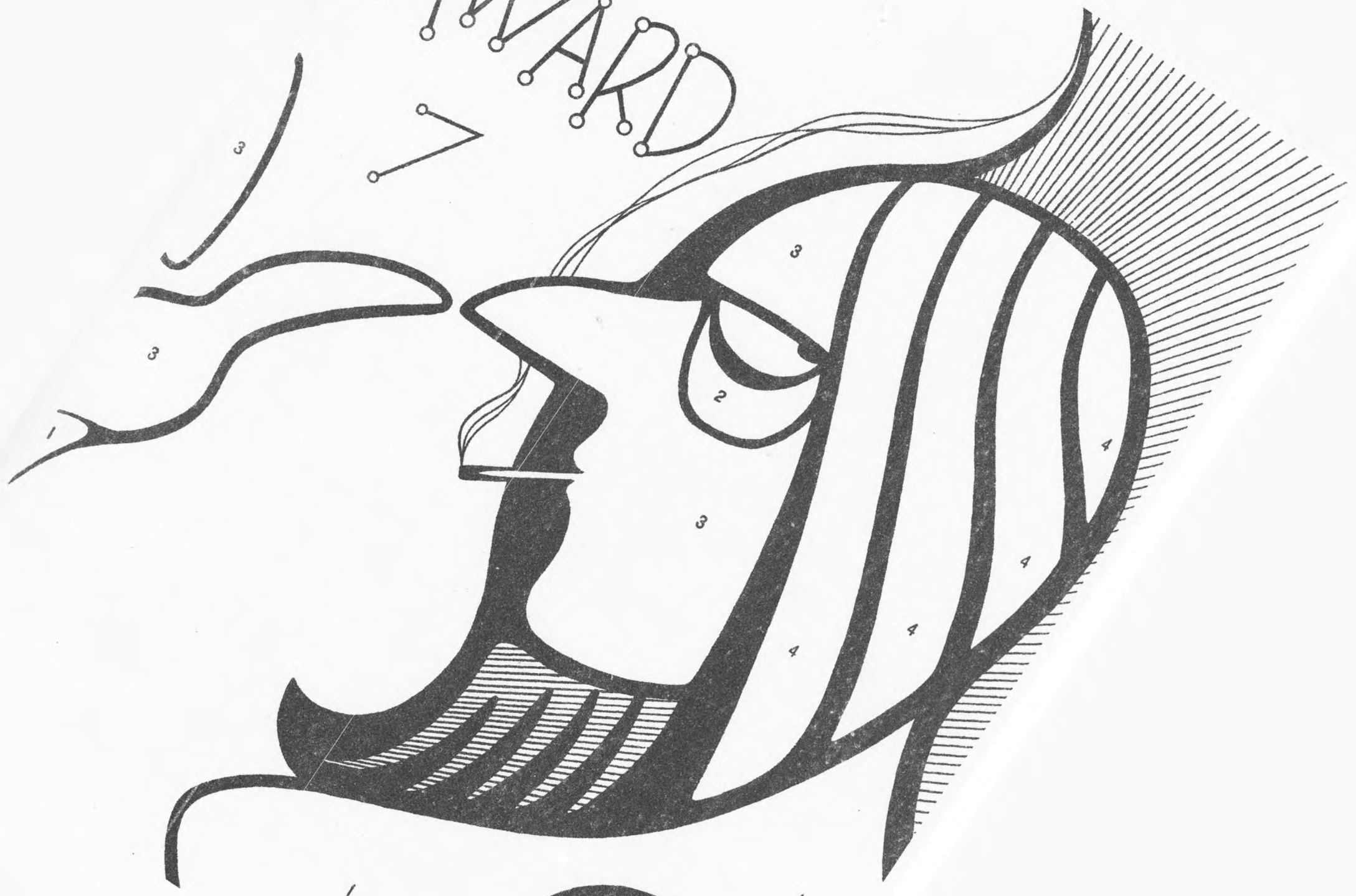


NO
AWARD



3
Wm as "Gerron" '85

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LEGALESE

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SPRING, 2000

THE FANZINE FOR WHICH YOU VOTED BEFORE IT EXISTED

This fanzine is available for the faanish usual (which I tend to translate as my own whim, but I do honour trades, locs, artwork, written articles, and other contributions). If all else fails, send me US\$5.00 and I will send you a copy. *No Award* is not pubbed on any regular schedule (even though I want to get it out at least twice a year). Mostly, issues will be put out when material and money decide to get together in a meaningful way.

NO AWARD

NUMBER SEVEN

**HOO HAH
 PUBLICATION
 NO. 483**
A FANZINE BY MARTY CANTOR**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

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ARTISTS

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Steve Stiles - page 9	Ray Capella - page 10
Joe Mayhew - pages 12, 18	Bill Rotsler - pages 14, 23, & 27
Terry Jeeves - page 16	Alexis Gilliland - page 33

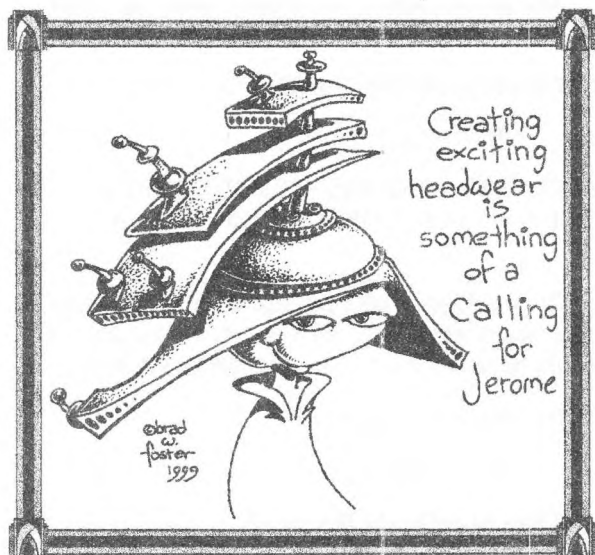
According to Taral, Bergeron thought that the "Bergeron" cover was funny. The editor for whom this was originally intended thought that this was too controversial because of the Topic A feud then raging. Taral changed the title and recently sent this to me. As I now have relaxed relations with many "on the other side" of that old feud, I do believe that this fine cover can now be pubbed without controversy. I surely hope so as there are too many good people on both sides of that mess for it to continue at this late date.

**LETTERS OF
COMMENT**

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__ We trade.
 __ Would you like to trade?
 __ You contributed, one way or 'tother. Thanks.
 __ Do it again.
 __ Both you and I would be improved if you were to contribute.

__ You really should do something. Soon.
 __ I thank you for the money. Now try the usual.
 __ Feel free to invite me someplace (if you pay the fare).
 __ You are an old phart and you are getting a copy of this zine because of that.



BRINGING UP THE REAR

an editorial by Marty Cantor

Late winter, 1975, and I discover fandom. By the time I found fandom, I had been a reader of science fiction for over 30 years. This being "late to the party" has been a pattern for me in fandom ever since my entry into this hobby (which is now a way of life in my retirement).

In May of 1975 I pubbed my first zine, a 2-pager for APA-L. This zine utilised mimeo, and was printed for me by "Frog" Hollander. Printing was later taken over for me by June Moffatt. The first copy machine I purchased was a used Heyer ditto machine (from Larry Niven) - I later bought a mimeo machine from John Trimble (and a second used [but electric] mimeo machine was purchased from the Los Angeles Canadian Consulate). But I am getting ahead of myself.

All of my early zines were typed on a Smith-Corona Portable (which I had acquired in the 1950s), later buying an IBM Selectric I. After I married, a second Selectric I was purchased - and it was after I was married that the above referenced electric mimeo machine was purchased. All well and good, but fans were already into computers and photo-offset printing. As usual, I was bringing up the rear.

We finally got our first computer in the late 80's; but, by that time, I was moving into semi-gafiation, and I never used that computer for zines. The first issue of *No Award*, produced in the early 90's, utilised a Selectric I and mimeo.

When Robbie and I separated, she took the computer, so I did not get my own computer until 1997 - it was then that I used it for *No Award* #2.

I have just used a small windfall to purchase a newer computer (on which this zine is being produced), and it includes a modem. So I have gotten on line - years behind most fanzine fans (except for some of the old pharts).

But the parade of paper zines from this computer will continue, despite my access to the web. I am a devotee of paper fandom - I do not see that changing.

m

PROBABLY

This is original material
by
Thom Digby
(researched and compiled by Marty Cantor)

SOMETHING

BUT NOT

SERCON MATERIAL

as this is a collection of material from one of the most original minds ever to grace the fannish continuum. Thomas G. Digby has written, mostly, in APAs. I have gathered this material from my collection of APA-L, MINNEAPA (partial collections of both) and LASFAPA (complete). Thom's zines were always titled PROBABLY SOMETHING, followed by the line, BUT NOT, and then followed by a line or so of thought that invariably showed the workings of a mind that always put together two and two and came up with an answer which probably could be thought up by nobody else on Earth. Often (but not always) he expanded upon or explained this in a following paragraph or three.

Thom is an original, and his often brilliant (but usually wacky and off-beat) ideas usually got readers trying to out-wacky him. Those were great days in those APAs. To put a little bit of perspective on his creativity, please note that he was in these three APAs simultaneously, APA-L is put out weekly, and Thom was producing these zines for just about every issue. Anybody who has read Larry Niven's What Can One Say About Chocolate Covered Manhole Covers will recognise which character was Thom Digby after reading just a little bit of the below. Keeping in mind that Thom was the person who explained why the Bermuda Triangle no longer existed, "Lying wholly within itself it has caused itself to disappear," I hope that you receive as much pleasure from this material that I did in re-reading it.

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

MINTING RADIOACTIVE MONEY WHOSE FACE VALUE DECREASES AS IT DECAYS.

The main use for such would be to implement a

policy of discouraging hoarding of cash and encouraging spending. It also might serve as an automatic "wealth tax" if you are in favor of taxing large fortunes to "redistribute wealth" or whatever. And perhaps if the rate at which the gov't mints this coinage matches the decay rate there won't be the inflation often attributed to "printing too much money." And considering the location of pants pockets, if the radioactivity is intense enough it might be an automatic birth-control system. (APA-L #570)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

BEING ASKED TO NAME SEVEN KINDS OF CATS AND COMING UP WITH "PUSSY," "TOM," "COPY," "SCAIRDY," "ALLEY," "HEP," AND, "ERPILLAR." (APA-L #523)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

BRIBING POSTAL OFFICIALS TO ISSUE A COMMEMORATIVE STAMP HONORING CORRUPTION IN GOVERNMENT.

And the fun comes when time comes for LASFS to vote on the choice of design. (APA-L #522)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

TRYING TO DISGUISE YOUR PET SNAKE AS A CAT SO YOUR FRIENDS WON'T BE AFRAID OF IT.

One could glue fake cat legs on it so it wouldn't be a snake any more but I think the hardest part would be teaching it to purr. (MINNEAPA #105)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

NATIONAL GOLEM WEEK.

To be celebrated by a parade across San Francisco's Golem Gate Bridge, and in Israel by some ceremonies in the Golem Heights district ... (APA-L #577)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

APPLYING FOR A CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE SO YOU MAY LEGALLY GET SMALLER.

Whether an Expander's License would be required for return to normal size afterward is a tricky legal question, and varies from state to state. Consult your local authorities for info. (APA-L #574)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

NATIONAL WEIRD RAILROAD CAR WEEK.

Here we go again - more semantics/definition problems. First, I suppose we might want to limit this to things the public would expect to come into contact with, so let's limit it to cars to be hooked to a passenger train for use by passengers while the train is in motion. This makes some things, like a mausoleum car (for those who prefer the idea of eternal travel to that of eternal rest) dependent on the definition of such terms as "passenger" but that can't be helped. And weirdness is at least partly relative - Just because trains in this society don't have bordello cars or opium den cars doesn't mean that other societies not too alien to ours couldn't have them, so they're weird only in a relative way. Absolute weirdness might be defined by such things as logical incompatibilities between various functions and that of railroad transportation, but if a society thinks those things are really necessary it becomes mainly a matter of cost and engineering BEMpower. For instance, a swimming-pool car might have to have some substance like lime Jello added to the water in just enough concentration to keep it from sloshing too violently but not enough to jell it completely. Likewise, holding motorcycle races the length of the train might require some redesign of the vestibules between cars but would otherwise be fairly easy. An art gallery car should be no problem. A wild-game preserve, on the other hand, would be very difficult to build into a railroad car unless the planet had had railroads long enough for there to be wild animals used to living in and around railroads (and considered to be endangered species worth saving) unless some sort of bigger-on-the-inside-than-the-outside spacewarp technology were available. Another

promising thought-line is that of most of the population permanently living on trains, and now and then getting off at some campsite or other. Then getting back to one's own train involves a complex sequence of riding various trains between various stops until one gets to some stop just ahead of one's own train. Then there might be cars serving as the inverse of travel agencies, stations, etc. And garden cars, and gymnasium cars, and school cars, and used-motorcycle-lot cars, and and and ... (APA-L #530)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

HOLDING A CON AT THE CENTER OF THE EARTH BECAUSE THAT'S THE SAME DISTANCE FROM EVERYBODY.

And it's all downhill. (APA-L #529)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

THE INADVISABILITY OF YELLING "FIRE" IN A CROWDED GUN CLUB.

Even if you don't yell, "Ready...Aim..." first. (LASFAPA #11)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

HAVING YOUR CAT RE-UPHOLSTERED.

Like when you get tired of the same old black-and-white splotches or orange tabby patterns and think you would be interested in a nice blue synthetic fur material (which would be less bother for your friends who might be allergic to regular cat fur), or if you're tired of cat hair all over the place, a nice corduroy or denim or a gay calico print of something ... (LASFAPA #17)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

LOSING ONE'S INDIVIDUALITY IN A CARD GAME BECAUSE, AFTER LOSING ALL ONE'S MONEY AND PROPERTY, AND ONE'S SEX PARTNER, IT'S THE LAST REMAINING THING ONE HAS TO BET.

Of course, at present this is more stfnal than practical, due to limitations on available technology, and

I strongly doubt it has happened to anybody in LASFS regardless of what the rumors say ... (APA-L #656)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

A PLACE SO FAR AWAY IT TAKES SIX WEEKS JUST TO THINK ABOUT IT.

Does a place half as far away take three weeks to think about? Unfortunately, I neglected to find that out. (APA-L #657)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

A MOVIE TITLED "CLOSED FOR REMODELING" THAT IS DOING VERY POORLY AT THE BOX OFFICE. (LASFAPA #29)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

ENFORCING THE AGE OF CONSENT BY PUTTING CHILDPROOF CLOSURES ON CHASTITY BELTS. (LASFAPA #46)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

THE PIED PIPER AT THE DOOR TO THE APA-L ROOM SURROUNDED BY RATS, WITH THE OC TELLING HIM THAT REGARDLESS OF THERE BEING MORE THAN THE REQUIRED NUMBER, ALL "SUBSTANTIALLY IDENTICAL," THE ANSWER IS STILL NO. (APA-L #660)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

THAT THE REASON DAYS IN JUNE ARE SO RARE IS THAT COLLECTORS HAVE BEEN BUYING THEM UP ON THE STRENGTH OF RUMORS THAT THE MONTH IS ABOUT TO GO OUT OF PRINT. (APA-L #681)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

BEING CHARGED MONEY FOR GRAVITY; IF

YOU DON'T PAY YOUR BILL, YOU GO FLOATING GENTLY OFF INTO THE SKY ...

With the added attraction that if you want to go touring the outer planets or something, all you have to do is say you're going on vacation and would like a temporary suspension of service, just like people do with newspaper and milk delivery sometimes.

And in a free market there may be competitors: People will be selling or renting things like propeller beanies with the prop rotating to push you down instead of giving lift; or miniature rocket engines to be worn about one's person; or perhaps Dean drive units; or in areas equipped with ferrous walkways, magnetic shoes. Some of these alternatives would survive in the market place while others would not, and still others would become confined to some specialized uses. Each would, for a time, have its adherents and CONSUMER REPORTS would probably eventually be moved to run tests on them. Skid Row, of course, would be full of people sleeping under bridges, etc., by night and slowly working their way from handhold to handhold by day, while police helicopters or some equivalent are kept busy hauling in drunks found sleeping it off two thousand feet over the city in clear violation of laws about hazards to aviation.

And what of the field of sports? What new contests would evolve, and what changes to the rules would be needed to make the old ones still playable? Would gravity be treated like any other item of athletic equipment or supplies, subject to specifications by rulemakers for various games? (APA-L #688)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

SNEAKING INTO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND "DOCTORING" THE CONSTITUTION SO THAT INSTEAD OF THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION POSSIBLY GOING TO THE HOUSE, IT WOULD GO TO LASFS.

And we might be able to get the Secret Service to help with the collating. (APA-L #800)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

A KANGAROO GETTING AN ABORTION; THEN, WHEN THE NEIGHBORS START ASKING EMBARRASSING QUESTIONS, BLAMING PICKPOCKETS. (APA-L #668)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

ISSUING SLAVES TO MEMBERS OF A CONVENTION AS "CON BADGES."

The system would be fairly simple - Each member would have a personal slave to follow that member around and vouch for said member to security guards, etc. A competent slave would be fairly hard to lose, even if the member gets careless, so long as the slave does not want to be lost. Stealing wouldn't be much of a problem either as the slave would run away from the thief back to the member the slave belonged to. As for the security guards, concomm, etc. being able to recognize the slaves, the logical thing to do is to have them all look alike. Perhaps they could all be cloned from some minor flunky on the concomm, since the time required to clone a slave is longer than most cons, counterfeiting shouldn't be a problem so long as the secret of who the slaves are cloned from isn't leaked. For that reason it would NOT be a good idea to clone the slaves from the Pro GoH, high-ranking committee members, or other obvious sources.

As a minor side-advantage, this system would mean the hotel gets twice as much business in the form of meals, rooms, etc., which should make them treat the con with more respect. A few fans can be expected to creeb at the added expense of maintaining a personal slave through the con, but then every great idea has its detractors. And think of how useful slaves would be after the con for such busywork as collating, retyping rough drafts onto master, standing in line for stuff, qualifying for the Diamond Lane, etc. etc. (APA-L #569)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

A STORE SELLING "ALREADY DEAD TROPICAL FISH."

"No Suspense!" "No Anxious Waiting!" "No Grief!" And they're probably easier to take care of than live fish too. (APA-L #567)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

A "REVERSE" MIDAS WHO CAN TURN ANY GOLDEN STATUE OR MODEL INTO THE REAL OBJECT. (APA-L #565)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

BUILDING AN UNDERWATER MOVIE THEATER TO SHOW MOVIES LIKE *JAWS* TO AUDIENCES OF SHARKS AND OTHER UNDERSEA CREATURES.

Two major problems: (1) Few undersea creatures have much money, and (2) the popcorn will get soggy. (APA-L #532)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

SEEING STARS, THE MOON, COMETS, ETC., ONLY IF YOU SUBSCRIBE TO T NIGHT SKY SERVICE.

If you don't subscribe, I don't know for sure what you'd see if you went outdoors at night and looked up, but I'd guess maybe underarm deodorant ads and that kind of stuff. (APA-L #541)

PROBABLY SOMETHING

BUT NOT

WEIGHING 150 POUNDS BUT SIGNING UP WITH WEIGHT WATCHERS TO LOSE 300 POUNDS SO YOU CAN LIVE ON THE CEILING OF YOUR APARTMENT TO GET MORE ROOM. (APA-L #552)

ml

(more in *No Award #8*)

←—————→
(In my DUFF trip report I wrote, "Somebody brought in some Pavlova . . . I immediately and totally absorbed this flavourful piece of heaven. Anybody can win my heart forever by giving me more of this wonderful stuff." Well, in mid-April, an air mail package arrived, containing a 1 kg. . .)

PAYLOVA OF COMMENT
by David L. Russell

Thank you for keeping me on your mailing list despite my really good imitation of a deadweight fan? How can I possibly get back into your good graces?

You just have, sir. And let this be an instructive lesson to anybody else who may be in danger of being dropped.

20,000

LEAGUES BENEATH GOOD TASTE

by

Milt Stevens

(And again we have Milt at another peak of his humorous form. I append this note for the edification of non-American readers: the deadline for filing one's Income Tax is April 15 - filing after that date subjects the filer to penalties. You will know what this means later in this article.)

Things were simpler centuries ago. In the middle ages, people were able to get by with only seven deadly sins. Of course, we have become a little bit fussier since then. Slaughter and pillage are considered rather reprehensible in our own era. Back then, they were not only standard business but politically correct as well. These days there is an incredibly long list of things we shouldn't do. Most of this list has been incorporated into our concept of sin.

The real expansion of enumerated sin began within the last two centuries. Seven deadly sins just weren't handling it anymore. The eighth deadly sin was imagining oneself to be a poet, and the ninth was imagining oneself to be a critic. The list now goes on and on. For instance, the 573rd deadly sin is imagining oneself to be Dave Langford.

The causes of some sins are easy to imagine. An incident as trivial as being dropped on your head in infancy could cause you to imagine yourself to be a poet. Other sins are not so easy to understand. Some reflect such a depravity of spirit and vileness of character that they are revolting to even contemplate. To practice such sins, a person would have to reflect the worst aspects of Saddam Hussein, Kenneth Starr, and the Three Stooges. All of these qualities would be needed to commit the 137th deadly sin, to imagine oneself to be a television executive.

Have you ever wondered how you qualify for some jobs? There are jobs like being a referee in professional wrestling or the dictator of a third world country which seem to require no skills and no talent. If you continue conducting respiration, the world will accept that you are doing your job. It may help

to wave your arms a bit and make some incomprehensible noise as well. There must be some sort of an agency that hires people for that sort of a job. It may well be the same agency which hires television executives. What would you need to qualify? Flossing after every meal couldn't hurt. Being able to hold a copy of *Variety* the right way up most of the time would probably be a good idea also. Beyond that, you would just have to practice the prime directive of all management, "When in doubt, mumble."

So now you are an executive at Over The Edge Television. You have a large corner office with a humongously large desk with no drawers. There is absolutely nothing on your desk, since anything requiring reading or writing is handled by your secretary. Difficult decisions are usually handled by your secretary's secretary. Things have been going well for Over The Edge Television. The idea of casting Drew Carey in blackface in a biography of Dr. Martin Luther King was a television triumph. The firm earned an extra million on recycling the protest mail alone. Of course, not all ideas work out perfectly. The Howard Stern Children's Hour developed some severe problems. Howard kept getting grossed out by the kids.

But all that is past, we must always concentrate on the future. The public complains that our programs are utterly tasteless. They have always been tasteless, but not Utterly Tasteless. Or at least, not as Utterly as they could be. We still have work to do. Offending all standards of human decency is the final frontier of television. To accomplish this end, we have a number of new shows under development.

For the animated children's market, we are developing "Snuffmouse." Snuffmouse is a rodent fugitive endlessly pursued by Elmer Hackett, the owner of The Final Solution Exterminators. In each episode, Snuffmouse is bashed, smashed, trashed, folded, spindled, mutilated, cut, stabbed, dismembered, and flattened by steam rollers. This never stops Snuffmouse from rising phoenix-like for another week of torment and torture.

"Road Rager" is being developed for the young mindless violence audience. The protagonist, Delbert Dweeb, is a nonentity in the Federal Bureau of Extraneous Services. At the end of each pointless day, a strange transformation overcomes him. When he gets behind the wheel of his sports-utility assault vehicle he becomes The Road Rager. The contentious bumper sticker, the oblivious cell-phone user, the objectionable paint job, the noisy kids in the back seat, the jay-walking poodle, the slow moving pedestrian, and anyone or anything else within range become targets for the Road Rager's weaponry. The Road Rager's vehicle includes a wide variety of military grade weapons. This allows him to use heat seeking missiles to destroy pizza delivery men. Cluster bomb units are particularly effective against pedestrian targets. For vehicles, he relies on his twin 50 caliber machine-guns while reserving his 20 millimeter canon for the coup de grace. You can bet young people will appreciate the simple message of this show. Violence may not prove anything, but it certainly is a lot of fun.

For the game show market, we are developing "Being Humiliated For Dollars." Each week, apparently normal contestants will be dragged into the arena and subjected to interrogation on a variety of

personal and embarrassing topics. Cash prizes increase with the number of questions the contestant is willing to answer. Hesitation in answering may result in electroshock or being pelted with a variety of odious substances. The studio audience is encouraged to jeer, make impolite noises, and throw garbage at the contestants. For the grand prize, contestants must mud wrestle a 300 pound female dental assistant.

We are developing "The Tax Files" as our entry in the surrealistic horror market. In this series, and average American inadvertently files his income tax returns on April 16. Agents of an unnamed but sinister government agency appear almost immediately. They begin by burning his house to the ground, selling his children to kiddy pornographers, and forcing his wife to sell Amway. After that, they become increasingly unpleasant. You can tell these government agents are really sinister because they wear black suits at all times. To add to their inhuman nature, they can't move their little fingers and when killed they immediately decompose into fluoride toothpaste.

For the sitcom market, we are developing "Domestic Violence." This series features Lucifer and Delenda Thorn, an average young suburban cou-



ple with homicidal tendencies. At the beginning of each episode, the Thorns are moving into a new house. This is because they destroyed their last residence by the conclusion of the last episode. For the thorns, there are no minor disputes. Burnt toast or leaving the toilet seat up are both invitations to Armageddon. The Thorns employ a wide variety of military grade weapons, some of which have only recently been added to the NATO Arsenal. The Thorns' disputes regularly progress from biting sarcasm to hand-to-hand combat to edged weapons to small arms to grenades and incendiaries and usually conclude with anti-tank weapons. Throughout the season, we will occasionally include guest combatants from some of our other series.

We're developing "Earth, The Final Insult" for the burgeoning sci-fi market. In this series set in the not too distant future, the alien Teflon have arrived on Earth in a spaceship that looks like a zucchini decorated for Christmas. They say they come in peace and offer low cost auto insurance. The fact that they dress entirely in black makes some people suspect their motives may be sinister. Many things are suspected, but nobody can make anything stick. An underground resistance movement is formed to find out more about the Teflon. It is discovered they can't move their little fingers. This obviously means they aren't touch typists. It is also discovered that when they are killed they immediately decompose into guacamole.

As the series develops, the Resistance discovers the Teflon are engaged in many diabolical experiments. At one site, the Teflon have been subjecting human guinea pigs to a wide assortment of bean dips. They have also been doing rigorous experiments with hair loss products. Uncovering their experiments with Xerography, it is learned the Teflon have lost the ability to reproduce. This in turn leads to the suspicion that more than their little fingers may not be in working order.

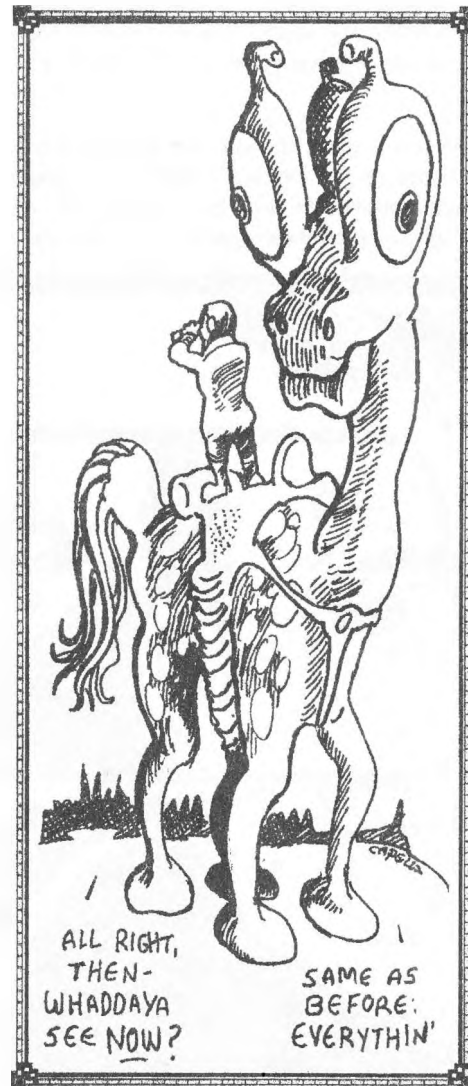
After the Teflon begin selling war bonds, the Resistance discovers the Teflon are at war with another alien race known as the Adhesives. The Teflon and the Adhesives have been at war for thousands of years. Both sides routinely launch planetary sized objects at each other. When that doesn't work they exchange nasty notes. They also tell many off-color jokes about each other. There is a whole cycle of jokes about what the Teflon call the Adhesive Disease and the Adhesives call the Teflon Disease. To their horror, the Resistance discovers the Teflon are intending to clone human gag writers to prosecute

their endless war against the Adhesives.

As another entry in the Children's market, we are developing "The Teletubbies Sunday Orgy." Long known for the diversity and perverseness of their sexual practices, the Teletubbies will be practicing a variety of Satanic rites which kids will be encouraged to try at home. In the first show, kids will be shown how to turn a frog into a television evangelist. Later, they will be shown how to apply curses for jock itch, ingrown toenails, and IRS audits.

At the end of another busy day of television creativity, the executive returns to his palatial mansion. He enters the front door, kicks the dog, and then beats the wife and kids. That taken care of, he can settle down for a relaxing evening of television.

m.



FANZINE REVIEW

by
Joseph T. Major

TWINK

"Starkle, starkle, little twink, how I wonder what you think."

Masks and deceptions are not uncommon among fans. The epochal career of Carl Brandon or the thrilling publishing history of *Nemesis* need only be mentioned to be recalled, and in more recent eras the splendid achievement of Lloyd Daub deserves to be places with these.

Even a pseudonym used explicitly is not unknown. In art, one has but to look at the pennings of Teddy Hariva and his close kinsman Dative Hydra. Such today in fanzines is the case of the cryptic Maryland fan who hides behind the name of "E. B. Frohvet."

As it was with Lloyd and his splendid alters Lucinda and Oino, it is a thankless task to un-riddle the name behind the mask. I certainly don't see the point in doing it. Determining such matters is, in my opinion, a parlor game of one-upmanship.

What the fan sees in *Twink* is zine dominated by its editor, for all that he (if, as has been both asserted and denied, the person I met outside the Baltimore Convention Center before the Hugo Awards Ceremony was indeed, as his membership badge asserted, "E. B. Frohvet") retreats behind the masks of editorship. Not only does he operate behind a pseudonym, but his writings use the editorial "we" - putting him on a level with Popes, MPD sufferers, and people with tapeworm.

And "we" have a constant presence throughout the zine. The inside front cover combines editorial and colophon, in the current issue discussing choices for the Hugo fan categories (albeit "Frohvet" appar-

Twink: E. B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall Drive #506, Ellicott City, MD 21042, USA. Quarterly; available for 'the usual' [Which is defined as: articles, relevant book or film reviews, con reports, locs, art, trade, or editorial whim].

ently feels that since "No Award" will be on the ballot anyway, explicitly nominating it is supererogatory), explaining the cover, and soliciting material for the forthcoming issue. It may be surprising to note that "Frohvet's" solicitations actually do get answered. Perhaps he will pass on his secret to our Editor?

The colophon proclaims the focus of the zine as being "on SF, fantasy, and fandom." As you know, this is a broad range of topics to consider, and can be broadened as the editor likes. "Frohvet" has called for the downsizing of SF cons in general and Worldcons in particular, by the removal of extraneous programming; failing to take into account that *all* that "extraneous" programming stemmed from the interests of core fans (even the bondage group of Disclave infamy), so any such removal would face opposition.

And indeed, the material proper begins with such an example; a guest editorial by regular *Twink* contributor Lyn McConchie on the use of magic in the contemporary world. Well, that's how I would put it; the title Lyn uses is "**Political Correctness Run Amok.**"

Lyn, you see, is crippled. She is not "physically challenged" or "differently abled." She resents those phrases, finding them demeaning if not actually insulting, not to mention being inappropriate (to her, someone who is "physically challenged" is someone "halfway up Everest who has just discovered that the rope on which their life depends is fraying in a most undesirable way." [p.2] and even ugly. And they do nothing to solve the very real problems of perception, of shame, of mindset that create these negative images.

"Frohvet" is deeply interested in discussing the thematic materials of SF. For example, a long-running series of articles in *Twink* has been covering and discussing the appearance and presentation of



black characters in SF, under the deceptively complex

title "We're All African Anyway." This issue takes up a new theme, "SF and the Law."

The article on that theme discusses such matters as emancipation as legal competence, the idea of the citizenry-in-arms, inheritance, and proof of death. The examples used are all from science fiction and fantasy; such as the legal status of women on Darkover, the legal paternity of Valentine Michael Smith, and the occupation of Earth by the Liralans in William Burkett's *Sleeping Planet*. The discussion is interesting even if the points are often erratic.

The theme of focusing of "SF, fantasy, and fandom" continues with the seemingly omnipresent Gene Stewart appearing here, writing on the topic of "New Ideas: Genuine Science Fiction." Rather than the plaint for a new new New Wave or a super-cyber-post-punk that this might seem to be evoking, Stewart discusses the elementary; the facts about the nature of science fiction that are so obvious that we have forgotten them. And because they are capable of being ignored, the field is often not living up to its potential.

Stewart continues with book reviews of, if not classics, at least not the same old mass-produced sharecropped stuff that drives out the literature of ideas and pioneering that he praises. The only problem I can see is finding the books; they are, after all, ten years old and therefore, by contemporary book standards, like, whadat?

"Frohvet" chimes in with several shorter reviews that tend more towards the metacritical. That is, they tend as much to be about the entire field as reflected in the book in question instead of just the book itself. He finds failure in entire established series (both McCaffrey's Pern and Pratchett's Discworld are characterized as having gone on far too long) and in novelty for novelty's sake.

(Another guest reviewer expressed a desire for more detailed reviews and, not being content to only snipe from the sidelines, provided one. Discussing in such detail a trivial book, and to be quite honest, the reviewer managed to display the incomprehensions

of the original writer well enough, rather vitiates the idea.)

A complicated reference (I know he explained it once, but it didn't take) has fanzine reviews being connected to "The Half Naked One on the Left." Here we have a paragraph per, which while barely skimming the surface at least allows the prospective faned to get an idea of what is out there and where to get it.

And now we'll get him, say the loccers, and provide "Rheders Rhevenge" on "Frohvet." The letter column in this particular issue contains one interesting discussion. Lloyd Penney, you see, wished to run for TAFF. He was informed, he says, "that anyone using the fund itself for the trip would be looked down upon" and that "Canadian participation would be unwelcome." Evidently "Frohvet" mentioned the matter to Ulrika O'Brien, who called the claims nonsense, saying "No current or former administrator would offer such a pronouncement." Looks like some self-styled SMOFs have been laying down the Law.

After the readers strike back, the editor gets to comment on "Miscellany." This contains the sort of thing your would expect from a name like that. "Frohvet" reports on his fiction sales, reports on various observations on the state of the world (like, for example, the dropping of a character named "Val Birkhead" from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*), and notable quotes.

Twink is not as advanced in appearance as other fanzines. In one way, indeed, it is a rarity; it is *typed*, not word-processed. (Until a few issues ago, the pages were marked by the alignment guide lines, until "Frohvet" discovered - or, actually, had pointed out to him - blue guide lines, which don't photocopy.) Perhaps this makes him more careful about errors and misalignments; there do not seem to be, for example, dropped lines.

The art, as with most fanzines these days, shows the tapping in the Great Reservoir of Fan Art that is out there. Once one gets into the flow, as it were, it is possible to put out issues that contain decent illos. The layout itself is adequate, which (except for art fanatics) has its good points; a fanzine with scintillating art and layout means that some other feature suffers, and that feature is most likely to be the writing.

Which is, after all, the feature of this zine.

ML

CALIFANIA TALES

PART THREE: THE OUTLANDER'S TALE

by
Len
Moffatt

Each year at LOSCON, The Los Angeles Science Fantasy Society's proprietary convention, this world's oldest s-f club gives two awards, namely The Forry Award and the Evans-Freehafer Award.

The Forry Award usually goes to a professional in the field as a lifetime achievement award. The annual winner is elected by the membership of LASFS using a fairly simple nominating and voting procedure. It is named for one of the club's oldest members, Forrest J. Ackerman.

I was going to write that I knew Forry before he was internationally famous and known as Mr. Science Fiction from Japan to Continental Europe and, for all I know, in Africa, North and South Poles, and maybe even Upper and Lower Katchelkikalikans. Actually, Forry was a famous fan in this country and overseas when I first heard of him through the pages of VOM and other fanzines. By the time we met in person in 1946, he and Bob Tucker were vying for the title of Number One Fan depending on which fan poll you wanted to believe. At the Worldcon (Pacificon I) in 1946, Tucker announced that Forry was indeed the Number One Fan and that he, Tucker, would be the Number One and One Half Fan.

Forry's preservation of science fiction, fantasy and weird books, magazines, artwork, movie artifacts, etc., etc., and his promotion of the field all these years is certainly unequalled by anyone. His generosity and open house policy has earned him innumerable friends. Unfortunately, the collection has also attracted thieves in fannish guise on occasion.

More than one friend has referred to Forry as a Peter Pan, the little boy who never grew up. He was and is envied because his hobby and his profession became one, and he has done it all: collect, write, edit, agent, lecture, travel to distant climes, act in movies, all of it related directly to his love of s-f and fantasy. So the Forry Award represents all phases of the science fiction field as exemplified by the man for whom it is named.

The Evans-Freehafer Award is given to a member of LASFS who has done more than his or her share to help the old club survive and prosper. I don't know how the first three recipients were chosen by nowadays the last three recipients form a committee to choose the annual winner.

By the time I joined LASFS in 1946, Paul Freehafer had already died but was still well remembered by his friends. There had been more than one fannish feud among the club members and, as I understand it, Freehafer remained friends with all the members without being a fence-sitter. How much he was loved and missed is shown by the fact that the club voted to call their meeting place Freehafer Hall, wherever it met over the years. That remains true to this day.

E. Everett Evans, who moved to Los Angeles in the Forties from Battle Creek Michigan, one of Michifandom's Slan Shack crew, was in his early fifties when I met him in 1946. He didn't live in LA's version of Slan Shack which was next door to the clubhouse. He was across the street in yet another old rooming house, dubbed Tendril Towers by local fans. Later he would move to another rooming house run by a lady named Louise Leipiar to whom I and others are indebted for introducing a certain lovely young lady named June to local fandom but that comes later in this tale.

I'm not sure what Ev did for a living. He may have had a pension from the Navy but this cigar-smoking old gent (old to me as I was only in my twenties at the time) who could hand out praise or gripes with equal pomposity always seemed to have money to spare for whatever cause came up. One of these was helping to pay the club's room rent when not enough dues were collected to cover it. And on more than one occasion when we went out for a group dinner, our separate checks never ar-

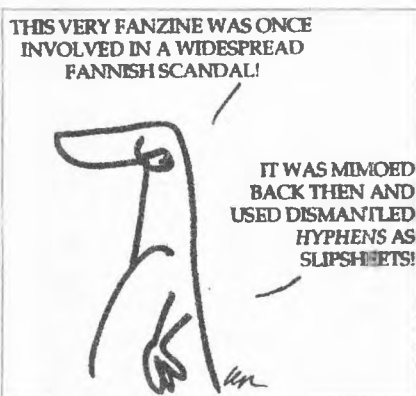
rived. Ev had picked up the tab.

Burbee and Laney wrote items implying that Ev was one of the club's "queers." I never got that impression as I have seen him pat more than one female fanny and I have it on good authority that he was as fond of the women as any other dirty old man. Of course, he could have been bisexual but who the hell cares? In any event, he eventually married a femme fan and writer, Thelma Hamm, and they appeared to be a happily married couple until the day he died.

Besides his big-heartedness, he was a hard worker for the club and had a lot to do with getting the Westercons started. He died in 1958, shortly after the SoLaCon. During the Fifties he tried his hand at pro writing as did several LASFS members of that era. He sold a few stories and a novel. The novel did not do well but one of his short stories has the oft-quoted line: "Slowly and painfully he leaped to his feet . . ."

There are probably other old time club members who did as much for LASFS as Freehafer and Evans, but they are representative of the members who are willing to work hard to keep the club going. Ev was not liked by everyone in the club, but he had many friends and even those who weren't all that fond of him would have to admit that he gave more than just money to the betterment of LASFS and fandom. Apparently, Paul Freehafer was universally liked; and, despite his own problems, was willing to work hard for the club. Somehow, the late, lamented Gary Louie comes to mind as a recent member in the same mold.

After the so-called Insurgent Element left the club, there was a rumor that Burbee intended to continue publishing *SHANGRI-L'AFFAIRES* as his own fanzine. I don't know if this rumor was started by the IE or was conjured up out of the imagination of some worried LASFS member; but, somehow, it was decided that



the club would go back to the original magazine title of *SHANGRI-LA*. Don't ask me if we continued the old numbering

or started all over with No. One as I can't recall. No one wanted to take on the job of editing the zine, knowing full well that it meant cutting most if not all of the stencils, running the mimeo, collating, stapling, labeling, and mailing, and doing it on a more or less basis.

Someone came up with the bright idea of a rotating editorship. A member could volunteer to produce just one issue. He or she could get help from others of course, and would be responsible for gathering the material to publish. The next issue would be produced by another volunteer, etc. As a result, the magazine lacked a certain consistency, not to mention the loss of a lot of quality control, so to speak.

The problem was compounded when there seemed to be trouble in keeping track of the mailing list. I am sure there were fans in other parts of the country (perhaps even overseas) who came to the conclusion that *SHAGGY* had died and perhaps the LASFS had also folded.

It was during this period that the very informal Outlanders became the no-very-formal Outlander Society. Rick Sneary insisted and the other Outlanders agreed that if we had any official rules they would be officially unofficial. We would meet once a month in each other's homes. We would produce a round-robin type of "chain letter." Not the kind you get in the mail that threatens disaster if you don't keep it going, but more like the one I started with the Western Pennsylvania Science Fictioners, pre-WWII. (The first person on the membership list would write something, anything, whatever they felt like, and mail it to the next person on the list, who in turn would go and do likewise, sending both his and the first person's contribution to the third person, and so on. When the by-now bulky letter got back to the first person, he would remove his original piece and replace it with a new one, and on into the night.)

Anyone could apply for membership, but they had to be voted in unanimously. The idea was to have a group not likely to have fussin' and feudin' among its members. The OS did select some Honorary Members. One was Ed Cox, a good friend of some members, who lived in a really outlandish place called Lubec, Maine. Forry and Wendy Ackerman were also Honorary Members and had a better attendance record than some of the regular members.

By this time some of us Outlanders were attending LASFS on a regular basis thanks to Alan and Freddie Hershey, who lived in Bell (close by South Gate and Bell Gardens) and who had a car.

I used to refer to this period of LASFS history as the “doldrums” but perhaps that was an unfair exaggeration. Despite its lack of contact with fandom in general, the old club was still meeting every Thursday in a room sublet to them by Walt Daugherty. Unlike the Bixel Street room (which had a storefront window), this one was below street level just off the lobby of the Prince Rupert Arms on Witmer St. (The last time we drove by there, the apartment building had steel bars protecting its windows, which told us that the neighborhood wasn’t as safe as it was when we met there.)

Actually, the large club room had windows that looked out onto the slanting sidewalk. (The building was set into a hill.) You could watch the legs and feet of passing pedestrians. Sometimes a passer-by would stop and lean down to peer into the room. I guess we had blinds or shades of some kind but rarely used them.

LASFS used the room on Thursday nights (eventually it was shared by the Pacific Rocket Society and there was some crossover in the memberships) and sometimes on weekends to publish *SHAGGY* and other fanzines.

Getting back to the Outlanders, I must admit that I was the one who suggested having monthly meetings in our homes, as well doing the “Unofficial Eternal Chain Letter;” and, hey, why don’t we publish our own fanzine? We did, and it was called *THE OUTLANDER*, what else? More on that later.

Meanwhile, Outlanders were helping to keep LASFS going by running for office and taking our turns at publishing *SHAGGY*. It was fairly easy to get elected then as hardly anybody wanted to do the work. Older members like Forry and Walt had already done more than their share for the club; and, among the so-called younger members, the Outlanders were the most fannishly active. During this period, Rick served as Treasurer and as Director, not at the same time although I am sure he could have managed it. The Director ran the meetings. Later in the club’s history the name of the office was changed, first to Procedural Director and then to President to avoid confusion with members of the Board of Directors.

I served as Secretary during Rick’s term as Director. At various times I was also Senior Committeeman (second in command, so to speak) and Junior Committeeman (third in command) whose main job was welcoming guests and new members. I started the system of having the guests fill out cards for the

JC to use in introducing them during the meeting and of course for the club’s records.

I never ran for Treasurer, knowing that it really was the hardest job of the five procedural offices. It still is. Back then there were fewer members but getting all of them to pay their dues every week took someone with the tenacity of a Sneary or a Barney Bernard. Nowadays, there are many more members, the club owns a lot with two buildings, and the Treasurer still has to lean on some members to pay their dues, as well as do a lot more record keeping and paper work. The job is just as tough or tougher, but at least the Treasurer doesn’t have to dig into his or her own pockets to help pay the rent.

After 1946, the Worldcon did not return to the Los Angeles area until 1958. There were two more west coast Worldcons before 1958, Portland in 1950 and San Francisco in 1954, but most of the Worldcons from the first one in New York 1939 to the sixteenth one in South Gate in ‘58 were held in the Midwest or East in the United States with the exception of Toronto in 1948 and London in 1957. (In case you are wondering about the numbering, there were no Worldcons in 1942, 1943, 1944, and 1945. The first three were in New York, Chicago, and Denver in 1939, 1940, and 1941. The fourth one was to be in Los Angeles in 1942 but was postponed until after World War II.)

The enthusiasm engendered by the 1946 Worldcon carried over to LASFS, despite the club’s internal problems. I think it was Ev Evans who voiced our wish that we could have another convention locally. It wouldn’t have to be a three day formal affair, just a one day get-together to “fangab.” Walt Daugherty did more than agree with the idea. He set about organizing the first West Coast Science Fantasy Conference. Sponsored by LASFS, it was indeed a one day affair but it did have a program and I think an auction, and we returned to Park View Manor near Westlake (now MacArthur) Park, the site of the 1946 Worldcon, for the 1948 “get-together.”

Authors present included Ross Rocklyn, the up-and-coming Ray Bradbury, Van and Mayne, of course, and I think that is the one time I met Claire Winger Harris, and elderly lady who wrote s-f for the Gernsback pulps. A female s-f writer or fan was a rarity in those days. When Ray got up to speak he pulled a ream of paper from his briefcase, pretending that it was the speech he intended to read to us. It got a good laugh. I don’t recall what he did talk about. Having heard him speak so many times over the

years, I can say with authority that besides being a great writer he is one of the world's best hambones.

There used to be a theory that writers usually made poor speakers but gentlemen like Ray Bradbury, Bob Bloch, Tony Boucher, Harlan Ellison, Tony Hillerman, and Jerry Pournelle (to name a few in no particular order) are exceptions to the rule.

The first Westercon was successful enough to warrant putting on a second one in 1949. By then the Outlander Society was established and active in fandom in general as well as locally. While Rex Ward was still with the group he had come up with the slogan "South Gate in '58!" derived from a Bay Area slogan, "Golden Gate in '48!". I guess they were bidding for the '48 Worldcon, but obviously Toronto's bid won.

Although it was nice to think of having a Worldcon in one's home town, Rick Sneary, who lived in South Gate, and the rest of us Outlanders, weren't all that serious about it. At first. We, and our friends around the country and overseas, kept the slogan in print until it became obvious that we were indeed *expected* to make the bid at the appropriate time.

Meanwhile, the Outlander Society decided to bid for the 1950 Westercon. We had some ideas of our own as to what we would like to see at a con, even if it was only a one-day deal. The 1949 Westercon was held at a Knights of Pythias Hall in Los Angeles and we rented it again for the 1950 one. As I recall, the meeting room was on the second floor of a ramshackle old building and there was a closet at the head of the stairs that contained a skeleton, such as one might see in a medical lab or a horror movie. We didn't know why it was there, but it was a fun thing to show to the attendees.

We decided to have an actual Guest of Honor and asked R.S. (Doc) Richardson (aka Philip

Latham), the astronomer and writer, if he would oblige. He had been a guest at more than one of our Outlander meetings, bringing along his wife and young daughter, the latter a little girl at the time. They seemed to enjoy our Outlandish antics, including the opera take-offs I used to do at meetings and parties. Doc was more than willing to be our GoH and we also asked his friend Chesley Bonestell, the great astronomical artist, to attend. Bonestell was apparently too shy to attend a fan convention, but he quite generously donated several of his original paintings to our auction. The convention actually made money, part of which was passed on to the next Westercon committee, and part of which was banked by Rick as a war chest for South Gate in '58.

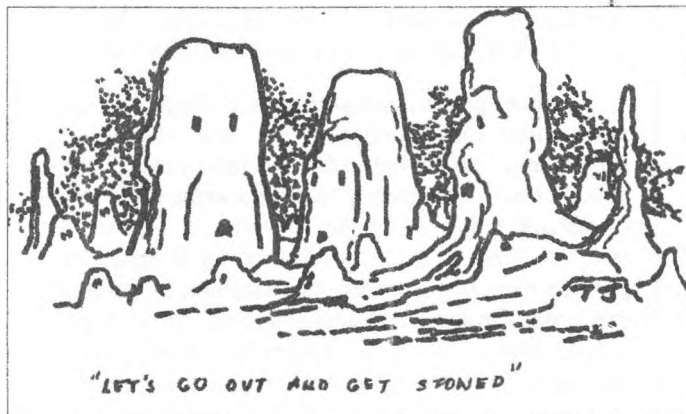
We had a kind of fan art show with one of our members, teenager Con Pederson, getting first prize (whatever it was) as voted on by the attendees.

Speaking of prizes, our other teen-age member, John Van Couvering, suggested that we have a drawing for a door prize. He went on a one-man scavenger expedition and found a big old wooden door which he brought to the convention and hid somewhere. I don't remember which attendee won the door prize, but imagine their surprise and perhaps consternation when presented with an actual door. We also had a science fiction book (probably purchased from Ackerman) as the winner's "consolation prize."

Forry usually had a table of books for sale at these affairs and I think Dale Hart rented a table for book selling too. The Outlander Society had its own table backed by a banner advertising "South Gate in 58!" I think we had a display of photos of our members. We also had copies of *THE OUTLANDER* for sale.

Although it was basically an Outlander operation, we had lots of help from our Honorary Members Forry and Wendy and from other Lasfasians like Walt Daugherty, our auctioneer, and others. Anyway, all of the Outlanders were also Lasfasians; so, though we, as Outlanders, were responsible for the convention, it was still being worked on by the LASFS.

None of us (members of LASFS and members of the Outlander Society) wanted to keep the Westercon in the LArea forever. Well, perhaps a few did, but it was obvious that it the same basic crew did it year after year, the fun of doing it might wear thin.



But not to worry, there were two out of town bids for the fourth Westercon, one from San Diego and one from San Francisco.

I sort of favored the San Diego bid but really didn't know enough about either group to have a good reason for favoring one over the other. As it turned out, San Francisco and the Bay Area in general became a favorite place to visit in the years to come. San Diego was and is a fun place to visit, too, but I would eventually have more friends in the Bay Area.

So we had a vote and the Bay Area bid won. I understand that the committee that won the bid for some reason were unable to plan and produce the convention and all the work was done by another committee. In any case, the Westercons were on their way to being a truly West Coast conference. At least, until the time it was held in Boise, Idaho. That established the precedent that they did not have to have a West Coast location.

Before and after the third Westercon the Outlanders were keeping busy, helping to keep LASFS alive, having their own monthly meetings (which were more like parties), writing their eternal chain letter, publishing their magazine, and socializing in general.

Some of us were also active in the NFFF and FAPA, still indulged in good old fashioned letter writing, kept up with our reading (in my case, s-f, mystery, history, show biz, cereal boxes, etc.), went to movies and stage shows, and somehow kept up with our daily jobs or, in the case of our younger members, school work.

While I was still working at the steel tubing mill there was a Big Steel strike, which meant that our smaller plant would not be getting material to work on. The plant was closed temporarily and we were laid off - - temporarily.

I went out to find a temporary job and wound up at a small paper box factory just a few blocks from where I lived. The company manufactured folding cartons such as cereal boxes, soap and detergent boxes, beer and soft drink carriers, some candy cartons, a variety of packaging items. As a floor worker, I didn't make as much as I did as a finished tube inspector, but the work and the surroundings were a lot more interesting. Eventually I got to work in the printing department and learned to feed a small printing press. I also helped the foreman to sort and set type and anything else that a printer's devil must do,

or learn to do.

Other parts of the whole operation fascinated me too. Behind the carton plant was the company's board mill which manufactured various grades of paper by using recycled paper goods, newsprint, etc.

I liked to go back to the mill's "beater room" where the hydro-pulper vats ("beaters") were. Sometimes I was there as part of my job, hauling paper cuttings or trimmings from our carton cutting department to be recycled, sometimes on my break or lunch hour. I liked to sort through the broken bales of paper brought into the back yard, looking for books or magazines. Once I even found an old copy of *GHOST STORIES*, a pulp my Uncle Willie used to read when I was a kid.

I learned to be a "stripper" in the cutting department, a job that required a certain amount of stamina as well as a good eye and some skill. Sometimes I worked in Finishing where the folding cartons were glued and packed, and sometimes I worked as a swamper, going on deliveries with the truck drivers. Needless to say, I did not go back to the tube mill.

I worked in all the departments in the carton plant at one time or another and learned enough about each one that I could make extra money staying overtime to fill in almost anywhere. I wasn't a master of all the trades but I could keep up with most of the work without screwing it up. It was all good training for what was to come, a career as a non-fiction writer in the packaging industry, which paid a lot better than writing for the magazines.

I worked at that same address for more than forty years for four different companies. When the second company took over I transferred into the office, something that probably wouldn't have happened except for the fact that I had some stories published in the latter day pulps!

Except for a college course in Journalism, I was probably the only person in the office who didn't have a complete college education. When someone asked me what I did for a living I used to keep it simple by saying that I was a technical writer for paper boxes, but my job over the years entailed more than that.

Writing (all kinds of writing, including ghosting for others) was an important part of it, as was dealing with customers by phone as well as by mail and sometimes in person. As a Sales Correspondent I had to work hand in hand with all the other departments:

sales, scheduling, production, shipping, inventory, billing, purchasing, etc.

Eventually I would also write a column for the company magazine. I was asked to write about each department as well as interview employees and write about them. Sometimes it was fun and sometimes it was difficult. But I enjoyed writing and I enjoyed the challenge.

I might still be working, but the fifth company to take over shut down the carton plant to used as a warehouse for the board mill, making paper and selling it to others to process being their main interest. So I was forced into retirement although I could have heeded the call of more than one head hunter. But I didn't want to start anew in a different location; and, since it was a layoff as well as retirement (for me and a few others), I got severance pay as well as my pensions. But I still don't have enough time (or energy) to do all the things I would like to do and wonder how I kept up with all of our activities when I was working five days a week!

Getting back to the late Forties and early Fifties, my mother and I moved to a rented house, still in Bell Gardens, and then I got a GI Loan to start buying a house of my own, still in Bell Gardens.

I have yet to tell you more about the various members of the Outlander Society and their doings as well as events and people at LASFS and elsewhere in local fandom, which means that this Tale will have *to be continued* . . .

mp

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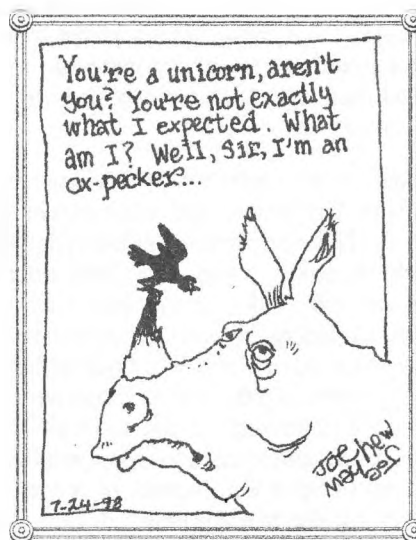
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Fanac by the Fire Light

by Ed Green

National Guard
Ssgt Ed Green's
continuing saga
of his duty during
the 1990's Los
Angeles riots.

The rule is, you don't stop shaking the shoulder of a sleeping trooper until he actually says something to you that isn't a grunt or a moan. Usually it's "I'm awake goddamnit!", and it was the same for me. Sticking my head out from inside the sleeping bag, George's face was there. Even with my glasses it would have been difficult to miss the breath. My eyes felt like they'd been sandpapered for an hour and my head had the opening beats of a great migraine. I brought my watch up close to my face and looked.

"Christ, what is it? I've only been asleep . . . two and a half hours?" It came out as a snarl, and George became defensive.

"It was Major Hood. Sergeant Lindahl is asleep! Hood asked for you!"

Nodding, and keeping any additional comments to myself, I pulled myself out of the bag. Running my hand through my hair, I closed my eyes and tried to concentrate on something other than the anger and fatigue. After a moment, the question came out. "Any idea why?"

"No, none. But he said it was important."

Sighing, since we had reached the point in this whole bloody mess where everything was important to someone, I asked George if he could find me a cup of coffee. As he headed off, I thought of something else. "Have you slept?"

"Yeah. Lindahl woke me up about an hour ago. I've had about six hours." Lucky bastard.

I told him to meet me in the office, and pulled it together to talk to Major Hood. It was a short walk, but a slow one. There were bodies strewn all along the floor, snoring, gasping

part
three

and making other sleep sounds. No one was getting a good night's rest, but they were doing the best they could.

Any thought of remaining pissed at Hood was swept away by the look of his eyes. Bloodshot, and almost vacant. The boss had had less sleep than me. I knocked on his door, and walked over to a chair. I fell into it and pulled a notepad out of my pocket. He was on the phone when I got there, and was finishing up something involving logistics. He hung up and sighed, they took another swig of his coffee.

I tried to put a good face on things, and doing my best Oliver Hardy voice said, "Well Stanley . . ." A wave of the hand ended that. He then passed over a cup of coffee and went right into business.

"The Adjutant General, The Commander of Military Forces for Los Angeles, the Division Commander, plus all of their strap hangers, are going to be here in three hours. The Colonel wants a full staff briefing prepped and rehearsed in 90 minutes." Fairly simple, only slightly unreasonable, and certainly not impossible. Then I thought about the visitors. The Adjutant General was the senior military member of the National Guard in the State. This time out, he was a two star Air Force General. Major General Hernandez was the Division Commander. Another two star, although he'd commanded a support unit during the '65 riots. That third one threw me.

"Hey, wait . . . who the fuck is the Commander of Military Forces for Los Angeles? Isn't that Hernandez? The Division Commander?" Hood shook his head.

Once you start fighting any kind of war, you tend to focus in on the stuff that's important to just you. Since I wasn't near the front lines, I worried just about the paperwork shuffle. Things had been happening at levels far beyond the Armory in Van Nuys.

The perception by the Governor was that the National Guard had totally blown its response to the rioting by not having ammo handy, and getting troops onto the streets in a "timely" manner. Along with this, there was the natural confusion between the Guard, the LAPD, and the LA Sheriff/s Department about who controlled whom, and who helped whom. Finally, between the media showing nothing but views of rioters controlling the streets, and the

efforts of local community leaders, the mayor of Los Angeles had the impression that the battle for the streets of LA was being lost. Enter Warren Christopher. Future Secretary of State to Bill Clinton, political advisor to numerous governors and Presidents, and . . . apparently military genius. He had made calls to both the White House and Mayor Bradley's office, convincing everyone that the "locals" couldn't handle the problem. It was time to call out the Marines.

And more. He pushed for the deployment of Federal troops and insisted that all the National Guard troops be "federalized." A legal term, meaning the troops now fall under the direct control of the President of the United States, or his designated representative. It also means that the Guard is no longer acting in the interests of the State, it is there to perform enforcement of specific federal laws. While it may seem like a subtle difference, it meant that instead of grabbing your gear and helping the cops, you needed to have each mission reviewed by a team of lawyers.

So, while I'd been busy waging my own war with strength reports, we'd gone from close to 10,000 troops slowly controlling the riots, to the deployment of almost another full Division of Marines from Camp Pendleton, south of Los Angeles, and another 3,000 soldiers from the 7th Infantry Division, out of Fort Ord (north of Los Angeles).

Either unit would have been more than capable of dealing with this mission on its own. The Marines have a rep as "bad asses." They earned that rep by, well . . . being "bad asses." I don't agree with their tactics at times, and I think they rely too much on just guts over brains to carry on a mission, but I'll take a platoon of Marines as my flank guard any day of the week.

The 7th ID, on the other hand, at the time was what the Army called "Light Fighters." In an age where it takes months to deploy tanks to the fighting, the Army needed a group of Fighters who were easy to move like Paratroopers, but would last longer in the field than the Airborne types. The 7th ID were those soldiers. Used to lugging up to one and a half times their own body weight for over 20 miles, trained to make every shot count, and every mouthful of food last as long as possible, this is the unit I'd want on my other flank if it got ugly.

So, we now had LAPD, LA County Sheriff, the California Army National Guard, the California Air National Guard, the USMC, the US Army *and* units

from the FBI, ATF, Federal Protective Service, FEMA, US Marshals, INS, and even the Department of Energy's SWAT team!

With all this going on, a single commander was needed for the military side of this mess, and in yet another political move, Brigadier General James Delk was assigned as the Commander of all the Military Units. Although Delk was outranked in the number of stars by damn near everyone else in the operation, he'd been given the *position* which gave him the authority. Delk was also one of the best moves made, since he was a former commander of the 40th ID (the California Division) and was well respected at the national level.

It took a lot less time for Hood to give me this info, since I knew the jargon (and you, the reader, do not) and I could see the implications, both for us at the unit, and for our overall job. We discussed what the Colonel was expecting to see for the briefing, and he dismissed me.

Hustling back to my office, I told George to handle all phone calls and faxes and jumped into the prep. It is a sad, but true fact that working as a Staff NCO, careers live and die by the briefings. I wasn't worried much about my career, it was pretty much at a standstill at that point, but a commanding officer who's career got tanked by a bad brief was a horrible thing to live with. In the personnel game, it's pretty straight forward. Numbers of troops, how many alive, dead, hurt, and so on. Then you start making guesses. How many will you lose in the next 24 hours? How many replacements do you expect? How many have you asked for? Medical problems? What's the fix? Morale? Mine was sinking, but coffee was helping to keep it floating.

While I'm up to my hips in a body count, the whole building is starting to bubble and babble over the visit. It's nearing 9:00 PM, so the first wave of troops going out on the streets is piling fear onto trucks and Humvees. The support troops are being whipped into preparing the building and briefing room for the visit. The Command Sergeant Major, the senior NCO of the Battalion is pushing the task, with his usual touch. The CSM was a good soldier, but just plain didn't like staff NCOs and the Full Time members of the unit, and always let you know about it. I know he didn't really like me, because I had this nasty habit of telling him that we just plain didn't have enough troops to do everything the plans called for. I guess it was my fault people weren't joining.

By about 10:00 PM, the staff assembles in the conference room and we rehearse the brief. We're all tired and it shows. Our numbers are off, we don't clearly present our plans, and the practice questions that Hood tosses at us end up with screaming matches between the various groups. Back to our offices, back to the charts, less time to get it all right. Another rehearsal with Hood. This time, he's the one who starts yelling. Twenty minutes to tweak it before the Colonel gets briefed. Those last changes, the re-drawing of the maps and charts.

The Colonel is playing good cop tonight. A few simple questions, a few minor corrections, and it's over for now. Hood and I talk quickly about security for the VIPs. Did either of us think we were going to be attacked by someone trying to take out the top leaders? Nope, not a chance in Hell.

I then suggested we trot out the hole security team, plus ask the Headquarters unit for an additional 20 man section, since Hell was full of losers. Hood thought it over for a second and told me to make it a platoon. Smiling, I requested that he ask the HQ unit for the soldiers, since I didn't need a First Sergeant yelling at me and making things ugly. Hood nodded, and walked away.

George was holding a dozen messages for me, including one ordering me to report to Division HQ tomorrow morning for a 6:00 AM conference. Including a shower and vehicle prep, it meant I'd leave the unit at around 4:00 AM. I sighed and told George to start working on requesting a vehicle and making sure it was fueled and ready to go. The rest of the messages all required some kind of attention. When the security unit arrived, I told them to set up and to fold the additional platoon in with them. As they left, I told them to make sure they actually used the sign/countersign on the generals. Although it was a pain in the ass, I just knew that we'd get a royal chewing out if we didn't do it. That's why there are Sergeants all over the place. Some to do the job, others to make sure it gets done.

All ten Humvees arrive 15 minutes prior to the briefing. I haven't seen that many stars in one clump ever in my career. They all bring drivers, and Senior NCOs and Aides, and radio operators, and security personnel. We've cleared enough parking spots in advance, and so getting everyone to the classroom is simple. No one wants to waste any time.

I've met most of the Generals at one time or another, and even worked for Delk for a brief period of time. Hernandez, however, is the man we're all go-

ing to key off of. He's our boss, the one we are directly responsible to. He's a big, thick, Hispanic, who's in better shape at 59 than most of us are at 35. And likable. Generals don't need to be that, but it's natural to him, and it's something we all can appreciate.

Delk looks his age - 60. His last fitness test he ran two miles in under 18 minutes. My time as 21 minutes. He passed, I didn't. He never yells, never raises a voice. He looks for the best thing to say about people working for him. People move when he gives orders. In part, because he's always clear about what he wants. And, well, no one wants to be the first to make him yell.

The Adjutant General is also in his late 50s, and you just know by the way he carries himself, he used to fly fighters. It's just a style. He looks slightly out of place in a sea of grunts, but he's the voice of the Governor and doesn't need to worry about how he looks.

The Division Command Sergeant Major, an old friend named Joe Marshall, smiles and nods his head at me as he goes by. We've pulled each other out of scrapes in the past, and we've both lost track of who owes whom.

As quickly as this mob can get settle in, we're ready to go. Marshall stands up first, and in his bellow of a voice, tells us that due to the nature of the operation, it's a modified brief. Fancy way of saying, unless something on the Personnel or Supply side are going to stop the war with problems, don't bother saying anything.

That throws all of us off stride, but we move on. Within seconds of starting, we now realize that this is not a briefing, but the big guys coming out to see how we are doing. Lots of questions about how the troops are managing, what they are doing. Later, Hood and I theorize that everyone had given up on the thought of any real planning, since we were truly making it up as we went, but on one had the courage to say that out loud.

After about 20 minutes of this, I caught Hood's eye and indicated I was heading back to my office. He nodded and I left. Considering what I had to deal with tomorrow, I could better use the time preparing for the meeting in the morning. I had just sat down when a First Lieutenant, someone I'd never met, came running into the office.

"I need a phone!"

"For what, Lieutenant?"

"I'm General Hernandez's Aide! We just got a call from the Governor's Office!"

Well, shucks and other comments, I shoved my phone across the desk so the man could punch in the numbers. I sat back and tried not to listen. After he got connected, he shoved the phone at me and said, "Keep the line open while I get the General!"

I sat there holding the phone for a moment, wondering what the Hell I was going to say. I lifted it up and said, "This is Staff Sergeant Green. Please stand by for General Hernandez."

At the other end, a lady responded with, "Thank you Sergeant. I have the Governor standing by here at this end."

This of course be the time some moron would come in and start telling me a dirty joke. That's the way my luck usually runs. But, in this case, I got all three Generals, a half dozen strap hangers, and a small.. army of NCOs invading my office. I handed the phone over to the General, repeating that the Governor was waiting.

At this point I tried to find a corner to hide in, since everyone was waiting for something important to come across the line, and I really didn't feel comfortable being there. As The lowest ranking person in the room, I had this horrible image of something really stupid needing to get done, and I'd catch it.

Instead, Hernandez said., "Yes, Sir. No, Sir" a lot. He stopped and looked around and told everyone that the Governor was on the phone to the White House about the troop movements. He then turned back to the phone and looked at me. He smiled, I guess because he saw the expression I had, and winked. "Hell of a way to fight a war, huh Green?" I returned a cross between a choke and a laugh and he went back to the conversation. For ten minutes I stood against the wall, listening to one end of a conversation with the White House.

Hanging up, Hernandez asked everyone to return to the briefing room, he had some info to pass along. As they filed out, he looked back at me and said, "Sorry we don't have time to get your brief, Sarge. I hope you understand."

For a brief moment, there was an urge to tell him I didn't understand, and it was bloody rude of him to do that to me, by my not-so-common sense kicked in and I nodded and assured him that it was fine by me. Sir.

During the next hour, all the visitors were talking to the officers and NCOs. In groups and one on one. All of them were trying to gauge how we were doing. But, as had always been the case, we felt less happy about the info we had coming back to us.

Finally, they all left. The security detail was finally pulled in, and things started to settle down. I told George to cover the office again, and I walked down to the latrine. In there I met Hood, again.

"You know about the meeting at Division tomorrow?"

"Yeah. You've got it covered?"

"No problem. I might take George with me. I'm not comfortable about going by myself."

"That works. Oh, by the way. What's your schedule tomorrow night?"

I chuckled and looked over at him. "What, you're asking me out on a date?"

"Far from it."

"Oh?"

"Orders from the General. He wants all Commanders, CSMs, and Executive Officers checking on the soldiers. We're doing okay, but some units aren't, so we all gotta play the game."

"Meaning that starting at sunset tomorrow night, you and I will be driving around the city of Los Angeles."

"I see. And how big a security detail will we be bringing along with us?"

He smiled and walked over to the sink to wash his hands. "With your background, and my leadership skills, who else do we need?"

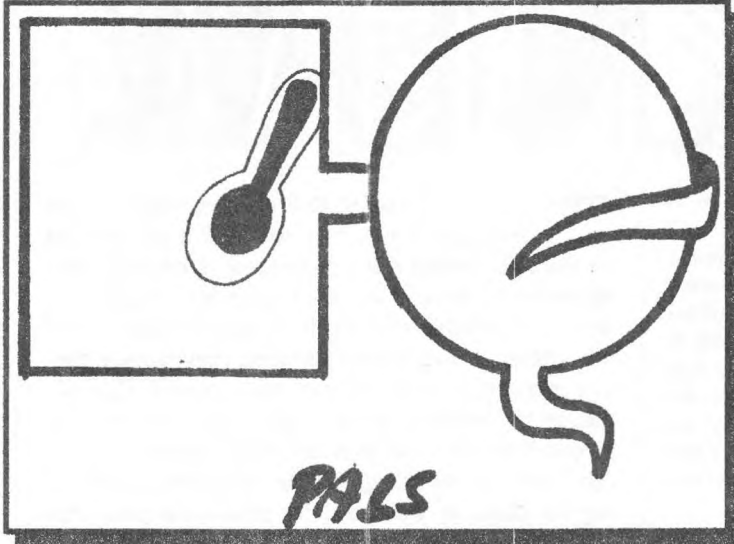
Sighing, I joined him at the sink. "I know, another chance to shine. I would like it noted that it's another . . ."

".. . crock? So noted."

"Actually, another chance to test my scrounging skills. Unless you're happy with carrying only eight bullets for your pistol, we're gonna need more ammo."

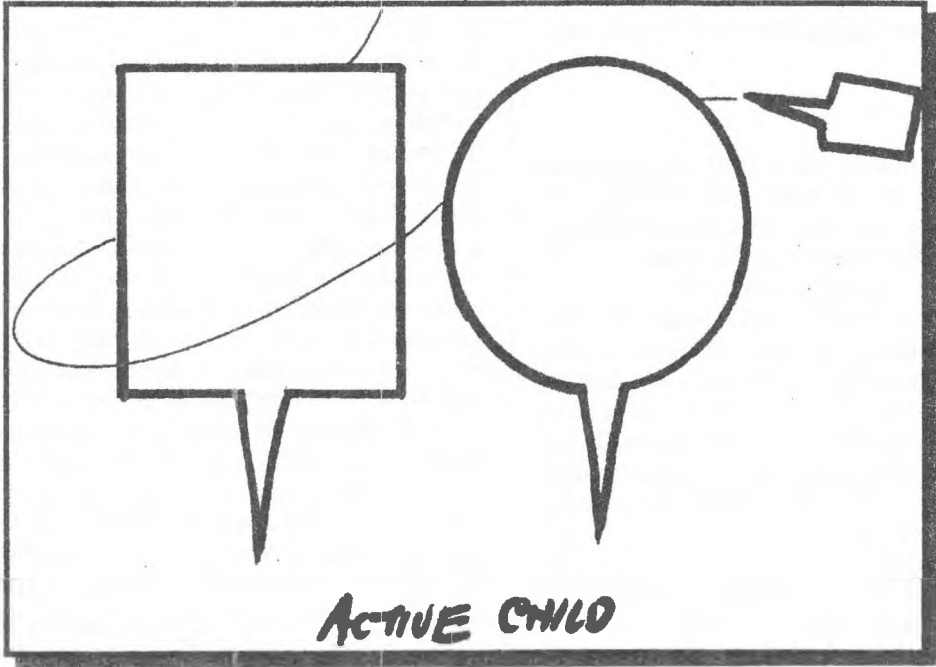
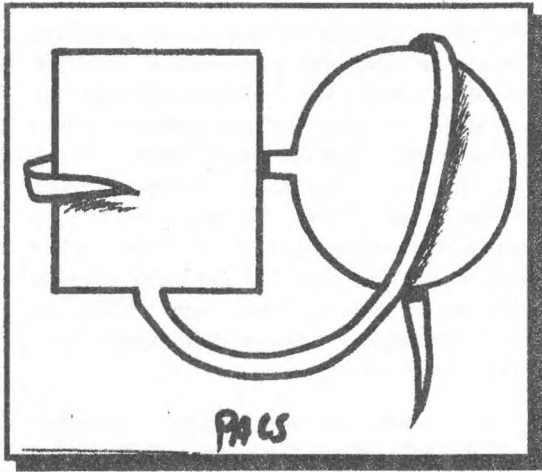
(to be continued)

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Bill Rotsler

**VARIATIONS
ON A
THEME**



TO KNOW

This article originally appeared in the limited-distribution *Thunderbox* preview, November, 1997, edited by Ann and Steve Green, © 1998, and in the not-so-limited-distribution *Thunderbox #1* (well, a second ish is promised), also © 1998. Printed by permission of the author, editors, publishers, and who knows what else at their address. Despite the references to various Brit fans who may not be known to fans in other countries, it is the opinion of this faned that *To Know Oneself* is one of the more interesting pieces of writing to come out of 1998 and it is being reprinted to, er, expose this work to a wider audience.

Many have tried to define that certain something which makes an otherwise unremarkable specimen of *Homo Sapiens* into a fan. "A love of Science Fiction!" cry some; "A mind open and receptive to new ideas!" "Fanzines!" "Conventions!" "Beer!" "Pervy sex with chocol..." (Do pay attention, Bridget, please.) Where was I? Oh, yes. In the great Venn diagram that is our community, we all fit into one of the circles, most of us snuggled intimately together (clenching our bottoms and desperately wishing we hadn't had last night's balti) in that happy place where all the rings overlap.

So that's it, then, this Fandom thing? All sorted, switch off the PC and put the cocoa on? As if. Let me begin by asking a question: do any of you know a fan who isn't a born again, dyed-in-the-wool, card-carrying *packrat*?

Thought not.

Packrats are cuddly, furry little creatures who stuff their homes full of junk - oh, all right, I'm sorry - useful, often valuable items, the ownership of which brings endless pleasure to the owner. You see now where this is going? Good. Unfortunately, to those of us whose packrat tendencies are less well developed, life with one of their ilk becomes, after several years of marriage, downright scary. The realisation of just what I'd let myself in for dawned on me one day as I watched Steve open his mail: that sheet of paper in his hand (it may have been a copy of *Ansible* or a money-off voucher for shaving foam - go figure) *would never leave our house*. Things which come into our house stay in our house - *forever*. "But it's *valuable*," they protest, "It must be worth at least a *fivever*..."

Look at this another way, if you will: have you ever watched a programme on the telly where some individual is talking about his or her - I have to say it's mostly his - hobby, obsession or whatever, from their home? They're usually sitting in their favourite room, inevitably a den-like study of some kind, with wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling bookshelves behind them, paper of the self-propagating type (never heard of it? Come 'round to our house, sweet thing) in piles upon heaps, balancing all kinds of weird shit in precarious positions. Their environment, coupled with tiny quirks of dress and speech, marks them out as a Fan; it doesn't matter if they've never heard of sf, neither have half the people who go to cons these days (more than half if you count the ever-increasing number of babies that turn up).

Still not convinced? Okay, let's try something else. You will agree that the Fannish credentials of those individuals named below are absolutely sparkly. I will show you, in all their hideousness, the different and varied kinds of packrat lurking in their dark and beer-stained souls.

The Eclectic Packrat

This is probably the worst of the breed. The EP has many interests, most of which are actually injurious, as they involve complete and obligatory abstinence from any form of physical exercise whatsoever *unless* it results in entry to a pub or second-hand bookshop. Their nests will contain not only books, but comics, 1960s toys - *in mint condition* - defunct typewriters, knackered cameras, the box from the ghetto-blaster before last, and hundreds upon hundreds of T-shirts, each one more bilious than the last and all far too small - either they've shrunk, the owner has expanded, or panoramic views of fat hairy tummies with fluffy (unpierced) belly-buttons were once the height of fashion. On rare occasions, the EP may be seen in B&Q, where it will snuffle around the DIY, grunting derisively at the exorbitant cost of flat-pack bookshelves. It will then purchase two or three sets of shelves, in colours bearing no resemblance to the colour scheme of the room for which they are intended, because they're "on offer." Having got their purchases home, they will set about ignoring them for months on end, because (a), they

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require a certain amount of effort in order to assemble them, and (b), the EP needs to tidy a space large enough to work in to build the things. If EPs have garages or sheds they will be too full of stuff to construct anything - except excuses as to why the bookshelves remain in the boxes. Gentle reader, I give you *Steve Green*. (Oh go on, have him; I've had the bugger for sixteen years - and unlike Louise Woodward, I didn't even get to appeal...)

The Techno Packrat

TPs are some of the more annoying members of the species. There are two flavours: the Smug TP and the Evangelical TP. STPs earn good money, usually at computery-type jobs, and aren't afraid to spend it on enough computer hardware to not only fly the space shuttle, but programme it to bathe the baby* and organise four Worldcons simultaneously - *in Azerbaijan*. Life is lived to the white noise hum of PCs, laptops and the comforting clicks of digital cameras. Fanzines may be produced, but are collated and stapled entirely by robots bought second-hand from the British car company down the road which has just gone into receivership.

Evangelical TPs are more insidiously damaging to your lifestyle and finances. Avoid them like the pox, dear reader, for they are the drug dealers of fandom. ETPs have usually done a succession of electronic engineering jobs, and when they move on, don't so much empty their desk as the company they're leaving. Their dens are full of electronic detritus, bits of motherboard, the odd hard drive and internet software CDs used as coffee mug coasters. These nasty little creatures invite you down for a quiet weekend, but by Saturday lunchtime, they've got you hunched over a table strewn with more techie shit than Dr. Frankenstein could shake a stick at, *building a bloody computer*. Ten arguments with your server and a truly terrifying phone bill later, it slowly dawns on you that *you yourself* have become a Techno Packrat. Stand up and be severely beaten, *Anne-Marie Wright*.

*(Re: the baby: You might think she's called Marianne, but I couldn't possibly comment.)

The Obscenely Rich Packrat

Much the same as the Eclectic Packrat (q.v.), but they can afford houses big enough to stow all their collections in fully fitted libraries so that their nests appear neat. ORP *Pete Weston* may have a cool domicile, but his packratty little heart is as black as ours.

The Anally Retentive Packrat

No I'm not feeling imaginative. Yes, I am gonna take a pop at *Tony Berry*; it seems to be something of a tradition, after all. ARPs are obsessives - as, of course, are all Packrats. They have all the same stuff as other Packrats, *but they don't want you to know about it*. Not to be confused with the ORP, you average ARP has a smallish terraced house with a new front door and a shiny knob (the doctor says the cream should start working any day now...). The postage-stamp-sized lawn out front will have been freshly trimmed - *with nail scissors* - and any offensive neighbours removed and their houses bulldozed. Inside, they not only tidy up, but they *dust*, for god's sake - then again, they wouldn't want their giveaway collection of beer bottles to look less than their best now, would they? In the *feng shui* oasis of clutter-free minimalism that is Tony's Oldbury home, the empty beer bottle is king. Nurtured and tended as well as any collection of Cycladic art, the bottles twinkle sweetly in the smog from the nearby motorway, each different one a testimony to several million liver cells now sadly gone for good. God love him, he's tried so hard to fight it, but it's time to Do The Right Thing and admit it Tony, you're a packrat, just like us.

The Reluctant Packrat

In this sub-species, the reluctance comes not from choice but from necessity. They'd *like* to packrat merrily away, and for the most part they do, but lacking the tidiness of the ARP and the space of the ORP, they can't keep as much junk as they'd really like, and have to indulge in a sin as heinous to Fannish Packrats as shagging donkeys is to the Pope: *self discipline*. Not only can they not acquire as much tat as the rest of us, but they're forced to get rid of stuff on a regular basis. *Martin Tudor*, for instance, at one time had a large enough mass of books and unsold copies of *Critical Wave* to bend space;

now you can walk unimpeded around the little house behind the gurdwara - if you're Kate Moss, that is. All that remains for him to do is find somewhere for baby Heloise to sleep now she's outgrown the drawer of the photocopier and he's home and dry.

The Sexual Packrat

Mmmm, that woke you up didn't it? I'm beginning to wonder if this cutie isn't an endangered species what with all these "Us? Shagging? Never!" disclaimers littering the place. The nervousness of the nineties has hit Fandom harder than just about anywhere; back in the seventies and eighties, you couldn't move at conventions for the heaving bottoms and hot sweaty scandal. Take *Joy Hibbert* for example. What? Oh, you already have. You too? *And you...*? I don't mean to be unkind, but there are some pretty glowing examples of the SP still around, male and female, collecting partners like sex is gonna be banned any day now. In truth these SPs are only pseudo packrats as they rarely keep their acquisitions for very long; when they do return them to the shelf whence they came, it's rarely without the odd page corner folded or a teeny crack in the spine. Remember, embarrassment is also a sexually transmitted disease and you don't want to end up *slightly foxed*.

The Award-Winning Packrat

Talented little buggers these. Every year their mantelpiece has to be reinforced to take the weight of yet *another* award. "Oh I wish they'd make these Hugos lighter, or at least with a nice floral motif to match the curtains!" was the comment attributed to a *certain Reading Fan* a couple of months ago. I can confirm, however, that although the AWP in question is a former nuclear physicist, he has abandoned plans to replace the pointy tips of the awards with miniaturised Trident warheads - he couldn't get the Pritt to stick. (And if you think that joke fell flat on its face because one doesn't use non-sticky-sticky-stuff in the manufacture or storage of weapons of mass destruction, go take a peep at the Cold War leftovers in the ex-USSR.)

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And now a quiz, so you can discover just what kind of sad creature you are...

Question 1. when you leave a convention, is your luggage...

- a) heavier than when you arrived?
- b) more valuable than when you arrived?
- c) in the boot of the car belonging to the person you've been shagging since the early hours of

Saturday morning?

Q2. You inherit two thousand ancient fanzines. Do you...

- a) keep a few and donate the rest to Memory Hole?
- b) lose sleep worrying about how you can get that mauve bookcase cobbled together before your wife throws a hissy fit?
- c) strew them all over the living room and scream at the dog for trampling on them - but leave the bookshelves in the box?

Q3. You have more books than Waterstones, there isn't a cat in hell's chance that you'll ever read them all *and* you're really short of money. Do you...

- a) sell some?
- b) put them in the loft and pretend they don't exist?
- c) buy more books, of course - what kind of damfool quiz is this?

Q4. You wake up in a hotel room. Your mouth resembles nothing so much as the inside of Robbie Coltran's posing pouch, and there's a strange man asleep next to you. Do you...

- a) look for his con badge - at least you'll know his name?
- b) look for any con badge - it's the only chance you have of remembering your own name right now?
- c) look for a *Read Me* - you might be missing a fan fund auction?

Q5. Your offspring's first words were or will be...

- a) "Mama, Dada, *Plokta*?"
- b) "What was *Critical Wave*, Dad - and I can stop sweeping chimneys yet?"
- c) "D:\Nipple\Connect.yum?"

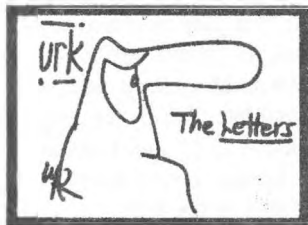
Q6. You have to don sunglasses before you open the living room curtains each morning, otherwise you'd be blinded by the sunlight reflected off your collection of Hugos. You are...

- a) Dave Langford?
- b) Dave Langford?
- c) Peter Weston - you got the guys at your old factory to knock you up a couple of dozen; hell, you can afford it?

Yeah right, like you need me to tell you how you scored.

Gentle reader, enjoy your packrattng; after all, it's what makes you so *very* special.





LOC 'N LOAD

paragraphs with commentary in script by ye ed.

Alexander Bouchard

Let us start with the Brad Foster cover. Once again, Brad is providing us with something you don't see every day. (Not even if your names are Chauncey and Edgar.) If he's drawing from life, it makes me Ghodawfully glad I don't live in Texas.

I understand that he went to Michigan for his models.

Milt Stevens' review of the 19th century book by Bellamy was hilarious, insightful, and a key way to distinguish between the Victorian "romantic" view and today's jaundiced (if not gangrenous) view of mankind. Maybe R. A. H. was right after all . . . that we humans *are* ungovernable.

Joe Major's in-depth review of *Challenger* by Guy Lillian hits pretty close to the mark, I think. . . Guy is someone with deep feelings, it seems to me, which he hides with his socially-inept-fan façade: when he gets cranking on something like the subject of the last article mentioned by Joe's review, you can almost *see* the passion being poured on the paper.

Guy, who says that he barely understands pencils, is good at pouring passion (and other things), some of which do not always fit the paper.

Your respondents are intelligent, informed, and fully capable of going off into reams of learned discourse at the drop of a left-hand-thread Johnson rod. The fact that they don't, thus boosting you to the size of *FOSFAX* and rendering you impecunious, is due in large measure to how you handle them.

*I handle them as little as possible with a ten-foot Yugoslavian. *Slash*rip*tear* is my editorial motto (sez he who had the longest lettercol in the early and mid eighties). Besides, I am already close to impecunious. Ever hear of "fixed income?" Not that it was broken, but it sure got fixed right after I retired.*

John Berry

Well, what can I say? Yet *another* absolutely superb Brad W. Foster front cover. Starting the latest

NO AWARD 6 with such an artistic treasure puts one in a good mood to start turning over the pages.

Or one's stomach. For a change of pace, you could always try reading the zine whilst standing on your head.

I must tell you that I have six grandsons, and the second oldest is Peter, aged 20 . . . he is currently at a university in Glasgow. He rang me up at the beginning of January and asked if you could stay for a couple of days, and bring his girlfriend. My wife and I live in a small bungalow, with one bedroom, and the first thing I asked them, when they arrived, was, "What are the sleeping arrangements?" "There aren't any," Peter replied, "just sling a couple of mattresses and a large duvet in the lounge." His girlfriend was a cracker, large brown eyes, and that was only for starters. We sat talking all night, and we asked each other what films we had seen lately. Peter and Kirstie (for that was her name) said that they had just seen the most marvelous horror film ever, *SIXTH SENSE*. "You must both go and see it," they said, "because it has the most marvelous, utterly surprising ending." We pressed them, but they would not divulge it. We, so far, still have not seen the film, but your columnist, Mike Glycer, cleverly led me to the denouement before I noticed the spring trap. Straight into it, I sprockled. (A Northern Ireland word denoting uncoordinated movement.) Of course, I have to thank Mike for saving me the price of two expensive cinema tickets. Now, I shall never know whether or not the film "exhibits a wonderful awareness of the cinema's visual language, the tradition of ghost movies and our cultural mores."

I think that your grandson's "sleeping arrangements" showed you more about current cultural mores more than any movie could. Up close and real. That you did not immediately throw them out of your house shows how old pharts like us have also changed. But then, we are fans, so we probably did not have to change very much.

Eric Lindsay

You ticked, "how can you stand to not live in Los Angeles?" This amuses me, as you may have noticed when Jean and I visit the USA, we take great care mostly to be sure we take planes routed via San

Francisco rather than Los Angeles. Take the airport (please), which is incredibly noisy and crowded at LA. and far less so at SF. Then, when you step outside, the traffic noise level just increases, and you discover there seems no way to get any transport anywhere. At SF, there are buses to the CalTrain station, and you can get up and down Silicon Valley with reasonable ease. Now, some other LA airports are not so bad—Burbank seems OK, at least with regard to traffic noise, but there seems to be no places you go to eat near Burbank airport.

The problems you describe at LAX have to do, mainly, with its being one of the busiest airports in the USA. Anyway, there are shuttles and stuff to other areas of the city. The Van Nuys shuttle takes one to across the street from the Van Nuys airport (a general aviation airport) in the middle of the San Fernando Valley - and I have used that many times when flying out of LAX. It would be rather inconvenient for me to use San Francisco International, after all.

As to Burbank Airport, it is untrue that there are no places to eat near it. Unless the next aeroplane which skids off of the runway veers slightly North and wipes it out, there is a Chinese restaurant on Hollywood Way. And I eat, several times a day, at a place only about ten minutes from that airport - it is known as my apartment.

Congratulations on your retirement. May it be as happy as mine has been to date. The only thing is, I totally fail to see what happened to all the time I thought it would free up, and seem to be busier now than ever.

**snicker*snicker*weep*wail*. Same here. At least, in retirement, it is we retirees who get to decide what it is we will not get to today. And, if something has to be put off, so bloody what? The other benefit of retirement is that we no longer have to hold off, for fear of being fired, telling the fuckers to sod off. And I, at least, can let my innate curmudgeonliness come to the surface.*

Harry Warner Jr.

You are to be congratulated for reaching retirement. I hope you have enjoyed by now the same reaction that I have experienced ever since my own retirement 18 years ago; complete freedom from regret over the decision to quit work. I worried endlessly in the last years on the job for fear that I had somehow miscalculated my income vs. expenses or that retirement would leave me too idle to enjoy life. But those fears were baseless. I'm busier now than I was when I was working forty to fifty hours a week

and, so far, I've not experienced a year in which my income failed to exceed my outgo. Unlike you, however, I was determined to have an absolutely sincere retirement, one in which I wouldn't chat by earning money. I've succeeded in that, too (I don't count some income from the fan history books because they were written while I was still on the job).

I had those fears, too, before I finally quit working. In my case, though, even though I wanted to be able to enjoy a work-free retirement, I just got to the point that I was mentally

unable to handle any more full-time crap. As it has turned out, though, it looks like the economy has raised the valuation of my retirement plans and it looks as though I will not have to pick up a part-time job to

keep my financial house in order. (Absolutely nothing, though, will ever keep Kipple Central, this pile of stuff in which I reside, in any kind of order.) It being less than a year since I retired, this may change, but I hope not. I am too busy in retirement to find any time for paying work.

Joseph Major has done it again with a fine fanzine review. I don't see any particular reason why a fanzine review shouldn't resemble a loc, the point on which he was criticized in the loc section this time.

However, I don't think it's right to equate Civil War re-enactment fans with SCA members. The former strive to reproduce exactly how it was in camp and in battle except for factors involving safety and health. The Society for Creative Anachronism obeys its name's implications by reproducing the Middle Ages as they should have been, not as they were.

Once again Len puts into the permanence of print some information on California fandom that probably existed previously only in the memories of a dwindling few survivors of those long-ago years.

Your innovation in the loc section (at least, I can't remember having seen it elsewhere) of putting short extracts from some letters into boxes is a good one. This seems much more appropriate than including a sentence or two from some of those in the wahf section, because the short quotes look more important than the longer locs through the prominence with which they hit the eye

Terry Jeeves

That Bellamy book review - very good. I haven't read it myself, but now I'd like to have a copy.

After reading what Milt wrote, you actually want to read it? Either Milt failed or you are very weirdly masochistic.

Yours was the only comment on this innovation. I intend to continue using it. It is a neat layout trick and it is one of the many reasons I prefer using computer technology to typing on stencil. Had I never been able to afford a computer I would have never returned to producing zines. I know of your feelings about computers, Harry; but, I must say that they are the frosting on the cake of my retirement - and, indeed, a large part of the cake itself. On the shelf above this computer is a loose-leaf binder containing a list of all of the fanzines in my collection and across the room is another with a list of all of my sf books. As yet unprinted is a list of all of my APA disties. As I get more items I enter them in the computer (sorting them alphanumerically), and I will print new lists once a year.

Gary Deindorfer

The cover is a Brad W. Foster psychedelic masterpiece. His characters are quite funny. A real zippy blast, indeed!

Len Moffatt's latest article of reminiscences is great, juicy, fascinating faanish history. Len must know a million fannish anecdotes after all the years he's been a fan.

Great, juicy, fascinating - that is what it is. What it is not is immoral, illegal, or fattening. It is also a bit of Western fan history to help fill in the gaps of what is mostly, in recent years, reporting of fan history occurring a bit East of here.

Thanks to Ed Green for showing us what a riot is like from the soldier's point of view. Doesn't sound like exactly a picnic. This segment of Ed's article is straightforwardly written, with no frills, and he really builds the tension. Well done.

Ed's material is heavier than I usually like for NO AWARD; however, aside from it being written by a fan, there are two reasons it is in here. Ed is a very good writer, and this is the first account of the L.A. riots written from the viewpoint of a National Guardsman. As a subset of all of this, my pubbing of his experiences is giving him an opportunity to get this down on paper. He tells me that, the more that he gets into this, the more he finds to write. I hope that he finds a paying market for it after it is finished.

The Taral recruitment poster for Oz is one of his

masterpieces. And a beautiful Schirm at the end of the zine. His line is so fluid, yet suggest volume and heft so well. He is truly a cartoon master. The "Consumer Warning" is a brief classic.

Both Taral and Schirm deserve placement on the Best Fanartist Hugo shortlist. Alas, limited exposure of both probably precludes this.

Rodney Leighton

Joseph Nicholas touched on one aspect of fandom which is bothering me when he asked what you knew of him other than what you read in fanzines.

We are all guilty of passing judgment on people based on little or no information. This occurs in real life constantly. We make a judgment on every person we meet; even those we pass on the street. We decide whether we like a person or not based on looks and a few words or sometimes simply on how he or she looks. With minimal interaction, people become friends or enemies. We decide the worth and value and characteristics of people based on little or no data.

In the small press world, coverall all types of fanzines, we base our opinions of other people on what a person writes. This is a highly dangerous practice in that what a person writes may be an exact representation of his personality and beliefs or it may be total bullshit, tossed out to see what reaction it receives. It is, of course, the sole criteria one has. Except in the case of fans wealthy enough to travel the world and attend cons and meet people, who then have other criteria. Or in the case of people who make use of telephones or cameras or videotapes or various other means of communication. However, in many cases, all one knows about a person is what is on the page of a fanzine. Or many pages.

Making judgments of a person from this bare bit of knowledge is extremely facetious, not to mention silly. Passing judgment on a sentence, a paragraph, a letter, an article, or a series of letters is perfectly reasonable. Passing judgment on a person's entire worth and character based on such minimal data is scurrilous. I have been guilty of it myself, many times. It used to be fun to see how people reacted to such things and the things which people write. Lately, I

Lee Hoffman

I have become really terrible about writing letters. After roughly half a century of writing one thing or another, I feel somewhat written out. I hope you'll forgive me.

Come on home, Lee - All Is Forgiven.

find it bothering me.

Not because of any personal attacks, although that has occurred a few times the past few months. But worse things have been said about me in the past which didn't bother me much if at all. When Rob Hansen called me a Neanderthal something or other based on one paragraph, I decided he was a complete idiot with a big mouth and forgot it. I was kind of bothered when Joe Major made some derogatory comments about me in *NO AWARD 5*, mostly because we correspond regularly. But we still do.

The reactions of you and S. M. Stirling and a couple of others to a loccer in *FOSFAX* were hilarious. I kept thinking of what a pack of idiots you were for getting so upset over this bit of silliness. But do you know what?

At the time I felt you nor no one had any right to demand the man be removed from someone else's mailing list. But I was not at all concerned that you and various other folks had passed judgment on the man based on virtually no data. Nor did it bother me that I was sitting here laughing my head off at this bunch of fools getting all upset at him. Now, these days? I am wondering if it was not unfair and improper that you all passed said judgments on that loccer. . . as I did myself. . . but I also wonder if it was fair and proper of me to laugh at you for your reactions and to consider you dimwits for said reactions.

As I said, this is normal procedure. Hell, I've been in more feuds in pro wrestling fandom than anyone can count and all I know about those folks is what they wrote. People pass judgment on other people in all types of publications, in correspondence, in every walk of life. I am wondering if reading folks doing this is a good hobby, that's all.

All that said, I have to confess that I loved Sherwood's depiction of Joey Nicholas.

Well laid out and presented, and I must say that I agree with much of what you say in the abstract. In the real world, though, at least in the real world of fanzines, though, reacting to what a person writes (and the persona they project) is a fannish given - it is expected. There is a rough give and take, and the thin-skinned need not apply. Is this fair? Well, when a person projects a consistent persona in many locs to many zines, he or she is opening themselves up to judgments by other fans. Joseph has been projecting a persona in many articles and locs since his days doing KTF fanzine reviews. He should not complain if we use the same methods when we reply to him. Is this persona the real Joseph? I can say that I do not think so because I have met

him a few times. We shared a bidding table at AUSSIE-CON II (and I remember him interacting with a panel I was on in the Fan Lounge), and I also met him at the first Seattle Corflu. We were both at the Brighton Worldcon; but, although I remember talking to Judith, I do not remember any conversations with Joseph. I will react to Joseph in a very pleasant manner in person because he is a very pleasant person in person. On paper, he tends to be an ogre - I respond in kind.

That loccer in FOSFAX, though, is so far beyond the bend in what he writes that he has even forgotten that there was a bend. His writings make him seem certifiable and I am not the only FOSFAX loccer who has sensed this, and Joseph Major has told me that Franz has been this way ever since he started loccing. Stirling and I are not the only loccers who feel that this nutcase does not belong in fandom.

Now, it is time to leighton, er. lighten up a bit.

Lloyd Penney

Many thanks for issue 6 of *NO AWARD* . . . from SMARTasserY himself. Before I cause any more trouble, especially for myself, here's a loc.

Too late, Lloyd, too late. Smartassery Is A Way Of Life, you should know. You have just dived into the deep end.

I certainly agree with Joe Major on Guy Lillian's *Challenger*. Even though only its 10th issue is out, I find it a slow, easy, and comfortable read. (Those words don't usually describe reading a fanzine, but whatthehell . . .) It reflects Guy well, and it is always enjoyable to read at leisure. Best of all, every issue has a lot to comment on, so Guy's locol is always a large part of the zine.

To me, Challenger always reads as though it has a highly emotional buzz going on at all times. It is suffused with Guy's personality throughout; so much so that it seems, at times, that he might be writing other people's columns. He certainly can pick compatible writers (sez this writer of an article in Challenger 11).

So YOU'RE the one who makes *FOSFAX THE GIGANTIC HUNK OF SLICED PAPER IT IS!* Your locs are the main reason mailmen everywhere suffer from hernias.

Ten to twelve page single-spaced locs have seemed right for that zine in the past. Now that I have decided to eschew commenting on editor Tim Lane's anti-Clinton lunacies, I can probably drop off three or four pages per loc. We shall see. Besides, I am getting tired of being one of the few token

liberals in that morass of mostly extreme right-wing nutcases. There are some interesting fans there, that is why I stay.

Joseph Major

"If music is the food of love then rock must be the fast food version." And rap is the dumpster version.

The quote you supplied makes me think that you are unaware of the origin of the title of HOLIER THAN THOU. As a devotee of rock music (who is spending his current years with his first musical love, classical (and with some Beethoven on the radio as he types this), I was often annoyed with the mistakes I heard on too many rock recordings and wishing that there would be a rock group called HOLIER THAN THOU which would record various pieces without the mistakes. I have wide-ranging tastes in music, but rap is not one of them, and I think that you rate it too highly.

Milt Stevens may be unaware that Edward Bellamy wrote a thrilling sequel to *Looking Backward*. Well, maybe "thrilling" is not the right word. In fact, if you want to talk soporific, *Equality* is to *Looking Backward* as Nembutal is to amphetamines. Bookstores flagged it "Do Not operate heavy machinery for twenty-four hours after reading this book."

Since when did bookstores start carrying NO AWARD? Or a certain FOSFAX loccer's locs, for that matter. To say nothing of my listserv e-mail postings.

At the end of *Looking Backward*, Julian West runs downstairs to apologize to his girlfriend Edith for dreaming that she was all a dream. No doubt James Branch Cabell could have made something out of this but no such luck. Therefore, *Equality* begins with Edith announcing that she is going to go change clothes. It turns out that all women of the year 2000 wear slacks. One more obstacle to deal with on Saturday night. Moreover, all the clothing is high-quality paper. It solves the problem of carrying notepads, and puts a new charm into rainy days.

Your last comment shows that you understand that this zine is determinedly Politically Incorrect as a matter of principle.

Len Moffatt contributes more memories of those wonderful days in Califandom when there were enough fen to make a critical mass (and obviously could be very critical) but not so many that everyone

was swamped. I had heard about Laney's little obsessions, like the floor plan of the Tucker Inn published in the mimeo edition of *A Wealth of Fable* which has one restroom for men, one for women, and one for Laney so he would not be accosted by perverts.

Would not having a special restroom just for him keep Laney from shitting on the perverts? I thought not.

The Schizophrenic Chimp: "This banana goes in my ear to lure out the scorpion that is hiding in my brain."

The Paranoid Chimp: "This banana looks like a banana. But then, that's what they want me to think."

The Bipolar (Manic-Depressive) Chimp: "Gotta have a banana now! Well, who cares . . ."

And then there is the Dead Chimp, well on his way towards resembling a dead banana.

Lousy smells? "Until you've walked a mile in another man's moccasins, you'll never believe the smell."

Until you smell the aroma of the English pipe tobacco I love.

E. B. Frohvet

Methinks I doth protest too much; none the less, I will deny having had a "humourectomy." Absurd is inherent in funny; it is not the same thing as funny. They are related concepts, not identical concepts.

In defense of which, I did recognize Joseph T. Major's *double entendre* in which he describes Guy Lillian III as "a long-standing member in condom." While this could easily be construed as a compliment, perhaps we should wait for Guy's response (better yet, the response of Guy's lady friends) before reaching a conclusion.

Whilst I am not coming to a climax on this point (ooh, what a bad man you are), I think accuracy demands that I point out that absurd is a subset of funny and is not a concept related to it. We will leave Guy and his lady friends to reach their own . . . (Should I call that a pregnant pause?)

Joseph Nicholas

Congratulations on opting for an early retirement from full-time work, with a period of part-time employment to come before you reach full retiring age.

Thank you, sir. As it turned out (and I have reported elsewhere) things worked out so that I have not had to do any part-time work. If things continue on this way, the only reason that I will have put in any part-time work is because I want to. This does not seem likely at the moment, but something interesting may come up (like doing something for a politician I might want to help out). If I liked the politician real well I will volunteer my time. If that person is just OK, I would ask for pay for my work. At this time there is no financial reason why I have to rush into any kind of work I do not want to do.

But let us turn to other parts of this issue: specifically, the letter column, in which I note (with a weary sigh) that you are still defending your earlier assertion that what you've read or been told by other people is sufficient grounds on which to base a claim to comprehensive knowledge about me - an assertion typical of science fiction fanzine fandom but liable to provoke derisive laughter everywhere else. To claim that a coherent and accurate picture of anyone can be assembled from superficial acquaintance with a handful of scattered texts and a number of disjointed third party impressions (doubtless contrived from garbled hearsay evidence of what once happened to a friend of a friend) is downright absurd—and (bluntly) the more you make it the more idiotic you appear. You are simply pretending to knowledge you can't possibly have.

(Insert *sigh* here.) I do not claim "comprehensive" knowledge about you - nobody, possibly even yourself, knows that. As I was pointing out to Rodney Leighton (who was writing on this general topic), my responses to you are based on what you write. I realise that my perceptions of you are primarily based on what you write, but this has been tempered by the few personal meetings with you which I have had. But you cannot deny that you have a tendency to fly off the written handle (as it were) - often abetted by me. Let me give an example how I set you up and let you ignite some fires. This is from your first appearance in *HOLIER THAN THOU*, it was issue #9 in 1981. Yeah, we have been at it for some time.

I set you up by turning your loc on *HFTI* #8 into an article, titling said article, "You're Full Of Shit, Marty." I did go on to say that the title was mine and not yours.. Then we get to your first sentence: "Your review of the Gardner Dozois-edited *Best SF Stories Of The Year*, which I hope you will forgive me for saying, struck me as so reactionary and bigoted a tract..." We have been entertaining fandom with this stuff ever since.

Joseph, from what I know of you I must say that I like you. I also like much of what you write (and I agree with some of it and do not agree with other things.) So what? At

this point I would like to put an end to this stuff which goes nowhere; and, after nineteen years, probably has fandom yawning in boredom. Here we are, long away from substance and arguing about if I do or do not know you. I prefer to leave this on a friendly note, telling you that what I do know of you makes me want to consider you a longtime acquaintance with few hard feelings between us. Shake?



You attempt another refutation of my comments on the crises of agenda SF and "the collapse of the idea of spaceflight as an achievable goal for the human species" with the claim that this "does not square with the reality that, at least in [the USA] there is still a large constituency for this idea" - but so what? This is no refutation, because there is no automatic connection between the existence of an idea and its achievability.

Consider the following parallel. In the UK, several thousand people support a political ideal which argues that, if the working classes can be sufficiently radicalised, they will be brought to the realisation that because the capitalist system rewards only the few it cannot satisfy the needs of the many; and therefore that the many must unite to overthrow capitalism and replace it with a new economic order in which all will be equal and none will exploit another for profit. But what does the number who pledge allegiance to this ideal say about its actual achievability? Absolutely nothing - and as it is with the likelihood of proletarian revolution, so it is with those in the USA who support spaceflight. In this sense, there is no difference between the Socialist Workers Party and the Mars Society: both are dreamers who have no grasp of political realities.

At this point I should admit, whilst my knowledge of current things British are relatively limited, they are non-existent. In addition to the usual news sources I would add paying attention to C-SPAN coverage of Britain (which includes Prime Minister's Question Time), almost daily reading of *The Guardian*, and zines and locs by Brits (some of which give an opinion of current British politics. With that in mind, and modified by Tony Blair's large majority in the House of Commons, I posit that the possibility of the Socialist Workers Party overthrowing the British government in the near future is dim.

The same C-SPAN which gives me some coverage of some things British also gives me gavel-to-gavel coverage of the US House of Representatives and the US Senate. The Los Angeles Times gives me daily coverage of American politics, as do various other newspapers in this country (many of

which I read on a random basis). To this I can add CNN and other reputable on-line sources of reliable news. So. From this material I know that there are many Senators and Representatives who hold pro-space positions - enough of them that the space programme in this country remains alive. Putting both this and the previous paragraph together shows that you are in part wrong - the Socialist Workers Party has no grasp of the political realities in your country but the proponents of space exploration have a very good grasp of political realities and are seeing some of what they want being funded. I make no predictions as to what political realities will change in either your or my country in the near or far future, but that is the way it is today. If you were right as to the American political realities, then the on-going NASA budgets and our recent space probes are all a figment of our imaginations.

You also claim that I merely assert, "without any factual backup, that Anderson, Niven *et al* are writing their novels with the idea of vociferously promoting spaceflight" and suggest that they are instead "top-notch story-tellers [whose] enjoyment of writing in their chosen genres shows in in every word," who are read for their "sheer, wonderful story-telling," which "has nothing to do with whether or not [they] are pro-space." To which I respond with a snort of laughter and the sarcastic enquiry: are you serious?

I do not see Poul Anderson very often; however, as both Jerry Pournelle and Larry Niven are LASFS members who attend most meetings, I can claim that I have a bit of knowledge of some of their thinking. I know that Jerry Pournelle is quite active in pro-space programmes and the Larry Niven has a big interest in maintaining our presence in space, I feel that it is a denigration of their writing abilities to consider them little more than propagandists for that political position. It does not follow that having many of their stories occurring in space automatically means that they these stories are no better than political tracts. Well, that is what you are implying even if you do not use those



particular words. A good author can transcend his political beliefs, and most do. Poul Anderson, as an example, has professed beliefs which are (or are close to) libertarianism in lots to various zines, yet a goodly portion of his best output is put in the context of a human empire in space, one with an Emperor, and with the protagonist of these stories a supporter of the empire. Does this make Poul a monarchist? By your apparent viewpoint, he would have to be. As a consumer of good stories I prefer to read the author's whose stories I like as good story tellers rather than as peddlers of political propaganda. Simplistic? Naïve? I do not give a rat's ass - I intend to spend my remaining years enjoying stories as stories and to confine my politics to politics, where it belongs. Besides, I will let you gnaw at any sub-texts you may claim to find in their works, I will continue to just enjoy their fine SF writing as long as they continue to provide it and as long as I can spare the bucks to buy what they produce.

You also ought to be aware that a claim that people like these authors "for [their] sheer, wonderful story-telling" effectively insults such readers by suggesting that they're too dim to spot the sub-texts. Never mind insulting the writers as well, for implying that they have nothing to say . . . Perhaps some writers don't; and perhaps some readers are functionally incapable of grasping a sub-text; but any novel worth the name ought to challenge its readers in some way, explicitly or implicitly putting forward some ideology or viewpoint to be accepted, rejected or argued with; the "sheer, wonderful story-telling" that you appear to prefer is simply the means by which a writer's ideas are conveyed. Ideas without narrative are dull didacticism, and storytelling without ideas are merely marks on paper. (Is marks on paper all you really want out of science fiction?)

You seem to have totally forgotten what so much of what SF is all about. It is about how the characters in a story navigate themselves out of difficulties, and it makes no difference if those difficulties are technological, economic, personal, political, or any combination thereof. Your on-going imputation that the writers of this type of fiction also have an ideological sub-text (when they are doing all or some of the above-mentioned plot-lines going) is going against Occam's Razor. SF does very well indeed without throwing current political theories into the mix. Compare much of the current writing of the libertarians with those who do not "push" libertarianism and see which are more interesting to more readers. I will admit that the one sub-text which is just about inherent in much good SF is so basic as to be bed-rock in it is "freedom/democracy/ or however you want to label it." Other than that, sub-texts detract from a story, and only those academics who "study" SF are more destructive of good story-telling than are writers who put in such sub-texts.

Alexis Gilliland

Thank you for *NO AWARD* #6, a nicely produced zine with excellent material, starting with Brad Foster's cover.

Of the written material I particularly like Ed Green's "Fanac By Firelight," which gives a fine sense of the situation - - the LA riots - - and the people involved, here the National Guard, suddenly thrust into a front line situation. You had a lot of diverse material, which will surely appeal to a range of diverse tastes. I'm not sure about the Milt Stevens piece. You call it a review, and yes, maybe it fits the definition, but it made me laugh out loud, which a review isn't supposed to do. Joseph Major's discussion of Guy Lillian's *Challenger* #9 is also more a meditation than a review; a discursive rumination that evokes the issue and tries to imagine the editor behind the pages.

"Loc 'n Load" is a nice lively lettercol. Combining Joe Mayhew and Fred Nietzsche we get: "Whatever doesn't kill me makes me funnier."

Leigh Husband Kimmel

It still feels a little strange to be writing "2000" for the year. When I was a kid, 2000 was The Future, that misty time ahead of us when we'd be living in a sf world like the Jetsons. Now 2000 is here, and it's a lot of the same old same old, but a lot different in ways we *didn't* expect - like the computer on my desktop, or the Internet I spend way too much time on, maintaining my ever-growing web pages.

When I was much younger, 2000 seemed like a very long time in the future - and it was (I was born in 1935). As I grew older, 2000 still seemed a long way off, even as I aged into the 1990's. But I began to think more of what I would do when I retired. One of the long projects I thought that I would do would be to "type" up a list of my SF books so that I would know when not to spend the money on a certain one because I already had it. It seemed like this would be a very long project. And then I bought a computer in 1997 and the project took just a month or so - in my spare time.

And all of my fanzines? That would be a listing/sorting project for when I retired. Hah! When I retired last February, that particular project (with some 5000 zines) took just a month and a half.

Then I get a small windfall and purchase a new,

more powerful computer, and get on line. Ten to twelve hours a day on line. I am now busier than I ever was whilst working for a living, and the future is here. In ways I never realized. I am having a wonderful retirement, marred only by not having anybody close with whom I can share it. But then, not having gotten married until I was 47; so, for much of my life, sharing my retirement was never "part of the plan."

Derek Pickles

No Award #6 arrived safely on 4th February. No idea how long it took to traverse the North American continent, from sea to shining sea, and the broad Atlantic Ocean. It did arrive unmarked by water.

That latter is amazing as I am certain that I had put in enough of my own words to adequately satisfy its proper amount of "all wet" content. Sorry, boss, but I guess the moisture evaporated en route. I shall try to do better this time.

Like the cover, typical photo of con attendees before they get dressed up for the show.

I've never been called on jury duty even though I spent a lot of time in court when I was a magistrate (Justice of the Peace, Bradford Petty Sessions), unpaid service on behalf of my fellow citizens.

Why does it not surprise me to find a fan doing something petty?

W A H F

Brad Foster, who welcomed me to *the future* (even though that does not arrive until next January 1); **Henry Welch**, who writes that the L.A. Riots article was the best part of the issue (by which may I assume that he is a fan of rip, tear, mangle, mutilate, and spindle?); **Richard Geis**, who thanked me for my loc and the recent No Award, "But then I lost it and have only memory to deal with . . ." (neglecting to state whether it was the loc or the zine he lost); and **Sally A. Syrjala**, who wrote, "Thanks for the current issue of *NO AWARD* that arrived in yesterday's mail. Even though I was expecting the latest mailing of *LASFAPA*, *NO AWARD* was a good runner up." (In a Hugo race, maybe. *NO AWARD* really is not at all like *LASFAPA* even though I do my best to put a lot of smartassery into the zine I contribute to that APA.)