

**THE ROYAL SWISS
NAVY GAZETTE**

#3



**SO FAR
HAVE WE COME**

THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE #3, September 1998, from Garth Spencer, P.O. Box 15335, V.M.P.O., Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6B 5B1; email hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca (or golem@direct.ca); posted eventually on <http://www.vcn.bc.ca/sig/rsn/fanzine/>. A personalzine with utterly irregular frequency and no particular subscription policy.

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Some of The Last Six Months' COAs

John Berry & Eileen Gunn are moving or have moved to New York, NY.
Gary Farber, c/o Zev Sero, Apt. 1L, 396-12th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11215-5017,
U.S.A.

George "Lan" Laskowski, 2466 Valleyview Dr., Troy, MI 48098-5317, U.S.A.

Teemu Leisti, Helsinginkatu 16 B 51, 00500 Helsinki, Finland

Mark Manning. (but not Getsu-shin), c/o 1300 W Nickerson #119, Seattle,
WA 98119, USA. (Ansible 134)

Murray Moore, 2118 Russett Road, Mississauga, ON L4Y 1C1,
mmoore@pathcom.com.

Nigel Rowe's email address will become nigel@mwpsoft.com. He wrote, "Alan,
bigboy@super.zippo.com will be no more, after serving me faithfully for
almost 2 years. The new address is at my own domain (MWP Software) so
it will be valid for a long time."

Dan Steffan, 800 S. Ivy St., Arlington, VA 22204, U.S.A.

Alan Stewart's new @address is fiawol@netspace.net.au. (Thyme, or Ethel the
Aardvark)

G. W. Thomas (writer and bookseller at 417 Claxton Crescent, Prince George,
BC V2M 6B8) is no longer ae160@pgfn.bc.ca or chucks@pgweb.com but
at aa296@pgfn.bc.ca

Jean Weber & Eric Lindsay, P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Qld. 4802, Australia,
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Henry Welch (*Knarley Knens*) now at welch@msoe.edu

Lucie Zinkiewicz is now at: home, 8/256 Geddes St, Toowoomba 4350; ph 07
4636 0609, work, Dept of Psychology, The University of Southern Qld,
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SO LITTLE TIME HA HA SO MUCH TO DO

I live a divided life, and mostly a solitary one. On the one hand there's the daytime work at a trademark office, typing and transcribing trademark searches and applications; on the other hand, when I come home and put on my masked crime-fighter outfit, I start my secret life ...

— and I usually stall out before I've got fairly started. On my project list are the maintenance of my Web page (convention list, club list, writers' market list, etc., all outdated as of last spring, or even last fall); a fanzine (now it's been a year since the last issue); fanhistories (I've owed Dale Speirs another article for at least six months); apa contributions; and a few other, book-size projects.

I've probably talked about this sort of thing before. The point I was trying to get to was, I found that the organizers in most stationery stores don't quite do the trick. What you need is not just chronological, but topical organizers. I tried inventing one myself with a looseleaf binder, not once but several times. The end in view was to take stock of how much time I have, and how much I am committing.

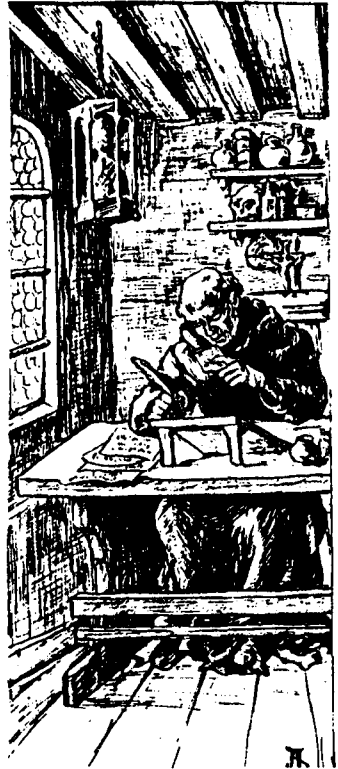
I haven't quite got to the point of measuring the timespans, yet.

What is this? It's more than Twonk's Disease, the sudden failure of fanwriters and faneditors to produce. I think I've discovered a crisis of available fannish energy, or manpower, versus the demand on fannish energy represented by any level of fanaticity.

My theory is, I've exceeded my personal limit. There's more to the theory, of course — a rising curve of the demands on time and energy, versus a falling curve of available energy and time — but the whole system is a bit too complicated to toss off here.

Come to think of it, I've run into a number of complex things. I was actually thinking of setting up **another** Web page, and **getting out of my system** posting expository essays on several complex systems — creative planetology, how to make up your own language (and make it work), even my crank theory of sociology and why I think economics is a branch of astrology.

Maybe I should take some courses this fall. Learn something. Meet people.



Credit Where Credit Isn't Due (1)

A couple of things both flattered and dismayed me in the past year. One was in the Burnaby Writers' Society newsletter; Eileen Kernaghan (famous local writer-type person) listed an article on my Web page as a writers' resource, a digest of news on scams and cons perpetrated on writers, new and established ... but failed to note that the material is, well, copied from many and diverse sources. All accredited, sometimes with HTML links, but ... well I'm relaying the news, not originating it. (I pointed this out to her at VCon 23, and the next newsletter conveyed my point.)

This is another thing for which I should issue a general apology. I try to give credit to every one of my sources, whatever I write, but the fact is I copy a lot of material, and I have this ongoing fear that I am trespassing on other people's copyrights. I've done some reading on the issue without really resolving my concerns. I am going to have to rewrite stuff like my postings on vanity publishers' scams, Real Soon Now. I promise.

In any case I'm scaling back. Cut out the small-press market listings from my Web page, and like that.

Credit Where Credit Isn't Due (2)

The other thing that flattered and dismayed me was a review of RSNG #2 in *Opuntia* #37.1; Dale Speirs somehow perceived this as a zine about conrunning, and recommended it to conrunners everywhere. Well, gee, Dale, I hadn't meant to give that impression. Although I daresay there was enough about conrunning issues to give you that idea. Actually I meant the Navy and the *Gazette* to support something in Vancouver like the Cacophony Society, the creative self-entertaining silliness cubs operating in paces like Los Angeles, Seattle and Portland.

At this point some synchronicity was happening; the same day I received *Opuntia*, Don DeBrandt (author of the recently-published *Steele* driver, plug plug) said something like it was high time somebody put together at east a rudimentary document for conrunners. At least for VCon committees. I can see the writing on the wall. So I'll try to assemble and submit to WCSFA Press at least a bare-bones, first-draft report on how our conventions seem to be run.

I'm no more an authority than the next fan. Nor do I infer or imply that I am. In fact the next fan is probably more an authority. All I can do is compile documents.

Every fan seems to be ready to express opinions on how cons are run, anyway. It just gripes me that rather few concom members seem prepared to *document* what they do; have you noticed? A man who specializes in documenting fanactivity might as well take on this documentary job.

If anyone's interested I have been compiling a chronology of SF convention-running guides, and other resources; I have been running portions of it past the fans on the Timebinders listserv, for corrections and additions.

Oh, Dear ... Must We?

The issue of religion keeps cropping up, in both the fannish and mundane news I received this year. It keeps amazing me that anyone still takes religion seriously. Guess I'm really out of it, huh?

Brin-Marie McLaughlin commented in *Conferring with Earthquakes* #1 on President Clinton taking communion in South Africa, and a cardinal commenting that he "might not have been worthy" to take it. Brin went on to

other connections, asking why there is religious graffiti on American currency, and why gay marriages, or justified euthanasia and abortion, are frowned on due largely to religious hysteria, in an allegedly secular republic.

It's a fair question. Eventually the question may become a hot political issue, but like the anti-smoking poster campaigns, here and in the US, even a campaign to raise the question won't get far, if someone's ox is gored.

The latest media furore over Clinton at first seemed to me based on a lingering, religious attitude in the States, but I am told that people really aren't that interested in his private affairs. His opponents, I am told, are merely using anything available to get at him.

Here in Vancouver the moderate and fundamental Sikhs came to blows, ostensibly over whether to sit on chairs or on the floor for ritual meals. Actually, it represented a power struggle between the factions. A local judge has ruled that the moderates have control over the local temple where the knives came out.

Real Issues

Another recent issue in Vancouver is the aftermath of the APEC conference last year. As was well-known at the time, protesters of the Asia-Pacific Economic Conference, especially protesters of Indonesia's representation, were prevented from making their demonstration visible, and thus embarrassing Indonesia's dictator.

SF Movies

I have some phrases for things I see on TV and movie screens: "turn-off-your-mind entertainment" for things like *Starship Troopers* and *Wayne's World*, "disgustingly funny" for things like Leslie Nielsen's comedies or *Austin Powers*. You shouldn't be surprised, then, that I didn't expect very much from *Starship Troopers* on film, or *The Postman*, or for that matter *Sphere*. But not only do you have to gear down your brain at least a few notches; by my standards, the American production system mutilates stories that go on-screen.

Let's face it. As things stand now, SF *novels* can be about "playing with ideas", as I call it, but media SF is primarily about moving images, the more spectacular the better. Very little scope is allowed in the current production system for reasoned speculation. Maybe that can change, maybe it *will* change; I don't know. You thrash it out.

Recent Reading

Since obtaining full-time employment I've become a biblioholic. Things have gotten to the point where I spent almost everything but rent money, come payday. Maybe I should join a twelve-step program.

The surprising thing is how much nonfiction I'm buying. Two years ago I would have predicted that I would raid science fiction bookshelves all over the city. Recent book titles I've acquired include *The Disbeliever's Dictionary* (Brian Fawcett), *The Undeclared War* (James Laxer), books on the MAI and "free trade" agreements, dictionaries of several languages ... I'll probably have something to say about all this reading in my next issue.

MY IDEA OF FUN - Ideas to play with, culled from various places

For The Royal Swiss Navy Handbook (in preparation)

I've been reading a bunch of UFO stuff, and other esoterica, just so I'm up to speed on current alternative belief systems. It's mildly amusing.

My favourite UFO theory is that, if we ever establish diplomatic relations with grey aliens, we ought to launch a class-action lawsuit on behalf of abductees. For one thing, the UFO-abduction insurers ought to give a *lot* of support to such a suit, to recover their own disbursements. For another ... well, for Pete's sake, if you're *going* to visit another world, you really should mind the local air-traffic regulations, now shouldn't you?

Other crank theories I've been reading about involve the secret life of Nikola Tesla, what the real secrets of the Templars and the Masons were, the hidden doctrines and coded messages in the Gospels, and even in the Grail legends. Just wild stuff.

Perhaps my favourite is a Canadian spin on the *Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* apocrypha. *Holy Grail Across the Atlantic* maintains that not only was there a hidden royal bloodline in Europe, warping European history in interesting ways, but they established a secret pre-Columbian refuge in Nova Scotia, which explains some odd legends and archaeological anomalies on both sides of the Atlantic. Really entertaining.

My Crank Theory Which Is Mine and Belongs to Me

One of several things I haven't gotten out of my system is an idea that sociology, and anthropology, and studies like that are stuck in the same phase that alchemy was stuck in, before about the 1700s. But after about 20 years of thinking like that, I have finally realized I am not going to revolutionize human studies. I'm not even Joseph Dalton, who systematized chemical notation.

I won't even be able to predict what humans are going to do next, or what they expect from me.

I used to think that fields of human studies just needed a simple notational system, something like this:

$$\text{Axy} \cdot \text{Byx} \quad (1)$$

where A and B are given single behaviours, x and y are given humans (or social groups), and what x does to y leads predictably to y's response.

There are obvious problems with this – and I don't mean just the stereotype that sociology and anthropology majors are the students who couldn't hack the math, so they got out of the hard sciences. What I have to face is the fact that I just don't *perceive* a lot of social behaviour. It's just that least bit too subtle for me. You can probably think of a lot of habitual, cultural behaviours you go through every day, automatic transactions with tellers and counter staff and other drivers and whatnot, but who's counting? Where is there a "dictionary" of all the ordinary social behaviour we soak up?

In the next hundred years – hell, in the next generation – someone may well take this idea, and Edward T. Hall's communication model of culture, and come up with a conceptual revolution. But it won't be me.

I have a sort of chicken-and-the-egg problem. Like any number of people you probably know, I'm somewhat insensitive and oblivious to people's feelings, intentions, or gestures. A lot of what people mean, or want from me, flies right past me.

$Ax \supset \sim Pq \{Ax\}$

(2)

You might say that there's a subpopulation of people wandering around – high-functioning autistics, let's say; call them set q – and some of whatever anyone else says or does to them (A), they just don't get ($\sim P$).

Of course there is a personal agenda driving all of this. I could sum up the first forty years of my life as a futile effort to find out *what other people want and what I have to conform to*. Divining others' feelings and concerns is an occult art, as far as I'm concerned. I use the word "divining" deliberately. Maybe I could work up a kind of sortilege, using iconic glyphs to symbolize the driving passions of the people I meet. Maybe the same fortunetelling could serve to define the cultural, as well as the personal demands I have to meet.

The concerns of others seem occult, and my search for them is futile, because I seem unable to perceive them accurately. I have in fact lost at least one job because I could not understand what was not said, and I've been banging away at that barrier for decades. It's become an issue at the place where I work now.

The fact is, of course, it is precisely a subliminal, less than conscious communication of others *with* which I do battle. Since I was five I have implicitly demanded that people spit out in plain English whatever they want from me. And it is precisely something unconscious, for them, that I want spelled out.

Impasse. Maddening.

What I Learned on the Internet While Intending to Exchange Fanhistory:

- *Egoboo Points*

From: Dick Smith <rhess@enteract.com>

"I'm not convinced that the thing that goes on in rec.arts.sf.fandom is fanac... at the very least, you get less egoboo points for it than you do for a good joke at a convention room party. Or this discussion, either."

From: Earl Cooley III <shiva@IO.COM>

"How many egoboo points, exactly, is a good joke at a convention room party worth? I assume it would be modified by the status of the audience for said joke. Has anyone worked out the basic unit of measure for egoboo, like the millihelen is the basic unit of beauty? What about a BNF rating system, like the FIDE rates chess masters or the ACBL uses masterpoints to rank Life Masters in bridge? With enough proper research, you could then calculate mathematically just who really deserves to be named a Worldcon Fan GoH, for example. And, you could establish a minimum rating requirement for Fan Fund delegate candidates. heh."

Timebinders listserv, 9 Aug 1998

- *Words to Live By*

T Nielsen Hayden wrote:

"The boundary of fandom is the limit of the collective fannish attention span."

Timebinders listserv, 2 Aug 1998

- *Fanzines of Tomorrow (will there be any?)*


Don Fitch wrote:

"[...] I'm ... sure there'll continue to be a lot of really good 'fannish' stuff there. Unfortunately, as far as I can see, there's no way it can become either a part of our Community or a Community in itself."

Ted White wrote:

"Yes, and is precisely that lack of community which works against "zines" and for "fanzines." We know our audience and write to it; they don't (in most cases). From my point of view the real problem with even the zines which Do publish material we'd find worthwhile is that finding them and that material is like finding a needle in a haystack...."

Don Fitch wrote:

"I agree with both parts of this, of course, but reserve coming to a long-term conclusion on the first one. The "Zine publishers seem (nothing is yet absolutely clear-cut) to be finding (& some are building) several Communities based on various Focal Point Zines (mostly perzines or general ones with exceptionally strong Editorial or personality Presence). (The most conspicuous community seems to be called "Straight-Edge Punk" — vegetarian, non-drug (with a sub-set doing beer, maybe), anti-war, anti-racism, semi-anarchistic — with a bit (though not much) more stress on conformity than is traditional in Fandom.) The whole Zine sphere seems to be about where fanzine fandom was before *Quandry*. A major difference, of course, is that Zines are much easier for "outsiders" to get into, so that microcosm is less cohesive than Fanzine Fandom — lots of New Blood, but of various blood-types,  factors, and such-like incompatibilities. OTOH, if they don't know (and write to) their audience, they write for themselves, and let the potential audience sort itself out — which is not unlike the practice of many FanEds & FanWriters.

"Finding 'fannish stuff' isn't quite as bad as looking for a needle in a haystack. Maybe not even nearly as bad. Zine reviewers generally take pride in the breadth of their horizons & taste, but some are clearly much more fannish than others, and there's a trend, even in perzines, to either review or recommend a few of the publisher's favourites, which is often helpful in tracing new leads. Nothing is presented on a platter, so you have to work at finding things you like, and it's unlike fandom in that you'll find tons of things you very much do not like, or that you'll consider almost-totally uninteresting. I think the major drawback to any idea of merging (or even extensively cross-pollinating) these two fandoms (or spheres of amateur publishing), is that we in Fandom really already have more Fanzines and Fans (and, for that matter, friends) than most of us can cope with. Not more than we want, mind you, but more than we can handle. And now we have the NewsGroups, E-mail Lists, and WebPages....

"Then there are the points Garth Spencer (among others) brought up: To what extent is the Community (or Family) aspect we perceive in Fandom real, how much of it is an idealized illusion, and how big can a Community be without attenuating into a (much less personal & individualized) City, or fragmenting into different and distinct neighbourhoods/communities? Have, Ghu help us, Fanzines (as well as — begging the question — large conventions) ceased to be a single Community (if they ever were)? (IMHO, there's a trend towards applying mundane Copyright Laws to fanzines & fanwriting, moving away from the concept of these being Community/Communal Property, and I hope Rob Hansen's treatment of his The Martin Chronicles will help reverse this.)"

Timebinders, June 2, 1998

- *Fanzine Fandom Outreach (are we doing any?)*

Watts Martin (<mika@SOLLUNA.ORG>), on 26 July '98, wrote:

<snips passim> >It may not be inappropriate to ask who IS proselytizing.

"I hesitate to Name Names, but Geri Sullivan & (recently) Patrick Nielsen Hayden have been doing it in the Minicon context, Arnie & Joyce Katz mostly in 'Vegas fandom, and Joe Siclari with the FANAC Web Site.

"Quite a few others as well, I suppose, and many... claim to be, and undoubtedly think & believe they are, but there's a big question in my mind whether they're reaching an adequate audience. The biggest success, during the past decade, appears to have been in UK fandom, and it's not clear to me what procedures they use.

"Writing is hard work (well... quality writing is, for most people).

Producing a reasonably-good fanzine is hard work, and expensive. In 1998 (vs., say 1958, when I discovered fandom) that amount of work and money invested in any number of other things can produce results most people (proto-fans, even) are likely to consider more rewarding than those resulting from written/published fanac.

"Traditionally (and still, as far as I can figure out) promising neofans have come in, done some increasingly Good Stuff, and either gafiated entirely or drifted into a vaguely-in-touch Limbo towards the end of about five years. I'd estimate that a maximum of ten percent of these "Converts" remain indefinitely (there appears to be another drop-out point at ca. 15 years ... roughly paralleling, as someone has noted, the failures of marriages). This isn't an area where solid statistics are available, but it looks to me as though the replacement rate isn't keeping up with the attrition rate (except maybe in the UK), and hasn't been for several decades. As the solid-state fans get older, publish less, and die off, this is going to become an increasingly serious problem, and I don't believe we've yet come up with an adequate answer for it... if there is an adequate/pleasing answer, and I'm beginning to suspect there isn't."

- *How Incestuous Is Fandom?*

Bill Donaho <donaho@JUNO.COM> wrote:

"Miriam Carr/Knight/Lloyd has a theory. She says that during the 50's the outside world was a truly awful place, and that fannish fandom was an oasis. And because it was a needed oasis, fans identified more, and were closer and

more dedicated. But the various social revolutions of the 60's made the outside world not so bad to most young people and the need for our oasis wasn't so strong.

Don Fitch wrote:

"Miriam's not the only one with that theory — I think maybe about 20 people developed it independently, and as many as a hundred more have consciously adopted one or another of these forms. Yup, fandom used to be, for a proto-fan, just about the only game in town. Now, such a person can drop into any number of places and be dealt a pretty good hand. Most of them chance into spots other than fandom, and even if they eventually discover us they're not likely to leave the one in which they've become Established.

"It's kinda disillusioning, though. In those various other microcosms/ fandoms I've stumbled upon, most of the things I've been considering as characteristic of (our) fandom — writing skill, intelligence, imaginativeness, creativity, amiable weirdness — seem to be in better supply and perhaps at a higher average level than they are here. It's not easy to discover that not only are we not Unique, we're not nearly as Superior as we thought we were."

Timebinders listserv, July 28, 1998



CAWSEY '93

LOCS

Peter Motte, 9 November 1997

I've noticed in your writing that you are

- a) critical
- b) intelligent.

You may have noticed that this combination is rare in science fiction fandom.

Sometimes I'm downright depressed because of the silliness of some fans, because of the silly way in which they run after anything as long as there is 'SF' or 'fantasy' written on it and as it is marketed the right way, instead whether it is a quality product. Partially that situation caused the lack of real success for my magazine, *De Tijdlijn*. Sometimes I think the critical intelligent fans should try to unite themselves, to look for truths about anything but sf&f and its fandom in particular, without being hampered by business' interests. In the long term such a collaboration could be useful for us. Actually, I propose a secret parallel fandom. We could try to select potential members by checking out their ideas and inclinations, rather than by checking out whether they read a lot of books, want to pay huge fees for memberships, or the like. Somehow it must be possible to trace them down via their publications.

(A friend once explained to me that the kind of friends I was looking for in fandom are still going to be in the minority, but the "hit rate" is going to be a little better.

(As far as finding candidates, we are surrounded by an embarrassment of riches. John Labovitz (somewhere in the U.S.) maintains a fannish directory listing e-mail fanzines and the like. John Lorentz (Portland, Oregon) maintains a fannish e-mail directory.

(As far as determining who are the critical and intelligent fans, nothing will serve but personal experience and communication with other fans. That, right there, limits the number of people one can list to the number of people one fan can relate to.)

Anyhow, it doesn't matter how we trace them, as long as we don't make mistakes.

(I used to be pretty obsessed and intense about not making any mistakes. The problem is, as I found, that you can't get through life without making mistakes. Even some big, critical ones. It's just not on.)

A co-operation should result in several actions. First of all, critical action of books, films, graphical novels and other artistic products associated with sf&f.

("Critical action of"? Garth not understand.

(I get the impression that the contemporary European fandom you witness, at least in Belgium, is very much the captive of SF as marketed by commercial parties, such as Paramount Studios. The situation is a little more complicated here. Most of what I pay attention to is SF novels; I have read very little in SF periodicals over the past several years, albeit I keep collecting and updating my SF market information across a wide range of frequency and circulation categories. Small press, professional publishers, periodicals and anthology/novel publishers.)

Secondly, critical research on the condition of sf&cf and its fans, and their relation with publishing companies. In a word: reveal the inner workings of the system. It could place us for some unpleasant surprises, but what the hell: I think all of us have already been unpleasantly surprised already.

(The few fans who are up for this effort are already doing it. Proposing that we make it a general effort will be labelled as "sercon" and will be ignored.)

Thirdly, as we need a) to keep in touch, and b) to spread our thoughts amongst our members and think-a-likes, we need a publication to express our findings. That means some kind of magazine. It could be on paper, it could be electronically. We could even use both techniques. Anyhow, some people who write about the web state that important information is and will always be available on paper too. Paper lasts longer than electronic data, which is rather volatile, and anyway: information on paper is readable to more people than in electronic form. The group could be secret (so that we personally don't risk to be under attack from the companies, which could result in isolation), but our publications shouldn't be.

(The way I see it, there's a Web site and publication for every interest group, coalition, faction and society. There's also at least one zine for every chowder and marching society you can think of, and many you couldn't. It was partly with this in mind that I set up the Royal Swiss Navy.)

If you want to start collecting serious and constructive fans into a Movement, go right ahead. It might take off, who knows?

I don't know whether you have an idea for the name of our group. I propose Critical Alternative Fandom. Actually, the name doesn't matter a lot, as long as it makes clear what we stand for. If you like it, then we are the first two members of CAF.

Clue cards/ SF Con Game Alchemy

R'ykandar Korra'ti rzyek@antixite.murkworks.net, 12 Jan 1998:

| R'ykandar Korra'ti was actually thinking of another thing to mode in a game format:

well, that and a never-to-be-missed opportunity to be snide in a hopefully semi-funny way. and to get a point across. the funny possible result would be if people actually started collecting cues. that's why i wanted nice art for them, so there might actually be some reason to want to collect these things. "you're an idiot, but here's a nice drawing." :)

*| The point of the game he proposes is, simply, to give them a clue.
and to parody trading card games. but hey.*

| "Clue cards" are an idea that haven't caught on

we haven't done them (editorial "we") because i haven't had time to push the project. conrad wong and i were interested in making it happen, plus we had some interest from other artists. which presumably we'd still have.

(I have been told that "cue cards" wouldn't work as intended, or wouldn't make for a that entertaining a game. Unless you're not on the committee))

Help for the Socially Retarded

Henry Welch Welch@admin.msos.edu, 9 Jan 1998

In Steve George's LOC he indicates that social ineptness is covered up in fanzines. I think, that at best, they are (*sic*) only slightly masked. One only has to look at the crap printed and written by some of the more prominent SF faneds and letter hacks to see examples. In addition, if we broaden our zine perspective it gets even worse (see any recent issue of Jim Romenesko's *Obscure Publications* for an example).

*** TECHIE WARNING ***

R'ykandar Korra'ti, rayek@anvilite.murkworks.net, 12 Jan 1998:

I have to disagree with Joseph T. Major in the definition of a shell account. A shell account as opposed to AO or Juno does not provide you with special software to interface with your provider. Typically a shell account can be run through a simple terminal program like Kermit, ProComm, or Hyperterminal. Generally it gives you direct access to the operating system (UNIX is common) or provides a menu program. Some shell accounts can be provided with graphics as long as a sophisticated terminal program is supported at both ends. For example, on a PC eXcursion can be used to start an X Windows System session that allows for fu graphics since an X version of Netscape is available.

*** END TECHIE WARNING ***

Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Dr., Hurst, TX 76054, U.S.A., 4 Jan 1998:

You are the only person to acknowledge receiving one of the many penny postcards I mailed out. Some things are priceless.

A COA for Amie Katz is news to me. I can't find any recent fanzines from as Vegas in my fannish stack of mail. ...

I have taken to searching the Internet for quick and dirty knowledge. I know what it provides is superficial and biased. Virtual knowledge has no depth.

I'm a little distressed by correspondents who expect instantaneous responses, or think I do. If you don't take time to think about what to say, correspondence will consume your life with little content.

Pace yourself ...

murray.moore@encode.com (Murray Moore), March 1/98

I respect your decision to abandon *Sercon Popcult Literit Fanmag* and replace it with *The Royal Swiss Navy Gazette*. I will miss SPLF, however. I invested mental energy in remembering the title for which SPLF was the acronym. And, *Sercon Popcult Literit Fanmag* had a resonance which still had a lot of energy for me.

The petroglyphs on pages 11, 19 & 20, reminded me of our visit, last August, on our way to Ottawa, to a former provincial park, near Peterborough, now operated by a Native band. The petroglyphs which are the reason the park was created, are painted on a large circular area of rock, protected from weather by a surrounding domed building. Visitors can walk around the rock on the encircling walkway and get a good view.

Further east is another provincial park, also now run by a Native band, the centrepiece of which is a burial mound in a s-shape, thus the name, Serpent Mound (formerly-Provincial) Park.

Being in the presence of the petroglyph-covered rock made for a contemplative experience. Pre-European peoples in our end of Canada lived such simple lives that hardly any artifact of size survives. The Natives here did not carve totem poles, for instance.

The petroglyph-covered rock is in the middle of bush, whereas the burial mound is on a height of land which drops off on two sides to a large lake. The burial site is scenic. The petroglyph site was in the middle of nowhere, stumbled upon by a prospector.

You exceeded your stated ideal page count of 16 pages with *Royal Swiss Navy 1*. I mentally shake my head at your decision not to publish a single letter. Letters are the core, the reason to read, many a fanzine. Fanzines are about communication between fans, and egoboo. Instead you filled four pages with filler from the Internet, and a fifth page with a Charles Dana Gibson drawing.

(I didn't have much choice with that issue. I did have a choice about illustration placement, and there I could have used more imagination.)

The fanzine descriptions did not tell me anything I needed to know, because I have been back in the web of fanzine fandom long enough to know who is doing what, and which fanzines are of interest to me. I do not mean to leave you with the thought that I think the fanzine descriptions too are filler. Fanzines should recognize that other fanzines exist, that each fanzine is a piece of a continuum. If a single reader of ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE 1 is led to other fanzine titles, then the fanzines received listing will have been a worthy inclusion.

You are too hard on fandom, expecting too much (*An Insidious Threat To All Of Fandom*). Of course you are disappointed if you expect fans to adopt other fans in Big Brother and Big Sister/Little Brother and Little Sister groupings. Fans do help each other. Maybe you Lotuslanders don't see the sun enough in the winter? Cheer up, Garth. Let me know if you find a more fulfilling alternative to fandom.

W:AHF: *Chester Cuthbert, Lyn McConchie, Rodney Leighton*

ILLUSTRATIONS

Charles Dana Gibson & unknown.....	cover
unknown (back cover of <i>Doctor Mirabilis</i>).....	1
Dan Cawsey	8
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Linda Hardy	18

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

to the

SWISS SUBMARINE CONVENTION

(Fall 1997)

Al Macintyre

Al lives in Evansville, Indiana, so I assume the Louisville KY refers to where the submarine convention took place. I am not really sure, since it is all an SF fantasy mind game anyway. Incidentally, the other people doing a satire within the spirit of the Swiss Navy, also did a great job (I refer to men admitting women into their former male club, without noticing self-bias problems, and comparing weirdnesses of population groups to consequences of different aliens among us - due to my interests, I usually think in terms of the aliens being time travellers visiting our era, who get their "facts" wrong because they got them from books not yet written in the future) I hope more of your fans are similarly inspired in future issues.

Garth's comments on Steve's input included a reference to time spent "disposing of spam." As you are probably aware, I am very interested in directing spammers to the slammer & I keep getting chunks of neat stuff we can do to grease the Mac Wheels of Justice to that end. Perhaps when the Keynote Address series has concluded, you might want me to dream up a mock trial or something. Spam tends to be such a pain in the neck for most on-line people that they just want meaningful guidance, such as the web site that lists the attorney generals of all USA states, and how to look up the police department of the junk mailers that give out their business address; While people who are not yet on-line cannot appreciate why web surfers equate spam with shark jaws in real-world surf. Given that disconnect between your audiences, perhaps this is an inappropriate topic for me to be making light of.

LoCcer Dale Speirs observed: "One wonders what the point is of trying to publish a con-runner guide. Those who need the advice the most are least likely to heed it. What baffles me is why SF is so susceptible to this." He talked about a stamp show then asked why can't SF cons run as smoothly. His speculations included average age of volunteers & what their roles are in the real world.

Al Macintyre has a slightly different view point. Having seen the same type of chaos in many game conventions as SF, while other "pastimes" such as computer users tend to have seemingly very professionally run cons, and there are overlapping con committees, I speculate that one of the reasons why some hobbies have traditionally self-destructive cons, while others are well organized, has to do with what the participants are in it for, and what's at risk if the con committee screws up.

Folks at computer cons are often in-it for meaningful personal education for advancement in using tools, or doing a better job in their career. They are paying big bucks & they expect a big bang for their investment of time. For the hucksters to be able to display their goodies to full effect they need oodles of electrical power and more than a modicum of guaranteed insurance & security. You end up having business people on the con committee who are serious about business realities and sensible structure, or the con does not fly. If the con com promises one thing & delivers another, all the members of the

committee are likely to be named in a law suit for commercial contract malfeasance.

Folks at SF & game cons are usually in-it to have a hell of a good time, and the folks on the con committee are also often in the con com for fun. The hucksters are a trivial portion of the total con. How much of a stamp con's activity involves either stuff changing hands in business deals, or valuable collections on display that had better be protected property, or else?

Many SF & game cons are staffed by volunteers who have successful careers, but SF fandom & simulation gaming attracts a lot of people who have not yet graduated high school & many of these people volunteer for con coms, where the democratic process more resembles anarchy than any formal structure.

LoCcer R'ykandar Korra'ti talked about a game whose purpose is unclear to me, because like the scenario Dale Speirs talked about, in which there are resources used by people who don't need them & ignored by people who do, the same could be said about the proposed game. The game may need to be clothed in some layers to disguise the real purpose. I have dabbled in time travel game design, and many people have created role paying games for characters visiting some reality divorced from our own. Is there a possible appeal to any of the anti-social characters paying a game in which they need to pass as a civilised human being in our reality, or some aspect of it?

There are such games within simulation game fandom. One variant started out as a simulation game to be played by the family members of families in trouble. The kids played the role of the parents, parents played the role of the kids. By what the roleplayers did, the psychologists drew insight into the nature of the conflicts in the family, and the degree to which observed behaviour diverted from some norms, without having to draw out information that is sometimes difficult to elicit. I am familiar with this game because another variant became extremely popular in game fandom outside the medical application.

We use it to simulate complex politics, such as making sense of what is going on in Washington DC, i.e. the folks who are observers, pay the roles of the leaders we sometimes think are unbalanced. How do we players act out the roles of leaders on the word stage? This communicates volumes to folks who are observing us. Thus the entertainment value varies greatly for different perspectives.

LoCcer Henry Welch thought *"until someone does a real marketing study and understands EXACTLY how the fannish mind works (if at a) the average con committee will have no idea how to attract new constituencies."*

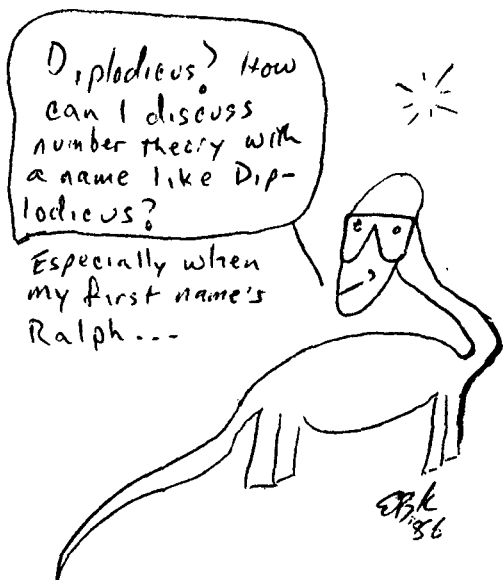
Well, several game cons HAVE done marketing studies. This stems from the idea that when you create a new game & would like to promote it, market testing comes with the territory. However, there are always arguments with the conclusions. People bring some philosophies to the table, like major political parties. They get some facts, filter them through their philosophy, and come out with some conclusions that are invariably the same regardless of the facts & of course people with different political philosophies, after digesting the same facts, come out with totally different conclusions.

Several of the Cincinnati Cons, when I was active in the structure, had surveys for participants - fill them out & we will use them on the basis of a random drawing - you do not have to identify yourself on the form, but if we draw one that has no identity, it will not get any door prizes - you do not even need to put down any answers to qualify for the drawing, but invariably people want to express some views.

There are questions like "How did you find out about this con?" "Was that a reliable method for you finding out about cons?" "What media do you view or subscribe to that you would expect to include an announcement of a con like this one?" "What places do you frequent, where there are bulletin boards, and other places, that you think are logical places where we should advertise this con in future years."

These types of questions do not help with the people who never did find out about the con, or heard but never came, but it does help to correlate this feedback with where the advertising budget moneys went, provided the people working with the data are prepared to cope with any facts that contradict theories they love.

Al Macintyre



FANZINES RECEIVED:

Bardic Runes XVI, from Michael McKenny, 424 Cambridge St. S., Ottawa, ON K1S 4H5. A biennial fiction zine, \$4.00 each. Mainly sword and sorcery fiction. I'm sorry, Michael, but I have no taste or judgment in these things, how can I review a fiction zine? Or poetry, for that matter?

BCSF-Azine #294 & 295-6 / November & December 1997, c/o #110 - 1855 West 2nd Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6J 1J1. Fifteen reasons why BCSFA is not the mind control centre of Southeast Asia; the hideous truth encoded behind the final *Beachcomber* episodes; why John is called Ken; and other crowdpleasers. All this for just \$25/year! (Hey, didn't my subscription just run out?)

Converse #3, Jan. 1998, Kim Huett, P.O. Box 679, Woden, ACT 2606, Australia. I think of Kim Huett as the man who puts good things in small packages, like some priceless Marc Orlieb send-ups of fanzine history as the subject of grade-school geology or biology (which ought to be posted on the Web someplace, hint hint); this issue focuses on Huett's proposed project to make a fanthology of Lucy Huntzinger's fanwriting. Lucy Huntzinger, we are to understand, is an Elder Ghod of fanpubbing, and one of Huett's New Year's resolutions is to "study at the feet of Lucy Huntzinger it my website is as cool as hers". (I keep coming in late on all the cool stuff ...)

Emerald City #27 - 34 (Nov 97 - June 98), an occasional zine produced by Cheryl Morgan and available from her at cmorgan@ceres.wallis.com or on-line at <http://www.emcit.com>. SEE Westercon 98's ruling that Australia can't bid for Westercon until the US annexes Australia - or vice versa! SEE what a Wisconsin is like (in the state proud of bad cheese)! And other convention and book reviews.

Ethel the Aardvark, MSFC, P.O. Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Vic. 3005, Australia.

FOSFAX #192, August 1998, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281, U.S.A. An entire world between two covers,

The Geis Letter ##48-53 from Richard E. Geis, P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211-0408, U.S.A., is known for featuring some paranoid conspiracy theories, but Geis has de-emphasized that in recent issues.

Mind you, in issues ##48-51, he brings up (and dismisses) the suspicion some people have had, that HIV was a virus deliberately manufactured, and deliberately disseminated. Only because current AIDS treatments are so expensive, and ill-distributed, the upcoming mass die-off in population will be concentrated precisely in the densest and poorest parts of the Third World. This is the sort of thing that causes unrest. An anonymous letter in the latest *Geis Letter* points out that a sterilization pill is deliberately being marketed to reach the same populations in the Third World. That is the sort of thing that causes conspiracy theories.

#53 covers a variety of topics, including a review of one of Geis' earlier topics - the fact that the world economy is sustaining a huge debt bubble, which is due to expire any time now.

I keep getting the feeling that, in evaluating conspiracy theories, Geis' book reviews miss the distinction between *America*-spanning conspiracies and *worldwide* ones. Not all that distinct a distinction from there, but from here there's a bit more chance to duck and run.

Capucine Plourde in Quebec keeps sending me *Klignon Subspace Transmissions* - for example, issue "Stardate: 9806.03" - subtitled "The Electronic Newsletter of the Klignon Imperial Diplomatic Corps". Email klignon@klignon.org and see what happens.

Kerles #1, Tommy Ferguson ed., at 40 Deramore Avenue, Belfast, BT7 3ER, Northern Ireland; E-mail: tferg@dial.pipex.com Phone: (01232) 293275; a fanzine review zine, this first issue.

The Knarley Knews #67-71, December 1997 to August 1998, Henry Welch ed., 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017, U.S.A.

MimeMeow, Bill Bridget, 900 Mtn. Creek Rd. Apt. 0-187, Chattanooga, TN 37405, U.S.A. I'm beginning to think of this as the sushi version of a personalzine, where *Outworlds* compares to a full-course steak dinner.

Opuntia #40, Sept. 1998, from Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, AB T2P 2E7. This issue: letters, and another historical article on chain letters.

Outworlds #70, Bill Bowers, 4651 Glenway Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45238, 4503, U.S.A. Himfela one big fanzine! This fanzine seems to discuss everything in the fannish universe, and then some.

Snifkin's Bum #2, November 1997, Maureen Kincaid Speller ed., 60 Bournemouth Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5AZ U.K. Fifteen reasons why Maureen ought to be a TAFF winner (not forgetting the cat).

Squib 3, Victor Gonzalez, 403 1/2 Garfield St. S. #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, U.S.A., squib@galazy-7.net. I'm not evolved enough to appreciate this fanzine properly.

Thyme #118, November 1997 - #122, July 1998, P.O. Box 222, Word Trade Centre, Melbourne, Vic. 3005, Australia. The Australian news and reviewzine I keep confusing with *Ethel the Aardvark*. Latest issue: the completion of Ian Gunn's "Space-Time Buccaneers"!

TommyWorld 29-40, Tommy Ferguson ed., at 40 Deramore Avenue, Belfast, BT7 3ER, Northern Ireland; E-mail: tferg@dial.pipex.com Phone: (01232) 293275 - A legend in his own time! A wealth of fable and nîmour precedes him everywhere! Coming soon to a fannish community near YOU!

Voices from the Boneyard, June 11 / Oct. 15 / Dec. 1 / Dec. 8, 1997 / Jan 8, 1998,
Paul Carpentier, P.O. Box 5171, Bellingham, WA 98227, U.S.A. Due to a recent
out-of-court settlement and the conditions under which legal action was
withdrawn I can't tell you about this fannish legend, but his film and event
reviews are lots of fun nonetheless.

Date: Fri, 23 Jan 1998

From: Arthur Mirieo <mirieo@videotron.ca>

Hi.

I would like to offer my online adventure series for
you and your readers.

<http://members.tripod.com/~OIS>

et me know if you use it or not.

I'm a Canadian writer.

Thanks

This happens every time my name and address gets outside of fanzine fandom!! — GS

