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APPARATCHIK
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The forty-eighth issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, edited and published by Andy Hooper and Victor Gonzalez, member & founding member fwa, supporters afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103, also available at fanmailAPH@aol.com. See the back page for availability and trade information. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 240. Apparatchiki: Steve Green, Carl Juarez, Lesley Reece, Martin Tudor & Pam Wells (British Address: 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX, U.K.). Like that's gonna work when atom bombs won't.

Issue # 48, December 7th, 1995

APH here: First of all, this issue is going to be a little thin, and possibly a little lacking in coherence; I've been struggling to survive the Fremont Flu since the beginning of last weekend (OF COURSE I managed to get sick on the weekend), which had me dozing fitfully and drinking flat 7-Up during the days when I would usually be assembling an issue of APAK. Victor talked me (well, it wasn't hard) into going to Vanguard last Saturday so I could expose everyone there (well, I've suffered, so why shouldn't you?), and since then he's been telling me how he's held off the onset of the disease by SHEER WILL. I, as a dissolute voluptuary, cannot aspire to such Liddy-like heights, and have consoled myself with the knowledge that after coughing like this all week, I no longer have to imagine what a heavy bag feels like after Mike Tyson has had his way with it.

SECOND, STRANGE CHANGES and transitions abound. You will note that we have changed the e-mail address featured in the colophon; this is now my address for all electronic correspondence. This change was not my idea, and I'm very, very sorry if there are APAK readers out there who have had e-mail bounce back from the old address. For the Record: All e-mail for me (us) should go to "fanmailAPH@aol.com" from now on.

And if that weren't enough, our U.K. agent has had the nerve to fall in love, become engaged, and move in with his intended! And this at the very moment that he is reaching out for our support in the upcoming TAFF race! Doesn't he realize that changing your address is an act which fandom seldom forgives? Congratulations and best wishes to Martin and Helen; if you'd like to send your own regards, you should make a note of the very long and excruciatingly English address in the little box in the upper right-hand corner.

By the way, Martin claims that if he wins TAFF, he hopes to talk his bride-to-be into getting married in Las Vegas either before or after the Worldcon. This is undoubtedly a wise choice, since Las Vegas fans have such a sterling record of harmonious relations with visiting British fans.

AND GET THIS: Tomorrow, the 8th of December, Bob (real) Shaw is scheduled to be married to Michigan fan Nancy Tucker, and apparently intends to take up residence in her home state! Many questions suggest themselves, but we have no further information to go on; anyone with a fuller account to offer is invited to contact us forthwith! We presume it is just a rumor that the happy couple are expected to honeymoon in beautiful Hamtramck . . .

One rumor I am happy to confirm is that we will soon be unveiling a stripped-down, electronic version of *Apparatchik*. *Apak Now!* will contain some of the editorials, articles and reviews (albeit in a far less eye-pleasing format) found in the paper version of the fanzine, and may be made available to a somewhat wider audience than we've reached so far. But we promise not to send the e-issue out until paying, trading and corresponding readers have had a chance to see it first. I like a cheap trick to become more visible around Hugo-nomination time just as much as anyone else, but there must be limits.

VMG here: The other day, while we were getting ready to go to Vanguard, Lesley loomed over me as I tied my shoes, a fanzine flapping between her quivering hands.

"See, she feels the same way I do," Lesley said. "There are rules, but you won't tell me what they are!"

I looked up with exasperation. She was reading the latest issue of *Attitude*, and quoted to me from a letter by Claire Brialey contained therein:

"I'd like to play, please. I'm enjoying fanzines; I like getting them, I like reading them, I like thinking about things I've read in them, I like responding, I like writing to and for them, and one of the things I'm promising myself when *Intersection* is over is that I'll be able to pay more attention to fanzines. But I don't know if I'm allowed to play."

"See?" Lesley asked.

"No, really, Lesley. There is no set of rules," I said. "There are no fannish standards."

She quoted some more, her arms waving wildly:

"But I still have this problem with 'real' fandom in general, not just the bit that fans both inside and outside it call fanzine fandom: I'm sure I'm trying to play a game whose object is to find out the rules. And once you know the rules, you've won, and you can start to enjoy playing. But you can only find out the rules by playing, and you can't play without knowing the rules. And some of the people who've already won, who know what the rules are, who've somehow got to a point where they can make the rules, will never want you to play unless you were the sort of person who knew what the rules were before you even started. . . . And it's not fair. So there."

"Don't tell me there are no fannish standards," Lesley finished.

"All right, Lesley. You're right." I pulled a small pamphlet from my coat pocket. It was printed on special Quill virgin-dried gelatin-green twilltone, handscreened with authentic AB Dick midnight black ink, a gold title multigraphed across the black leather binding.

"I knew it!" she exclaimed triumphantly.

I had been thinking of some of the same questions. Bill Kunkel's notes in the *WH* 11 editorial -- and the responses to it from other *WH* editors -- had set me to pondering.

Kunkel wrote:

"You people are becoming fannishly inbred. You only deal with other fans and you talk exclusively about fandom. . . . The best piece I've read by the Vegrants in forever was the stuff on the camping/rafting adventure a couple of months back and it didn't have a single 'fannish' element.

"As it is, you all breathe the same rarefied air, Arnie writes the same overly-stylized Fannish Prose and all any of you can talk about is Andy Fucking Hooper! Expand your horizons. . . . Let's drop the self-referential in-joke crapola and talk about our LIVES, rather than

. . . as Sondra said, if we didn't understand the movie, why should we understand the food?

What I do object to are such persons who move from house to house in search of romance.

parceling up moments into fannish anecdotes, okay?"

To which, as an example of the response, Joyce Katz wrote: "It seems to me that we are talking about our lives, our interests, and in varied and entertaining ways. . . . Personally, I'm enjoying the rarefied air of our fannish zine."

What are the goals of a fan editor? Are there acceptable and unacceptable goals? Who and what do you have to know to "get in"? Is there a type of fan article that is better than another?

And, ultimately, I wonder how this controversy has survived for so long. Who can remember the first new fan they heard whining about not being accepted by fandom? When was the first letter written criticizing the "inbred, rarefied" nature of any particular zine or fan group?

I opened to the first page of the leather-bound book, and intoned:

"Fannish standard number one: Fanzine fandom is based on written communication between people with similar and varied interests. That communication will be effected by means of interesting prose.

"Fannish standard number two: The Usual. Fanzine editors will honor the contract that they must send a copy of their fanzine to those who communicate through written means to comment or contribute to that fanzine.

"Fannish standard number three: The best type of fan article will be a nonfiction convention review clothed in the metaphor of a fictional context."

"You're kidding," Lesley said.

"Are you sure you didn't get a copy of this?" I asked, waving the pamphlet. "They're issued at the door, you know."

Ultimately, I don't believe there are many barriers holding any new fan back. But I think there's one thing new fans miss.

Constant communication makes a person familiar with other people. People aren't as comfortable with people they don't know very well. The end result of this is that a new fan's stuff isn't read in the same sympathetic way a more well-known fan's stuff might be.

My recent reentry into fandom is a good example; despite my previous efforts years ago, my first ten columns elicited little response. What did come in was frequently negative. One fan editor called my column the weakest element in the fanzine.

But, as people have come to know me a little better, the response has improved both in quality and quantity.

Standard number one really does hold. That's what got fans together in the first place. Whether fans should curl up into their cozy little groups and ignore the rest of the world, or they should open up and expand their horizons, they ultimately want to communicate.

And if a new fan's stuff is entertaining, fun, challenging, intelligent -- whatever -- enough, the stuff will be read and the fan will be "accepted," whatever that means beyond getting stuff in print.

I continued reading to Lesley. "Fannish standard number four: You have to work pretty hard to be rejected to fandom. Conversely, you may have to work pretty hard to be noticed."

Fanzine fandom as we know it started when a bunch of people decided they wanted to talk to each other about science fiction directly, I explained to Lesley. They wrote to each other, produced fanzines, and wrote to each others' fanzines. They talked.

Eventually, the topics began spreading beyond science fiction; fans started writing about other fans and about their lives in general.

They started holding conventions, and actually met the people they were talking to, strengthening bonds they established in print.

What exists now is essentially the same thing, but with many different people involved, I said to her.

Then I turned a page in the pamphlet.

"Fannish standard number five: fandom is made up of individuals. There is no consensus reality."

There are "group minds," I said to Lesley; groups of fans close enough in thinking to have a relative consensus about reality. But that always changes and mutates. Fandom is no less complex than all the people involved.

Lesley nodded. "You know what?" she said. "You've explained the rules."

I ignored her.

"You know, I had a pretty smooth ride when I entered fandom the first time, in late 1983," I said to her. "Tom Weber acted the role of friendly native guide, and I really didn't face much of the incomprehension and lack of familiarity that many new fans face today.

"But I was still intimidated," I said. "I was intimidated by the writers who were producing at the time. Teresa Nielsen Hayden. Patrick Tom. D. West. Greg Pickersgill. Lucy Huntzinger. Damn fine writers, and I never in the world believed I could write as well as they did, no matter what the subject, no matter if it were for a fanzine or the New Yorker.

"That, to me, is what pushed me the hardest, and what made me want to get out. If I haven't got any chance of equaling their performance, why the hell am I trying?"

"That's the real challenge you face, Lesley."



Fannish Memory Syndrome

by Steve Green

Those of you on the opposite side of the Big Pond, consider yourself lucky: as I write, the run-up to the yuletide season has barely begun in earnest (in truth, the prelims open around the time we throw out the undigested Easter eggs), but Britain's already in the throes of the annual farce which is our music industry's Christmas "top ten". And hot among the dirges which currently jostle for the lucrative pole position is, needless to say, the necromantic Beatles "reunion".

Ignoring its awesome awfulness (still, at least this is one Lennon/McCartney "tune" which won't intrude into our lives every time we catch an elevator), the perverse genesis of "Free as a Bird" set me to wondering whether such twisted technology might ever be employed within fandom's environs. Decades from now, might some cashrich lunatic recreate, say, HYPHEN, using BurroughsWare to cut/up original WillisWit into ZineText™, with appropriate clip art from the Atom Archive? Simon Ounsley has already nudged us down this sick highway by filling LAGOON #7 with samizdat "D West" artwork; he should be taken out and shot immediately.

Like Christmas singles, birthdays and tax returns, hardly has one TAFF race been concluded and its winner condemned to a lifetime of cynical smirks till his or her first trip report surfaces, than another falls upon us. Fortunately for APAK readers, at least one of Andy and Victor's columnists is ideally placed to step onto the grassy knoll and target this year's gruesome twosome in his sights.

First across Dealey Plaza, obviously, is APAK's very own UK agent, Martin Joseph Tudor. Now, I'm hardly going to be influenced by the fact that his valiant efforts to keep CRITICAL WAVE afloat have ensured we're both doomed to co-edit the buggger into the next century, or the relish he displayed when plotting my trial and summary decapitation at MiSdemeanor (cf. Catherine McAulay's triflic conrep in ATTITUDE #1), am I? Too bloody right, I am. For

Boring Ad Executive turns Sarcastic Fugitive

more than a decade, Tudor has shuffled around in the murky shadows of British fandom, egging folks on to agree to far more fannish commitments than any sensible person would afford a second glance, using his own overstretched lifestyle as proof it's possible to run dozens of conventions, edit scores of fanzines, guest at assorted foreign events and still manage to be at the bar just when you've arrived to buy a round with your last fiver.

More sinister is the nickname "Teflon Tudor", a reference to his uncanny talent for escaping the repercussions of actions so shameful (how the heck *do* you wreck a hotel bed in your *sleep*?) that the perpetrator would normally be appropriately branded and cast into the wilderness, or at the very least sentenced to run a worldcon fan room; were it not for the fact that I know he hasn't an attic, I'd lay odds Tudor had a portrait hidden up there.

Meanwhile, dozing in the book repository, we have Michael J "Simo" Simpson, whose enthusiastic but ill-informed campaign saw him cruising Glasgow's Central Hotel in garish drag on the Sunday of Intervention, apparently under the impression that TAFF stood for Transvestite Apparel Fan Fund (claims that he was playing homage to Edward D Wood simply worsened matters). Despite his "filthy pro" journalistic status and the intense irritation created whenever he mentions that SFX is picking up his bill, Simo at least hasn't sunk to the depths of offering to get married in Las Vegas if he wins the race. On the other hand, his byline has regularly appeared above the phrase "sci-fi", which automatically bars him from every fannish household apart from the Ackermansion, kind of limiting potential post-worldcon exploration of the US.

So there you have it. Two of the worst examples of British fandom today, neither exhibiting any truly redeemable qualities whatsoever. That'll teach you not to darken our peaceful shores with the boisterous likes of Dan and Lynn Steffan. And anyway, I'm off to the Register Office to change my name to Hold Over Funds.



AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS:

[APH: Let's get going with a large chunk of an even larger letter from KIM HUETT (P.O. Box 679 Woden ACT 2606 Australia), who takes us back to issues I raised last summer:]

"According to the guide book I have here, *Insight Guides: The Pacific Northwest*, published by Houghton Mifflin, Seattle Metro runs two 1927 vintage Australian streetcars along the waterfront. Are Seattle fans aware of this Australian connection in their midst? When I finally make it to Seattle I plan to have a look for myself.

"I have in mind some bookshops to explore this week, second-hand bookshops. I should be a little safer than you as I plan to mostly look at the non-fiction sections, and there I have no great expectations as I don't know exactly what it is I'm looking for. When I visited *The Old Bookroom* which is not far from home last week I ended up with *Training your Donkey*, which is the guide to what it says it is; *The Reason Why*, an explanation of the Charge of the Light Brigade; *A Supplement to the Glossary of the Dialect of Cumberland*, again what it says; *With Malice Aforethought*, Australian invective, insults and abuse. With this sort of collecting it's a rare day indeed that I don't find something of interest. Not that

I always buy what I find as frequently the asking price is greater than my desire. In most cases a small loss as I have still had the joy of discovery.

"This is a digression however given that the real question is about fiction, science fiction to be exact. The situation you describe is an inevitable one in that you admit, according to Sturgeon, 90% of everything is crap. Which means that more or less the bulk of what is on sale at any one till will indeed be odiferous. It was just bad luck that on your little stroll (as described in *Apparatchik* #37) the bookstores rather exceeded the Sturgeon quotient. I like to think of the other 10%, 'the right stuff', as being like alluvial gold. It's washed down the publishing stream mixed in with a great deal of mud and gravel until it finally catches in the bookstore mudbank. When Andy discovers Science Fiction he travels down to the mudbank and pans for gold. Once the accumulation has been sieved out poor ol' Andy is reduced to waiting for new grains in that tiny trickle to arrive. Aren't we all!

"Given this scenario I wouldn't like to say that there is more bad science fiction about today. Perhaps there is, but it's hard to estimate because there has always been so much bad material about. As far as I can see the only thing that changes are the authors. Pull out *Warhoon* #28 and have a read of *The Harp That Once or Twice*. In it you will find Walt complaining about Rene Lafayette (Elron Hubbard), and L. Sprague DeCamp in much the same way you mention Piers Anthony and Orson Scott Card here.

"If you think you have it bad then spare a thought for me. I inhabit a middle ground which requires competent writing but straight-forward plots. It is a narrow ridge to tread indeed, with Lin Carter, Robert Adams, Tanith Lee (formula dreck) on one side and Philip K. Dick, Gene Wolfe and Robert Silverberg (elegantly written, but boring cryptic crosswords on the other). There are few writers about with just enough talent to tell a riveting story who are content to do just that. Lois McMaster Bujold is the first one who springs to mind in a purely science fictional sense. She is also the one I feel the least urge to edit of my automatic read authors. On the other hand, the high points in her novels never make it up to the level of Simon R. Green's best. Unfortunately Green's novels tend to jump in quality like the needle of a seismograph. While I enjoy his books I do frequently have the urge to edit his work to cut out the numerous weak points in it. On the fantasy front I most enjoy Glen Cook, finding him the fantasy equivalent of Bujold. Apart from an urge to re-write his battle scenes so the forces involved are of a realistic size (he has the unfortunate tendency to horribly over-exaggerate like many ancient chroniclers) and reduce the amount of pseudo-Chandler in his series about Garrett the detective, I very much enjoy his work.

"These days, when I don't have something new to read, I mostly read something old. Most recently it was Van Vogt's *Empire of the Atom* & *The Wizard of Linn*, and Niven's *Neutron Star*, *A World Out of Time*, & *The World of Ptavvs*. Given how little time there is in my week for reading fiction the re-reading of material enjoyed in the past should keep me entertained well into the future.

"In *The Illustrated Book of Science Fiction Lists*, edited by Michael Ashley and published way back in 1982 a list of Algy's

Wrestle a gator and eat some pralines

Budrys' ten most promising new science fiction and fantasy writers was included. The list consisted of Paul Preuss, Parke Godwin, Arsen Darnay, Michael Swanwick, Somtow Sucharitkul, Victor Besaw, Lucius Shepard, Madeleine Robins, Robert L. Forward & Robert Frazier. Budrys commented that it would be interesting to look at this list ten years further on to see how well his predictions have held up. So it's more like 12 years further on and most of the names are unfamiliar to me. Sucharitkul is still around as S. P. Somtow I believe and Godwin or Shepard could still be selling material though I don't recall seeing their names of late. As for the rest I have no idea, I wonder if anyone else can add to this."

[APH: We have different values in regard to SF, to say the least. Seeing you characterize Silverberg's work as "boring cryptic crosswords" filled me with the urge to check you for an opposable thumb and an upright gait, but I do try to remember that everyone's taste is different, and has different reasons for reading SF. I have read a number of Bujold's books and find that most of them are essentially interchangeable – but for many people, that kind of dependability and lack of unpleasant surprises is a great comfort. I'm also less enchanted by her recapitulation of Victorian aristocratic values and social structure than many readers. But it is true that one feels little impulse to rewrite her prose, which is both utilitarian and entertaining.

And it's true that Glen Cook seems to take the genre term "Fantasy" quite thoroughly to heart, but one has little opportunity to observe pre-gunpowder armies in the field while working in a General Motors plant in St. Louis.

Budrys' list of up-and-comers is interesting. I'd say that at least part of his "error" is due to a lack of female writers in his list. A remarkable number of the writers who have moved to the front of the field in the past decade and a half are women – Connie Willis, Bujold, Nancy Kress, Pat Cadigan, Gwyneth Jones, Shari Tepper – the list could continue for some time. Other than that, choose any ten writers who appeared to gathering steam in 1982, in any field, and you'd probably have the same rate of success. Shepard, a Seattle resident and notorious raconteur, has produced some amazing work, but financial success still eludes him. Somtow has hitched his star to horror-writing these days, and seems to be making better progress than he had with SF. Parke Godwin's books are a staple of remainder tables across America, but I don't know what he is doing now.

Forward remains among the brightest stars among the *Analog* school of SF, but he is perhaps better known to most fans for his excellent technical programs at conventions from coast to coast. Robert Frazier has made some healthy sales as well, but I wouldn't put him in the lead of anything. Perhaps the best writer of the bunch is Michael Swanwick, whose sparkling *Science-Fantasy Stations of the Tide* was a Hugo-nominee in 1992, and was my personal choice for the award. The rest, I must admit, are largely unfamiliar to me. Perhaps other readers can provide further details.

I sympathize with your plight in having such a narrow focus for your recreational reading (when it comes to fiction; your taste in non-fiction is obviously fairly catholic). It's a story which I've heard repeated by many fans. Given the limited range of stuff which appeals to and entertains you, I certainly can't blame you for re-reading favorite books. Personally, I like to rattle my head a little by trying varying styles of fiction, to the degree that I seldom read two books within the same genre back to back. So-called mainstream fiction now seems to embrace such an experimental ethic that critics find it fashionable to suggest that it has

thus alienated the reading public, and driven them to formulaic genre fiction in order to find familiar and dependable tropes and motifs. I guess there's some argument for that; I find more invention, particularly when it comes to character, when reading contemporary mainstream fiction than in any of the topical genres that once stoked my sense of wonder so completely. But the nice thing about this is that it has lead me to ask less of SF – I don't rely on it to provide such a large chunk of my recreational reading anymore, so I feel no need to read every piece of skiffy dreck that comes along, and am generally more forgiving of the work I do read.

The Seattle waterfront cable-car is indeed from Australia, namely Melbourne, and is both charming and useful. Parking is often a big problem when we want to take visitors down there, and it's most convenient to park at the north end of the line and take it south as far as Pioneer Square. By the way, do you have some expectation of having to train a Donkey in the near future? Or does this have some oblique connection with the Australia in 1999 bid? It would be a refreshing change from the usual Koalas and Wombats

Now, a little musing on things Roswellian, inspired by my article in # 47, from that master of the unexplained, JON SINGER (e-mailable at a-jons@microsoft.com):]

"That was pretty cool, that. It's a subject I've been interested in for quite a while but haven't been following lately, and I was very pleased to read your take on it.

"To give you some idea of just how far out of date I am: I started by reading a bunch of books when I was in high school. That's some time back in the Devouring period, when fish became obnoxious. Much later, when I lived in Chicago, I went & saw Allen Hynek lecture.

"He seemed like a fairly solid 'no horseshit' kinda guy, and I liked him well enough that I went down and did a little bit of volunteer work for him and his wife at their little office. (CUFOS, isn't that what they called it? Been too bloody long.)

"Read through some old Air Force microfilms, and got intrigued by green fireballs, among other things. (There was a little bit about Roswell, but nothing you could really put your teeth into. Dammit.) When I finally saw a green fireball, by the way, I called him up to tell him about it. That, unfortunately, was toward the end of his life, and he was already quite ill. I think he died of brain cancer . . . what a waste.

"But, so, anyway, I hadn't heard any of this new stuff, and I think it's pretty exciting. Your objection to the usual explanations of Roswell is well put, I think, though if the stuff won't burn, then it's maybe not too surprising that there wasn't a big charred crater. As to the fact that it wasn't scattered over a huge area, well, what if the thing was hovering (at just a few thousand feet, or maybe even less) when it blew up? All the junk falls more or less straight down, no?

"Then there is the story from that general, and the context around it. Most intriguing, indeed! I could easily develop a (somewhat paranoid) interpretation, to the effect that the Feds are eager to pacify people who 'know' that 'something happened' and that 'they don't want us to get any real info about it.' The Feds don't really need tons of mosquitoes buzzing around their heads, do they? It isn't all that surprising that they would release these oh-so-handly reports that superficially seem like a big deal, but may actually merely corroborate what 'knowledge' we already have, rather than adding all that much to it. So what if a few thousand nutcases

Your lady has been informed!

clamor for still more corroboration? They are not obliged to furnish it... are they?

"On the other hand, why was there such a tight, heavy, and effective news blackout in '47? Could it be that what blew up out there was, say, an AF cargo plane, carrying parts of an A-bomb or some bits of a prototype H-bomb, things they most definitely would not have wanted to talk about? (How dismally mundane!) On the third hand, why would they object to talking about it now, unless, for example, the crash scattered nasty radioactive shit all over the place and they gummed up their attempt to clean up the results, in which case they are doing well by having people think that it was little gray aliens, right? Well, maybe.

"Of course, all of this idiocy is pure speculation on my part -- I don't even know whether that 'crash site' is on public, private, or Government land now, don't know whether it is open to the public these days, and don't know enough about the entire subject, really, even to speculate well.

"Like I said, Andy, I'm 'way out of date on all of this.

"Know where I can find out any more? C'n I maybe borrow the book by those two guys?"

[APH: Hmmmm . . . you don't know enough to even speculate well? That doesn't seem to stop anybody working in the UFO field.

The land on which the "Roswell" debris was discovered was actually 70 miles south of Roswell. The nearest town is Corona, New Mexico. Curiously, I have had little luck in determining who actually owns the land. The ranch foreman who found the debris, Mac Brazel, was definitely working it for someone else. Some sources state that the land was leased from the Bureau of Land Management, but I can't find any reference as to who held that lease. This is another example of how some of the most prosaic details of this case remain maddeningly hard to hold.

The crash or descent or whatever you choose to call it is widely believed to have occurred during a thunderstorm on Wednesday, July 2nd, 1947. If the debris had been released from any height, the winds associated with a fast-moving storm in the desert would have scattered it over many square miles. And a plane crash involving radioactive materials really would have been likely to leave some sort of lingering evidence.

Hynek was, most of the time, a very rational and exacting researcher. His great weakness was that he was occasionally less than rigorous in his questioning of eyewitness accounts and/or photographic evidence, despite his assurances to the contrary. I don't think he was necessarily that sanguine about the origin of the majority of objects people reported to him; he simply preferred to accept their motives at face value, and declined to consider that they could be hoaxing him. He was always more inclined to attribute bad reports to misidentification rather than mischief, which left him open to the same hoaxers and career-sighters on multiple occasions.

Now, returning to the lettercol after a long absence is GARY FARBER (e-mail at gfarber@panix.com), commenting on Steve Green's column on English attitudes toward Intersection:]

"Steve Green's column is an interesting example of how the fragmentation of fandom we've long experienced in the States is spreading to the UK.

"I'm in contact with a variety of UK fen of various ilk who share being net.connected, and the one thing that seems clear is that there is no serious Cardiff bid. It takes a curious misunderstanding of the bid process, even in the UK, to con-

fuse some signs on the wall of the SECC with a potentially serious bid. (Anyone have 30,000 pounds to spare?)

"Matters remain to be sorted out, of course, and I would not be so foolish as to make any firm predictions, but it's clear that while opinion across UK fandom is mixed about the next UK bid (and surely no one believes this will never happen?), it seems far more likely that Berlin may emerge as the next candidate for a European Worldcon.

"Oh, and a trivial correction for Robert Lichtman: 'Glicksohn and Wood' never co-edited save posthumously; it was 'Glicksohn and Glicksohn.' And when he points to the telephone as a substitute for e-mail, he misses the point that a long distance call is very expensive. Having paid my base \$10 a month, all my e-mail, no matter the length, content (an elaborate fanzine, potentially), or distance, is free."

[APH: Points duly noted, Gary. It may be slightly hysterical of various Britfans to cry doom in the face of such a tentative gesture toward Worldcon as the Cardiff bid seems to be, but given the range of reactions to Intersection which Steve quoted last issue, I'm just glad they haven't done physical harm to the people who put up those posters.

Now, a quick train ride and we'll pay a visit to VICKI ROSENZWEIG (33 Indian Road #6-R, New York, NY 10034), who has her own observations on Intersection's aftermath:]

"Part of the difference between US and British experiences of the Scottish Worldcon is, I think, exoticism. Most of the American fans who were there don't spend a lot of time in Britain: along with our experience of the con itself, there was the underlying awareness of being in a foreign country. Britain isn't frighteningly alien to an American: we can understand the language, and most of the food isn't too weird, and a lot of the people look like the people we see at home. But it's still a foreign country, where the money is different and they drive on the other side of the road and the temperature is given in different units. At least as important, most of us went for two or three weeks, rather than the long weekend that is possible and even common for an American at an American Worldcon, or a British fan at this British Worldcon. Those of us who didn't arrive jet-lagged, which is almost as disorienting as having been at a con for three days, had been away from home for days before we ever got to Intersection: on tours or traveling by ourselves, in hotels or staying with family or friends, we were outside our usual lives. We didn't leave work Wednesday or Thursday afternoon and get to the con that night, with our minds still on our jobs.

"My other thought is that, if British fans can create this atmosphere at every Novacon with far less effort, I should see if I can juggle my schedule to get to Novacon.

"I am by no means an expert on any aspect of UFOs, but it seems clear that if an alien spacecraft did crash on Earth in 1947, that fact is of almost incalculable importance: it means there is at least one other intelligent species out there, and they've found a way to beat Einstein, a way we might also find. But I'm not convinced that a cover-up proves there was anything important going on: keeping secrets is as reflexive for certain people as suckling is for an infant, and such people gravitate to the government and particularly to intelligence work.

"I think that the distinguishing aspect of our culture -- roughly, the industrialized world in the 20th century -- is the extent to which we take for granted that change is constant,

You should be an exhibit in the art show

not so much that we think it good (though some of it is good) but that we take it for granted, assuming not that our lives are radically different from those of our parents, but that if we have children their lives will be at least as different from ours, and that this is the usual human condition. This viewpoint may be inextricably part of science fiction, but it's hardly unique to sf or fans. And people like Vernor Vinge talk about a 'singularity' into which the pace of change is driving humanity, assuming that everyone will fall into it, the !Kung and the Amish and the Bedouin along with Silicon Valley and Tokyo. I don't think it's Luddism to point out that a tool is not a purpose, and that we should think about what we want to accomplish before picking up a hammer and treating everything as a nail."

[APH: While I think all of your observations in regard to the different experiences which Americans and British fans had in getting to, or existing during, the Scottish Convention, are quite valid, I don't think they do very much to address the attitudes which the different fandoms have had toward the convention itself. The most important difference arises from the simple fact that we were the guests and they were the hosts; the convention was held on their turf, and they were prey to all the anxieties and responsibilities which accompany that, no matter how thoroughly many members of British fandom sought to distance themselves from the event. While we might have made considerable note of the problems at the con, they weren't our problems, and the new acronym FIASIG (Fandom Is A Shed In Glasgow) strikes us as funny, rather than mortifying.

I try my best not to get caught up in the Implications Of Alien Visitation. Obviously, if we are talking about intelligently-piloted craft from another world, the possibilities this opens up are quite startling. But personally, I'm still trying to deal with the issue of confirming that some UFOs can't be explained as terrestrial phenomena. And if this can't be established, I'd settle for some real proof that the government has at times operated under that assumption, which strikes me as quite fascinating in itself. Above all, I'd like to avoid getting so painfully *serious* about this stuff, which is what makes so many ufologists and believers such crushing and comical bores. Theorizing the existence of specific civilizations, plans for the redemption of the earth people, blonde, beautiful alien agents – well, I feel I look ridiculous enough already, thank you.

Of course, once you make that initial leap of faith, in the face of all logical arguments against the feasibility of such a visitation, the pitch onward to Venusian protocols and the Pleaidean Agenda seems like a tiny step. Which is why I try to remain open to a lot of other interpretations, like time travel, inter-dimensional manifestations, the Japanese squid fleet, weather balloons and too much bulgar.]

[VMG: First, I'd like to point out that I recommended Andy seek professional help some time back. On the other hand, a Tacoma News Tribune editorial Dec. 4 had a little fun with the X-Files and a \$20 million, 17 year ESP program funded by the U.S. government, 'codenamed 'Stargate,' apparently in response to reports that the Soviets were conducting paranormal experiments.'

As many as six psychics were employed to track down Moammar Gadhafi, hunt plutonium in North Korea and used a technique called 'remote viewing' to gather information.

Experts were unimpressed by the results.]

[APH: Now, having once raised the issue of general sartorial adaptation in British fandom, I should have anticipated that AVEDON CAROL (e-mail at avedon@cix.compulink.co.uk) would have a few things to say on the subject:]

"What I don't understand is why someone like Nigel Richardson, of all people, would go out of his way to try to lead the chorus against folk who are frumpy and dumpy. Is it like closet cases who always tell the worst anti-queer jokes, so no one will know they are one?"

"You've seen this guy, right? Did you stare with envy upon his willowy physique, his tight buns, his general sartorial splendour? Were you wowed by his clan, his panache? I mean, he may write like he thinks he's Lou Stathis, but not that many people have ever called Nigel E. Richardson 'stud muffins', let alone 'cool'. (Hmm, now that I think of it, maybe you haven't seen him. Well, let's just say you didn't miss meeting the Lou Reed of fandom.)

"BLAT! - I think it's one of the best fanzines I've ever seen, and probably the best-looking. But they do dabble in politics from time to time, so I guess they are fair targets for political criticism - just like anyone else. Anyway, it keeps life interesting. But boy, they do some knockout work.

"Co-editing, huh? Hmmm. Well, I've always found it a bit, uh, difficult, if you do it with someone who doesn't actually live in your house. But hell, you managed to get something out of Victor after all these years when he broke my heart with his disappearance, so just keep the fire lit under him, will ya?"

[APH: As if that were necessary! I'm lying here with a 101° fever, watching little ducks and ponys flop around the room, and Victor's calling me every night: "We get any mail? When are you going to send it? Are we going to go to press on time? How many lizards do I get at the bottom of my column this time?" I mean, okay, he gets us seats on the 40 yard-line for a pro football game (if you can call the Seahawks and Jets "pro" teams), he drives me 5,000 miles round trip for a three-day weekend in Vegas, he keeps the smoking lamp lit at all hours . . . it's been supremely entertaining. But it's all I can do to keep up with him; he's the one keeping the fire lit under me at the moment.

One can't be entirely unsympathetic to Nigel's reactions to fandom's state of terminal unhipness. Honestly, Avedon, I've heard you say some of the same things yourself. Nigel's just in some denial about the degree to which these things apply to him. We all have a more idealized image of ourselves than we actually present; most of us merely have the good taste to keep that to ourselves. Nigel feels comfortable letting us know that he is a tightly-muscled rubber-clad rave-monkey trapped inside the body of a dour little weed who publishes fanzines. The soul-shattering power of that admission ought to inspire admiration in at least equal proportion to our contempt.

Time now for a quick card on weighty subjects from DAVID THAYER (701 Regency Dr., Hurst, TX 76054-2307):]

"Your fanzine needs more art and not just mine languishing in your files, somebody's, anybody's. Words communicate, yes, but they are merely symbols which depend too much on reader experience.

"I took my newest Hugo to SoonerCon to impress my friends. (The platypus hand puppet proved in the end to be a better babe magnet.) To confuse the uninformed, I allowed Brad Foster to display it on his dealer's table. Since he'd brought none of his own, he suggested I bring both of mine to

A message from Lesley Reece: "I LOVE Bill "Potshot" Kunkel!"

the next first Saturday SF party at his house for comparison. After all, it's not the number, but the size of your rocket that counts."

[VMG: Pictures communicate, yes, but they are merely lines and shading which depend too much on viewer experience. While art might be nice, I wouldn't expect to see too much in APAK. Stuff which illustrates and perhaps some humorous stuff, but nothing so large it would take away from the too few words we can barely afford to publish already. The letters and essays are, in my view, what APAK is really made up of, and why we come out twice a month.]

[APH: Alas, the Ned Kelley hand-puppet has not had the same effect as your platypus (they ask, "what the HELL is that supposed to be?"). I see it as a happy coincidence that the Hugo voters have chosen to honor someone who takes such obvious delight in the award. But why stop at merely toting the things around with you? Why not find further uses for the rocket, like holding up dodgy furniture or perhaps lawn darts?

I think the time is coming when we will probably add some more graphic variation to the body of APA. But I leave the communicative content of art to artists.

Now, Some people found out about the change of our UK agent's address before we did, including STEVE JEFFERY (JEFFERY_STEVE@ctc-cookson.ccmil.compuserve.com)]

"Thanks for *Apparatchik* 45 and 46, just arrived in an envelope marked (confusingly) Ravensbourne Grove, Wildenhall, West Midlands, UK. Do you have a new distributor or has Martin Tudor moved from Alum Rock Road?

"A highlight of A46 is Pam Wells' Novacon report, where I find the bits I missed through having to leave early before Sunday evening, just after the Nova Awards. I wish I'd stayed to see Nic Farey shorn for charity, although I wonder how Dee Ann felt about it, especially having to drag him back through US immigration with 'Tudor for TAFF' shaved into his scalp.

"Welcome (officially) to Victor as co-editor and sponsor. In your famous doubles you forgot Morecombe and Wise, Roy Rogers and Trigger, Marx and Lenin, and Stalin and . . . well, nobody for very long. How long before Victor is co-opted to the post of 25th assistant co-editor for *Wild Heirs*?

"Hmm 46 already, and Ansible celebrating its 100th recently. A rough calculation suggests you will be matching up issues in some 54 months, say around . . . Hey, almost on the dot for the start of the year 2000. . . .

"Andy, seeing you looked to be a little grouchy about Christina's use of Apak review cuttings of her zine(s) in *Balloons Over Bristol* 9 (what happened to the 'Freeware' concept anyway -- did you subscribe?), I thought I'd better ask first: We are doing a library talk on SF fanzines in a couple of weeks and I wanted some hand-out sheets. It struck me that the back page fanzine reviews in recent *Apaks* give a pretty good view of what to expect from a range of fanzines. I wonder if I have your permission to copy some of these, from perhaps *Apak* 41-46, for about 20 copies of a small (three sheet) handout. Just for this event and subsequent enquiries along the lines 'what are fanzines and how do I get them?'. I'll have other stuff, but this would be useful. If no, can you let me know, and I'll go badger *Critical Wave* about the same idea."

[APH: I shudder to think what kind of machinations would be required to keep us in bi-weekly publication for another four years. Maybe we'll just jump ahead twenty or thirty issues

Martin Tudor has indeed moved; see the front page for details if you haven't already made note of them.

I don't really subscribe to the "freeware" concept; I like to have some vague idea of where my stuff ends up. But I wasn't really angry at Christina for running those little review squibs without permission, I was just meant it would have been nice to be asked. It would be very flattering to know that you had used my reviews to introduce people to fanzines -- God help them.

But CHRISTINA LAKE (e-mail at clake@wsxwatl.demon.co.uk) seems to understand these things implicitly]

"It must be quite irksome for you to have people quizzing you on your throwaway lines. I quite liked the idea of being described as politically unsound, it gave a rather risqué edge to an otherwise generally vacillating set of opinions. But maybe it wasn't me after all. Maybe someone else at Inter-section wrote several pages of criticism on *Blat*. Maybe we will never know.

"Pam missed out the best line from the Novacon/Ditto e-mail link up (though this is excusable since she wasn't there for that session). I asked whether there were any sidebars at Ditto, and someone, I don't remember who, came back with the reply: 'Where Andy Hooper is, there are the sidebars.'

"Good luck to Victor in his new role on the *Apak* team."

[VMG: Thanks for the wish. But it will take more than luck. It will take an all-out bone-crunching mind-numbing effort to take over fandom. Are you pondering what I'm pondering, Andy?

Yes, there were sidebars at Ditto. Very sercon sidebars indeed.]

[APH: No comment. Let us move on to a side-comment on Novacon from the titanic DAVE LANGFORD (e-mail as ever at ansible@cix.compulink.co.uk):]

"*APAK* #45 and #46 received a few days ago -- many thanks as always. It was nice of you to mention *Ansible* #99, which was nothing special . . . but I know the chance to misspell both Jackie McRobert and Ian Sorensen in a single phrase is too much for mortal fan to resist.

"Pam's Novacon report in #46 was a pleasant surprise. (Pedant correction: Fran Dowd, not Down.) The most exciting event, the Depilation of Nic Farey, was cunningly timed to coincide with my train home, alas -- I should have stayed another night, but owing to pressure of Real Work (if you can call researching and writing a theme quizbook real) had arrived at Novacon too tired to enjoy it to the full. Poot.

"I am glad that various inputs, principally yours, persuaded Hero TAFF Candidate Tudor to drop that statistical platform format ('Smallpox vaccination: 1970. Third place in Birmingham pub quiz on Hanseatic League: 1984.') for something more fannish in flavour. I suggested the addition of 'bearded' to the list of qualities"

[APH: Given the apparently universal expressions of horror which greeted the beta version of Martin's platform, I'm sure that he would have made some adjustments without any advice from me. One can understand his confusion, but the mere fact that a majority of American fans are attracted by displays of sercon officiousness doesn't necessarily mean that one should focus one's efforts on attracting their votes. Anyway, the part of his latest platform I like best is where he proclaims his intention to produce a trip report on demand. That should be fun to watch.

That's it for this one, folks. We'll be back with our gala egg-nog bloat issue in two weeks time.]

1) Heirlooms #3, aka Wild Heirs #11.5, edited by Vegas Fandom, 330 South Decatur, Suite #152, Las Vegas, NV, 89107; I really try to avoid giving greater play to reprinted projects and fanhistorical screeds merely because that's where some of my strongest fannish interest lies, but there really are some fan-writers from the past who seem to outshine most of today's. Here we have a truly irresistible collection, a tiny sliver of the work produced by the fans known as the LA Insurgents, lovingly reprinted with only a few typos by their most ardent modern-day disciples, the Las Vegrants. They lead off with one of the most amazing pieces of fan-writing I have ever seen, the uncut version of "FAPA Forever" by Charles Burbee. I won't -- I can't -- describe it, but Burbee swears this is a true story. Next is Francis Towner Laney's consideration of how to become "A Fabulous Burbee-like Character," a thing distinctly worth doing. I was distinctly taken aback while reading Paul Feller's "The Rap on R.A.P.," which considers the effect that Ray Palmer's patronage of The Shaver Mystery was likely to have on fandom, and offers Feller's vision of fandom in 1995 by contrast, to see the following: "English Fandom will make a post-war comeback. This will be good for fandom, because British fans are much more mature and have better manners than their rough and tumble American counterparts. The English fans believe in K.T.F. (Kindness to Fanzines), so their presence may reduce the number of personal attacks and unprovoked fan feuds." I mean -- is this some kind of a hoax? Has anyone in Britfandom ever read this? Rob Hansen, help! And the zine finishes off with a piece by Elmer Perdue, hand-picked and introduced by Robert Lichtman, perhaps to balance the pokes Burbee had at him earlier. This stuff BURNS from bar one -- reading it juiced me up something fierce! And to think that fans in 1945 once believed that the Worldcon might one day draw as many as one thousand fans . . .

#2) Quondam Bleep # 3, written and edited by C. Ross Chamberlain, 5289 Petal Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89122-5352; Okay, so this is a FAPA zine, and therefore not as widely available as one might like in the #2 slot, but it really impressed me. Essentially, this is an account of how participating in the Las Vegas production of "Ten 'Zines that Shook the World" made Ross remember stage experiences of his youth. These are quite charmingly told and a lot more interesting than "Theater Stories" tend to be. Quite a striking cover too, but one expects no less from Ross. Good show!

#3) Attitude #6, edited by Michael Abbott, John Dallman and Pam Wells, 102 William Smith Close, Cambridge, CB1 3QF U.K.; If there is anything to object to about Attitude, it is the way that it seems to have taken on the mantle of "genzine of record," thus necessitating, for example, 12 pages of comment by 23 (fancy that!) different fans on every possible permutation of The Intersection Experience. Why else would a fanzine which had spoken strongly and frequently against the very idea of a British Worldcon for two years leading up to the event feel the need to give it so much space? Ah well, many of the individual accounts were well-written, and there is a minimum of bashing of bloody American Con-Runners who ruined everything, so one should not complain. The best articles here are deliciously sercon, Sue Thomason's essay on "Language and Cultural Identity," and Gwyneth Jones' "Science fiction and the New Futurism." Steve Brewster's

fanzine reviews are quite good also, as is Michael Abbott's Eastercon report. But Peter Crump's "Anti-SF," an indictment of *Star Trek Generations*, is rather a non-starter, as well as being like shooting fish in a barrel, and *Attitude*'s letter column needs editing almost as badly as ours does. Then, when I'm really getting punchy, the three editors toss a four-page joint editorial on the meaning of colors at me. This is a very fine fanzine, but sometimes it's a lot of work to read.

#4) Wild Heirs # 11, edited by The Twenty-Three, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107, e-mail at Wildheirs@aol.com; Oh . . . the part about my being a fannish ghod was a joke? I take it all back then. This one has a fine Precursor report by Rob Hansen, more of Tom Springer's fan-fiction on -- well, you read it and see if you can figure out what he's talking about -- plus a superb article on the future of TAFF by Arnie Katz. And so much more. Always a treat to see that fat envelope shoved under the door.

#5) Project Z #1.4, written and edited by Luke McGuff, P.O. Box 31848, Seattle, WA 98103-1848; More disturbingly good essays from Luke McGuff, who dares to say the things we all know, but never notice. A lot of stuff here about life at Microsoft, and Luke's semi-ecstatic experiences working with the Fremont Arts Council to prepare for the summer Solstice Parade. Luke is such a good writer; I get a sense of a book-in-progress on post-modern life in Seattle here, and I'd love to see this stuff collected like that someday.

ALSO RECEIVED: A Prophet and a Liar #85, Vicki Rosenzweig; Canadian Journal of Detournement #7, Dale Speirs; Challenger #3, Guy H. Lillian III; Cube #61, edited by Hope Kiefer for SF3; From Linotype to Internet, the Ditto 8 one-shot; The Galacto-Celtic Newsflash Worldcon '95 Special, Franz Miklis; The Knarley Knews #53 & 54, Henry & Letha Welch; Opuntia #26.1, Dale Speirs; The SFSFS Shuttle #122, edited by Joe Siclari & Edie Stern for the SFSFS; Spirochete #74, Redd Boggs; Squeel #4 & 5, Brin-Marie Laughlin; The Texas SF Inquirer #54, edited by Alexander Slate for FACT; World Domination Review #17 & 18, Larry Taylor; Xamixdat '95, Neil Rest; and numerous other fine zines from mailing # 233 of the FAPA.

APPARATCHIK is the Prince Camille De Polignac of fandom, an aristocratic veteran of the Crimean War, who served with the Confederate Army in the Civil War. The unruly Texas Brigade he commanded in 1863 cared little for him and referred to him as "General Polecat." It's still available for the usual, but note that trades must now be sent to both Andy and Victor (Victor can be reached at 403½ Garfield Street S., #11, Tacoma, WA 98444, and electronically at Gonzalez@tribnet.com), and/or you can get Apparatchik for \$3.00 for a three month supply, or a year's worth for \$12.00 or a life-time subscription for \$19.73, or in exchange for a replica of the Taj Mahal sculpted entirely from oleo-margarine. For readers in the United Kingdom, Martin Tudor will accept £10.00 for an annual subscription, £19.37 for a lifetime sub, see his address in the colophon on the front cover. Lifetime subscribers include Tom Becker, Judy Bemis, Richard Brandt, Steve Brewster, Scott Custis, Don Fitch, Ken Forman, Lucy Huntzinger, Nancy Lebovitz, Robert Lichtman, Michelle Lyons, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Tony Parker, Greg Pickersgill, Barnaby Rapoport, Alan Rosenthal, Anita Rowland, Karen Schaffer, Leslie Smith, Nevenah Smith, Geri Sullivan, Steve Swartz, Michael Waite, and Art Widner. This map shows the routes taken by the Byzantines under Romanus IV Diogenes.