

No Goat's Kneecap

Reviews, letters of comment, and other items of interest to *Science Fiction Five Yearly* #9 contributors and friends. Published by Geri Sullivan, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315 USA. July 1992.

SFFY named #1 fanzine of '91!

SFFY came out on top in Andy Hooper's analytic survey of 1991 fanzines, scoring 67 on his 70-point scale.

Andy evaluated fanzines against criteria in seven categories: layout, art, congeniality, genre, writing, temporality, and faanishness, and assigned 10 points to each category. He then evaluated each of the nearly 70 titles he received last year, saying, "I handed out scores in each of these categories rather like boxing judges use the 'ten-point-must' system, assuming that each fanzine has a ten in each category until strikes against it can be made."

The results were published in *Cube #47*, which came out in May. In his review, Andy wrote: "*SF Five-Yearly's* amazing score of 67 may seem like bombast or hype to some, but have another look at it, or find one if you haven't seen it yet. The mimeography and design of the zine is the best since Colin Hinz' *Novoid*, but covers much more worthwhile ground along the way. For a measure of how good its mimeo technique is, compare it with an issue of Mark Manning's *Tand*. Mark does a pretty good job, and achieves a few difficult textural effects in the process, but for clarity and aesthetic

impression, it falls well short of both *BEDEC* and *SFFY*." Andy went on to say flattering things about both Jeff and me that modesty forbids me to repeat here. I can only urge you to come to ReinCONation this fall and stop by Toad Hall, where you can read the plaque we're having bronzed.

Rounding out the top five were *Mimosa*, *Tand*, *Trap Door*, and *BEDEC*. Here's a look at *SFFY's* scores by category:

Layout	9
Art	10
Congeniality	10
Genre	8
Writing	10
Temporality	10
Faanishness	10

Just because you're wondering, genre was described as "Does the fanzine focus on science fiction or fantasy? Does the zine openly espouse some other special interest?"

Here are the guiding questions for the art and writing scales: "How well is art integrated into the production of the zine? Does the art serve the written material well, or alternatively, does it stand well on its own as a separate feature?"

"Does the written material embody that sheer sophistication of presentation, that fine characterization and narrative flow in its

fiction, that clarity and inventiveness in its non-fiction, which we expect from our best fanzines?"

Note that Andy gave *SFFY* perfect scores for both writing and art, and you'll see why *SFFY* was as much fun to put together as it was to read.

Cube #47 is available from editor Steve Swartz at SF3, PO Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624, USA. If you want just a photocopy of Andy's 3-page article, drop me a postcard and I'll send one your way.

LetterCol

SFFY received long, chatty letters from Buck Coulson and Chuck Harris, plus numerous shorter notes and postcards from fans far and wide. (Not meaning to exclude those near and narrow.) Lee's done a great job of forwarding letters north to Minnesota; we've done a less than terrific job of sending them southbound. Here are the meaty bits from the whole collection:

Nancy Atherton:

"I thoroughly enjoyed all of the writing, but I have to say that Dan Steffan's *Jesus Christ, Neofan* stands out at a work of pure genius. Juses's stigmata-marked hand raised in a Vulcan salute is

an image I'll treasure for years to come. Please send my thanks to Dan for giving ghod a good laugh. Heaven knows, s/he needs one.

"In the Great Minds Think Alike Department, we turn to the bacover. I'm enclosing a handful of the buttons I made up to distribute at the Corflu in New York (the first one held after Arthur's death)." [*Nancy chose the same art we used in SFFY for the buttons. She was first.*]

"As for the rest of the pieces, I refuse to pick a favorite, since it was all so well Worth Waiting For. Please accept the enclosed small token of my appreciation for turning out such a toad-ally splendid issue!" [*I'm enjoying the frog notepad Nancy sent.*]

3 poetsarcds from Teddy Harvia:

"I find 'Where's Waldo?' an entertaining visual puzzle. I dread though the day when the character appears on Saturday morning TV with the requisite shallow storyline.

"I found your letter column disappointing. When I published 9-year-old letters in the tenth issue of my fanzine, the time-capsule effect was amusing."

— and —

"Amphibians under the light of the red shift. Ken Fletcher makes the cosmic comic like no other. If the registration was off, it didn't register with me. I always enjoy seeing colorful fanzines."

— and —

"I wrote Dan Steffan telling him I liked *Jesus Christ, Neofan*. He responded that my comments were the only ones he'd received.

If you have others, you might forward them to him. We don't want him getting discouraged and diminishing his output. The world needs all the irreverent humor it can get."

Richard Brandt:

"Thanks for letting me see SCIENCE FICTION FIVE YEARLY (and for explaining where my spatula must have run off to: peripatetic black holes, hmm?) A worthy inheritor of its own noble traditions. Vastly enjoyable stuff, starting with the triff cover by C. Ross C. (from whom we really should see more often). And probably no one around besides Stu could draw Chuck Harris in what we have come to accept as the appropriate fashion..."

"Chuck's uncomfortable juxtaposition of golf and death recalls the recent AP wire story of a golfer who died of a heart attack on the 18th green. Course officials covered him with a tarp and posted a sign at the 18th tee to tell golfers to please skip that hole, please don't ask why. Naturally, a few diehard golfers insisted on seeing the course through to its bitter end, and had to wait until they discovered the draped form on the green to realize why it had been closed. What this all means, I suppose, is that if Chuck wants to be sure his fellow golfers mark his passing, he'd better find something pretty damned spectacular.

"With all his other problems, I'm glad Walter was able to control himself before he plunged off the edge of Europe. At least he's not incontinent."

Buck Coulson:

"Talk about 'out of the past'; you'd have been pleased by my blank expression when SCIENCE FICTION FIVE-YEARLY arrived yesterday. Stunned, I think the term is.

"Enjoyed Harris's article. Fandom isn't very good at conferring immortality, but Juanita and I have managed ours. Or rather, been given ours. In the Popular Culture Institute at Bowling Green, there is now the collection of master tapes of the Off Centaur Publications filk tapes, and it's classified as the Buck and Juanita Coulson Collection. We were informed of this after the fact; we were not informed why, though I can guess: we may be the only people who are still speaking to all three original members of Off Centaur. They're definitely not speaking to each other. So we have a small niche for at least as long as audiotapes last; I have no idea how long that will be.

"As for golf, I quit playing golf when I got married. On the whole, I think I made an excellent trade.

"I even remember Lou Holtz. Not favorably, but I do remember him.

"I thoroughly enjoyed Jeanne Gomoll's article." [+2 long paragraphs of public school reminiscences]

"About the Aldiss story, I wasn't bothered by the diode valves; but then I'd known enough fans with complete vacuums in their heads that it seemed quite plausible.

"I've never been as impressed by faan fiction as most trufans seem to be — but then I've never

been impressed by Trufans, either. I like the stuff Irish Fandom did, and most of Tucker's, but the quality falls off pretty sharply after those.

[+ 2 paragraphs of personal and family updates]

"Until 1996..."

Mike Glicksohn:

"From the brilliant cover by Ross to the poignant remembrance of Arthur's greatness this was a lovely fanzine, one to read and enjoy amidst nostalgia for a fandom apparently gone. I'll be delighted if there are many more issues waiting for me as the lustrums unroll!"

Martha Beck:

"Got 5 yr. SF #9 yesterday — dearly needed a fanzine (good, that is) fix — took it in bedroom, shut door, relaxed — read it in one gulp! Thank you — thank you!"

"Can't comment — each article was fine — Tucker's, of course was great."

A.C. Clarke:

"Can't wait until 1996!" [+2 page personal & project update]

Russ Chauvenet:

"I have certainly enjoyed SF 5-YEARLY and no doubt will get around to writing a LOC RSN. ... It will not surprise you that I think Walt Willis' pages are the best in SF5."

Mark Manning:

"Science-fiction Five-yearly #9 contained lovely art, perfect (and perfectly faanish) articles. We Are Most Amused.

"Note, however, my correct address, typed above. [1709 South Holgate, Seattle WA 98144 USA]

"No, Jeff, don't try offset inks for mimeo; it'll gum up your silkscreen. I'm working on finding out the relative compositions of mimeo and offset inks from printing textbooks, and will report as soon as I learn what's what. So far, I know that mimeo ink is most similar to oil-based offset inks — perhaps something like litho or etching ink would be even closer

to the mimeo, who knows?"

[+1 paragraph on getting ink into tubes]

Robert Bloch:

"Dear Lee:

"SF FIVE YEARLY arrived and congratulations — slowly but surely you're getting the knack of it. You give promise of becoming a proficient fanzine editor!

"No quarrel with contents either, though I did find Danté di Stefano's concept incredible — nails must go through wrists, since palms don't resist tearing apart because of weight. If you don't believe me, try it some time. Or let Tucker try it."

See you at MagiCon?

SFFY editors, contributors, readers, fans, and friends from throughout the ages are invited to the *SFFY party at MagiCon*. It's scheduled for *Sunday, from 5 – 7 pm in the Fan Lounge*. The lounge will be located in the theme park area of the Convention Center — that's the big hall between the programming area and the art show and huckster's areas. Stop by the lounge before Sunday to confirm the time. (We'll have schedules available listing events in the Fan Lounge and the Minneapolis in '73 Suite at the Peabody.) Maybe we can mount a dinner expedition or two after the party...or a seating block for the Hugo's.

Other MagiCon events include: rich brown hosting the Carl Joshua Brandon "Memorable" Bheerbust (Tower of Beercans to the Moon) in the Minneapolis in '73 suite Saturday night; James White and Chuch Harris demonstrating "The Fine Art of the Fannish Insult" at a practicum in the Fan Lounge Friday evening; and fannish luminaries such as Mike Glicksohn, Art Widner, Elaine & Steve Stiles, Dick & Nicki Lynch, Arnie & Joyce Katz, Caroline Mullen, Linda Bushyager, Madeleine Willis, Don Fitch, etc., etc. hosting Fan Lounge events. Wheel

Mae Strelkov:

"Hope I'm in time for your next issue. I've been racing you backwards for quite a while and may yet get to 1971 and your 10th issue before you do.

"The Juses cartoons are clever and a good takeoff on the TV "Jesuses" folks like Jimmy Swaggart bandy about.

"Corrugated Confessions' was delightful. I wish more fanzines pubbed that sort of material.

"Lacking further scintillating remarks, I'll switch off for now, and thanks for the zine. I *did* enjoy it!: [*Backed by a lovely hecto illo, as usual.*]

Chuck Harris:

"You know, I have to say there are several things I don't like about SF5Y! First, it's almost as infrequent as the Vargo Statten Magazine. Secondly, the contents are always so damn good that every other faned in the world despairs. Thirdly, the previous eight issues are filed away in the tin box in the loft, the loft is well below freezing point at present and, after I've written this, I have to crawl in, locate the tin box, re-read the previous eight issues, update the file and then crawl out again before all the interesting appendages freeze and fall off.

"And finally, I find it almost unbearably nostalgic. Dammit, I was a 24 year old stripling when #1 came out, and I have a sneaky suspicion that I shall never see a complete set. At least, I hope not.

"Modesty forbids me rating this issue's contents but, ... Bloch was superb (of course), and Dan Steffan was Marvellous — a

veritobooble monumental classic. You seldom get text living up to the illos in any strip but this was a delight all round. I loved Jesus doing something out of this world with no more than a tuna fish sandwich and a prayer. Even Walt can't do that yet. (His fishes are okay but the bread rolls always seem stale.)

"(To be fair, I understand he is working on this problem. He thinks a sort of shrinkwrap might be the answer. He needs a little more time.)

"And, as you probably know, half of those people in the background were at Corflu as well as Buttcon — and I hope to see some of them at Orlando next year.

"Most of all I like His final T shirt. I know Atom would have approved...and I guess He found it a damn sight more fashionable and picturesque than His old Turin shroud ever was.

"And Jeanne Gomoll too...this is easily the best piece I've ever seen from her. She makes it look all so effortless, so casual and relaxed but always hilarious and believable. And those display packs that her father invented seem to be used for almost everything nowadays. I trust Gomoll pere made a pisspot full of money out of them. But I doubt it.

"And I trust that Robert Bloch isn't chickening out of the traditional piece for the 1996 issue. SFFY wouldn't be the same without him. No...it would be...er, different. I think, — apart from the Headitor — he is the only person who has appeared in

every issue so far. (I've managed to get my name on nine envelopes, but that's not quite the same thing.) In the Golden Age when I was young, vibrant, and still had a waist, I used to pore (that's p.o.r.e. — no alternative spellings, please) over Bob's stuff trying to discover The Secret, — the smooth effortless narrative, the truly stylish writing, the words and wordplay that he tossed around so casually and so effectively to delight the reader...and distract him from the sometimes pedestrian plotting.

"It took a long time but in the end I discovered The Secret. It was called Talent, and just as soon as I find out where to buy it I shall have an even bigger pot full of money than Jeanne Gomoll's dad ever managed.

"I liked Ted and Walter and Tucker (even though he reneged on his 1954 promise and has STILL not given me immortality by naming the promised spaceship after me. And, even worse, refused to refund my deposit and had the temerity to try to fob me off, — the very shame of it. Me. Chucky Harris, fobbed exquisitely by all the crowned heads of Europe...crowned heads are best because you know where they've been for ten generations and condominiums are against their religion...fobbed me off I say with a mere title role in a '78 ANALOG short story which didn't even win a Hugo. Ghod! I was so beautiful in my youth...we will have no filthy wordplay just there, thank you very much...so beautiful and even lissome...and now I come to this, fawned upon and courted by

an unemployed cinematograph projectionist, and then abandoned shamed and shipless.)

"Yes. Verily. On second thoughts I don't think I REALLY enjoyed Tucker's piece AT ALL. So there.

"And Jeff had a good idea too. Everyone else has overlooked the fact that what SF5Y really needs is a good serial. They add a sort of continuity to the product. This should run and run. And run. I can hardly wait for the next installment in 1996 let alone the mind-wrenching conclusion in 2036.

"And I just that's the lot for this, er, lustrum. I have to go and hang lights (electric, not Tucker's) on the Christmas tree and then go grovel to the Bank Manager."

Janice Murray:

"I found some typos in SFFY. You probably know what they are." [Janice's note was attached to a small zip-lock bag with ten 1973 pennies inside. It worked!]

"The bad news is...well, it's not bad news, but we bought 250 feet of Romex to run up to the attic. Since that time, we've put in a darkroom, a garage door opener, mimeos, track lighting...and now we have to go buy more Romex."

Jeff Schalles
On adding electrical circuits
to Toad Hall's attic
7/1/92

We Also Heard From...

Bill Danner (with a copy of *Stefantasy*), **Harry Andruschak** (with much info on ditto supplies), and **Harlan Ellison** (in two phone calls).

Perhaps I should say a bit about the calls from Harlan.

I sent Harlan a brief note in late September, to find out if he was reviving "Nissassa" or working on another column for SFFY. I included our November publication and mailing dates, and a request to let us know if he was

working on something. (I didn't think he was, but don't like to leave things hanging.) He called a few days later, very interested in writing for SFFY and asking again for copies of previous columns. "Fax what you have and I'll write something tonight," he said. "I'll put it in tomorrow's mail." OK. I faxed the columns we'd talked about, and gave him a fax number along with my mailing address.

Over the next few weeks, both mailbox and fax remained steadfastly Ellison-less. In the ensuing chaos, I misplaced Harlan's fax number for several months. (It later emerged during a spring cleaning frenzy.)

The second call came in late December, about a 6 weeks after we mailed SFFY. "I was surprised and disappointed to receive SFFY, already finished, before I had a chance to write my column," Harlan said.

Oh. We chatted for a few minutes, quite pleasantly. He enjoyed #9, and wants to be in the next issue. I promised to let LeeH and the 1996 assistant editors know. Ask him early; ask him often.

Why "No Goat's Kneecap"?

You no doubt noticed the curious title of this fanzine, such as it is. Back when James White and Walt Willis were working on *Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator...To the Enchanted Convention*, James sent me an update, saying the story was "No goat's toe...and then some." "No goat's toe" is an Ulster expression for "not half bad."

I published three progress reports for Walter, James, Stu Shiffman, and others involved in the publication of *BEDEC* under the *No Goat's Toe* title. Now we're simply moving up the goat. If I take on many more special publishing projects, Chuck Harris will no doubt be willing to help out with the finer aspects of goat anatomy needed to title future fanzines such as this.

It's never too late

to send a

letter of comment.

(I learned it from Walter...)

