

# Implosion

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**Implosion:** The Fanzine that proves anyone can publish a fanzine.  
Member, fwa.

"I'm worried, meyer," said Tom Springer, the putative Laney of the 21st Century. We were talking on the phone, as we do almost every day.

The Big Guy, as we never call him, is a land salesman. He sits, spiderlike, in his office and waits for an affluent fly to step through the door. Phone calls fill up the dead spaces not already filled by fanac or preparations for our upcoming baseball simulation league.

I'm a professional writer, which is to say that I don't like to work too many hours in a row without a little break. Some people brew coffee; I call Tom and other friends.

Tom is my lifeline to my favorite corner of Las Vegas fandom. His take on the soap operatic crises that lurch through our clique, Las Vegants, is impeccable.

In return, he gets the dubious benefit of my advice on fannish matters beyond Glitter City. Just yesterday, he asked, "Who is Buck Coulson?" While he grumbled under his breath about the last line of Buck's letter in **Wild Heirs #12**, I pondered a succinct description of Robert S. Coulson.

"Buck is a long-time active fan who published **Yandro** beginning in the 1950s and continuing regular well into the 1970s."

"He's the guy who published all those amateur science fiction stories, right?" he said. He said it like a police officer summarizing a perp's rap sheet.

"Well, not so many," I temporized. "Only one an issue."

"Only one an issue," he said. Then he laughed his Evil Low Chuckle that signifies his relish of fandom's darker side. "That's

not a good thing. There were a lot of issues."

"I'm worried," he repeated, now that I had gotten my digression out of the way. That's typical of his obliging ways.

"If you're worried, I'm worried," I said. "What's on your mind?"

To my surprise, he mentioned, not one of the continuing disasters besetting Vegas' fannish luminaries, but something he read in a fanzine. Or rather, several issues of a fanzine.

"Fans in **Apparatchik** keep saying that **Wild Heirs** is too self-referential."

"Who? I demanded. "Not Victor Gonzalez again?"

"It might've been him or Andy or some of the letter writers," Tom said. "What's important is that they said we are too self-referential. People have been saying that in the last few **Apparatchik**s." I heard a little catch in his voice. The taunts had pierced his usual, stoic demeanor.

"They'd probably say the same thing about **Hyphen** with its stories about coffee kisses and hoodminton," I offered. Tom has my reasonably complete **Hyphen** file on loan. He carries it with him at all times, should the need arise to quote Willis, Harris or Shaw.

"Yes, but they're saying it about *our* fanzine," he persisted. "They say **Wild Heirs** is too self-referential. What are we going to do?"

"We're going to laugh at those fans and keep on doing our thing," I said. "What they really mean is that we should mention them instead of us."

"I'd do that," he volunteered. "But I don't know a lot of them that well yet." A lengthy silence followed. I sensed my solution did not entirely satisfy him.

"I guess you're right," he said at last. He didn't sound convinced. "But they said we're self-referential."

"Well, Tom, it's hard to know what to do about

it other than just letting people have their say. **Wild Heirs** is mostly about the lives and times of its numerous editors, and we *do* spend a lot of time doing things together. It's hard not to refer to each other, no matter what situation we're describing, because there are usually at least a few of us involved.

"That's true," he acknowledged. His reluctance to let it go was palpable to my slantlike senses. Perhaps I have the makings of a Psychic Psychiatrist.

"Tom, what we need are some nonfan friends we can mention instead of each other."

"I don't think any of us has enough nonfan friends to do the job," Tom argued. "Besides, my nonfan friends don't say enough interesting things to make an article."

I thought about my nonfan friends. I could see his point. They weren't nice people, but they lacked a certain fannish.... zip.

"So we're back to laughing at them while we let them have their say about us being self-referential?" he said.

My status as the wise fannish counselor was on the line. I could either come up with something daring or innovative, or Tom would take his next problem to Robert Lichtman or rich brown.

"We can do what we've always done," I began. "Las Vegrants do best when we pull together as a team."

"So?"

"So.... the Vegrants can pretend to be each others' nonfan friends."

"How would that work?"

"Let's say you're writing about Joyce and Tammy's depression glass hunts. Instead of mentioning Joyce, you call her Hiawatha Little Feather. And when you tell about how I accompany them while you watch football and consumer mass quantities, refer to me as Phineas T Ackerman," I said. "And remember, there's no period after the 'T'."

"Hiawatha Little Feather and Phineas T Ackerman," he repeated. I was pleased not to hear the telltale sound of a period after the "T." "And that's better than mentioning you and Joyce?"

"To those people, evidently it is."

"And that's enough?"

"Well, we could develop characters, personalities, to go with each of these fictitious nonfan friends."

"Characters?"

"Sure! Forget about reality and just make up everything and everyone!"

"You mean like one of your con reports?" Now he was getting the idea.

"Hiawatha Little Feather could be an ex-professional wrestler turned Native American Activist. She could even be a Psychic Psychologist on the side. You can write that Phineas T Ackerman is a former astronaut who now lives in one of those big plastic bubbles. Think of the story possibilities!"

"This is exactly what **Wild Heirs** needs!" he declared.

So on that cheery, upbeat note I said good-bye to my non-fan friend -- not a Vegrant -- Otto Von Crankenschmidt, noted philatelist and heavy construction equipment operator.

Good-bye self-referentialism!

Good-bye!