

SPENT BRASS

The allegedly frequent fanzine that says "Ho! For the Yukon!" Published by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, of 315 N. Ingersoll, Madison, WI 53703, members fwa, and available for the usual, or \$1.00/2 issues. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #130, 2/21/92. Material this time comes from Peter Larsen, Andi Shechter, Ted White, and Chris X. Art credits on page 12. Corflu Ten: May 21 -- 23rd, 1993.

"The time now is 332 AD, and you've been listening to the Sonata in F major for oboe and guitar by Charles Starkweather, on 88.7 FM, WEBU..."

NEVER APOLOGIZE, NEVER EXPLAIN by Andy



Well, I imagine it has been a source of some satisfaction that we rapidly fell off of our near tri-weekly pubbing schedule. This is our first issue since June of last year, and I have heard those semi-public whispers about how the upstart cheesehead neofen pushed their meagre talents past the redline, and flamed out like a short-block Chevy trying to run with the top-fuel boys. "Sunday, Sunday, Sunday!", I hear you all chortling to yourselves, "see Andy Hooper and Carrie Root shoot a hundred-foot ball of fire!"

But take notice: We're back. There were a few little things we had to get out of the way before we could start publishing regularly

again...to wit, three weddings, a worldcon, family births and deaths, the acquisition of one new job and the search for another, the best World Series since 1975, and preparations for moving 2000 miles across the country. Plus, I'm trying to organize fan-programming for Magicon, and we want to have Corflu Ten here in Madison in 1993. And you people didn't help that much, either: All those locs and trade fanzines! The pile of letters I've had to wade through in preparing this issues "Blowback" column is truly impressive. I've gone to fanzine panels at conventions in the past and listened to people complaining about the lack of letters in response to their 'zines, and all I can say is that they must not have the same people on their mailing list as we do!

In fact, the many mutterings of gloom and misery that I hear about the death of the fanzine and the decimation of trufandom, would seem to be contra-indicated by the huge pile of 1991 fanzines that I have at my feet right now. There was a real rush of good material that came out in December, issues of Mark Manning's Tand, the Lynch's Mimosa, Pulp, even, Begad, Rune 81, now in the control of an engagingly bent editorial circle. And we can't stand to sit on the sidelines anymore!

I wanted to be able to start the "frequent" gears grinding again; I liked that part of it all. Showering people with a bewildering blizzard of Spent Brass, coming out every three hours if we could manage it. I wanted to resist the process of enlargement that has claimed so many fine zines in the past, slowed them down to an annual pace.

So. After this ultra-big double issue, we'll go back to our ensmallled ideals. If we can't keep up a frequent schedule, we'll announce an official hiatus, and we won't leave you hanging and wondering if we just forgot about you. Spent Brass is going to be a frequent fanzine, and if we can't do it the way we want to, we'll kill it. (And pick a new title by the next day.) -- aph

...a savage little tool capable of delivering a 50,000 volt whack...

"It is possible to be below flattery as well as above it."

THE FIGHTING FANZINE REVIEW COLUMN:

PART I: PIGS IN A BLANKET

Before I move on to the meat of the matter, I'd like to respond to letters from the studio audience. Thanks for sharing; keep writing and I'll respond when I feel like it. Mr. White and Ms. Rosenzweig both complained that I gave Pulp and FTT the short end of my fist back in #2. Well, I agree and plan on writing more about them in the future, especially if they bother to send new issues to me. That goes for the rest of you: if you want to see your name in bruises up on my silver screen, you've got to get your stuff to me. Send fanzines and hate mail to: PO Box 13253, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414-0253. Red Boggs and Barnaby Rapoport did just that; look where it got them.

Also correct is Mr. Warner, who took me to task for demanding that faneds "do their best." I can't know what their best is, so I'll rephrase my tune. If I see shit, I'll call it shit. Now this doesn't mean (as one of you whose name I've mislaid worried) that I want to beat on first-time crudzine editors who don't know any better, and who'll get discouraged and become Trekheads at the first taste of rough handling. It takes time to see who's worth the spit. My bile is reserved for fans who have put out article after article with no sign of improvement or any evidence that they notice how amazingly awful they are.

Which brings me to Mr. Andruschak's defense of ROSEFAX. Now it's true that I'm fairly new to fan writing, having been around for only about five years or so, but I've read a whole lot o' zines in that time, and I am aware of what ROSEFAX is trying to do. My beef is that they do it so fucking badly. Mr. Andruschak, you are welcome to disagree with me (I wallow in it), but defending tripe requires more than saying "the reviewer ain't qualified." With that out of the way, on to the reviews.

Three of them this time, all the soul of brevity. First come, first served, with Redd Boggs' zippy little Spirochete. Although produced for FAPA, this little mimeographed four-pager stands on its own. #55, the one he sent me (although I've pillaged others) addresses the burning question "who wrote Zane Grey?" with grace and plausibility. A few bits of letters follow, and that's all. There's an old-style homey faanishness to it, an atmosphere which would probably kill me if I had to live there, but that's great to visit. A quick, pleasant read that appears frequently and has some meat to it. Spirochete is a spiritual ancestor of the Spent Brass project. This is a style worth pursuing; fandom needs more sprightly little zines to counteract the gravitational stress of the "ten pounds of lard per pound of meat" ideal. Fortunately, there's others in the camp.

Once upon a time, there was a bitingly witty fanzine called Abbotoir. Produced by Bryan Barrett and Lucy Huntzinger, it was the sort of rabid fun that I eat with a spoon. Well, Cartouche isn't Abbotoir, since it's so much nicer, but it is witty and fun and I can actually get copies. The material is varied and has almost nothing to do with fandom. The Bay quake and Romance novels rub shoulders with the opera "Pietro Rosa" and pig farming.

Yep, something for everyone in the big city. I'd like to see a little of the bite return, but I can live with Cartouche as it is, especially if they get on a regular (or at least frequent) schedule.

Let's Fanag. Barnaby Rapoport's latest zine, isn't quite as little as it might be, but it feels like a small zine, so what the hell. Its biggest drawback is its ugly layout, with big sloppy pages of text that don't hang together. A little tightening and reduction could work wonders, though, and visual style is the easiest thing to fix. What about the contents? Short reviews, a brief visit to Mike Gunderloy's house, and discussion of arguments that did or didn't convince. The analysis is sound, the reviews to the point, and the feeling of the whole thing, despite the look, is a nice unity. If Mr. Rapoport tightens down his hatches, and this puppy goes out with any frequency, I'll be pretty damn happy.

This is what we're looking to see; more small zines on a schedule. At Spent Brass, we're looking to be a good example, a rude beacon in troubled times (Editor's note: we've no need to have the irony of this last sentence pointed out to us, thank you). If just a few more zines could pickup and deliver, we might see some real action, something a little more interesting than bad genre reviews and moaning about fandom past and present. So what about it, eh? Don't you have anything to say?

PART II:

IT'S SUMMERTIME AND THE LIVING IS EASY

Summer's got me by the throat again, and it isn't going to let go easily. This heats my already irascible nature, which is too fucking bad for me, 'cause I don't have anything that really needs the sharp stick this time. Of course, the mailbox hasn't exactly been full, either, if you know what I mean. The address is still Peter Larsen, PO Box 13253, Dinkytown Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414-0253. Remember: a zine sent to A.P. Hooper, man about town, has a fairly small chance of showing up in my column; we live 300 miles apart, OK? This issue my target is zines that look away from traditional faanish preoccupations.

The first item on the block has nothing to do with SF/F, fans, or fandom, but it's a load o' fun. Holy Titclamps is a queerpunk rantzine that howls and gibbers its way into your heart. The latest issue, #8, had an interview with a lesbian dj, a visit to a Mpls. exhibit on the history of underwear by underwear-bedecked commandos, gay/lesbian/alternative music/fanzine/art terrorism convention in Chicago, and loads of photos, art, comix, poems and fiction. It's mostly gay/punkish, but there's material here for anyone interested in sexual frontiers. SF fans need to read stuff like this to keep their heads out of their self-referential ghettoized asses. It's the same reason Factsheet Five and Novoid get my vote. Holy Titclamps is a window into a very different sensibility, so take a look: it's not only good, it's good for you.

A guy who's totally unconcerned by genre boundaries is finally back in the world of fanzines. Garth Danielson, editor of Boowatt,

demon brain of the Rune boys, writer of Nick Bortop mysteries, has unveiled his new venue: Spangler. Garth is a wild man, a media grist mill, a book devouring maniac, a collector of stuff whose tastes and obsessions rattle together like armadillos in a drum. He takes the world (such as it is) and sorts it all with a naive eye (although he knows very much what he is doing). He's just so damn interested in almost everything; a trip to a Target store becomes an adventure, because you never know what he'll find. Spangler is the latest entrant on the small-but-frequent list, so it's a doubly good thing: fandom needs some punctuation in its run-on sentence.

I want to like Sticky Quarters #20 better than I do. The last issue was great, built around a long, intense article on the Names Project, but this offering wanders, distracted and stale, over the usual terrain. There are some high points: Harry Warner's "The Purloined Letter", and "The Thrill of Defeat" by Eric Mayer are engaging, but I had hoped for more. The issue lacks focus; Taral's "Roach Motel" should provide it, but it's too long, with too little payoff to manage the trick, and the bad layout and sloppy repro add to the problem. Worse though is the totally faanish attitude. Last issue that old-faanish gentility contrasted nicely with broader concerns; left to itself, it becomes cloying. Sticky Quarters might well be the model for the "big zine" of the future, but it might also become a victim of the past.

And lastly, a plucky little magazine conscious of its 'zine roots. Nova Express does reviews, criticism, stories by hot talent, and the best interviews I've read in a long time. They've got great taste, they're cheap, and if you know what's good for you, you'll get this before either Locus or Science Fiction Chronicle. To do it better, these guys are partial to the small press, alerting readers to material that would otherwise go unnoticed. Not as snippy as SF Eye, but with much the same attitude, Nova Express is a rude example of what SF magazines should be, but mostly aren't.

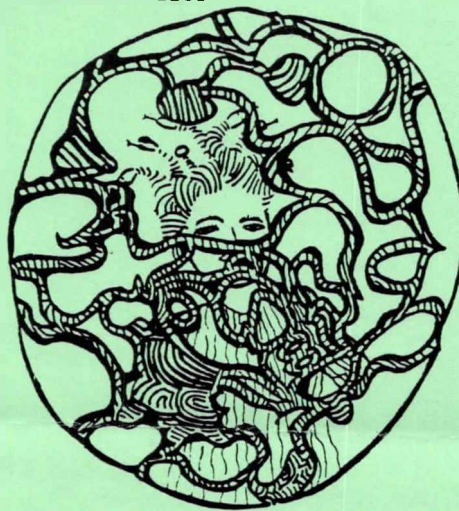
What did that have to do with this column? Nova Express is a F/SF magazine that takes its cue from the broader world, unlike its rather sad competition. That's where fanzines need to be. Lan's Lantern and Fosfax are as popular and horrible as they are because they appeal easily to the media fans, the geek fans, the fans that are never going to get out of the fan ghetto. The best fanzines get out, they carry ghetto culture with them (they don't forget their roots), but they don't limit themselves to ghetto concerns. The future of fanzines is not the future of mainstream SF fandom, and the sooner we all stop agonizing over it the better, OK?

Zines Reviewed:

Spirochete (for FAPA members and selected others applying the usual) from Redd Boggs, PO Box 1111, Berkley, CA 94701
Cartouche (the usual) from Lucy Huntzinger, 2523 Sunset Place, Nashville, TN 37212 & Bryan Barrett, PO Box 6202, Hayward, CA 94540
Let's Fanac (the usual) from Barnaby Rapoport, PO Box 565, Storrs CT 06268
Holy Titclamps (\$2) from Larry-Bob, PO Box 3054, Minneapolis, MN 55403. It's a good idea

to leave the title off your envelope if you don't want Mr. Postmaster fucking around with your stuff

Spangler, (the usual) Garth Danielson 3817 29th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55406
Sticky Quarters, (the usual) Brian Earl Brown 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224
Nova Express (\$3, \$10/year) PO Box 27231, Austin, TX 78755-2231



TINY TALES OF TERROR:

AND THEY'RE GOOD FOR YOU TOO!

by Andi Shechter

We had a housewarming party last December. It was lots of fun -- people came, drank beer, ate munchies, brought us presents like slug bait and gardening books and generally hung around and provided lots of company and good conversation for hours. It was a rather crazy time -- we'd moved in a month earlier, and Jerry and Suzle had moved in upstairs the day before. We thought of having the party the same day, but various things made it better to hold it the day after the move.

So Saturday, the day before the party, the wonderful Kate and Glenn schlepped us to the supermarket, because we don't have a car, and we needed to substantially stock up on everything. You know, it's so hard to tell what to buy for a party. If you buy lots of one thing, invariably it won't be consumed. So you better damn well buy what you like, because you'll be eating it for days (yes, the carrots did get used, thank you.) So we had cleaning to do, and we had to take the piles of papers, hide them in another room and all that jazz, food to buy, all on that Saturday. Sunday we had to prepare food and cut things and put things in dishes and clean the dishes out that were not worthy of putting things in and mix dips and be nervous. I'm great at that. I send out an invitation that says the party starts at 3:00. At 3:03 I'm convinced no one is going to come and why did I ever think people liked me and why did I ever spend all this money on food it's a good thing I like carrots.

We tried to offer stuff that would appeal to to lots of people. Since many fans like hot food, ya hafta have some things like salsa. We bought chips, and I reluctantly decided that I didn't have time to make Andi's

"If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton,
 you may as well make it dance." - G.B. Shaw

version of Teresa's Famous Salsa all the way from Phoenix. People like healthy munchies sometimes, so we got broccoli and carrots. People like beer, and soda, so we bought that. And then we bought more stuff. We couldn't find the wasabi chips, though, until three weeks later. By then the party was over.

So it was 12 noon or so, and Stu and I were doing 8 things at once. Jerry came downstairs to check in with us and found me in the kitchen. There was cookie batter in a pot, and I was madly chopping broccoli to put on a platter with carrots and dips. Jerry looked at the motley collection rather quizzically, grinned and asked "Um, are you putting broccoli in the cookies?" Why yes," I replied maniacally, "my broccoli cookies are famous." Or something like that. Actually, I think I said that, and then collapsed with laughter. Jerry, who had really come downstairs to let us know they were still waiting for out-of-town guests, went back upstairs (where it was probably calmer -- I mean, after all, two people who have lived together for 15 years plus had just moved into a brand new place. How can that compare with party preparations?")

Stu came by and I told him that Jerry thought I was putting broccoli in the cookies. We decided that if time permitted (time never did), I should make a broccoli chip cookie for Jerry. Well, heck, you know broccoli is kind of sweet when it's steamed, and well, gee, y'know....

Over the next several days, references to those great broccoli chip cookies kept popping up. Late one night, Stu and I had one of our (soon-to-be) legendary "Sleepy" conversations. Stu allowed as how he thought we had finally found our marketing niche, and we should get to work on package design because our vegetable cookies were sure to catch on. Andi's Original Broccoli Chip would of course be the flagship cookie, but it was Stu who, after mulling over several possibilities proposed the one I think will be the best we can offer -- the avocado creme sandwich cookie. This is clearly the one that will really establish us as the Mrs. Fields of the 90's healthy eating generation.

The main problem does seem to be marketing. I mean, Stu suggested we tout them as natural and healthy, but I mistrust that. Of course, they'll be natural (don't ask about unnatural cookies, that's a totally different article I haven't written yet. It's like organic vegetables -- as opposed to...?), that's a given now, it's so common no one notices it. So then he says, how about "tastes just like real cookies?" Nah, we decide. "Taste's just like chicken" has been done to death (so, if alligator tastes like chicken, and frog's legs taste just like chicken, and snake tastes like chicken, why don't I just order the chicken, hmmm?) How about "Ecoawafers?" Everyone's trying to cash in on the "green revolution," right? "The cookies George Bush wouldn't eat?" Well, anyway, watch for a marketing sample in your mailbox soon.

-- Andi Shechter

B L O W B A C K : THE SPENT BRASS LETTER COLUMN

Don Fitch
3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722

It's just dawned on me that you must have some sort of bookkeeping system for SPENT BRASS, and that I might as well send \$5.00 as \$1.00, thus assuring future issues even though I'll be travelling a lot this summer and getting impossibly far behind in loocing. If you don't publish another 10 issues, IYYY ~~is~~/unhappy you can spend whatever money remains on something fannish.

Jeanne Bowman
PO Box 982, Glen Ellen, CA 95442-0982

I have to take the iguanas to the veterinarian's for a check-up. I know they don't need rabies shots & I am afraid I am going to find out what sort of nasty things they can get. And Binkley likes putting its head in Jaime's mouth (maybe we should get a sex ID, too.)

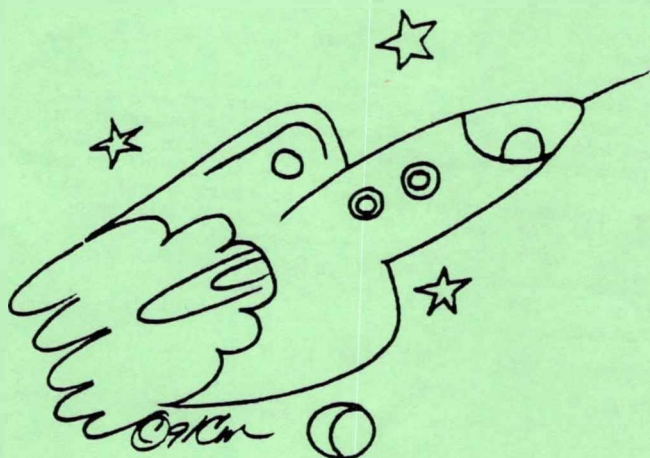
I kind of took off with the Twin Peaks stuff and it inspired me to write a column for Outworlds...one of the points to my article for Bowers was to announce (probably prematurely) a plan for returning Corflu to northern California in '94 or '95. Maybe in my back yard...but Bryan Barrett had such a good time in Texas, and you all wrote up such inspiring convention reports, that we want to do Corflu. I think the Glen Ellen "Jack London Lodge" may be too far from the airports and the train ain't run for thirty years and the tracks are gone, but they're putting bicycle paths on the right of way....

PS Binkley is probably a "she." Iguana sex education, or why I didn't grow up to be a veterinarian.

(Wow! You're getting to be a full-blown fan mogul here! Write back and let us know if you've changed your mind about this in the wake of your TAFF victory.)

Harry Warner Jr.
423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, MD 21740

Jeanne Mealy's little piece brought back all sorts of memories of how nice it was years ago before the mail became a flood with which I can't cope. Quite possibly, The Letter Exchange would like to reprint it. When incoming mail becomes too much for a fellow, how does he get back to the way it used to be, when he could cope? He can't ask everyone in fandom to get together and decide who will lay off this month, and who will fail to send him everything next month and so on. He can't selectively tell this fan he doesn't want to hear from him again and urge that fan to keep sending him fanzines and letters. He can't overwhelm nature and find the old ability to read with excellent eyesight and type without



backaches. He doesn't want to gaffiate totally. Meanwhile, he gets deeper and deeper in disgrace for failing to respond to many kindnesses and goodies and he feels more miserable all the time.

I enjoyed the Minicon report despite the fact that it should have been much longer and I've been trying unsuccessfully to remember who in fandom already lived in Menlo Park before Jon Singer changed his address....

El Paso may have the southernmost Union cemetery, but Hagerstown which was in the union all during the war has a Confederate cemetery. It's only a few blocks from my home. The southern troops pulled back after Antietam, leaving the job of burying the dead to Union forces. Most of the Confederate bodies were buried in mass graves without identification. Years after the war, their bodies were exhumed and brought the 20-mile journey to a Hagerstown cemetery, where one portion was set aside for their re-burial and even given a different name from the main cemetery. They're still mostly unidentified, alas, and still not single-coffined. I'll be buried in the adjoining cemetery only a few hundred feet away so I'll undoubtedly see a lot of excitement over there when the soldiers try to figure out what happened on Judgement Day.

Bob Webber's plaintive lay about driving in Massachusetts has meaning even for a stay-at-home like me... the traffic circle in the town square in Gettysburg outdoes the one in my neighborhood and all the famous ones in Washington. I wouldn't be surprised if it has caused more casualties by now than the celebrated battle just outside the town, unless they've modified it by now. I haven't driven through it for years, out of sheer cowardice.

(The bit about the Union cemetery in El Paso was another put-on, part of the alternate history... but, what inspired me to include it is the fact that Madison is the home of the northernmost Confederate cemetery. Unlike the plot in Hagerstown, though, each of the graves is marked individually; the soldiers perished here in Wisconsin, from disease and malnutrition. They were brought here as prisoners, taken in the capture of Island # 10 in 1862, and kept at Camp Randall. A local woman of southern birth maintained their graves for many years after; and upon her death, she was interred beside "her boys."

By the way, the tone of your comment on the departure of the Secesh troops makes it sound as though they left the task of burial to the Federals out of laziness. I'm sure the ongoing presence of the Army of the Potomac had something to do with their shirking that particular task....)

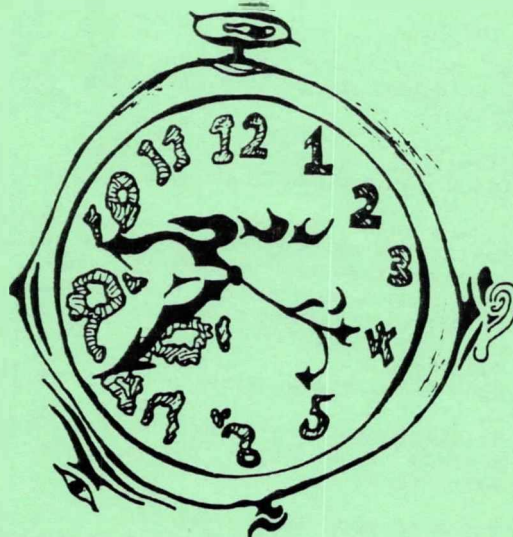
Mark Manning
1400 East Mercer #19 Seattle WA 98112

....Consider Folly, Spent Brass, and now perhaps Chuck Connor's Thingumy Bob: Has fandom passed imperceptibly over into a new stage?

(I think we can only hope so, Mark.)

Robert Lichtman
PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442

Will someone be publishing the David Emerson memoir of Susan Wood and Terry Carr to which you refer in your Minicon report? If it isn't spoken for already, I'd love to see it for



the next Trap Door. But I can hardly believe it can still be available if it's as good as all that.

(I would like to be able to say that it has already been published, at this point, but the hard copy of the live Mainstream is still apparently hanging fire. One of the worst things about being this late with SB is the fact that we can't ethically harangue Jerry and Suzle about this.)

Roy Tackett
915 Green Valley Rd NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107

Are you sure we attended the same Corflu? Alternate worlds, indeed. I suppose I could get all philosophical here and go on about how each of us attends our own convention, and, indeed, probably all live in our own little alternative worlds (insert here a two page treatise on quantum mechanics) but I don't feel all that philosophical today. Aren't you lucky? And I suppose that, yes, I do envision an alternate world now and then but it has nothing to do with the South winning the Civil War. You forgot to mention that, had the South won, all of that wire, etc., on the other side of the Rio Grande wouldn't have been there because it was Southern intent to add Mexico to the Confederacy. Ciudad Flores??? Would you believe Juarez? We're going to have to make the first thing on the future program of conventions Geography 101.

Corona and Lime? Yuppy drink. Try Dos Equis -- without the lime.

Richard and Michelle did one fine job in putting on Corflu without much in the way of outside help. I have no intention of rushing to the defense of El Paso fandom but should point out that AmigoCon was held only two weeks previous to Corflu. Maybe one con at a time is all they can handle. And then again maybe they aren't interested in fanzine fen.

(Well, a lot of people took what I wrote as straight historical commentary -- I think my sense of humor is too dry, or not dry enough, or something. I do find it annoying to have people calling my knowledge of geography in question. I know damn well where Juarez is -- my point was that if a strong, expansive confederacy had stood on the northern border of Mexico, Benito Juarez may well have had no opportunity to make an impact on history. I envisioned the city renamed Ciudad Flores, after perhaps either Jose Maria Flores, a Juarez freight magnate and politico of the 1870's, or his son, Jose Jacinto Flores, who became mayor of the city in 1913 in the wake

of the 1911 revolution, and was one of its most powerful citizens until his death in 1929.)

Michael W. Waite
105 W. Ainsworth, Ypsilanti, MI 48197

I seem to be the only one in fandom who isn't familiar with Pong -- at least it would seem that way from the letters of comment. The only Pong I am familiar with is Boy Ping Pong (one of Bob Tucker's pseudonyms).

Jean Lamb
4846 Derby Place, Klamath Falls, OR 97603

Spiffy Quote: "Is a sharp-dressed Buddhist in a state of Sartori?" (You asked for one, I heard you!)

Notes on your letter column -- it's rather nice to see one that's a bit laid back. After negotiating the minefield of the FOSFAX wars every couple of months or so, one needs a rest. Just one question: What's a PONG? And where is its good friend PING?

(See, Michael, there's more than one person in fandom who doesn't know what Pong was. The answer is that Pong was a fine fanzine -- I dare say a focal-point fanzine -- of the early eighties, published by Ted White and Dan Steffan, for forty glorious issues. It concerned itself largely with fans and fandom. In both philosophy and execution, Pong has been an inspiration which guides us in publishing Spent Brass.)

Sheryl Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20882

Tee hee - I KNOW this publishing schedule will get to you -- merely a matter of time.

(Indeed, Sheryl. How awfully droll. Happy now?)



Arnie Katz
330 S. Decatur, Suite 152 Las Vegas, NV 89107

Regaining my eyesight has allowed me to resume pleasures that encroaching blindness curtailed last winter. One of the things I'd had to give up was reading fanzines. This weighed heavily on me. From time to time, Joyce or Becky would announce the arrival of a fanzine. I'd sit in my chair, stare into the Chorp dimension, and imagine the delights such publications might contain.

By the time Dr. Westfield fitted me for my first pair of reading glasses, the fanzine pile stood surprisingly high for a fandom in which, supposedly, folks don't publish. Besides all the current titles, there were batches of old and fascinating fanzines from Vine Clarke and Rob Hansen.

Like a child let loose at a candy counter, I

didn't know which treat to devour first. I couldn't decide what to read first, so I did nothing for a few days. Then one morning, Becky brought Spent Brass #5 into my office. "You got a fanzine from those people who put 'Legs Shayne' on my mailing label," she said, with Tempered Enthusiasm. Ms. Shayne would prefer to be known for her fine mind. Maybe she'd like her future SB address labels to read "Brains Shayne". Or maybe *not*.

She paused to scan the front page. Her smile broadened. "It mentions you!"

This decided the issue of which fanzine I would read first. I yanked SB #5 from her grasp and raced through the text in a manic hunt for my name.

The clear, dark print enabled me to quickly locate the mention. I sat back in the chair, ready to savor sweet egoboo from that stalwart and energetic young fanned Andy Hooper.

Today's fandom is clearly in good hands with creative and intelligent trufans like Andy Hooper, I mused. It made me warm inside to think of what a comfort this rising star in the fanzine firmament must be to elderly Minnesota fans like Ken Fletcher, Fred Haskell and David Emerson. I could visualize him at gatherings of those venerable fans, perhaps at an attractive senior citizens center. How eagerly he listens to their rambling tales of how they almost bid for the worldcon, "way back in '73". How bright-eyed he appears as he scurries back and forth, bringing soft drinks (and in some cases, needed geriatric medicines) to these still vital oldsters.

His write up begins so promisingly. "best wishes to Arnie Katz," it reads, "who says he is recovering slowly from cataract surgery, and manages to pub more issues of Folly while legally blind." A nice balance of concern and approval.

Unfortunately, things went rapidly downhill from this lofty start. The very next sentence says "Nice of him to drop the name, but he'll find out what modern fan feuds are like if he keeps saying that half our editorial duo is from Minnesota and fails to put the other half on the mailing label."

As this reprehensible fakefan Hooper implies, I am unused to current fandom. So I hope you, Carrie, can forgive my ignorance of my mores. For instance, I had no idea that it was now acceptable to tease a blind man for not being able to read someone's address on a printed page.

Misplacing Hoppity in Minnesota was a mistake, but I think there are extenuating circumstances. Until fall 1989, I was a lifelong resident of New York. Geography is not an exact science to most New Yorkers; maps grow sketchy once we cross the Hudson. Those snowbound states all seem much alike to Big Apple residents. I humbly regret putting Andy's home at the wrong end of the iceberg.

I am worried about what will happen if some Minnesotan has fallen and can't get up. Who will extend the helping hand that I, in my trusting innocence, thought belonged to the demonic Hooper? There's succor born every minute, so presumably someone will step into the breach caused by the self-centered Madison mogul's callous abandonment of those lovable Minnifans. We can only hope.

"Pleasure, n. The least hateful form of dejection." -- Ambrose Bierce

Thank you so much for the latest issue of Spent Brass, Carrie. Now that Andy's true character has revealed itself, I will be sure to put your name on the label for future issues of Folly. It's the least I can do for someone whose fate is evidently so closely linked to such an individual.

(Arnie, this letter of yours has exhibited a bravura performance the likes of which has not been seen since the very early work of Evelyn Ankers! This letter...it...it...it is the HEART and the VERY SOUL of this issue of SPENT BRASS! I shall never wash this keyboard again! All hail Arnie Katz, KING of ALL FANDOM!!!

Speaking of strong "young" fen on whom we may depend for secret mental crifanac in The Land of the Loon:)

Victor Raymond
1017 Raymond Ave. #7 St. Paul, MN 55114

"Bring the Jumping Bean" was exquisite...As I am located up here in Dakotia Territory, it brought back memories of the first SF bookstore in the area, Papa Herbert's, just off of Sibley Blvd. in L'oeil de Cochon.

(Hard to imagine Henry Sibley having a street in Minneapolis named after him, regardless of who won the civil war. But at least you're getting into the right spirit here, Victor....)

Tom Jackson
1109 Cherry, Lawton OK 73507

I wonder how many fans there are these days, and whether the number has actually shrunk in the last couple of decades. Russ Chauvenet, in his FAPA zine Detours 39, reveals that in February 1966 FAPA had 65 members and 52 people on the waitlist; The fantasy Amateur for May 1991 lists only 63 FAPA members (two below the limit, of course) and no one on the waitlist. Has the talent pool of potential FAPAns shrunk or are the potential inductees otherwise engaged?

(I tend to support the latter hypothesis; the vast number of listings for amateur publications which appear every quarter in Factsheet Five testify that there are more people interested in putting out fanzines than ever before. On the other hand, the number of faanish publications seems to drop year by year. I think we need to apply some serious effort to introducing some of the nouveau editors to the fannish ethic; some of these people have to have the right sort of timber to be fans.

Your citation of FAPA illustrates a good point; if there are fans out there who ever thought of joining that most venerable of fannish apae, now is the time. Dinosaurhood is certainly no criteria for membership now, if indeed it ever was. I joined four mailings ago, and have enjoyed each of them very much.)

David Bratman
1161 Huntingdon Dr., San Jose, CA 95129

...what is this "plague of weddings" you cite? Who else has gotten married recently besides Jane and Luke?

(Since I wrote those words last spring there have been no less than four weddings in our immediate acquaintance and a fifth is pending. Kim and Kathi Nash were married in July; Spike Parsons and Tom Becker just before Worldcon. A colleague of Carrie's, Robert Thorson, was wed in August, and my sister Elizabeth was married in October. Now my sister Margaret has just announced her engagement, and Madison fandom is already buzzing with the many preparations for the wedding of Bill Humphries and Julie Shivers, coming in May. I think that qualifies as at least a small epidemic, if not a plague.

By the way, Carrie and I advise anyone who's interested to follow our lead and elope.)

Harry Andrushack
PO Box 5309 Torrance, CA 90510-5309

Weddings? Count me out.

(OK)

Buck Coulson
2677W-500N Hartford City, IN 47348

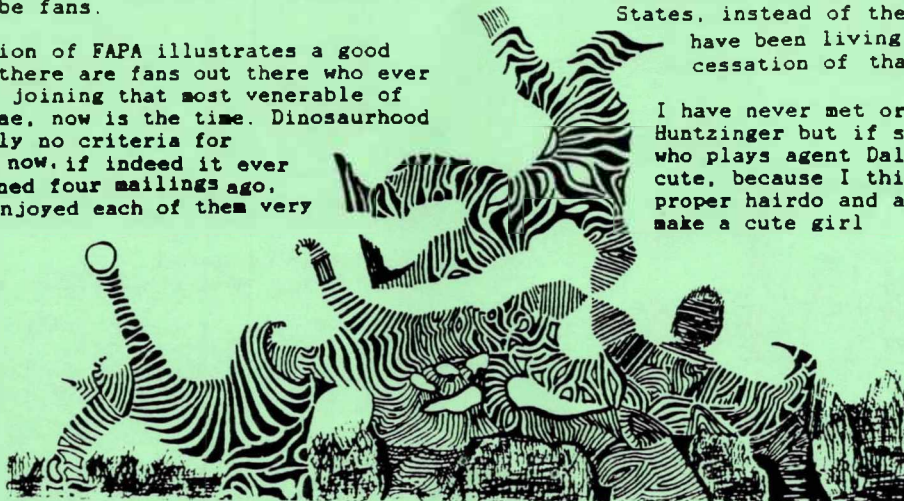
I enjoy alternate universes; an alternate universe for an alternate fandom? Can't say I'm particularly interested in Corflu, though; a convention for fanzine fans seems a non-sequitur. Apas are for fanzine fans. Going to a con makes you convention fans, doesn't it?

(Ah, but like everything else these days, the con-going experience is becoming more compartmentalized and special interest-oriented...on the other hand, with your wide range of interests, Buck, Corflu probably isn't the con for you. But then, if you attended, you could probably get quite a lively argument going with that "Apas are for fanzine fans" statement.)

Gary Deindorfer
447 Bellevue Ave. #9-B, Trenton NJ 08618

Such a poignant, elegiac article you have managed to write about the El Paso Corflu, Andy. It practically reeks of mint juleps and pecan pies. Indeed, it is interesting to consider what things would have been like if the Yankees had won the War Between the States, instead of the grand Confederacy we have been living under since the cessation of that conflict...

I have never met or seen a photo of Lucy Huntzinger but if she looks like the actor who plays agent Dale Cooper, she must be cute, because I think with makeup and the proper hairdo and a padded dress, he could make a cute girl



Pamela Boal's letter quotation is a jewel, for all of that. I have heard that Robert Silverberg has the kind of memory that Pamela says she used to have. It seems to me such a powerful memory could be a curse as well as a blessing (Vide Borges' "Funes the Memorious.") And apropos of very little, Kerouac's friends used to refer to him as "memory babe." And they say Proust had that kind of memory. I don't, by any means. As with Glicksohn, I have killed too many of my brain cells (in his case with alcohol, in my case with drugs) to have much of a memory left.

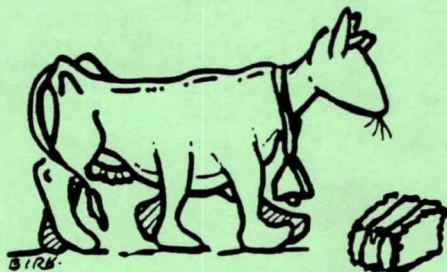
Harold Bob
6602 Shelrick Place, Baltimore MD 21209

Please put me down on your mailing list for Spent Brass of which I've just enjoyed reading a borrowed copy. Also, if Jeanne Gomoll publishes a fanzine, I'd like to receive it. I probably get dropped from lists because I never write loc's. There are many reasons, summarized as I'm a physician and I always have people to call back, and we're a two-career family with two teenagers.

Two years ago I made the long trip across the interstates to Lexington, KY. My first fan friend from before I knew about fandom and more years ago than I want to think about lives there now. We'd talked on the phone a lot, but not seen each other in years. He's always believed in the cause of the south, and we walked the across the Perryville battlefield arguing the merits of the war. It is a story without end, because the bravery and glory of the south doesn't die. Were it not for slavery...

Lincoln's second inaugural summarizes it for me. He acknowledges that in the beginning the war for him was not about slavery; but as it went on he determined that "the Almighty has his own purposes," and this war was to cleanse of slavery.

(I am struck by what an outpouring of interest and passion about the events and ideas surrounding the civil war have been elicited by my little piece of historical vandalism! I argue a lot with fellow amateur historians about the place of slavery in the motivations of the Union. My personal feeling is that it occupied a position of somewhat greater importance in the minds of the combatants than latter-day historians are wont to acknowledge. It is for this reason that I assert the glory and bravery of the Union is eternal as well; and that the sacrifice of those who fell for the north is made no less valid for the inexorability of their ultimate victory, just as justice should not be disdained for its purported impartiality.)



Linda Blanchard
PO Box 50788, Midland TX 79710-0788

Corflu 8 made me a little crazy, I'm afraid. I've had hot flashes of hyper-fannish urges which are totally inappropriate for the mother of an infant. Fandom Access, as a way to get new people interested in fanzines, is part of that hyperfannish drive (whoever said conventions were bad for fanzines couldn't have meant Corflus). It's going pretty well, considering. Seems reviewing (as opposed to critiquing) fanzines is something that fits well in the five-minutes-at-a-time new mothers have to themselves.

But your comments about me knowing what's good and current as well as you do must be misguided. I've been mired, Meyer, in the quicksands of fafia for a long time, moved without sending out COAs far too often... sometimes I think fandom's forgotten me, until I read my name in print, as in your fanzine. I imagine if for nothing else, I'll be remembered as the person who introduced Falls Church fandom to its equivalent of ghoominton...double deck pinochle.

(Publishing, on the other hand, is apparently not one of those five minute things. As if we could talk.)

Teddy Harvia
Box 905, Euless, TX 76039

I agree with you that nothing in Texas seems within walking distance of anything else. That's why God created cars and fossil fuels.

(Thanks for clearing that up for us. Is that in the Old Testament? Congratulations again on winning the rocket in Chicago!)

(Speaking of Hugo awards....)

Ben Indick
428 Sagamore Ave. Teaneck, NJ 07666

Lan's Lantern is hardly a great zine, but it gives his students and numerous fans a place for self-expression... Also, his tribute issues to SF luminaries are indeed distinguished work, indicative of his own generosity and his love for the genre. Surely, his work deserved at least one-time recognition... No loudmouth can cancel out the inherent sincerity, dignity, and value of Lan's work. Faanishness as expressed in loutish behavior is valid too, but only one aspect (too much at that.)

R. Laurraine Tutihasi
5876 Bowcroft St. #4, Los Angeles, CA 90016

I'm sorry but I can't sympathize with people who don't think Lan's Lantern should have won the Hugo. The Hugo is not awarded for fannishness. While I personally might not think that Lan's Lantern is the best fanzine to fill my mailbox, I don't think it's the worst, either. In fact, it frequently has some very good content. It satisfies a lot of readers, and that is what the Hugo is about.

George "Lan" Laskowski
55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304

There is little I can say that haven't said already to the criticism about Lan's Lantern. I put out what I want, and publish things on a wide variety of topics which interest me.



or I may think interest my readers. You do the same. It seems, however, that your change from Nine Innings... was a calculated move to elicit the support of fanzine fandom in an effort to get on the Hugo ballot, which you disdain because you weren't on it. Then you lash out at me... As for the criticisms themselves, both quoted here and elsewhere, I have made changes based on them which I thought were valid, and which did not interfere with my own basic philosophy of what I wanted to do with Lan's Lantern. To you that might not be apparent, but it is to me.

I agree that Trap Door should win a Hugo; it is one of the best fanzines around and has been a perennial nomination of mine (along with Airglow). I hope that next year more people will agree with us and it will make the ballot.

Note also that our zip code has been changed by the Post Office: 48304-2662

(Well, as to the criticisms of LL, I imagine you feel as though you can let those roll off your back at this point, eh? Having a matched set of Hugo awards on the mantle probably goes a long way towards toughening one's skin. It clearly gave you a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction to win the award in Chicago, and in that sense, I was happy to see it go to you.

On the other hand, your inference that I help publish this fanzine just to get on the Hugo ballot is disingenuous in the extreme, and I can only assume that it was made out of wounded pride at my endorsement of an

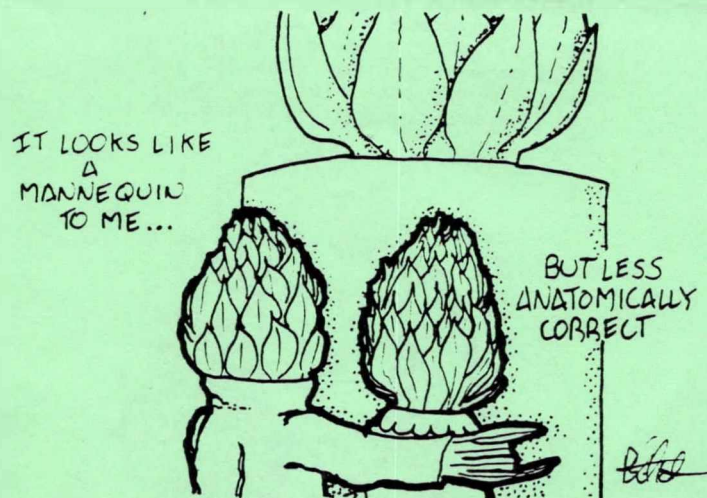
indictment of your material. I don't back away from that particular assessment, but it honestly had to do more with the notion that it is largely non-faans that do the voting for the Hugo awards than that you or I were or were not deserving of an award. My lack of respect for the Hugos far predates my recent failure to be nominated (a perfect record I have held for thirty years, I might add), and my recent contempt for the plebiscite derives directly from the awards given to Speaker for the dead and Ender's game in 86 and 87 (And NO, I am NOT interested in discussing the relative strengths of those or ANY OTHER works by Card in this fanzine).

The only reason I thought I might get nominated this past year, as I said in the article in question, was so many people had been claiming that they were going to do so. I make no claim whatsoever to be worthy of such recognition; and in any event, the majority of the people who vote for the Hugos are not people I consider my peers, and their failure to notice me is of no lasting concern.

My frustration at that turn of events was largely tongue-in-cheek, a fact which I imagine was rather lost on you, since your attention was drawn by the attack on your "own basic philosophy of what I wanted to do with Lan's Lantern." As I said earlier, mine seems to be something of a minority opinion.)

We Also Heard From: Richard Brandt, C. Ross Chamberlain, Brett Cox, Frank Denton, Cathy Doyle, Lucy Huntzinger, Kathleen Gallagher, Richard Gilliam, Don Glover, Hope Kiefer, Luke McGuff, Catherine Mintz, Ladislav Peska (hope he's OK!), Dave Rike, Rudi Rubberoid (Who sent a great Lou Gehrig rubber stamp -- thanks!), Ron Saloman, Leland Sapiro, Greg Sax, Kate Schaefer, Ruth Shields, Bhub Stewart, Steve Stiles, Steve Swartz, Amy Thomson, Ted White, Kate Yule and Franz Zrillich.

If we failed to note the receipt of anyone's mail, I'm sorry: It's been a long time since we published letters, and in the midst of packing to move, some may have slipped through the cracks. We surely appreciate all of the response we get to our little fanzine!



"I am not sincere, even when I say I am not." -- Jules Renard

The really bitter poetsarcds have the nicest pictures on the front.

ANOTHER TINY TALE OF TERROR:
Adventures in Coffee House Archeology
by Chris X.

High noon in the coffee house. I show Cosmo di Madison a book. On page 13 is pictured a Fara cuneiform tablet (c. 2600 BC). The clay inscription is still just a muddle to me, put down by a scribe who was further distant in years from Our Lord than Our Lord is from us. The texts are usually temple or palace accounts, reading something like the following Sumerian Fara tablet (BM 15833): "1 barley-fed ox; 6 grass-fed oxen; the god Shuruppuk -- 3 barley-fed oxen; 6 grass-fed oxen; the god Gibil -- 3 from the god Enlil; 2 oxen; 6 grass-fed oxen; Mr. Kinnir -- 7 oxen; from the god Suen." The scribes recorded which god got what, and who offered it for sacrifice, being at this time sparse on commentary. Thus we are to understand that a Mr. Kinnir, pillar of the community in 3,000 BC, put up seven oxen of indeterminate or at least unrecorded feed, for who knows which god. Gibil?

So I show Cosmo a different Fara tablet. Cosmo: "Yeah, sure, I know this stuff. I can read it. But they have it upside down." He turns my library book over and begins to translate. According to him, the gist of the record is as follows: "A Sumerian man marries two women, two children by the first, one by the second. Foreign soldiers come, murder first wife and children, murder pet lamb of child of second wife. Sadness. Man moves elsewhere." End of tablet. Cosmo points points to the first word inscribed in the seventh margin of the third column. "See, there's the lamb." And it is indeed a lamb. Or perhaps a beef. Or perhaps it is just the god Shuruppuk out on a spree.

I am perplexed for sure, for my book doesn't translate this particular tablet for me, and so I only have Cosmo's translation to go on. Most bizarre of all, however, is that Cosmo immediately insisted the tablet was mounted upside down, and had to turn the book over to translate it for me.

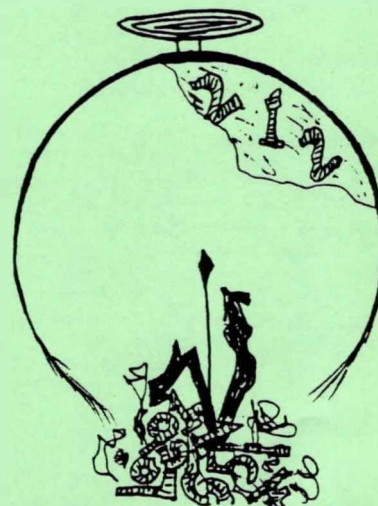
Several pages later in the same book, I learn from the author, and for the first time, that modern scholarly practice places tablets either on their side or upside down, in both museum displays and transcriptions. This is simply a result of the manner in which modern European scholars studying cuneiform records originally set the tablets while trying to interpret them. We have since

learned that this method of mounting does not reflect the direction in which the Sumerian scribes held the tablets when reading or writing them, but in contradicts it. So, if an ancient Sumerian scribe were to pick up a modern scholarly book picturing the tablets that he or she inscribed, the first thing they would notice was that for some odd reason, the tablets were shown upside down.

It is as if in some distant future an American public library were discovered, and the future scholars held the books upside down, or read from the bottom of the page up. Even after the mistake was uncovered it was considered easier to continue publishing the texts in the established manner, as all the scholarly books were doing this, and the only ones reading them were the scholars in any case.

Why? How explain it? Cosmo is a braying idiot, one of the perpetually bewildered. Struggling against the logic of the English text covering most of page 13, Cosmo Di Madison briefly looked at the 4,600 year-old clay tablet and said, "Yeah, I can read this stuff. But they have it upside down."

-- Chris X.



UFFISH THOTS by Ted White

BEYOND THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR
...AND BACK AGAIN?

rich brown and I both got copies of Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator to the Enchanted Convention by Walt Willis and James White in the same week. And, by sheer coincidence, Lenny Bailes was in town that week and dropped by Saturday afternoon. I want to tell ya, it was really fannish.

Lenny was trying to get me to join the GENie computer net. Bhob Stewart had been trying the same thing, going so far as to send me lengthy printouts of "conversations" by the likes of Teresa Neilsen Hayden and Tom Perry (among many others) on the subject of Claude Degler. It's like being able to overhear every word of a series of conversations at a room party: ultimately not really worth the time. Lenny had been thinking of printing some of the Degler stuff in Whistlestar, but had run into objections from Patrick NH and Tom, which were probably based on their perception of the same point, although editing and careful selection could overcome such an objection, I think.



But I wasn't really interested in getting into a computer bulletin board ("Just what I need -- another demand on my time and money..."); my mind was on Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator (or BTED to save on typing), which I was still digesting at that point. I thrust it on Lenny to read.

Later that evening, when I picked up rich brown for our Night of Cards, I asked him what he made of BTED. "Did it live up to your expectations?" I asked him.

He equivocated. "Did it live up to yours?" he riposted. "No," I said, "It didn't. It didn't work for me and that's very disappointing. Because, you see, the original Enchanted Duplicator worked so well." I got my copy in 1955, took it to school with me and sneak-read it in class. I'd been in fandom then for a few years, long enough to have absorbed a working idea of what it was all about, but I hadn't ever verbalized it or indeed given it much conscious thought. Fandom was an ongoing experience and I was in the thick of it.

In The Enchanted Duplicator I found the bible. Here, in one perfectly-realized metaphor, was everything I'd learned in and about fandom, coalesced and codified. Reading it, I recognized it, and in recognizing it I found fandom. It was a profound experience for a sixteen-year-old.

At the 1989 Tropicon, it was suggested to Walt that fandom needed a sequel to TED, dealing with modern convention fandom. I recall thinking at the time that this was probably impossible, but apparently Walt mulled it over, discussed it with James, and ultimately went ahead and wrote it.

"I want to write about it," I told Rich, "and therein lies my dilemma."

"How so?"

"Well, it's an important work and it deserves a non-hostile assessment. I mean, I can imagine what D. West might say about it. Or maybe even Luke McGuff. On the other hand, it is fundamentally flawed, and maybe even ultimately false. How can I say that?"

"Why not just say that?" came Lenny's voice from the back seat. "I mean, I can see why you're bothered about it, Ted."

Yes.

So, okay, let's talk about it.

The Enchanted Duplicator is an allegory. In it attitudes solidify into realities: ego boo becomes the life-nourishing juice from an egg and indifference becomes a desert to be crossed. Jophan becomes a fan by taking an allegorical journey through the attitudes that surround fandom and penetrating to the core of fandom itself. Getting there is the point of it all and at that point the story ends. BTED starts out in the same allegorical locale, a few years later, and already the original concept is strained, because nothing in TED deals with fandom as a lifestyle, as a place to completely exist away from the mundane world. You weren't supposed to live in fandom. One need look no farther than the actual life-styles of the authors of TED, Bob Shaw and Willis, to understand this. Fandom coexists with mundane; they simply occupy different but overlapping planes. Jophan didn't need to stay in the place to which he had journeyed to in order to remain a fan. His was a journey of discovery and enlightenment, not a physical trip to a particular place where he would ever after live.

So, already the original allegory has begun to break down as we begin reading BTED. What had been allegorical has started to become literal. What has he been doing here?

Jophan, obeying unvoiced inner urgings, leaves fandom and returns to mundane, retracing most of his steps on the return journey. But things have changed. The letterpress railroad has been abandoned (and later Jophan is reminded of the personal computer he had in fandom -- which I found oddly jarring), and there are other comments on the passing of thirty-five years and how fandom has changed. Not all these changes strike me as perceptively recorded. In particular, I object to the current state of the Canyon of Criticism -- which strikes me as no less than ten years out of date and perhaps misguided in the bargain.

Once Jophan returns to the mundane world, the metaphor itself and the allegorical nature of TED are abandoned completely. It is at this point that the authors begin constructing an idealized version of reality -- or people working at local jobs, joining local clubs, and going to conventions. And the story continues in this vein until its conclusion, when it again ascends into fantasy.

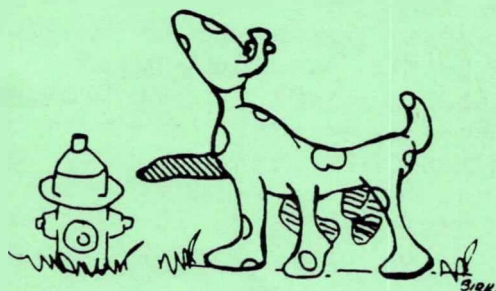
I might have found this acceptable if not for the fact that the allegory of TED sits to one side throughout the story and causes the oddest dissonances. Jophan, for example -- unlike virtually everyone else in both Fandom and Mundane -- has never been to a convention until after his return to Mundane. Why this is so is never explained, but clearly it's not because he became known as a hermit, a fan who never met other fans. (Indeed, sequences in the original TED allegorize aspects of the convention experience, which further disrupts my suspension of disbelief.) Thirty-five years in Fandom and he's more ignorant of conventions than even Eric Mayer, as though he'd never even read a conreport. Stranger yet, he apparently spent his time in Fandom publishing fanzines and is indeed known as a BNF for them, but once he returns to Mundane he stops putting them out, switching all his fanac to conventions. Why?

As a story, BTED is largely insipid.

Jophan has very few problems and overcomes them all effortlessly. He gets a job restocking shelves in a supermarket and is quickly promoted to a position that provides him unlimited travel to anywhere he wishes and allows him to attend a convention every weekend. He accomplishes this through his "fannish skills" -- he stocks supermarket shelves the way he laid out his fanzine. So perfectly that everything is where it ought to be. Gimme a break!

Jophan was originally everyfan. But in BTED he's obviously a cut above the rest. After all, no one else from Fandom achieved his mundane success, although supposedly he drew upon common fannish skills.

But where things really break down is in part two, "To the Enchanted Convention." Here we discover not the allegorical analogy to the fanzine fandom described in TED, but



simply the extent of the author's ignorance of the nuts and bolts of modern conventions, which the story pretends to describe.

"Well, Ted," rich remarked, "you have to consider their experience with modern conventions. When's the last time Walt Willis was a gopher at a Worldcon? When's the last time James White had to buy his own membership at a convention?"

Conventions have been an important part of fandom for more than fifty years. They were important in the mid-fifties, albeit less all-consuming of fanac than they are now. I looked for insight into the convention experience in BTED, and I didn't find it. I wanted a companion-allegory for TED in BTED, but I didn't find it. And I'm not sure that one is possible, conceptually possible. Failing these things, I looked for the charm and wit of TED in BTED, and found it in some measure, albeit less than I had hoped for. Perhaps the best bits of BTED are the snippets of room-party chatter, strung together with ellipses and italicized...and largely recognizable as Hyphen bacover quotes. But even these are undercut by the fact that the device is used twice -- for the first time as comments overheard in a supermarket by Jophan, who writes them down and posts them on shelves like mundane interlineations for the amusement of the shoppers (they are very popular). The fact

that Hyphen's eavesdroppings are equally appropriate when used as both fannish and mundane utterances seems to me to trivialise and diminish them as a device and in importance to the story.

And that's the problem: BTED isn't an allegory like TED, it's just a story. And as such it doesn't tell much of a tale. I'm disappointed.

"You know, Ted," Lenny said. "It's funny that Jophan never finds any romance in this story. I thought conventions were supposed to be hot beds of romance."

"Hmmm," I said. "Now that you mention it, I've been married three times, and I met all three of my wives at conventions." But Jophan goes to that Ultimate Convention Up Above as a bachelor and apparently still a virgin as well.

"So what's it all mean, Ted?" Lenny asked as we pulled into my driveway.

"I think it means you can't go home again," rich said. "sequels to classics rarely measure up."

"But Geri Sullivan did a great production job," I said. "it's an elegant but fannish in design, cleanly executed in mimeo on twilltone -- real classy."

rich agreed. "Good paper," he said.

-- Ted White

This fanzine was produced without recourse to Bovine Growth Hormone

TEMPORALLY SIGNIFICANT INFORMATION:

While we love to get letters and trades, we'd better point out once more that mail sent to the bulk mail address on the back of the zine takes a long time to get to us. Send things to Ingersoll street, not box 1624. And you might want to hold off for a few weeks anyway; we'll be publishing our new Seattle address in the next issue of SB.

Got two pretty recent events of which I want to make some note. First off, Robert Lichtman sends word that Jeanne Bowman has triumphed in the 1992 TAFF race, and will be attending this year's Eastercon. Congratulations, Jeanne! The race was apparently one of the most closely contested in years, which I think attests to the fact that both Jeanne and Richard Brandt are among the best-liked people in fandom. We're sorry that either of them had to lose, and we hope that Richard will at least consider running again.

The other piece of news is an unhappy one; we want to offer our condolences to the family of Dolly Gilliland, who recently passed away. While Carrie and I never had the opportunity to get to know Dolly as well as we would have liked, she and Alexis were among the fans who attended the reception after our wedding in Bellevue, Washington, back in 1986. They helped to make us feel that we weren't so far from home after all, and it was great to see some friendly faces at the northwest conventions that came shortly thereafter. Alexis' marvelous cartoons have graced almost every fanzine we have published to date, starting with some he drew on napkins for us, while waiting for one dinner or another in Seattle or Vancouver. So while we haven't had a chance to see them very much since those days, Alexis and Dolly were never too far from the fannish foreground for us.

We offer our sympathy to Alexis and the rest of Dolly's family. Saying it in a fanzine seemed the most appropriate way to us; that, after all, is where we saw them most often. -- aph

Art Credits this issue: Sheryl Birkhead, pages 6, 8, 11. Alexis Gilliland, page 1. Jeanne Gomoll, Spent Brass title, page 13. Don Helley, pages 3, 5, 7, 10. Catherine Mintz, page 4. Stu Shiffman, page 9. Phil Torotorici, page 9. The art file is rather bare once more....

MY HEROES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN COWBOYS

by Carrie



Whatever I wanted to write about here has been driven from my mind by the passage of several months, and some of those events Andy referred to before. I spent a lot of last summer mentally visiting my early childhood. I was born in New Mexico, and until I was ten, we lived in small towns in the northern part of the state. My dad was a rural schoolteacher, working in a series of one- and two-room schools, moving when each school was "consolidated" into some neighboring district. There wasn't much money in it, but this was in the early fifties, before television came to New Mexico, and we didn't know what we were missing. Besides, my dad's brother Harold ran the

family ranch in the northeast corner of the state (near Clayton, in Union County, if you want to look on a map), and we spent most holidays and vacations there. I suppose these were working visits for my parents, but for us kids they were days excitement and freedom. These memories came back particularly strong last summer, as my Uncle Harold died in June.

You're going to get a little family history here. My dad's family moved from Kansas to New Mexico in 1925; he was five then, with three older brothers and two big sisters. Harold was fifteen, in the middle of the three older boys, and (at least from how dad tells it) protected him from the other two. The family bought some land which they farmed for 25 more years, right through the dust bowl, when most of it blew away into Oklahoma. In the 40's they started putting land in the "land bank," which was one of the first agricultural subsidies, paying farmers to convert land back into pastures. My two other uncles left to become carpenters; my father was the "runt" of the family and went to college; but Harold stayed to farm, and then ranch with my elderly grandfather. After Grandpa died in 1948, Harold ran the ranch with my grandmother. He didn't marry until several years after her death, when he was in his forties. He continued on the ranch until about 15 years ago, when he retired to town. In later years, they moved to Colorado to be close to Aunt Mabel's kids and grandkids, but that was well after I had grown up, and moved to Wisconsin for "just a few years." (That was in 1968!)

So, the way I remember Uncle Harold is best is as he was in his "cowboy" years. He dressed like a cowboy, always wearing heeled boots and Levis. He was red-haired, but balding, and he looked a little odd without his battered old Stetson hat, because his head was never tan above the hat-line. Until he married, he smoked Bull Durham tobacco, rolling his own. As far as I know, he never took a drink, and only swore upon great provocation.

I have very early recollections, from when I was no more than three, of Uncle Harold milking the cows, feeding the pigs, and plowing the field across the road before it was put in the land bank. I remember "helping" Dad and Harold dig worms for bait under the lilac bushes, and then many long afternoons fishing with our little cane poles. I remember feeding the cattle, and my brother Ron and I would "drive" the pickup (carefully tuned to go about 5 mph in second gear with your foot off the gas) along the rutted track while Uncle Harold would climb in the back and toss out the cottonseed cake and hay.

Memories of Uncle Harold are tied up in smells -- of Grandma cooking breakfast in the kitchen while Uncle Harold pulled on his boots, the smell of tobacco, and of leather in the tack room while he saddled up the old mare he'd let us ride. And of the "pretty kitty with the white stripe" that Ron and I found in the barn while we were looking for eggs, and which Dad and Uncle Harold went out and shot.

We kids were lucky to have in Uncle Harold someone who loved us as unconditionally as a parent. I remember as a very little girl deciding I was going to marry Uncle Harold when I grew up, and how I was devastated when he married Aunt Mabel.

I think I was a teenager before I understood why she was a much better choice.

Now, with Uncle Harold gone, I think perhaps my affection for cowboys might be even greater than it was before. A cowboy yodeler still just sends a thrill up my spine. And while we aren't exactly moving to cowboy country, I think it is in part my memories of Uncle Harold that make me so happy to be returning to the west again. Now all I have to do is get Andy to buy a big Stetson and a pair of proper boots, and maybe I can get over the disappointment at last. -- cr

We see by our outfits that we are both cowboys

(Some of these aren't the most newsworthy, but represent people for whom we've been sending zines to ten-year-old addresses, and we thought it would be nice to keep other people out of the same boat.)

Hary Bond, 11 Rutland St., Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs, ST1 5JG U.K.

Andie Dunne, 1045 25th Ave. SE Minneapolis, MN 55414

Victor Gonzalez, 204 W. 108th St. #44, New York, NY 10025

Dick & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1350, Germantown, MD 20875

Bruno Ogorolec, Kopernikova 10, Zagreb, Croatia

Tom Perry, 4072 E. 22nd St. # 361, Tucson, AZ 85771

Jon Singer 3930 229th Place SE Issaquah, WA 98027

Alexander Slate, 10316 Flatland Trail, Converse, TX 78109

Nevenah Smith, 102 N. Franklin St., Apt. # 211, Madison, WI 53703

Steve Swartz & Elspeth Krisor, 829 Jennifer St., Madison, WI 53703

Shelby Vick (!), 627 Barton Ave., Panama City, FL 32404

Joe Wesson, 1605 Valley Rd. #1, Pullman, WA 99163

Art Widner, P.O. Box 677, Gualala, CA 95445

SPENT BRASS # 8/9

P.O. BOX 1624

MADISON, WI 53701-1624

NON-PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MADISON, WI
PERMIT NO 2414

Address Correction requested

