



Lines of

Occurrence 12

# Lines of Occurrence 12

is a science-fiction fanzine written by Arthur D. Hlavaty, 819 W. Markham Ave., Durham, NC 27701, 919-NUTS'LAB. It is available for \$1 or the usual. Copyright © 1986 by Arthur D. Hlavaty. All rights returned to contributors. Last issue claimed to be Lines of Occurrence 12, but it lied. This is the only true Lines of Occurrence 12. Accept no substitutes. This is W.A.S.T.E. Paper #838, and it is a product of 23d Fandom.

I had a real good worldcon; I didn't get sick. That doesn't sound like much, but it's a vast improvement over my last worldcon, Constellation, at which I got very sick indeed, wound up in the emergency room on Thursday night, and missed the entire rest of the con. At Confederation, perhaps because it was not held in the accursed city of Baltimore, nothing of the sort happened. But I could say more positive things, as I thoroughly enjoyed the con.

One reason I enjoyed the con was that I got to appear on programming, which I always enjoy. Dick & Nicki Lynch were in charge of Fan Programming, and I was scheduled to appear on four panels. I was chosen for these on pure fannish merit; the fact that my spouse, Bernadette Bosky, was the Lynches' assistant had nothing to do with it.

In any event, the first of these was scheduled for Thursday afternoon, which I would have thought was before the con opened. Bernadette, on the other hand, would not be able to be there until Friday evening at the earliest. She is teaching two sections of the University Writing Course (not unlike what used to be called Freshman Comp) at Duke this fall, and there was a mandatory Teachers' Workshop that lasted through Friday afternoon. (This was not as bad as you might think. Bernadette enjoys teaching Freshman Comp, and the change of name was accompanied by some new approaches that sound fascinating. It did keep her away from the con for a while, though.)

Cathy Crockett and Alan Rosenthal were driving down to Atlanta from the Great White North, and they stopped in at the Nuts' Lab Tuesday night, then offered me a ride down, which I gratefully accepted. And so we drove south on Route 85, passing a giant peach in South Carolina, and dozens or perhaps hundreds of Outlet Stores. (Though I did not notice any Emotional Outlet Stores.) We had little trouble finding our destination, and arrived in the early evening.

Constellation was held in two hotels, the Hilton and the Marriott Marquis *de Sade*, which face each other across a street. Most of the buildings in the area are connected to one another by indoor tunnels; in fact, it may be the only two buildings not so connected are the Hilton and the Marriott Marquis. It was generally cold and windy, and often raining, between the two buildings.

But the hotels themselves were delightful. They are that new sort of hotel with lots of open space inside and glass elevators that overlook the lobby. The Marriott was

about 40 stories tall, and there were free-form open halls around the center area. Many people said it was like being inside a giant rib cage. The Hilton, where we stayed, was smaller and a bit less spectacular. Some people hated the elevators and tried to look at the small areas of them which were not glass-walled. I thought the elevators were fun.

Thursday morning I went down to the Green Room. I had two reasons for being there, as I was on Staff, as well as Programming. In a week moment (or actually two), I had volunteered to help out with both Fan Programming and the Fanzine Lounge. I registered for the con and found (as would be obvious all weekend) that the place was full of friendly, knowledgeable people, like Nancy Atherton, Louise Sachter, and Lucy Huntzinger, ready to offer aid and guidance to the perplexed.

Opening ceremonies were at 1 PM, and then at 2, panels began. There were, at any given time during the day, about half a dozen panels running, usually at least two that I would want to see. At 2 PM, the choice was fairly easy, since I was running one of the panels. The topic was "Fanzines, Computers, and Communications," and I had recruited Ned Brooks, D. Gary Grady, and Eric Raymond to appear with me. It had occurred to me that the topic really covered two questions: the use of the computer in creating fanzines (word processing, graphics, etc.) and the question of whether computer nets were replacing fanzines.

A few minutes before the panel was to start, I was informed that the airlines had kidnapped Eric Raymond, or at least had, through sheer incompetence, prevented him from getting to the con in time to appear on the panel. But one George Wilhelmsen had volunteered, and he was qualified by virtue of running a couple of science fiction nets for CompuServe. That sounded OK with me.

The panel went well. The good news about George was that he knows a lot about computer nets. The bad news was that he understandably tended to deliver CompuServe commercials. He did point out that he removes all obscenity and libel from the CompuServe nets he runs, and believes that he is legally required to do so. Since I have neither the equipment nor the money to wallow in computer nets as I would like to, that served as an excellent indication that the grapes are indeed sour.

Gary offered information on computer nets other than CompuServe, and Ned Brooks offered some information in his area of expertise, using computers to produce fanzines. (He may be the world's leading expert on cutting stencils with a dot-matrix printer. The idea of word-processing a zine and then mimeoing it sounds a bit strange, rather like discussing what sort of buggy whip one uses with a 747, but it does make a kind of sense. Mimeo is nice and cheap, and using word processing eliminates one of the great drawbacks of mimeo, the need to rub blue glop on stencils to correct errors.)

(Bernadette and I have done some such zines, and we can testify that a Juki or Kaypro daisywheel printer cuts very good stencils. In fact, thanks to Gary, I could have shown the audience an example of a word-processed, mimeoed zine. Apa-nu was having its annual worldcon collation. I wrote a zine before leaving, and stencilled it, and left it for Bernadette to print up and bring along with her. But when I got to the con I discovered that apa-nu collation was scheduled for shortly before the time Bernadette was to arrive. Fortunately, Gary had not yet left Durham when I discovered this, so Bernadette rapidly printed up the zine and Gary brought it down with him.)

The panel ended with what may have been my favorite comment of the weekend. George went into a peroration about the wonders of CompuServe, and how you can get to communicate with important writers and such. He said, "How would you like to have famous editors like Beth Meacham writing to you?" From the audience, Charlie Martin said, "Famous editors like Beth Meacham write to me all the time. They say, 'No, I won't buy it.'"

In the evening there was a party in the con suite (which was the entire 10th floor of the Marriott). Program participants were identified by thin plastic rods which contained cyalume, so when you looped them and connected the ends, they glowed. Most of us wore them around our necks, but Marty Cantor, as editor of Holier than Thou, felt that he should be identified by a halo, so he wore his around his head. The party was most enjoyable, and I had the pleasure of meeting some friends I'd known only in print, such as Warren Norwood, JoAnn Montalbano, and Tim Gatewood. I hit several other parties as well, and had a good time despite my usual feeling at these things that there's an even better party somewhere else that I'm missing.

I have to begin the Friday report with an apology. I'm writing this almost a month after the con. I took notes at the time, but my notebook is presumably still somewhere in Atlanta. I have a copy of the pocket program, and I am reconstructing the panels and such from that. But for some reason, there is no printed list covering things like whom I had meals with, so there I rely on frail memory and may get some times and places wrong.

I think it was Friday morning when I had breakfast with Sourdough Jackson, another old apa buddy I was meeting for the first time. One of the tunnels in the sky connected the Marriott with the Peachtree Mall, and on the way was a restaurant called \*yeuchh\* Le Peep. Worse yet, it claimed to serve Le Breakfast, Le Brunch, and Le Lunch. It all seemed so Le Cute you could Le Puke, but Sourdough and I braved it. The food turned out to be quite good, and the Cute Name Premium per meal was probably under a dollar. (Actually, they also had cutely-named original dishes that they claimed to have "designed," but I avoided those in favor of a plain old mushroom omelet. The waiter said, "Don't you have any

imagination?" I replied, "Enough to imagine what will happen to me if I order any of that weird-sounding stuff.")

From there, I went to a Fanzine panel, moderated by Jodie Offutt, on which Bill Bowers and Mike Glicksohn talked entertainingly about how and why they do what they do.

That was followed by one of the more controversial panels, on the Fan Hugoes. This year an ad appeared in Science Fiction Chronicle suggesting a vote for No Award in the Fanzine category on this year's Hugo ballot. The signers included some of the biggest names in fanzine fandom (such as Don D'Amassa and Patrick Nielsen Hayden, who won richly deserved Hugo nominations for their fan writing this year), a couple of people whose names I've never seen on fanzines, and many levels in between. The opponents of No Award were three fanzines with at least some claim to roots in the fanzine tradition--Lan Laskowski's Lan's Lantern, Marty Cantor's Holier than Thou, and Charlotte Proctor's Anvil--as well as a costumazine and The Universal Translator--a catalog of media fanzines.

The whole issue is complex. Motivation for signing the ad appears to have ranged from serious esthetic considerations to personal distaste for individual nominees or their subject matter. Vote counters Jeff Copeland and Liz Schwarzin pointed out that while it would have taken only about half the signers to put a zine of their choice on the ballot, only four of the signers had in fact nominated in the fanzine category; motivation for not signing turned out to range from the real problem that it cost \$25 to buy a supporting membership (and thus nominate) to plain old apathy and laziness.

Mike Glicksohn had said in his Lan's Lantern guest editorial that he supported No Award because the current nominees did not live up to the great tradition of previous winners. Patrick, on the other hand, cited other past winners of dubious merit and suggested that if, as had been rumored, The Universal Translator was campaigning shamelessly among the medioids for votes, that this too was in the great tradition of at least some previous winners.



Fandom does have its rewards.

The panel consisted of moderator Mike Glycer, Patrick Nielsen Hayden (presumably representing the ad signers), and the three at least somewhat fannish nominees. It was enjoyable, but did not resolve much of the controversy. I was pleasantly surprised by Charlotte Proctor, whom I have not met before, and who showed much aplomb and wit in discussing the questions. I was not surprised that the others behaved similarly, because I already knew them.

[There's no point in faking suspense. You know what happened; you know I'm writing this after the con. I'm happy that Lan's Lantern won. I don't think it's a perfect zine, but I do think it's a good one.]

At 2:00 there was the opportunity to heckle Guy Lillian, which is always fun, so I went over to Guy's "Introduction to APAdom" panel. Actually, I didn't do much heckling. David Schlosser, the OE of LASFAPA, was in the audience, and he was Lead Heckler. Guy has been in LASFAPA for many years, but he managed to get every detail wrong, from copy count to how long the apa has been in existence, and David kept correcting him. Except for such questions of mere factuality, it was an excellent panel; Guy included a wide range of apas, from the comics apas to ERB-APA (for readers and collectors of Edgar Rice Burroughs), as well as the discussion apas that many of us are familiar with.

After the panels, I hung around the lobby of the Hilton, where I encountered Robert Shea. He had not planned to be at worldcon until he found out that Illuminatus! would be given the Libertarian Futurist Society's Hall of Fame Award. (I wished that the award had been sufficient to tempt co-author Robert Anton Wilson from his home in Ireland as well.) We agreed to meet for dinner, and I went off to the apa-nu collation, scheduled for 5 PM.

There, under the direction of Rev. Vinnie Bartilucci (one of the Token Nonassholes in the Church of the SubGenius), Dorian Tenore, Elly Freeman, Rich Segal, Rhiannon Wallace, Richard Onley, and I, among others, prepared to collate. Unfortunately, I'd agreed to meet Bob Shea for dinner at 6, and by then Vinnie was just finishing up the table of contents, so I didn't get to help collate at all, and I even took Elly & Richard with me. Dinner was at a mediocre Chinese restaurant, but the company was good, with Nancy Lebovitz, J. Neil Schulman, Michael Grossberg, and others. Among other things, we talked about THE PASSION OF AYN RAND The Passion of Ayn Rand, that tale of one of the flawed heroes of American culture.

After dinner, I party-crawled a bit more moderately than the previous night. I believe it was at this time that I encountered another person I'd been looking forward to seeing, Rick Albertson, a fellow member of LASFAPA and Gonzo. I didn't recognize him at first because the only other time we'd met (at a DeepSouthcon) he looked like a giant toad. (That was the result of his taste in costumes, rather than my taste in recreational substances.) In my frequent shamefully unfannish manner, I went to sleep before midnight.



Speaking of sleeping, Bernadette had come to the sensible conclusion that it would be a good idea to get some sleep before coming to the con, so instead of dashing off as soon as her workshop was over or leaving first thing Saturday morning, she got a flight that would arrive in Atlanta in the middle of Saturday afternoon.

That meant that she missed my appearance on the panel on the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis (the idea that a culture's worldview is largely structured by its language) and its role in sf. The panel was chaired by Jan Murphy, a University of California anthropologist, who probably would have been a better panelist than moderator. She had all sorts of interesting things to say about the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, but she would say them, and then ask if her fellow panelists (Sheila Finch, Vernor Vinge, and I) had anything to say, rather than asking us questions that would elicit comments.

We had things to say anyway. I took this opportunity to air my distaste for one of the current languages in our environment, the sign language which now appears in many public places in lieu of more verbal signs. I pointed out that when I am in public and I feel a certain biological need, I am used to seeking out a door marked MEN (or GENTLEMEN, a curious way of gaining status by excreting). That is itself an abstraction, but now I have to make the further abstraction of thinking of myself as "person-without-triangle-below-torso."

I think it was around this time that I finally solved the Mystery of TK Atherton's Sister. T. Kevin Atherton is a multitalented person who publishes a delightful zine called Cri de Loon and does cartoons for other zines, including mine. He has a sister named Nancy Atherton, who shares the family wit and weirdness. This is all simple to understand, but there are anomalies, people who claim to have met Nancy though she doesn't know them, etc. The mystery was solved for me when Kathy Nerat, another person I know from apas, told me that she too is Kevin's sister.

Bernadette arrived in mid-afternoon. She turned out not to be needed for on-site work with Fan Programming right away, so we discharged another of our obligations, keeping an eye on the fanzine lounge while the rest of the crew took a supper break. The lounge was a pleasant place to hang out throughout the con.

After dinner it was time for the Hugo Awards, moved to Saturday this year from the traditional Sunday. Bernadette and I arrived early and took seats in the Nominees' section, where we were joined by Lan & Maia and the Cantors. The show began with a surprise, a magnificent light show put on by Executive Producer Rick Albertson and his crew. Then Toastmaster Bob Shaw began an autobiographical tale that he interspersed between awards. Like all BoSh speeches, it was rich in laughs, with just an occasional oldie or misfire.

One of the advantages of being a fan nominee is that you get to find out your fate quickly. I knew that I had lost again while the Best Novel nominees still had half an hour of suspense. I almost didn't even get my name announced, though. Shaw simply announced Mike Glycer as the winner of the Fan Writer award, without listing the nominees first, but Mike, ever the newsperson, made the announcement. (I certainly feel no shame at losing to a writer like Mike, but it does get a bit tedious with repetition. On the other hand, it's nice to know that this year, for once, I didn't finish last.)

There were two particularly notable moments in the ceremony. Mike Whelan, winning the Best Artist Award once again, made the magnanimous gesture of asking his fellow nominees to rise and announcing that he was taking a year off from the award to let one of those talented people win one. The late Judy-Lynn del Rey won the Best Editor award, and Del Rey Books editor Owen Lock read a statement from her widower, Lester del Rey, to the effect that since she had never been nominated for the award in all the years she was alive and producing books, he could conclude only that she was being given this award for dying, and he refused to accept such an award. A tenable position, but it could not have been fun for Bob Shaw to have this suddenly thrust upon him.

Unfortunately, after the ceremonies, we continued the Nuts' Lab tradition of leaving worldcon to go to the emergency room. Fortunately, this time it was nowhere near as serious. Bernadette had an earache, and there was no doctor on duty at the Hilton, so we went to a nearby hospital to have it treated. The doctor simply prescribed a local anesthetic and a decongestant and let her go.

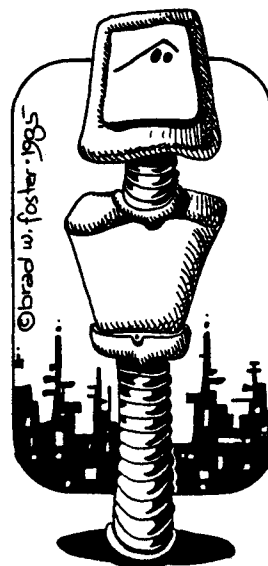
Sunday morning I got up for a 10 o'clock panel because I had volunteered to moderate it. The panel was on Future Worldcon Bids, and Dick Lynch wanted somebody who was impartial. As I explained in my opening remarks, I have the impartiality that comes from large quantities of ignorance and apathy. That may not be a sufficient source of impartiality, and indeed at the very beginning of the panel, impartiality clashed with smartass, and the latter won. Craig Miller and Bruce Pelz, representing Los Angeles in 1990, mildly disagreed over which was to speak first, and I said, "Aha, one bid that's torn by dissension and strife." As a matter of fact, the reason they'd needed someone impartial was in case there was a question of apportioning the panel's hour fairly. However, the LA bid and

the rival Netherlands in 1990 bid, represented by Kees Van Toorn, both had presentations of only about ten minutes. Those were followed by representatives of later bids, from Milwaukee and Washington, DC. Audience members asked questions about the facilities for each bid, and the whole thing proceeded in a ~~borring~~ calm, civilized manner.

That was followed by the panel Bernadette had suggested, on "Two-Fan Households." Lan & Maia (still euphoric about Lan's Hugo award) and Bruce and Elayne Pelz joined us, and it went very well. If there was any fault to the panel, it was that it was limited in subject. While we'd attained diversity in geographical area (East, Midwest, and West) and interests (clubs and con smocking, as well as zines), it was all coeducational couples. One woman in the audience pointed out that she and her daughter were a two-fan household, and that kind had not been represented.

There was an entire track of academic programming, but we hadn't gotten to any of it yet. Vernon Hyles was chairing a panel called "SF in Mundane Literature," which sounded fascinating, but it was scheduled for the same time as our Two-Fan Household panel. After that, however, was a panel on Fan-Academic relations, appropriately chaired by Joe Sanders, who is both a professor and a FAPA member. Linda Haldeman, Susan Schwartz, and Russell Letson proposed bridges between these two groups--both somewhat similar and filled with interesting, intelligent people, and yet often at odds.

After the panel, we joined several of these people for lunch. Vernon Hyles was there, as was one Vernon Miles, also a Professor of English Literature at the University of Arkansas, though at a different branch. Further similarities between the two are that both have done work on John Barth and C. S. Lewis and both have nicknames. I had forgotten that native Southern males often cheerfully accept appellations that men from elsewhere might consider fighting words. Hyles is Sonny, and Miles is Tad. *I'm just as happy that neither wishes to be called Bubba!*



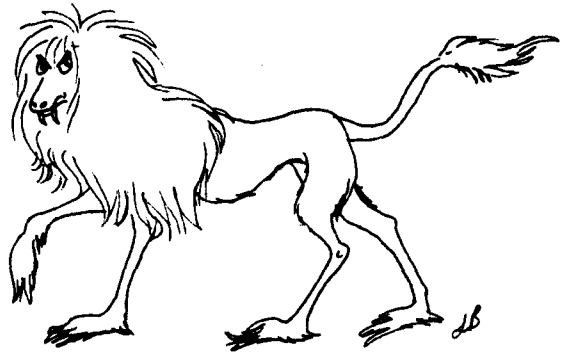
Then it was time for the Libertarian Futurist Society awards, and here I had a sense of *déjà vu*. Four years ago Bob Shea came to Chicon to present the Libertarian Futurist Society's Prometheus Award for best novel of the year to L. Neil Smith (or more precisely to me, giving a singularly unconvincing impersonation of L. Neil Smith). Then the presentation was shunted around and finally made in a small, out-of-the-way room because of concom inefficiency. This year the same sort of thing happened, but at least this time the award was moved in a good cause, as Harlan Ellison was running an auction to benefit the widow of fantasy writer Manly Wade Wellman in the room where the awards had been supposed to be given. Bernadette and I found the new venue and got seats next to our friend Janice Gelb and Victor Milan, one of the nominees.

Along with the Libertarian Futurist Society awards, there was a presentation of the Japanese science fiction awards, and First Fan David Kyle presented the Beanie Award to First Fan Frederik Pohl for no discernible reason. (Pohl later mentioned that it's anachronistic to use propellor beanies as a symbol of First Fandom, as they did not become popular until the 40s.) It was already known that the Hall of Fame awards were going to Illuminatus! and C. M. Kornbluth's The Syndic. Pohl returned to the podium to accept Kornbluth's award, then Bob Shea accepted, and finally there was the one surprise announcement: MC Brad Linaweaver presented this year's Prometheus Award to Victor Milan for his novel, The Cybernetic Samurai. (It's supposed to come out in paperback from Ace shortly after this zine does, and I'm looking forward to reading it.)

The awards ceremony ran a bit late, and Bernadette had to leave, as she was room manager for the "Legends of LASFS" panel. The duties of the room manager include getting the panelists together in the Green Room and taking them over to the room where the panel is scheduled, making sure that there are signs with the panelists' names on them, and filling out a form for the Programming committee on how the panel went. I know that because the next hour I was room manager for the "Legends of East Coast Fandom" panel.

I was a bit disconcerted to note that Frederik Pohl was the only panelist in the Green Room. I consider Pohl one of the major writers in the field, and I'm personally grateful to him because when I did my very first fanzine, I sent him a copy and he sent me a loc that was both encouraging and amusing. I finally got around to thanking him in person for that, and when we got to the room where the panel was scheduled, I was relieved to see the other panelists already there.

The next hour was thoroughly delightful. The scheduled panelists were Pohl, Donald A. Wollheim, Julius Schwartz, Bob Madle, and Dave Kyle, and they coopted Sam Moskowitz from the audience. Moskowitz had his larynx removed a few years ago, but he now can speak by holding an electrical device to his throat; he sounds like one of those mechanical voices in the Atlanta airport. The six



of them reminisced, disputed, and joked, and it was just fascinating to hear their tales of First Fandom.

Bernadette and I got together with a small group, including Bob Shea and his son Michael, Jimmy Harris, David Bratman, Jerry Kaufman, and Art Widner, and we went over to the Marriott for their dinner buffet. The food was really excellent, and I was really enjoying the meal until I looked at my watch and noticed that it was 7:45. The problem with that was that we were hosting a Discordian Business Meeting in 15 minutes, and we were utterly unprepared for it.

A Discordian Business Meeting is the sort of thing you might mistake for a party. Actually, I thought of the name six or seven years ago when I started giving parties at cons, and I soon discovered one value to it. When a pack of 18-year-old male nonreaders comes to the door and says, "Is this a party?" you can reply, "No, this is a Discordian Business Meeting," and very often they will say, "Oh," and leave.

It was not coincidental that the DBM was scheduled for the same time as the masquerade. Usually, DBMs are scheduled for Friday night, but at Chicon when the masquerade was on, I found myself wandering the halls with Bob Shea & Marty Cantor, looking for parties and not finding much, so I resolved to provide an alternative to the masquerade. I think I have the reasonable, middle-of-the-road approach to costume fans. I do not, like some printfan purists, consider them an abomination; in fact, I think many of them add a touch of color and beauty. On the other hand, I do not think it's worth 2 or 3 hours of my time, at a con with many interesting people to talk with, to sit around watching costumers.

Anyway, here it was, 15 minutes to party time, and I had not thought to get any refreshments for the party. Fortunately, Jimmy Harris had his car with him, and he and the Sheas volunteered to go out and buy supplies. (Eva Chalker Whitley later called to offer us a bunch of leftover edibles from a party she'd thrown earlier. We gratefully accepted, and what didn't get eaten at the DBM wound up at a Boston in '89 party or in the Fanzine Lounge.) The party went very well, although I began to get a bit concerned as 10 PM approached, because I was scheduled to be on a panel then.

The panel had seemed like a wonderful idea at first. It was on FAPA (the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, the oldest fannish amateur press association). FAPA is not only historically important, and not only still an enjoyable group, but it's special to Bernadette and me because we first met there. And so we planned a panel, with me moderating and featuring Bob Silverberg and Terry Carr, who remain in FAPA despite their pro writing successes, and long-time FAPA members Art Widner and Dick Eney. I figured we'd have all sorts of interesting fannish history and gossip to impart.

When I got to the con, I discovered that, although we had been told the panel would be scheduled for Monday, it had been moved to Sunday night at 10, and that Silverberg would not be on it. (I got to meet him anyway. I introduced myself to him in a hotel lobby, and we had a brief, but pleasant, chat. He made one puzzling remark, to the effect that he remembered meeting me at the Crab Feast at Constellation. I remembered being in the hospital at that time. When I told this to Bernadette, she said that she had met him there and had told him about me. I guess she described me very vividly.)

In any event, I decided to have the party Sunday evening anyway, and leave for an hour to be on the panel, but now I was beginning to have misgivings. The First Fandom panel had been so good, I despaired of putting on a show anywhere near as interesting. Worse, the rest of the panel was disappearing. It now turned out that neither Terry Carr nor Dick Eney could be there. That left Art and me. I wanted to chicken out, but at 10 I went down to the panel room with Bernadette, in the pious hope that no one would be there so we could cancel it.

The panel was saved by two good ideas, neither of them mine. Dick Lynch suggested that, rather than get up on stage, we sit in a circle with whatever audience showed up. Bernadette offered to lead the discussion and, seeing that there were several other FAPAns in the group, suggested that we introduce ourselves individually and mention how long we'd been in FAPA. That was enough to start. We had a pleasant discussion, including FAPAns Art Widner, Brian Earl Brown, Don Thompson, Fred Lerner, Curt Phillips, and Marty Cantor, and some people who just wandered in.

Since I was willing, and since I hadn't made a mess of the worldcon bidders' panel, Dick Lynch asked me to moderate a panel of presentations by the next three worldcons--England ('87), New Orleans ('88), and Boston ('89). It's been traditional to devote an hour to this at every worldcon. This, however, was the first worldcon at which the next three years' locations (rather than two) had already been decided, and it soon became obvious that not enough time had been allotted. The presentations were to be in chronological order. First, a couple of British fans presented a slide show. That took 20 minutes, and I said we'd get back to them for questions. At that point, there was no one present from New Orleans, so the representatives of the ever-organized Boston group

~~clicked their jackboots heels, saluted, and~~ began their presentation. They presented information and answered questions for 20 minutes. By that time, Guy Lillian, representing New Orleans, had arrived. I realized that if he had 20 minutes, the British fans would have no time to answer questions. Fortunately, I also remembered that nothing was scheduled for that room after the hour, so I asked the British fan if they would be willing to stay after the scheduled closing to answer questions. That was fine with them, so it all worked out.

It was now time for the mad rush of checking out of the hotel, which kept me from having lunch with Bernadette's friend Bob Eber and his family, and then I made one last tour of the dealers' room. I haven't mentioned the dealers' room before, though I went there before, spending some time, and less money than I feared. I finally met Mark Ziesing, after years of buying books from him by mail. Since the con, I have sent him another order, and he replied that he was pleased that I was still willing to buy from him after having met him. I said that we should consider it even, since he was still willing to sell to me after having met me.

There was one huckster operation that did a particularly good job of pandering to my interests. They had some very nice rubber stamps, the most thorough collection of Daniel Manus Pinkwater books I've seen in one place, and the complete stock of Serconia Books, a publishing and bookselling effort run by Seattle fans Jerry Kaufman & Don Keller, which features critical works by Brian Aldiss and Samuel R. Delany, among others. Don Keller was another old postal friend I met at this con. He publishes an excellent, but regrettably infrequent, zine called INSCAPE (last issue 2 years ago, next issue Real Soon Now). We discussed sf as literature. He has higher literary standards than I do, but we agreed on the major literary accomplishments of New Worlds writers like Disch & Sladek, and newer writers like Carter Scholz. He then went on, "The Seahawks may go to the Super Bowl this year. Ray Butler's going to help the passing game...." I like someone who can discuss all the important cultural topics.

Bernadette and I made to our plane without difficulties and agreed that it was an excellent con, except that there was no panel on finding good endings for con reports.

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# Reviews

I do not for the life of me understand why Howard the Duck is being so universally taken for a somewhat larger bird, associated with Thanksgiving. I thought it was a most enjoyable movie, a light-hearted romp. I think I can guess what Dick Geis will say about it: Audiences want to take their stories at least somewhat seriously, and they will not sit still and suspend their disbelief if you mock them by making a duck your hero. In any event, it could be assumed that if there is one thing worse than a failed movie, it is the novelization of a failed movie.

I would urge you to question that assumption. The novelization of Howard the Duck is written by Ellis Weiner (last seen doing the parody Doon) and published in paperback by Berkley. It's in the spirit of the movie, and like the best novelizations, it adds a lot of good stuff, such as a screamingly funny (though neither subtle nor fair) parody of SDI. Whether you saw the movie or not, give the book a try.

Ace has inaugurated a new hardcover line, for its more prestigious sf, and has a somewhat auspicious beginning in Gordon R. Dickson's new novel, The Forever Man. It's a novel rich in ideas and scenes, beginning with a space ship which has somehow absorbed at least some of the soul of its dead pilot, and continuing through strange worlds and alien races, raising some interesting questions about communicating with the inhabitants of utterly different worlds. (I wish I'd had the book to refer to when I was on the Sapir-Whorf panel.) The bad news is the male and female protagonists, who crab at each other intermittently throughout the book in the belief that they are showing what tough heroic people they are. It's a bit reminiscent of The Number of the Beast, but these squabbles take up less verbiage and are generally less annoying than those. Besides, the rest of the book makes it worth ignoring that part.

Howard Waldrop is moving into more prominence in the sf field. For a while, he was known mostly as the coauthor of The Texas-Israeli War, a book generally agreed not to live up to its title (though that's by no means an easy title to live up to). Then, his short novel Them Bones was published in the Ace Specials series, and now there is Howard Who?, a collection of thirteen of his short stories, published in hardcover by Doubleday.

Them Bones gives the reader a hint of what these stories are like: marvelously inventive, but ending in downers--destruction, defeat, at best resignation. There's some wondrous stuff in the book, from the post-holocaust Amerind culture scavenging automobiles in "Mary Margaret Road-Grader" to Sen. Elvis Presley listening enviously to the great jazz musician Eisenhower in "Ike at the Mike." But it always ends sadly.

One occasionally hears the complaint that apas are draining the vital fluids of general fanzine fandom, taking some of the best writers out of general circulation. At

the very least, this argument does not take into account the fact that the opposite of the process is also taking place: good writers who got their start in apas moving into general fanzines. An excellent example of this process is Notes 5 (\$1 or the usual from Sam Helm, 495 W. 186th St., #5E, New York, NY 10033). Editor Sam Helm has filled his zine with some of the best apahacks.

Jeff Grimshaw is something of an acquired taste, and he writes here about sports, but I enjoy the unique savor of his writing. Nancy Lebovitz has much of interest to say about the Alexander and Feldenkrais approaches to bodywork. Book Reviewer Andrea Chalfin-Antonoff takes an incisive look at Peter Straub's Floating Dragon. (Bernadette says Andrea's WRONG WRONG WRONG, but agrees that the review is well thought-out.) Anni Ackner manages to write with warmth and wit at the same time, which is not the world's easiest combination.

There's also a lengthy and enjoyable letter column, though perhaps the one place where Notes shows its origins is in the pages of transcribed mailing comments, many too disconnected to read well as parts of letters. Other than that, though, Notes is one of the best fanzines currently published.

## USEFUL STUFF

Eve Ackerman writes:

I'll be teaching a class this winter to a group of teens. The class is called "Understanding Judaism through Science Fiction," and I'm trying to compile a bibliography. I'm looking for SF & F stories on Jews, the Holocaust, Israel, Non-Christian Alternative Universes, etc. We'll be using Wandering Stars and More Wandering Stars (which are unfortunately out of print), The Red Magician, Jesus on Mars, and a variety of short stories from various sources. Any comments, suggestions, insights, etc. are greatly appreciated. The course starts in January. Please send information to: Eve Ackerman, 2220 NW 14th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32605.

DUFF is the fan fund to exchange fans between the US and Australia. In 1987, a US fan will go to Australia, and the voting has just begun. There are three excellent candidates--Lucy Huntzinger, R Laurraine Tutihasi, and Tom Whitmore--all of whom have made contributions to literate fandom and would be deserving winners. For a ballot, send a SASE to Marty & Robbie Cantor, 11565 Archwood St., North Hollywood, CA 91606. You will be required to pay \$2 to vote and to give the Cantors the name of a fan who knows you, if they don't.

It occurs to me I should give the addresses of those book dealers I was telling you about in the latter part of the report. For mail-order sf in general, Mark Ziesing, PO Box 806, Willimantic, CT 06226. For critical books by Aldiss, Delany, et al., Serconia Press, PO Box 1786, Seattle, WA 98111. For Pinkwater books, B. Barrett Books, PO Box 6202, Hayward, CA 94540. Send a SASE with your request for a price list.





## From Silent Tristero's Empire

[on LINES 11]

Warren Norwood writes:

Appreciated your comments on the Conference on the Fantastic, and was interested in your analysis of Aldiss' GoH speech. However, I will cast one vote in favor of the "Scheherazade syndrome," pointing out only that those stories passed down generation after generation in all of humanities branches are those stories which are not boring. The oral story teller knew and still knows that if he doesn't entertain the audience, he'll lose it, and he cannot pass on knowledge, cannot teach, cannot arouse the interest, intellect, and curiosity of an audience that turns away. Part of the problem with "modern fiction" and all its mutations is that its writers have forgotten that first and foremost, as Faulkner said, their job is to tell the story. The reason that Heinlein, Herbert, Clarke, Asimov, Bradbury, et al. are popular is precisely that they are story tellers first. Thus we forgive them bad prose, cardboard characters, juvenile perspectives, implausible societies, etc. Their stories carry us, and consequently, the messages that receive the biggest audience are the ones broadcast by the best story-tellers.

[On LINES 10]

Nancy Lebowitz writes:

I would say that the apparent banishment of the critics in Number of the Beast simply means that anyone who reads carefully enough to realize that a

Klein bottle doesn't confine is a good enough reader not to count as the kind of critic Heinlein despises.

In re "national accents" in sf: I've seen it described as American sf having "sick power fantasies," in which case British sf has sick powerlessness fantasies.

One other thing about The Cat Who Walked through Walls: One of the consistent themes in Heinlein's work is his hatred of slavery. (It's kind of neat that Friday is an anti-slavery novel without ever mentioning the word.) In Number and Cat, as his characters become more independent, it becomes clear that in normal fiction characters are slaves to the author. Heinlein characters don't put up with that.

Dave Dixon writes:

I enjoyed your remarks on Heinlein, even though I didn't totally agree with them—particularly at the end, where you criticize both RAH and Campbell for operating on the basis of "ours not to reason why." I think you missed an implicit but necessary part of the whole structure of the book, wherein Campbell, slowly learning more all along—and also learning how vastly much more he didn't know—came to trust his allies. There's a big difference between that trust and blind, unthinking obedience, which I think is what you intended to be attacking; RAH should not be tarred with the latter brush. There is such a thing as faith. It can be abused, like anything else. But it does exist, and it can be valid and meaningful.