

Wondering & Wandering

...is the revived name (so this is Issue #5, I guess) of an occasional General-circulation Journal/Fanzine (the previous issue was titled *From Sunday to Saturday* 94/1-8) published by Don Fitch, of 3908 Frijol, Covina, CA 91722, USA, for September, 1994. It's available for The Usual (letter of comment, a suitable article, or trade), Editorial Whim, Sense of Guilt (there's a high probability that I owe you a letter, loc, or trade) or even — if all else fails — about a dollar. The Mailing List is becoming Too Large, and will soon be pruned. This issue (which is, also, *From Sunday to Saturday* 94/29-46) is intended for publication sometime in September of 1994. Editor-written material is © 1994 by Don Fitch, as Freeware; permission is hereby granted to reprint any of it in any amateur/not-for-profit publication provided it's credited & dated and I'm sent a copy. Copyright of other material (if there is any) is held by the originators unless specifically noted as being Freeware. Member: fwa

THERE'S AN OLD FANNISH AXIOM (or perhaps a corollary of Finagle's Law) that some casual filler, or maybe even just a typo, will often attract more attention from readers than the more carefully-done or serious material does. I was serious enough about that Crusade to encourage the use of "Freeware" in fanzine writing, but the piece was first-draft, and perhaps the casualness of it left the idea open to misunderstanding ... or maybe it's just that more people than usual followed my (all too frequent) practice of taking off on an extreme tangent without notification.

Though there may be some question about the over-all benefit to our society/culture from the current U.S. Copyright Law, I didn't intend to raise that; it seems clear to me that Artists and Writers should have control over how their creations are used, and over any profits from them. I do argue that the Law's default system (the creator has Copyright, even without claiming it) and—even worse—the practice of placing a © notice on fanwriting or artwork, are often pointless, ridiculous, and inimical to the spirit of fandom. Sure, there are, sometimes, perfectly good reasons for doing it... but not, I feel, very often.

The point I was (and am) trying to make is that if you produce fanwriting (or artwork) largely for the pleasure of other people, and for the egoboo you get from their enjoyment of it ... if you want it to be seen by as many people as possible, and are willing (not to mention "eager") to have it more widely (or even narrowly) reprinted in fanzines/amateur publications, you have to indicate, specifically, your permission for this. Doing so in conjunction with the original publication simply, and thoughtfully, saves everyone a little bit of time & effort, increases the possibility that such reprinting will be done, and emphasizes the concept that fanwriting is a sort of Community/Family property, something we share freely with each other.

IT'S REALLY EMBARRASSING to fail the most basic intelligence test ("Don't make the same mistake twice"), but ... errr Upon returning to fanac a few years ago, after a lapse of almost a decade, I mimeed a fanzine (150 copies, if memory serves) and only then tackled the job of compiling a Mailing List — which turned out to have almost 200 names on it, so some of the least-active people had to be omitted. *sigh* (Well, no, that didn't have to be, but the juices of Enthusiasm are drying up, and somehow the idea of putting all those used stencils back on the Gestetner (and re-annoying the arthritic wrists) was too dismal to entertain for more than a minute or two.)

With the more recent General Circulation issue of FSTS, ("Jan-Feb 94", or "94/1-8") I thought I was playing it smart by walking into Staples with the master copy and saying "I'd like 300 copies of this, please". Hardly any fanzines have that high a circulation, and 300 probably would've been adequate; the (eventually) revised Mailing List ended up with 244 names (7 months later, it's at *sigh* 403), but then I decided to include the zine in four APAs... which took 178 copies, only about a third of which would otherwise have gone out via the Mailing List, and it was necessary to go back to Staples for another 100 copies, bringing the total duplicating cost to \$96. The postage (including bundles to APA OEs, and about 30 copies to Canada & Overseas) was almost that much again. Was it worth it? If you're reading this, you know my answer to that question ... but will also understand why FSTS/*Wondering & Wandering* is going to be published Irregularly & Infrequently.

Now, what's this people have been saying about Fanzine Fandom dying on the vine? They're right, in the sense that only a very small percentage of the people now who identify themselves as "Science Fiction Fans" participate in fanzines, and they may

be right about the long-term results from the almost total absence of young neofans in the field, but there seems little point in worrying about this (though there'd be some value in paying attention to it and actually doing a little bit about it once in a while) as long as there's enough fanzine activity going on to keep one busy full-time. Why, there are even enough good fanzines to support a FIAWOL Habit, despite the strikingly large number of excellent fanwriters who seem not to have produced anything for general circulation during the past year.

There may well be as many "fannish type" writers as ever, but a check of the Data Base indicates that many who've been in fandom for years now either are not writing, or are not publishing in fanzines for general circulation. The new, young proto-fanwriters who could liven things up helpfully are part of a world in which there are so many other things for young people to do that they don't need sf fandom, much less our fanzines, as an outlet for either fun or creativity. There are still some — at least several thousand — who want to Publish (and do so), but they do this in the medium of "'zines", a microcosm lamentably divorced from both sf Fanzines and the Amateur Journalism of "the Mundane APAs" (which are going to be suffering even sooner than we are from lack of new blood). If any of you are interested in Recruiting, the place to start is *Factsheet 5* — send copies of your fanzine to be reviewed therein.

Some Journal Extracts

Saturday, 9 January 1994:

The American Indian Show in Santa Monica is less convenient to reach, from Covina, than the one in Pasadena, but sometimes I make the drive because there's often a Powwow/Dance held in association with it, unlike the Pasadena one, on Saturday afternoon. The other attractions are the hundreds of books MacRae has for sale, and of course the Indian items and artifacts offered by the many Dealers in the auditorium. Since the most beautiful and desirable of the objects are too expensive for me (and overpriced, to boot, in my opinion) I utilize that section largely as a Museum, and purchase only a couple of arm-loads of books. But this year, with the Computer just acquired, several convention trips in the planning & ordering-plane-tickets stage, and a house so crowded with Stuff that the only three places to sit down are at the kitchen table, in front of the Computer, and in the bathroom, I decided it would be wiser not to buy books, or make the trip & be exposed to Temptation, but just go to the California Indian Hobbyist Association Dance in Long Beach.

Arriving a bit late, I was surprised to see two Indian visitor Drums set up, in addition to the CIHA Host Drum (Southern) and the Northern (Blue Star Singers) Drum; apparently they'd decided to stop by here and get some more Singing in, after the Santa Monica event closed. More surprises piled up. The drums themselves appeared to be Southern ones (by modern tradition, Northern Singers prefer a marching-band type bass drum with a metal rim they can sometimes click their beater-sticks against), and these Singers used smooth, Southern-style beaters, but some of the songs I'm pretty sure were Northern, and all of them certainly *sounded* Northern, by virtue of their higher pitch, sharper melody, and greater length. (It's by no means impossible for Southerners to Sing Northern, and vice-versa, but it's not often done, and even more rarely done well, in my experience.)

There was another (and double) surprise. These Guys were young (in their early 20's, I'd guess, though my guesses about people's age grow less dependable as *everyone* starts to look very young), and they were Good Singers. This combination is fairly common in Indian Country, but it's not often encountered in the LArea Urban Indian Community; the young people here are mostly acculturated, 2 or 3 generations removed from full-time Tribal background exposure, and they're likely to lack the determination, persistence, available free time, and patience which are necessary to make a good Drum/Singing Group. (Individual young people manage it by integrating into one of the established Drums composed mostly of middle-aged & older Singers, from whom both the songs and their proper uses are gradually learned.) The usual course of new Groups (not always all- young people, either, just all new singers) seems to be to learn a few generic songs which have no particular character to them but are adequate (though certainly uninspiring) to dance to; they show up at various local dances for a year or two, without improving much or adding to their repertory, and then I don't see them again. Both of these new groups obviously have something else going for them.

That groups of young singers would show up at a CIHA dance at all (except when we've brought a group of well-known singers out from Oklahoma or South Dakota) was a trifle surprising. A few of the older, Southern singers come by frequently and sit in with the CIHA Drum, but the younger, & especially Northern, Indians tend to avoid the "hobbyists", though there's been no overt antagonism since the AIM days. These two groups, however, seem to be more interested in being Excellent Indian Singers than in being anti-anything, which I consider an admirable attitude.

Both of these groups, this evening, did something I'd not observed before... maybe it's a regular practice

and I just didn't notice it, but it's striking enough that this doesn't seem probable. It's not unusual for dancers or bystanders who especially like the rendition of a song to toss some (paper) money on the drum. If this is done at the end of a song, the donor may shake hands with the Head Singer (or, if it's a large enough amount, with all the singers); if it's done during the song, the singers used to just continue on, unless I'm gravely mistaken, and afterwards the Head would hunt up the person and shake hands & express his thanks. This time, however, when money was placed on the drum during a song, the singers all removed their hats, and applied themselves to the singing with an emotional intensity which made me think they were treating it almost as an Honoring Song. It is, of course, customary for a man to remove his hat when receiving a gift—that's a sacred moment and one should show humility and respect—but I can't recall ever before seeing singers do this during a song (except for a few times when they belatedly realized that it was an Honoring Song). This seems, then, to be a new (or more likely a revived ancient) custom, and I think it's admirable because it's in the direction of greater politeness, opposite to the current which seems characteristic of much of the modern world.

I noticed that someone at one of the drums rubbed the money against the drum-head, as is done with tobacco on a consecrated drum, then passed his hand over his chest, transferring to himself some of the sacredness of both the Drum and the Gift.

Kayse ended the Dance Ponca-fashion, with a Veterans' Song before the Heluska Closing Song, and fortunately the M. C. announced this, so we had some idea of what to do. I danced on the Veterans' Song, as usual, and noticed that almost all the members of one of the Drums also did; something was said to the effect that they're Marines (though whether (recent) veterans or currently stationed at Camp Pendleton was unclear). They seemed to be pleasant and amiable people, as well as talented and persevering, and I hope to see them again—and to hear them sing more of the old (and new) Plains Indian Songs.

Easter —

The First Minneapolis Trip of 1994:

Minicon this year was marvelous, as usual — the only Big Convention I know of that manages to maintain most of the good aspects of the old-time small fannish cons — and I must Write It Up one of these days. The Trip?... oh, yes. Ahh!, Minneapolis in the Spring, at Easter-tide! Most of the local (and Eastern) people seemed to be a bit bewildered or bemused by my enthusiasm for the three Terrible Blizzards (each worse than

the previous, so I could keep on saying "Why, this is the Worst Blizzard I've experienced in over 40 years!"); it appears that an accumulation of almost two inches of snow (some of which didn't melt until the next day!) is not a remarkable event in Minnesota, nor an entirely welcome one.

This time, I didn't make a great effort to see much of Minneapolis — not that the Blizzards were at all Fearsome, or the weather really bad, mind you, but largely because I was staying at Toad Hall, the almost-century-old home of Geri Sullivan and Jeff Schalles, and the place and the people were far too interesting & pleasant to part from for long. Next trip (for ReinCONation, the weekend after the Winnipeg WorldCon) I'll try to stay at the Con hotel, downtown, for a week of Touristing.

Most of one day, though, was spent re-visiting the Mpls Institute of the Arts — a world-class Museum as far as interestingness is concerned; years back, the people running it recognized the importance of many things other museums scorned as being merely decorative, rather than Fine Art, so there's a fine chair by the Greene brothers (made for one of their Pasadena houses) (and an ugly & extremely uncomfortable-looking one by Frank Lloyd Wright—perhaps the very one he's reported to have kept sliding off of), Renaissance chests, furniture and glass of various eras, a good many superb Chinese bronzes & jade pieces & tomb figures (the horses so lively, the camels so stately)... many treasures one would not expect in a city in the northern midwest ~~where it snows so much~~.

But the falls in the river, here where the Pillsbury flour mills were built to take advantage of the water's power (though the difference in elevation seems to be only a few yards), also mark the upper limit of navigation of the (here not-so-mighty) Mississippi. Even after various railroads crossed the country, The Twin Cities have remained a major hub connecting the great plains with The East; the people here have a tradition of industriousness and prosperity; back in the days when it could be done more easily, great wealth was accumulated by the Barons of grain, milling, timber, and shipping... and that was an era in which Wealthy people were widely considered to have a sort of Responsibility to support Culture and The Arts.

Like the Dakota, some of whom still live in this area which was once their land, the Scandinavian immigrants had a strong tradition (especially after they had ceased to go a-Viking) of infusing their lives with art (especially by emphasizing the decorativeness of everyday objects) and of recognizing the importance of strengthening the bonds which make them a Group or Society, better able than unconnected individuals to withstand the

rigors of an often-hostile environment. Modern Minnesotans and Minneapolitans have inherited much of this attitude, and support not only social welfare programs that are broader and more humane than those in most areas, but also many Cultural Activities. I don't suppose Minneapolis spends more (or much more) on such things than Los Angeles does, but it seems to be more efficient, and the results seem to apply to a broader economic segment of the populace; Parks, Museums, Theaters and various Cultural Things are all over the place.

The new State Historical Society Museum in St. Paul is Big & Spectacular (properly, in my opinion, following the concept that Public Buildings should be Impressive) and the Exhibits, though only partly installed, are First Rate. I do regret, though, that they didn't bring along the sign from the crowded little book&gift shop in the old museum ... the one that said something like:

Read History, don't read science-fiction.
What would people say if you died during the night and they found one of those science-fiction books on the bed-side stand?

Read History!

(I think there are at least three levels of humor in there, in addition to taking it quite seriously, as some of those St. Paulines who look to Boston as their closest eastern neighbor might do, and perhaps a few old-style Lutherans, ~~and Lakota/Seots fans.~~)

Overlapping Fandoms:

Mail Art

If you've never even heard the phrase "Mail Art" you probably know even less about the subject than I do... and might or might not want to discover more. I'm finding it fascinating from the Galactic Observer (non- Artist) viewpoint, as an example of a Fandom very much like our own Fanzine microcosm, based on an amateur (i.e., for the love of it) and participatory approach.

It's been going on for many years — artists drew sketches on the envelopes when they wrote letters (Charley Remington, I understand, was fond of depicting Western American scenes on his, and I seem to recall that both Michaelangelo and Leonardo daVinci also sketched on the outsides of their letters), ordinary people were more likely to doodle on theirs, or decorate them with (sometimes) amusing &/or appropriate stickers or rubber-stamp

impressions, philatelists produced elaborately-printed First Day Covers and other special forms tied in to the postage stamp used, and picture post-cards, though usually "commercial", can be thought of as a form or sub-set of Mail Art.

Activity in the field seems to have increased greatly with the proliferation of the photocopy machine ... and to have undergone a major change in its Nature. (I get the feeling that lots of yelling and arm-waving goes on when members of this fandom start discussing the question of whether or not it's really Mail Art if it's not on the outside of the envelope.) Even people with no great Creative Ability may be able to produce something rather pleasing or interesting (and even "Art", by some contemporary definitions) by simply manipulating objects & images in a photocopy machine. (The results from this are often a bit too abstract or surreal for my conservative taste, but some artists working in realistic mode simply use the machine to duplicate their work.)

This hobby (as I think of it, though for some it's obviously A Way Of Life) seems to have generated a substantial arcane vocabulary, much of which I still find confusing, despite having had little trouble with FanSpeak, but I gather that there are at least two major manifestations of Mail Art. Exhibits, for which one copy is requested, with "Documentation" in the form of a list of names & addresses of participants, appear to be the most common form. The other, though it doesn't seem to have a specific name, is a sort of one-shot APA, or ComboZine — you send, say, 25 copies of your work, and get back 25 examples of other contributors' artwork (or "artwork", as the case may be).

Some of these Projects are "ongoing", others may have a Deadline; many have specific size &/or medium limitations (postcard, U.S. or European Letter Std., "if it smells; seal it in a plastic bag", "colorfast pigments on quilt-block size cloth", &cet.); many have some specific Theme, or other requirements which sometimes seem rather strange to me, though they probably make perfect sense to Mail Art people.

I don't understand all the ethical niceties involved, but every indication I've seen so far suggests that all this Mail Art activity is, like Fanzine Publishing, thoroughly non-profit, and "The Usual", here, means that if you expect to get something back you should include postage (or IRC) to cover that expense.

Mail Art seems (though my sources of addresses are few, so far, and may be skewed) to be Extremely Popular in Italy, and only slightly less so in the rest of Europe, the U.K., and South America; about half the addresses are outside the US... which doesn't necessarily make it all that expensive a proposition;

foreign Air Mail postage is (currently) only 50¢ for the first half-ounce.

How good is the Art? I don't have the faintest idea, and rather suspect that this isn't necessarily the major point. The words I've seen (and the lines between them) indicate that, for many, the big attraction is that of being Part of a (preferably International) Network of Individualistic and highly-Independent people who are doing something at least mildly Creative, outside the framework of the Mainstream Establishment. People who have been involved with Fanzines for very long should understand this perfectly.

HAD ASHLEY PARKER OWENS discovered Fandom, rather than Mail Art, she'd probably be one of our most important BNFs. As it is, she publishes what must be a Focal Point fanzine in & for that fandom:

Global Mail. P.O.Box 597996, Chicago IL 60659. Three times per year, 8 pages, @\$2.50 or (substantial?) Trade (checks to: Soapbox Junc.). Sample copy (not necessarily current) for 2 first-class US stamps or IRCs. (You might also request an "info handout", though this filled in only a few of my gaps in understanding Mail Art.) That the current issue (#8) is published in an edition of 4,000 copies is probably a good indication of its popularity & importance — and it's also available on-line on a number of Computer BBSs & The Well (via *Factsheet Five*).

The word for this publication is "Utilitarian"; hundreds of (perhaps over a thousand) brief listings of Mail Art Projects & events are crowded on the pages in a type font so small that I'm tempted to take her advice and photocopy it at 200X. It does, however, present a vast amount of information and number of addresses, and I invariably find myself reading all of it, not only because the exotic foreign addresses and many of the Topics are interesting, but also because some of the Projects are oriented to the written word & imply the presence of potential Fanzine Fans — and the sheer variety of interests indicated is fascinating enough to be Tempting.

...Speaking of "Utilitarian"...

...and you might as well add "procrastination"....

Yes, it's shameful that I — fascinated by fine books, printing, and typographical design since highschool days — have not utilized this Macintosh and the *ghasp* almost *fifty* typefaces now stored within it to produce something much more

striking and ...ummm... attractive to the eye than the things I've produced since acquiring The Computer almost a year ago.

To be perfectly honest, *shibui* has little to do with it; mostly... cobbling-together enough written material to make up a fanzine consumes just about all my limited patience, attention-span, and time. If everything is going to hold together long enough for me to get a zine to the post office, I can devote only minimal time to re-writing, much less to format and layout. (And yes, I do consider that words are or ought to be much more important (in almost all fanzines) than Artistic Appearance, and if something must suffer, in my zines, it's going to be the latter.

...a useful Project for you to do...

...is a phrase that, as soon as Technology is adequately developed, I'll program my hearing-aid not to amplify, so's to avoid the Guilt Feelings associated with pretending not to hear it. In all honesty, though, the current Project sprang from ~~some~~ *defect* something in the depths of my very own soul, and the discussions at FanHistoricon about how to assure the survival of items of fanhistorical interest & make them more useful merely encouraged it to emerge, and I alone am to blame for not immediately repressing it.

The most nearly completed part of this Project, so far, is a Cumulative Index (with author, title, and occasionally subject listings) of the contents of 14 of the first 15 issues of the Hugo-winning Fanzine, *Mimosa*. (I expect to locate a copy of the missing issue soon, and also figure that Dick & Nicki will have #16 out shortly.) The similar Index to *Fanthology* covers only the recent series of 6 Issues, for the years 1986-90...but there were only spotty issues of this (and other annual anthologies of fan writing) prior to the current series, so I guess I'll publish/make available what has been done so far ... after some proofreading and re-formatting. Most likely, I'll have the preliminary versions of both at the fanzine room in Winnipeg, but the finished versions won't appear until at least the beginning of '95.

All this isn't a Big Project, mind you — it's something to work on when I'm feeling even less Creative than usual, but still am disinclined to go out and Fight Bermuda Grass. I'll probably keep up with these two titles, and add a few more to work backwards on ... but only two or three of those at a time, and none will be *Lan's Lantern*, *FOSFAX*, *Yandro*, *Cry*, or anything else really daunting.

Factsheet Five

Has Factsheet 5 Blown It, or at least Dropped The Ball? Yes and no. It has recently adopted policies which will, I think, eventually turn out to be badly contradictory to its original most important thrust, but it's still The Indispensable Resource for anyone who's paying serious attention to (or is even casually interested in) the Do It Yourself amateur publication/communication phenomenon which is coming to be recognized as one of the influential factors shaping American (and other) intellectual and cultural development during the last half of this century (and perhaps about the first half of the next).

Yes, that does sound Pretentious, but the comparatively inexpensive accessibility of the combination of photocopy machines, DTP computers, and (semi-)dependable postal distribution system has produced something unequalled in human history. For the first time ever, almost everyone can, with a few hours time and the price of a few meals, speak out in print, on any topic they find interesting, communicate their ideas and opinions to others all over the country (and world) who might share their interests, get feedback from those people, and form & participate in their own particular sub-culture. Granted, many of these are tiny, trivial, &/or downright silly, but they are also independent of "The Establishment", of the demands of conformity to the standards of the wealthy Upper Class, and of the monolithic "Mainstream Culture" which is always stultifying and usually dominates our thinking in specific areas for a decade or more after its ideas & attitudes in these spheres have ceased to be realistic.

(The Computer Nets and BBSs perform a very similar function, but as these now exist they seem to be too immediate, too ephemeral, and perhaps too gigantic to be a satisfactory substitute for on-paper communication — which, among other things, permits the use of graphics and artwork which can often serve better than words to communicate on an emotional level. Electronic communication may well be The Wave of the Future, but for the vast majority of people that probably won't arrive for at least several decades, and meanwhile Amateur Publications (or 'Zines, or "fanzines" or whatever you want to call them) will remain significant, and will continue to deserve attention.)

Mike Gunderloy understood these things when he began publishing Factsheet Five many years ago; he reviewed all of these amateur publications he could find, traded with the publishers, and gradually built up, almost single-handedly, an enormous network of amateur, independent publishers (and people) who were producing thousands of publications centered on just about any topic you can think of except those that already had professional or commercially-profitable outlets. Mike had started out in "Science Fiction Fandom" (an aggregation of the kind of people who enjoy imaginative literature, though that basic attitude is only the lower foundation of their social relationships), five or ten years after I did, and he took to this new amateur publishing microcosm many of the principles common in (science-fiction) Fanzine Fandom. He encouraged (by his Example, as much as anything) the ideas that "This is something you do because you're interested in it and because it's fun" and "Interaction, in the form of a zine in trade or a (reasonably thoughtful) letter-of-comment, is more important than a monetary subscription" and "This is a hobby, on which you can (and should) expect to spend about as much time and money as any other hobby or interest or field of enjoyment". Eventually, and understandably, publishing the magazine got to be too much for Mike, and he had to bail out, leaving the field without a Focal Point for several years.

Seth Friedman cannot, I think be faulted for being hard-headed & practical when he revived the publication of *Factsheet 5* in its current incarnation. He was almost undoubtedly motivated largely by Idealism — by a powerful feeling that "This is something that Needs to be published" — and it appeared that no-one else was going to do it, but he also realized that it would be a full-time job (and then some) and would have to generate at least enough money to pay his living expenses. That meant increasing the sales (it had already become desirable to all but the most stuffy & traditionalistic & impoverished Libraries) through improving its Image by a more attractive & legible (& expensive) format and by greatly increasing distribution to newstand, magazine, and bookstore outlets. It was not, and could not any longer be, an Amateur Publication like the ones it reviewed; it had to become a Business.

One of Seth's first steps was to announce that he could not Trade for the Zines he reviewed; the publishers received only post-card print-outs of the reviews of their publications. It certainly made economic sense to refuse to trade

(Fan)Zine Reviews

something that cost several dollars to produce and mail, for something that may have cost only about 50¢, but it also (I feared and think) seriously reduced the number of publications sent in for review; *Factsheet 5* no longer covered "Almost everything in the field", it was beginning to edge out and ignore a significant number of Really Amateur (and, admittedly, often Really Wretched) publications, more than a few of which might be on The Cutting Edge of new Trends and Modes... the very sort of thing that attracted Gunderloy (and many others) to this field in the first place. Maybe it's necessary, but I think edging these things out is regrettable.

Now, in Issue #52 (July? '94) Seth announces the additional Policy change of not reviewing every zine sent in; they'll all be subject to "editorial approval". I don't suppose this is intended to keep out the *hoi polloi* and snotty-nosed newcomers (though it may have that effect), and with something like 1,475 reviews packed into 136 pages, four or five times a year, I guess something of the sort might have to be done, but ... it's like seeing The Passing of an Era. I plan to keep an eye out for the zine (and certainly at least one will appear) that makes a point of Reviewing the riff-raff, the rejects, the zines not on the "A" (or "B" or "C") Party List, and those not Politically Correct.

Quibbling aside, anyone really interested in fanzines or amateur publishing will probably be well-rewarded by picking up (and plowing carefully through, and sending off for some promising-sounding stuff from) at least an occasional issue of *Factsheet 5*. Subscriptions (in the U.S.) are \$20 for 6 issues, a sample copy is \$6 postpaid (but the cover price is only \$3.95, and it's carried at many alternative-type bookstores and magazine stands, especially in the vicinity of college campuses), from *Factsheet Five Subscriptions*, P.O.Box 170099, San Francisco CA 94117-0099. Those more technologically advanced than I may wish to inquire about *Factsheet Five-Electric*, from Jerod Pore (jerod23@well.sf.ca.us). If you publish a general-circulation fanzine, and don't mind handling a dozen or so requests, consider sending a copy for Review (omit "Subscriptions" from the above address), fastening to it a note with subscription info., perhaps asking at least \$1 for it, to discourage the people who'll request anything that's free. The Reviewers have liked *Blat!*, *Derogatory Reference*, *Empties*, *From Sunday to Saturday*, *Habakkuk*, *Spent Brass*, *Tales of the Unanticipated*, and... I can't recall either Jerod or Seth really panning anything I recognized as a Fanzine; their reviews are more descriptive than prescriptive, and the KTF type is rare here.

Bovine Gazette, Vol. 2 #10, April/May '94: 20 pages, half-std size, \$1 or 6/\$5; Mad Dog Productions, P.O.Box 2263, Pasadena CA 91102.

Regrettably, this is (stringently) Copyright, so I can't quote enough to give the feel of the lead piece, which is ostensibly a review (with copious examples) of Richard Nixon's (supposed) first book of poetry. A devoted admirer of Nixon, or a passionate hater of him, might take this article seriously, and almost anyone could easily challenge its Political Correctness (or that of, as far as I can tell, anything appearing in any issue of *Bovine Gazette*); satire and parody sufficiently subtle that it's difficult to be absolutely sure they really are satire & parody is a bit iffy, but B.G. does it well enough in this instance that I've sent in a subscription, even though I find the cartoons/comics making up part of this zine somewhat less interesting & amusing.

Our Two Cents (#3, Dec '93; #4, Mar '94) 11/12 pages, std, Trade or \$1 each, I guess; Rowden/Press, 1701 Manhattan Ave., Union City NJ 07087.

Mostly reviews (back & forth, like Siskel & Ebert) of movies & books — enjoyable, even though I don't watch movies or especially want to read many of the books they cover, and the restaurants they review are too far away — with some less-classifiable pieces; all Very Good Writing — a trifle more polished & formal than you'll find in most Fanzines, but mostly with a strong Fannish Air. Rowden's Essays strike me as being particularly fine (in quality, they're on a par with Farber's pieces on medical/hospital life in *Mimosa*, though she doesn't use humor as broadly as Sharon does), and I'd want to get future issues for them alone, even if Press didn't sometimes deal with a topic that strikes my fancy. The key word for this zine is, I think, "Civilized"; these people seem too fannish, by nature, to slip into the trap of (brittle) Sophistication, though they skirt it more closely than most fans (except, maybe, Greg Benford). The format is much too Dignified to be fannish, with Corporate, Conspicuous Consumption margins, and printing on only one side of the paper, but that's immaterial — or rather, it is material, and therefore unimportant.

Obsessions (#3, More Chocolate..., March '94) 16 pages, half-std., DTP; The Usual, or IRC; Bridget Hardcastle, 13 Lindfield Gardens, Hampstead, London NW3 6PX, U.K.

Of special interest to Chocoholics, perhaps, but Bridget (and Mark Armstrong, John

Bray, Alex McLintock, & Pat McMurray) write about other "obsessions" (or pleasures) as well — the Musical Show "Hot Stuff" ('70s nostalgia), book collecting, wines — all with the combination of enthusiasm and wry (sometimes actually askew) humor characteristic of so much good British (and Irish) (oh, ok, and Welsh & Cornish, not to mention some Scottish) fan writing.

Blat! #3, Spring 1994; published "a couple of times a year" by Dan Steffan (3804 South 9th Street, Arlington VA 22204) & Ted White (1014 North Tuckahoe Street, Falls Church VA 22048), for "the usual" (... "or \$10", which may or may not be intended seriously).

At Corflu NoVa, Ted White plaintively asked why I hadn't reviewed *Blat!*. I was so taken aback at hearing Ted being plaintive about anything that I answered with only one of the reasons (if memory serves, it was "The most recent issue wasn't close enough to the top of The Stack"), but there's another very good one. I had simply (& perhaps improperly) assumed that any reader of this zine who's at all interested in fanzines & fandom would either be on Ted's Mailing List or would have heard about *Blat!* and have written for a copy.

Both Dan and Ted know a great deal about fandom and fanzines, and have perceptive ideas about the microcosm to which anyone would do well to pay attention (though not necessarily agree with). Ted, in particular, is especially vigorous in the expression of his ideas, and in the putting-down of people and ideas not conducive to his ideals of what fandom ought to be; at one time or another most of us disagree strongly (even violently) with him and with some of the techniques he uses, but ... almost always, there's some kernel of Truth and Importance in what he says. This is not, perhaps, a fanzine for the faint-hearted... it's certainly not what the Brits would call "a pipe-and-slippers fanzine"... but it does get the juices flowing, and brings to our attention things that we ought to be thinking about.

Passionate Fulcrum V.1 #2 (n.d. — Spring 94?) 8 p., Std., Xerog. Irregular?, for The Usual, from Mike Whalen, P.O.Box 55422, Metairie LA 70055-5422.

A rare thing indeed, these days, though it wouldn't have been especially remarkable in the '60s or '70s — a personalzine examining and detailing, with considerable intensity, a young fan's emotional and social involvement with other fans in his local (New Orleans) fandom. The people seem straight out of the LASFS of the 1960s, when I was a Neo, and his reactions are curiously similar to mine of that era.

What is remarkable about this zine, beyond the unusualness of anyone under 25 starting to publish a Fanzine, is that Mike comes from a background of Media Fandom and of a decade of Computer on-line/Net hyperactivity, yet his approach is essentially what might be called Proto-Faanish — i.e., he's powerfully interested in (and enthusiastic about, and sometimes disillusioned by) Fans and Fandom — it looks as though he'd fit in very well with most of the fans with whom I hang out. (Some may find him too much like themselves to be bearable, and others might not be pleased by his contemporary, computer-influenced (i.e., lacking in sound input) writing style, but I hope they/you all send him zines and suggest Trading.)

The Wrong Leggings (oneshot?, May '94), 14 p., DTP, for The Usual (but Trades preferred), from Lilian Edwards, 39 Viewforth, Edinburgh EH10 4JE, United Kingdom.

Produced to take along and hand out at Mexicon 6, this engaging personalzine continues the fine fannish tradition of producing a zine for a convention, and might be participating in a New Trend—that of publishing casual, friendly (and one hopes frequent) personalzines rather than the more intense genzines for which UK Fandom has become known in recent years.

Like most U.K. fanzine fans, Lilian writes well, and she has significant things to say about fandom, fanzines, and conventions (she'll be helping run the fanroom at Intersection), but she's not especially enthusiastic about getting lots of long Letters of Comment (or claims that she isn't), so if you don't publish anything to trade, it might not be a bad idea to send a Dollar or so with your request for a copy (even though this might not be The Fannish Thing To Do), in order to help out with the high trans-Atlantic postal costs... something that might, indeed, be considered for all zines produced "overseas".

Never Quite Arriving #2, May '94, 14 pages, DTP, Irregular?, for The Usual, from Christina Lake, 12 Hatherly Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, U. K.

Even more informal than Lilian Edwards' zine, but also well-written and almost as much a personalzine, despite Barb Drummond's fine piece on The Texas Rangers (as seen on the telly, as a child) and a modest Letter Column. Christina is aware of this trend towards less ambitious fanzines (and indeed is the one who brought it to my attention and perhaps first identified it), and has even coined The Descriptive Phrase: "Chocolate Cream Fanzines". She seems to feel a trifle Guilty about joining the British fans who are publishing "trivial" fanzines, but those of us who are willing

to engage in a little self-indulgence can hope she'll continue doing it... especially since careful examination reveals some genuine Nourishment within the confection.

Opuntia — Published irregularly (but frequently) by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7, Canada, is available for \$2 cash, trade, or letter of comment. It's one of the more unusual, and better, of the current fanzines; whole numbered issues are "sercon" (and may include Garth Spencer's running History of Canadian Fandom, which is fannishly entertaining as well as informative), .1 issues are Reviews, and .5 issues are perzines. Dale might not think of himself as being "faannish", but brings a thoroughly fannish outlook to his skillful Informal Essays dealing with Canadian Politics (as hilarious as those of the U.S.), the inner workings of local tropical fish and stamp-collecting clubs, and his job as a Park Superintendent. He displays the Broad Mental Horizons and somewhat wry sense of humor characteristic of most of the best fanwriters, without being as ingroupish and relentlessly informal as many are. *Opuntia* (now up to Issue #20) is another "Must" for many thoughtful fanzine readers.

Slubberdegullion Vol. 1, No. 8, June '94, 16 pages, DTP, irregular, for The Usual (or a couple of dollars?) from: Nigel Richardson, 35 Cricketers Way, Headingley, Leeds LS5 3RJ, U. K. (New address). Nigel's taste in typography may be execrable (or at least much different from mine — 3-column, justified type, indeed!; it looks like some of the less-admirable Amateur Printers' publications of the '40s), but the contents are fannish, wide-ranging, Iconoclastic, and both humorous and perceptive. (Of Harry Andruschak's African Trip Report, Nigel says "He manages to go places most people only dream of, the most glorious landscapes on earth, and mostly manages to make it sound like a trip to a DIY warehouse by concentrating on the minutia and missing the big picture".)

I'm not quite sure what's been happening the past few years, but U.K. fandom (surely much smaller than U.S. fandom) has recently been producing an extraordinarily large number of extremely fine and entertaining fanzines. Regrettably, overseas postal rates (especially for Air Mail, so we're likely to get things 3 months late) are higher than the typical British Fan can afford, so we don't see as many of them as we'd like, or as would be good for us, but the enthusiastic U.S. fanzine fan would do well to get on as many U.K. Mailing Lists as possible; it looks very much as though The Cutting Edge in the fanzine world is now in Great Britain.

Trap Door #14, July '94, 36 pages, half-legal size, maybe twice a year; \$4 (or arranged trade, or Whim — Robert's a bit ~~picky~~ selective about the quality of trades or LoCs); from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442.

Trap Door is (to be cautious about it) one of the 5 or 10 best fannish fanzines currently published; Robert makes a point of soliciting or reprinting material from many of the best writers in fandom (or on the fringes of it). This issue contains pieces by Lichtman, Jeff Schalles, Gordon Eklund, Dave Hartwell, Ted White, Rob Hansen, and Greg Benford, as well as a fine letter column; probably nothing more needs to be said.

The Secret Garden ... isn't a fanzine, it's a new APA, intended for fans who are more-than-casually interested in plants & gardening (flowers & vegetables). Mailings are quarterly, activity requirement will probably be a minimum of 2 pages every other Mlg. The first Mlg. (ca 34 pages, Aug. '94) contained contributions from about a dozen fans, and there's room for almost that many more on the Roster. Information may be obtained from: Priscilla Olson, 10 Shawmut Terrace, Framingham MA 01701

The L.A. Gang Bang ... isn't a fanzine either, but only because the four fannish people who produce this personalzine every month don't happen to "be members of Science-Fiction Fandom". Otherwise, there's no distinguishable difference — they're at least as interesting, weird, stimulating, and enjoyable as our kind of "fans", though they're active in Theater Fandom... writing, producing, & acting in "Off-Broadway" productions in the LArea. Issue #69, July '94, is 6 pages, Std. size, DTP; sample copy \$1 (?) subscriptions \$9 per year, some Trades arranged. From: Lee Wochner, P.O.Box 7550, Burbank CA 91510.



LetterColumn: Responses

The 29⁺ Conversation

Those of you who who've put up with me for years, and probably some who don't know me at all, will have no difficulty in understanding that I either filed away or (in fewer cases than you might think) cannot at the moment locate (i.e., have misplaced) about half of the letters containing comments on the previous issue. I probably wouldn't try to hunt those letters up under any conditions, and certainly not now, in the midst of trying to get this issue put together and posted in the week prior to leaving for Winnipeg and the WorldCon, but I do regret — and apologize for — the absence of material that really ought to be published here.

The LetterCol, this time, is arranged according to topic, with the writers' names at the beginning of each of their responses, in bold-face type for ease in egoscanning or BNFscanning, if applicable. My responses (if any) to their comments are indented behind vertical bars, and followed by my initials. The addresses of the letter-writers appear in the "Contributors" listing.

On Copyright Laws and Fandom

From **Bridget Hardcastle**... "Fannish Copyright"? Until I read this I never thought anyone might want to reproduce anything I wrote (and they probably don't!) The trouble with a community spirit convention such as this is that it works only if everyone abides by it — one rotten egg spoils the whole barrel and stirs up lots of bad feeling.

From **Brad W. Foster** several small pieces of artwork, and a note indicating one of the reasons Artists are especially concerned with retaining control/copyright of their work... "I've no problem with them being reduced if you wish to fit a layout, but I prefer not to have them enlarged beyond a tiny amount — enlarging artwork often takes what is a simple line and turns it into a lumpy squiggle. As well, my style would be different on the same "idea" if it is drawn in different sizes.

From **Derek Pickles**... "I like the 'freeware' idea; anyone can print anything I've ever written if they're prepared to dig through 40+-year-old fanzines ... just so long as they print the copy to send to me on the backs of £10 notes.

\Is it okay for us to print the fronts of the
\notes, ourselves, also? ...df

From **Ned Brooks**... ... I thought that while a writer retained rights in letters and manuscripts, anything actually *published* without a copyright notice was in the public domain.

\As I understand it, that used to be the case,
\but the new law, more consonant with
\British & European practice, vests the rights
\entirely in the author or artist. The © now
\seems mostly to serve to establish the
\date/priority, and to make clear that the
\holder is being Seriously Fussy. ...df

I have never bothered to copyright fanzines, and I feel quite free to use anything from really old fanzines. But what about fans who later became big-name pros and are still working? I would feel a bit uneasy about lifting Fabian or Kirk art from a fanzine.

\A good rule-of-thumb is "Don't do
\anything you feel guilty about", and I'd
\be especially scrupulous in the matter of
\reprinting early fan works by now-pros; I
\didn't hesitate to make an archival
\photocopy of *Stymie* #2 (the ditto
\pigment is fading), for example, but
\would not reprint from it without
\permission, on the general grounds that
\the publisher, Rog Ebert, might Really
\Dislike seeing some of the movie reviews
\he did in his teens given such public
\attention today. ...df

From **Brian Earl Brown**... Copyright Law has not prevented fans from pasting in a lot of cartoons and comic strips over the years and those are legitimate for-profit operations. I can't help thinking that if fans can ignore copyrights for that they can all the more easily ignore the niceties of copyright law for fannish articles. I hope you would go ahead with your idea of a fannish anthology or two. While there's probably a lot of stuff from the fifties and sixties that should never see the light of day again, there's also a lot that should but we'll never see because there were so few copies printed and even fewer remain extant. We need a reprint program such as you propose. ...you could begin by drawing up a blanket permissions slip...and...have everyone you could imagine wanting to reprint sign one... Mostly it strikes me that you are shying away from a project because while it seems like a good idea, it appears to be more work than you care for.

\Oh. I was hoping no-one would think
\about that... it is a pretty good excuse to
\get out of work, isn't it? Yes, I may get
\around to keyboarding stuff from time to
\time, and perhaps eventually trying to get
\permission to (re)publish it. Right now,
\though, I'm being side-tracked into doing
\Indexes (by Author and Article Title &
\sometimes Subject) of some genzines
\(mostly recent/currently "active" ones) —
\older items (those not being indexed by Joe
\Siclari) will have to wait until several
\cubic yards of fanzines get filed properly.
\Of course, something like that can't be
\done without re-reading each of the zines
\handled, in its entirety, so this is not
\precisely a fast-moving Project. ...df

From Geri Sullivan a (misplaced *sigh*) letter pointing out that, as a professional Graphics & Typographical Designer, she has strong and definite ideas about the format & layout of anything of hers that is to be reprinted, and that she sometimes uses different writing styles for different audiences, and thus might not want some of her material reprinted without her having an opportunity to revise it. Both of these seem to me to be valid points, even though I don't share those feelings and have to stretch a bit to understand them.

Mundane Copyright Law, it seems to me, is designed and intended to protect the artist's commercial interests; I don't hesitate to "infringe" on it as long as I'm not doing the writer or artist out of any money (most such appearances in fanzines are, in effect, Free Advertising, and over the years I must have purchased more than a dozen books simply because I've seen segments of them "pirated" in fanzines).

"Fannish Copyright" is quite different — there's usually no thought of money involved, if only because the style, length, and content of most fanwriting makes it unsuited to any commercial market. What we do here is put into practice the kindergarten lesson — "Don't make the other kids mad at you". Perhaps fandom today is too diverse, too lacking in a single *Ethos*, for the concept of Fannish Copyright to apply, or perhaps we just need to reach a new agreement about what our Standards are. What does seem clear is that most of us follow customs that are not the same as those embodied in U.S. Copyright Law. ...df

On Clothes Making the Fan

From Bridget Hardcastle... The only con attire I've seen ridiculed at a convention is - "AAaargh! Suits!" - but in fun. Oh, and the time a wedding reception was held in a con hotel - "Bloody costumers". I expect a lot more vitriol is being sprayed around about con dress, it's just not usually in my hearing.

From Chuck Connor... I have long been out of the convention system (now almost independent in the UK, but with a confan-circuit that is positively just ducky darling provide you know who is what, etc) but used to take great delight in changing "attire" as much as possible without appearing in fancy dress — even going to the point of finding a 1953 tux (proper wool, jet buttons, massive silk lapels you could launch aircraft off of) which cost about \$10 from an Oxfam shop, and a 4th of July baseball outfit... it was very much a case of doing something — anything! — to get away from the boring Jeans & T-Shirt uniform that seems to haunt conventions.

\Yeah, those ConFans sure are Ingroupish.
\I kinda like the idea of Jeans & T-shirts —
\both because I rarely wear anything else,
\and because they're a reminder of The
\Good Old Days when most fans could
\afford nothing better, were rebelling
\against Formality, and paid little
\attention to physical appearance. ...df

From Sheryl Birkhead... Being almost paralytically shy at cons, my protective coloration is mundane clothing. I've always found it interesting to "listen" in on conversations from airports (fans *are* rather loud — often) to con hotels. I'm categorized as non-fan by both clothing and quietness, and it makes for very interesting observations.

On Chocolate

From Bridget Hardcastle... I am jealous, having heard what is got up to with chocolate at US cons; how the other half lives! There's scarcely a whiff of chocolate at most UK cons, though I am running a chocolate tasting at BaCon this weekend - and it would be nice to run an international chocolate tasting at Intersection... (not that I'm volunteering for anything, you understand).

On Fanzine Publishing

From **Bridget Hardcastle**... It is easy to produce a professional-looking zine these days, with the great access to DTP and cheap copying facilities, which is probably why so many people are going in for producing glossier, larger print-run zines with the added egoboo of seeing them on the newsagents shelf rather than using a messy duplicator to get distributions of a hundred or two. The times, they are a changing.

\Part of my definition of "Fanzine" involves
\the Editor knowing (or coming to know),
\though perhaps not meeting in person,
\everyone on the Mailing List. Most of us
\can't handle more than a couple of
\hundred Personalities at this level. ...df

On "Is it homophobia?"

From **Chuck Connor**... The thought of outlawing it all (again) and thus driving it underground (and, perhaps, adding the 'mystique' it had during the first quarter of this 'enlightened' century) but it's okay in the privacy of your own home, with the curtains drawn and the lights turned off, makes me wonder in all honesty whether or not [Orson Scott Card] is on the same wavelength as Reality.

From **Ned Brooks**... ...none of us are perfect and most of us have irrational prejudices. And Card seems to realize that there are problems with his position. Also, I have met Card and it is hard to imagine him being rude or unkind to anyone.

From **Brian Earl Brown**... If Card does say that he thinks Homosexuality ought to be illegal but is willing to ignore homosexuals as long as they don't get caught he's only practicing the modern hypocrisy ... Most people feel that way... Card is hardly unusual ... except for having publicly written about them and affirming the doctrinal position that they are unacceptable to God. The real issue, it seems to me, is that some people are taking such issue with this last point that they are publicly refusing to work on any concom which invites Card to be a guest. Well, let 'em. This is no worse than Card declaring homosexuals to be immoral. ... If Card continues to make homosexuality an ideological issue then we can and should expect con committees to question his desirability as a guest.

\A point that may deserve serious
\consideration, however, is that Card does

\not seem have made this doctrinal matter a
\part — certainly not a significant part — of
\any of his Science Fiction works. I find this
\commendable, and wonder if it's really a
\ConCom's place to consider anything
\outside an author's contributions to the
\genre... and, perhaps, personableness.
\Whether this latter ought to include
\"Political Correctness" seems to me to be
\crucial, and in general I don't support the
\concept of Enforced "P.C." even though the
\phrase may have departed somewhat from
\its original meaning of "What a Politician
\has to say in order to get elected".
...df

From **Norman Metcalf**, a letter (currently misplaced *sigh*) indicating that Card's Essays on this topic originally appeared in a publication produced by young Mormons who tend to challenge the Church's Hierarchy, and either Norm or someone else pointed out that Card's attitude is very much that of a Liberal of the 1940s. Perhaps the axiom that "The Law is always 20 years behind the times" should have an addition to the effect of "...and The Church, at least 50 years behind".
...df

On International co-operative Fanpublishing.

From **Chuck Connor**... ...provided a reliable agent could be found then the idea of a US contact would be most welcome considering that I've paid 48p each (about 75¢) for the 70+ copies to the US & Canada via surface mail under the newsprint heading — air mail newsprint would have taken it just over the £1.00 mark (about \$1.50 each). This isn't a complaint — after 15 years of fanzine production I know how dangerous it is to count the cost of the things — but it would certainly be interesting to do some trial material — perhaps a one-off 'Live From America' edition...

On Moon Day

From **Gary Deindorfer**... I like Ray Nelson's idea of celebrating Moon Day and am glad to see that this July 20th [1994], the 25th Anniversary of Moon Walk, there are going to be some tv shows pertinent to that.

\Some postage stamps, too — with the
\\$9.95 one much more impressive than the
\29¢ First Class Commemorative. ...df

On Cacaoffany...err...Cacophony

From Mike Deckinger, a mention of the picketing of Fantasia when it re-opened in the BArea a few years ago; as far as I can figure out, Mike read coverage by a reporter who took seriously the Cacophony group protesting against the Violence in some segments... "It could have been a hoax event, staged more from an anarchistic spirit of tomfoolery than a serious concern over a perceived negative influence."

"However, it could also have been a totally legitimate expression of dissent by persons who truly believed in the bad influence exerted by the film. By living in the Bay Area for 23 years, I've learned never to be surprised at the latest examples of publicized absurdities."

"You may recall the well-organized demonstrations at pet shows by a group called SINA (Society for Indecency to Naked Animals), some years back. They contended, quite reasonably, that all the naked animals on display were promoting lewd conduct, and demanded they be properly attired. Quite a few people took them seriously, even when it was revealed that the members of SINA were guerrilla pranksters...."

\My membership Card in SINA is around
\here someplace, as is the carbon of the
\of the enthusiastic letter in which I
\expressed total and complete
\commitment to the Noble Moral
\Precepts of SINA. It's easy enough to
\say something like that with a straight
\face from behind a keyboard; doing so
\in person isn't as easy, though I may
\possibly have convinced some people
\that I truly believe that Sherlock
\Holmes was Real, and Conan-Doyle
\merely Dr. James Watson's (and in a
\few cases, Holmes') literary agent. The
\possibility of one or more direct links
\from SINA to The Cacophony Society
\can't be discounted, either. ...df

From Ned Brooks... The Cacophony Society sounds like a great idea... I was wandering down the hall once at a DisCon with a bunch of fans and we were puzzled to see the Gideon Bible from one of the rooms laying on the floor outside the door — what were they doing in there, we wondered, that made the presence of a Bible in the bedside drawer so unbearable? So we got the matching books from a number of rooms we had access to and piled them against the door... Alas, I never heard how this came out!

\I know of one Militant Atheist, and two
\Observent (but not Orthodox) Jews who

\prefer not to have the Bible/New
\Testament (or Book of Mormon) in the
\room in which they are residing, and
\who regularly put those provided
\outside the door when staying in a
\hotel.. ...df

!Computer Alert!

From Ned Brooks... ..it does seem like miscegenation, trading with a Mac user... All of my experience has been on the IBM/DOS side and the further Mac-ward they lean with the damned Windows crap, the less I like it...

\Most people like the system they started
\out with &/or know how to use well. I'm
\not sure about Windows, but the Mac
\system has keyboard controls for just
\about every action ... and they're the
\same in (almost) all Programs. ...df

From Joseph T Major... I still think the most inane comment on computers I ever heard, and I have encountered some incredibly inane ones, was that computers made it too easy to pub your ish. Somehow I cannot comprehend that idea.

\Neither can I, but there may be some merit
\in the associated concept, suggested by
\Charles Burbee many years ago, that "Fan
\writing went all to hell with the invention
\of the electric typewriter". This is upped
\by several orders of magnitude by the
\availability of Computers & xerographic
\reproduction; with less physical work,
\and time, demanded, it's much easier to
\spew out masses of inadequately-
\considered words. Assuming that *good*
\(fan)writing involves making every word
\count, this conclusion seems to make
\sense. (I'm not a Writer, and have always
\considered my fanzines as conversation,
\which does not require such an intense
\approach.) ...df

From Brian Earl Brown... The overall impression I'm getting is that these XT computers have a lot of capacity for publishing fine-looking fanzines and yet, because they're yesterday's model and because of the rush to have the latest and biggest computers, they're being sold for junk. I'm not saying there's any special virtue in publishing one's fanzine on an XT, only concern that fans are declining to pub their ish because of computer envy.

Unclassified

(or: putting them anywhere else would require too much re-formatting)

From Steve Sneyd... Glad I'm not alone in my theory that those who wonder where all the new fanzine writers went shd be looking at the genre of small press/zines &tc.. I think in particular the increasingly hostile and dismissive attitude to poetry and fiction in fanzines, and a 'general expectation' (cf. the *Stet* attitude) that newcomers should toe various imaginary lines, combined to send folk to different outlets for their writings. So it goes.

\ I dunno how applicable it is. It does seem to me that there's something that might be called "The Fannish Mind-set" — one of those things no one can define, but many can recognize — and I perceive it in, at most, one out of ten of the people who are active in the various other Amateur Publishing arenas. (Not that 10 out of 10 in "ours" display it; maybe 8.)

¶ I suspect the main factors in operation have been Technology and Happenstance. At one time the only practical/affordable systems for amateur self-publishing were letterpress, and mimeo/spirit duplicating. AJ (Amateur Journalism) fandom was mostly letterpress, and could be contacted through Kelsey and other manufacturers of hobby printing-presses. The only other major networks (as far as I know) for newcomers to plug into were the (to my mind somewhat pretentious) "Small Press Publications", and "Science Fiction Fandom". And some such network was needed to provide the necessary audience & feed-back. Each group (or the several sub-sets of them) shaped the newcomer, as Groups always do whether we like it or not, by encouraging some attitudes and discouraging others. (I don't take Leah Zeldes Smith ("the *Stet* attitude") too seriously; she outspokenly favors (her version of) Traditionalism, but doesn't attempt to *enforce* it.)

¶ With the advent of reasonably-priced photocopy, and Computers, it was no longer necessary to serve a long apprenticeship in the techniques of zine production, to know someone who has (or to buy & maintain) a printing press or duplicator. The readership (Mailing List) was easy enough to build up, especially after *Factsheet 5* appeared, as long as the editor didn't insist on significant reader response.

¶ "Publishing a zine" has become so easy, during the past decade or so, that the

\ practice has expanded explosively, with literally thousands of people doing it. I'm not sure if that's A Good Thing or not, but it's obvious that there are bound to be significant differences between such a macrocosm and the older microcosm in which everyone knew everyone else.

...df

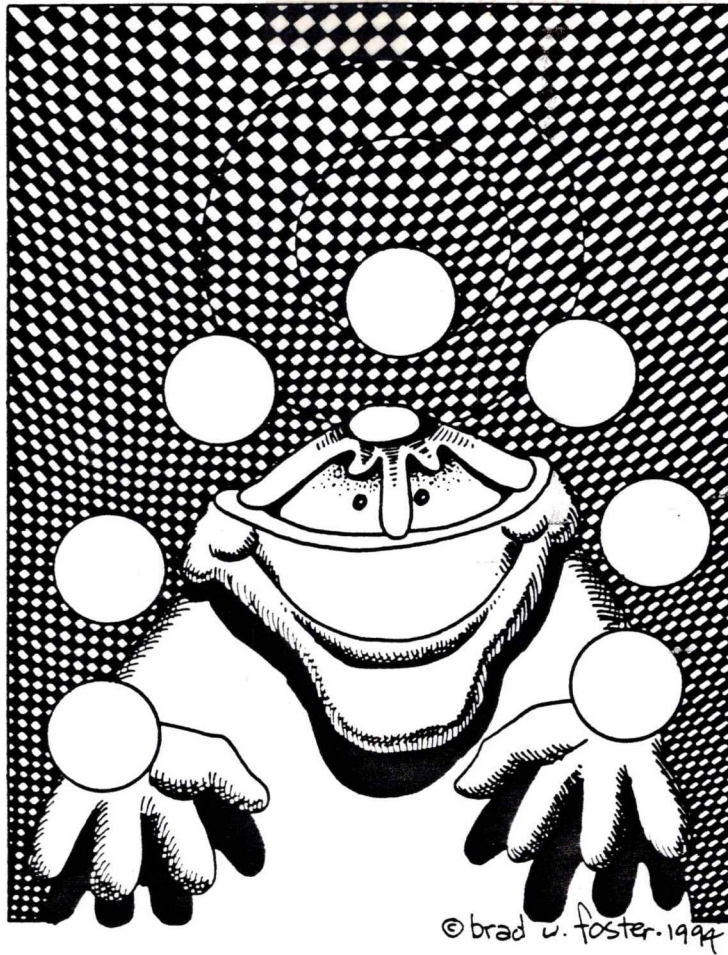
From Chuck Connor... ...the idea of a fandom-owned farm in the Ozarks sounds appealing. But, I started thinking, why stop there? Why not get some land — say a tract in the mountains of Van Buren County — certainly northwestern Arkansas — and who knows, maybe the farm will expand into a village? A town? A whole city perhaps! Full of Fans! A United World Fandom! with its own schools, teachers, even our own laws?! Our children shall inherit not only this earth — but this universe! Needless to say these Cosmic thoughts are still circling my mind even now after I have renewed my subscription to the World Science Fantasy Association. ...

\ At first glance, that seemed like a rather far-fetched extrapolation from the idea of having a fan in one country publish & post a local edition of a fanzine for a fan overseas (or even the logical next step of having a fan organization (with its own photocopy machine) do this), but upon sober and thoughtful consideration... yes, it seems to be a marvelous idea. Why, we could even establish a Foundation, to publish *The Encyclopedia Fanctica* — a compendium of all fanzines ever published (well... almost all) with a Concordance and Index to every topic and name mentioned in them. Certainly the Committees of all those WorldCons that have made such enormous profits would be delighted to fund a few million dollars to such a Worthy Fannish Project, along with establishing a Chair in Fanzine Editing, and providing full, no-strings-attached, subsidies, and Xerocopy machines to all fans who want to publish fanzines. ...df

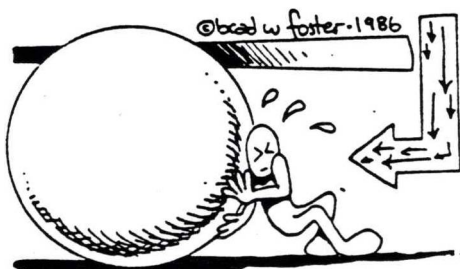
Semi-obligatory Health Report

Since I was so uncharacteristically un-private last time as to mention getting radiation treatment for a malign tumor in my nose, some updating is due the many LoCers who expressed concern & good wishes (for which, many thanks). Eight months later, there's no sign of the tumor, and though the radiation damage — like a severe sunburn — is annoying, it's expected to clear up in 6 months.. or maybe a year.

Don



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