

OPUNTIA

#41.1C



OPUNTIA is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment.

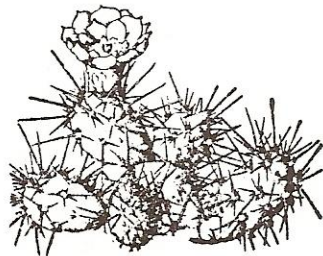
ART CREDIT: Cover drawn by Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Drive, Hurst, Texas 76054-2307.

I ALSO HEARD FROM: John Held Jr, Scott Crow, Sheryl Birkhead, Alexander Vasilkivsky, Geri Sullivan, Chester Cuthbert, Chuck Welch, Eric Watts, Juanita Coulson, Russ Forster, Richard Sagall,, Jim Moseley, Teddy Harvia, Taral Wayne, Scott Garinger, Murray Moore, Michael Waite, Bruce Pelz, Ken Cheslin

I WON'T HEAR FROM: Buck Coulson, deceased 1999-02-19 after a period of poor health. He was one of my most reliable loccers and I could count on his letters arriving promptly after each **OPUNTIA** was mailed out. Condolences to wife Juanita and son Bruce.

**LETTERS
TO THE
EDITOR**

[Editor's
remarks
in square
brackets]



FROM: Ned Brooks
4817 Dean Lane
Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720

1998-12-31

You seem to be using new software. Was the graph in *OPUNTIA* #41 done from the text editor?

[Yes, I bought a Toshiba laptop and Hewlett Packard laser printer with Windows 95, WordPerfect 8, QuattroPro 8, and Works 4.5. No plans for Internet access, nor will I accept contributions on floppy for fear of viruses.. The graph was done on QP8 and pasted into WP8. I also took mercy on readers complaining about the small size of text and boosted the font to 10-point Times New Roman. I kept my typewriter for letters, since it is faster to roll in a sheet of paper and start typing than to wait for the computer to boot up, software to load, and the printer to warm up. And I still keep my card indexes, since I know they will always be compatible with the future.]

FROM: Harry Warner Jr
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

1999-01-17

Maybe there was such a thing as a focal-point fanzine in the early years of fanzine fandom when the field was less diversified. Today "focal point" is a synonym for "favourite" rather than a fanzine that everyone in the field receives and considers crucial to enjoyment and knowledge of SF fandom.

The sad fate of Jim Goad is a reminder that almost anyone publishing zines today could suffer a decade or two into the future from radical opinions expressed in them as a result of an investigative reporter or prospective employer checking into background..

FROM: John Hertz
236 South Coronado Street, #409
Los Angeles, California 90057

1999-02-07

What a delicious prologue in OPUNTIA #41.1B!

Today's SF finds easier ways to fame
Nor wishing Asimov's art, nor Heinlein's flame.
Themselves they study, as they felt, they writ;

Intrigue is plot, obscenity is wit.
Vice always finds a sympathetic friend;
They please their age, and do not aim to mend.

FROM: Lloyd Penney
1706 - 24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

1999-01-15

In the beginning years of SF prodrom, most writers came from fandom. Today, that's rare. Some writers see fans as a nuisance, and brave cons only as a means for selling a few books. Most authors see the usefulness of cons. They know that cons and authors usually use each other as marketing tools to promote themselves.

FROM: Carolyn Clowes
5911 West Pay Drive
Depauw, Indiana 47115

1999-03-01

I think the choice of typeface can contribute or detract mightily from the pleasure of reading, often without the reader quite knowing why. If a writer hopes to impress an editor, a 400-page manuscript in sans-serif, however stylish, is not the way to go.

AMATEUR PRESS ASSOCIATIONS

Apas are a form of zine distro dating back to the late 1800s. SF apas date back to the 1930s, and there are a large number formed in more recent years. There are individual variations in the procedures, but for most apas, you send in x number of copies of your zine to the Central Mailer or Official Editor. The C.M. then collates the zines into bundles and sends back a set to each member. You pay an annual fee to help cover the cost of postage.

For some apas you must meet certain requirements such as proof of activity in zinedom or interest in the particular specialization of the apa. There are many general apas, but most specialize around a specific topic or geographical area. Above all, an apa requires active participation, not simply passively subscribing. You will be expected to publish a minimum number of pages per year, known as minac. Apas are for the creative and self-motivated who seek a community of like-minded zinesters. Some apas have annual conventions, but most apahackers never meet.

And how to become involved? I list a few herewith that I am personally familiar with. The definitive directory of apas is the NEW MOON DIRECTORY, price US\$6, which lists hundreds of apas. Its publisher Eric L. Watts resides at 1161 Research Drive NE, Marietta, Georgia 30066-5539. If you are interested in becoming involved with an apa, here is the place to begin.

UNITED A.P.A. OF AMERICA

-4-

January 1999 (Sample bundle US\$2 from Kay Weems, HCR 13 Box 21AA, Artemas, Pennsylvania 17211) General apa founded in 1895, with emphasis on creative writing, mostly poetry and sentimental thoughts in prose. Content must be suitable for family; one of the contributors in this bundle is 10 years old. No flaming. Annual fee is US\$15 plus credential of your writing such as a poem. Bundles are 5½ x 8½ so your zine must be foldable if bigger. If you don't publish a zine you can still submit work as it will be placed with other zines. If you want to join straight away, send US\$15 payable to UAPAA, c/o Doris Hall, 1420 Whitehall Avenue, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18104.

CANFANDOM #4 (Sample copy \$3 from Graeme Cameron, #110 - 1855 West 2nd Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 1J1) Formerly CANFAPA, this is a slightly different style of apa where the maximum contribution is two pages per issue (minimum is one page per issue), which is then printed up as a single zine-like issue rather than distributed as a bundle. This apa is devoted specifically to promoting awareness of Canadian SF fanzines, converting fans into faneds, and preserving Canadian fanzines. Sort of a cross between the Timebinders, N3F, and the Fossils. This issue has an emphasis on bibliographies, checklists, and indexes to zines.

LINGUICA #53 (Sample copy US\$2 from Georg Patterson, 110 East Lynch Street, Apt. A, Durham, North Carolina 27701) The theme of this apa is languages, covering every aspect from etymology to grammar to culture, although the members do veer off topic into personal life, movie reviews, etcetera. Highlights of this issue are a San Francisco controversy that erupted when a Chinese-language radio station appeared to be making homophobic slurs (it was all a mistake in translation), Japanese reactions to foreigners who speak their language fluently, and Herodotus' mis-translation of a Persian story that turned marmots into ants.

FANTASY A.P.A. #246 (Sample bundle US\$5 from Ken Forman, 7215 Nordic Lights Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-0335, or details only about joining from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) This bundle has 48 zines with 372 pages total. There is a mixture of newbies and dinosaurs, and topics ranging from Broadway plays to hospital implosions to SF conventions. One feature of this apa is the mailing comments, which are remarks by members on each others' zines in the previous bundle. Now in its 62nd year, this apa is nominally about SF, but in actual practice is largely perzines and reviewzines with a fannish tinge. Members are required to send in 65 copies of their zine, which is the membership limit. Currently there are four vacancies, so if you hustle a letter of enquiry to Lichtman for details, you should be able to get in.

ZINE LISTINGS

by Dale Speirs

8-TRACK MIND #97 (US\$3 from Russ Forster, Box 14402, Chicago, Illinois 60614-0402) Devoted to the 8-track cartridge, with a few minor excursions into other obsolete technologies. Lots of letters, DIY instructions for playing 8-tracks on reel-to-reel decks via a record player, and notes about collecting. A biography about Earl "Madman" Muntz, who invented the 4-track cartridge in 1962, the immediate predecessor to the 8-track invented by William Lear. The latter bought 4-track decks to install in his business jets, decided he could do better, and did.

ALIAS #34 (\$1? from Editor, Alias, Fred Victor Centre, 145 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario M5A 1S1) Digest-sized zine of a group of Toronto community organizations, with essays, poems, and reports about goings-on thereabouts.

CATTILACK SMOKESTACK #2 (The Usual from Haggard & Halloo, 348 East 3rd Street, Long Beach, California 90802) 4-page zine of poetry and prosody.

CRIFANAC #11 (The Usual from Ken Forman, 7215 Nordic Lights Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119) News and views of SF fanzine culture, fan funds, and convention reports.

GRAMMAR Q AND A #14 and #15 (Stamp or IRC from Misti and Scott Crow, Box 445, Clements, California 95227) Single-sheet zine dealing with grammar and spelling, two items that some zinesters seem to think do not matter. The query about capitalization is one that aforesaid zinesters should note. Just because e.e. cummings got away with it doesn't mean you are being artistic when you do it. Also advice on archaic words, -ed versus -t endings, and ending sentences with multiple punctuation marks.

INFILTRATION #12 (\$2 from Box 66069, Town Centre P.O., Pickering, Ontario L1V 6P7) Nicely produced digest devoted to hacking building service rooms, tunnels, and other places you aren't supposed to go. This issue has accounts of unauthorized back room travels in the Buffalo (New York) Central Terminal and Union Station (Toronto), and a guided tour of the Chicago Tunnel Company network.

MARKTIME #55 (The Usual from Mark Strickert, 300 South Beau Drive #1, Des Plaines, Illinois 60016) Perzine of a radio taper, county collector, apahack, and baseball fan.

TYPOGRAPUNX #hH (The Usual from T. Pickle, 15 Chruchville Road #115-163, Bel Air, Maryland 21014) Devoted to avant-garde typography, with articles on typesetting machines, a glossary of proofreading marks, and Univers typefaces.

MIMOSA #23 (US\$4 or zine trade from Nicki and Richard Lynch, Box 3120, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20885) SF fanhistory zine, well printed in card covers. Lots of WorldCon reports, both the recent past in Baltimore, and others stretching back to the 1950s. Also a history of Norwegian fandom since the Nazi occupation, and various other reports of fans, conventions, and, everywhere you look, hotels.

PROBE #106 (The Usual from Science Fiction South Africa, Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa) Nicely produced clubzine, digest size in card covers. The usual news, reviews, and letters, but with a high proportion of original fiction. Some of it, such as a fun collaboration of fans, titled "Wormhole", is an understandable frolic, but other stories are by more serious authors, who have only this zine as an outlet. South Africa will, I think, begin producing name authors in quantity in another decade or so. Just as Canada took a while to reach critical mass, so it is that South Africa is starting out on the same road.

CUL-DE-SAC #4 (The Usual from Liz Saidel, Box 6074, Buffalo Grove, Illinois 60089-6074) Perzine issue, this time around on the theme of young adults. Those awkward embarrassing years when emotional, physical, and intellectual capabilities are changing daily. Those years that many people would rather suppress from memory but usually can't.

BOOK OF LETTERS #11 (US\$3 from Rich Mackin, Box 890, Allston, Massachusetts 02134) Mackin writes letters to corporations offering weird ideas (mixing soda pop flavours), complaining about ads (actors' ages in commercials), or other commentary from the lunatic fringe. Not surprisingly, many companies do not reply, or send a form letter carefully vetted by lawyers to say nothing. But one item in this issue leaped out at me. Mackin was annoying the M&M candy people about the millennium. Correctly speaking of course, it begins in 2001, and of course most people will celebrate it in 2000. He writes in his letter: " ... *the year 2000 is actually the last year of this millennium, much that the tenth finger is part of your own ten fingers, not the first finger of somebody else.*". This is the best explanation I have ever seen explaining why 2001 is the correct turnover, one that can be understood even by the most illiterate labourer.

DICK AND LEAH'S SKIFFY CALENDAR 1999 (The Usual from Dick and Leah Zeldes Smith, 410 West Willow Road, Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070-1250) A wall calendar listing not only the usual public holidays but also events of interest to SF fans. A few minor mistakes: Victoria Day is May 24, not the 17th, June 24 is celebrated as a holiday only in Quebec, not the rest of Canada, and the World Wide Party is omitted for June 21. We learn that July 7 is the anniversary of the first comic book (1802). One hilarious date is August 24, labelled "Day Of Ruin" by the

Smiths because it was on that day that Pompeii was destroyed (79), Rome fell (410), the British burned Washington (1812), and Microsoft released Windows 95 (1995).

FOSFAX #194 (Sample copy US\$3 from Falls of the Ohio SF and Fantasy Association, Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281) A clubzine of 84 pages of microprint, of which 45 pages are the legendary letter column. The Clinton impeachment was still underway at the time this issue went to print, so the bulk of the issue is given over to American politics. The rest is book and movie reviews, and SF convention reports.

ANGRY THOREAUAN #23 (US\$5 from Randall Tin-ear, Box 3478, Hollywood, California 90078) Slick cover punkzine with the usual zine and music reviews and a plethora of ads from record lables, but the main content is, as always, a look at the rowdy side of life. This issue has death for a theme, with articles on torso murders and suicide by cop. Don't have the guts to blow yourself away? Just surprise a cop on a dark street and point a toy gun at him; he'll do the rest.

BARMAID #5 (The Usual from Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimpey, Worcs. DY12 1NP, England) Perzine, with essays comparing romance with pornography, loss of faith in Santa Claus, Y2K, and letters.

THE BIBLIOFANTASIAC #11 (The Usual from C.F. Kennedy, 39 Claremore Avenue, Scarborough, Ontario M1N 3S1) Short stories, poems, and reviews embedded in a liberally-collaged layout.

FOR THE CLERISY V6#32 (The Usual from Brant Kresovich, Box 404, Getzville, New York 14068) After 12 years as an English-as-a-second-language teacher, Kresovich has decided on a career change, and explains why. Also articles on South African carjackers, the Stockholm Syndrome extended from hostage takings to battered women and UFOs, movie and zine reviews.

THE GEIS LETTER #58 and #59 (US\$2 from Richard Geis, Box 11408, Portland, Oregon 97211-0408) Conspiracy newsletter, with topics ranging from kiddie porn to the TWA plane crash. Also a few book and movie reviews.

SAUCER SMEAR V46#1 (US\$3 from James Moseley, Box 1709, Key West, Florida 33041) Newszine of UFOnuts, taking a skeptical look at the MJ-12 forgeries, book reviews, news of UFO clubs, and Y2K. Good rowdy fun that makes SF fan feuds look like Bible class.

FILE 770 #128 (US\$8 for five issues, from Mike Glyer, 705 Valley View Avenue, Monrovia, California 91016) SF newszine, with convention reports, news of fandom, and letters.

SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN

V7#2 (The Usual from Julie Wall, 470 Ridge Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35206-2816) Clubzine of southern USA SF fandom. Convention reports and listings, zine reviews, a history of North Carolina fandom, and letters.

SUGAR NEEDLE #8 (The Usual from Phlox, 1174-2 Briarcliff, Atlanta, Georgia 30306) A zine devoted to candy, with this issue's topic being bugs. Bugs as food in themselves, bug-shaped candy, and a book review on candy. Advice from a person speaking from experience that gnats eaten fresh are quite sweet. For informational purposes only, one is tempted to add.

VANAMONDE #293 to #297 (The Usual from John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street, #409, Los Angeles, California 90057) A weekly single-sheet apazine with topics ranging from cathedral stained glass windows to Max Beerbohm's trouble with his tutors at the University of Oxford.

WHIZZBANGER GUIDE TO ZINE DISTRIBUTORS #3 (US\$3 from Shannon Colebank, Box 5591, Portland, Oregon 97228) Listing of 219 zine distributors, with a short note about each as supplied by the distro itself. Useful if you want to sell you zines or find a place to buy them.

ERG #145 (The Usual from Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ) The 40th anniversary issue of this zine! Articles on inventions that never became practical, Soviet ground-effect planes (imagine a Boeing passenger jet with the engines mounted above the cockpit, and travelling at wavetop height), and historical serendipity.

FABLES OF IRISH FANDOM #3 (L2 or US\$5 from Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 2PH, England. The first two volumes still available at the same prices.) A facsimile reprint of humorous stories of 1950s zinedom in Northern Ireland. The stories start off with a tinge of fact and lurch off into frenetic exaggeration. Enjoyable reading; you do not need to know the history of Irish fandom.

FANORAMA (US\$10 from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) This anthology reprints a series of review columns and commentary originally published in the 1950s by SF fan writer Walt Willis. A good survey of British zinedom back then, written in the humorous style for which Willis was so well known.

BROKEN PENCIL #9 (\$5 from Broken Pencil, Box 203, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S7) Slick-cover reviewzine of Canadian zines, plus news of the Canuck Papernet and reprints therefrom.

EIGHT-LETTER WORD MEANING PUZZLE

Reviews of *THE STRANGE WORLD OF THE CROSSWORD* by Roger Millington (M & J Hobbs, 1974), and Herbert Resnicow's mystery novel *MURDER ACROSS AND DOWN* (Ballantine, 1985). In the foreword to his history of the crossword puzzle, Roger Millington wondered why there weren't any serious academic studies on crossword puzzles. That was 25 years ago; there may since have been such studies. He goes on to remark: "*After all, over a hundred colleges in the United States now give courses in science fiction, and there aren't all that many science fiction works that can boast more ingenuity, more wit, or more ideas than the daily crossword in THE TIMES.*". Having thrown the cat among the skiffy pigeons, he then starts the book.

Various types of word puzzles have existed since literacy was invented. Word squares date back to the ancient Romans, who knew the following one:

ROTAS
OPERA
TENET
AREPO
SATOR

The modern crossword as we know it today did not appear until 1913, when Arthur Wynne devised the first one for the Sunday edition of the *NEW YORK WORLD* newspaper. Readers demanded more, and the daily crossword became an institution with us still. In 1924, two young men founded a publishing company called Simon & Schuster. For their first book, they proposed to reprint the *WORLD* puzzles as a collection. They had trouble getting support for the idea. Noted newspaper columnist Franklin P. Adams advised them against such foolishness, as the book couldn't possibly turn a profit. Dick Simon and Lincoln Schuster were discouraged, until they learned that F.P.A. had also warned a newspaper not to hire cartoonist Rube Goldberg. Realizing the value of F.P.A.'s advice, they decided to go ahead with the book after all. They sold 400,000 copies of three volumes in their first year.

The crossword craze ran full throttle in the 1920s. It crossed the Atlantic (pardon the pun) in 1924, and despite doomsaying by *THE TIMES* became established as a mass favourite. Soon few people were unaware that Asa was the King of Judah or Ra the Sun God of ancient Egypt. Newspapers quickly realized the value of crosswords as a promotional item, and cash prizes became standard circulation builders. Even *THE TIMES* of London gave in, and started its daily crossword in 1930. British crosswords diverged from North American crosswords in style, the former leaning more to doubly cryptic clues. On both sides of the Atlantic, all manner

of variation was introduced, from crosswords shaped like Valentine hearts to puzzles where the words moved in an L shape like a knight on a chessboard, instead of simply straight down or across.

In 1945, MI5 officers had to investigate why the *DAILY TELEGRAPH* (London) crossword kept using words like Utah, Omaha, Neptune, Mulberry, and Overlord, all code names from the top secret Operation Overlord, better known to history as the D-Day invasion of Normandy. The crossword compiler, Leonard Dawe, finally convinced security agents that it was all a horrible coincidence.

To this day, books of crossword puzzles are bread-and-butter to publishing firms. People still keep inventing weird variations, but the basic square grid still rules. An unforeseen consequence of literacy, no more foreseeable to the Sumerian merchants who invented writing to keep business receipts than SF writers could have predicted screensavers on computers.

Mystery stories are written as intellectual puzzles for the reader, so mystery stories about crosswords provide a double dose. Herbert Resnicow's novel *MURDER ACROSS AND DOWN* deals with the Cruciverbal Club, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary with a \$50,000 contest. Six members of the club

desperately need the money. Another member, wealthy Harvey Brundage, wants the prizes for prestige. He knows he is not and never will be a championship solver, so he decides to win by blackmailing the unfortunate six, all of whom have something to hide. The action commences when everyone, plus the detectors of the novel, Giles Sullivan and Isabel Macintosh, is enjoying a dinner of broiled trout with almond slivers. Brundage doesn't get to enjoy his final meal, as his first few bites turned out to include cyanide as a flavouring.

Brundage gets the last laugh from beyond the grave. He knew he was unpopular, and that blackmail is a dangerous occupation, so after his death crossword puzzles are couriered daily to the six suspects and to the newspapers to whom he supplied daily crosswords. The clues to what each of the suspects were being blackmailed for is in each of the puzzles. The public would not understand the story behind them if no one were to say anything. Brundage made arrangements though, that if his murderer was not identified by the time the last puzzle was worked, the blackmail information would be made public. This concentrates the minds of the six wonderfully, and each day they race to solve the incoming puzzles in the hopes of identifying the guilty one and keeping everyone else's story hidden.

This novel includes the actual crossword puzzles for the reader to do. It is a basic principle of the mystery novel that an author is

supposed to play fair and give sufficient clues to identify the murderer before the denouement. Resnicow goes out of his way to do so, since one can work the puzzles at the same time as the characters and guess the perpetrator's name. Regrettably, if you buy this book used, as I did, chances are that the previous owner already worked them, in ink of course. Sullivan and Macintosh unmask the killer by resetting the puzzles in the \$50,000 contest so that they refer to the method by which the cyanide was emplaced in Brundage's delicious and fatal meal. Reverse psychology is used here, as the real killer would go out of his way to avoid giving answers indicating the method of operation. The guilty flee when no one pursues, and also put down the wrong answers in ink.

VIVE LE (INSERT NAME OF GOVERNMENT HERE)

Review of *FREE FRENCH INVASION: THE ST. PIERRE AND MIQUELON AFFAIRE OF 1941* by Douglas Anglin (US\$25 or C\$32 from Penny Black Publishing, Box 21132, 665 - 8 Street SW, Calgary, Alberta T2P 4H5) Trade paperback, reprint of the definitive 1966 text from the University of Toronto Press edition.

If you want to have fun with a trivia question at some party game or for a tavern bet, pose the following question: "How many sovereign nations are there in North America north of Mexico?"

The average person will respond that there are only two, Canada and the USA. Some people will note that Kalaallit Nunaat is part of the continent, and therefore is either Inuit or Danish, depending on your political sympathies towards what the People From The South refer to as Greenland. Very few people will know that France is a North American nation, or even believe it when you tell them.

Off the southern coast of Newfoundland are the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon, an integral part of France, whose population of 5,000 people is heavily subsidized by the central government. Just as Newfoundland was Britain's oldest colony, so St. Pierre and Miquelon are France's oldest colony. Newfoundland gave up its independence as a Dominion when it joined the Canadian Confederation in 1949, but St. Pierre and Miquelon still cling to the old country. The fishing industry is a remnant of what it once was, and the islanders basically survive because of French subsidies. In Paris, the St. Pierrais and Miquelonais are cynically referred as the world's most expensive Frenchmen. The main occupations are government paperwork and smuggling, the latter done today with aircraft and high-speed boats instead of schooners with black sails.

John Cabot discovered the islands in 1497. They were settled originally because of the excellent fishing and because the ice-free harbour was used to provision the sailing ships that came from

Europe to fish the nearby Grand Banks. Over the next few centuries the islands changed hands numerous times between England and France, and not until 1816 did they become a permanent part of France. The advent of the steamship crippled the economy of the islands, since fishing ships could go straight to the Grand Banks from Europe and did not need to stop at a harbour. The subsequent decline in the fishing industry finished off any hope that St. Pierre and Miquelon would ever be self-sufficient, and since that time they have relied on government subsidy.

Fast-forward to 1941. The war in Europe is not going well. Canada and Newfoundland (then still an independent nation) had been in the war since 1939. The USA was neutral, and inclined to be sympathetic to the Vichy government while at the same time leaning to Britain in support against the Germans. In St. Pierre and Miquelon, there was political strife. The government administrators, businessmen, and clergy were Vichyards, while the majority of the population supported the Free French under Charles de Gaulle. Both sides conducted political campaigns that might have exploded into open violence anywhere else, but in the closely intermarried colony had to be kept at just below the boiling point. The Vichyards arrested a few agitators or fired them from government jobs. The Resistance published underground papers and posters that stung the Vichyards. And

watching them carefully, sometimes almost hysterical with nerves, were the Free French, Canadian, American, Newfoundland, and British governments.

On the one hand, the islands were too insignificant to start a full scale clash over. On the other hand, the Vichy had a shortwave transmitter that was of use to the German U-boats raiding the North Atlantic. The Newfoundland government was foaming at the mouth to annex the islands (as they still are today) but none of the other powers would allow that. The Canadians were too cautious to touch off a diplomatic incident by invading the islands and offending both Vichy and Free French. The Americans wanted to forget the whole thing but couldn't.

De Gaulle solved the whole matter, to his satisfaction at least, by sending Free French destroyers to St. Pierre and Miquelon in December 1941 and evicting the Vichy. From a practical military point of view, the islands then became a backwater for the rest of the war. With the radio transmitter under Free French control, there was no more value in the islands, especially once the USA finally entered the war after Pearl Harbour.

Whenever any government is overthrown, the first thing the new regime does is issue postage stamps. The Free French occupation was no exception to this rule. The stamps were issued under circumstances for which the phrase 'sharp practice' was too mild.

Many found their way to the philatelic market under suspicious circumstances, and the money flowed like water everywhere except in the riverbed it was supposed to go in. It was no surprise that one of the principals in the stamp affair subsequently served a prison term and was sent into exile.

The diplomatic repercussions continued however. The USA was divided between Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, who wanted the Free French evicted and everything put back the way it was, and President Roosevelt, who preferred to ignore Foggy Bottom and treat the St. Pierre and Miquelon incident as the minor sideshow it was, in the hope that it would soon be forgotten. Churchill, who had to deal with de Gaulle, once remarked that the heaviest cross he had to bear was the Cross of Lorraine. Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King had been in power for decades and always worked on the principle that doing nothing about anything was the best policy. He was harassed by his cabinet ministers, who wanted him to Do Something Fer Crying Out Loud Willya, while simultaneously he had to remind the Americans that Canada was not their errand boy.

Douglas Anglin writes well about all the diplomatic to-ing and fro-ing. The book has a bad case of footnote-itis, but is otherwise quite readable. The cast of characters and their activities is reasonably easy to follow, and the book overall is enjoyable.

Review of an article "On Falling Behind Schedule" by D.B. Anderson in *JOURNAL OF SCHOLARLY PUBLISHING* 29:212-218. Ever since zines first became common in the late 1800s, part of their culture is the delayed issue. Amateur zine publishers must first look to their home life before devoting time to publishing their issue. Jobs, or lack of, can kill the budget. Divorces or moving house take away energy to do the work. Professional magazines, with full-time paid staff, are more reliable, assuming solid finances. There is a third category of periodicals where, like zinedom, printing schedules are often wishful thinking or outright fantasy. This is the category of small-press academic journals.

Delayed publication is a more serious matter for learned journals than for zines. Authors need those published papers for their tenure chase. Scientists need accurately dated reports to establish priority. As users of university libraries know, the cover date of a learned periodical is often out by months or years. This is why many scientific journals include under the article title the date a manuscript was first received, to help establish the true priority date in case several researchers published on the same subject at about the same time.

Anderson cites his own experience as an example. His article

"Visions of Monorail in Houston, 1955-1994" was finished in the spring of 1996, and published that autumn in an issue dated "Fall 1995". This would confuse anyone researching monorails, as the article, despite its title, contained comments dated 1996, making Anderson seem psychic.

Editors of learned journals, especially the smaller ones run by non-profit societies, must fit in their work with classroom teaching, research, and tenure track hustling. They must also placate librarians around the world, who track periodicals by annual subscriptions, and send in claims for non-existent issues. The editors feel guilty at not keeping up, or may rush into print poorer quality research just to fill the pages.

Familiar problems to zinesters. Since most zines don't take subscriptions, serials librarians are not such a problem, but many zines are sent to press with space fillers just to get something out.

Anderson suggests some practical methods that zinesters would be well advised to use. Firstly, production schedules should complement your work schedule. If you are student or staff at a university, don't try to get an issue out in the middle of the exam period. A retail clerk working overtime during the Christmas rush should plan his/her zine before or after the peak period, not December 15.

Anderson also recommends that in the long run, if you cannot keep a regular schedule, you should announce that your periodical is an irregular. In doing so, move to publishing by content, not by calendar. Spacefiller zines are soon forgotten. Zines with quality writing will be remembered longer. Nor are you obligated to publish a certain number of issues per year. If you can keep the total page count the same, but over fewer issues, then the work will be less, since most of it is in the layout and pasteup stages. Do not use the tired wheeze of double issues, especially if a so-called 'double' issue has the same number of pages as an ordinary issue.

In my personal experience, I find it best to announce that your zine is an irregular. That way, if you publish monthly (as *OPUNTIA* usually does) it makes you look good. If you then get behind, you need feel no guilt, as you were publishing an irregular anyway.

The most important factor in publishing a zine is that one should be doing it for fun. When it ceases to be fun, then stop. Don't let it die a lingering death, poisoning zinedom for you. Kill it quickly and cleanly, and come back later when you can approach it again with the needed time and energy. This is why it is best not to take subscriptions. Don't kid yourself about being the next *WIRED* or *ROLLING STONE*. You have a better chance of winning the lottery or being hit by lightning than of earning a full-time living

from your zine. Take money only for an issue at a time, zine trade, or for contribution of writing or art. You can then wrap up in one issue if you decide to kill the zine.

Anderson suggests in the final analysis that an editor should consider why he/she is publishing. Anderson considers this question as to whether or not there is a market for the periodical. The market may not support a quarterly of studies about the planet Mercury if no one is actively reporting new research. In zinedom, a common problem is the zine specializing on a single topic, about which not much new can be said after the first couple of issues.

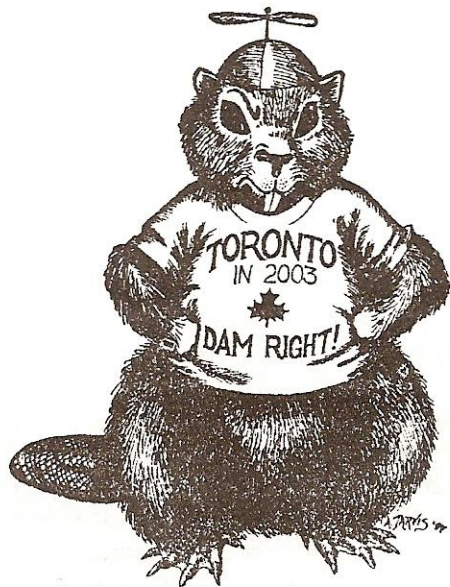
Zinesters, who do not have to cater to a market, should consider a different question. A zine should be published for a purpose, not just because you thought it a cool thing to do. You may want to rant about politics, or cover the music scene, or get your poems into print. It is easier to publish when you have a purpose and sense of direction, rather than groan at the thought of rounding up more copy for another issue.

The Papernet always has people coming and going, but continues onward. To quote from Robert Filliou's poem about the Eternal Network (written with mail art in mind): "*someone helping, someone hindering / someone enjoying, someone suffering, someone indifferent / someone starting, someone stopping / the network is eternal*".

On June 21st this year will be the sixth annual World Wide Party. At 21h00 your time, raise a glass and toast your friends in the Papernet around the world. Have a party if you will, do a one-shot zine, prepare and post a batch of mail art, or whatever else you may think of.

The World Wide Party was first suggested by Benoit Girard of Quebec and boosted by Franz Miklis of Austria. The idea behind a 21h00 toast is to get a wave circling the planet celebrating zineish friends and connecting everyone in the Papernet briefly by a common activity.

It is as well to also reflect on the history of the Papernet. Personal correspondence dates back centuries ago, of course, but the modern postal system did not begin until Rowland Hill of England reformed the postal system of Britain. With uniform, cheap postage and faster mail handling, private correspondence increased dramatically. Zines as we know them today developed in the late 1800s, and mail art bloomed in the second half of the 1900s. These are the two major activities of the Papernet, but there are a multitude of others, such as round robins, exchange clubs, and apas.



To support Toronto's bid to host the 2003 World Science Fiction Convention, send C\$20.03 or US\$15 to: Toronto in '03, Box 3, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1A2.