



*David Chesler '90*

# CHALLENGER NO. 9

SPRING 1999

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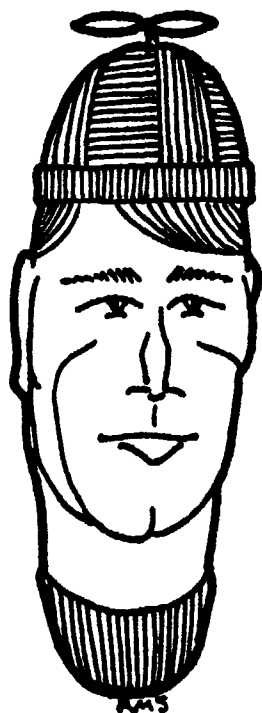
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Join **DEEPSOUTHCON 37 / CRESCENT CITY CON 14** -- August 6-8 1999 at the Best Western Landmark Hotel, Metairie LA. Address: P.O. Box 52622 NOLA 70150-2622. (504) 488-0489. Net: [cccno@aol.com](mailto:cccno@aol.com), [www.fatsnake.com/ccc/index/html](http://www.fatsnake.com/ccc/index/html). It *will* be great!



Welcome to **Challenger** #9. It's the usual mess, but I do enjoy assembling this mess.

## INTO THE FUTURE

Thanks to **Richard Brandt** of El Paso, **Challenger** will soon have its own webpage. Yes: onto the Net at last. That will augment our potential audience a hundredfold.

I sense your confusion. In this age of easy Internet access, and almost universal computer competence, why (1) aren't I on the Net already, (2) do I need B'r'er Brandt to set up my webpage, and (3) considering that the first eight issues of **Challenger** totalled more than 720 pages, why is he *doing* it? I can answer the first two questions easily. This issue is being written on a second-hand 386. It's too slow for the Net, and it's all I can presently afford. Also, *I'm* too slow for the Net. I barely understand *pencils*. I need someone computer-literate, like Richard, to help me and my fanac enter the 21st Century.

The third question is one I cannot answer, because kindness and generosity of such a scale is frankly beyond my capacity to understand. Brandt has access to acres and acres of free webspace, a working

flatbed scanner, and a beneficent heart. No wonder he has such a wonderful lady friend as Michelle Lyons by his side. What can I say? Besides, *thanks*. And ... *don't bother with my nonsense, Richard, until your eyes are better!*

## ARTWORK

If you've known me for any time at all, you know that I'm a sucker for beautiful and brilliant redheads. That's not the only reason my cover this time is by beautiful, brilliant, redheaded **Diana Sharples**, but I'd be lying if I didn't admit that it helped. Here we have not only a good drawing, with subtle, intriguing touches of alienness (the elfin ears, the vulpine fingers), but also one practically gooey with romance. Diana says the sentiment was sincere, as her models were a genuine couple. Their sweetness appeals to the pitiful residue of Life I have left in my spirit. (The dancer also resembles a female assistant district attorney whom I like a lot.)

Other artists contributed to the look of **Challenger 9**. Good **Steve Stiles** sent spot illos, including the rare new piece atop this editorial. From **Joe Mayhew** came a welcome envelope. **Sheryl Birkhead**, **Nola Frame-Gray**, and the great **Scott Patri** chimed in. **Ruth Shields** contributed, and from my stash of unpublished art, I made sure we don't forget the talents of **William Rotsler**, **Ian Gunn**, and Southern fandom's own **Dave Ryan**. Artwork for specific articles was solicited from Mayhew, **Charlie Williams**, and NOLA's own **Bryan Norris**, who, during **Dr. Henry "Knarley" Welch**'s sojourn to our city, finally met one of his epic subjects: **Dennis Dolbear**. (**Peggy Ranson** ~ speaking of artists and redheads ~ joined Knarley and me for lunch one day.) Also, here and there you will find cover reprints from **Terry Jeeves'** wonderful **Erg**, his generous gift, and a page of cool airmail stickers from **John Berry**. Thanks and thanks and thanks to all ... and to the terrific souls also who *wrote* for this issue. Hugos for all!

## READING

Since I'm too *fabbo* for sex, the onslaught of spring has brought *books* back before my eyes. I've read very little science fiction, I'm afraid.

Mostly I've scanned *crime* fiction, a genre more satisfying than our beloved spaceships to the humane questions of personal character and individual tragedy that age has made most meaningful to me. On the advice of a female client I tried a novel by Tami Hoag, but only made it halfway before its feminist anger (every male character was weak and contemptible) offended me past caring to finish. Instead I sought an author much praised by **Esquire** ~ **Michael Connelly** ~ and devoured his entire *oeuvre*. Connelly's superb Harry Bosch novels entertained me with police action (their hero is an L.A. detective) and moved me with human drama (Bosch is a powerful, complex character). They were provocative, convincing, and weren't saddled with bitchy gender loathing. I recommend them highly, but don't make my mistake and read them out of sequence. Bosch's is an ongoing, developing story. Start with **The Black Echo**, continue with **The Black Ice**, **The Concrete Blonde** ~ you know you're reading an American mystery when it has "blonde" in the title ~ **The Last Coyote**, **Trunk Music**, and **Angels Flight**. (Read **The Poet** and **Blood Work** at any time; they're not part of the series. Both are *effin' A*.)

I also scanned one of the new Parker novels by "Richard Stark" (Donald Westlake), **Comeback** ~ and Parker is just as vicious, ruthless, psychotic and entertaining as ever ... infinitely more acceptable than the repellant cuddly slant given the character by the Mel Gibson movie, **Payback**. **Backflash** awaits.

Remembering the joy with which I read **Little Big Man** in my college days ~ and there's another wonderful character gutted by the movies ~ I began **Return of Little Big Man** by Thomas Berger, which takes Jack Crabb from the Little Big Horn into his days with Bill Cody's Wild West Show. It's fun, but not as much fun as the earlier adventures, which had life among the Human Beings ~ the Cheyenne ~ to add satiric perspective and pathos. The historical bent to the book, however, did get me in tune for my major read of the season.

This was **Lincoln at Gettysburg** by Garry Wills, a study of the origins and impact of the epochal speech which "remade America." Wills' convincing thesis is that Honest Abe's 272 words did exactly that, *reinvent* the United States, as an *idea* fomented in the Declaration of Independence and given its most crucial test on that most awful ground. It was that idea that was most important to Lincoln, and Will's accomplishment is to spell out that idea and explain how the short speech at Gettysburg so brilliantly elucidated it. He sets the speech in context as classic Greek funeral oratory, establishes its Transcendental moment in history, and brings it to vivid life as rhetoric and an intellectual accomplishment. And what is the central idea of the Address? Two, actually: that America is based on the proposition that all men are created equal, and that this is one country, not two. Following Wills' argument in support of this perspective is little short of thrilling. His book put me in awed and happy tears.



### ***DUH- UFF***

Most of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance and many other folks bonked my bean after I stated, last issue, that DUFF candidate **Janice Gelb**, though the longest-contributing female member of SFPA, had never lived in the South. Of course she has, in Atlanta and Florida. I'm an idiot.

However, all's well that ends. I'm pleased to report that my endorsement didn't hurt Janice's candidacy and she won the trip to Australia 2-to-1 over her nearest opponent. Off she goes for Aussiecon. Say hello to Hanging Rock for me, J.

### **ABSENT FRIENDS**

We must note grievous losses. **Robert "Buck" Coulson**, of course, sloughed this mortal coil on 21 February 1999. **Yandro** was before my time, but Buck was a friendly and instructive presence at many conventions, from '75's Louisville DeepSouthCon to the last one we shared, the '98 DSC in Birmingham. My favorite memory is a moment when Judge Jack Speer sat down opposite me and asked me to tell him when Buck Coulson came in. "You don't have to wait long," I replied, indicating the man sitting right beside him. So long, Buck.

Also, farewell to my friend and LASFAPAmate **Gary Louie**. For me, the moment that lives is one at ConFrancisco - he set up the Hugo exhibit there - when my fellow G.L. gave me a treatise on Louisiana law he'd found in an arcane bookstore. For the rest ... well, here's his friend **Nola Frame-Gray**.

**Gary Louie**, LASFS Board of Directors member and SMOF (Secret Master of Fandom) and lover of Leggos, passed away [in February] from a heart attack.

I can't believe he's gone. It seems just yesterday I was at Loscon, at that panel taking notes as he was talking about a special size of Leggos which he got for his nephews which have blocks large enough to be "child safe."

I'm grateful that convention newsletter editor Chaz Baden assigned me the Leggos panel. It gave me the rare chance to see Gary in a special light as he talked about the toys he loved. It was a side of him I never saw before ... and will never see again ...

Guess Gary won't be able to go to Leggoland which will open up on the 20th ...

Reminiscences and other biographical materials were being solicited this spring for a memorial page on [www.99.nasfic.org](http://www.99.nasfic.org), to be e-mailed to [web99@99.nasfic.org](mailto:web99@99.nasfic.org). If you were lucky enough to know Gary, check in.

More editorial ramblings begin on page 49



art by JOE MAYHEW

ONE SMALL STEP ACROSS TIME...  
*Curt Phillips*

*" ... I refer to a quality that has been termed 'time-binding.' ... It refers to the fact that the human animal lives not only in the present but in the past and in the future ..."*

*Robert A. Heinlein  
Denvention, 1941*

It is about half an hour before sunrise and I and the 600 other men in my battalion are lying on the ground in a treeline near the town of Manassas Junction in Northern Virginia. None of us are asleep. For nearly an hour the massed roar of artillery fire has made that impossible. Our own cannon seem to be firing from directly behind us, and across the field to our front we can easily see the gouts of flame from the enemy guns as they answer. Most of the shots have no effect on us where we lie, but occasionally an explosion rips from the ground near us and we are showered with earth and tree limbs. The smell of burnt gunpowder is everywhere.

A commotion to my left; several riders approaching fast. I hear the flags snapping in the air before I see them -- it's the commanding general himself. "Up men! Up and stand ready!" We leap to obey. Now the drums sound the long roll, and we look to our center and our own flag. Now the advance is ordered, and we step off as one, a solid wave of blue marching into the Virginia morning. The enemy is silent, but watches every step as we close. 500 yards. 300 yards. 100 yards -- and the Captain raises his sword to order the charge just as the first enemy volley of rifle fire rips into our ranks. Dead and wounded fall around me as others step up to close the ranks. Across the field at the double-quick, loading and firing as we go. Now the enemy is close enough for me to see the squint of their eyes and the set of their jaws. They fire again, a massed volley that sweeps our men down before it.

I stop and shoot at the man who waves their flag. He drops but another seizes the banner before it falls. I see a gray-clad boy in the ranks ahead of me. He cannot be even half my age. He is looking at me. Our eyes lock, and time seems to slow. The rifle in my hands is empty -- no time to reload! I must use the bayonet. I leap ahead at a dead run. 20 yards. He begins to raise his rifle. 15 yards. He takes careful aim. 10 yards. I see the flames erupt from his rifle. My head snaps back, my weapon drops to the ground. I feel my legs buckle, and I fall not ten feet from the lad who has shot me. My eyes still look forward and I see the enemy cheering and tossing their hats into the air as my surviving comrades run to the rear. I close my eyes. I have died again.

"You all right, Yank?" I open my eyes to see my killer kneeling over me. I grin at him. "Good shootin', reb." He grins back, and offers a hand to help me to my feet. I take his hand, stand and shake it, and we both turn and go back to our ranks for the march back to camp. This morning he killed me. After lunch I'll return the favor, and tonight we'll both sit at the same campfire with a dozen others and trade war stories till the wee hours. We are Civil War re-enactors, and on this day we each made a new friend on the field of battle.

Re-enacting (my other major hobby apart from being a science fiction fan) seems to mystify a lot of people. They marvel at the money we spend on it. A reproduction 1861 Springfield rifled musket costs \$450 and the uniforms and other equipment that we use adds another \$600-\$800 to that bill. They goggle at the time we put into it. Many of us try to do something Civil War-related every weekend in the year and a few days during the week if we can get away with it. (I sometimes put my uniform on and speak to elementary school classes about local Civil War history, and I confess that I've actually snuck out of an SF convention to participate in a Civil War Memorial Service in the same town.) And they practically faint dead away at the thought that we'll dress ourselves up in up to five layers of clothing -- three of them wool -- and march several miles into battle on a day when the temperature will reach 105 degrees. I have done this. It wasn't easy and it probably wasn't very smart, but I've done it.

The obvious question presents itself: why? Well, one might as well ask, "Why do anything that involves getting further than ten yards away from the refrigerator and the TV?" but if you'd really like

to know why I re-enact the American Civil War, you'll have to bear with me as I explore the question. I've never been sure that I completely understand the answer myself.

Let's look at how I got started. I think it really began when I was a child back in the 1960's. We studied the War in the 4th grade, and I recall being thoroughly shocked when I learned that the South had actually lost the Civil War. You see, I was born and raised in Virginia and grew thinking of myself as a Southerner. At the same time I was taught in school that my country had never lost a war (this was before Vietnam). Somehow no one had ever discussed this seeming contradiction with me before and I well recall how the 12-year-old Curt spent the next several weeks following that rude discovery being thoroughly outraged at the idea that My South had in fact lost the War.

Of course the 12-year-old Curt knew nothing of the realities of the slavery era --another way in which my primary education shortchanged me. Long afterwards when I had studied the history of slavery and various political factors that involved that era I realized that we are all far better off today because the War ended as it did, but in that summer when I was 12 I still felt a bit touchy about the whole thing. I don't know; you might have to be a Southerner to understand this.

It was the custom in those years for my family to take a short vacation and drive from our home in Abingdon, Virginia to visit my Uncle Glen and Aunt Doris in Centerville. Those were *long* car trips. This was before the Interstate was open all the way across Virginia and the drive up Highway 11 took (or seemed) nearly twice as long as it does now. That summer when I was 12 we took along my grandparents and though my Grandmother was a wonderful lady otherwise, she happened to be the Queen of all backseat drivers, and so that trip was longer than usual.

Our carload of hot and cranky relatives arrived in Centerville that summer day and while the grownups huddled indoors around the single window air conditioner to recover from the excesses of life, young Curt was largely left to depend on his own ingenuity for his entertainment. There really wasn't much for a 12-year-old country kid to do there. I was confined to the house and back yard most of the time because my mother was convinced that if she allowed me very far out of her sight to play I'd run right out into the traffic and get myself killed. The traffic on that road in the '60s was nothing like it is today, but we were used to being in the country where if a car drove by after 9 at night, the novelty of it would wake everyone up. It was The Old Centerville Road, by the way, the main evacuation route for the Union Army after the Battle of Bull Run, though I didn't realize it at the time. I usually read a lot of science fiction on those trips.

On the first morning after we arrived I got up early and wandered out to the front porch and found the newspaper. In it was a photo that astonished me. It was a group of five or six men in Confederate uniforms. The caption mentioned that there had been a re-creation of the Battle of Bull Run a few days earlier. My studies of the War in school that year had certainly made an academic impression on me, but the idea that people could dress up in those uniforms and fight the battles again amazed me. How wonderful it would be, I remember thinking, to do that sort of thing. Later at breakfast I pointed out that photo and asked my Uncle Glen if he'd heard anything about it. He had, and mentioned that the *real* Battle of Bull Run had been fought just down the road from there. My jaw must have dropped to the floor.

"Gee," I asked, "do you suppose we could drive by and have a look?" Later that day, he took me out there. I suppose he took us all, but I can't remember anyone else going along. If they did, none was as impressed as I was.

I remember the visitor's center with the little movie about the battle and the tattered uniforms and tarnished mini-balls on display, and the Henry House where old Judith Henry had died during the battle because she refused to allow the soldiers to move her to safety, and the dozens of cannon all lined up in formation as though the cannoneers had just left them after the battle, and the stunning statue of Stonewall Jackson on horseback. For years afterwards I thought he was buried there.

I had a moment there that afternoon of my 12-year-old summer, when I stood with my hand on



the breach of one of those old brass cannon and looked towards the west where the sun was setting behind Stonewall's statue, making it seem as though he might come to life at any moment and order his troops forward. In that moment I experienced the clearest focus of my young life. In that moment I knew that what I really wanted was that somehow, someday, I would get one of those uniforms, and I would walk in the footsteps of the soldiers of the Civil War. I didn't think I'd actually do it, but in that moment I wanted it so badly it hurt. To actually stand on a real battlefield and make history come alive seemed like pure magic ...

... And then, 25 years later, I find myself standing on that same battlefield with my hand on that same cannon, and I look down and see myself wearing the uniform of the 79th New York State Militia - - which actually fought at that spot during the War -- and I look to the west at Stonewall and notice that the last quarter-century hasn't made him look the least bit less magical. That evening I reported in to my regiment at the re-enactment site and joined 3000 others to re-enact the Battle of Bull Run, and had to wonder: how many of them had traveled 25 years to be there as I had?

Things like that make me realize that you never know when you're changing someone's life with what you do. I'm sure Uncle Glen never dream that by taking me to the Manassas Battlefield Park he was doing anything more than entertaining his nephew for an afternoon. Had it not been for that visit, I'd certainly never have followed my interest in the Civil War into the re-enacting hobby and would have missed a big part of what I've wound up doing for the past 11 years.

I think of that every time I put on my uniform and go to an elementary school to talk to kids about the Civil War. Most of them just sit there and allow their eyes to glaze over, but once in a while I'll see that same light in a kid's eyes that I once felt in mine, and I'll know that this young life isn't

going to be exactly the same as it was before my visit. Maybe he'll read a book of history that he wouldn't have otherwise picked up, or maybe she'll realize that women played an important role in that part of history too and will be inspired to learn more, and maybe, just maybe, some kid will put his feet on a new path that leads two and a half decades into the future. You really never know.

So that was how it started for me; a young dream of touching the past has come truer than I had thought possible, because as any long-time re-enactor can tell you, timebinding works. In our rational minds we know it's a deception, of course. The reality of the 1860s included death (over 620,000 soldiers), horrible pain and suffering, and precious little of the glory that popular history tells us was the legacy of that war. Be that as it may, those times still have a hold on the American consciousness. We are drawn to it with horror and fascination, with anguish for those who died and with excitement for some of the valor that they sometimes showed.

And if you look hard enough for it, and if you allow yourself to believe that it might just be possible, then there truly are moments during our re-creations when it all seems so true and so real that you can't help but feel that the past is right there in front of you. Waiting for you.

Just one small step away.





Bryan 99

*Since **Chall 8** Inge Glass and her husband have been hither and yon on this planet. First, hither, as she takes us into*

## INGE'S WORLD

*Inge Glass*

**From:** Ingeborg.Glass@icn.siemens.de [Add to Address Book](#)

**Date:** 15 Jan 99 14:01:57 MET

**Subject:** I'm back

**To:** ghliii@yahoo.com

Hi Guy -- Thank you for tell me that you escaped the blizzard. Your Christmas was, in fact, far more adventure-laden than mine that way. At least, I didn't encounter blizzards in New Zealand ...

Here is a short summary of my adventures:

First of all, we were almost stranded while still in Germany because of the weather. Our Air New Zealand flight was to leave from Frankfurt, and getting there proved to be a problem -- flights were cancelled due to blizzards and freezing rain.

Anyway, we made it to Rarotonga, and there landed right in the middle of Paradise. Raro is a small South Pacific island, 30kms circumference, with a narrow lagoon behind coral reefs, green mountains in the middle, nice people and lots of flowers. We enjoyed snorkeling between tropical fish, hiking and cycling. The weather was sunny and warm, just right, with a light breeze from the sea. Perfect. My, had I got a sunburn after some days! Sundays on Raro are slow, but our travel guide mentioned that going to church there is rewarding. It is. All the native people wear white: the men are in snow-white suits, the women in long dresses, with white straw hats. They sing Christian hymns with traditional Maori tunes, very beautiful.

After five days, we continued to New Zealand itself. We traveled on North Island for one week, then took the ferry, and spent two weeks on South Island. The weather was exceptionally dry and warm almost all of the time, the wine very good, the scenery stunning -- in places. There are beautiful coastlines, volcanoes, mountains, everything. In other places, the logging industry has ruined everything. Pine forests are no so beautiful. Well.

We encountered some aspects of the local wildlife: strange birds (not Kiwis, they are nocturnal and I'm not), two sorts of Penguins, fur seals, and, the most numerous species of all, sandflies.

Afterwards, we spent some days on Hawaii's Big Island to wind down. There, I stood near an underground lava flow and watched the lava entering the sea, generating explosions and an acid cloud mixed with obsidian particles, which rained down on us when we hiked back to our car. We stayed at a nice bed & breakfast situated in a mac nut and coffee plantation

near Kona. The people there have nice pets: some green parrots, some hens and roosters (one of them bit me), and two very nice pigs names Momona and Petunia. "Momona" means "fat, juicy, sexy" in Hawaiian, I've been told.

And, at last, last Friday, we returned home ... sigh.

*Now, you ...*

**Date:** Tue, 23 Feb 1999 15:35:12 +0100

### Carnevale a Venezia : The Ultimate Masquerade

I love Venice. This city is unique in its construction on wooden poles, in the midst of a lagoon, in between dry land and the Adriatic Sea. On a normal workday in winter, with delivery boats, ambulances, police boats, gondolas, taxis and vaporetto clogging the major channels, tourists on foot, the pale sun shining in the winter sky and disappearing when the fog rolls in, the atmosphere is special. Stately churches, palazzi both perfectly renovated and slowly crumbling, houses and narrow pathways sink deeper and deeper into the mud, as slowly and inevitably like continental drift. The mixture of the mundane and the fantastic is always there, but during the carnival season, the balance tips. Gates to other worlds are wide open then.

A gentleman board a gondola. He is wearing a tricorne hat, a powdered wig, face mask. A black cape covers a silk overcoat, vest and knee breeches. Stockings and buckled shoes complete the outfit. His lady tucks her velvet skirts up as she steps into the boat. She, too is masked, and a hooded velvet cape protects her from the cold.

At the Piazza San Marco, nobility from all epochs mingle with fairy creatures, dragons, knights in armor, living plants, colombine and harlequins. Masks pose artfully in front of gondolas and statues, alone, paired or in splendid matching groups. The epidemic spreads: ladies in fur coats don feather-rimmed face masks, tourists let art students paint their faces with glittering arabesques. I, too, have succumbed to the costuming plague: this year, I'm clad in a midnight-blue gown, gold-black brocade cloak, blue veil, a small headdress. At dusk, the masks parade across the Piazza to baroque tunes. Then, at midnight, in the Pieta, Vivaldi's "Four Seasons", played by excellent soloists, the church lit by candles.

Later, I walk slowly across Venice, back to my hotel. The masks are gone. Crowds of youngsters at the piazzas and campos, loud salsa music, laughter, drummers, fire eaters. Noise, empty bottles, confetti.

I'll sew a Tudor gown, and a farthingale, for next time. I have a year till the dream starts again ...

*Inge reports that she has lost her address book and would be grateful to receive the addresses of everyone she knows in fandom. Her e-mail address is <Ingeborg.Glass@icn.siemens.de>, and her snail mail is given on page 92.*

# WILLY LEY

John Berry

Willy Ley was born on 2nd October 1906 and attended Berlin University, when he happened to read a book on rocketry. This experience changed his life as he forgot his intended zoology studies and became a rocket and space flight enthusiast. He was one of the founders of the German rocket society, the *Verein Fur Raumschiffart* in 1927 and became very friendly with Wernher von Braun.

The VIR moved to deserted premises at Reinikendorf and worked on rocket and engine construction. Willy Ley designed a rocket for the VIR which he insisted on naming Repulsor I. Its flight lasted a few seconds only, but Repulsors II and III were more successful. However, when von Braun and other VIR members commenced working for Captain Walter Dornberger at Kummersdorf West to construct rockets for the German Army, Ley became disenchanted, especially when the Nazis came to power. He realized that rockets would eventually be used for military means, when he had always visualized their construction as a means of flying into space and visiting nearby planets. He emigrated to the USA in 1935 and a decade later was granted US citizenship.

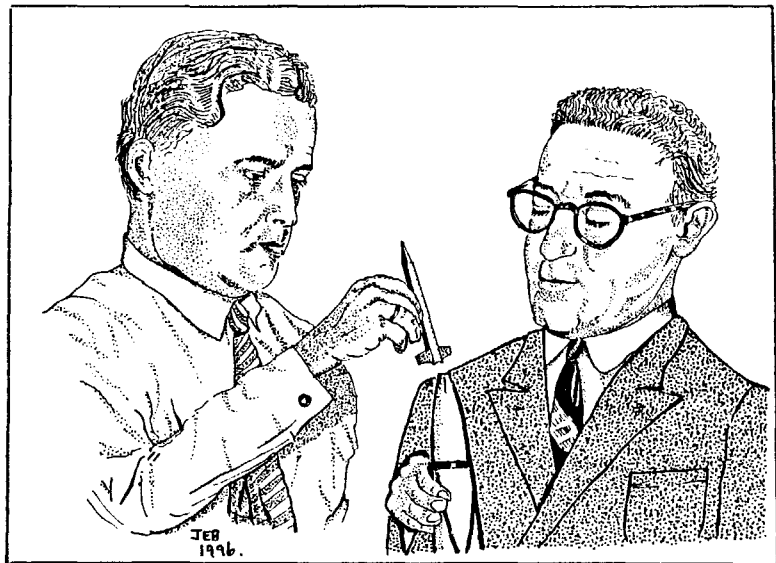
In 1936 he worked on two rockets. On 23rd February 1936, a rocket flew across a frozen lake near Hewitt, New Jersey, carrying 4,323 letters and 1,826 postcards. Unfortunately it crashed, but the mail was undamaged.

After WWII concluded, Ley once again came into contact with Wernher von Braun, who had entered the US in a clandestine manner with another hundred or so rocket experts from Peenemunde and in 1950 they both appeared in a Walt Disney film, **Man in Space**. Ley also authored a number of best-selling books on space matters including **Conquest of Space** (1949), illustrated by space artist supreme Chesley Bonestell and **Rockets, Missiles and Space Travel** (1961).

Willy Ley was a science fiction enthusiast also and was well known amongst the SF fraternity. He won two Hugo Awards for his science writing, in 1953 and 1956. In that context he attended the World Science Fiction Convention in 1959 in Detroit. At that time I was writing extensively for local sci-fi mags, mostly humorous pieces and a number of prominent sci-fi fans paid my fare and expenses to permit me to attend that Detroit convention, where I met Willy Ley himself.

He had the use of a room where he displayed static plastic models of rockets and I had several brief conversations with him. He had a hearty laugh and a great sense of humor. On one occasion I had become friendly with a young and very pretty American female sci-fi fan and was in a hotel lift with her when it stopped and he entered. "Ah," he observed in a heavy German accent, "this seems to be a wonderful example of Anglo-American cooperation."

Willy Ley died on 24th June 1969, ironically just a few short weeks before the Apollo 11 moon landing. All his life he had prophesied it would happen and it is sad that he died when his dream was so close to fruition.

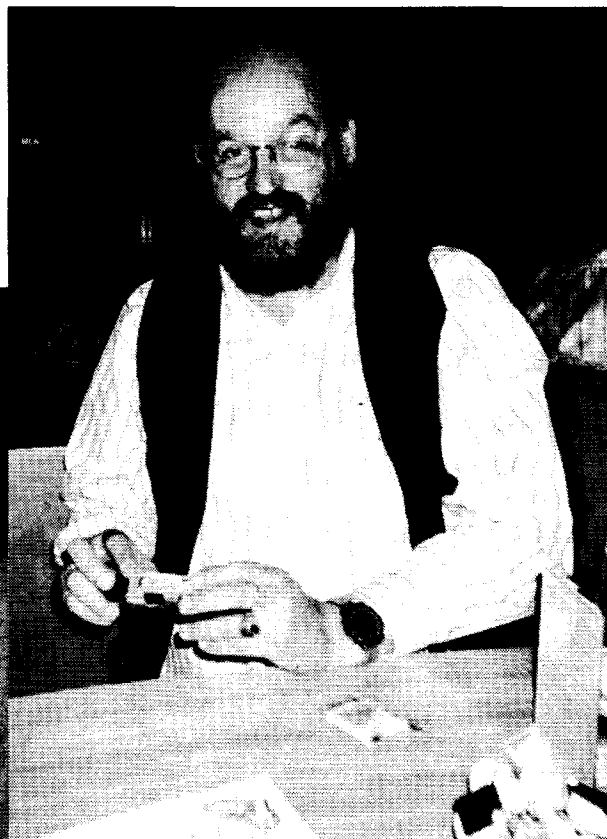


*Originally published in Orbit, a philatelic journal.*

# GUESTS

Visiting New Orleans since our last issue ...

Rivercon founder and '79 NASFiC chair  
**CLIFF AMOS ...**



Australian *bon vivant*  
**PAULA McGRATH ...**



and "Knarley" himself, **HENRY WELCH**.  
I lost the photo of Henry getting his hand eaten  
by an alligator ...



Art by CHARLIE WILLIAMS

Talk about your guilty pleasures! Imagine someone saying to you "You're going to take 3 months off to do nothing but read, rest and lose weight." Trust me. It's not all it's cracked up to be. On Tuesday, August 4, 1998, I got my usual pre-worldcon haircut and afterwards noticed I felt a bit lightheaded as I was walking around downtown -- and not because of the hair being removed from my head. I also wasn't very hungry that day, but that's not unusual prior to my leaving for a trip. That evening my throat was scratchy and I said my husband Howard "I may be coming down with a bug, but it's probably no big deal, just a 24-hour thing."

Little did I know.

Wednesday, August 5 seemed normal enough. Flew off to Baltimore, got checked in at Bucconeer, wandered about the Huckster room, *schmoozed* and went back to the hotel to wait for Janice Gelb, my friend and roommate. When Janice got settled in we joined Moshe Feder, Lise and others for a dinner expedition where we walked a good distance to the Purple Orchid, a Continental/Oriental restaurant which had been highly recommended.

Once there I began again to feel lightheaded and the scratchy throat was back. The only thing that looked good was the soup, but since it had a meat base I ended up ordering an entree. When it arrived I lost my appetite, picked at it a bit and set it aside. The restaurant was famed for its desserts and my appetite flared up again at the thought of something creamy, like flan. Ordered one, when it arrived I again lost my appetite, picked at it a bit and set it aside.

Someone in our party asked if she could finish my dinner 'cause I'd left so much. Boy, I'll bet she's sorry now I was willing to share!

In later days I was to recognize this strange pattern of my body reacting to food as appetizing/unappetizing in bizarre ways, but at that time I didn't think much of it.

We trundled back to the hotel and went to the Boston-in-Orlando bid party (one of the classiest bid parties I've ever attended) and I had a scotch from my own stash while chatting with Joe Siclari. Towards the end of the conversation I had to get away and get rid of the scotch. Alcohol too was leaving me affected, feeling queasy. So I called it an early night and went back to the room to sleep.

Next morning I felt great. Went out for my regular constitutional -- one hour's brisk walk. Came back, showered, got ready for a day helping in Ops. Around 2 p.m. I ate lunch at a Thai

restaurant, again leaving most of it on my plate.

Everything went well until about 5 p.m. when I began to feel run down and "punk" as a Southern lady I knew would describe it. Janice and I popped around the corner to an Italian restaurant for dinner and again, not much appealed to me. But I hung in there to do what fans do best at worldcon -- party.

The Brits were serving hot tea at their do and suddenly that appealed to me more than all the alcoholic beverages available. After chatting with various folks, meeting some Aussies, *finally* meeting Mike Glicksohn, complaining to Gay Haldeman that my kids were going hungry now that Joe was sitting in on Howard's Tuesday night "prayer meetings" (also known as the Poker Game Once Restricted to Liars -- uh, Lawyers), I made another early evening of it.

That night I awoke a few times feeling feverish. Slight headache. Low grade fever, but feverish nonetheless. Of course since I didn't have my kids with me, I didn't have a thermometer so I was basing this on a lifetime of experience and being a mom. Again, I figured it was a bug and would run itself out. I just had to make it through the Hugos and recover in time for the second leg of my trip, my brother's wedding in Minneapolis.

Next morning was Friday and since I was committed to hostessing the Pre-Hugo reception that evening I felt it best to take it easy, so I skipped exercising. Turned out to be a good move. The morning started out kind of OK -- I ate a large bowl of oatmeal and two glasses of fresh O.J., but as the day wore on I began to feel worse and worse. Rested in the room for a while then walked over to the Inner Harbor to get a bowl of soup. My throat had been getting steadily scratchier and the only way I could eat was to pop a couple aspirin first and suck on lozenges.

Made it through the Hugo reception, the Hugos and the post-Hugo party. Barely. Around midnight I told Janice I had to leave and walked back to the hotel. By the time I got there I was shaking with chills. Immediately went to bed, but off and on all night I'd wake up shaking. I knew something was wrong here. No nausea, no diarrhea, no congestion. This was not the normal flu.

Before the sun was up Saturday I was downstairs in the lobby, trying to locate a walk-in clinic in the area. Now, imagine if you will what kind of walk-in clinic would be operating on a weekend in inner city Baltimore ...



Janice had woken up before I left and I brought her up to speed, asking her to please answer the phone if I rang the room even though it was the Sabbath. If I had something serious, I'd need her help. She willingly agreed.

Turned out I had a choice between the hospital emergency room and a place called "Concentra" up the street. I knew that if I walked into the emergency room and said "'Scuse me, I have a low fever and a sore throat" they'd say "We'll see you Tuesday." But Concentra wasn't a winner either. It wasn't an Urgent Care center, like I'd imagined, but a facility for Workmen's Compensation claims. To their credit, the nurse/practitioner was willing to see me, even though they weren't set up for situations like mine.

So the nurse examines me, does a strep culture and finds I have a fever of 100F. My throat was very inflamed but nothing else seemed to be affected so she got me a prescription for antibiotics (e-mycin) going on the assumption that it was likely strep even though the test would take a few days to come back.



Somewhat cheered and feeling like the fever was receding even before I started the drugs, I walked back to the hotel (only a few blocks away) and Janice joined me for breakfast. Again, the only thing which appealed was soft foods and liquids, not surprising given my situation. We went out to fetch the drugs and I retired to the hotel room to give myself some healing time.

Saturday night we had dinner with Joe and Edie, fortunately at a restaurant famed for their vegetarian black bean soup. Edie was telling me about being in a similar situation to mine, having a difficult to diagnose disease, being on rounds of antibiotics, but I was fairly sure at this point it was strep and I'd just have to ride it out.

Sunday passed in a fog -- staying in the hotel room, reading, sleeping, taking my meds. I was leaving Monday for Minneapolis and I just wanted to conserve my strength and get well. Janice made my apologies to folks and brought me back some Kosher won-ton soup from a restaurant excursion.

Monday morning I felt a bit better and was cheered by this, thinking the antibiotics were kicking in and I was beginning to lick whatever it was.

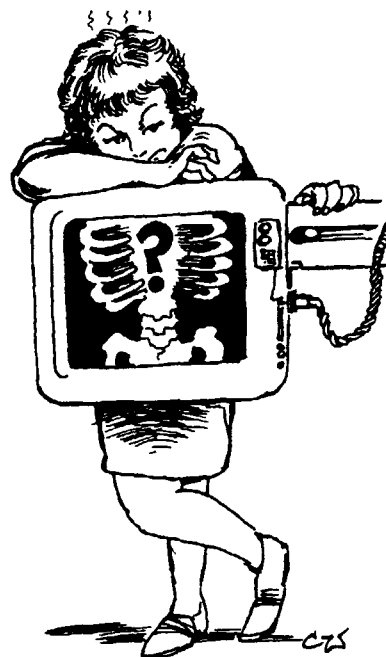
By the time I arrived in Minneapolis early that evening, I wasn't so optimistic. I was feeling very rundown, not hungry, sore throat. Howard met me at the airport (the kids were with my sister-in-law) and I watched him eat dinner while I sipped a lemonade. When we rejoined my brother, sister-in-law and my boys I got info on urgent care centers in the area in case I felt compelled to drop in.

What developed over the next few days was a pattern of feeling good in the morning (though only wanting oatmeal and juice) till late afternoon at which time I'd feel run down, my throat would ache and I'd pop aspirin to get through dinner. But the fever was gone (I'd bought a thermometer), at least for a few days, leading me to believe the strep diagnosis. It took me five days to get the strep results from Baltimore ... and they were negative. But by then I was mostly through the antibiotics and figured I should finish them as one is supposed to, just in case. I also developed a strange soreness in my left side near the waist, almost as if I'd pulled a muscle.

Most of the Minneapolis trip I read and rested except for those occasions when we had to be out and about. One exception was a visit to Valley fair amusement park with the kids and my nieces. I was having a good day and felt up to it. The kids loved the rides and I even did one turn on the roller coaster without losing it. On Friday we were at the cemetery for the unveiling of my father's tombstone. Afterwards at lunch my cousin commented on the huge bruises on my arms and wanted to know if Howard was beating me. I recalled walking into a door frame when I was sick, but I was surprised at the lividity. I bruise easy, but this was a bit much even for me. Saturday was Sabbath services and a rehearsal dinner and Sunday was the wedding. After the wedding I went back to the hotel and rested.

By Friday afternoon I knew something was still wrong with me, and various scenarios from sinus infection to tonsillitis went running through my head. But wisely or not, I figured if I could get through the weekend's activities I was returning home on Monday and could see my physician then.

So I did. By Monday though I was a zombie. Not eating, forcing myself to drink water and juice, moving like I was swimming upstream. I didn't know one could sleep sitting straight up in the



chairs at the Atlanta terminal. Trust me, it can be done.

After a harrowing trip home which included canceled flights, lost luggage and an extra night in Atlanta at the airline's expense I was finally back in Gainesville. I had a 2 p.m. "walk-in" appointment with my doctor but by 11 a.m. I was parked in his waiting room, head back against the wall, lethargic and dozing. They took a look at me and agreed to work me in before lunch. I walked into the examining room and the nurse looks at me and says "Strep!" Light rash on my upper arms, sore throat, low fever.

Doctor Black comes in, looks at me and cheerfully says, "Could be mono but I'm voting for strep." He does his examination, orders another throat culture, writes me a prescription for a different antibiotic explaining that I may not have responded well to the e-mycin and we'd see how I did on Augmentin. Again, it would take a few days for the strep tests to come back.

So I left, Howard went to get the scrip filled and I collapsed in bed.

Two days later, I was feeling worse. I couldn't talk and literally couldn't swallow my own saliva from the pain. Only fluids, yogurt and custards could be tolerated. I croaked my situation over the phone to the doctor's office and they had me come back first thing next morning for a blood work up. This was August 21. All of this had started August 4.

Anyway, Friday morning they drew blood and by Friday afternoon I got the call back.

"You've got *mononucleosis*. We're going to start you on Prednisone to relieve your throat, but other than that all you can do is rest."

I don't remember much of the next two days except dragging myself out of bed to eat enough yogurt or rice pudding or soup to take my meds. Then it was back to sleep.

Monday I went to the doctor's office feeling a touch more human.

"Okay, smart guy, why didn't you run the mono test right away?"

"In med school they teach us 'If you hear hoofbeats, don't turn around expecting to see zebras.'" In other words, when a 43-year-old happily married woman walks in with low grade fever, rash and sore throat you don't assume she has a disease most common among young adults who kiss indiscriminately.

He also scolded me for not leading a more hedonistic life in my 20's and getting this then like I was supposed to. The next day I ventured out to the supermarket and felt like gravity was weighing heavier on me than on others, as if my body mass had somehow increased. , and I was having to expend more energy on simple tasks like putting one foot in front of the other. A very strange feeling.

I also had to visit my radiologist to get ultrasound pictures taken of my spleen. Remember the soreness and "pulled muscle" on my left side? It's odd -- the spleen is one of those dandy little organs you just don't think about 'til it begins acting up. Then suddenly you find yourself thinking about it every time you move too quickly.

I like my radiologist. When she did my baseline mammogram a few years back she brought the film in and said "It's official. You have nice tits."

Her definition of "nice" being clear and easy to photograph, but I digress ...

She said all my innards looked good. Even took pictures of my heart, measured the aorta and typed on the photo "Good heart. Strong too." Reassuring since I've already outlived my mother, who did not have a strong heart.

Before I left she said "Let me make sure I understand this -- you have to lie around all day doing nothing but reading and sleeping? And you've lost your appetite? Would you kiss me on the lips, please?"

I told her I wasn't that kind of a girl and her husband wouldn't appreciate me infecting her.

I learned to listen carefully to what my body is telling me. Up until mid-afternoon that day I'd been feeling pretty chipper -- went to the radiologist, did some paperwork, ate lunch sitting up. I'd started folding a basket of laundry when I suddenly got that "go lie down *now*" feeling so I

stopped everything and did just that.

Another time that happened as I was entering the grocery store, so I turned around, drove home and used the car phone to tell Howard he'd be taking the boys out for dinner.

Howard's been a saint. He keeps fretting that I'm doing too much. We did have one rough moment when I was prescribed another round of heavier dose Prednisone for a particularly virulent rash which began covering me from ankle to neck.

The meds are supposed to contribute to wild mood swings. Howard said, "How will we be able to tell?" So I killed him.

As it turned out, the three months recovery was a bit optimistic. I didn't feel wholly recovered until the end of December and celebrated by staying up past midnight to bring in the New Year. Even now there are lingering traces, days when I know I have to take it a bit easier. But that's not necessarily a bad thing. The other day the puppy crawled into my lap and while I needed to get up and do some things, I figured an extra 15 minutes cuddling a puppy wouldn't slow the progress of Western Civilization. I drove to Tampa for the day with my husband, just the two of us, and as we were driving back over the causeway I looked out at the crystal blue skies, turned to him and said, "You don't know how good it feels just to be awake all day, enjoying the moment."

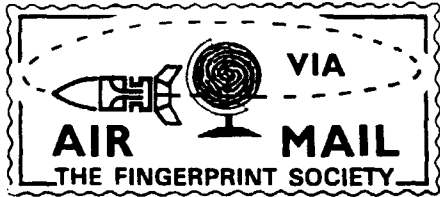
Even when I was feeling most depressed, when I would have a couple good days, then spend the next day having to rest, I could tell myself, "It's two steps forward, one step back, but at least I'm moving in the right direction."

Sappy, I know, but in retrospect my attitude towards mononucleosis is that there are much worse diseases I could have gotten. While I'm reminded of the button I bought a few years back -- "**Oh no! Not another learning experience!**" -- I did learn a lot from this time, caught up on a hell of a lot of reading and lost ten pounds.

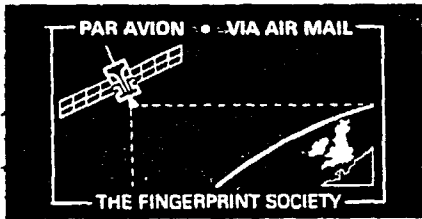
Kisses, anybody?



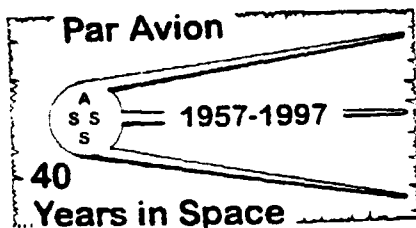
AIRMAIL STICKERS  
← DESIGNED BY  
JOHN BERRY.



← Design above prepared for THE FINGERPRINT SOCIETY in 1977. Ten thousand used on Society mail between 1977 and 1986.



← Design above also prepared for THE FINGERPRINT SOCIETY. Ten thousand also printed and used between 1986 and 1996.



← Designed for ORBIT, official journal of the ASTRO SPACE STAMP SOCIETY. Sheets of these adhesive stickers were included with the JULY 1998 issue of ORBIT.

What's that signpost up ahead? Your next stop: Bob Sirignano's *THE POSTAL ZONE* ...

## SICK TIME

*Robert Whitaker Sirignano*

*I'm gonna go in the bedroom  
and pull down the shade  
the boss man don't have to see me  
till it's time to get paid*

*I'm gonna call in sick  
that's what I'm gonna do  
if you don't like it mister boss man  
you know what you can do*

***Big Daddy Graham from the EP OFF CENTER***

People calling in sick at the post office remains one of the big thorns of the postal service: debating real sickness, the desire for a mental health day or just plain abuse ...

There have been unusual stories ... Oliver Columbus showed up drunk one day. He had trouble navigating up the single step in the employee entrance, tried opening the door the wrong way and couldn't adjust his badge for the electronic reader. He managed to stagger in, following another employee through the door. I can imagine Oliver looked around, thought about the hellish possibilities of working eight hours in his current condition and gave in to the temptation. He stumbled into a nearby office and called in sick while still in the building ... and then went home.

When the Wilmington, Delaware postal service was in downtown Wilmington it was located across from a fire station. The second floor of the post office building had a hot line that led directly to the fire station. One day the fire phone rang. Suspecting the worst, the supervisor answered it. It was Billy Twoomy, another employee with a beer habit. He was calling in sick.

There was Slim Lawrence who called in sick, went to Philadelphia and got involved in a barroom brawl and was stabbed in the back. His requests for sick leave had to then be backed up with police reports and medical records which showed him to be in the wrong place when he should have been at home. There were occasions when his behavior was transparent, as observed by his filling out a sick slip and leaving right after he received his paycheck.

The post office management takes a dim view of this sort of activity and has successfully removed a number of people for too much of it. Often, the post office is willing to overstep any kind of logic and humanity in order to stress a point.

Kenny Johns is a good example of the bad point the post office tried to press on. I've known him for years. He's not a totally happy person, being corpulent and plain-looking, a bit lonely, with a bad habit of smoking. He was quiet and did his job and did it without bothering people or getting in the way.

He was called into an office and asked why he



Robert WS

had used 80 hours of sick leave in a month. This is not just a warning. You will get suspended. The post office will not tolerate such behavior, blah blah blah. The supervisor in question was a humorless troll. Kenny started complaining, unbuttoned his shirt, opened it up, showed him the scars from "my open heart surgery, you asshole". The Absence Con Troll was unimpressed, and filed paperwork for a one-week suspension. It was eventually overturned, but to initiate it and go ahead with the process made no sense.

I had a clipping from the Philadelphia **Daily News** about ten years ago. The supervisory powers decreed that if a person were absent from work more than three times a year, they would be dismissed. One man, who was undergoing chemotherapy for his cancer could not make it to work from the debilitating side effects of the treatment. They sent him a letter of dismissal. It couldn't have made him feel better. He died.

To the other extreme, the post office has a number of people who developed bad health while still in their service. Management runs them ragged. I don't know how many people have been "encouraged" to work while ill, running a fever, having a full-blown case of influenza ... *et cetera* ... And even if the illness is disruptive, management *will not send those people home*. They are working. It looks good on the paperwork. Fewer people off, it looks good on the paperwork. If you fall down you get an ambulance (sometimes). there were cases where people were injured on the job and management would not send them home or to a doctor even if broken bones were involved. This is much rarer as time goes on, as the Postal Service has come under OSHA guidelines.

The post office used to a doctor who was a case -- a law -- a separate universe unto himself. Dr. Kopecker drank gallons of coffee, smoked and was exceptionally rotund. He was hired to agree with the post office's terms and side with the management. His medical advice was ignored by everyone who came into contact with him. I went to see him (I was ordered) over a back injury I received while on the job. A cigarette in one hand and a cup of black coffee in the other, a few dozen packets of sugar scattered on the floor, and the man was reading a newsletter devoted to stock options. He looked up from his bifocals and said, "What the hell do you want?" Everyone who went to him later went to real doctors who overruled any and all of his suggestions and recommendations. Most women did not like him because he insisted on doing breast examinations. A man with a pulled arm tendon was told "There's nothing wrong with you." Broken bones were mere "sprains."

A carrier was stung by a bee. He was allergic to the sting. He spent three days in the hospital under a respirator. He filed for Workmen's Compensation and was initially turned down with the explanation, "It's your route and you do it every day. You should know where the bees hang out."

One Absence Con Troll was a humorless drab woman who over the years displayed an ineptitude for dealing with people and following procedures. She questioned everyone for any use of leave at all. Calling in, one person was told, "I'm sure if you took an aspirin and came to work everything would be all right." She told that to a good number of people. I called in one time when she was there with a good headache and a slump of depression. "What's wrong?" she said. "I got a headache," I said. She told me all about aspirin. "Lady," I said, "You aren't a doctor and it's people like you who make me sick."

I hung up.

The postal unions filed charges against her for practicing medicine without a license.

*Next ... "Supervisors: Menace or Brain-Damaged?"*

# CHALLENGER



## A CHEAP PLACE TO LIVE

*Tales from the Berkeley Co-ops*

*Guy H. Lillian III*

Art by CHARLIE WILLIAMS

*In 1971, as I prepared to graduate from the University of California, I was asked by the University Students' Co-operative Association to write a history of their organization. So during my last summer at Berkeley I interviewed many veterans of the U.C. co-op experience ... none more interesting than **Dan Eisenstein**, who related the following tales from the fabulous '50s ...*

Student life in the 1950s was still dominated by the Greek system, by fraternities and sororities and the beer-and-parties approach to education they represented. Plunked in the middle of the largest Greek colonies in Berkeley was Cloyne Court.

Cloyne, a converted, ramshackle hotel, was the largest of the co-ops. It had three neighbors in the 1950s. Higher on Ridge Road was Newman Hall, the University Catholic Chapel. An "architectural gem" it was a beautiful brown shingled building filled with exquisite woodwork. The University recognized Newman's excellence, so subsequently purchased and immediately demolished it, making way for a vacant lot full of concrete chunks, broken glass and weeds. Across the street from Cloyne was the fraternity house of Cal's Phi Kapa Psi chapter. Dan Eisenstein, Cloyne resident and occasional manager, described the Cloyne/Phi-Psi relationship as relatively friendly. However, across Cloyne's backyard, overlooking the co-op's asphalt volleyball court, was the house of Beta Theta Phi, or the Betas, as they were simply and affectionately known, and they hated Cloyne like they hated death.

The source of the raw loathing that enjoyed a fifteen-year bloom between Cloyne Court and Beta Theta Phi is a matter of supposition. The Betas were by and large an athletically-oriented frat ~ much of Cal's

football team lived there. The diminutive stature of most of co-op denizens won the disgust of the more gargantuan Betas. The lack of racial or ethnic considerations in the array of co-op residents was also a matter of some rancor. In their terms, as quoted by Eisenstein, "Betas had two things going for them: there were a lot of jocks in the house, and they couldn't stand \*\*\*\*s, \*\*\*s, \*\*\*\*\*s or \*\*\*\*\*s. They were thoroughly insulted by the fact that right next to them was a house full of \*\*\*\*s, \*\*\*s, \*\*\*\*\*s, \*\*\*\*\*s ... and \*\*\*s too!"

Eisenstein describes Cloyne's encounters with their musclebound neighbors graphically.

"Periodically the Betas would have parties and would get very drunk and would litter our volleyball court with broken glass. It wasn't broken till it got into our volleyball court - it'd break when it hit. Big strong bottles that made nice glass chips. We'd spend the next morning sweeping glass off our volleyball court. Nice fellas, the Betas.

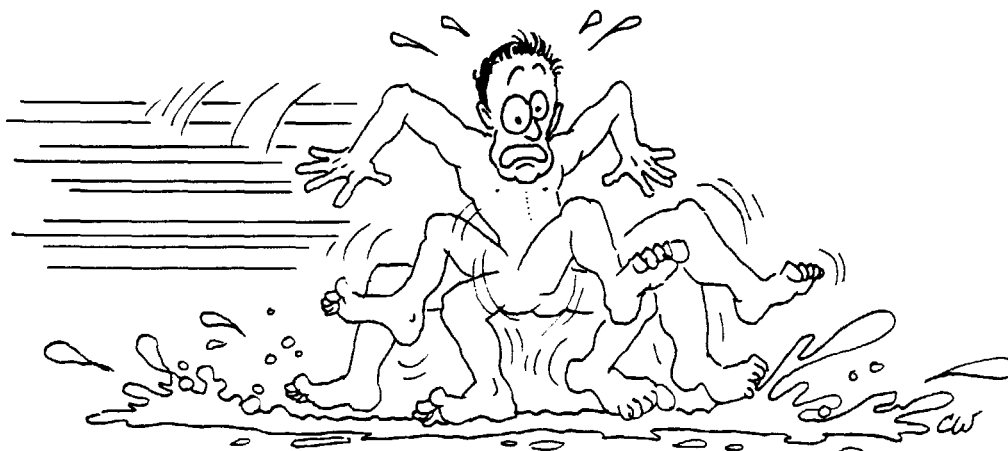
"We'd have lots of fights - physical ones - with the Betas. One weapon: firehoses. *We had a bigger waterhose than they did.* We could stand in the volleyball courts and fill their rooms with water. One point I remember well. A weightlifter lived in an upstairs room. He left his window open one night when we had a waterfight. When he came home there was a foot of water on his floor. He got very upset and he and some of his friends came over to try to do something about it.

"Cloyne had a fellow named Sammy, a little Mexican guy who had just come back from the Army in '53. He weighed about 122 pounds ... but he was the boxing coach at Cal while still a student. Had been champion of his division (or something) in the Army - but didn't look it. This Beta jock came over with about twenty of his fellows. He was met by about twenty of our fellows in the middle of the volleyball court and was making a huge ruckus. Sammy stepped in front of him and said, 'Really, you should just go home and quiet down.' The guy took a swing at him. Sammy hit him. And he was asleep before he hit the ground. One of the few times that anybody ever hit anybody with the Betas."

Tales of such classic David/Goliath confrontations, of course, are legion. Another, more clandestine skirmish between the contrary living groups was somewhat more original.

"Cloyne Court had stoves which have grease traps in them, which we took out in back and emptied into grease buckets. These would be picked up by the tallow company periodically and taken off to be rendered into ... something. One night in the summer of '56 or '57 a few guys took this can of grease and spread it on the Betas' driveway. They had only one driveway, very steep." The grease slowly oozed down onto the sidewalk. The vandals retired to a Cloyne room overlooking this mess to observe what would then occur. It was after midnight.

"One of the things that they saw happen was a car try to pull into the driveway and just spin its wheels. This guy finally looked out of his car, saw that there was grease everywhere,. let out a howl and drove off. First event.





"Second event: It is now one in the morning. Walking down the sidewalk from the direction of campus comes a guy who is totally *nude*. Totally naked. This is pledge week when frats sometimes forced prospective members to prove themselves worthy of the Greek name through such idiot stunts.

"This guy, totally naked, walks along the sidewalk, holding his hands over his vital place, and he suddenly sees this huge flood of grease on the sidewalk. And he looks at it, and he looks around, there's nobody visible and he goes back about ten feet and he *runs* and *leaps* and *misses*... and he falls naked into this pool of grease. And he rolls around and gets up and staggers off. The street is quiet again.

"The next morning the Betas spent three hours burning off the grease."

Cloyne's war with the Betas went on for years. On one famous night in the mid-60s some inebriated Betas fired a Very pistol at Cloyne's roof, where the flares set an empty sleeping bag on fire and threatened a fatal conflagration. Complaints to the Dean of Men got nowhere, just as did reports of gunshots aimed at Cloyne and the horrible murder of several pet chickens by drunken Betas. "Boys will be boys," the Dean - it was claimed - would intone. "Back when I was a frat ..."

Far from regarding the Betas as a joke, Cloyne men were anxious to end the Greek menace across Ridge Road and indeed on more than one occasion suggested to the Board that the USCA buy the Beta house and evict the tenants. This act of justice never came to be, but nevertheless the Betas moved across campus in the early '60s and were never heard from again.

All of which sets the stage for another, more terrible story. For the mid-50s also contained the definitive event of the collegiate decade: The Great Panty Raid of 1956.

In the hot spring of 1956, Eisenstein was the Cloyne Court house manager, and he knows why what happened happened.

"The University did a very stupid thing in the spring of '56. We had semesters then. The winter break for Christmas was from December 20th until about January 3rd. We went back to schools went for another three weeks, had finals. We had *no spring recess*. Three days after finals we came back and we registered for a week, and then we had classes. No recess. No spring break. Just two solid semesters of school.

"By the time mid-May came around everybody was tired. May '56 was one of the hottest Mays we'd ever had. People developed an interest in *waterfighting*." The incident of the weightlifter's window described earlier dates from this newfound frolic. "People would bring firehoses, waterballoons, buckets and all the frats would have waterfights. Cloyne Court would join in. They went on-and-off for a period of about two weeks with the Betas and Phi Psis ... I remember at one point somebody throwing a huge waterballoon off the roof of the apartment house next door, hitting a car's windshield as he drove past ... guy ran into a parked car, had an accident.

"The University got very concerned about these water fights, and so the Berkeley police started to tell people to cool it. But people were developing *hysteria*. Everyone was beginning to get a little *freaky*. We needed *release*. So every evening you'd have waterfights, wake up the next morning and wait for the waterfights.

"We were damn near to the finals period, near the end of May, and there was a really *big* set of waterfights, which had several hundred people involved, all over. Everybody got very uptight; lot of damage was being done." It was building, a compression of the frustrations and psychic energy laid over from almost five months of next-to-solid schoolwork. The dam was bound to break.

"And I remember how this happened.

"At the end of this particular days in Cloyne, we heard about two or three fraternities having this big waterfight north of us. They'd decided that the thing to do was to go over and attack Cloyne. They'd run out of balloons or were resting before they attacked. So we were all worried, and a lot of us went out and stood in front of the house, waiting. Some guys actually brought *weapons*.

"Suddenly we got a report from somebody who'd been further north that this big crowd of frat guys

had started down towards Cloyne, but had stopped at one of the sorority houses on their route and staged a *pantry raid*.

"Now we had heard about pantry raids from Eastern schools. They had been going on for the previous year or two and had been sort of a fad. But this was the first one we had really had in Berkeley." Curiosity was aroused in the anxious Cloynemen. "Gee. Panty raid. Hmmm. What does that mean? Well, were they still coming towards us? Yes.

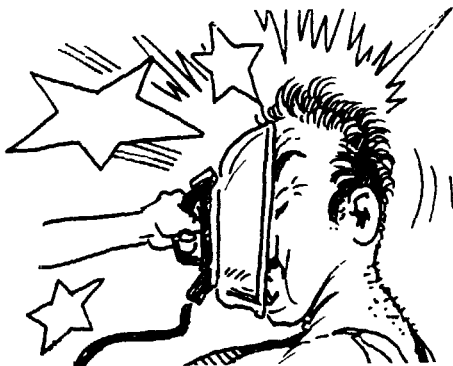
"Then we heard voices. I went down and stood in the intersection, and I saw a crowd of guys ~ about 250, 300, 400 guys ~ coming towards me." It was about 6:30 in the evening. "They came to the intersection, and they turned, and somebody yelled 'Let's go to Stern!' And they went right on past Cloyne. A whole bunch of guys streamed out of Cloyne to follow them. And they disappeared down the street."

Eisenstein, ever the responsible co-op official, did not follow his hysterical fellows to the university's major women's dorm. He and other co-op honchos had their hands full protecting USCA property. "We sat around making sure nobody did anything funny to our house. At some point I got a phone call from Hoyt, a girls' co-op. People had broken in and were giving the girls a hard time. So three of us went down and *physically* threw people out the door. We went up onto the roof ~ that's how they'd gotten into the house ~ and secured the door there." In the meantime the crowd of male students, frat, co-op, and rooming house, had roared the wrath of Adam down onto Stern Hall.

"A group had come up to join the mob there, and soon *two thousand guys* were assaulting the dormitory. They broke into Stern forcibly. They ran around in the hall stealing things from the girls ~ mostly panties ~ lots of pushing, shoving, lot of damage done at Stern.

"Then the crowd left Stern and simply went down sorority row like a *tidal wave*. The girls in some houses enticed them, because they were bored and hot and miserable too! There were some houses that didn't want them in; they tried to keep them out. The guys broke the doors down, they broke the windows ~ thousands and *thousands* of dollars worth of damage was done.

The flabbergasted Berkeley Police Department closed Piedmont Avenue, site of the most frenetic rioting, but took no ardent action. The coeds were on their own. One exhilarated young man kicked in a door at one sorority and was greeted with an *iron* in the face. At another house a girl in a strategic spot atop a flight of stairs saluted each passing male with an umbrella held like a cricket bat, "One guy after another would come by and she'd just whang them with this umbrella. WHANG! WHANG! Lot of sore guys came out of that house."



Piedmont, Warring, Prospect. These are the Berkeley streets where Panhellenic women's groups dominated and there the mob attacked.

"I heard several stories about events in individual sorority houses," Eisenstein recollected. "One guy from Cloyne was in a house and they were running around in an upstairs floor. He had just grabbed a handful of underwear and was running out when the housemother said 'YOU! I KNOW YOUR MOTHER!'"

Up and down in the hot May evening the vandalism raged. "This running around, this hassling, and this bringing home of *loot* went on till about three in the morning." People straggled back to their houses all night. At Cloyne, the scone was boisterous. Nobody was drunk. Hysteria and heat alone had moved then that day.

"These guys came back to Cloyne, old guys, young guys, respectable guys, disreputable guys, mature guys, immature guys, waving panties, underwear, slips, brassieres ... *amazing!* And some very funny things happened. Our maintenance manager, a very stable, developed, mature guy, and somebody else put on a set of this underwear and danced around before a crowd of approving Cloynemen. The house photographer took

pictures of them in girls' underwear. About a day later they went to see him, and in very quiet voices insisted he give them the negative and all the prints."

Saturday night does indeed precede Sunday morning.

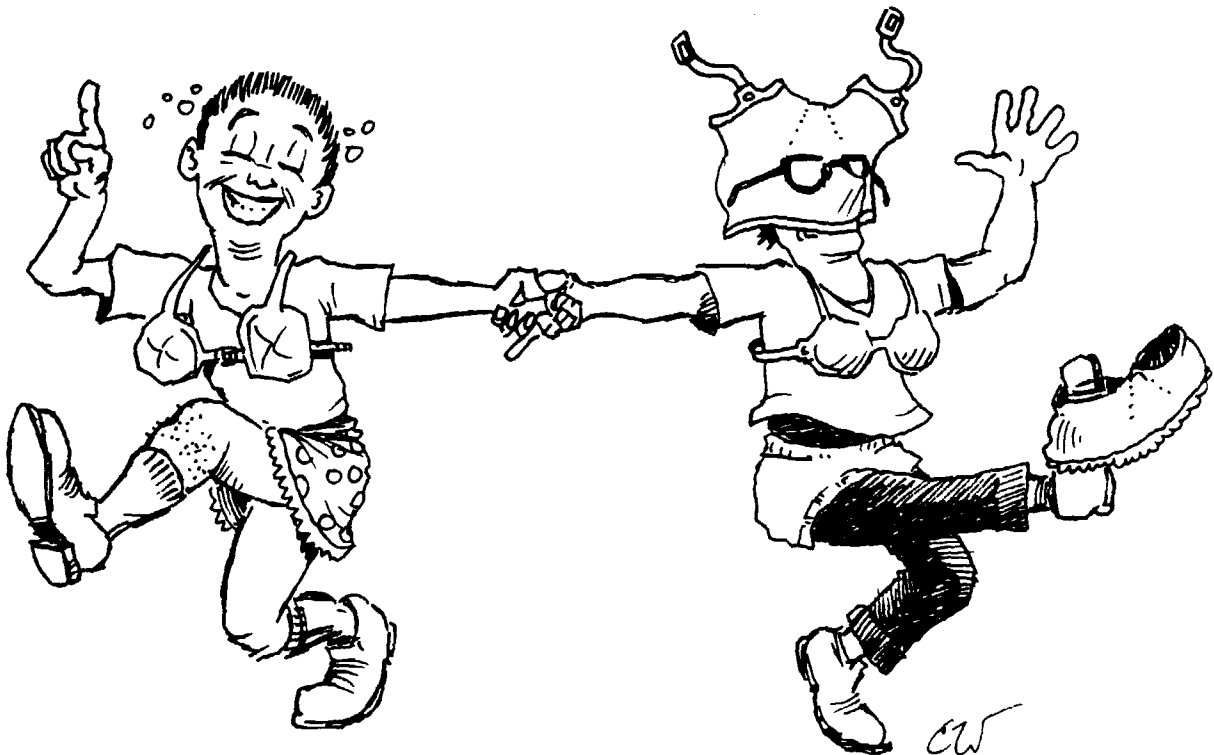
"The next morning the house president and some others decided it would be a good idea if we collected all the lingerie we'd taken from the sororities and girls' dorms. We set up a big box and collected over 300 articles from Cloyne alone.

"The same thing happened all over. The University asked that everyone please bring the stuff back and it was all taken down to the Sproul Hall basement and spread out on big tables. *Thousands* of items of lingerie. The girls were invited to come pick out their own."

A huge investigation was conducted by the aghast university administration. Several men were identified for specific acts of malfeasance and suspended from school. A fine was planned against all males at the University to pay for damages. A special four-page supplement to the **Daily Californian** was mailed out to the parents of every U.C. student. In the regular **Daily Cal** story on the Panty Raid Uprising, only a few students were named. Among them - singled out for praise - was Dan Eisenstein. He didn't steal anyone's underwear, he merely tried to save the co-op from destruction. But he certainly understood what was going on. Even in 1956, even with such an anti-political event as a panty raid, a schism had appeared. The U.C. administration had shown itself absolutely ignorant of the emotional state of the student body, as in coming years it would demonstrate monumental contempt for the student mind and conception of self. 1956 fell in a non-political era, but the portents were there. The crisis of understanding built toward the explosion that would come.

"It was a very tense time," Eisenstein says of May, 1956. He could have been speaking of the entire decade in which the Silent Generation held away over Berkeley.

"Have you ever been in the midwest before a thunderstorm? Sultry, hot, oppressive; you can feel the electricity in the air. This feeling in the air was the same feeling we had before the panty raid" - before the '60s too, he might have added - "and it scared me a little bit."



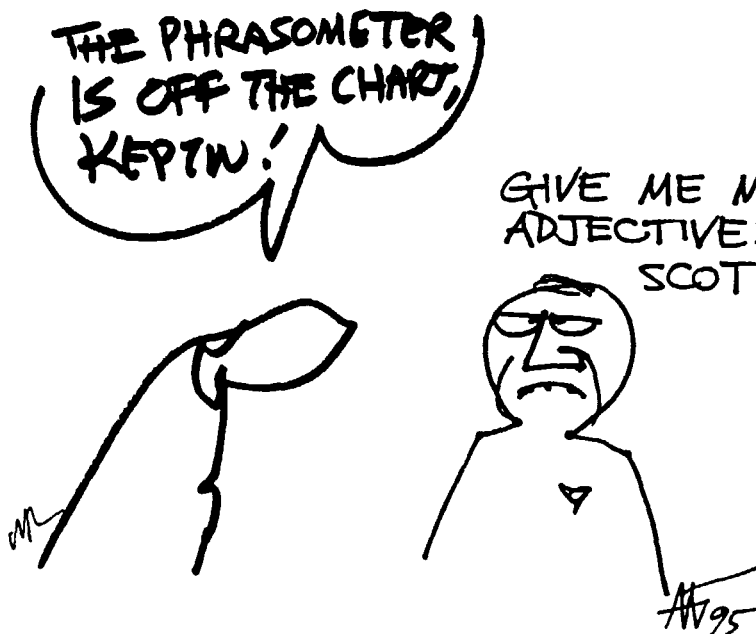
# THE ZINE DUMP

Behold the zines of many sorts that came our way between 11-1-98 and my cut-off date, 5-1-99! Zines in *italics* did *not* come in but were on our minds anyway. Like **MSFire**. *Lucinda ... Oino ... say it ain't so!*

**The Abyssinian Prince** #210 / Jim Burgess, 664 Smith Street, Providence RI 02908-4327 / Well, here's a nifty mystery to start off this issue's review of zines received. Apparently -- to judge by an accompanying publication, **The Dead Poets Society** -- this is a Cult-like apa devoted to Diplomacy, which is fought herein with verve and imagination. Since I don't play Diplomacy and recognize only one name -- Harry Andruschak -- that nosing into these matters in mid-flight makes me feel like a Martian.

**Aces** #11 / Paul McCall, 5801 W. Henry St., Indianapolis IN 46241 / pmccall@indy.net / \$10 post paid, checks to Paul at address above, no subs, limited trades / A review of the latest **Aces** has opened almost every edition of "The Fanzine Dump" and I've exhausted my cache of laudatory adjectives. Every issue is simply a gorgeous labor of love, and here's #11 to continue the tradition. Lots of evocative art, both new and reprinted from the pulps which are Paul's magnificent obsession. The written material, too, is varied and exciting, with pieces on the Shadow, the Phantom Sheriff, Hannes Bok, the Spider ... I'm sure Paul isn't surprised that the issue's biggest boost for Your Favorite Guy is the interview reprinted from a 1933 **Science Fiction Digest** ... by My Favorite Julius, Schwartz, that is, and his partner, Mort Weisinger. What can I say? **Aces** is.

**Adventures in Crime & Space** Vol.5 No. 3 / Lori Wolf, 609-A West 6th St., Austin TX 78701 / e-mail: acs@eden.com; web: www.eden.com / February '99 guide to an epic genre bookstore, listing book after book after book, hardback, paperback, trade pb, this issue missing the usual editorial asides from editors Wolf and Willie Siros. In November Willie chatted about the World Fantasy Con in Monterey, with emphasis, of course, on books debuting there. Some day soon I've *got* to get back to Austin; I bet people spend their weekends in that bookstore.



**The Angolite** Vol. 23 No. 6 / Wilbert Rideau, Louisiana State Penitentiary, Angola LA 70712 / \$20/year (6 issues) / I realize this is drifting pretty far afield, but **The Angolite** is so remarkable a publication that I couldn't help but note it here. Edited by inmates, this issue features articles about the famous October rodeo, aliens (from other countries, that is) in custody, the prison ministry, the death penalty -- of substantial interest to at least some readers -- and, of course, the law. There's a strong article on Washington state's Special Commitment Center, where sexual criminals are committed "to rot forever" *after* their sentences are

completed. The remarkable author is herself a rape victim, so if her attitude is ingenuous, it's a peculiar naivete. Probably the most disturbing and compelling section of this unique journal is devoted to submissions by prisoners, where amidst the predictable plaints are a couple of truly evocative pieces, such as the chilling allegory from Death Row, "Living on My Block". "As I sit in my cell I fear not Death, I just wonder when Dad is going to tell me that he loves me and kill me afterward." It ain't science fiction, but you can't forget this stuff.



**Ansible #140** / Dave Langford / 94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU, U.K. / U.S. Agent: Janice Murray, P.O. Box 75684, Seattle WA 98125-0684 / SAE or. / \*whew\* Back to fandom. #140 is only the latest issue of the fundamental British newszine; its monthly arrival always as welcome as a Social Security check. News of both the professional and fan quarters of this genre, a touch of gossip, British convention news ... I don't think any publication so efficiently and entertainingly captures the scope and the flavor of SF. Scope ... flavor ... peppermint? Get it? Get it? Forget it ...

**Asterism no.** / Jeff Berkwits, P.O. Box 6210, Evanston IL 60204 / e-mail: [jberkwit@nslsilus.org](mailto:jberkwit@nslsilus.org) / *The "Journal of Science Fiction, Fantasy and Space Music" is on hiatus, as Jeff takes on a career as a fulltime free-lancer. Check out his letter in this issue and his net column for Science Fiction Weekly at <http://www.scifiweekly.com>.*

**As the Crow Flies 2** / Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle WA 98166-1953 / [bearlodge@msn.com](mailto:bearlodge@msn.com) / Trade / Frank continues the true tale of his and his wife's taking custody of their 12-year-old granddaughter, concentrating on the complex legalities involved. If anyone wonders why some lawyers try to avoid family law, check out the anguish in Frank's case. Luckily, all's worked out in favor of the Dentons, and life seems stabilized for this good fan and true. Frank completes this little perzine with a eulogy for Jim Turner, a noble comrade from the Nameless, Seattle's Hugo-winning s.f. club.

**Aussiecon Three progress report #3** / Mark Loney for Aussiecon Three, P.O. Box 266, Prospect Heights IL 60070-0266 (U.S. address) / [info@aussiecon3.worldcon.org](mailto:info@aussiecon3.worldcon.org) / Member #798 laments the "(S)" behind his name, because con chair Perry Middlemiss and his krewe look to be prepping a righteous event. Here is a purely informational report, packed with business you need to know (and the Hugo nomination ballots, on which more in a mo') so there's little of the classic Oz spirit here. No problem; that's why we have **Thyme**. Now, a creeb: Aussiecon's Hugo ballot carried only an Australian address; there was no American (or European) agent named. I'm sure this was a serious inconvenience for many would-be voters. Even if (as I've heard) the folks who were supposed to fulfill this task resigned, others would have gladly taken their place. I hope the final ballot rectifies this problem.

**Banana Wings 12** / Claire Brialey, 26 Northampton Rd., Croydon, Surrey CR0 7HA, U.K.; Mark Plummer, 14 Northway Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 6JE, U.K. / [banana@tragic.demon.co.uk](mailto:banana@tragic.demon.co.uk) / A comprehensive British genzine I hadn't seen before, inaugurating in this edition a segmentization (*please tell me that's not a word!*) of their contents into fannish and sercon. Whatever plows their pasture. The first section is faanish in that it springs from the personal lives of the writers. These are fun lives to encounter, making toy smurfs, shopping (one of the little illos looks just like Linda Krawecke),

Rachmaninoff, and many another topic. The fanzine section is notable for its criticism of **crifanac** and the snobbishness sensed in its attitude towards fanzine fandom. Author Paul Kincaid puts it more clearly: "**crifanac** ... devotes [too] much of its energy to deciding who is excluded from [the] ranks" of *true* fanzine fandom, whatever that is. (You should be able to intuit from this segment of **Chall** my feelings on the matter; I count myself a major fan of Arnie Katz, but absolutely for the "big tent" philosophy of fanzining: As long as a science fiction fan is at the helm of a publication, it will be an SF fanzine in my view.) The science fiction "chapter" discusses John Wyndham, Ray Bradbury (specifically **Fahrenheit 451**), the Eastercon, and movies -- even the wretched **Armageddon**. Then, LOCs, including one from some American guy named "Ned Brookes." Sounds like a neo to me.

**Batteries Not Included** Vol. V #12, Vol. VI #1-4 / Richard Freeman, 130 W. Limestone St., Yellow Springs OH 45387 / \$3@ / An exploration into the world of video porn that continues to enlighten and titillate. The latest issues feature terrific -- and invitingly lengthy -- articles by Richard Pacheco. The former porn stud, just elected to the genre's hall of fame, is a fine writer, funny when the subject merits it, profound when he has to be. He has an autobiography circulating among publishers; let's hope one picks it up. Within each issue are well-written and generally intelligent articles and *very little*



*defensiveness*, which I find odd and refreshing in the feminist age; but maybe we're in another age now, less confrontational, less self-conscious, less concerned with that hideous social joke, political correctness. (Someone has suggested that the impeachment spectacle, and the balanced public judgment which kiboshed it, also put *finis* to that era.) Now I'd like to see someone wax eloquent about smut's psychological attraction -- why we're so drawn to depictions of sex. These are the people that could tell us.

*Bento* / David Levine and Kate Yule, 1905 SE 43rd Ave., Portland OR 97215 / davidl@co.intel.com; kyule@agora.rdrop.com

**Ben's Beat** 52 & 53 / Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Ave., Teaneck NJ 07666-2626 / Indick's FAPazine is an indispensable joy for the fan who loves theatre. In these 1998 issues Ben describes his encounter with Claudette Colbert and Rex Harrison many years ago and more recent meeting with **Seinfeld's** Michael Richards. He discusses his own play, "War of the Wags", about the friendship between H.G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw, and makes me wish he'd pursue its professional production. (Or at least let me read a copy!) His past in the theatre is the subject of Ben's continuing reminiscence "Journeys", which is a fascinating account of a life in the arts. Theatre reviews and a few FAPA mc's close another marvelous publication from Teaneck. It's a feather in SFdom's war bonnet to number such an erudite fan as Indick in our crowd.

**The Cat's Cradle** / Mandy Pack, 227 Leonard Place, Knoxville TN 38917 / Knoxsf@aol.com / Journal of the Knoxville Area S.F. Association / 4 issues, \$2 / Clubzine and come-on for Con\*Cat, KASFA's cool conclave, enthused and perky, with a list of forthcoming cons, gaming and "geek" gags, and a survey for the convention's edition of Fan Family Feud. Next Cat: November.

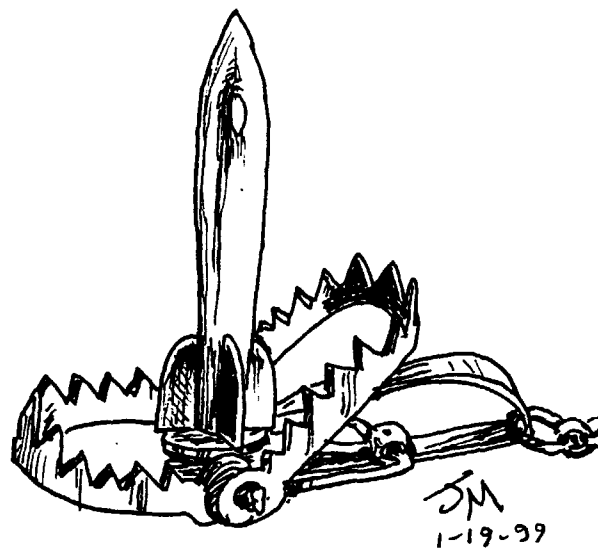
**Chicon 2000 Progress Report 3** / Terry Patch, Chicon 2000, P.O. Box 642057, Chicago IL 60664 / chi2000@chicon.org / membership / An excellent publication of its type, featuring a beautiful color cover by Bob Eggleton and unusually well-written, interesting contents. Chair Tom Veal looks back over worldcon history to dissect the growth in its size and appeal, Jerry Bloom interviews ChiCon GoH Ben Bova, Richard Wright is eulogized (and quite movingly), as is Buck Coulson, and Eggleton reflects on

his father's recent death, all in addition to the usual p.r. accoutrements. Good photos, and excellent artwork by Mike Cole, but I dislike the thick, heavy typeface chosen for the text. I didn't enjoy the last Chicon, but member A2151 is determined to relish this one.

**Conferring with Earthquakes #3** / Brin-Marie McLaughlin, 247 19th Avenue Apt. 6, San Francisco CA 94121-2353 / brininsf@aol.com / Delightful chat about the World Cup, Bravo, Brin's HMO, baseball, an injured neighbor they thought was dead, Rotsler (she prints two spots and a righteous LOC from Harry Warner about Bill's work) -- which ends with a bona fide earthquake! Love the zine, but that's one conference I can skip!

**Con\*tour** / Collin Wood, 196 Alps Rd. Suite 2-342, Athens GA 30606 / ConTour@negia.net / \$5.95@ / *Betcha these folks will be all over the New Orleans DSC this August!*

**Corflu Sunsplash** / Suzanne & Shelby Vick, 627 Barton Avenue, Springfield FL 32404 / chimes@interoz.com / Friendly, informal ads for the late April fanzine fans' convention. I supported it and wish I could have attended; ShelVy did the first artwork ever in the Southern Fandom Press Alliance and I've always wanted to meet him. Cheryl Good contributes a wonderful and evocative page to the second of these issues, "The Box of Many Colored Papers," about the childhood discovery that made her a fanzine fan. It deserves reprinting ... though come to think of it, these ads reached as many eyes as a genzine would!



**Council Times** / Dennis Blake, 11 Henley Road, Buffalo NY 14216 / Newsletter of the Buffalo Time Council, picked up at a party one snowy evening last Christmastime. This issue notes a Toronto media con called Primedia, which featured Walter Koenig as big name guest. After some book & TV reviews Blake reprints ads for a local convention, Eeriecon One, which actually seems to be about science fiction, but which is past by the time you read this. Here's to a second edition: fandom would love Niagara Falls.

**Crifanac #9-12** / Arnie Katz & Ken Forman, 7215 Nordic Lights Dr., Las Vegas NV 89119 / crifanac@aol.com / **Crifanac** is of and by traditional fanzine fandom, energetic and opinion-rich. It's been accused -- most forcefully in **Banana Wings**, *supra* -- of being exclusivist and closed, but admiring Katz as I do, I can't see the zine in so negative a light. **Crifanac** is simply devoted to fandom as a *written* medium. It's made a sincere -- if somewhat pained -- effort to explore the Net (which puts it far ahead of allegedly more inclusive zinesters, like me), and I know from personal experience how receptive it is to new faneds. True, the event of its year is Corflu, not worldcon, but as I tried to assert -- in my clumsy way -- in a recent issue, that's true of many another fannish subset: Southern fandom, for instance, has its DSC. So I read **crifanac** to keep up on and enjoy an able, well-studied and vigorous slice of the fannish pie, and if I get any more ridiculous in my choice of metaphors, may said pie smack me upside o'my face.

*Cube / Hope Kiefer c/o SF<sup>3</sup>, Box 1624, Madison WI 53701-1624 / CubeNews @aol.com. / SF<sup>3</sup> membership*

*Detours / Louis Russell Chauvenet, 11 Sussex Road, Silver Spring MD 20910-5436 / Detoured.*

*De Profundis / Tim Merrigan, LASFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., N. Hollywood CA 91601 / Official newszine of the Los Angeles S.F. Society, which has apparently ceased to exist. R.I.P. and L.S.M.F.T., LASFS.*

**Derogatory Reference 91** / Arthur D. Hlavaty, 206 Valentine St., Yonkers NY 10704-1814 / hlvaty@panix.com / trade / Perzine received as part of a SFPA mailing. Here one may find "Operation Desert Impeach", the most astute and witty demolition of the Republican impeachment nuts I have yet read. Hlavaty recognizes that the late assault on Bill Clinton was not merely an attack on a political rival, someone who played the game with an instinctive zest and skill that no active Republican could approach, but an onslaught against his generation and the whole facade of liberal and libertarian thought. He is absolutely right on. No one has ever received more Hugo nominations without winning than Arthur; he deserves to break that chain.

**Dewachen Vol. 1** Ish. 1 / Trinlay Khadro, P.O. Box 24708, Brown Deer WI 53224-0708 / trin@dias.net / \$2 or t.u. / A trade copy I sent to this address came back "Unknown". Material is fiction, by a friend Trinlay calls "Rayz'r", a writer Lloyd Daub calls "Lucinda Borkenhagen", even a page by the editor. Unique artsy look to this zine, bound with thread (!), inconsistently pasted up, and creatively peppered with clip art illustrations.

**Dick and Leah's Skiffy Calendar** / Dick and Leah Zeldes Smith, 410 West Willow Rd., Prospect Heights IL 60070-1250 / rhes@enteract.com, lazs@enteract.com / The '99 version of this spiffy item features significant anniversaries (Telstar launched; pencil invented; **Dr. Who** premieres), the birthdates of professional luminaries (from Jonathan Swift to Sally Ride) and BNFs. Again I am *not* included. July 20th 1949, people! It's not like anything *else* ever happened on July 20th!

**Did I Say That Out Loud** Nos. 2-3 / Debbi Kerr, 38 Bankfield Terrace, Burley, Leeds LS4 2RE U.K. / sd\_ankh@msn.com / t.u. / Winning personalzine from a talented Brit. She's a friend of Linda Krawecke's, whose presence permeates these two friendly, detailed, breezy issues. The first dates from July '98, and centers on a meeting of the Leeds SF group and a visit to a male strip show, which shocks poor Debbi despite herself. (The distaff places bore me after about an hour -- even Memphis' supreme Platinum Plus.) #3 -- which seems to have a *hand-colored* cover -- takes our heroine and Linda on a diverting if foot-weary jaunt to Dublin, described in lively detail. Alas for James Joyce nuts, they don't seem to visit the Martello Tower or Madame Bella's, prime stops on the *Ulysses* tour. Krawecke contributes a column of bus musings. I hope her pendulum would swing back towards tolerating me again; rumor is she'll be at DeepSouthCon: maybe there.

**DragonCon 1999 Progress Report** Vol. XIII No. 1 / P.O. Box 47696, Atlanta GA 30362 / Semi-annual come-on for the massive mediacon scheduled for Independence Day weekend. Well- done publication (by the editors of **Con\*Tour**), but the Brian Froud cover and the interior photo gallery are ruined by awful color registration. Anyway, the convention obviously has its act together, blending *everything* fannish and semi-fannish into one behemoth event: comics, games, science, music, media media media, even respectable items like My Man Schwartz's Julie Award. The chance to see Schwartz may tip the scales for me. Check out Chall #10 to see if I went for it.



*Drift* / C. Fairn Kennedy, Box Forty, 90 Shuter St., Toronto M5B 2K6 Canada

**Each Charter'd Course: Vol. 4 of Fables of Irish Fandom** / Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Road, Halesowen, W. Midlands B63 2PH, U.K. / \$5 suggested / Oh, this is *awesome* stuff: a collection of great fan writing from the halcyon days of Irish fandom, by Walt Willis, *about* Walt Willis, from fanzines like **Cry of the Nameless** and **Hyphen**, **Xero** and **Shangri L'Affaires**, legendary names to a neo like me, who has never even seen one. What a collection! Profusely illustrated with antique ATom art, these tales of fans in their heyday are enviable and instructive: this is what fandom is, at its most real -- friendship, inspired by SF but maintained through a love of the people.

*Empties* / Martin Tudor, 24 Ravensbourne Grove, off Clarkes Lane, Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 1HX U.K.

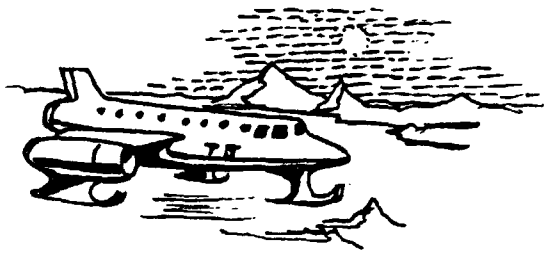
**Erg Quarterly** #144 / Terry Jeeves, 66 Red Scar Dr., Scarborough, N. Yorks. YO12 5RQ U.K. / The. / "Talk about a time capsule!" Terry starts out cleaning out his garage and uncovering a wealth of Jeeves memorabilia, artwork and writings. You can see some of the goodies he unearthed elsewhere in this **Challenger**. In a nostalgic mood, Terry gazes back into the halcyon days of pulps and the impossible inventions they trumpeted, including time machines. The way the future was. The wonderfully-named Penelope Fandergaste wonders why trekkies are so fat, then Terry returns to blast unions, review a few zines, and answer his several correspondents. Among these is Vincent Clarke; our sympathies to Terry and all his other soulmates. 40th annish coming up!



**Fanorama: Walt Willis' Fan Columns from Nebula** / Robert Lichtman, P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442 / \$10 / 96 pages of Willis' exquisite columns from the '50s and early '60s, as published in **Nebula** and **Zenith**, with two pages of introduction by the editor. Utterly delightful, tremendously valuable, a boon to all of us who were mere whelps when this grand material was first being circulated. I've been scanning a column a night, savoring the wit of one of fandom's great writers. If I have any criticism, it's that I'd've enjoyed seeing the dates of each column as well as the issue number it came from. Well, so what. Here we go, Guy Lillian hyperbole: *The fanzine of the year*.

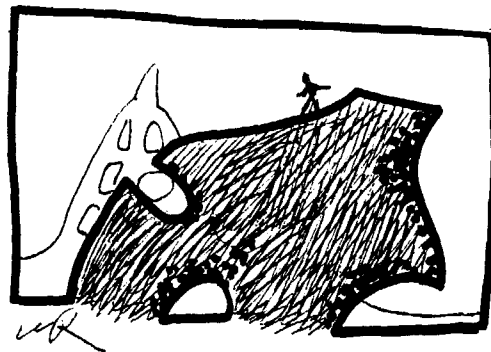
**File 770: 127-129** / Mike Glyer, 705 Valley View Drive, Monrovia CA 91016 / MGlyer@compuserve.com / \$8 for 5 issues / Good cover variety to the last few issues, including a *great* Brad Foster, and as this is fandom's premiere news'n'gossip zine, the contents are constantly renewed and fresh. My own meteorological misadventures over the past few months -- Hurricanes Frances & Georges and the deadly New Year's blizzard -- are given kind mention, but other matters also get their due, most important being the San Francisco / San Jose / Seattle confusion in worldcon voting. Wherever we end up in 2002 we're going to be footsore. #127 discusses the demise of club fandom, which incites some righteous commentary in the followup issues. Neat column by Milt Steven on the congoer's Bill of "Rights", and piles of other good material, but too damn many obituaries.

**The Floating Fan** Vol. 1 No. 4 / Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 7EW, U.K. / PJBoal@aol.com / Trade / Pamela natters about her new toys, including a scanner, and, showing that her fanzine is aptly named, prints pretty color photos of a river trip with grandson Gawain. One wonders if instead of "Good night," people tell the lad, "Green knight!" Hahaha.



**For the Clerisy** Vol. 5 No. 31-33/ Brant Kresovich, P.O. Box 404, Getzville NY 14068-0404 / kresovich@hotmail.com / \$2 or trade / This zine gets my vote for the most improved publication since I've become involved in genzine fandom. It's grown from a newsletter about the Balkans to a zine entertaining as well as informative. For instance, issue #32 reflects intelligently upon the teaching profession (Brant taught ESL for years), writing rejection letters, hostage etiquette, and **To Kill a Mockingbird**,

the story that started me on my lawyerly career. (All right, the *movie* started me on my lawyerly career. I read the book later.) It also staggers me with a generous review of **Chall #8**. #33 features a fun piece about the difference in the way men and women speak, apparently based on real research, and an article about the films of Stanley Kubrick with a unique and interesting p.o.v. on **2001** and **The Shining** (Brent believes liberal guilt about the Indians is at the heart of the Overlook horror, a point so subtle I doubt Stephen King could catch it). His zine listings concentrate on pop culture entries; very little overlap with pubs reviewed here. I very much want to hear what Brant has to say about the war in Kosovo, as he has taught in the region, but the fun stuff is welcome too.



**For Dickheads Only** / Dave Hyde c/o Ganymeadean Slime Mold Productions, P.O. Box 611, Kokomo IN 46903 / *The premiere Philip K. Dick fanzine, needed, needed.*

**Fosfax** #193-194 / Timothy Lane c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville KY 40233-7281 / \$3 or. / Mountains of material -- comprehensive reviews not only of SF but history and politics, very detailed con reports, opinionated LOCs -- if you can overlook the fact that the editors think Clinton is the anti-Christ, and the cluttered layout, it's quite entertaining. The political snideness has grown very old but we should salute **Fosfax's** incredible energy. There are more words to the square inch here than in any other fanzine, and some of them are quite good. What other fanzine prompts LOCs from that grand fellow Poul Anderson?

**Four Eyes** / Jon Diefenbach, 317 W. 7th St., Hermann MO 65041 / al\_jon@juno.com / t.u.

**The Freethinker** / Tom Feller, P.O. Box 68203, Nashville TN 37206-8203 / ccws74a@prodigy.com / *unstated but the usual, I'm sure*

**The Frozen Frog** / Benoit Girard, 1016 Guillaume-Boissat, Cap-Rouge Quebec G17 1Y9 Canada / frozfrog@clic.net / *E-mailed a note to Benny recently. "You okay?" His reply, in its entirety, was "Yes" with a grinning type-face. My rejoinder: "Good." As indeed it is.*

**Gegenschein** / Eric Lindsay, P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Queensland 4802 Australia **NEW ADDRESS** / old e-mail: eric@maths.uts.edu.au / Trade. / Old issue from summer '98, just before Eric retired. It recounts the west coast portion of an American trip he and his took in late '97, including a day in Walnut Creek, California, where I went to high school. We are not told if Lindsay made the pilgrimage to Ygnacio Valley H.S. to soak in the GHLIII vibes. After the trip report Eric "whinges" (is that how

Aussies spell "whines"?) about Oz politics, which seems about as rheumy as any other country's, and gripes about his taxes. Thank heaven for the book reviews which rescue him from this dread and dreary subject. See 1998 Notes (in the "N's").

**The Geis Letter** #s 55-60 / Richard E. Geis, P.O. Box 11408, Portland OR 97211-0408 / CompuServe: 100313,3440; Internet: 100313.3440@compu-serve.com (in ASCII) / \$1@. / Vigorous and diverse paranoid persuasions disseminated on a monthly basis, opining passionately on topics from **Natural Born Killers** to Kosovo, with stopovers at urban invasion, germ warfare, and TWA 800 -- a favorite -- in between. Forever lively, with reviews and a few LOCs tossed in. The *faux* invasion of Oakland by U.S. amphibious troops Dick discusses may not portend a fascist scenario out of **7 Days in May**, as he seems to think, but it's surely very damned strange.

**Green Stuff** / Murray Moore, 377 Manly Street, Midland Ontario L4R 3E2 Canada / murray.moore@encode.com

**Ichthyoelectroanalgesia** / Sean McLachlan, P.O. Box 3734, Tucson AZ 85722-3734 / e-mail: c638125@showme.missouri.edu / \$2 or trade.

**Idea** / Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis MN 55408-4315 / I have no idea.

**Interesting!** #14 / Rich Sagall, 747 S. 3rd St. #3, Philadelphia PA 19147-3324 / interesting@pobox.com; rich.sagall@pobox.com / \$1.50 for sample issue, 6 for \$8, 12 for \$14 / "Striving to be the Best of Bathroom Reading." Dr. Sagall's pub is an eclectic stew of quotations, real and satiric, commentary, and comedy, much reprinted. He really had me going in his article on "Proper Diskette Care and Usage" until I realized that one does *not* "periodically spray diskettes with insecticide to prevent system bugs from spreading." You stuff a roach motel into the slot, *then* you insert your disc.



**International Revolutionary Gardener No. 1** / Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4JU U.K. / Fallow for the winter. Be advised! The equinox has passed!

**Janice for DUFF!** / No editor or address is given for this spiffy little zine touting Janice Gelb's successful candidacy for the Down Under Fan Fund. Eve Ackerman, Arthur Hlavaty, and mike Glycer provide written support, Teddy Harvia adds apt cartoons. It worked. I'm glad I didn't run for DUFF; I could never have inspired such honest affection.

**January First, A.D. 3000** / Camille Cazedessus II, P.O. Box 2340, Pagosa Springs CO 81147-2340 / No price is given for this spiffy reprint of an 1856 short story from **Harper's New Monthly Magazine**, but Caz asks \$8 for the two current issues of **Pulpdom** featuring Murray Leinster's "JuJu". This antique s.f. yarn -- by Fitz-James O'Brien, I believe -- is hilarious and the illustrations are priceless. I won't

quote or summarize -- you should read it for yourself. Caz dedicates the zine to Sam Moscowitz, "who taught us to look for fiction like this."

*The Jezail* / Andy Hooper, 4228 Francis Ave. N #103, Seattle WA 98103 / fanmailAPH@aol.com

*Jomp Jr.* / Richard A. Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Dr. #302, Alexandria VA 22306

**Kerles 2** / Tommy Ferguson, 40 Deramore Ave., Belfast, BT7 3ER, Northern Ireland / kerles@net.ntl.com / t.u. / A fanzine about fanzines, with an enormous mailing list (450+ is enormous to *me*, anyway), reviewing the epochal **Outworlds 70**, **Banana Wings**, and **Squib**. I like Ferguson's dialog-based style, and agree with most of what he says about **Outworlds**, at least.

**The Knarley Knews #72-74** / Dr. Henry Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton WI 53024-2017 / welch@msoe.edu or LethaWelch@aol.com / Knarley visited NOLa in March and promised to write up the experience for the next **KK**; I never knew there were so few ATMs in this city. This bimonthly zine is fresh yet consistently high in quality. I especially enjoy Don Pattenden's continuing account of his cycling trip around Australia, which is not only enviable -- I was never so free of spirit -- but occasionally moving. Because of his trip Don spent Christmas '98 "under canvas", camping on a beautiful beach, alone with his thoughts. Other regular contributors include Charlotte Proctor, Alexander Bouchard, the usual LOCsters (without whom genzines would quickly collapse), and we can't forget Knarley himself, whose "spume" is always crisp (he talks about *cereal* in one installment, see). But you see, Henry, if I hadn't had money in my account, the ATM at the restaurant wouldn't have done me any good anyway, so ...

**Kronos** / Debra A. Hussey / dah2@hotmail.com / Debra's on-line newszine is neat and valuable, spreading news about the Nashville area throughout the Net and national news throughout Nashville, including SCA and filk news and stream-of-consciousness con and meeting reports. N'ville is one of my favorite towns, and clearly, there's a lot in the works there.

*Lan's Lantern* / George "Lan" Lascowski, 2466 Valleyview Dr., Troy MI 48098-5317 / george\_lascowski@cc.cranbrook.edu / I'm told the special Poul Anderson issue is out but I haven't seen it.

**Lofgeornost #54** / Fred Lerner, 5 Worcester Ave., White River Junction VT 05001 / fred.lerner@dartmouth.com / A FAPazine with thoughts on shopping -- Lerner hates it -- the reaction gleaned by his book, **The History of Libraries** (264 pp., \$24.95 hc Cassell & Continuum, 22883 Quicksilver Dr., Dallas VA 20166), and the sainted Ray Lafferty's truncated tetralogy begun with **The Flame is Green and Half a Sky**. Attention Robert Whitaker Sirignano: have you read (in m.s.) the other books in the series?

**MarkTime #56** / Mark Strickert, 300 S. Beau Dr. #1, Des Plaines IL 60016 / \$1.50@, trades, or. / "Mark's Zine of Hobbies and Interests" includes music -- he starts with a vivid account of a country-folk concert featuring Sara Hickman, another of those wonderful Austin songbirds (Nancy Griffith, Nancy Griffith) and Tish Hinojosa -- baseball, and college radio. Like Dick Lynch, he was a college DJ; his piece on this induces a serious bout of nostalgia, and I *wasn't* a DJ. Lots of short zine notices -- on amazing topics such as *maps* and *roller coasters* -- and LOCs from those similarly obsessed. In #55 -- which he sends unstapled, tsk -- he reveals that we share a great obsession with *road trips*, as he describes the highways and by-ways of the upper South. His count of parishes visited in Louisiana is described as pathetic; I know a way he could remedy that. Well-written glimpse into an expressive head.

**Memphen** #s 249-252 / Barbara & Tim Gatewood, 3125 S. Mendenhall #353, Memphis TN 38115-2808 / memphen@aol.com / \$12/year / The Gatewoods quit the editorial helm of this enthusiastic clubzine with issue 252, the February '99 edition, a fact trumpeted by Tom Foster's charming cover. More's the pity, since during their stewardship this monthly clubzine truly prospered, with well-written and enthusiastic con reports, book reviews, and club gossip. If a replacement has published, I've seen no sign.

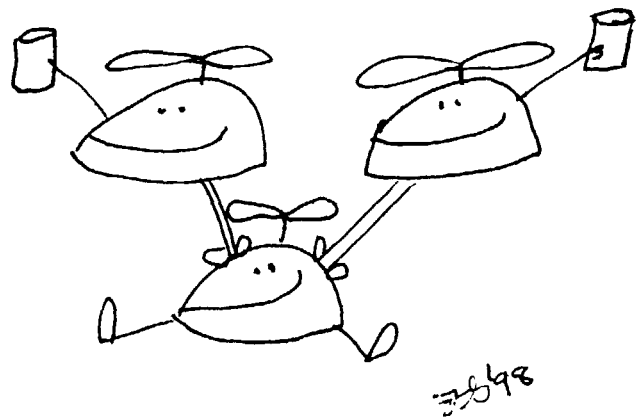
**Millennium Philcon Flash** No. 1 / Suite 2001, 402 Huntingdon Pike, Rockledge PA 19046 / Phil2001@netaxs.com / First newsletter of the 2001 worldcon, giving Guest of Honor and membership conversion info. Upon receiving this zine, member 1411 S-for-supporting logged his sixty bucks to transform to member 1411 A-for-attending. One item of personal note is the Liberty Bell/space capsule illo by Mercy van Vlack. Have I mentioned how Mercy filled my apazines with spiffy fan art during my days at D.C. Comics? I have? Well ... this makes twice.

**The MimeMeow of Bill Bridget** / Bill Bridget, 4126 Mountain Creek Rd. #6, Chattanooga TN 37415 / <bbridget@mail.-cha.bellsouth.net> / trade.

**Mimosa** #23 / Richard & Nicki Lynch, P.O. Box 1350, Germantown MD 20875 / e-mail: lynch@access.digex.net website: <http://www.smithway.org/mimosa> / \$4 or. / I hear distressing rumors about the dominant fanzine of the 1990's, namely, that the Lynchi have grown tired of hauling Hugos home every year and are thinking of retiring the title. Yoiks! Anyway, we have here the 23rd issue, with a piratical cover by Julia Morgan-Scott, an appropriate subject considering that Richard and Nicki open with a nice report on Bucconeer. They note -- as everyone did -- Joe Mayhew's moving tribute to Ian Gunn when he accepted his Hugo. More worldcon memories follow, in Part 2 of Mike Resnick's long article on the subject. It's a hoot ... except when Mike talks about his troubles with Nolacon II. I must elaborate on the subject, because in addition to voicing awe over the great suite the convention gave him as Toastmaster -- larger than some of the universities I've attended -- he also levels serious diss at the con's *de facto* manager. (He apparently withheld some of Mike's promised *per diem*. Resnick came close to boycotting the Nolacon II Hugo ceremonies.) Resnick's reminiscences of other cons in an earlier issue bring on a remarkable *mea culpa* from Confrancisco's Kevin Standlee; I doubt he'll hear the same from the Nolacon manager.

**Mimosa's** other usual magnificent contributors chime in -- Howard DeVote, Forry Ackerman, Dave Kyle, Robert Madle -- along with Cato ~~Kaelin~~ Lindberg, who recounts how fandom came to Norway, Jeanne Mealy, and Ron Bennett. As ever, the artwork is all original, article-specific, and excellent. Assuming those terrible rumors are true ... what will we do without **Mimosa**?

**MSFire** / Lloyd G. Daub, P.O. Box 1637, Milwaukee WI 53201-1637 / e-mail: lucindab@rocket-mail.com / Trades, contributors, club members. / A zine, it seems, of the past -- also, it seems, a vehicle for a marvelous and successful hoax. Remember Lucinda Borkenhagen and Oino, the other editors of this excellent publication? We're now told they were *all Daub*. Color me snoggered: I never suspected. (Lloyd



says to check out *Dewachen* for a fictional account of his characters' meeting.) I'll miss *MSFire*; it was always lush with laughs. Including one on us, it seems ...

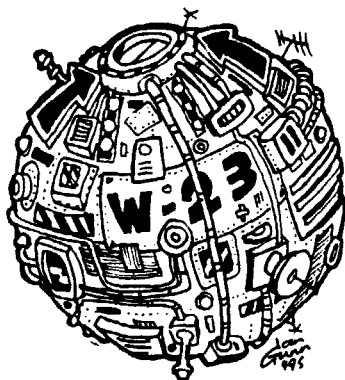
*Muse* 134 March 1997 / Stephen desJardins, 1711 Massachusetts Ave. NW #134, Washington DC 20036 / [steven@desjardins.org](mailto:steven@desjardins.org)

*Never Quite Arriving* / Christina Lake, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA U.K. / e-mail [christina.l@virgin.net](mailto:christina.l@virgin.net) / Trade / Has never quite arrived ...

*Niekas* / Ed Meskys, RR #2 Box 63, 322 Whittier Hwy., Center Harbor NH 03226-9708 / [edmund.meskys@gsel.org](mailto:edmund.meskys@gsel.org) / \$9.95.

1998 [Nineteen Ninety-Eight] Notes / Eric Lindsay, P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, Queensland 4802, Australia / [eric@wrevenge.com.au](mailto:eric@wrevenge.com.au) / trade / A letter substitute from the former editor of *Gegenschein*, discussing his recovery from a heart attack. He reports that Geg #84 will appear on the web at [www.maths.uts.edu.au/staff/eric/sf/geg.htm](http://www.maths.uts.edu.au/staff/eric/sf/geg.htm); good that he'll keep in touch.

No Award #5 / Marty Cantor, 11825 Gilmore St. #105, N. Hollywood CA 91606 / T.u. or \$5 / Great



issue of a zine that sings with the vitality and verve of LASFS. Marty hates it when I say that, but the contents and contributors almost all deal with and emit from that greatest of SF groups. This does not demean *No Award*, but rather *distinguishes* it, giving editor Cantor an Ali-Babian cave of riches of anecdotes and personalities to dole to us luckless masses a few jewels at a time. Even the cover -- by the long-absent Marc Schirmeister -- trumpets L.A. (Born in Mojave, I recognize the Vasquez Rocks behind Schirm's sexy dinosaur!) Throughout, lotsa LASFS fun, from a guide to their fabled auctions to pieces by Milt Stevens, Bill Rotsler, Len Moffatt (part 2 of his "Califania Tales"), Mike Glycer, and Ed Green (a great memoir of Texas riots). All broadcast the energy and joy Marty has tapped in his clubmates. Is there more easterly material? Indeed -- a solid review of *The Reluctant Famulus* by Joseph Major and LOCs from

all over. But this zine remains a tribute to the ambiance of the land of the lotus-eaters, communicated with a fine eye for an attractive page ... 50 of them, in this case.

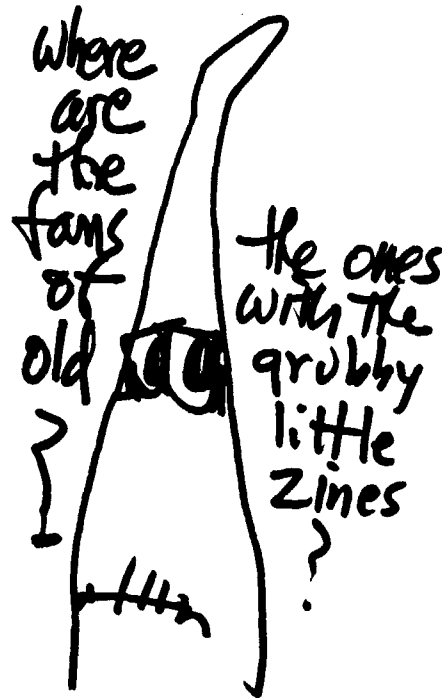
*No-Pest Strips* #4 / Timeliketoon c/o Yul Tolbert, P.O. Box 02222, Detroit MI 48202-9998 / \$1.25 @ / Neato comic strip zine sent (in a cool personalized envelope) with a selection of ads for the editor/artist's work. It stars Celestella, a bright and busty black girl in kerchief and halter. Her adventure in this issue deals with non-HIV explanations for AIDS, recalling Jim Hogan's article here. Celestella looks better than Hogan. Nifty artwork: Yul, do me a cover!

*Notes from Oblivion* #36-40 / Jay Harber, 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville IL 60048 / Trade / Jay asked that I not review his powerful personalzine, so I'll simply list the pub and note it as received and very welcome.

*Nova Express* Vol. 5 No. 1 / Lawrence Person, P.O. Box 27231, Austin TX 78755-2231 / e-mail: [lawrence@bga.com](mailto:lawrence@bga.com) / 4/\$12 U.S.; 4/\$16 Canada & Mexico; 4/\$22 International. / A sercon class act, professional-quality in every respect. This issue centers on Gene Wolfe, among SFdom's more cerebral writers, but every piece is intellectually oriented and serious in tone. This manner is no burden in *Nova*

**Express**; when the articles are as well-thought-out and presented as Person seems to insist on, their perspective is exciting, not tedious. Herein I'd single out for special praise Bill Sheehan's analysis of Dan Simmons' **Hyperion** quartet, but every review seems committed to paper with such care. Yet there is humor, such as Lawrence's proud cover banner: "One-Time Hugo Nominee!" That will change.

**Opuntia** #33.5-40.2 / Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E7 Canada / \$3 @ or. / Astoundingly prolific, perplexingly organized (what's ".1" as opposed to ".5" again?), if **Opuntia** isn't Canada's premiere genzine I'd like to see what is. He receives and notes lots and lots of zines -- many unknown here -- in random order, the better to turn faneds on to other publications. His personal observations on real life include con reports, arcane info (who knows what "pounce" is?), rants against gophers and beavers (has Dale ever met a *nutria*?), rivers, postage (more of a problem north of the border than here), libraries, typesetting ... Dale's doing a subject index for Canadian fanzines; his own publication will probably take him a year to do. Fun reads, these. Though Dale's title and cover symbol denotes a cactus, his style is never *prickly*. Hahaha. Sent with **The Canadian Journal of Detournement** #s 27-28, epistles of evil.



**Out of the Kaje** #3 / Karen Johnson, 35 Mariana Ave., Sth Croydon, Vict. 3136, Australia / karenjoh@hotmail.com / the usual, whim, trade, or \$3 / **Out of the Kaje** came Out of the Blue; Karen says **Chall 7** was part of a bundle she bought from the Ian Gunn Memorial Fund, and she was moved to trade and comment. Lucky me. **OotK** -- if I may call it that -- is breezy, well-produced, and refreshingly personal. It begins with moving tributes to Ian Gunn, Karen's unforgettable "I wish I had a Time Machine" and Mark Plummer's "Remembering Ian". Next up is a sprightly response to Elizabeth Billinger's challenge in **Banana Wings**, to name ten items she would take to Mars. Karen spins a spiffy self-portrait from her answers. (You can always trust a woman who plays the flute.) Thoughts on Tennyson, reviews of Robinson and Bear, a fannish glossary (I thought a "con" was a dude who comes to court in handcuffs), poetry, LOCs and a very funny piece on ill-informed plot synopses, "I don't think they read the book" also fill this happy publication. Karen admits to being new at the fannish game, but that only makes her zine fresh. Can't wait to read her reactions to Aussiecon.

**PhiloSFy** #11 / Alexander R. Slate, 8603 Shallow Ridge Rd., San Antonio TX 78239-4022 / slateal@swbell.net / \$1 but trade preferred. / Fanzine fandom's favorite Texas wild man rides on ... "Examining the role of ethics in modern life -- with a genre edge." Slate's earnestness lends **PhiloSFy** a most attractive focus. Not a breath of pomposity here. Alex's style is friendly and personable, and his editorial couldn't be more homey -- dental visits, leaky roofs, coaching his kid's soccer team, sweating out the boy's *bar mitzvah*. He reads and reviews a wide range of material -- SF, mysteries, even a set of Whoopi Goldberg essays, and *even Gormenghast*. There's an interesting and lively exchange in his LOC section, and then we reach the continuing segment that gives **PhiloSFy** its weight: Alex's musings on "the morality and ethics of \_\_\_\_\_ (fill in the blank)". This time Medicine and

Governance are targeted. He closes with a nice mood piece by E.B. Frohvet on why he never became a monk. I like this zine a great deal. I like what Slate has to say, and I very much like the fact that he's saying it. He's obviously a guy trying not only to get by in the world, but to make sense of it, to figure out how to behave decently and act accordingly. The point, after all, is not just *what* we do, but *why* and *how* we do it; not just *who* survives, but *what* survives.

**Proper Boskonian** No. 44 / Lisa Hertel, c/o NESFA, P.O. Box 809, Framingham MA 01701-0203 / pb@nesfa.org / NESFA membership + a \$16 subscription, \$3/issue or. / November '98 issue, replete with ace contributors and varied content. Terry Hickman begins with a short story submitted for the NESFA fiction contest. Later, Evelyn Leeper takes us panel-by-panel through Boskone 35; if she missed a single cough at any point of the convention I'd be surprised. Ian Gunn's "Space-Time Buccaneers" reminds us of how much we lost when Ian passed away. Thank heaven we still have Joe Mayhew, whose "Bears in Space" segues into Bob Devney's "Orbita Dicta", which Joe also illustrates. Lotsa letters to close; I was about to tee off on **PB** for not printing writers' addresses when I noticed their complete contributors' page at the end.

*QUANt Suff* / Joyce Worley Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas NV 89107

*Quipu* / Vicki Rosenzweig, 33 Indian Road, 6-R, New York NY 10034 / vr@interport.net

*Raw Goof* / Bill Bodden, P.O. Box 762, Madison WI 53701-0762 / Trade

**The Reluctant Famulus #53** / Thomas D. Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian MI 49221-1627 / E-mail: tomfamulus@dmci.net / Or \$2. / A beautiful (pastel-like) cover by Sheryl Birkhead is only the first color work in this large, jolly issue. Sadler bedecks most articles with a photo of the author -- providing some surprises, as names that had only been names become faces as well: Robert Sabella,

Terry Jeeves, Gene Stewart, and Tom himself. There's a lot here, and I like a lot of it. Sadler's editorial is bravely personal, as he discusses his depression and his treatments for it. (The most effective: his abusive boss apparently got himself arrested and definitely got himself fired.) This kind of honesty turns a random collection of articles into a reflection of the editor's personality, an exercise in self-expression -- and what else *is* a fanzine? Anyway, Sabella reviews a Dozois anthology, Stewart waxes philosophical on knowledge itself, Joe Mayhew provides a fine portfolio of fillos, Jeeves reminiscences about his first days home from the R.A.F., the late Buck Coulson, bless'im, reviews novels, and there's Howard de Vore, Rodney Leighton, Sheryl Birkhead, zines reviewed, lotsalotsa LOCs ... and a hilarious page of scanner mis-scans. I love these things: remember "Fart of a fiendish scheme"?

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iguana in Ian's name at the  
Melbourne Zoo.



*Riverside Quarterly* Vol. 9 No. 3 / Leland Sapiro,  
P.O. Box 12085, San Antonio TX 78212



*Scavenger's Newsletter 174 / Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage City KS 66523-1329 / foxscav1@jc.met / \$2.50 per sample copy*

*scopus:3007 / Alexander J.L. Bouchard, P.O. Box 573, Hazel Park MI 48030-0573 / ae019@detroit.freenet.org. / \$1.50 per.*

**SFSFS Shuttle** Nos. 136-137 / Mal Barker, c/o SFSFS P.O. Box 70143, Ft. Lauderdale FL 33307-0143 / January-February issue of a spirited clubzine. Once a month SFSFS congregates for picnics, discussions (scheduled guests in March were Kim Stanley Robinson, John Clute, and Brian Aldiss), Hugo debates (reminding me of my own orations on the awards to a stupefied NOSFA). The club sponsors a writers' workshop, an ongoing convention (Tropicon -- the next is 11/5-7, and Mike Resnick is GoH), and much else. These issues herald George Peterson's Bucconeer report -- very witty, and he got to more panels than did I. #137 features David Lowrey's wry review of the latest **Star Trek** movie, and numerous letters from the usual chorus, hitting on the usual numberless subjects. Obviously, a grand group.

*Shooting Stars / Mike Siddall, 133 Duke Street, Askam-in-Furness, Cumbria, LA16 7AE, U.K., & Dave Hicks, 1 St. Woolos Place, Newport, South Wales, NP9 4GQ, U.K. / mds@askamite.demon.co.uk or little.jim@dial.pipex.com*

*Skosh / Steve Stiles, 8631 Lucerne Rd., Randallstown MD 21133 / Trade*

**Small Publishers Co-Op** / 2579 Clematis St., Sarasota FL 34239 / spcoop@flnet.com / Not bad prices offered for those needing 1000 copies and not minding newsprint. Ideal for punkzines but for fandom, I'm not so sure.

**Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin** Vol. 7 No. 2 / Julie Wall, 470 Ridge Road, B'ham AL 35206-2816 / SFC membership or. / Thick (36-page) and indispensable guide to Southern fandom, with comprehensive fanzine reviews, club news, convention listings and reports, and very well done. There's a satisfying depth to all leant by contributors like Tom Feller and Laura Haywood, whose retrospective of Chapel Hill's Chimera and ChimeraCon is the centerpiece of the issue. A kind review of **Challenger**. Stray below the Mason-Dixon and this zine is essential.

*The Space Cadet Gazette / R. Graeme Cameron, 1855 West 2nd Ave. #110, Vancouver BC V6J 1J1 Canada / graeme\_cameron@mindlink.bc.ca / \$1*

*Splish Splash Autumn 1996 / Joy V. Smith, 3403 Providence Road, Lakeland FL 33809*

*Squib / Victor Gonzalez, 905 N.E. 45th St. #106, Seattle WA 98105 / squib@galaxy-7.net / "the real thing, for the usual price."*

*Starfire / Wm. Breiding, P.O. Box 2322, Tucson AZ 85702 / wbreiding@juno.com*

**Stefantasy** Volume 54 No 2 #123 / William M. Danner, R.D. 1, Kennerdell PA 16374 / "Less than 149 pesetas except for your copy, which is *free!*" / Now in its 55th year of continuous publication, **Stef** is a treasure. This time Bill talks about his experiences, long ago, as audience in live local theatre. The rest of the issue is given over to LOCs, some from unfamiliar names; stick around fanzining for 54 years and you amass a load of correspondents. One item of discussion leaps giggling from the page: *Teletubbies*. Jerry Falwell's idiotic brouhaha over the purple one got toys based on the alleged gay

mascot -- because he carries a purse, see -- exiled from the shelves at the local Wal-Mart. When I protested, I was told they were sold out. (If anyone cares, I've seen the show, and truly like the depiction of the sun as a laughing baby. There's poetry in that image.)

*Tangent* / David Truesdale, 5779 Norfleet, Raytown MO 64133 / internet - 103133.1350@compuserve.com; <http://www.sff.net/people/Dave.T/index.htm> / \$5 @, \$20 one-year sub. / Check the web!

**Thyme** #124-125 / Alan Stewart, P.O. Box 222, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 3005, Australia / a.stewart@pgrad.unimelb.edu.au / The or \$A 3; subscription \$A 15. / Those Aussies can't wait for their worldcon; they have to issue nifty fanzines as well. Central to issue #125 of "The Australian S.F. News Magazine" is a very funny piece by Rose Mitchell, "Mein Trek", upbraiding trekkies for their humorlessness, and a good interview by Stewart and Donna Hennan with David Gemmell. There's a great deal more, of course; there always is. The cover is a dramatic overhead shot of an Apollo LEM descending into a giant lunar crater; wasn't this the actual plan for Apollo 20? For some reason -- surface rate transport, maybe -- #124 reached me later than #125. It is a wonderfully exciting issue, featuring plenty of photos of fans hitherto shrouded by distance -- bringing faces and life to Australian fandom as they prepare to plunge into their third worldcon. And it is moving as well, as those very folks mourn the recent loss of Ian Gunn.

*Trash Barrel* / Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., N. Hollywood CA 91606-2308 / Trade

**Tripe Reportcard** 32 / Bruce Pelz, 15931 Kalisher St., Granada Hills CA 91344 / Dated 11 Feb. 1999, Bruce's potscrad -- or is "pocstrad"? -- comes all the way from Madagascar, and depicts a lemur. More interesting is the invertebrate on one of the stamps: literally, *snail* mail.

**Twink** #12-13 / E.B. Frohvet, 4725 Dorsey Hall Dr. Box #A-700, Ellicott City MD 21042 / The u. / There are zines I think of as **Challenger's** siblings, and **Twink** is one of them. Here are two good issues. #12 features a cute Sheryl Birkhead cover, its successor an \*odd\* Franz Miklis illustration -- a "Frohvet Party" -- on its front. Within #12, good content, including an interesting critical piece on race in SF by the editor, "We're All African Anyway"; this installment deals with Heinlein. (Personally, I don't think SF has *any* realistic black characters, except perhaps Genry Ai in **Left Hand of Darkness**, but I'd like to hear what my Af-Am readers think.) Corresponding in the followup issue is Elizabeth Osborne's neat tale of "Pennsic War XXVII", an SCA event. We don't hear much about the Society for Creative Anachronism these days, which is too bad: my friends the Proctors and Hank Reinhardt are strong supporters of these antiquarians, and Hank takes credit for bringing the SCA to the South. Anyway, Frohvet exerts his editorial presence in #13 through a cool article on *basic* SF, but doesn't mention **The Stars My Destination**, so he must have published an early draft. (I josh.) Good lettercols, nice reviews (he's very kind to **Challenger's** 8th), as two more winners slide forth from the pseudonym from the Magnolia State.

**Two Loonies and a Soft Toy** / Renaldo, Frances & Phil, Oz FFANZ Administrators, P.O. Box 33, Seville, Australia 3139 / Free, but please make a donation to the FFANZ Fund / A unique and utterly spiffoid account of the editors' trip to New Zealand as winners of last year's FFANZ competition. Reynaldo, a stuffed sheep soft toy, was obviously the hit of the trip. I wonder how he'd get along with my pals, Tony and Mib.

**Vanamonde** Nos. 278-297 / John Hertz, 236 S. Coronado St. No. 409, L.A. CA 90057 / Trade. / More opinings on everything 'neath Sol from Apa-L, now with a snazzy new logo by Brad Foster. These

zines bring us the flavor of LASFS' marvelous weekly apa, where one never knows if he'll be reading about Ulysses or haiku or fan history or Shari Lewis or what. John and his correspondents touch on them all. What next?

*Violet Books / Jessica Amanda Salmonson, P.O. Box 20610, Seattle WA 98102*

**Visions of Paradise** #s 77-79 / Robert Sabella, 24 Cedar Manor Court, Budd Lake NJ 07828-1023 / bobsabella@nac.net / A literate and stimulating publication, intellectually and academically strong. A personal publication foremost, each issue begins with a long selection from Sabella's diaries, including a long account of the National Education Association's convention here in New Orleans. Thank God worldcons aren't so turbulent. Sabella's reviews reveal not only his personal judgment but the personal taste behind it. (In one instance, where he criticizes **A Case of Conscience**, one of my favorite SF novels, I wish he'd been more clear.) His fanzine notices concentrate on one title per issue; his long review of **Challs** 6 and 7 in his 77th issue is extraordinarily charitable, his looks at **Opuntia** and **Reluctant Famulus** are accurate, positive and fair. As befits an educator, there's a refreshing emphasis on books here, specifically, at one point, the controversial list of the 100 greatest books of the century (of which I've read, alas, but 21). An ad for Sabella's **Who Shaped Science Fiction?** (180 pp, \$23.95 from Kroshna Books, 6080 Jericho Turnpike #207, Commack NY 11725) is included.

*The Wordsmith/Eclectic Collector No. 5 / Vince Nowell, P.O. Box 1258, Simi Valley CA 93062-1258*

*The Wrong Leggings / Lilian Edwards, 39 Viewforth, Edinburgh U.K. / L.Edwards@ed.ac.uk / Trade*

**Xenolith** 42 / Bill Bowers, 4651 Glenway Ave., Cincinnati OH 45238-4503 / xenolith@iname.com / Electronic publication, available in hard copy to FAPA. Involving personal natter from the editor of **Outworlds** -- his '77 gafiation, the evolution of his fanac from genzine to perzine, his apac (does anyone else use one title for all apas?), and compelling personal natter, followed by FAPA comments. From hectography to the Net, Bill's is a fascinating fannish odyssey.

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

**Zendik** #53 / Chen, Arol, Siah, 6025 12th St., Vero Beach FL 32966 / zendik@gate.net / 4 for \$15 / A quality publication by a Green commune with a strong environmental slant, moderately preachy, rather attractively weird. Founded by a beat poet, Wulf Zendik, apparently the group's been around for quite a while. Bought from a street vendor on Bourbon Street on Mardi Gras, this pub brought me back to the '60s.

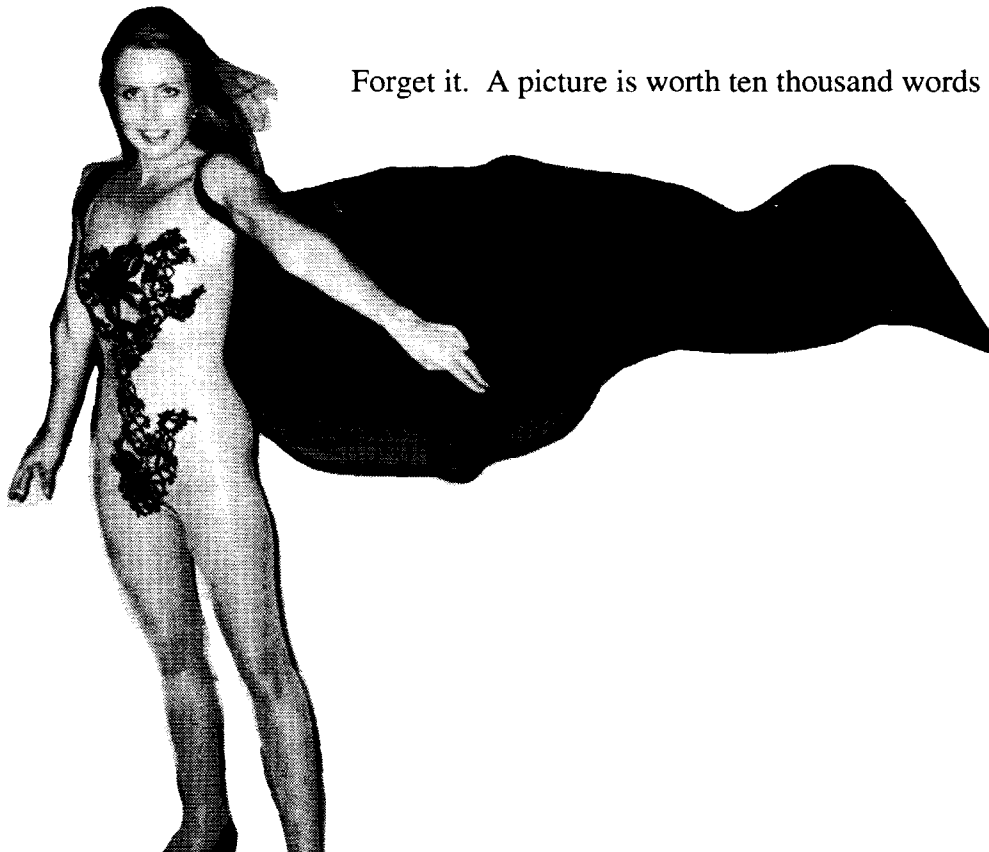
*Zero-G Lavatory / Scott Patri, Box 1196, Cumberland BC V0R 1S0 Canada / No zine this time, but at least Scott sent me some of his ... distinctive illos. What better way to juice up a column!*



*The Challenger Tribute ...*

"Laura  
is a face in the misty light  
Footsteps that you hear down the hall  
a laugh that floats on the summer breeze  
that you can never quite recall  
And you see  
Laura  
on a train that is passing by  
those eyes -- how familiar they seem  
she gave your very first kiss to you  
and that is  
Laura  
but she's only a dream"

Forget it. A picture is worth ten thousand words



***LAURA MODINE***

Said Gary when he submitted this piece, "This was certainly an appropriate article to write for *Challenger*, since my challenge was to make something technical comprehensible to a non-technician." Comprehensible, maybe. Entertaining – definitely!

# Watching Paint Dry

and Other Moments of Technological High Excitement

Gary R. Robe

Technology can make things possible, but it never makes them simpler. I don't know if that is an original statement, but if it is I'd like to claim it as Robe's First Law of Scientific Progress. For example, I'm using a marvel of technology to write these words, a Dell Latitude XPi CD laptop computer. I'm using Microsoft Word '97 to organize my thoughts into electrons. I happen to be writing this in Mexico City, and if I make good progress, I might E-mail a rough draft to Guy for his comments. All of these things have been made possible, even easy, by technology that has sprung into existence over the past few years. Ease, however, does not equate to simplicity. If any one of these components should fail in the next 10 minutes, I would be out of luck, and I would be forced to read a book instead. A faulty circuit in the computer, a corrupted line of code in the program, or a problem with the phone line would put me out of business instantly. All of these tasks are easy enough for me to do, but I'm certain that the microchip engineer, software writer, or telephone engineer would agree that none of this technology is simple to achieve. I'll give you a more detailed example of what I'm talking about, and you can decide for yourself if technology is your friend or not.

I work for Eastman Chemical Company. My job is in the technical service lab for coatings. This means that I'm paid to travel the world and train people to make paint. A while ago a friend remarked that something was about as exciting as watching paint dry. I laughed and told him that I get paid to watch paint dry and that it can be pretty exciting if you know what you're looking for. I'm certain that only a few people in the world actually consider what is happening when you paint over your kid's crayon artwork in the hallway. Let me tell you, there's a lot more to paint drying than splatters and brushes to clean and a nasty smell that lingers in the house for a couple days.

Let me start by paying tribute to our ancestors. In my youth, paint was an oily mixture that required turpentine and a lot of ventilation to apply. Back then, paint drying was boring. You spread the paint on the wall, the solvent evaporated, and you had a layer of paint left behind that eventually hardened up and dried. Even at that low level of excitement, there is more going on than meets the eye. You probably think that good old oil based lacquer is some hard stuff dissolved in solvent with some colored powder mixed in. That is close to right, but the stuff that actually goes into the paint can is oil.

Back at the dawn of history, somebody was probably looking for something to eat. This proto-painter, call him Ugmael, knew that if you took the seeds of certain plants like olives, coconuts, or cocoa, you could squeeze out some oil that was good to eat. Ugmael was probably hungry and none of those good-to-eat oily seeds were around, so he tried the seeds from some other plants like linseed, castor, or rape to see if they were any good. What he discovered was that these oils all made him sick, if they didn't kill him. If he left them sitting out for a while, however, they changed from an oil to a hard solid. These became known as *drying oils* for their ability to seemingly dry out and harden when they were exposed to air. There was actually no drying taking place here in the sense that something volatile was leaving the system. These oils

react with oxygen and crosslink to form a hard material. It was not a great leap of technology to mix in colorants, smear them on the wall, and voila! we got paint folks! This paint technology took the human race all the way from cave drawings to Picasso.

With the discovery of drying oils, early man had stumbled across the class of chemical reactions called polymerization. That is taking relatively small and simple molecules and causing them to link up and form a really big molecule. Nature does this all the time. Cellulose, DNA, natural rubber, and cheese are all examples of natural polymers. It wasn't until 1843 When Charles Goodyear discovered that adding sulfur to natural rubber did the same kind of curing trick for rubber that oxygen did for drying oils. Goodyear made the first step towards gaining control over the polymerization process. From that humble beginning we now have polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polyvinyl chloride, polyethylene terphthalate, polyacrylate, polyester, polyurethane, and other sorts of poly-alpha-methyl-chicken wire ad nauseum. The important thing is when you see *poly* tacked on to the front of something, you can be sure that mankind has been Fooling With Nature again.

So what's this got to do with paint drying, you ask? The Reason For Paint, if you want to get philosophical is to a) make things look prettier, and b) keep things from decaying. To do this paint has to be colored, and it has to stay where you put it. (OK, smarty pants, wood finishes and automotive clear coats don't have color, but they do make things look better and they do protect the surface.) The color part is not really too difficult. There are lots of things you can grind up and stir into the paint to make it black, white, and anything in-between. You need, however, something to hold that powder on the wall, and to hold it together. Without that you have whitewash that comes off the first time it rains or when you touch it. The tie that binds is called, logically enough, the binder, and the binder has to be a polymer. Furthermore it had to be a certain kind of binder. It has to be something that is hard yet flexible over the whole range of temperatures the coating is going to see. Otherwise it gets sticky in the summer and flakes off in the winter.

Drying oils fit that bill very nicely since they form a very hard and glassy polymer that doesn't melt yet isn't too brittle in the cold. There are a couple of snakes in the garden though. First, in order to be hard enough to work, a polymer loses its solubility. You can't just let the oil polymerize and then dissolve it because the solution would be so thick that you would need a steam roller to apply it. Instead, the oil is dissolved in turpentine or the like, which keeps it from reacting in the can. When you are ready, you apply the paint, the solvents go away, and if the gods of polymerization are smiling the paint dries. If this technology was good enough for Michaelangelo, you ask, why change? That's the second snake in the garden because the solvents used in oil-based paint are very potent air pollutants.

In the late 60's the air in Los Angeles was approaching the point that it no longer supported human life. Smog is caused by a combination of soot particles and the breakdown of organic vapors to form ozone. The public demanded that the government Do Something about air pollution. It was quickly determined that the cause of 90% of air pollution was caused by automobile emissions, and there was no way that the State of California was going to take on the oil and car industries. Then some brilliant soul noticed that there are lots of nasty solvents in paint. Even better, the paint industry is tiny compared to Ford and Standard Oil, so it was politically easy to pass California Rule 66 that strictly limited the use of hydrocarbon solvents. Don't get me wrong. These solvents are really efficient at producing air pollution, and not using them reduces air pollution. What it didn't do was decrease air pollution *significantly*. Regardless, the federal government was quick to see that California had Done Something to fight air pollution, and so the Clean Air Act of 1972 quickly followed that set up our friends at the EPA, and nationalized California's idea to cut the use of those nasty solvents.

This put the paint industry into something of a bind. It was possible to formulate away from the really nasty hydrocarbon solvents on the EPA's Hazardous Air Pollutant list, but the alternatives didn't work as well and cost many times that of reliable turpentine and mineral spirits. A technological breakthrough was needed. Luckily, there was a new technology in the wings to take the place of our trustworthy drying oils.

Any polymer good enough to work as a paint binder can't be put into a low viscosity solution. Synthetic rubber chemists had found a way during World War II to make a big polymer in a liquid form by stealing another trick from nature. Oil and water don't mix. If you get oil on your hands, water itself won't wash it off. Oil and water and soap don't mix either, but soap can surround oil droplets and suspend them in water. It is not a real solution since you can look at soapy oily water under a microscope and see little drops of oil floating in the water. What the soap does is to stabilize the floating oil in the water so that on the large scale the mixture is homogeneous, and the oil and water don't separate. Once you have a soapy film around the oil droplet, the system doesn't care if the oil is 10-W-30 or a really big polymer. What you've got, my friends, is an *emulsion*.

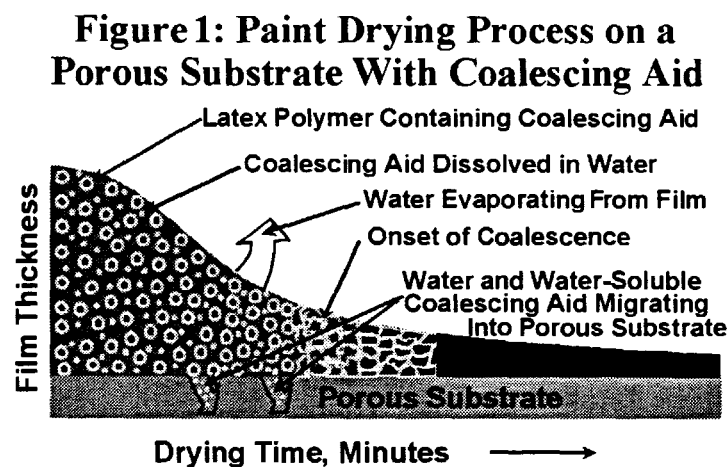
There are lots of naturally occurring emulsions like milk and the sap of the rubber tree. An emulsion is any dispersion of oily stuff in water. When the oily stuff is a polymer, it is called a *latex*. During World War II, the Asian sources for natural rubber latex were cut off, so Germany and the US had to come up with something to replace it. The scientists realized that they could mimic nature by taking some reactive building blocks (*monomers*) emulsify them with some soap (call that *surfactant*), then trigger the polymerization of the monomers. The little oil droplets act like microscopic reactors, the monomers link up, and create synthetic rubber. The early synthetic latex polymers were fairly simple structures that used at most one or two different monomers. Once the idea took hold, however, it didn't take long to discover that by changing the composition of the monomers one could control the physical properties of the polymer. For example, methyl methacrylate makes a hard and clear polymer now known as Plexiglas. Vinyl acetate makes a softer but more flexible polymer that we now call Elmer's Glue-All. The techno-geeks now had a vast new way to put chemicals together, and since there was no World Wide Web to distract them they stayed up all night making ever more complex monomers and polymers made from mixtures of monomers. Thus the acrylic latex family was born.

The advent of acrylics opened a new door for formulation of polymers that would work in applications ranging from adhesives to paint binders to space shuttle windows. Furthermore acrylic lattices essentially eliminated the use of prohibited solvents in paints. There are, however, a few problems with latex paints. The polymer floats around in the water as droplets stabilized with a one-molecule thick layer of surfactant. As the water dries, the particles come closer together until they come into contact. At that point, the surfactant shell pops like a soap bubble, and suddenly we are back to a mixture of oil and water. If the polymer particles are soft enough, they fuse together to form a continuous film. If the particles are too hard, however, they just bounce off each other, and once the water is gone all that remains is a fine powder.

For adhesives, a soft, sticky film is desirable, and so polymers that readily fuse when the emulsion collapses are just fine. For paint, however, a soft and sticky film is a complete non-starter. Unfortunately, in order to make a polymer that forms a tough and hard film, the particles generally do not fuse at room temperature. The beauty of drying oils is that they start out as liquids or gums, and with a bit of oxygen and time they polymerize themselves. With emulsion polymers, the polymerization process is like an avalanche. Once it starts, it doesn't stop until all of the monomer is used up. Furthermore, acrylics are very stable in oxygen, so you can't pull the trick of having them cure once the paint is on the wall. So paint formulators have a dilemma. If you make a polymer soft enough to make a film, it is too sticky, and if you make a polymer hard enough to work, it won't form a film.

This would have been a knockout blow for latex paint if the valiant paint formulators 25 years ago had not kept working until they found a technological fix. After all that work to remove solvents from paint by switching to latex, the solution was adding solvent back into the system. The idea was to make a latex polymer act a bit like oil based paint. By adding a bit of a special solvent (called a coalescing aid), it was discovered that polymers could be temporarily softened in order to let them form a film when drying. The coalescing aid then evaporates over a few weeks, and leaves behind a continuous film of hard and durable polymer.

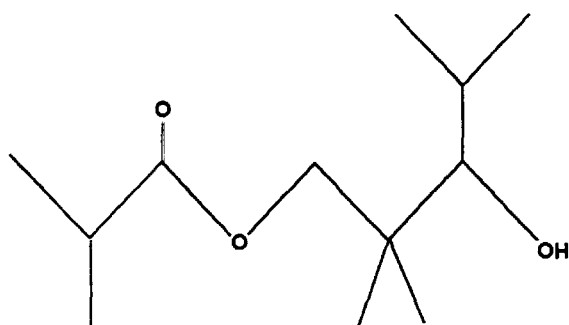
It is not a perfect solution, but by using a coalescing aid, latex paint can be use polymers that won't form a film by themselves at temperatures below 120°F. By adding enough coalescing aid to overcome the polymer's resistance to film formation, it is possible to make latex paint that can be applied at temperatures right down to freezing. So, if you think that paint drying is boring, what is really happening is quite a bit more complex. The drawing gives an idea of all that is happening as a latex paint dries.



The coalescing aid has to have a number of properties, and the list of things that actually work is pretty short. First, the coalescing aid has to evaporate slower than water. If not, it will already be gone when the latex collapses and it is needed. Second, the coalescing aid needs to be a good solvent for the polymer or it will not soften the particles, and that defeats the purpose of using the solvent. Also, the coalescing aid should not be soluble in water. As the diagram shows, if it is soluble in water, it will soak into the wall with the water, and won't be inside the polymer particles when it is needed. The

coalescing aid also can't react with the other components of the paint. That might destabilize the latex and cause the whole system to coagulate in the can, or it might change the coalescent into something that doesn't work.. The coalescing aid should also be efficient at lowering the film-formation temperature of the polymer so that you can get by with using as little of it as possible. Finally, the coalescing aid should be cheap as water, and smell like roses. Right. Well, it's not a perfect world, so the purchasing manager of the paint company isn't happy because he has to pay for the coalescing aid. Also some of the odor that comes from drying paint is the coalescing aid. I'm told that there are odd people out there that don't like the smell of paint. There's no accounting for taste. Since the coalescing aid is what my company sells, to me it smells like money.

**Figure 2: Chemical Structure of Texanol Ester-Alcohol**



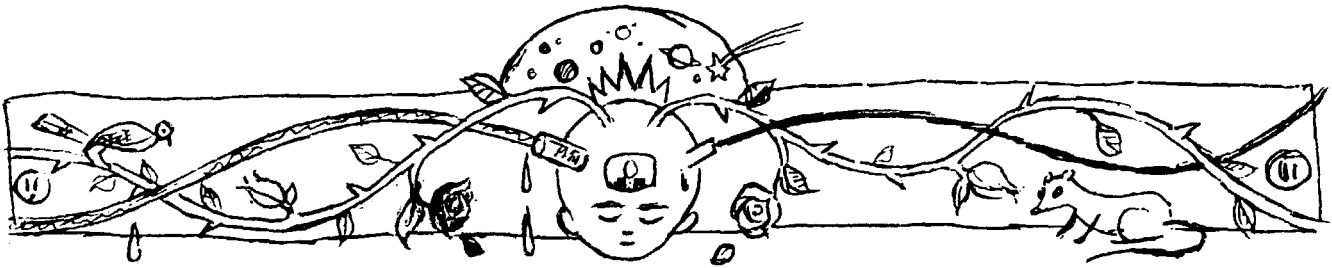
2,2,4-trimethyl-1,3-pentanediol monoisobutyrate

I couldn't leave you without a picture of the beast, so here is the chemical structure of *Texanol* ester-alcohol from Eastman Chemical Company. It is a complex molecule so it is heavy and evaporates slowly. It is mostly carbon, so it doesn't like water at all. It has a lot of the same chemical structure as an acrylic monomer so it is an excellent solvent for most paint polymers. To be brutally honest, it smells a bit like a cross between ammonia and cat pee. It does, however, demonstrate Robe's First Law of Scientific Progress. After adding



some of this stuff to an acrylic polymer in addition to all the other stuff that goes into paint we end up with a complex, finicky, almost-stable system that is fairly easy to use, and replaces a relatively simple technology that worked for thousands of years. It may have a few drawbacks, but so does Windows '98, and at least most of the time when you are using it you think that you are doing something easy.

So, that is a little peek under the sofa cushions of paint technology. It is a bit daunting to think that just about everything that we touch each day from the alarm clock's snooze button in the morning to the remote control to shut up Jay Leno at bedtime probably has just as mind-numbing a level of detail behind it. Next time you paint something, have a moment of silence in memory of those hundreds of paint dabblers from Ugmael to Mr. Sherwin and Mr. Williams. If you feel the need to say something is boring, just come out and say it and don't insult the paint.



## EDITORIAL (cont.)

### ETERNITY

A scary event. I had a private case on the third floor of the massive New Orleans courthouse named for its location, Tulane&Broad. The elevators being on the fritz, as usual, I had to hike up three long flights. During break I took my client to lunch, but found I had little appetite, and some small problem paying attention to what she had to say. When we hauled our bods back up to the courtroom, I felt just the tiniest bit dizzy, and she said I was flushed boiling red. That was bad enough, but what is really frightening in retrospect is what I felt ... emotionally. *Total indifference*. I wasn't interested in what was going on. It was like I was glimpsing in my mind's eye (I'm being literal here) a room with nothing in it but a grey curtain, and the world of color and motion that you and I live in was just an unimportant surface trapping to this room and its grey curtain.

Soon my incomparable chops regained their normal healthy lustre. The feeling of disinterest took longer to pass. Indeed, my dismay at the incident hasn't passed yet. If I'd had a flash of eternity, I didn't want to take it like that. I want to love this life so passionately that death will have to pry my finger- and toenails and teeth off it. I don't want to regard life and everything in it as *passe* in the face of Oblivion. I want to *love* this thing.

Which is why, since I turn *\*sob\** 50 on 20 July, 1999, I'm soliciting advice on how to handle that dread event. Among my possible plans is a jaunt to Boston to see **Old Ironsides** and visit NESFA. Since I was a boy, clumsily assembling a Revell model of that fine old ship (**Old Ironsides**, not NESFA) and getting more glue on my fingers than on the model, I've wanted to walk its decks. I consider the idea, then, that sweetest of endowments: a gift to myself. So Bostonians, in an abundance of caution, come the summer, you *may* want to bar your doors.

**REVIEW: "The End of Certainty: Time, Chaos and the New Laws of Nature"  
by Ilya Prigogine**

(New York: The Free Press, 1997) 228 pages, HC, \$24  
reviewed by **Sally J. Morem**

In his latest book, Nobel laureate Ilya Prigogine examines time's constructive role in the evolution of matter, of life, and of human culture.

Prigogine's study of chaos and self-organizing systems is a sustained effort to overthrow the stranglehold that the concept of determinism has had over Western science, philosophy, and theology since the era of the pre-Socratic Greeks. He asks, "Is the future given or is it under perpetual construction?" As a lapsed Presbyterian, I can sympathize with his struggle with this scientific version of Calvinistic predestination.

The problem, simply stated, is as follows: If nothing is determined, how can lawful chains of cause and effect occur; but if everything is determined, what then of free will and creativity?

To get at this conundrum, Prigogine enlists the aid of an unlikely ally -- entropy. Entropy plays a very different role in Prigogine's universe than in the well-noted Second Law of Thermodynamics. To Prigogine, entropy is the arrow of time which brings order and life to the universe, not a sentence of heat death. Our evolutionary universe changes every moment, each state built upon what preceded it. Cause and effect are left intact in this indeterministic universe; chance leaves the system open at every fork in the path of change to truly novel systems and structures.

Probabilities shape the Prigoginian universe. Unlike the oversimplified model of interacting particles over a short period of time posited by traditional physics, Prigogine understands that in the real universe large numbers of particles interact with each other over a long period of time. They create a history of interrelations -- a kind of primitive "memory." In short, persistent interactions lead to self-organizing systems of great creative power.

"Knowledge presupposes that the world affects us and our instruments, that there is an interaction between the knower and the known, that this interaction creates a difference between past and future. Becoming is the sine qua non of science, and indeed of knowledge itself."

Prigogine is saying that there is something extremely odd about the determinism of traditional physics, a paradigm that -- in effect -- predicts the non-existence of science and of scientists!

But Prigogine goes even further than this. He suggests that the arrow of time is so fundamental to existence that it actually precedes the birth of the universe itself. How could this possibly be? If the Big Bang resulted from fluctuations in a primeval quantum vacuum, as several noted cosmologists have suggested, time could exist in this vacuum, this meta-universe in which universes are born. Time would have always been and would always be.

We do not live in a predestined world then; neither do we live in a world of pure chance. We live in a world in which chance creates novelty and in which lawful chains of cause and effect conserve the resulting pattern. Creative chance piles novelty of top of novelty; lawfulness orders these into a many-leveled self-organized whole.

Prigogine's scientific dialogue with nature reveals to us ever-changing, ever-growing turrets and parapets of a palace seen before now only dimly, a palace of ordered freedom. Our Universe.

***CHALLENGER 9***

**WAHF Pilots:** Sheryl Birkhead, Pamela Boal, Bill Bowers (to answer his query: my photo pages were first halftoned at a regular print shop, then 'roxed along with the text pages), Gary Brown (good suggestions from a newspaper pro about improving the looks of this rag), Barbara Fister-Liltz, Mike Friedrich, Alexis Gilliland, Susan **Rosalie** Higgins, Binker Hughes, Lan Laskowski, Bill Legate, Robert Lichtman, Dave Locke, Julie Schwartz, Robert Whitaker Sirignano, Elizabeth Stewart, Susan Stockell, Mark Verheiden

*The day after I transcribed the following LOC into Word Processing, the news about Buck Coulson's death broke on the Internet. Buck was a good friend to Challenger and always a pleasant companion at conventions. My first memory of him is a smile, and that's what will be remembered. Here's his last LOC to Chall.*

**Buck Coulson**  
 2677 W. 500 N.  
 Hartford City IN  
 47348-9575

My father's mind went before his body did, which lessened the grief when he finally did die. He'd been in a nursing home for years, and when I visited him a major task was to figure out who he thought I was so I could respond appropriately. Mostly, he thought I was his younger brother, who had died well before he did. All of the going through the house, finding old memories and a lot of trash, happened while he was still alive.

**Bucconeer photos:** a lot of fans have changed considerably since I last saw them.

**Jeeves on correspondence courses:** I took one and it got me two jobs as a draftsman. In the first job I was promoted to being the technical writing department (all of it) at one Honeywell factory. When they closed that

factory, I got another drafting job with the Overhead Door Company and was promoted there to being track designer. Until they closed the factory. At least, companies had to make strenuous efforts to get rid of me ...

I almost took a postal job, but then I got promoted where I was and was out from under the boss I disliked and making more money, so I turned it down. I'd passed the exam and the job was offered; in hindsight, I realize that I should have taken it. Shutting down the post office to get rid of me would have caused more trouble than it was worth.

I don't think that jobs in rural post offices would be as irritating as the one Robert Sirignano describes. It's a friendlier atmosphere. Retired

postal clerks now greet me when I see them on the street.

Age 50 is a bit young to be an old fart. I did start calling myself one when I turned 70, but some fans disputed that. I'm out of the wheelchair now, and working on getting rid of the cane. Time heals all wounds and all that guff ... Time and a good doctor healed my ankle, anyway.

**Interruption:** the dog came in and demanded to be petted. I got her out of the



animal shelter and was told that she'd been abused as a puppy; she was a year old then. I figured I could handle any dog (and one of the people at the boarding kennel says that I've proved it) so I took her and she's pretty much back to normal except for an insatiable desire to be petted and a fear of strangers, *unless* the strangers are allowed in the house. Of course, we now have a 75-pound house-dog ... but she's very well-behaved.

I've had a carry permit for a pistol; it's easier to get, here, or was. But I let it lapse. Not much crime in rural Indiana; some robberies, but as long as I'm on my own property I don't need a permit. I wanted it mostly for the times I carry large amounts of cash home from cons, but it was only good in Indiana and most of our cons are out of state, so ... (But don't try robbing me; I've been known to carry one *without* a permit!)

A good article on Andersonville, and I enjoyed seeing the pictures since I've never been there. The problems of the prisoners there didn't end with the war. They were released and shipped north, but on the way the steamboat **Sultana** blew up one night in the worst maritime disaster in our history. The boat had been badly overloaded and more people died than on the **Titanic**. They were asleep, mostly, so a lot never knew what hit them, but a lot died in the fire that followed the explosion. Some of the survivors woke up in midair; consider the mental effects of that. One woke up under water, but most of the ones who hit the water drowned. Few people learned to swim in those days.

A good article on the junkie. I'd *guess* that the dope released inhibitions, but it doesn't make much difference. One can separate people's influences in studies, but they're all bound together. A good psychiatrist might have helped her, but also might not have. I'm no expert; I can't even get drunk. (I've occasionally had enough to drink that I couldn't walk straight. but never enough to keep me from knowing exactly what I was doing and why. I suspect that some of the asthma medicines I took as a child are responsible for that; after getting a quarter-grain of morphine mixed with 1 cc of

adrenaline as a 10-year-old child, and getting it regularly, the effects of alcohol, at least, are pretty well diminished. I suspect that the effects of other drugs would be diminished also.)

**Joy V. Smith**  
**8925 Selph Rd.**  
**Lakeland FL 33810-0341**

What a happy cover on **Challenger #8**. I loved your use of Nolacon II art throughout the issue. Ann Layman Chancellor's bookplate (for the Nolacon II program book) is beautiful.

Re: editorial. What a collection of memories on that one audiotape! To be able to listen to and recall that time and those people ...

I enjoyed your Nolacon II recollections. Yes, often getting there is half the fun. Sorry you couldn't run for DUFF. Maybe another time. (I think you had a bunch of votes sewn up.) 'Tis wise to evacuate when a hurricane is heading in your direction, especially if they're planning to blow up the levees. The only damage our place got from Georges was a broken closer on the screen door. It *was* windy.

I enjoyed Chris M. Barkley's recounting of John Glenn's influence on him and his childhood and his journey to SF fandom. Where are his other adventures chronicled?

Loved your worldcon photo spread. The photo quality and the hard work you put into it is appreciated.

*The quality is due to Tom's Printing, which so ably and patiently handles halftoning my photos to xeroxable dots. (I'm a freak for antique technique.) As for the hard work, it's hardly that: my photo pages are where I play in Challenger.*

Terry Jeeves did a good job of gleaning from his old magazine collection those ads and coupons for home education; the piece was nicely enhanced by the illustrations.

The "Postal Zone" piece was scary. (I was relieved Robert Sirignano) wasn't filmed going "Hmm, hmm.") I always thought postal inspectors were super cops. Sigh.

Enlightening article on "The Scandal"!

I love your letters column heading! A great selection, as usual, also of fanzine reviews. (It was during the latter that the dogs made me

take them out. I had attempted to read **Challenger** in one sitting. I had the whole night free; I closed down the computer and didn't turn on the TV.)

Scotty Offutt's "Gunslinger" report was fun; and the ghost distinctions piece was well-researched. (Wouldn't it be great to this info in a conversation?)

Very good Andersonville report, and the photos really helped to get a feel for the place, but "The White Sustenance" was fantastic. You do the background and characters so well, and admitting you don't know keeps us from reacting to any judgments you might make. You should collect and publish these accounts; they might be useful for research and education purposes.

Beautifully written tributes to Ann Layman Chancellor (Chance) -- a woman it would have been a privilege to know.

*It was.*

**David Langford**  
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Thanks for **Challenger #8**. I notice a mysterious complaint that **Ansible #130** left your name off the DUFF voters' tally. Ha ha, I admit it! In my campaign of evil, dedicated to annoying you and thus causing you to scatter mentions of Langford all over your fanzine (any publicity is good publicity), I omitted your name! In fact, I got carried away and omitted all the voters' names!! Or, to put it another way, **Ansible never published a list of DUFF voters ...**

Perhaps there was a DUFF newsletter in the same envelope?

*Heh heh ... yes sir, [I replied]; that's exactly what happened. To which Dave responded:*

Thanks for that! I did pass the datum on to Janice Murray, so maybe the next newsletter will begin

1999 DUFF WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT

\*\*\* GUY H. LILLIAN III \*\*\*

... was omitted from the last voting list -- apologies.

In other news ...



**Robbie Bourget**  
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It's true there are still some raw spots for some people when discussing Nolacon II, however I can honestly say that the people who worked for me in Ops look back on the convention fondly. I know because, when I asked them would they be willing to do it again at Magicon, the ones who replied unreservedly said that they had the best time working for me in New Orleans. In fact, most of the non-working members of fandom, who are not familiar with the insides of conventions, thought Nolacon was fine except for the constant programming changes. Which proved the point the bid was making: New Orleans is a fun city

to be in and any convention held there would be fun. Well, it was for more people than it wasn't. The difficulty is that those who \*do\* know about the inner workings of conventions are also the ones who vote on where Worldcons shall be held. And that will hold New Orleans back for some time.

*One of my strongest memories of Nolacon II is of helping that great gentleman John Guidry assist you to his car for a jaunt to the hospital, after you worked yourself literally to exhaustion trying to make organizational sense out of the chaos. Even then, you never stopped smiling. This city owes you, very big time.*

Seeing the short article from Terry Jeeves brings back memories of 1987, when I went to Conspiracy and then toured England afterwards. I spent some time with Terry and his wife. They took me around their part of Yorkshire. It was ever so nice of them and I had a great time.

Harry Warner's worries about his memory failing with age strikes a bell with many of us I'm sure. I frequently find myself not remembering a term even though I know that I know it. As for names, I gave up years ago. I'm simply not capable of remembering names easily. Which makes it all the stranger when I do remember one clearly. And don't we all suffer from the "enter a room and forget why" syndrome? There's a great "Rose is Rose" where Rose enters the room, sits down next to her husband and asks, "Do you ever enter a room and forget why?" He replies, "Of course, all the time!" in order to comfort her. She then asks, "What about a planet?" I've kept this cartoon for years, it seems so apt.

*"Rose is Rose" is a wonderful strip. I love Vicki the Biker Chick.*

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Thanks [for asking about my career since the last issue of **Asterism**]! I am currently a staff writer for **Science Fiction Weekly** (<http://www.scifiweekly.com>). Among other

things, I write their Sound Space column, which is a biweekly section devoted to the latest (and some classic) SF music. Recent items covered have included the first twenty **Babylon 5** episodic soundtrack CDs, the **Forbidden Planet** soundtrack, the original score to **A Clockwork Orange**, a couple of concept discs titled **Wormholes** and **Interstellar Memories**, etc. As you can see, it's like **Asterism**, only on-line!

I also am a contributor to **Sci-Fi Entertainment**, where I write their Future Shock column (among other articles), and have recently contributed to the genre magazines **Sci-Fi Universe** (where I did a story on "The Singing Stars of SF", all those actors who have recently released CDs, such as Bill Mumy, Claudia Christian, Brent Spiner, Mira Furlan, Tucker Smallwood, etc.), **Cinescape**, **The X-Files Official Magazine**, and **Outre**. As you can see, I'm keeping busy!

*Thank heaven you don't seem to be involved in one fan's efforts to have William Shatner record more music. That person must be stopped. I heard Shatner's version of "Mr. Tambourine Man" once, and my senses are still reeling.*

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Thanks for **Challenger 8**, another enjoyable and thought-provoking issue. The best feature was the artwork from Nolacon II, a pleasant bit of memory-tripping. Unfortunately, I stopped attending worldcons in 1981 -- and don't anticipate reviving the practice unless one happens *real* close by.

I was most interested in your comments on **Lives of the Monster Dogs**, a book which has intrigued me since its initial publication and subsequent rave reviews. Your comments convinced me that I should read the book -- and indeed I will do so.

I have done some thinking about your feelings of sadness because "Science fiction is so much narrower and less powerful than fantasy, so much more pedestrian." That is certainly true of the portion of SF that grew out of genre

SF because it is inextricably bound to pulp fiction and science-oriented fiction by way of Edgar Rice Burroughs, Hugo Gernsback and John W. Campbell, the three most important shapers of pulp SF in this century.

But SF that is *not* genre-bound is much more expansive and often achieves the heights of true literature in the hands of writers as far back as H.G. Wells and Olaf Stapledon, and progressing through Philip K. Dick, Ursula K. LeGuin, Michael Bishop, Dan Simmons, and Kim Stanley Robinson. It also includes many non-genre writers who incorporate SF into their entire body of work, such as Aldous Huxley, Doris Lessing, Mary Doris Russell, and apparently, Kirsten Bakis. True, these literary SF writers are still in the minority, but there are enough of them to give at least a portion of SF a true literary aspect.

And there is enough literature out there that incorporates much of the ambiance of SF without actually falling into its clutches, a perfect example being Andrea Barrett's wonderful *Voyage of the Narwhal*, which I just finished and will be reviewing for the next *Visions of Paradise*. So maybe Theodore Sturgeon was correct -- at least with regards to SF -- that 90% of it is crap, but it's that other 10% that makes it all worthwhile, and since I do not have the time to read all the wonderful 10% anyway, why should I worry about the 90% that consists of pulp adventures/thrillers/media tie-ins/etc.? I will just continue to marvel at and be thankful for the 10%, knowing full well that while the inspiration is there the talent \*alas\* is not.

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Challenger 8 was the usual lovely job. My delay in responding was because I was writing a Big Fat Fantasy and wanted to give some thought to my response.

Darrell Schweitzer's letter takes the position that Sam Mines was an able but minor editor of his day, and that my comparison of him to Gardner Dozois is incorrect because Gardner is an able and major editor of our day.

That's a reasoned position, but on reflection I think my initial (off-hand) comment was correct. Mines was a minor editor because he was editing pulp magazines during the death throes of pulp. All the major editors of his day were editing digests.

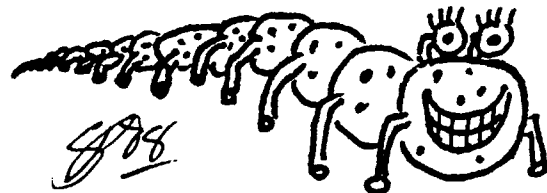
All the major (SF -- I'm only qualified to talk about SF) editors of today are editing books.

I really regret this. I got into the field by reading short stories and I had been selling short stories for thirteen years before I was able to finish a novel. One of the reasons most of the SF and fantasy I read is 30 to 70-odd years old is because the best writers in the field then were doing short stories.

That's no longer true. Most people (the Richard Mathesons aside) get good by practicing. Harlan Ellison got the skill to write "Jeffy is Five" by writing stories quickly around Ziff-Davis covers, as he brags in PITFCS in 1960. To make enough money at your craft to practice it constantly today, you have to write novels.

Sam Mines was a minor editor whose skill brought some writers to prominence they might not otherwise have gained. And Gardner Dozois is the same.

This isn't a world I desire; heck, in the world *I* desire, *Planet Stories* would be a going concern and I'd be writing "lead novels" for it the way Leigh Brackett and Poul Anderson did in 1950. But it's the world we live in.



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Your recent call for contributions spurs me on to thank you for **Challenger #8**. I

suppose I will send you a contribution eventually, should something occur to me, though I have to confess that I have never been very good at the personal essay, and I am not sure my travels (though extensive) are remarkable enough to chronicle for Posterity; so it will have to be some special topic which strikes my fancy, and I doubt I shall ever be seen as the Willis or Tucker of my generation. Actually the closest thing you can find to my collected fanwriting is my recent essay volume, **Windows of the Imagination** (Borgo Press, 1998), the opening section of which is subtitled, "and Other Evasions of Autobiography".

But in any case, **Challenger** is reassuring, not only for its content but for the fanzines it reviews and alludes to. Too many people think of fanzines as a phenomenon of the past. I am not at all sure that the traditional fanzine (and traditional fandom) will survive the demise of the Baby Boom generation, but meanwhile **Challenger** seems to display the Old Fannish culture in the blooming health of its Late Youth (to borrow Isaac Asimov's term for anybody past a certain point).

The one bit of progress I can see is the fact that fanzines are now offset and computer typeset. I for one do not mourn the passing of the mimeograph of the extinction of Twiltone. Maybe someday diehard traditionalists will develop an aerosol spray which may be applied to a modern fanzine so it will assume the musty and pleasing aroma of rotting Twiltone without actually destroying the paper.

I have just been going through my old fanzines (in the narcissistic but necessary process of self-bibliography, which starts with the need to find things for professional reprinting), many of them dating back as much as 30 years. It's a humbling experience, to see how badly I could write back then, but I see a certain continuity, and am again grateful for modern technology. It's easier to be witty and articulate when you can revise your letters, rather than just banging them out one draft on a manual typewriter.

*Next October -- and hopefully, next **Challenger** -- I'll mark the thirtieth anniversary of the **GHLIII Press**, the most enjoyable, expensive, ridiculous, and fulfilling hobby I've ever had.*

*I'll have to scan many early press pubs for the occasion, and dread rereading the pompous opinings of the childe Lillian.*

I hadn't quite connected you with Nolacon II before now, but I will tell you that I and everyone I know had a good time at that convention. I think we'd all go back to another one, for all Nolacon was one of the more randomly chaotic worldcons on record. My guess is the programming guide was only about 40% accurate, particularly as to who was on which item, despite more than daily corrections and corrections on corrections. It's true that when ConFiasco started to go so badly in 1993, within hours people were calling it "A Nolacon for the '90s," as if that were some dire insult, [but] there was a profound difference. The Nolacon staff was flexible and friendly, as contrasted with Confiasco's "New Age Fascists" (Gardner Dozois' term). I was only on one or two program items, and I thought I might like to do a couple more, so I went into the program room and asked, and they were perfectly happy to put me on a "Religion in SF" item, which allegedly had (if I remember correctly) four participants, one of whom was James Morrow. But when I got there, the only one of the original panelists who showed up was James Morrow, so we did it together. For me the archetypal Nolacon moment occurred on Monday when a crier went through the dealers' room announcing that the time and place of the gripe session had been changed. This later turned out to be in error. Well, I didn't have any gripes, so I didn't try to find the gripe session anyway. I came away with a good feeling. I'd go to a worldcon in New Orleans again.

*Just shows to go you -- I enjoyed Confrancisco, berserk lighting and all. Some months back a group of lunatics tried to convince me to head a New Orleans in '06 bid, but I drove them off with words of flame. Let's see if Aussiecon ratifies the abolition of the zone rotation system; afterwards let's fantasize about a "Nolacon III". Until then, there's always Wigwam Village.*

One of the other things that came to my attention as I was going through my old fanzines



was that I wrote an article rather like Terry Jeeves' about 30 years ago, only my focus was exclusively on the ads in the pulp magazines and my particular fascination was with the medical remedies offered, not just the archetypal Rupture Easer ads, but such things as a nose-adjuster a mesh of strings you tie around your head, criss-crossing around the nose, so that your nose may grow straight, but the rest of your face will be hideously deformed) various hideous devices for removing pimples in the safety of your own home without any need for a blasting permit, or even such now-obsolete remedies as Listerine for dandruff (which might actually work if it was bacteriological dandruff). There were also the religious ads, not just the familiar Rosicrucians one (ghoulish inquisitors pronouncing, "This knowledge must die!") but another very common one to the effect of, "I talked with God! I really did!" (And for a small fee, you can too.) If you go back to the popular magazines of the 19th Century you can find far more arcane medical items -- what were "blood pills" for? -- but the ads of the pulp era had a particular charm, largely because they were so vulgar. In a moment of nostalgia, when we started up **Weird Tales** again in 1988, my colleagues and I offered the Rosicrucians a free, full-page ad, for old times' sake. But we never got any reply.

Your comment that fantasy seems a lot broader and more powerful than science fiction could draw an extremely long response from me -- possibly I will write you an essay on the subject. Let me just suggest that the case might be made for the very best fantasy, which tends to come, not out of the commercial genre, but out of the mainstream, as **Lives of the Monster Dogs** did. This has always been the case. The truly great fantasies like **The King of Elfland's Daughter**, **The Worm Ouroboros**, **The Circus of Dr. Lao**, **The Unfortunate Fursey**, **The Once and Future King**, **Titus Groan**, **The Kingdoms of Elfin** etc. only their uniqueness in common. They're a series of unscalable peaks. But at the same time we have to admit that most of the genre-fantasy, the various questing series, the TSR sort of book, the works of Terry Brooks, etc. are unable to stand above even *average* science fiction. The typical story in,

say, **Analog** seems to be less formula-driven. Of course it is possible to construct something that looks like science fiction or fantasy entirely out of prefabricated parts, without any imagination at all included -- but this is as different from the real thing as a papier-mache dummy is from a living person.

I enjoyed Richard Dengrove's article on "Hamlet's Ghost". Let me suggest that, as it seems to Hamlet himself, the question of the ghost's nature is undecided, but the point of the play is that Hamlet is driven to revenge and to tragedy not merely by the agency of the ghost, but by his own emotions, even as the witches in **Macbeth** are but the catalyst for human actions. Surely in Shakespeare's time something as seemingly logical and as universal (in the Christian world) as the belief that spirits of the dead may return would not have died out in a mere two or three generations of enforced Protestantism. The Protestant view actually does help explain why there aren't more ghosts about than living people -- that such sightings are extraordinary, rare, and may be of demonic origin. Only a "perturbed spirit" walks the night. Shakespeare also explains the ghost's presence in a curiously Catholic manner, by suggesting that the ghost's presence on Earth is actually its Purgatory, and thus it must walk until its sins are cleansed away. But, considering that the ghost is asking Hamlet to commit several more sins, Hamlet Sr. is at the very least not making any progress in his spiritual Twelve-Step Program. You can understand why Hamlet might have some doubts, but the case seems to have been left deliberately ambiguous by the author in order to heighten dramatic tension.

Note, by the way, that the "Catholic" ghost is also the pagan, pre-Christian ghost. Pliny the Younger tells a very conventional "restless spirit" anecdote.

*An interesting Hamlet was performed about 20 years ago in which the ghost's lines were spoken by Hamlet himself -- implying that the spirit of his father was in actuality a personal guilty obsession. Of course this doesn't explain how the ghost could also be seen by Horatio and the guardsmen.*

But this is not universal. I read an interesting piece in an anthropology text recently, about an American anthropologist who tried to tell the story of Hamlet to a primitive African tribe. He assumed that the story would be universal, but knew he was in trouble as soon as he encountered the tribesmen's assumption that it was Claudius' duty to marry his brother's widow as soon as possible and become father to his nephew. Then they explained that Hamlet had no business taking revenge outside of his age-group, but should have instead brought his complaint to the elders, to let some contemporary of Claudius' do the killing if such a thing was needed. The Africans also (like good Protestants, though they were not) completely rejected the idea that the ghost was the spirit of Hamlet's father, since they did not believe in individual survival after death, but, instead, a return-to-nature scenario. Therefore the "ghost" must be an omen, sent by a witch. Ophelia's death then makes sense, that she was deliberately drowned so her body could be sold to the witch to pay for the sending. The Africans then explained to the anthropologist that it was a good story, and they'd enjoyed it, but he'd gotten a few things wrong. They were sure his next telling would be more correct.

**Milt Stevens**  
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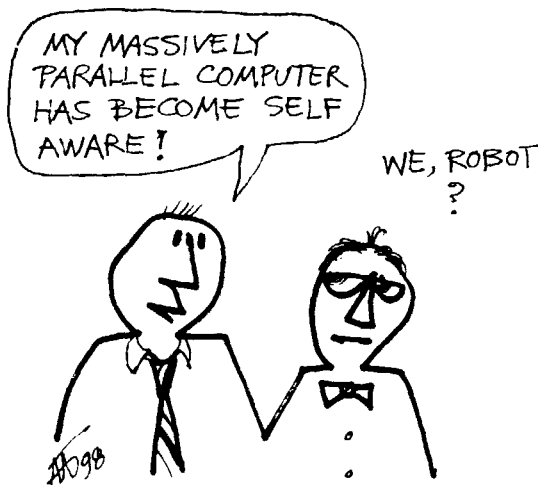
It's unfortunate thing that fan politics can sometimes be almost as distasteful as real politics. If someone runs for a fan fund, it may be like donning a T-shirt with bullseyes on the front and back. I have occasionally thought about trying to run for TAFF. I really don't need the money to go to England, but I do need the excuse. I've never been to England, and the Atlantic Ocean has always acted like a

psychological barrier. If I believe I can't get there from here, then I can't.

I don't know whether the internet is going to dominate fandom and fan politics forever. I think e-zines are here to stay because of the cost of producing a fanzine. I'm not so sure about usenet. Usenet now may be equivalent to television in the fifties. In the fifties, it looked like television would replace all other recreational and entertainment activities. A lot of the SF published at the time reflected this belief. But after the fifties, people started going back to other activities, and television viewing has been on a continuous decline ever since. I suspect similar may happen to usenet. The thing that will diminish usenet is what I would call Loose Canon Effect. On usenet, you don't know who or what you may be dealing with. At the last Loscon, Bill Warren was telling how he acquired an actual stalker from a news group. Traditional fanzines and apas are at least somewhat self moderating. Being terminally ill advised may be tolerated, but a real nut case would be eliminated from the entire field.

Jeff Copeland thinks electing all of a state's congressman at large would be a good idea. In California, that could result in a hundred-way race for congress. I don't think anyone could figure a mess like that out. Also, the urban population sinks would completely dominate the entire state, and anyone living in one of the smaller towns could just about forget voting at all. Since I live in a smaller town, I don't think I like that idea at all.

Wigwam Village is a cinch to win the worldcon if the bid is moved a few years later. There is currently an almost complete lack of worldcon bids in the second half of the next decade. The Wigwam Village bid could easily handle a worldcon size crowd by using the same ruse that Southgate in 58 used. Since there were



no hotels in Southgate, the committee convinced the City of Los Angeles to cede the downtown Alexandria Hotel to the City of Southgate for the Labor Day Weekend. Taxes from the hotel were not included in the deal. The mayor of Southgate even showed up and officially accepted the temporary donation. For the amount of revenue involved in a worldcon, I'm sure any hotel chain in the country would be more than happy to declare any of their facilities to be wigwams. With the proper fannish cosmic outlook, the idea of virtual wigwams should be perfectly acceptable.

In the photo section, there is a purported picture of Joseph Major. This can't be the real Joseph Major. It must be a simulcrum created by the true Joseph Major entity. Evidence suggests that the true Joseph Major entity must have at least a hundred eyes mounted on stalks as well as thirty or forty tentacles. That is the only way he could manage reading half a dozen books at once while having some of his tentacles working on two or three long erudite articles at the same time.

Harry Warner shamelessly admits to the practice of wearing socks to bed in the wintertime. This brings up a question which might be addressed to the general audience. What is the weirdest thing you do that you could discuss in a family apa? In my own case, I know what the answer is. I eat mayonnaise on french fries. I'm certainly glad the House Un-American Activities Committee isn't around any more, because this certainly qualifies as an Un-American activity.

When I first encountered the ads in the back of old pulp magazines I shared Terry Jeeves suspicion that they weren't very legitimate operations. Some of them were more legitimate than they looked. Back in the thirties, my father took a couple of courses from International Correspondence School (which I seem to recall is connected to the University of Virginia). Like many Americans, my father hit several periods of economic hard times in the thirties, and he'd try just about anything. He thought the ICS courses were pretty good courses, but they didn't help him find a job. Charles Atlas is almost remembered as a national joke, but the system he was selling

(dynamic tension) is a perfectly valid physical development program. Dynamic tension is probably better as cardio-vascular exercise than free weights, and there is almost no risk of hurting yourself. Of course, you do have to do it in order to get any results. This is the drawback to all physical development programs. Even the Rosicrucians were more legitimate than they looked (that may not be saying much really). My ex-wife was a Rosicrucian for awhile. The Rosicrucians have a real historical connection to the Masons. Both groups claim a mythic connection to ancient Egypt. I would tend to doubt that connection, but both groups have been around for several centuries. Rosicrucianism is a type of mysticism which isn't likely to appeal to all people. However, it is not a scam.

In the letter column, you mention using that Joycean criticism bit on Harlan Ellison. Aside from being the first time Harlan Ellison noticed you, I think it was the first time I noticed you. If you were 18 at the time, I must have been 24. How time flies. In any case, it was an all time great flim-flam.

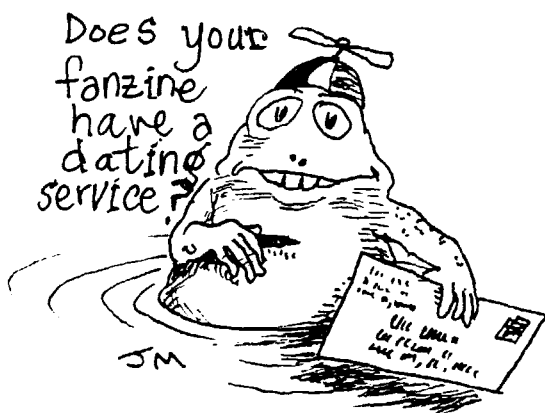
There don't seem to be any good answers for people like Denise. Six months in prison wouldn't have changed anything, and she probably wouldn't have survived until 2009. If her daughter has to go through a pat down search every time she visits her mother, at least Denise ought to be able to recognize who her daughter is. Even if Denise doesn't get out of prison until she is fifty, you can attest yourself that there is still life after fifty. And it sure beats being dead.

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No, you haven't been forgotten, even though the cautionary tale from Harry Warner tends to strike home here; but it's taken a New Year resolution to kickstart my fanac, make me turn over a new leaf, and (hopefully) become more punctual.

I did have my response to Jeffrey Copeland's article all prepared; but then when

Clinton was impeached, when the Teflon kid really stuck, it all changed again. Indeed, it's hard enough for the newspapers to keep up with what's changing almost hourly, let alone a



leisurely fanzine; so in case I have to eat these words, I'm sprinkling them with salt and pepper (if the food police haven't made salt a no-no). And I'm writing from the point of view of a continent away, anyway. But from over here, it looks like the Republicans have scored in their own goal with the impeachment; equal to Clinton's decision to bomb Iraq, and our own Glorious Leader's support of him ... If the opinion polls can be trusted, it seems as if the last thing the American people wanted was impeachment; which will probably rebound on the Republicans at the next election, so far from putting them back into power as they seem to hope. You can't tar all Democrats with the same brush is a lesson they've learned in the country, not apparently in Washington; but of course, they're in a world of their own there, aren't they? Mind you, I can't see an ex-President Clinton in the same light as an ex-President Carter; Carter may have been laughed out of office but he's behaved perfectly, gained nothing but respect ever since; but what can an irredeemably-flawed Clinton do after this, where can he go?

At the risk of prolonging the debate, I can't see Gardner Dozois as a Campbell figure; at least, not until he's put a similar span of years behind him. No, I see him more as the Frederik Pohl of our era (that is, if Frederik Pohl wasn't

still the Frederik Pohl of our era). With a reader's-eye view, comparing Pohl to Campbell there never was much of an editor's presence at the Galaxy group of magazines; a one-page editorial here, a note after a reader's letter there, and yet he kept bringing out issue after issue filled with both memorable and entertaining stories. Even award-winners; for *Worlds of If* to win the Best Magazine Hugo three years in succession, he must have been doing something right. And Gardner Dozois seems similarly self-effacing. We hardly see anything of him, not even in editorials, but his choice is impeccable, there must be more of the stories that he prints nominated for awards than any other magazine; I'm tempted to say, will the real Gardner Dozois stand up? Failing that, some writer to come forward and reveal the secrets of what it's like to be guided by Gardner, what he's like, from the other side of the editorial chair.

Appreciated the worldcon photo feature greatly. As a postal fan, that's one aspect of life where I miss out, being able to put faces to names, and mostly have to rely on my imagination. Which can often lead me astray; for long enough I had the picture in my mind of Gordon R. Dickson looking like Charlton Heston, which maybe came from confusing the writer with his work, seeing his heroes as himself. I've since been enlightened in that respect, but there's so many other authors, and fans, who are still products of my imagination.

*I refer you to my memoir of St. Louiscon in Challenger #1 for my own deathless memory of Gordon R. Dickson -- pounding on his door in the middle of the afternoon at the bequest of Quinn Yarbrow, trying to wake the good gentleman up for an interview.*

Have to say, I haven't the same memories of John Glenn as Chris Barkley. Perhaps that's because by the time he orbited the Earth I'd already discovered science fiction, and my horizons were already wider than the Solar System; no goshwow for me; I can just about recall the traces of a thrill with the first satellites in space, thanks mainly to nostalgia and one of the top-selling records of the time (did it ever top the hit parade?), *Telstar*, an instrumental by the Tornados. Neil Armstrong on the Moon, of

course; but just lately, the building of the first space station has caught my imagination again. Now this is exactly what I used to see in countless comic strips and comic annuals, in every glorious detail; seeing such space fiction become space fact has brought back the thrill I thought I'd lost.

On "Hamlet's Ghost ... and Others", I like to think that we've moved on from the Elizabethan worldview, become more rational; and yet the belief in ghosts and spirits is as strong as ever. It used to be mine; as a Christian, I used to take perverse delight in imagining those apparitions, the ghosts of the departed, were here on Earth because all of the long-promised joys of Heaven didn't tempt them, that they'd much rather remain among the scenes and places they'd loved in this life. However, I began to realise that theory didn't take much account of the tales of phantom armies, even Roman soldiers in York apparently marching through eternity, where surely not all of them would want to carry on, especially those who were reluctant recruits in the first place. And when it comes to phantom dogs, and even phantom coaches, it breaks down completely. So until that's superseded in its turn, I'm inclined to believe in experiences of such intensity that they leave their traces on their surroundings and the landscape; such a situation as in Richard's closing words.

Which is why, even while fascinated by your account of the trip to Andersonville, I was all the while hoping for a mention of the atmosphere you found there; for surely here, if nowhere else in the States, there must have been emotions burned into the landscape from that "single, moving, moaning organism." Although perhaps the only feeling gathered at Andersonville should be "Never again."

*There's an old fort on the coast of North Carolina where Civil War prisoners were once housed; perhaps because it was enclosed, and small, and shadowed, and not open to the sky and the healing winds, it spooked me a lot more than the fields at Andersonville. Nor was I alone in that feeling; my ex couldn't even look at the place.*

**Terry Jeeves**  
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**N. Yorks. YO12 5RQ**  
**U.K.**

Very many thanks for the massive issue of **Challenger 8**. Lovely cover and excellent interior art -- I must try and slap in an item or two for you.

*You did, and for that, many thanks.* Enjoyed "Glenn", but my own memories are of getting up at 4AM to watch Armstrong's "one small step". On the other hand, I too was a space SF buff from 9 or 10 (way back in 1928/30).

Loved the photo section; it's a real gas to see what correspondents and others really look like. I was tickled to note you have less hair than me -- which upsets my theory that all Americans have bushy hair and beards.

*I keep mine in a drawer.*

I haven't lost anything the way Harry Warner does, but I had a *weird* experience last night. I awoke, got my torch and shone it on my wristwatch to see the time. It had no hands, but a blank dial with crosses in the corner. "Hmm -- crafty way of showing a flat battery," I thought, so I shone the torch on the wall clock. 3:40 AM. So I got up and went to the loo. When I got up for breakfast my watch was running perfectly. Now was it a dream and if so, did I sleep walk to the toilet?

*I don't know, but be careful putting on your shoes.*

I was amused by the U.S. Post Office saga, and when in the USA I have always been saddened by the prison-like public offices and counters. Not user-friendly.

*Guns*. I was tickled by the idea of planning the getting of a gun because as a follow-up to winning the lottery, with the odds on *our* lotteries of some 14,000,000 to one, winning is virtually a waste of time and money.

Smashing fanzine reviews -- many thanks for the kind words on **Erg**. No 164 will be mailed out in a few days and then work starts on the 40th annish!

A very good LOC col and all-round, top-notch issue. More power to your elbow.

**Dale Speirs**  
**Box 6830**  
**Calgary, Alberta**  
**Canada T2P 2E7**

You know fandom is a way of life when you hear that a hurricane is about to hit New Orleans and your first thought is "I wonder if **Challenger** will be late?" But issue #8 has arrived and glad to read that you escaped the worst of it.

Barkley article on John Glenn: Some say the whole thing was just a publicity stunt but it is nice to have a positive hero. Not sports players who are overpaid for amusing the lumpen, not actresses in drug rehab, not politicians diddling bimbos (or pepper-spraying protestors as did our Prime Minister), but someone to remind us that Earth is the cradle but we cannot stay in the cradle forever.

*Ah, but some sports heroes do not simply amuse; some enlighten, instruct, give superb positive examples on how to live and compete with class and character. I point to Messrs.*

*McGwire and Sosa, gentlemen who have shown us all how to be gentlemen, and, in a somewhat angrier mode, to Himself, James Scott Connors.*

I learned something new from Dengrove's article on ghosts; I had no idea that they could be either Catholic or Protestant. The closest thing I've seen to ghosts was at the University of Alberta campus. The buildings were connected by pedways, which create corridors as long as a kilometre or more. The pressure differential between the ends caused doors to mysteriously open and close by themselves, and sudden gusts of wind. Spooky if you didn't know why it was happening.

*Sounds like my mama's Uncle Zeke, who was always invisibly pushing open doors.*

In retrospect, it might have been interesting to do performance art in those corridors, staging a modified version of **Hamlet**, with the audience following along as the cast moves through the corridors. The graveyard scene could have been staged in one of the innumerable construction pits scattered around the campus. Polonius could have met his end behind the giant tapestries hanging in the lobbies. The ghost

and/or demon could have appeared in the St. Joseph's building, a theological seminary operated by the Catholics. Perhaps the abbot could have interjected from the audience various quotes from the Bible.

Would that Andersonville was the last of its kind, and inhumane prisons only something from history. *Look away ...*

Time flies, and so do worldcon bids. Toronto in 2003 seems to be coming along well. Pre-supporting is C\$20.03 or US\$15 from: Toronto in '03, Box 3, Station A, Toronto Ontario M5W 1A2.

*Sorry. WIG WAM WIG WAM WIG WAM*

**Ben Indick**  
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Naturally, I most appreciated your article on Denise, that pitiable woman. By chance I have been reading **Bleak House**, by Charles Dickens, the 15th I have read by my favorite of all writers; probably the last as the only other novel is half a novel, **Edwin Drood**. This is so discursive as to be probably the Master's toughest read. For you, the interest would be his withering condemnation of the snail-like pace of the law, expressed in Chancery, where cases never end, and lawyers come and go with equal equanimity while clients live and die in agony of blasted hopes. If I could have another lifetime, I would reread all of Dickens; he is an eternal joy.

Currently my joy has been in Shaw and Wells, and I read dozens of books in preparation. I have hopes there may be life for the play. [*Ben refers to his own work in progress.*] Maybe. The theatre is hard, if not impossible venue of life, although I love it.

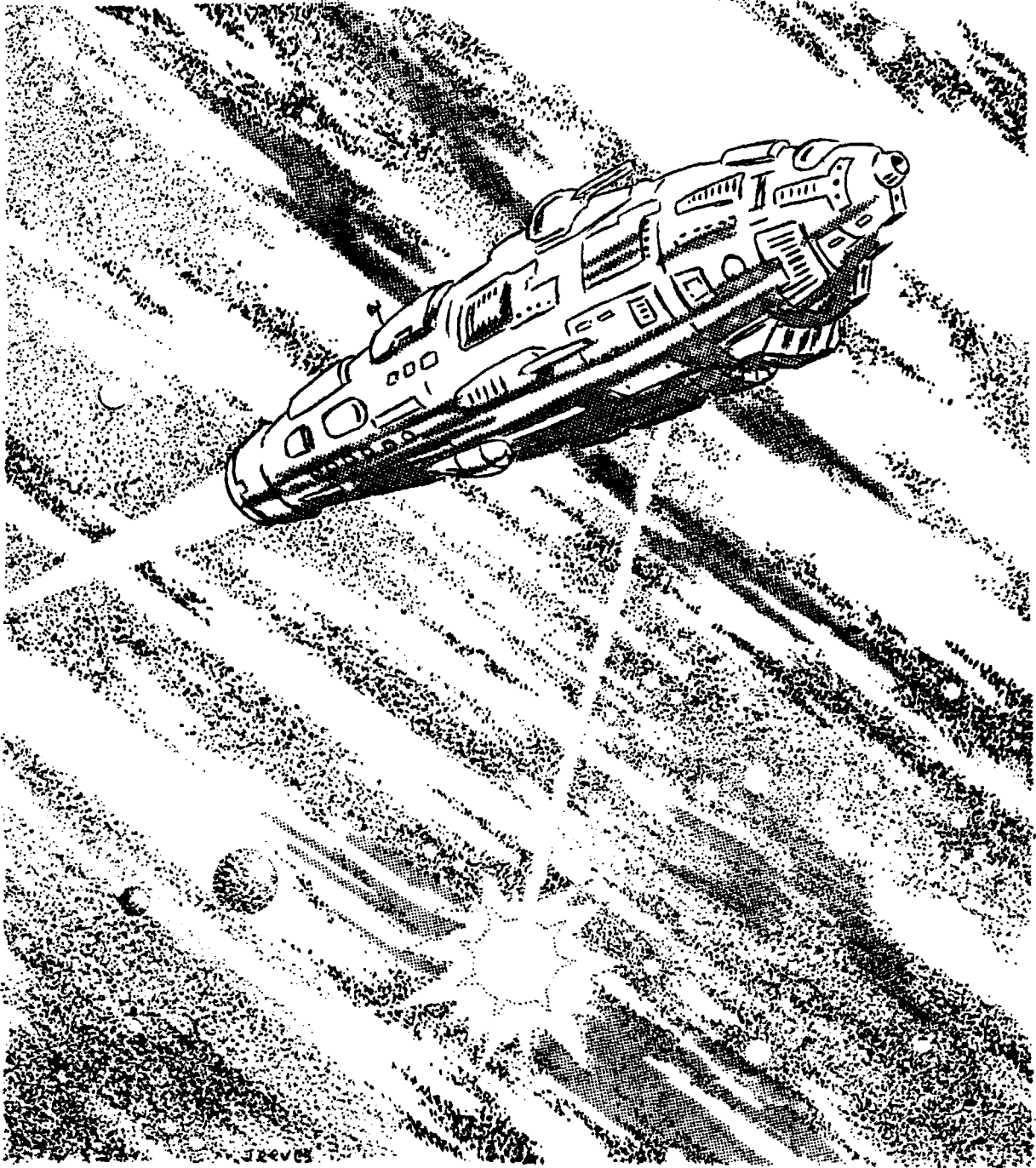
Speaking of which, and of Denise, we recently saw, off-B'way, a British import, recently a praised movie, now a play for four actors doing even more roles: **Trainspotting**. Had I known it was about four hopeless drug addicts, I probably would not have gone. It is bleak and hopeless. Set in Edinburgh, it could have been NYC, N.O., anywhere. One guy who willingly takes smack, "I can manage it," becomes a quivering wreck, and before he dies,

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*Runoff of hard-rot stone*

shoots up into his exposed penis. The problem for me, is that however well written, which it was, and acted, which it was, it went nowhere. Now did it preach. It was just four junkies. I have been down this road so many times and simply to show four junkies, language being 2/3 fuck and cunts (applied irrespective of sex, not referring to the genitals at all, either word), no hope any old way. There is no possible progress here, and, ultimately, except for a lawyer who cares, no hope except simply to live incarcerated. Once free, it is a short time before she is back. This may not truly be by will, although in the play one guy says that the high is like multiplying the best orgasm he ever had by twenty, but by the impossible to satisfy needs of the addicted mind and body.

You are a good guy. That is all. I wish you some moneymaking cases and the ability to clear those bills from the government from your back.

*I've been after drug users for years to explain the attraction of their habit, and -- except for a couple of poems -- never gotten more than the most contemptuous of answers. I guess the white sustenance is just something you're supposed to know.*



Meanwhile, I wish you might see my play. Instead of four little shits cursing themselves and the world, I wrote about two men of genius, who contributed so much to the world, seen from comedy to misunderstanding drama. What a subject! It was a privilege! Real, accomplishing people, troubled just as anyone might be, I used their letters but adapted them as I wished for the human aspect. It was honest, and it worked.

I liked your photos, seeing a few folks I already knew, and some I knew only by mail. Hi, Ned Brooks, you look just right! And Forry, keeps on rolling. He is even older than I am! And I have seen Guy L III in photo, and you look well. Give the Big Easy my fond best. I am so happy that hurricane had the sense and conscience to swerve away in time.

**Henry L. Welch**  
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[Re: "The White Sustenance":] I am always amazed how people in order to avoid a slap on the wrist will dig themselves a hole so deep that they might never climb out of it. I realize that addiction reduces the ability to make sound and rational decisions, but I often wonder whether there is some other personality flaw that is contributing to the severity of the problem. Since I have no background in psychology or any similar field my opinion is probably not even worth two cents and if I were to charge the two cents for it then I would be violating my professional ethics obligations regarding practice outside of my field of expertise. So you get this for free.

*Thanks for the visit in late March!*

**Alexander Slate**  
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Another interesting issue of Challenger. Fun to see all the Nolacon artwork again after so long.

Many interesting articles, but the one that most prompts me to write is "The White Sustenance." While I can appreciate your viewpoint concerning Denise and her problems



I do disagree with many of your conclusions. Denise is obviously self-destructive. Certainly, in a particular sense of the law she is not a competent party while under the influence of narcotics. I have a real problem with using an insanity defense for the assault and robbery incidents. I don't believe the concept of competency regarding contracts translates into these situations.

Further getting her off is not doing justice to society, the victims, or even Denise herself. You, yourself, said some time off the streets would do her some good.

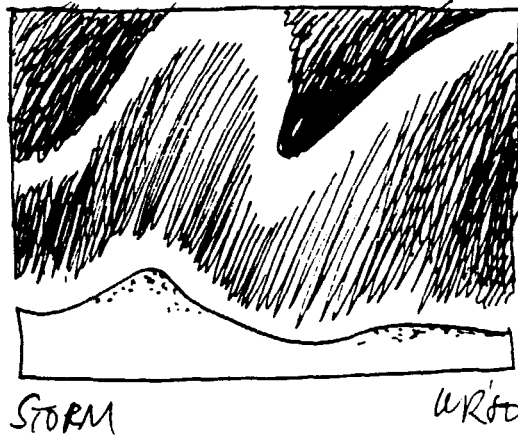
I know that the system needs to be changed. Just chucking Denise in jail for 10 years without doing anything else isn't the answer either. Where do we bend? How do we temper justice with mercy?

**Steve Hughes**  
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Very nice issue! I enjoyed reading it. I particularly liked the Nolacon II illos. They brought back some very nice memories.

The main feeling I had walking around Andersonville was sadness at the way we are so willing to demote other humans to animal status. That's really what seems to go on in the minds of people when they commit atrocities like the Andersonville prison camp. Somehow we decide, for some reason or other, we are absolutely right and *they* are absolutely wrong. So wrong that anything we do to them is justified.

The thing constantly overlooked is that it is not the differences between us that cause the problems; it's the conviction that we are absolutely *right* and that, being absolutely *right*,



we are justified in using any means to punish those who are *wrong*. From that stance it's easy to single out people who are *wrong* and identify them by some external sign like religion or language or color or political party. Then we make the logical step that all people who are Black / Jewish / Southern / Catholic / whatever are *wrong*.

Now we can treat whole groups of people like animals with a clear conscience.

The really terrible thing is that it seems to happen so easy! The prisoners and guards in Andersonville and Elmira (few people even know it existed much less how bad the conditions were; it's the old case of the winner writing the history books) were of the same race, the same religion, they spoke the same language, ate the same food, sang the same songs, were in many cases close relatives and still they treated each other worse than animals. No wonder we can be so cruel to people we don't know or understand.

Today we have the mess in the Balkans with a dozen small ethnic groups all wanting to kill each other when outsiders can't even tell them apart. Our solution to the problem is to impose peace by force of arms. It's an old solution and it's been tried many times, and it has never worked. I watched a British talk show where the moderator asked an old British Army colonel, "Do you think the NATO forces will complete their mission and be out of Bosnia by Christmas?" He answered, "If by 'complete their mission,' you mean bring lasting peace to the region, no. They will spend Christmas in Bosnia, so will their children, their grandchildren, and their greatgrandchildren." He went on to try and explain that you cannot change people's attitudes toward one another by force. The moderator didn't ask him any more

questions.

The simple awful-as-it-is truth is that you cannot change the way people treat each other by laws or force. You have to change the way they think first, then they will change the way they act, themselves. Andersonville is a vivid reminder of the price we pay for not being willing to admit we just might be a little bit wrong.

*You remind me of Jacob Bronowski's magnificent speech at the close of the "Knowledge or Certainty?" episode of The Ascent of Man. "You have to touch people ..."*

**Harry Andruschak**  
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**Torrance CA 90510-5309**

As for Nolacon II, I seem to have only pleasant memories. Perhaps this is due to the fact that it was my first worldcon since the 1984 in L.A., and it was also my last worldcon ever. Yup, my priorities changed, and I now prefer to spend my vacation time and money in overseas travel rather than cons.

As for "The Postal Zone" ... what can I say, being a level 9 Electronics Technician for the USPS? It has the ring of authenticity. I could tell many stories like that myself, although I am not sure how much your readers could stand. The real problem, obviously, is that the PO is so *huge* that an unwieldy bureaucratic organization is inevitable.

I've never had a brush with the Postal Inspectors, although there was one time when I was expecting it. The inspectors had busted a theft ring, where several mechanics and electronics technicians had been stealing credit cards. One of those was a level 8 named ... "X" will do. Anyhow, "X" had a drinking and cocaine problem, had been caught, went through treatment, and came to me several times for help on the 12-step programs and "all that God stuff."

Now I am an atheist, and [was] 15 years sober on 17 March 1999. So I may or may not know something about staying sober. But not drugs. But in any case, I have had thousands ask me for help on "all that God stuff" but the

sad fact is that there are damned few real atheists and agnostics out there. Most are *not* having problems with all that God stuff. What they really have problems with is all that "we don't drink today, no matter what" stuff.

Well, everyone I knew was supposed to be helping "X" some way or another, but I mostly gave up on him the day I surprised him at his machine with a full glass of straight whiskey in the corner. This after his treatment program. No, I did not report this. He was black. I am white. At the Post Office, whites do not snitch on blacks for *any* reason if you know what is good for you. This is not racism, this is a simple fact of life at the Post Office, and a sad one, too. It would seem as if relapsed to cocaine as well. Cocaine costs lots of money. Credit cards are a tempting source of money, but he was caught along with the rest of the ring.

I was wondering if the Postal Inspectors might question me, given my minor connection with him. Nope. He and the rest were fired, of course.

And then I come to page 99 of **Challenger #8: "The White Sustenance"**. What to say? You and I are *quite* different in that respect. You seem to meet the addicts as they hit bottom, one way or another. I know little about drug addiction but lots about alcoholism, and that can be a problem.

See, it has become sort of a gospel among the Chemical Dependency Industry that drug addiction and alcoholism are not two separate things but one same thing ... Chemical Dependency. Most people who are addicted to both drugs and alcohol agree. Most "pure" alcoholics (like me) do not agree.

About six years ago my AA sponsor told me to cut all ties with LASFS on the grounds of the club being "spiritually sick." In its place, I have worked twice a week at the local AA office, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4-7PM, as a phone volunteer. Most of the calls are simple requests for locations of meetings. But we do get the occasional 12-step call for help. When it comes to alcoholics, I have been able, in most cases, to complete that 12-step call and get them to agree to talk to a 12-step worker. I have little

success with the drug addicts.

What about Narcotics Anonymous, you may ask? I don't know. For some reason lots of drug addicts do not like NA. They want AA and what the alcoholics have. I have been asked to sponsor several who are "dual addicted." By trial and error, I have found out the best thing is to agree to be their AA sponsor and *insist* they get a separate but equal NA sponsor. Most refuse. Two have agreed and they are the only two I have sponsored to stay clean and sober until today.

So most of the addicts I meet are trying to do something, but they are trying to do it in AA. Most do not succeed and I suppose you will meet them sooner or later.

**Rich Dengrove**  
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GUY H. LILLIAN III. Yes, we need our failures as well as our successes. As you say, from Nolacon II came Mike Resnick, Peggy Ranson, and **Challenger's** fan illos. Also, New Orleans. People may not have cared for the '88 Nolacon but they loved New Orleans.

It's brave to accept your Southern identity's good and bad. Southern bravery and Andersonville's cruelty. Normally, I accept the Jewish good and forget the bad. It's more comforting that way. My only excuse is that, in this case, I don't try to be consistent.

On the other hand, Andersonville is worse than you suspect. I recall the North did treat its prisoners of war better -- after a while. After the reformers got to them. Of course, the North had more money for such things.

Did Denise have free will? Yes. We all go with the cause of least resistance. We are hungry, we eat. We are broke, we work. We like chocolate, we buy a Snickers. We feel guilty, we do good. In Denise's case, she was addicted, she stole. Free will does not mean uncaused; I can't think of a single behavior that is not the product of least resistance.

Instead, free will means knowing right from wrong, and reality from illusion. At least, persuasion and reason might them be factors.

Then punishment does not seem unjust. Unfortunately, Denise probably knew right and reality.

CHRIS M. BARKLEY. I don't see how you recalled all these memories surrounding the '60s space program. Just thinking about it, however, I would with the right cues: they would all come spilling out.

HARRY WARNER JR. I would like to tell Harry he has normal memory loss, not Alzheimer's. But he knows that, yet persists in his paranoia. He probably knows he couldn't do anything more about Alzheimer's if it proved true. It is difficult to comfort someone so perceptive.

JEFF COPELAND. At least, your article cited its sources. Right-wing articles usually don't; they believe on faith.

On the other hand, you attribute to conspiracy what is patently incompetence. I believe Paula Jones, despite the time discrepancy. You heard the judge: Paula's story amounts to little more than a one-night stand. She is an incompetent accuser. Also, I doubt the Wingers have planned farther than Clinton's impeachment, certainly not to a Gore presidency. Planning that far is abnormal; albeit, competent.

The whole anti-Clinton phenomenon strikes me as visceral, i.e., incompetent, not calculating, i.e., conspiratorial. The wingers are of two minds about Clinton, and strive for one mind by cutting a fact here and a fact there. Soon they believe on faith alone.

SUFORD LEWIS. Part of the South seems dead with Ann Layman Chancellor. But her funeral resurrected another part.

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I have come to expect good writing from **Challenger**, and #8 did not disappoint me. I look forward to more. Too bad we won't see a DUFF trip report from you, but I thoroughly understand your reservations about running at this time.

**Challenger #8** was full of interesting

and thought-provoking reading, as usual. I had a good laugh when I read "Gunslinger" by Scotty Offutt. Your personal writing is always fine and fascinating; Denise's story is especially sad. It reminds us if our health "system" ever produces true cures for drug and alcohol addiction, a tremendous amount of criminal activity will be prevented, and many lives saved. I wonder how funding for that search compares to what we spend on chasing down the suppliers of drugs, not to mention the legal repercussions of alcohol abuse.

*Such is my despair -- Emily Dickinson's original "white sustenance" -- about the human condition that I'm convinced that when cures for those addictions are found, new torments will be created. World without end, amen.*



I enjoyed the photos from Bucky. I had a good time at the worldcon but as usual I felt like I had missed conversing with too many people when it ended. This time the distance to the fanzine lounge was a problem for me, and I never made it there. *[I did, and am glad I did, but it was a hellacious trek from the center of action.]* Well, I still found plenty to do, and the convention center itself was easy to move around in, so I can't complain. Every worldcon has its own flavor.

*Crab flavor, in this case.*

The various illos from the Nolacon bid were fun to see. I especially appreciate the information about Dany Frolich, whose work I miss since the bid ended. I have several of his Mardi Gras cups, caught at parades and kept

because of their quality and my memory of his artwork at Nolacon. Oh, I love the cover, by the way!

*Dany lives in Florida now, but I still remember him from my first New Orleans Science Fiction Association meetings in 1969, when the talent that would eventually transform Mardi Gras concentrated on illustrating New Orleans ap- and clubzines. By the way, Dany is and always shall be the only man that I've ever danced with. Don't bother asking.*

**John Berry**  
**4, Chilterns,**  
**S.Hatfield,**  
**Herts AL10 8JU**  
**U.K.**

Many thanks for your magnificent 100+-pager. (Do you know that, honestly, I did not know that my old typer has a "+" on the query?) With superb artwork ... the full page Nolacon ads being particularly spectacular.

I liked the John Glenn article. I wrote to John Glenn [last year] for his autograph on my especially prepared space covers, and it arrived, suitably personalised, just before blast off. I have almost completed a full series of STS covers, and have many of them autographed. John Blaha (six STS and one MIR) autographed all the STS covers. I'm usually fortunate with the US astronauts I write to, because not only do I supply a stamped and addressed return cover (obviously a pre-requisite) but I write a short but effective plea for signatures, rather an over-the-top ingratiating missive like many collectors send. Also, I'm sure many US astronauts are chagrined to note how much cards with their signatures are sold for (hundreds of dollars) so their advertised reluctance to sign is understandable, but they will sign for true collectors, such as myself; ergo, this should be clearly stated in the request. Joe Mayhew's illos most excellent ... t'would be a wonderful thing for Chris Barkley to mount this illo on card and stand for Glenn's signature. I believe I will do it myself ...

As other fans point out, your fotosheets are so important because, obviously, faces can be connected to written personalities ... but the photographs you feature are extremely clear ...

your reproductive system is functioning perfectly.

*Not as well as when I was 20, but occasionally I still manage.*

Harry Warner, from his observations in "Lest I Forget", has no problems with his preoccupation with getting some form of senile dementia. His writings show, as always, the product of a fully working hunk of grey matter, with absolutely no indication whatsoever of deterioration. I am on my 73rd year, and I too lose things, and also I occasionally feel faint, and have to mentally take a grip of myself, and will myself to recover, which takes a couple of moments. What pleases me, regarding my mind, is that my wife does crosswords, and throws questions at me on any subject, and in fact I am happily surprised at the speed of thought in rattling off the correct answers. On a couple of occasions, I haven't been able to give her an answer, and I wake up in the middle of the night with it, although she doesn't really appreciate the fact that I wake her up and tell her. She thinks that *is* mental deterioration!

I always read the US Post Office stories by Robert Whitaker Sirignano, because I collect US stamps. I must state what happened a couple of years ago. 1997 was the 40th anniversary of Sputnik 1, and I prepared elaborate covers to commemorate this event, and sent them to postal authorities all over the world for them to frank the items 3rd October 1997. All except the US sent them back by return, with all sorts of commemorative frankings. Six months went by, and I had given up any hope of the return of the dozen or so items I'd sent to the US. One day the items arrived ... but they were dated 20th July 1997, obviously the anniversary of Apollo 11.

This means that, somewhere, deep thought had gone into a decision as to how to frank my cards, obviously *not* to applaud the Russians for Sputnik 1, eventually deciding on the Apollo 11 date. This is excellent, of course, and I do not gripe, but I still fail to see why 3rd October could not have been used. Do you think Robert can assist in the thought formations?

*John's designs for British airmail stickers are*

*displayed elsewhere in this issue. Speaking of Sputnik, I remember the anguish I felt when it was launched -- and Douglas Edwards' newscast about it -- and later watching it pass overhead. Is it still in orbit?*

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An appealing cover by Joshua Quagmire, combining cute kids with old-fashioned sexual desire for big grown-up women, the passion that dare not speak its name these days.

If only I could have found that tape of my father speaking into the recorder I had then! Back in 1971 I was not to be entrusted with anything so crucial as publications for a worldcon; that was no Chicon, where Bob Tucker was drafted as treasurer because the treasurer or an organization had to be of age. So I was sleeping on the Tuesday of the first week of vacation, looking forward to celebrating my birthday with Dad in the hospital that Friday, and Christmas on Saturday, when the bedroom door opened and my father's boss came in, shouted something, and left.

He had died during the night. Happy 17th birthday! Merry Christmas! Bah, humbug!

*I have a[nother] tape, which my parents recorded off their home phone (a creep was bothering my mother). On it they just chat, like best friends, which is what they were, making me feel simultaneously lucky to have come from such a union, and envious since I've never been able to find that kind of intimacy in my own life.*

This week's **Leo**, the local alternative paper, reprinted Dave Barry's column on hurricane preparations, which in Miami seem to involve buying vast quantities of bleach and cutting your fingers on hurricane shutters.

Bucconeer Pictures: I think I will just have to live with looking like Stan Laurel.

Wigwam Worldcon: Your chances have gone up now that Berlin has dropped out of the Worldcon in 2003 race. **Wig Wam Wig Wam Wig Wam**

Lest I Forget: Alzheimer's seems to be

# ERG

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NOW IN ITS 15th. YEAR



confined to inlaws. One cousin's widow's second husband was a particularly tragic example of this. His wife (the widow of my cousin) told me once that she had gone to visit him and as she left he said "You're a nice lady. Why don't we get married?" Trying very hard not to cry she said, "We've been married for ten years!" See what Alzheimer's steals from you?

*Yeah, but there's a silver lining even to this evil thundercloud: senility denies you the fear of death.*

The Postal Zone: After reading F. Lee Bailey's description of his defense of the accused in 1960's Massachusetts postal theft (over \$2 mil, and none ever found), for all that as a defense attorney he is inclined to his clients' attitude, I can see why Robert Sirignano is less than impressed with the postal inspectors. At one point, or so Bailey says, the management was trying to get donations from all the postal inspectors to go after the defendants in a rather shady fashion ...

~~Epsitles~~ ~~Espitles~~ ~~Eptisles~~ ~~Epilstes~~  
**LETTERS, DAMMIT!**: Spelling checkers have taken a lot of the romance out of the legendary typo. It reduces the above heading to "Epistle Epistles Entitles Elites Epilate Letters". Prudishly, it will not spell-check "dammit".

Darrell Schweitzer rightly decries the swelling tide of oblivion, though (\*SOB\*) "Doc" Lowndes has no longer survived the memory of his career. But it seems to be happening earlier and earlier. Consider the great fan artists of the '70s; where is Tim Kirk, for example?

*Check out the next LOC.*

And Ghod only knows where the then-renowned (in their own field) fan fiction writers of the '70s are now. (Remember when these writers, having honed their skills in an environment where learning the difficult tasks of plotting was facilitated by not having to establish characters, and nourished in a writing field where optimism was the norm, would emerge and sweep the moribund, pessimistic SF field?)

Considering that one **Dangerous Visions** contribution, Philip Jose Farmer's "Riders of the Purple Wage", is modeled in style on the "Cave of the Winds" chapter of *Ulysses*, small wonder that Harlan Ellison recognized your incisive

clarity of analysis. Of course, you will not be so foolish as to trade on that reservoir of good will and ask him to get **The Last Dangerous Visions** out ...

I remember well the LoneStarCon2 masquerade. The "Scottish Blues Brothers" were "The Men in Black Watch"! Weel, ye canna expect that the domned aliens will be confin' themselves to the States, noo?

*Hoot, mon.*

When Milt Stevens cites the last refuges of Hollywood "plotting" he forgets one element. Explosions. If thriller movies had to cut out explosions as well as shootouts and chases they would be about five minutes long, which is not a bad idea in itself.

The Old Lang Fund should be *very* strictly defined. It should, as you report, be for bringing Dave Langford to Aussiecon III. Bringing. Note that word. Bringing. Not sending back.

"[An] icon of adolescent anger and angst created by angry and angst-filled adolescents." Part of the powerlessness of adolescence is being oppressed by vast powerful entities which are absolutely invulnerable to your counterstrikes. (The way I feel about dealing with Humana, for example.) Having something that will produce some kind of reaction is, therefore, a desired anodyne to this feeling of powerlessness. "That made them sit up and notice, huh huh?" This is why alienated, angry, angst-filled adolescents in Europe paint swastikas on everything. It upsets the old farts so.

In 1947 a flying saucer crashed near Roswell, New Mexico. Nine months later, Al Gore, a man who speaks and acts like an alien, was born. Coincidence?

*Gore is very funny in person, much more effective on the stump than you'd think. I expect we'll be discussing him more and more in coming months.*

"[Did] any Red ladies fly after Valentina Tereshkova?" Da. Svetlana Savitskaya, in the '80s.

I understand the real breakdown of standards of living -- if you could call it that -- at Andersonville had to do with Grant's decision to cancel prisoner exchanges. On a simple

numerical count it had something to recommend it, as the Union had more men and could afford not to get those returned, while the Confederacy could not. Practical, hard-headed decisions often require dehumanizing the targets of their actions.

[The original Nolacon II Hugo was a] beautiful Hugo base design, but the mind trembles at the thought of trying to get it home!

*Challenge me! Challenge me!*

### Tim Kirk

I've been very inactive in fandom -- and s.f. art in general -- for the last ten years or so. I've been a designer at Walt Disney Imagineering (in Glendale, California) since 1980, working on a variety of theme park related projects -- including (in Florida) EPCOT Center, the Disney-MGM Studios, and the Magic Kingdom. I'm currently involved with the design and construction of our second theme park in Tokyo: Tokyo DisneySea.

*Tim says to drop him a line if we have any more questions; I'll pass along any y'all voice.*



**George Flynn**  
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Roy Tackett has some of the facts wrong in talking about the worldcon bid for Highmore, South Dakota. First of all, it was instigated not just by "one of the boys from MIT" but by Richard Harter, who is *from* Highmore. And while it was first talked about (repeatedly) in the sixties, the bid reached its apogee in 1974, when

we actually made a presentation to the Discon II business meeting. (I gave a speech in the Frisian language, with a bag over my head. Don't ask: Frisian Fandom was a totally *different* silly story.) Fortunately, we had prudently not gotten on the ballot, thus avoiding any risk of actually winning. But to this day one still sometimes sees buttons reading "Highmore: Now More Than Ever".

"Did [my "flamingo carol"] backfire and contribute to Philly's upset victory?" I had no idea my writing had such power. I must give thought as to whom I should threaten to support next ... But as for it being "an aesthetic error," hey, that was the *good* stuff! You should [well, actually, you shouldn't] have seen the, um, verse I circulated only *within* the committee ...

### Marty Cantor

**11825 Gilmore St. #105**  
**N. Hollywood CA 91606**

I have my doubts that Harry Warner will ever suffer from Alzheimer's disease or any other form of decrepitude. ~~He has been writing that way for decades.~~ He would not dare! A fandom without Harry in it is too dreadful to think about. I mean, as a faned, I know that Harry is always *there*, a bedrock upon which our segment of fandom is built. (In-joke ahead alert!) Well, if Harry insists on mental decline, I guess that Mark Ortlieb will have to re-constitute Harry's basement LOC factory.

Postal thefts, hmmm. When I worked for the Post Office (I think it was from 1960 through 1963) I remember that two fellow employees were arrested for theft. One of them was a young fellow who was in my training class and I remember him being taken off of the floor in handcuffs. The other was a carrier who was suspects of taking parcels (and maybe other kinds of mail) that he was supposed to be delivering. As I understand it, the inspectors pulled off a sting operation, sending a parcel with a chocolate cake or something in it, keeping a figurative eye on it during its journey. The postman took the parcel and was arrested. I guess the inspectors in Pasadena in the 1960s were better than the inspectors in Delaware in the 1990s.



*[Long statement about the Lewinsky scandal deleted as, by now, and at long last, please God, out-of-date.]* In your comment to Darrell Schweitzer you mention the "right-wing conspiracy." At least you did not refer to it as a "vast" right-wing conspiracy. I consider it only half-vast.

I still do a double-take when somebody writes about *Ulysses* -- and is talking about James Joyce. When I was a wee lad I used to go to the West Hartford Public Library and read books about Greek Mythology -- this was before I discovered science fiction when I was about 10 or so.

Considering what Hank Reinhardt wrote and your respective political positions, when you responded to him with "See you at the next ACLU picnic" I could not help but wonder if you were implying "on" rather than "reading" the menu.

*I have often eaten Hank's lunch at the Hearts table, while he has had to make do with the Queen of Spades.*

All faneds who needed Bill Rotsler art could always get illos as he was profligate in scattering them to any and all faneds. In some ways, I was luckier than most, in that I could always get art from Bill -- an instant commission, as it were. If I needed a cover for LASFAPA (back when I was in charge of the apa) I could go up to Bill at the beginning of a LASFS meeting and ask him for one. Sometime before the end of the meeting, despite his socializing with other fans, he would have a wonderful cove ready for me. When I needed a cover for **No Award #2** last summer, I gave Bill a call and later went over to his house. Not only did he have a cover for me but he also gave me his usual envelope of illos. Yet, at the time of my visit, his illness was such that he was barely able to move from his couch.

I do not think that Brin McLaughlin need worry about running out of Rotsler illos, as I believe that Bill Warren has thousands yet to distribute. I advertised Warren's offer *[to send some to any faned who requests them]* in my last two **No Awards**, and I was glad to hear that he was spreading the word in other venues. The more Rotsler art out there to be used, the better

for fandom sez I. Bill Warren is doing fandom a good turn, so let us all tale him up on his offer and spread Rotsler art everywhere. Contact Warren at BILLYLBOND@aol.com.

In your comment to Milt Stevens you mentions the "infamous LASFAPA Chart." This Chart resides, in all of its current dustiness, atop one of my bookcases. For the uninitiated, it should be mentioned that the LASFAPA Chart is a 3-dimensional Langdon Chart. To continue for the uninitiated, I will mention that a Langdon Chart is a representation of the sexual connections of a group of people. The LASFAPA Chart is composed of many red and blue styrofoam balls connected by pipe cleaners. At the time that the Chart was put together (by David Schlosser) LASFAPA was self-described as "The Friendly Apa." What the readers impure to the word "Friendly" in the context of what I have just written is probably correct. Anyway, as the styrofoam balls were never labeled, conversation around it at parties was always a heated guessing game.

*I've seen the LASFAPA Chart; it looks like a mess of spaghetti and meatballs in free fall.*

*Remember that LASFAPA's heyday was pre-AIDS, if not pre-trich, as the roster learned to its chagrin after Iguanacon.*

Guy, it just seems to you that **No Award** is just a LASFSzine; really, sir, and like I said, I am simply taking advantage of available talent. That is, I can yell at them every week until I finally get their contributions! What with a letter column with a goodly percentage of the LOCcers being from out of the country (and only one from Los Angeles), it seems that **No Award** is turning out to be a bridge 'twixt Lafandom and the rest of the world. Still, I would like contributors from outside of the Los Angeles area. It would nice to get something from somebody I did not have to browbeat on a weekly basis. Anyway, I thank you for your kind words. Oh, and by the way, **No Award** is



produced on mimeo.

*As I implied in my review, I'm madly envious for your living in such a fan- and talent-rich area. Your stewardship of LASFAPA -- and that of Dave Schlosser, your successor -- was able and enthused, and helped build that apa into one of the best social krewes fandom has ever known. I could never rejoin: the memory of what was is just too wonderful to dilute.*

**E.B. Frohvet**  
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**Ellicott City MD 21042**

Nothing brightens up a glum November day like receiving a new **Challenger**. (Okay, so it was in fact rather a nice day: poetic license.) I recently wrote to Bob Sabella that the envelope for the latest **Visions of Paradise** was not cancelled or postmarked; someone had drawn a line through the stamps with a red marker. In contrast, the **Challenger** envelope seems to have been postmarked by Jeff Gordon en route to winning the NASCAR title. Happily, the contents were safe.

A fine touch, recycling the "harlequin" art from the 1988 New Orleans worldcon. For the record, I had a fine time at Nolacon; but then I wasn't involved in running it in any way. Not the best organized worldcon I've ever attended, but I had fun.

*A lot of people did, thanks to the French Quarter, adjacent to the convention. Someone called it the largest con suite ever. Even on days with downpours, it's hard not to have a good time in this town.*

It's an excellent photo-spread on the 1998 worldcon, though Inge Glass looks less than enthusiastic about eating crustaceans. I don't object in principle to eating crabs, it just seems like a lot of work for the number of calories obtained.

*I wrote an article for NYAPA once on "How to Eat Crabs", adorned with a fantastic illustration by Carl Gafford. Part of the instructions read "Rip his balls off!"*

Thank you for the reviews of **Twink**. Doubtless you will find any number of "fannish" fans who will ardently deny that my fanzine is

"fannish". That group will be closely congruent to, though not identical to, those who use "sercon" as a pejorative.

Scotty Offutt talks about the gun instructor who urged "shooting burgers." Veronica Johnson, weatherperson on one of the Baltimore TV stations, says very clearly and distinctly, "tempature." Three syllables. Scotty never does say for what reason she *wanted* a handgun license ... I believe the law in Maryland is that one has to show a compelling reason for a concealed handgun license, e.g., that one has to carry large sums of money in the course of one's job, or something of the sort.

Your decision not to run for DUFF is a regrettable one. Looking on the bright side, more time to devote to the Wigwam in 2003 bid. Someone suggested parking RVs to extend the housing. Tents are another possibility. [*And foxholes!*] Using Mammoth cave for the con suite is not only a bitchin' idea, it might work; they have (or used to have) an underground cafeteria!

*Sorry, the Dairy Queen down the highway from Wigwam Village already has the Hugo banquet booked, assuming the demolition order doesn't come through.*

**Lloyd Penney**  
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Many thanks for **Challenger #8**. I always enjoy a good, thick fanzine, and this is one of those, by gar.

As you were back then [in 1988], I am now involved in a worldcon bid, Toronto in 2003. It's been a chance to put both fannish ken and business skills to best effect. In working towards the ultimate goal, it's been educational, fannish goshwow, challenging and a pain in the rump, all at various times. Yvonne and I did the initial calling back in late 1996, at the behest of Ken Smookler, who in turn had been called by John Mansfield, Robbie Bourget and Bruce Farr, all of whom thought another Toronto worldcon was a great idea. We now have the pleasure of seeing local friends from various and

diverse interests in fandom (fanzines, cons, **Trek**, **Dr. Who**, even First Fandom) working together for the first time, and they never would have had the opportunity to work together otherwise. For us, it's more satisfaction in achievement than anything else.

*But you're doomed -- as is your competition,  
Cancun -- doomed to be swept away in the  
tsunami of support building for WIGWAM  
VILLAGE!*

*(P.S.: The sun is green.)*

I had a great time at Nolacon II in 1988. In retrospect, things like registration opening late, and waiting for programme books to arrive were small potatoes that did not detract from my good time. (Not to say that our bid won't endeavor to avoid these problems, though ...) I always find it easy to enjoy my worldcon. Some try not to have that good time, and boy, do they succeed ... they're usually the most vocal ones at the bitch panel.

*I handled the Nolacon II gripe session alone until the con chairman and de facto manager showed up, and most of the complaints I heard made some sense. However, I had to defend my publications unit from howls that the program we published was inaccurate --*

*how were we supposed to know that? -- and make it clear that Nolacon II was bid for and put on -- at least as far as I was concerned -- out of pride in New Orleans and love for fandom.*

John Glenn showed that even for a brief moment, Tom Wolfe notwithstanding, you could go home.

*Do you mean Tom Wolfe of **The Right Stuff** or Thomas Wolfe of **You Can't Go Home Again**?*

*Guess it doesn't make much difference in this case!*

Allen Steele wrote a story about aging astronauts sucking back cold beers, and wondering aloud if they'd go up again if they ever got the chance ... John Glenn answered that question with an

emphatic *yes!* Sure, Glenn campaigned to up again, but in his position, wouldn't we all have done the same? The chance came, and he grabbed it with both hands. He's still a hero, one we can remember again, and one we never should have forgotten.

*Who ever forgot John Glenn?*

I always like the photo sections in fanzines ... I know it's costly, but I like to see who I'm corresponding with. Now I know what Ned Brooks and Joe Major look like. [*Don't hold it against them.*] Ned, I probably walked past you a couple of times at your dealer's table without ever suspecting you might be there.

The Super Family on page 18 has been seen by hundreds of thousands of Canadians ... while at Bucconeer, they were interviewed by Don Wright and Mark Askwith of **Space: The Imagination Station**, Canada's science fiction channel. The piece they broadcast still shows up from time to time on **S:TIS**.

Amen to David Drake and you on fandom. We're just organized enough to hang together, but otherwise, we're just creative chaos, silliness, fun and whimsy, guaranteed to lengthen our lives a few years at least.

I did know the name Robert A. W. Lowndes, although I never had the pleasure of meeting the former editor of **The Magazine of Fantasy & Science Fiction**. Another name from our glorious past is Robert Sheckley. He was a guest one year at Con\*cept, the annual con in Montreal, and fandom in Montreal is predominantly media-oriented. It was a wonderful idea to invite him as a guest, but he was largely ignored once he was there. I may be wrong, but I think I was the only one to bring my handful of Sheckley paperbacks with me, and ask him to sign them. That craggy face lit right up, and it was the only time I saw him smile the entire weekend.

Roy Tackett's letter explains Highmore, South Dakota for me just in time. I accessed the

HE CALLED ME A  
PIMPLE ON THE ASS  
OF PROGRESS! ME

A FIRST  
CLASS BOIL!



Chicago 2000 website a few nights ago, and it listed where all the votes for 2000 went at LoneStarCon. Six were given to Highmore.

To Brin McLaughlin, my age is a few months until 40 [*as of February 3, 1999*] and I also feel the same way you do, that I missed the heyday of everything fannish. It's because of that we need to be a little outrageous and make our mark, so that in the future, those who might still be involved with fanzines will look back at our time and say that *that* was the heyday.

Milt Stevens is right about the Brother Cadfael mysteries; they are different enough to catch my interest, and Derek Jacobi always did a wonderful acting job with them. The story was pure mystery-solving, without the attitude of the gumshoe, or the Hollywood effects of a car chase or a foot chase. For the same reasons, the late Jeremy Brett's Sherlock Holmes and David Suchet's Hercule Poirot dramas were a major perk for me on some evenings. Holmes or Poirot and a pot of tea, and we were happy.

*I loved Brett's characterization -- particularly on that occasion when Inspector Lestrade told Holmes how proud Scotland Yard was of him, and he came that close to breaking down. The scripts, however, were often not particularly tight.*

I wonder if anyone else will notice that your illustration on page 77 was of Patrick Troughton, the second Dr. Who.

Joe Mayhew's prayer for Ian Gunn [*at Buccaneer*] was a class act, but alas, it wasn't enough to save him.

*Let's see to it Ian gets his Hugo this year.*

Where did I get my shirt at worldcon? Yvonne makes them all for me! I am proud owner of 22 of the tackiest shirts in creation, courtesy of Yvonne's Ferenghi Fashions!

**Brad W. Foster**  
**P.O. Box 165246**  
**Irving TX 75016**

What can I say, another killer issue here with **Challenger #8**. I most especially want to thank you for laying your hands on, and publishing, that photograph of the wonderful original Hugo base design by Ned Dameron. I've been telling Cindy about it for years, but

time has dimmed my memory a bit of it, and it is even more amazing than I recall. What a shame there was no fannish millionaire around at the time (or even now, for that matter!) to jump in and finance that being used for the award base. Thanks for documenting it.

Indeed, thanks for running all the Nolacon art, my own humble contribution included. Kick to see what happens when different artists play around with the same basic theme. I found the tag-line on my own art of "He hasn't gone anywhere," one of those scary ones when taken out of context. I mean, I'd like to think I *have* gone somewhere beyond where I was over a dozen years ago! But I know whatcha mean -- I've got fannish ink in my blood now, and too late for a transfusion.

I was a bit amazed at Harry Warner's confession in his "...Lest I Forget" article that he considers wearing his socks in bed to be the ultimate in disgusting habits. I'm not sure why he finds this revolting. If my feet are cold, I'll wear socks in bed. Does he think he can only cover his feet if he is wearing bunny-foot pajamas with the built-in socks? A *very* strange confession! To make Harry worry even more, maybe the fact that he finds such a totally innocent activity no embarrassing to admit in public is one of the signs of advancing age!

That first issue of **The Texas SF Inquirer** that Cindy and I put together is also our last. Evidently the contents were either too "non-fannish" for most folks, or so totally horrid (or even so totally uninteresting) that to this date after a couple of years since it came out, we've gotten only three or four responses, most of only a line or two, and I think I've seen it reviewed once. Okay, I can take a hint, a zine editor I'm not. I'll go back to my drawing board instead.

Your articles on your own cases are always fascinating. The sad little tale this time only left me with the thought at the end that this gal was, more than the last guy, Born to Lose. Didn't sound like much there beyond someone who never thought ahead more than a day or two, and saw only how things related to her. There are good people, there are bad people, and there are way too many just plain sad people like that.

**Tom Feller**  
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Sorry to hear that you are not going to run for DUFF. You would have made a strong candidate.

I don't blame you for evacuating New Orleans due to the hurricane. I always felt that anyone living there should evacuate early or batten down the hatches. I would be afraid of getting caught in traffic on one of those roads leading out of the city.

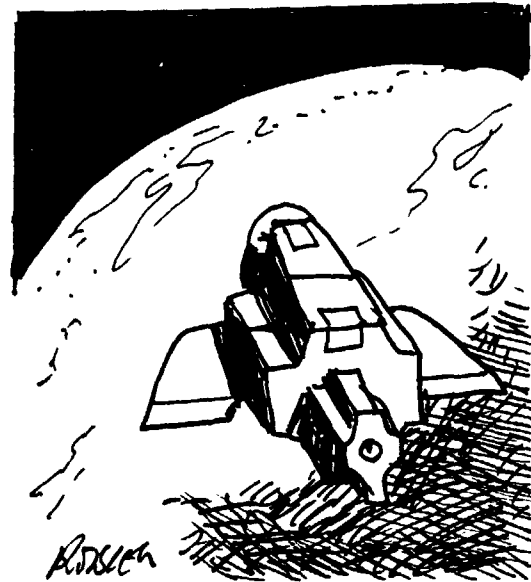
The picture of you and Inge Glass at the Buccaneer Crab Feast looks familiar. Did I snap the picture for you?

In today's business climate, sex in the workplace is a very hot issue, which is how I view the Lewinsky scandal. I think the Paula Jones lawsuit was rightly dismissed, because of her inability to show any consequences from the incident, assuming it happened at all. If a corporate CEO was caught having an affair with an intern or other entry-level employee, he or she could be fired, depending on the attitude of the board of directors and the CEO's actions after the scandal broke. Any CEO who lied to his board or his employees as Clinton did to the media and to the people should be fired. Why should we hold the President of the United States to a lesser standard?

*No sane corporation would fire a successful executive for lying about an affair with an employee unless the exec had exposed the company to financial loss. Corporations look to the bottom line; so should countries. America incurred no actual damage because of Clinton's affair; the only expense has been the time and money wasted by the GOP hounds trying to bring him down. Besides which, this incident bears little resemblance to corporate sexual harassment. Remember, Lewinsky had no complaints. The whole scandal erupted because Clinton reacted unwisely to a smear and a phony lawsuit instigated by the Republicans; that's the way the people see it and that's the way I predict history will record it.*

However, the Kathleen Willey incident,

assuming her story is true, is a more classic story of sexual harassment. Someone who is sexually fondled during a job interview and then does not get the job has a very strong case if she wants to sue an employer. Misconduct that results in a lawsuit gets managers. Even if she did get the job, most companies have a policy against such conduct and would have to fire the interviewer to avoid creating a sexually hostile environment.



Thank you for the kind remarks about **The Freethinker**. Yes, that is the same Steve Skeates who used to work at DC Comics. I did not find him, he found me. If you write to him at the address in **The Freethinker**, I'm sure he can send some items to you.

I have been doing some work lately to re-qualify our hotels for Certified Drug Free Workplace status in three of the four states where we operate. The discount on the insurance premiums more than pays for the exoenses of the program. The state requirements vary somewhat, but they all consist of a combination of education, assistance, and testing. The fourth state is Louisiana, which does not have any incentives for businesses to institute such programs. We have basically the same program in our Louisiana operations, but have to hope we will come out ahead by having

fewer and less costly claims.

It was a great zine. I'll remember you when I get my Hugo nomination ballot.

**Harry B. Warner, Jr.**  
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I'm much too old to do such strenuous things as write locs on fanzines contain more than 100 good pages. But here I am doing it for the second time in less than a month, and like Maxwell Smart, loving every minute of it.

So the enormous eighth **Challenger** lived up to its name by posing a challenge to be read and loosed while I'm in a temporary but fertile spell of commenting on a fanzine each and every day. I enjoyed practically everything in it.

Chris Barkley's appreciation for John Glenn is a welcome difference from the recent spate of media items saying that Glenn is wonderful, *but*. I wish I'd been a bit younger when John made that pioneering adventure in space. Chris was able to experience the nation's first space program accomplishments while he get all-out enthusiastic, thanks to his youth. In 1962, I was very happy about the accomplishment, but I'd lost both of my parents in the past five years, my job was turning sour, I still felt the effects of a broken hip suffered little more than a year earlier, so it didn't loom as large in my life as it would have in my teens or even twenties. I'm so glad I was wrong about the amount of risk involved in the elderly Glenn returning to space last fall.

The worldcon photos are superb in naturalness of poses and reproduction. The Poe home pictures remind me how I failed to carry out one intention: remind the worldcon committee that **Maryland Magazine** had published a splendid article and detailed map about all the Baltimore sites associated in one way or another with Poe, and suggesting that they might be interested in asking permission to reprint it in a progress report.

I suppose you heard during your visit to the gravesite about the mysterious arrival in the middle of the night each year on the anniversary of either Poe's birth or death (I forget which) by

a man who deposits a bottle of wine and a flower on the grave and departs as silently as he came. The media watch for him each year but so far have refrained from attempting to buttonhole him and seek his identity. It's believed that this is the second generation of the mysterious visitor because it has been going on so long.

I feel rather sad that the advertisements about learning a trade have become so scarce in American magazines nowadays. Obviously, they appeared in such great numbers over a period of so many years early in this century because a great many individuals sought to improve themselves by patronizing the correspondence school offerings. I assume that today there aren't many people ambitious enough to seek new income sources for such advertising to be numerous. Maybe I really have begun to forget, since I didn't remember the article by me which you reprinted until I was a page deep into it.

I had wondered about the postal service's method of handling internal crime. Maybe this is the best system, but I would think that law enforcement officials who get called in after postal inspectors find definite evidence of whodunit are not happy about taking up an investigation after other people have been asking questions and messing with evidence.

Janine Stinson's remarks on creativity reached me just as I was finishing a large biography of Hugo Wolf. Here was the most mysterious case of creativity I've encountered. You could attend symphony concerts and chamber music recitals for decades without encountering his music, but he was the supreme creator of art songs in the late 19th Century and is buried right beside Beethoven and Schubert. Wolf in his maturity could compose only spasmodically. He would go several years without succeeding in putting any notes on paper worth preserving. Then suddenly a creativity gate would open and he would compose great songs at a fabulous rate, one or two every day, sometimes three, and between sessions with score paper he would be amazed at what he was doing as if another person had taken over the task. After a month or two, this creativity would suddenly end and he would fret and fuss

endlessly until suddenly inspiration returned. Wolf was syphilitic, went mad before he was 40 from the illness, and died after four years of institutional care. Some authorities suspect his peculiar composing bouts were the result of the early stages of his infection.

Ben Indick is right about the way big name classic music stars abstain from overdoing legal or illegal drugs. I suspect this is tied up with the very nature of classical music performance: the pianist with the schedule of sixty recitals in as many cities in a three-month period simply can't allow himself to indulge in harmful substances without ruining his reputation by playing poorly or canceling performances while under the influence. Many great writers have been drunks or addicted to some other drug but they can get away with it by doing their writing between their bad periods. Curiously, I can think of only one great composer who is known to have been seriously addicted: Mussorgsky who was an alcoholic and probably owed his early death to too much drinking. You'd think composers like writers could also be creative between their incapacitating sprees.

Claims that Huck Finn was black are automatically invalid because of his adventures. How could a black boy have fooled the slave-hunters into thinking he had tied up Jim to get him back to his owners.

*Huck also says he's not black -- obliquely -- during the chapters starring the phony King and Dauphin. Fascinating study of this sequence in Garry Wills' Lincoln at Gettysburg, by the way.*

Lloyd Daub's remarks about old family photographs struck home. I have a great quantity of them, many of which I could fully identified if I'd asked relatives years ago to help. Now nobody from previous generations of my family is alive and capable of remembering, and I'm gradually forgetting some of the identities that I once knew. And those treasured snapshots will be utterly useless to anyone in the world when I'm dead because there are no immediate family members who would care about them and they don't show enough surrounding structures or customs to interest historians of American life.

*Mr. Eastman's great invention -- and if I'm crediting the wrong guy with bringing photography to the common man, I'm sure someone will tell me -- was as you intimate a testament to the family, a way of remembrance for people who cared. And even if the last person aware of who it is in an image passes from the world, the fact of that caring remains. In my more purple moments -- which lapse into the ultraviolet -- I imagine human love as radiating outward from our planet just as TV signals do, flooding our part of the galaxy with the electronic signals of our joy, blooming into the cosmos the true nature of our being without end. Of course, and alas, our anger radiates too. Anyway, perhaps images caught on silver nitrate have an impact even if the name behind them is lost: how many history buffs have looked on Matthew Brady's Civil War pictures to understand the nameless men who fought in that conflict? And I will never forget the girl I knew in college who kept on her desk a photograph from the early '20s of a handsome and well-dressed young man. She didn't know who he was, but ... some things, blessedly, are eternal.*

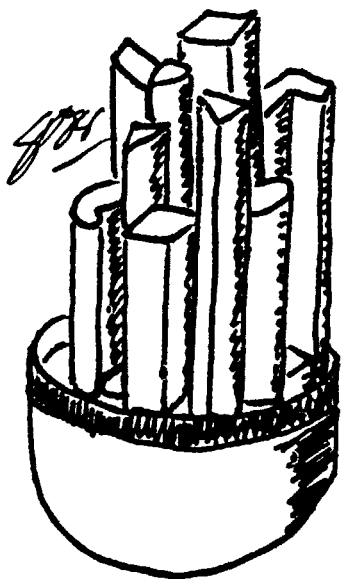
Your fanzine review column must be the most up-to-date any fanzine has published in ages. I could have sworn some of the fanzines reviewed didn't get distributed before the November 9th postmark on this issue's envelope. You must have hustled it into the mails before the pages had cooled from the copier machine.

Is Scotty Offutt a second generation of the Offutts who have been in fandom and prodom for many years? [Yep.] Her article is amusing but I'm glad I don't live in Kentucky.

If the ghost in **Hamlet** was a demon rather than a surviving form of real person, it would explain why Hamlet speculates in his famous monolog about whether there is life after death, so soon after conversing with his apparent dead father. But I've also seen a theory that the "To be or not to be" monolog is not by Shakespeare at all because it contradicts what has gone before in the play. Maybe Shakespeare never stopped to consider whether ghosts do or do not exist and just used one because other

dramatists had done the same thing.

Your article on Andersonville reminded me of the apparent solving of a very old controversy among baseball fans. There has been a legend that baseball, then in its infancy, was played at Andersonville between guards and prisoners. Civil War researchers have poohpooed the idea because of the overwhelming evidence of how conditions were at the famous prison. But just recently, I understand, some documentary evidence has turned up that proved such baseball games were played there, in the very early days of the prison's existence, before it had many prisoners and relations between them and the guards were still tolerable.



The illustrations are fine throughout. You performed a great service in getting those drawings from Nolacon II into print in a place where they'll be seen by many fans of today and in the future. For a long time I've thought that art done for convention publications suffers a nasty fate of near oblivion soon after publication, because so few congoers save their progress reports, program books and other documents and such things are rarely offered for sale by dealers.

There are many other comments I intended to make but this letter is entirely too long already. Many thanks for sending such a good fanzine and try to live up to these high standards in future issues.

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Turns out we were both right to high-tail it for safer ground when Georges burbled into town. Hope your house and environs survived intact. I came back to a house missing only a few shingles, but nearly every tree in the yard (and there are nearly a dozen) either lost branches or was snapped in half at the main trunk. The 50-foot tall Australian pine (classified as an exotic and on the eradication list in the Keys) stayed up, miraculously, only losing two or three large branches, none of which elected to put holes in the house. It wasn't a very fun drive back from Melbourne, Florida: the further down the Keys I drove, the worse things looked. Many of us were very fortunate here, but so many more weren't.

*A friend of mine lives on Isle of Palms, by Charleston SC, which bore the head-on brunt of Hurricane Hugo in 1989. When she was allowed back on the island by the civil defense people after the storm, she found houses flung across streets into their neighbors, beaches eroded to bare rock, and trees completely denuded down to their trunks. We're told to expect another bad season in '99.*

The John Glenn appreciation by Chris Barkley touched a loud chord with me. I don't recall Glenn's [first] flight, but I will never forget being glued to the floor in front of the family TV, watching Neil Armstrong set foot on the Moon. It was a thrill to hear that Glenn was to return to space, and I got a big grin on my face when I saw the TV shots from the shuttle with Glenn looking completely relaxed. He just looked so natural. Thanks to Mr. Barkley for reminding me of a wow-gone-by.

*Not that it's in your neighborhood, but if you ever can, drop by Wapakoneta OH, and check out the Neil Armstrong Space Museum. (Contact Bill Bowers or Roger Sims about this July 20th's SpaceCon there.) Then meander through the town itself -- undoubtedly the most caucasian municipality outside of Norway on this planet -- just to see the kind of place which would grow the first man on the Moon. And remember Armstrong's wonderful story*



*about his next door neighbor, and the last words he said on the moon ...*

The Nolacon art of years past was wonderful! So much talent out there, and I'm so glad of the opportunity to see some of it through the zines I receive.

The article on Andersonville reminded me of my time in Germany in the early 1980s, while I was soldiering for Uncle Sam. I considered visiting Dachau several times, but never went for fear something entirely too weird would happen to me. I just had this hunch, you see? However, after hearing John Cleese tell an extremely funny (and very politically incorrect) about Monty Python's visit to Dachau several years ago, I think I might be able to visit there with less of a sense of dread. It would still be very depressing, but perhaps not as affecting.

*My father visited Dachau once, and wrote the longest letter he'd ever send me about it. He was an engineer and words weren't his tools, but his anguish over being in such a place came through. For such a decent fella it must have been like finding oneself on Mars. Talking about that letter and that visit brought me to my first tears of psychotherapy.*

Thanks for another fine Zine Dump. E. B. Frohvet should be left alone. Personally, I think if a person wants to use a pseudonym, others should respect his privacy and not be so badgerly in trying to reveal the "real name." James Tiptree, Jr. will always be James Tiptree, Jr. to me, and the person who used that name apparently had more to hide than a security clearance. I've always wondered whether Tiptree might have lived longer (and been less ill as a result) if the anonymity has remained in place.

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Please allow me to say a very heartfelt "thank you" to all who commented on my article about Lynn Hickman in **Challenger 7**. I am certain, of course, that the depth of reaction was far more an indication of fandom's appreciation of Lynn's life than of my writing, but that's only

as it should be. I was particularly moved by Mike Glicksohn's comments as I've long had a great deal of respect for his writing and to have him praise that article in such emotional terms means quite a lot to me, particularly in a year that's been a bit difficult.

Thanks also for your good wishes for my recovery from the firetruck wreck that I was involved in back in August ['98]. Since I've gone to great efforts to make sure that everybody that I know on the planet has heard about my adventure (I even posted it on the Timebinders Fanhistory list on the Internet) I'll just briefly recap that on August 6, 1998, while on our way to a house fire, the pumper I was riding in overturned in a curve (I'd like to interject here that I wasn't driving) and rolled over several times ending up with the truck upside down and me pinned at the head under it. Very luckily all my department's crash rescue people were right there and saw it happen, and in only an hour or so they had me cut out of the wreckage and flown by helicopter to a trauma center. Amazingly, in spite of being ejected out of the rear window of the truck (a window I might add that does not normally open) and pinned at the head by the frame of the truck, I suffered no permanent damage. The E.R. doctor examined me and reported that although he couldn't see why, my skull wasn't the least bit fractured as had initially been feared. "Of course not," I quipped. "It must be my slan-like brain ..." He then frowned and ordered a CAT-scan. However I passed that test too and they had to turn me loose. I'm fully recovered now and went back on duty with the local Fire/Rescue Department about two months later.

And if you'll allow me to, Guy, I'd like to apologize to mike weber in your pages. The evening after I was released from the hospital, mike happened to be passing through Abingdon, and he stopped to call me. I should have invited him out to the house to spend the night and break his travels, but I had just had that wreck less than 24 hours earlier and though I was on some serious painkillers I quite literally could not move out of bed. I really wasn't up to receiving guests that evening. So I told mike on the phone, "Gee mike, I'd invite you out to the house but believe it or not I just had a firetruck

wreck and I'm laid up in bed." You could almost hear mike's eyebrows stretching up over the phone. The phone was silent in my hand for about two beats, then mike said, "Uh-huh." No one in fandom can be as eloquent with only a single grunt as can mike weber. Though I can't blame him for being skeptical, I hope he reads this and knows that I really was in a wreck that night and that he can call me the next time he's passing through. I'll show him the scar on my forehead.

Your editorial in **Challenger 8** sent me digging through boxes to find Lynn's copy of your Nolacon II program book. It is indeed a fine and wonderful work, and though I couldn't attend that convention myself I am very glad to have the program book to enjoy. It affects me very much the way that the Sears Roebuck Christmas "Wish Book" did when I was a youngster. By the way (he asked innocently), did anyone ever point out that Roger Sims' name is typed on the contents page?

*I still have a box of Nolacon II souvenir volumes, available to anyone who wants one for ten bucks each.*

I heard the other side of the story of your hurricane-inspired evacuation to the van Hartesveldts' place in Georgia from the principals themselves at ConCat in Knoxville, last Thanksgiving. I asked Lillian (Fred & Mary Ann's daughter) if they had tried applying for federal relief due to hurricane damage because of your visit, but she seems to like you, and rather resented my implication that a visit from Guy H. Lillian III was in any way like an uprooted tree being thrown through the living room window. In my defense I'll just point out

that if my 19 years of employment in the defense industry have taught me anything it's that when you're dealing with the Federal Government, anything at all is possible if you send in the correct paperwork.

You're certainly getting good mileage out of that Nolacon II art file, but my favorite illos [in **Chall 8**] are the ones Joe Mayhew did for Chris Barkley's article on John Glenn. I imagine that a lot of **Challenger's** readers are frustrated astronauts. I certainly am. I well recall the way the bottom dropped out of my world when I realized at the age of 12 that they were never going to let a kid who wore glasses, like I did, become an astronaut. Many years later I noticed that a few of the Shuttle astronauts were indeed wearing glasses, but since I had given up many years earlier it was far too late to do me any good. I was a bit too young to remember Glenn's flight first hand. For me it was the flight of Apollo 11 that put the stars firmly in my eyes. Who knows? The future unfolds in amazing ways sometimes. We may all yet take that ride into space someday, somehow. It could happen.

Harry Warner, Jr. will never convince me that he could possibly succumb to Alzheimer's Disease as long as he can write as well as he has in **Chall 8**. I do, however, worry that he might be partly serious in that he really does harbor that concern. Harry, I graduate from Nursing School in June, 2000, and will be a fully qualified home health care provider as well as an advanced level E.M.T. If you'll move down here to Abingdon where the air is better, the crime levels are next to nothing, and



the cost of living is much less than it is in Hagerstown, I'll provide any home health care you might need for free. All I'll ask is that you let me read your fanzine collection. Of course I imagine that fans from Florida to Canada would happily chime in with the same offer, but I got mine in first!

Another great lettercol. Good heavens, your WAHF list is better than the lettercols that some zines print! David Drake's LOC mentions that he collects and reads the SF pulps. At one point that was the prime criteria for being a fan. Personally I still feel that it's among the most important, but obviously fandom has changed and fragmented so much over the years -- and continues to do so -- that those of us who read the old magazines are but a subset of fandom. I kind of wish that more fans would explore the older works, but really there are as many "book fans" now as there ever were, if not actually more. It's really just that fandom itself expanded its umbrella to cover so much more.

Buck Coulson had me laughing out loud with description of how Lynn Hickman would zip through yellow caution lights leaving Buck to be caught by the red light. Last time I visited Lynn's family in Wauseon OH, Lynn's son Mark did exactly the same thing to me as he was leading me through backroads -- sometimes unpaved -- to Bowling Green. I believe we actually cut through a cornfield with no road at all at one point, and when I found myself unexpectedly crossing a bridge over what appeared to be the Erie Canal I began to wonder if I was following the right car. I think it's just how they drive up there.

Thanks for reviewing my apazine, **Absarka**. Though I did expect to be moving to either Tucson or Wichita to follow the company that I worked for at the time, Liz and I decided to stay here in SW Virginia where our hearts are. I am so much a part of the southern Appalachians that I cannot imagine ever feeling at home anywhere else. I started taking classes towards a nursing degree back in the summer and have now finished two semesters. (In fact, I took and passed a five-hour Anatomy exam just hours before the firetruck wreck. As he was sewing me up, I was quizzing the E.R.

doctor on the 12 cranial nerves, but quit when I found he'd forgotten them.) In June, 2000 I'll graduate.

Your review of Victor Gonzalez's **Squib** touches on the point of whether or not the Internet represents fandom's future. I've been exploring fanac on the Net in a very limited way for several months now and can report that there's quite a lot of it out there, that some very active and very good fans are there, and that while they are busy at their keyboards one of the biggest topics of concern for them is the apparent fact that fandom is moving onto the Net. Most of the fans I see in listserves like Timebinders are deeply committed to fanzine fandom and to keeping print zines going. I believe that for some time to come the two communities will co-exist with a very large overlap and if print zines do become an endangered species the blame will fall more to higher costs of printing and postage than to anything else. This is an issue that is still very much in play, and I suggest that fans explore both aspects of fandom as best they can. I suggest that you start including LOC-writers e-mail addresses when they provide them.

*No! I won't do it!*

*Seriously, until the Net becomes as all-pervasive as the postal service, print fanzines will never wholly be out of style. There are still going to be dinosaurs like me (at the moment) who aren't on the Net and can't enjoy its convenience. However, I expect that within the next X years, where X is a much smaller number than anyone could believe, the Net will be accessible through the TV, and print fanzines -- in fact, print everything -- will be an anachronism, treasured by the old-fashioned, tolerated with good-natured scorn by those living in the present. Hey, it's the future. It's been the hope our genre has lived by. Now it's becoming the reality our genre has to live with.*

Enjoyed your description of your visit to Andersonville. You have a historic soul. This article and your earlier report of your trip to Gettysburg prove that. You should take the next step. In the parks you have seen the legends made larger than life. Come re-enacting with

me and I'll show you how they were born. Re-enacting is "play-soldiering," no question about it. But there are moments when are part of a line of battle of 5,000 men and the heat and smoke of battle pour over you like the fog of Hell, and the acrid sweat stings your eyes but you have no time to wipe it away because suddenly the enemy is on your flank! Wheel, boys! Turn and fire! Fire! FIRE! There are moments when you feel as though the next footstep will take you across time.

*We have your article in this very issue to verify that!*

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'Tis a GHLIIIful thing, **Chall 8**, worthy of systematic response, to wit:

PRESERVED is, yes, good writing, so your restored faith evidently inspired you to good purpose. This is no surprise to me, one of your writing's biggest fans. For me, my mother's death, not yet my father's, is an emotional marker, and you evoke your memories and experiences beautifully, with restraint & dignity.

Nolacon II's revived art, along with the fresher stuff, is a reminder of how professional some of this amateur stuff can be. Hooray.

As for **Mona Lisa**, she reduced me to tears when I stood before her in the Louvre last year. I've never figured out why, exactly, but there was so much Reality there, y'know?

I'll have to check out **Lives of the Monster Dogs** by Kirsten Bakis, envious though it'll no doubt make me. As for your remarks about why sf is so much narrower and shallower than fantasy can be, sure, it's the materials we restrict it to, as well as the domineering views of a very few people, such as RAH and Campbell. And the sf field's disdain for good writing is not only absurd, but harmful, as you point out. How sad, that a bigotry, probably rooted in engineers detesting the more theoretical among them, has ossified sf fandom's appreciation of the skillfully written word.

Sneering at literature is snobbish and stupid -- each work must find its own readers, that's all. It's categorizing that gets us into trouble, and dismissive attitudes, and intolerance -- many of the very things, in fact, that sf fandom prides itself for avoiding, ducking, and eschewing.

And, as you've mentioned it, why *are* sf writers, and most genre writers, really, so utterly incapable of writing convincing, human, and humane scenes of love and sex and humanity? There are alarming implications in this fact. And, yes, sexless high school math nerds trying to imagine the emotional lives of cheerleaders is a perfect image, alas.

As a writer who started off studying only classics of literature -- which means I discovered sf somewhat later than most sf fans -- I've also got to report that there is an open hostility to the inclusion of certain kinds of scenes in genre fiction. It comes not only from the editors, but also the fans, who will often scoff at, even bitterly denounce, such scenes in fiction they otherwise claim to have enjoyed. It is prudery that borders on the Puritanical, and it's puzzling to me, unless your idea of arrested development holds water.

Maybe that's what's slowly happening to sf, as it seeps into mainstream culture -- it's growing up, and forcing its fans to grow along with it, or turn into those curmudgeons who whine about the good old days when sf was *good*, meaning more limited.

And let's not forget the whole New Wave flap, which pitted Grandmasters against Young Turks and held cockfights between the Hard and the Soft -- Freudianism, anyone? It seemed that any attempt to broaden the scope of sf to include good writing and a broader emotional palette, not to mention academic or experimental techniques and patterns, threatened the Old Guard the same way unisex ambiguity upsets homophobes. Exceptions that prove the rule, such as **The Lovers** by Farmer or much of Sturgeon's fiction, especially **Some of Your Blood**, or "In the Barn" by Piers Anthony, or the fiction of much of the **Dangerous Visions** gang. Most of these exceptions are virtually forgotten, especially by neofans.

As you rightly point out, sf has been blessed with many fine writers, so the dichotomy we're citing isn't perfect by any means. Still, the tendency, the overbearing majority has been against good writing and in favor of sticking to pulp verities and simplistic formulas, *tant pis*. The only solution is for individual writers to ignore restrictions -- real or imagined, declared or unspoken -- and to write as well as possible. All else is just flapping our gums and twiddling our keyboards.

Chris M. Barkley's Appreciation of John Glenn brought back strong memories and feelings for me, despite the fact that I was but four years old when Friendship 7 went up. (ASIDE -- Did y'all catch Glenn's somewhat incongruous appearance on the Academy Awards show? In their montage, they didn't cut from Ed Harris in *Apollo 13* to a real shot of Glenn, which I found typically Hollywood of them, but at least they acknowledged his existence in the Real World.) As for Glenn's second flight, it demonstrates that there really can be heroes who don't fade with age, but who gain in stature and who can lend us something of their valor and courage when we maybe need it most.

The Worldcon photographs, as usual, presented **Chall** readers with a personal glimpse of an event most of us wish we'd attended. And the Poe stuff was fascinating, my favorite being 4E Ackerman holding up Poe's grave marker.

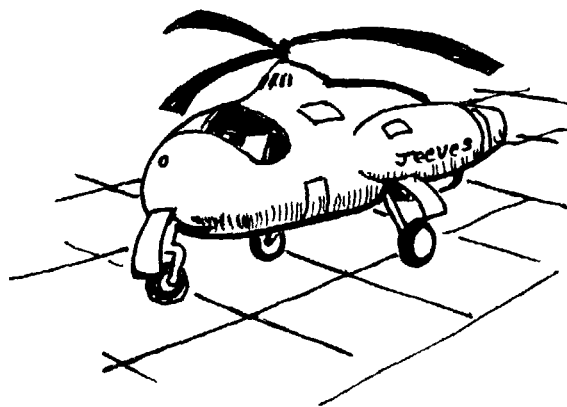
Go Wigwam Worldcon 2003 !

"The Con They Call the City of New Orleans", aside from evoking the Guthrie song, now unfortunately brings to mind the terrible train crash of March 1999. Happier images will no doubt prevail, though.

Ah, good old Terry Jeeves and his coupon-clipping savvy. Only one thing -- I've always thought America *is* crammed to the gills, ear-flaps, and duodenum with self-proclaimed experts, much to its detriment. If we knew a bit less and did a bit more, we'd all be better off.

Harry Warner, Jr. needn't be overly concerned; memory lapses are certainly not the sole worry of seniors. Once I bought concert tickets and promptly lost them, and we had to beg the box office robot for permission to buy new ones on the night of the show. Turns out

they'd slipped down under a chair's cushion, and because I hadn't remembered having them while sitting there, we ended up paying twice the cost to see the show. (It was Jethro Tull's **Catfish Rising** tour, at Atlanta's fanciest theater, if you care, and we ended up having to climb steep, vertiginously steep steps to the



highest balcony, where all the illicit smoke goes and where one discovers the reason opera glasses were invented by not having any -- who *is* that tiny little person down there on, is that the stage? And my wife was 9.8 months pregnant, too...)

Robert Whitaker Sirignano's "The Postal Zone" leads me to report that a *non-writer* acquaintance once went to a small-town post office to buy some IRCs for a writer friend. IRCs are International Reply Coupons, used for return postage from other countries. Writers use them all the time, as I can attest. So the postal clerk had never heard of them and, worse, was surly about it. This clerk, in fact, was notorious for being an SOB to customers and for rudeness even off the job. He was reportedly the kind of guy who makes supermarket checkout people cringe and try to take unscheduled breaks, so they won't have to deal with him. Described several times, the IRCs showed up finally, and then the question of how much to charge came up. Well, right on them, in the middle box, is a monetary amount. At the time it was 95¢. Seeing this, the clerk said, "Ninety-five cents, please," and slid a rubber-band-bound pack of one hundred IRCs across the counter. Knowing no better, the *non-writer* customer paid for them

and later delighted the writer friend, who called me that very moment to let me in on the coup. And even better, the clerk ended up being held responsible for coming up a hundred bucks short -- actually \$94 -- and was taken off the public desk and later transferred to another, smaller town's dingier post office where, presumably, he would do less harm and have fewer chances of being confused by such outré requests. Despite my counsel to be honest and ethical about it, the writer never bothered apprising anyone official of her IRC windfall, and has since used them up, every one.

"The Scandal" by Jeff Copeland is cogent and, with an update, deserves wider distribution, particularly for its succinct summary of historical perspective. Also, awen to citing the religious zealotry currently so desperate to take over -- didn't we fight a Revolutionary War to get away from such shit? Ah, but I'm forgetting that the Founding Fathers have been co-opted by these unblinking fishfolk, so maybe the first task is to take back our own history from revanchists and revisionists and the insipid Politically Correct among us.

LETTERS - David Drake's definition of fandom is excellent, indeed.

Thanks, Janine G. Stinson, for the eloquent defense of my "Now Go Play". As I've understood the Who's "My Generation", it was meant as a mocking retort to the viewpoint expressed in the song, as well as a kick in the face of various low-end folks who were supposedly representative of that generation. In short, don't judge us by the hippies and burn-outs only. As for Old Neil's line "...it's better to burn out than to fade away..." I've always taken that as a call to arms for rock to regain some of its intensity, rather than letting this wonderful form of music die in an extended fade-out, as it seems actually to have done now by putting out too much irrelevant commercialism and too little relevant social or life commentary. I'm still ruefully chuckling at a line from Comedy Channel's **The Daily Report** -- John Stewart -- no known relation, but hey -- said, "Garth Brooks's clever mixture of country and rock, which has managed to kill off both." It's sure a harbinger, if not a

death-knell, when cont-ry music consists largely of twanged-up retreads of old rock songs. And hasn't Pat Boone covered Metallica and Nine Inch Nails? QED.

Also, I'd like to note that I don't disagree with anything GHLIII wrote about an artist having to put some mileage on the equipment first, then report on the trip. Maybe it was just the way I couched what I said that made our inestimable editor categorically disagree. For me, creating has always been a happy, engaging, and fascinating experience distinct from any suffering I've done. And, sure, the pain informs everything one does, but I still think creating is playing with life, not suffering through it. It's the ability to pick life up and manipulate it in some compelling, interesting way -- isn't that play? Ah, well...

DIGRESSION - TV and movie writers are increasingly post-literate, meaning that they've grown up getting their fiction from the tube and the screen. This leads them to produce story patterns that insult the intelligence of us dwindling few literates. Sf is undergoing a similar transition, except in sf it's from those familiar with the sf classics on which the genre was founded, and those who absorbed what they think is sf mostly from TV and movies. The dichotomy is obvious and glaring -- media sf and print sf are worlds apart and probably getting farther apart every day.

Question is, does this matter to anyone enough to motivate them to *do* something about it, such as promoting screen adaptations of classic sf -- a practice fraught with huge disappointments and offensive simplifications -- or, gasp, actually *buying, reading and discussing* printed sf. Sorry, I know it's incredibly harsh for some among us to contemplate such a desperate move, but it had to be said.

Joseph T. Major - I'll second GHLIII's endorsement of the inspiring character evinced by Jimmy Connors. Where has such determination and refusal to give up *gone*? While it may always have been rare, it certainly seemed to have been less rare in the USA, at least at the start. We used to have a good self-image, and now we act beaten-down and ashamed, or sulky and belligerent, as often as

not. We need to try to regain some of our cockiness -- but I suppose that would require a *reason* to be cocky, and the ghods know that's not likely these days.

Bill Legate - Uh, forgive me for not being bright enough to figure it out, but are you calling *Old 815* stupid? (Just joshing...) One wonders if deaf children taught by sign language learn faster and better because they're being paid attention that would otherwise not be given them?

Bill Indick - We're in agreement, but I must remind you of Picasso's last words, which were, "Drink to me, drink to my health for, you know, I cannot drink anymore." Then again, no one every accused Picasso of being incapacitated, and to have produced the sheer amount of superb work he did over his long life, he simply couldn't have overindulged much. Well, except for sex, but hey, that *sharpens* one's art...

It's probably the sensitivity of the artist, combined with society's tendency to ostracize such folks, that leads many creative types into chemical abuse or other self-destructive behavior. GH1111 is quite right, art doesn't come from the incidentals, nor the artist's tools or immediate surroundings, but from the artist. This is why it's so misguided, for example, when would-be jazz artists copy the excesses of their various role models, in hopes of recreating some of their insights or experiences. It's just the superstition of sympathetic magic, that's all, and magical thinking plain doesn't help.

Oh, and once again, GH1111 and I are in accord, which once again makes me wonder why he categorically renounced my "Now Go Play" article. Could his comment have been but a squib to pique interest and comment? Sure hope

so, because the alternative is that I so clumsily expressed my thoughts that he mistook what I was saying for something else...

*I don't think artistic creativity comes from play; I think it begins with anguish and represents an attempt to voice that anguish, understand it, and answer it. That's work. Of course, there is art that is happy and art that is obsessive and miserable -- look to Alfred Hitchcock for an artist at ease with both.*

Sally Syrjala - You cite USA's recent penchant for dragging everything and everybody down. We prefer pejoratives to praise. This reminds me of the general attitude in England, where, friends report, the standard response if

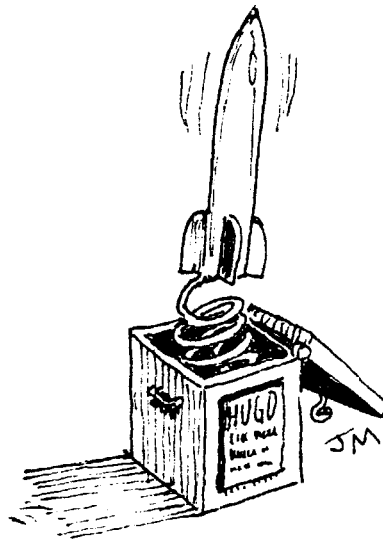
one is so injudicious as to admit publically to writing a novel is, "Who do you think *you* are? Oh, aren't *you* high-and-mighty, writing a *novel*, are you? Who could possibly be interested in anything *you'd* write? La-di-da," and the like. Whereas, in USA, the response is likely to be more along the lines of, "Really? Go for it. What's it about?" and so on. Are we losing that central, basic optimism? Are we becoming class-conscious? Are we

falling into the loser's habit of always being bitter, resentful, and envious? Maybe so. Certainly we seek to blame everything on everyone else, and we seem to seek the nonsense of "security" at the cost of what we once held dear, such as freedom, liberty, truth, and beauty. We used to do the hard things *because* they were hard, remember? Now we whine and complain at anything short of instant gratification. What have we done as a nation, really, since the Sixties?

Buck Coulson - R.I.P.

Pamela Boal - Thanks.

Mike Glicksohn - How could you not



like such a great Guy? Are you, perhaps, of the ungrateful north's unblinking rightwing fishfolk persuasion? Hey, just asking, no need to gasp and thrash on the bottom of the boat like that.

Dale Speirs - Indeed, the only thing the death penalty solves is the question of where the sadists can get their jollies now and then.

E.B. Frohvet - How about sending me a copy of **Twink** to loc? To judge from GHLIII's endorsement, I'd probably enjoy it a great deal.

Harry Warner, Jr. - Great question about whether modern stage magicians bar camcorders. You'd think they would, along the same grounds of fighting against bootleg performances that lead musicians to bar sound recorders, if not also to protect the secrets of their craft.

I'm with you, and never plan what I'll write in a loc before sitting down to do the actual writing. Nor do I mark up the zines. I just go through page by page and respond. Of course, I use a computer, so I can make changes if I notice an error, but it was the same for me in typewriter days.

Richard Dengrove - So, how's tricks? You're right, help begins in one's own head, more's the pity. And people these days seem far less charitable than what I recall from my childhood. Or was I just whacked out on being a kid?

Steve Hughes - Yes, the death penalty is just giving up on someone, either from outrage, vindictiveness, or being utterly at a loss about what to do that might help reform or rehabilitate or recivilize the person being executed.

Milt Stevens - Hey, come back to the **Fantasy Rotator** Bucket, it's getting damned empty again. You're right, crime is easy drama with built-in conflict. That's probably why mystery stories are so enduring, there's always basic human interest in them, unlike all-too-many sf tales, as has been discussed earlier in this & other locs. And forget Byron, let's dragoon Wilt Chamberlain into the LASFAPA Chart -- they didn't call him Stilt for nothing, apparently, if his claim of having had sexual congress with over 10,000 women is true.

Lloyd G. Daub - Those who start at the beginning, continue until they reach the end, and

then *don't* stop are called critics and academics.

THE ZINE DUMP - Suitably dumpy. Glad to see that Astral Travel is finally a matter of confidence and safety.

Binker Glock's "Naked" is a prescient poem from 1994. A bit more quality poetry wouldn't be a bad thing, methinks.

GUNSLINGER by Scotty Offutt -- any relation to the Air Force Base I'm sitting rather close to at the moment? -- Gives new meaning to the term Glamour Shot, doesn't it? *Stand back, he's got a gun* -- new fan slogan.

HAMLET'S GHOST ...and Others by Richard L. Dengrove - I remember when he used to be Rich. Anyway, superb article, full of thoughtful chunks that'll be bothering -- haunting? -- me for some time. You're right, Protestant ghosts were demons, sure, and to the Puritans, practically everything was a demon in one form or another, so I can see your point that Hamlet's ghost fits into the milieu.

Being "hag-ridden" refers to a specific sort of nightmare, in which, during hypnogogic sleep, we dream for some reason of an old woman, or hag, sitting on our chest and often sucking the life out of us. It's thought to be a basis for the succubus.

Ghosts as conscience makes an interesting distinction, because this type of ghost is doing, at least by proxy, the Lord's work, isn't it? However, Shakespeare's use of ghosts is to externalize the inner conflicts so torturing Hamlet, to make them explicit. It's clever exposition, among other things, with roots in Greek drama. My guess is that Shakespeare had more reference to Dante than to theology.

Also, remember that demon comes from the Greek, daimon, meaning only divine power, with neither positive nor negative connotations, perhaps because the Greek conception of the gods included both tendencies in a very human mix. Redefining demon to mean "evil spirit" came about thanks to the Puritans, so in Shakespeare's time such a spin would've been rather new, and maybe open to some satire.

Also, is the ghost of Hamlet's father actually evil? If it's not merely Hamlet's inner turmoil made dramatic, then it could also be construed as a spirit of justice, an attempt from



beyond the pale to balance the scales and right a wrong, which would have appealed greatly to the vengeance-happy Elizabethans. Of course, the ghost does lead Hamlet into temptation, doesn't it? Hard to call.

*The ghost leads Hamlet to truth and the opportunity not only for revenge, but redemption, so I would hardly call it demonic or evil. One thing that bothers me: by the end of the play, Hamlet is entirely reactive, almost lax. He does nothing after returning from the pirates to carry forward his father's command, and only fulfills it in anger after Claudius' plan to murder him is revealed.*

Demon dogs may stem from the Spectral Hunt or Wild Hunt of the Celts, and certainly Doyle used this resonance to good effect in **The Hound of the Baskervilles**.

Uh, Dickens wasn't Catholic, so Marley's Ghost is probably merely a moral object lesson. Also, what of the third part of the trinity? How did that affect the Elizabethan and Jacobean mindset, one wonders.

Your thesis hasn't convinced me, but hasn't failed, either. As I said, this'll be bugging me for some time, probably. Thanks for an excellent, provocative article.

On the Spot: ANDERSONVILLE - A place to give even ghosts the creeps. Excellent article, and the illustrations were evocative.

THE WHITE SUSTENANCE - What can be said, a heartrending account that underscores the innate absurdity of draconian laws and their unwarranted, uncharitable, and inhumane punishments, along with the utter insanity drug use and associating with drug users can cause. It costs so much to fuck up so little, all too often. You speak for the people caught in such dilemmas, and your eloquence always leads me into frustrated anger and outraged empathy, especially when it's not entirely clear-cut, as in this case.

That such a chain of tragic missteps could happen to any of us is a lesson too few of us learn, and that's one of the biggest obstacles to drawing on the compassion necessary to try to help instead of rushing to punish. And Bill's suicide, well, no one saw that coming, and retrospect can be cruel, but it seems that his,

too, at the end, was a choice bullied by circumstances that could've been changed. And I don't mean whether or not he'd be subpoenaed, I mean the fraught atmosphere of adversarial law.

*Bill wasn't the first. A man I sued over a car wreck had a heart attack as a direct result of the lawsuit. So I've killed two men. I didn't put guns to their head or knives in their hearts ... just subpoenas in their hands. The fact that I did so out of duty and that I could not have anticipated their deaths doesn't change what is ultimately immutable. They died because of my actions. A factor no one else but you caught in "The White Sustenance" was my abiding unease because of that.... and the fact that I'll do it again whenever necessary.*

And to end **Challenger 8** with those two elegiac tributes to Chance, wow. Put the cap on one strong bottle of feelings, let me tell you.

This zine has the most heart of any of them, and that's one hell of a compliment in my book. In the end, maybe that's all any of us are left with, art and memories. Thanks for both.

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I had an awful lot to say about **Challenger #6** but seem to have much less to say this time though I did enjoy the zine very much. In fact, all my comments are on the lettercol.

Roy Tackett on the Highmore in '64 bid brings back fond memories, but I thought SAPS member Wrai Ballard lived there or nearby at the time. Anyhow, I think it was he who said in a SAPSzine that while Highmore had three bars it had no hotels, so fen would have to drink all weekend and never go to sleep. Then about ten years ago, Dick Harter, NESFAn, came from Blanchard ND and had a joke bid. In only remember a discussion of the large number of sheep in Blanchard, and a cartoon cover on NESFA's **Proper Boskonian**, of a book stand containing titles like **I Have No Muzzle and I Must Bleat** and **The Yew is a Harsh Mistress**.

NESFen of the time did not remember the previous North Dakota bid.

Ben Indick said that van Gogh cut off his ear to impress a woman. I had heard that he suffered from tintinaitus [sic], constant ringing sounds in his head, most of his life, and he mutilated his ears to try, unsuccessfully, to stop the torment.

Harry Warner wondered why Mars didn't have more water than the Moon since it would capture more comet debris. Actually, I believe Mars *does* have much more water than the Moon, in the polar caps and as permafrost deep underground. The Moon only has a little bit in the permanently sunless bottoms of some polar craters.

I forget who wrote of Little Men meetings at Ben Stark's in Berkeley [and] the old mags there [*that was ye editor*]. I was a regular at the Little Men 1962 to 1965 and fondly remember their and Gugfus (Golden Gate Futurian Society) meetings on alternate Friday's at Stark's, Poul & Karen Anderson's, Alva and Sid Rogers', Emil Petaja's, and Joe & Felice Rolfe's. Those were glorious days at the peak of my fannish activity. I did most of my magazine collecting between '55 and '62, concentrating on **Astounding** and **Unknown**, and most of the post-WWII digests, including many a crudzine but with some excellent low-budget zines edited by Doc Lowndes. It was Rog Phillips' column in a Ray Palmer zine (**Other Worlds? Universe?**) that prompted me to get into fandom in '55. I had been reading Rog's column and then Boucher's **Rocket to the Rue Morgue** made fandom sound like so much fun that I wrote him for some addresses. I am now 63 years old and cannot read my print collection, and neither my wife nor my son have any interest in my magazines (Both *do* read the SF books), and I am thinking about selling them. I hate to do it ... it feels like selling my own children. However, my 20x30 foot library is bulging with additional boxes in the attic, basement, and garage.

To me the magazines *are* the field, the history is there, as the on-going dialog of the authors, as Fred Lerner says. (See his column in **Niekas** 46 when I can finally get it out.) Fred

made a good point there and elsewhere that when someone like Margaret Atwood writes a book in our genre, she is not part of the dialog. In our dialog writers look at the ideas in each other's stories and carry them further. She has no interest in our stories and is isolated. And it seems to me that this dialog has largely taken place in the magazines. From concept to published book is at least two years, so the process seems too slow to me for such a dialog. When I started reading SF in 1950 the original hardcover book was a rarity, and few fen bought them when they *did* come out. In the '60s the Hugo rules allowed a second crack at eligibility when a book was published as an HC original. Only magazine serials and paperback novels had a shot at the Hugo, though **A Canticle for Leibowitz** and **Stranger in a Strange Land** violated that rule of thumb. Now magazine serials have no chance.

*Gotta disagree here. First, I don't see how original hardback publication gave a book two shots at a Hugo. First publication date always has ruled insofar as eligibility is concerned. The only novel ever nominated twice was **The Moon is a Harsh Mistress**, and that was because of a loophole in the rules regarding magazine serials. And Lois Bujold's **Barrayar**, a fairly recent winner, won the award after appearing in serial form -- and paperback.*

Found the piece on the ghost in **Hamlet** very interesting. In contemporary horror fiction the ghost is assumed to be some sort of remnant of a dead person. In the few such stories I have read its intentions might be malevolent, neutral, or benign, but it is rarely considered to be a demon pretending to be a human remnant. I had not known of the Elizabethan dichotomy between Catholic and Protestant ghosts.

Roger Waddington praised magazines for not publishing media-related fiction. Unfortunately the newly-revised **Amazing** violates this, having a very strong **Star Wars** tie-in. But even that might not be too bad. Shortly after George Scithers became editor of the new **Asimov**, he started a companion zine, large format, called **Asimov's Science Fiction Adventure Magazine**. George had hoped to

capture the comic book audience and bring it to written SF, but I guess he failed as the zine lasted very few issues. Or did the publisher kill it for other reasons before returns were in? Perhaps this new **Amazing** will succeed where Scithers failed ... and perhaps not. As John Trimble has said, "You can bring a whore to culture, but you cannot make her think."

**Gregory Benford**  
**XBenford@aol.com**

A fine issue, best so far perhaps. You continue to be your own standout writer, editorial and otherwise -- a sense of character and place come through, though I've never met you.

*Maybe we've never been introduced but you're a familiar face from my years in fandom. You were the speaker at my first Little Men meeting in 1967, you were Guest of Honor at an Atlanta con I attended in 1983, you came to the Nebula banquet in NOLA several years back, and of course you were at LACon III.*

We haven't the same lit'ry taste, though ... I found **Lives of the Monster Dogs** a pretentious knockoff of ifras misunderstood from the genre. Read the NYTimes review and wrote an outraged note asking if the reviewer had never head of **The Island of Dr. Moreau** or the later hundred of works which did a better job.

Of course I disagree that fantasy is broader and more powerful ... Surely you can't mean that the genre swamped with trilogies written by suburbanites who've never sat a horse, hoed a lie or slopped a hawg? As a country boy I find fantasy missing exactly this quality of lived experience. SF has some excuse (though not much) for its authors not experiencing their worlds. *Anybody* can learn enough about rural matters to make fantasy breathe ... and they don't, for my money.

I'm Guest of Honor at the SF Research Association meeting this June in Mobile and you've inspired me to bring this up in my public talk on SF, Fantasy and the South -- for the south is often the true conceptual ground of U.S. fantasy (vs. Tolkein or Lovecraft, say). Thanks!

I found *very* effective your "White Sustenance". Must say you're brave to make yourself come off as less than fore-thoughtful in

the death of Bill [*the witness who committed suicide after being served with a subpoena*]. I dislike so much the arrogance of lawyers at every end of the scale, how they've logjammed American society with their endless dodges and amoral postures -- all that matters is who has the better gladiators, not what the truth is, just like ancient Rome. It's hard not to read your truly well-done piece and sympathize with you in his death ...

**Karen Johnson**  
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**Australia**  
**karenjoh@hotmail.com**

I hope you don't mind someone writing to you out of the blue. I recently picked up a bundle of fairly recent fanzines from the Ian Gunn Memorial Fund, and **Challenger** 7 was included. After reading it, I have to say I agree with Walter Willis ... **Challenger** seems to me to be an interesting, varied, well-thought-out, and well-laid-out product (should i gush any more?)

*Please do! Although I must admit that of the 9 Challs to date, only #s 5 & 7 were really planned -- the rest just grewed.*

The front cover [to #7, by David Cherry] is maganificent! Alas I couldn't admire it in its full glory because the silverfish seemed to have liked the taste of the glossy grey ink and they've nibbled away at the cup in the hands of that beautiful lady. Do you know if the drawing was based on a real person? [*Sure don't.*] Thank you too for the photo essays on the history of Hugos. I've never seen one of them before, though I knew that they always had different bases. So that's what the "rocket launch" base actually looked like. I'd heard it was supposed to be hideous. Sorry, it doesn't look bad to me ... quite graceful actually. I thought the Hugos were always made of silver [*chrome, actually*], so I was surprised to see a "crystal: (plastic) model. I don't know what the bases they're using at Aussiecon look like, or even who's making them. All I know about them is that it cost a packet to bring them into the country because they're real silver [???] and someone declared them (probably for insurance purposes) so the Customs people locked them up

in a warehouse until Aussiecon coughed up an incredible quantity of import tax. I do't think they quite understood what it was all about, or the fact that they're 99.9% certain to be leaving again in September. (Can't we keep one, please? Ian Gunn for Fan Artist Hugo!!!!!!) [*Sounds fair to me.*]

As somebody who's never been to a worldcon I enjoyed Inge Glass' report and your photoessay. Things are coming under control at this end. Almost every fan in Melbourne has been co-opted to do something to help organise the con, and I've found myself in charge of the Childcare, half of the Children's Program, and I'm helping with the Art Show. Speaking of the Children's Program -- we need volunteer session leaders/helpers from the overseas contingent. We don't know who you all are, but surely there are people out there who enjoy working with kids, have a fannish / artistic / science background (especially the latter) and would be willing to help out for an hour or so? Please contact me if you can help or if you know anyone else who might be interested.

**Mike Resnick**  
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Dear Sir You Cur:  
 You single-handedly wiped out 20 Antarean Dynasties! [*In my caption to Mr. R's photo in issue #8.*] Shame on you! It was "The 43 Antarean Dynasties", not 23. So there.  
 Otherwise, your usual sterling issue.

*Mike*

P.P.S. See you at the 1999 DeepSouthCon.  
*With bells & whistles!*

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**ARTISTS THIS SECTION**

Brad Foster, Wm. Rotsler, Scott Patri, Alexis Gilliland, Joe Mayhew, Terry Jeeves, Ian Gunn, Joshua Quagmire.

**ARTISTS IN 'ZINE DUMP'**

Gillilan/Rotsler, Gunn, Mayhew, Cara Sherman, Jeeves, Nola Frame-Gray.

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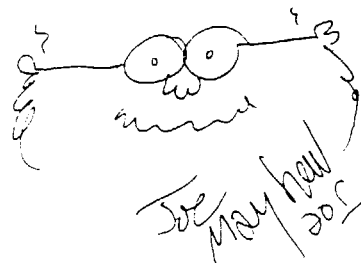
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THE CASE FOR COMMEMORATIVE U.S. POSTAGE  
STAMPS FOR S.F. ARTISTS, AUTHORS & EDITORS  
OR  
THERE'S NO WAY MY TONGUE IS GOING  
ANYWHERE NEAR AYN RAND

*Chris Barkley*  
*also to be printed in ASFA*

Several weeks ago I read in **Entertainment Weekly** (of all places!) that the late Ayn Rand (1905-82) is going to be honored with a commemorative U.S. stamp by the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee (CSAC) sometime this year. Ms. Rand is the author of three novels well known in the s.f. community, **Anthem** (1938), **The Fountainhead** (1943) and **Atlas Shrugged** (1957) and better known as the originator of the philosophy of Objectivism whose main aim, quoting from John Clute's entry for her in the **Encyclopedia of Science Fiction** (St. Martin's Press, 1995), is "... to heed one's own self interest, to abjure altruism and to maximize the Superman potential within all of us."

Which in itself would be fine if Ayn Rand weren't such a mean, money-happy, selfish, backstabbing bitch.

Ever since she immigrated from Russia back in the 1930's, her every waking moment had been spent in pursuit of power, flory, and (especially) wealth, all for herself. She had taken the basic concepts of Libertarianism and had twisted them to such an incredibly severe and perverse degree that I could imagine robber barons like J.P. Morgan and Andrew Carnegie blanching in fear at the sight of her.

Ayn Rand turned me off a long time ago; I witnessed her in action on Phil Donohue's show one summer in the mid-'70s. A small, gnome-like woman with gnarly little hands and an ever-present frown, she was rather cold, distant, and rude towards an audience that by the looks of it, was more than ready to adore her. What I witnessed that day (and what Donohue truly intended to show) was that all the humanity and soul had been rung out of her a long, long time ago.

And yet, Ayn Rand is getting a commemorative stamp.

My question is, where Catherine Lucille Moore's stamp?

C.L. Moore (1911-1987), under her own name and with her equally talented husband, Henry Kuttner, were one of the premiere writing teams during the first Golden Age of Science Fiction (believe it or not, we're in the midst of the Second Golden Age, but that's another argument in another column...). She had a hand in writing classics like "Shambleau", "Clash by Night", "Jirel of Joiry" and novels such as **Judgment Night** and **Fury**.

And if we're going to give her (and Henry, of course) a stamp, we'll have to give one to Theodore Sturgeon. And Robert A. Heinlein. Isaac Asimov. I could go on (and will very shortly, too) but I think you're getting my point.

America has honored its greatest writers and artists with stamps: Hemingway, Cassat, Faulkner, Pollack, Fitzgerald and Steinbeck ... What about the artists, writers and editors near and dear to *our* hearts; men and women who have infolenced astronauts, filmmakers, scholars, engineers, lawyers and lawmakers, even captivating our current President and his daughter. It would not hyperbole to state that the writers that I have just mentioned had more, talent, more imagination, more essence of soul in their right pinkie fingers than Ayn Rand had in her entire body.

There have been discussions regarding this for years. At Bucconeer, a panel was devoted to debating who is deserving enough to be honored.

My friends, the millennium is at hand and the time has come to get it done.

The task at hand will be very daunting. The CSAC's rules regarding commemorative stamps are

located at < [www.usps.gov/fr\\_stamps.html](http://www.usps.gov/fr_stamps.html) > . Proving that our beloved and departed are worth stamps is easily done ... mustering enough popular public support to fulfill our wishes will be an uphill battle, except ... I have a plan.

I will build a website, completely devoted to s.f. stamps. The website might be of newsworthy interest by itself, but it might gain even more attention if its opening were to coincide with the release of the most anticipated movie of the last decade, if not the entire century. And no, I'm not talking about **Austin Powers: The Spy who Shagged Me** ...

The Commemorative Science Fiction Stamp Drive website will be open by 12:021 AM, 18 May 1999.

At this writing, the design will include a link to the CSAC rules, short bios of the artist, author and editor nominees (with a voting option, whose results will be collected and sent to the CSAC), e-mail to the USPS, a section for comments, suggestions on future nominees (or those that may have been overlooked), links to the Association of Science Fiction Artists, the Science Fiction Writers of America, the World Science Fiction Society and the Science Fiction Web Ring. An announcement of the website opening will be sent to *every* major news organization in the United States.

### The Nominees

Artists: Richard Powers Frank R. Paul Ed Emshwiller Hannes Bok Virgil Finlay  
Jack Gaughan Vaughan Bode Roy Krenkel Chesley Bonestell

Editors: John W. Campbell, Jr. Judy Lynn Del Rey Anthony Boucher T.E. Ditky  
Donald & Elsie Wollheim Groff Conklin Terry Carr H.L. Gold

Authors: E.E. "Doc" Smith Robert A. Heinlein Isaac Asimov Clifford D. Simak Paul Linebarger  
(Cordwainer Smith) Will F. Jenkins (Murray Leinster) Theodore Sturgeon  
C.L. Moore & Henry Kuttner Alfred Bester Leigh Brackett & Edmond Hamilton  
Alice Sheldon (James M. Tiptree, Jr.) Philip K. Dick Cyril M. Kornbluth James Blish  
Frank Herbert Fritz Leiber

Some final points: (A) I realize that the list is overwhelmingly male. Sexism aside, this could not be helped; these are the pioneers of our genre and their greatness must be judged by their historical significance and their work, not their gender. (B) I need photographs of any of the nominees; please scan it and send it via e-mail attachment to < [cmshang56@yahoo.com](mailto:cmshang56@yahoo.com) >, or, if you would like to physically entrust a photograph to me, via snail mail to 7505 Montgomery Rd. Apt. #4, Cincinnati OH 45236-4140. (C) Your comments and suggestions are *always* welcome! (D) I really don't know if all of these deserving nominees will receive their just due. Once the CSAC approves of the proposition of s.f. stamps, there will be no telling if there will be a limit on the number issued. It is my hope that they will all be honored over several years in a series of issues. We can only hope the CSAC can be persuaded to do so.

As for Ayn Rand ... If I were on the committee and could not block the commemorative issue, I would vigorously lobby to grant her a stamp that would be appropriate and fitting for her ... Bulk Rate/3rd Class direct mail!

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Challenger wholeheartedly endorses this marvelous idea -- but note that USPS policy forbids honoring anyone with a commemorative stamp who hasn't been dead for ten years. That lets out Asimov. And where is Hugo Gernsback's name?*

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# ON THE JOB

*Guy Lillian*

## BIBB

Most of the time he kept his face in his hands, or in a kleenex cupped in his palms. Thin, undersized, his dimunitiveness underscored by the bulky sweater he wore, he was pale, and chinless, so sunken-chested he seemed boneless, curling up on himself, like a doodlebug. He looked half his 32 years. Not the most criminal man I've ever seen. Simply the most evil.

Brian Bibb was a successful engineer and executive with Texaco. He had a pretty wife, also an engineer and executive with Texaco, a six-figure house, two hundred grand in the bank, and two very attractive kids named Christopher and Catherine, 5 and 2. He was the quintessential yuppie, the picture of '80's achievement and conformity: a man whose career came first. His trouble was where his career took him.

He came from a little municipality in Pennsylvania, near the chocolate town, Hershey. His first Louisiana posting was Morgan City, a similarly small town. Overt problems emerged when Texaco promoted him to the regional office, in New Orleans. The city - with its high crime rate, primitive racial relations, and extreme corruption - terrified Brian Bibb. His job performance began to show signs of stress. He was advised to enroll in an inpatient stress program. He wrote a memo to the Texaco brass begging for a transfer to Hershey, even though the company had no office there. The police found a copy of the memo at his house. In the memo he stated his worries about life in New Orleans. He cited "danger to his children."

I think the date was June 3, 1991. On that day I picked up a promising medical report on a civil case from a doctor at Charity Hospital. That evening, the night, Brian Bibb murdered his two children and injured his wife with a serrated steak knife.

His wife survived to slip through a window and call the police. The first cop through the door was a 25-year veteran of police work. They say he sobbed from the stand when he described the scene.



*Art by BRYAN NORRIS*

The DA's investigator was well-known to me, street-tough, cynical, and very funny. He liked to skid crime scene photos in front of public defenders to razz us about our clients. This time, he said plainly that he would not show us those photographs even if we asked.

Not that anyone wanted to see them. You see, Bibb slit his children's throats. The pathologist found defensive wounds on their palms. They were awake at the time. The neck wounds were likewise ragged and vicious. Clearly, the ferocity of the attack was insane.

But was *Bibb* insane? Did he know right from wrong when he attacked his family? That was the question.

The prosecution said yes. His memo, and his long night walks, were part they said of a calculated design. He'd bought extra insurance on his wife. His memo could have set up a massive lawsuit against Texaco after the worst had happened. And the worst was on Bibb's mind. The evening before his savagery, Bibb had discussed **Fatal Vision** with his wife. **Fatal Vision**: the murder of a wife and children by an overachiever ~ driven over the edge by the amphetamines in antihistamines. Jeffrey MacDonald had tried to blame the crime on hippy intruders. Bibb, said the state, planned to do the same. If that failed, he had the antihistamines.

It was called "the Dimetapp defense." Bibb's lawyer, Dick Murphy, was quite proud of it. It's not every case when you get to present an innovative and possibly historic defense, and it was that "historic" that Murphy counted on to underscore its impression on the jury. Aware that they were making history, he felt, the jury would give the defense more consideration. Others weren't so sure. Many lawyers I talked to felt that laying two hideous murders to the effects of over-the-counter medication trivialized the event, and the jury would feel that Murphy had added insult to irreparable injury. No way to convince them that this was not a monster before them, but a desperately sick man.

It was clear to me, as I watched the trial, that Bibb's entire demeanor was focused on this object. Instead of a suit he wore the aforementioned bulky sweater, which made him look like a sickly, pale boy. He barely opened his eyes and never looked on the witnesses. He sobbed often. Occasionally, he sobbed too much. In fact, he sobbed the most when the district attorney was approaching a particularly telling point against him. Then he'd wail like a banshee, and often collapse. It looked phony.

I talked to the ADA about Bibb years after the trial. A cynical woman, her comportment failed her when the subject came up. She remembered little about all of the other murder trials she'd done; they were simply jobs. Bibb's case ... The photos, she said, haunted her yet. And one time in the law school library I was reading over the appellate decision on the case, when who should stroll by but another of the ADAs who'd worked it. He too had never forgotten it; he too kept seeing those pictures.

So how would I have defended Bibb? Maybe the "yuppie" alternative. Another attorney on the defense team, a former nurse, advanced this defense in the penalty phase of the trial. Bibb, she said, was a naive kid from a small town: brilliant, but unable to enjoy his brilliancy. He gave himself and the people around him no breaks. Only perfection would do: perfection was the only acceptable accomplishment, the only acceptable state. (Without meaning to she recalled MacDonald to mind again, who butchered his wife in part because he didn't think her as perfect as the rest of his hotshot existence.) When Bibb felt that perfection threatened, when he found that living in a larger, more complex, more dangerous city had brought him to the stress-stretched limit of his talent ~ he lost his mind. That might have worked better.

It worked well enough. Though guilty of two counts of first degree murder and one count of attempted, Bibb would not face the Needle. The jury hung on the issue of punishment, and he drew life imprisonment. No one voiced much disappointment, and I understood. Watching his wretched figure shamble out of the courtroom that last time, I felt a definite sense of closure. Society was finished with Brian Bibb. The law had put him away. It was enough for practically everyone to shut Brian Bibb into a cage and be done with him forever.

Of course, we heard more about him. There were stories of the brute justice being handed out against him by his fellow inmates at Angola. Realize this about criminals. Some are murderers, some are robbers, some are embezzlers, and some are *fathers*. They do not welcome the likes of Brian Bibb in their midst. One



tale I heard involved the collection of urine in tin cans, to be pitched in at Bibb through his cell door. Within the past year I saw him again, huddled on his knees by the front door to the courthouse, chained to one of my former clients who called me over to say hello. "Sorry about your company," I told my guy, watching the thing groveling at his feet. Doubtless it was to my disgrace that all I felt like doing was kicking Bibb's teeth into his brain.

They'd brought Bibb back for a post-conviction appeals hearing. I was in the courtroom next door and we all heard when they carried the defendant out. It was not a human sound. It was a bleating. Bestial. My judge glanced up sharply. "Bibb, sir," I told him.

Brian Bibb lives out his lifetime as apart from humanity as possible. But the ghastly resonance of his acts echoes and echoes. *Why?* Did his kids die because of psychotic yuppie angst, or greed (there was a new insurance policy on the wife), or antihistamine psychosis, or the phases of the moon? Several cops told me they suspected that Bibb was a repressed homosexual, and struck out of projected guilt and self-loathing, a hideous precursor to Dunblane. His wife - injured only - didn't speak much about the case, and I couldn't observe her almost eerie calm without wondering ... She must have known that something was terribly wrong with Bibb, and like, after all, cleaves to like ...

We will never know. The fragility of life, relationships, society, these are after all the morbid lessons of Brian Bibb's act. Emptiness. Monstrosity. How do we answer him?

The question kept me awake for a long time. Finally, as a stopgap measure, I came up with *duty*. Duty to keep faith, despite atrocity, horror, lunacy. All we have in the face of Brian Bibb is belief that human life is important, that even the least of us deserves protection, that joy is possible, that hope has meaning, that love is real.

### THREE TRIALS

Jefferson Parish, Louisiana, where I serve as a public defender, is a conservative bedroom community for the New Orleans area. It has filled over the years with apostles of the great church of the White Flight, which is why I've said, in issues past, that it's next to impossible to win a criminal case there.

New Orleans itself is different. Very different. Night and day different. And whether or not Orleans represents night or day depends entirely on your point of view.

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We started **Brian's** second trial at ten o'clock in the morning. Judge Petruzello - young, gloomy, conservative; went to law school with Dennis Dolbear - was impatient, and wanted it done; Brian had been in jail for far too long and the matter had been postponed far too many times. So he hurried us along, myself and co-counsel Valla Lyons and the young male district attorneys; there would be no more delays.

Brian faced accusations of armed robbery and attempted murder. The victim was a decent, gentlemanly tourist - a dentist in town for a convention. His word and his word alone tied Brian, our client, to the crime.

Quite a crime it was. Doctor and his wife and several of his staff members were staying at the Hilton, a hotel infamous for its rotten security. Early evening, Doctor's wife went next door to chat with a friend while



the doctor flaked off in front of the tube. His back to the door, he felt a weight on the edge of the bed; turning, expecting his wife, and instead found himself facing a pop-eyed maniac.

The intruder began to whack the doctor on the head with a pistol. He hit the doctor and he hit the doctor and he hit the doctor and he hit the doctor, as they rolled off the bed onto the floor by the window.

"I just need drug money," he rasped. "This is *your* fault; *you're* making me do this."

The attacker picked up a lamp and brought it down smash on what remained of the doctor's scalp. The doctor said later that the sensation was unmistakable, and unspeakable. He felt his skull give way. His attacker shoved him aside and rifled through his wallet, taking cash and a gold Visa card. While he was at it, the doctor's wife knocked on the door.

She was in her bathrobe and locked out. At first she thought the situation comic. But then the door flew open and she was yanked down by the intruder, the gun at her head.

Through the blood coursing over his face the doctor saw this and staggered to his feet. The intruder seemed astounded that he was still alive. He bolted down the hall to the stairwell and was gone.

The injuries to the doctor were awful. He required metal plates be set into his skull to relieve pressure on the dura. He was well enough the next day to take a visit from a NOPD sketch artist., who created a drawing with the doctor's guidance. (Neither the wife nor their friend got a good look at the attacker's face.) In a few weeks, the cops FedEx'd a number of mug shots to the doctor. From them he picked one. He was quite definite that it showed the guilty party: Brian.

Brian had been seen trolling other Nawlins hotels with two other black males. In 1987 he'd broken into a Hilton guest room ~ though that time, when he found it occupied, he made like the Red Sea and split. That's what brought his face to official attention; that's what caused him to be included in the photo lineup. But prior convictions or arrests are information the law ordinarily denies the jury. This was a point which could have been important later, during the trial, which started as I said at ten o'clock in the morning.

Brian's first trial had featured professorial jurors who poohpooed the prosecution's case during *voir dire*. We were almost as lucky this time. Not one but four lawyers were in the jury pool, and all mentioned cases they'd seen of *mistaken identity*. I prayed the other jurors were listening. Also, I asked those jurors who had been knocked unconscious or given solid clouts on the head about their ability to perceive things afterwards. Eventually we got our jury, 12 citizens good and true: 7 women and 5 men; 9 black folks, 3 white. One was a nun, black and female and seemingly narcoleptic. I don't think she opened her eyes during the trial. For these charges ten would have to concur for a verdict.

I won't go into tedious detail on the testimony except for a couple of points. First was the idiot police detective who almost sent us all home, when he mentioned burglaries in adjacent hotels. Recall that I mentioned information that the jury cannot see? This was such. The rationale is that there was no proof that Brian committed those crimes ~ and there wasn't, just videotapes showing him in those hotels on those days ~ and therefore they didn't constitute evidence against him. Merely mentioning that there had. been crimes in other hotels was prejudicial. Judge Petruzello excused the jury for a minute or two of healthy grouching at the cop to watch his damnfool mouth. He denied me a mistrial but caught my eye a moment later to share a subtle disgusted shake of the head.

Another item of interest involved bloody clothing found in the Hilton some weeks after the crime. They were far lighter-colored than the clothes the doctor described and fit no one involved, certainly not Brian. But they found the doctor's credit card ~ part of the loot ~ in the pants pocket. Also, though the pants were stained with Type O blood (shared by the doctor, Brian, and you, for all I know), the blood on the shirt was Type A. Whose? The ADA had no answer, and neither did I ... but I did have a very tantalizing mystery to wave at my jury. An unexplained bit of vital evidence, I said. A *reasonable doubt*.

But these things were sideshows. The only attraction that meant squat was the victim - the doctor. Because his was the only evidence pointing the finger at Brian.

I hadn't spoken to the doctor before he took the stand, but I had seen him, waiting with his wife and

friends in the anteroom. He and I had exchanged a glance, both of us aware of the strange and intense relationship on which we were about to embark. He was a nice-looking guy, tall, slim, a secure man, friendly, accomplished and successful; obviously a thoroughly decent gentleman. Upon me fell the duty of tearing him up.

Well, not *him*. Just his story. There were crease marks to guide me, all ripping jagged holes across his identification of Brian. My main point dealt with the ferocity of the attack. How could a man ~ even an excellent guy like the doctor ~ be sure of his perceptions after such a vicious attack? How did he explain the differences between the sketch he'd guided into creation the day after the incident and Brian ~ who was nowhere near as popeyed and who had more hair? And what about the smaller shirt and pants with his credit card in the pocket?

When the question was Brian's guilt, the prosecution emphasized that the doctor's head was crushed, the better to revolt the jury. It downplayed the injury when I asked about the reliability of an injured man's perceptions. A friend said the doctor remembered football scores and his Social Security number. I said that proved only that he'd memorized his number, since we had no evidence that the scores were correct. He claimed that he'd begun to drive as soon as he was discharged from the hospital, and that he'd been back at work the next day. Politely, with the best courtesy I could muster, I decried that proved anything about his being able to report accurately on what he saw.

It was the theme of my closing. Look to your own experience, I said, to your own common sense. A man that dreadfully injured in the head cannot recall a face beyond a reasonable doubt. On Valla's suggestion, I zeroed in on the intensely personal *hurt* the good doctor had suffered. Here was a man who had worked hard, and achieved much, and done well. He was obviously a credit to himself and his family and his community. I expressed my sincere horror and embarrassment that he should be attacked in this city... really, that any person would do such a terrible thing to another. But you don't convict a man on the basis of pity, or shame. You convict him on the basis of *evidence*, and all the state had was the doctor, and because of his pain and because of *his* shame, his identification didn't stand up.

(I also hauled out the mysterious blood-spattered clothing, the too-small too-light duds partially spotted with the wrong blood type, wherein they found the doctor's credit card. A mystery ... a fact the state cannot explain ... *reasonable doubt*.)

Well, the jury got the case at 8:10 PM, after ten hours of trial. I was whupped. Leaving my phone number with the court clerk, I went home and flaked, expecting a quick guilty verdict. I was conditioned by Jefferson Parish venires to expect loss. But I'd done my best. Time for a nap.

At 11:30 the phone rang in my ear. "Jury back?" I muttered to the receiver. But it was simply a pushy dope court client who didn't know decent people slept at night. Back to sleep.

At 1 in the morning I awoke again. I'd heard nothing. I pulled my tie on again and blundered to the courthouse. Surely the jury had returned and they hadn't called me. But no. Amidst the preternatural silence of the courtroom, the echoing chambers of the hallway, the smudgy atmosphere of unnatural consciousness, Valla waited, the ADAs waited, Petruzello waited, the bailiff and court reporter waited ... and Brian, seated on his cold cell floor, waited.

At 2:10 the judge had waited long enough. He brought the jury down. They looked *flailed*.

The vote, they reported, was 7-5, and had been for hours, and would probably so remain. That was close enough to a dead heat to convince Petruzello. Go home, he told them. Go home, he told the ADAs. Go home, he would have told the doctor had he been there. Go home, he told me and he told Valla. Stay here, he told Brian. Everyone come back in late March.

"*Well hung*," lauded Valla (not that she'd know). Other defense lawyers also praised the result. Anything's better than a conviction, they said. Guess so. But I didn't know how I felt. True, I'd argued sincerely, and were I a juror I would have voted not guilty; but I wanted *finis* to this story. Not just for myself,

or Brian, or even Brian's family. For the doctor. The man was a wronged innocent. He deserved *closure*. Now he had to return, and face me again. And God forgive me, the next time I knew I could take him.

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It had to be the most satisfying verdict I've heard since my first first degree. The client's name was **Hubert** and he was charged with Distribution of Cocaine and Possession of Cocaine with the Intent to Distribute.

Hubert was a big, likable black guy of 32, slow, affable, dumb - his family told me he'd been in special ed all his life. On the day in question he was loafing around a mini-mall in a poor neighborhood, drinking a beer. Up sauntered Officer **Lane**, another black man of 32, in plainclothes. Without bothering to inform the people that he was of the constabulary, he went from group to group asking if anyone had any cocaine to sell, or knew where any could be bought. Hubert volunteered to help him. It was never clear whether Lane offered him a piece of the crack rock or was asked for one. Out of the adjacent convenience store came **William**, a dealer. He advised Hubert and Lane to follow him to his apartment.

While they walked Lane kept up a constant chatter. He was wired, you see, and being followed by two or three other narcs, in cars. When they reached the apartment complex a few blocks distant, these cops took up positions in the parking lot, as Lane and Hubert followed William into his abode. William went into his closet and emerged with a plastic dinner plate, on which was arrayed a selection of rough cut rocks of crack cocaine. William invited Lane, the buyer, to select his goods. He did so and handed over the cash. At this point the stories diverged.

According to Hubert - and common sense - William gave the dope to Lane. The two buyers departed and Lane gave a fragment of the crack to Hubert, who left. He was picked up shortly thereafter, throwing down the rock when arrested - unfortunately while being observed. Lane's version - that adopted by the district attorney - was that William handed the crack to *Hubert*, and that *Hubert* gave the dope to Lane, outside, breaking off a small piece for himself. That made him complicity in the sale, and was evidence he was working for William and therefore had possession of the dope on the plate, which he plainly intended to distribute. My ass, said I.

As you know, a defendant in a criminal trial needs put on no evidence - the entire burden of proof is on the prosecution. Nevertheless, I had some good points to make. First was the most vivid piece of secondary evidence - an audio tape of the incident, recorded from Officer Lane's wire. It held traffic sounds, static, Officer Lane's voice (clearly) and two others (not clearly). It *didn't* sustain Lane's claim that Hubert had handed him the coke. Secondly, Hubert was mildly mentally retarded - one of those people who trust people easily, can be taken advantage of easily, can be manipulated - and entrapped. Thirdly, Lane could have *known* that Hubert was dumb - and would fall for a scam. I had evidence of that - his junior high school yearbook. On page 101, Hubert - the editorial comment "UGLY" scrawled across his face, no doubt by one of his cronies.

On page 102, Lane.

Hubert had no drug record ~ in fact, no record of any convictions. That meant there was no way the prosecution could assert the defendant's predisposition to commit the crime, which refutes the entrapment defense. True, claiming that Lane had recognized Hubert, remembered him from 20 years before as a fool who could be manipulated, and then enticed him into committing his crimes was a bit of a stretch. But it was a weapon; best to use it. When Judge Greta started our trial, I voir dired the jury pool on entrapment and "the mentally challenged," and made sure to select people who had experience with such folk.

A word about Judge Greta. She was new to the bench, a former prosecutor, tiny as a bird, very conservative but pretty and quite nice. The lead ADA was also female, tiny, conservative, and pretty, also quite nice but very worried about being taken seriously, as she was not only tiny and pretty but young. (She'd fumed once that a male lawyer had been condescending to her, to which I rejoined "Now don't you worry your pretty little head about it, honey." It took her a wonderful second or two to flinch.)

It took us all afternoon to pick our jury. After a quick strategy huddle with the Orleans Parish Public Defender handling William the dealer's defense, I retired. Hubert called twice during the night, close to panic.

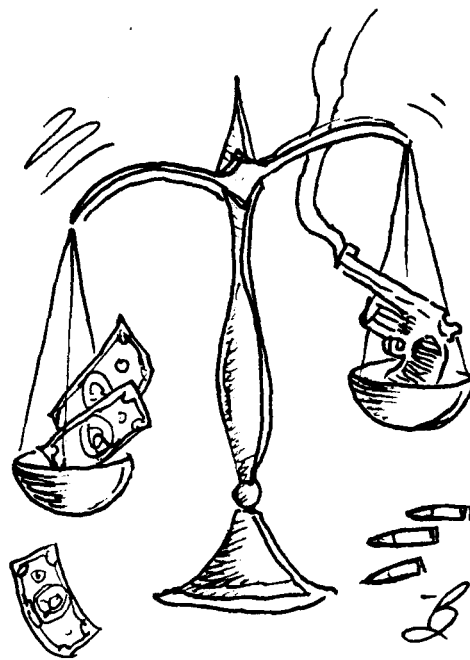
Came the dawn. I wore my good grey suit. The state's case started with the criminalist who tested the rock bought at the scene and determined that yes, it was cocaine. Then Lane took the stand, a tall fellow who proudly boasted of his numerous rookie-of-the-year awards. He held to the line that William, the dealer, had given the dope to Hubert after Lane had purchased it, even though the audio tape of the transaction proved nothing of the sort. He seemed genuinely surprised ~ and a little tickled ~ when I showed him his junior high yearbook, with his photo on the page following Hubert's. In answer, he protested that his actions weren't personal but purely professional, and really didn't come off that badly.

But I'd made some headway, at least with my attack on the distribution charge. It was clear that, after he'd snared Hubert, their meeting with William had been *accidental*. Hubert obviously did not work for or with William. Lane admitted that he had been the one who gave money for dope, and yes, it was against NOPD policy to give anyone cocaine, ever. If he'd given Hubert a piece of his rock, he'd've violated that policy, and all those awards he was so proud of could have followed his career down the tubes. That fact gave him a real motive to lie.

The next two witnesses were also cops, and one backed up Lane's story, while the other admitted that he only saw some sort of hand-to-hand exchange between Lane and Hubert. He couldn't tell who'd given what to whom. The guy who supported Lane turned out to be his mentor and trainer, and yes, he allowed, he'd look bad himself if his protege messed up. Another cop or two was called to the stand but they only talked about William's arrest. The poor PD griped about their invasion of his apartment, but during breaks, wailed ~ with a grin ~ that he had nothing to argue. They'd caught his guy with his drugs on a *plate!* Then it was our turn.

I had one witness: Hubert's brother. I put Jerry on to build sympathy for Hubert. He was 12 years older than Hubert, *not* mentally challenged; he had a record in his youth but had since settled down, gone to college and ~ true! ~ divinity school, and was awaiting ordination as a minister. He verified my claim that Hubert had been in special ed and purely on his own, talked about what this experience would teach his brother. Hubert's aged mother and father and cute girlfriend were also arrayed behind him in the courtroom ~ support that never hurts.

My favorite part of any trial is closing argument, even though it requires me to abandon my natural timidity and make a speech. I made a point of apologizing for using notes, which is bad rhetoric, and waxing



purple, which is comic, but I also battered at the state's case as hard as I could. My main point ~ and it's always the main point ~ is that the jury could not and should not *assume* facts in favor of the prosecution. They couldn't fill in gaps in order to convict. William's lawyer, with no facts in his favor, argued the Constitution, always a sign of bone-deep desperation. And so.

The jury came back in half an hour. In Jefferson that would have meant a surefire lynchmob Guilty as Charged, but Orleans, as I was assured, was another planet. William got spiked ~ two guilty's, distribution and possession with intent to distribute. Hubert got a *possession* ~ and a not guilty.

"Praise God!" exclaimed his mother. Amen, I said. Possession is probatable. Hubert would not have to go to jail. Clearly, although my entrapment defense had gone nowhere, the weakness of the distribution case had come through. Also, the family support made him human in away poor William, who sat through his trial alone, seated where he was barely visible to the jury anyway, could not manage.

Judge Greta addressed my guy. She said she agreed with the verdict ... and that Hubert was lucky to have me as his lawyer. Obviously, I really believed in my client, and my conduct of the case, she said, had been *exemplary*.

That felt ... that *really* felt ... Yeah, that it did, didn't it?

And the next week another judge in Orleans Parish held me in contempt for missing a meaningless court date and fined me \$100. But that is another and much less pleasant story.

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I argued with **Dulcea**. The case ~ in Petruzello's court ~ was a simple he said/she said. The cop said he'd seen her staggering drunkenly down the street, arrested her, and found a crack pipe in her pocket which was coated with cocaine residue. My client said that he had found the pipe underneath the back seat of his police car after he'd taken her to jail. Close to hysteria, she wailed that she hadn't put it there.

I told her that such a simple case was bound to go against her. That because her cab driver boyfriend ~ who had paid my fee ~ had searched for witnesses and couldn't find any, we couldn't possibly shake the cop's story. If she took the stand the jury would *have* to learn that she had a prior cocaine conviction. Any jury would think her more likely to have had cocaine because of that. The judge had offered her a short sentence if she pled out ~ and the further generosity of an **Alford** citation, which meant she wouldn't really be admitting guilt. If she went to trial and was convicted, she could get charged as a repeat offender and *burned*.

No, Dulcea cried, she wasn't guilty. She wasn't gonna take no time.

I was utterly disgusted. I saw myself losing an afternoon in a losing trial. Worse, I saw her losing years out of her life that I'd bargained very hard to save. I snarled at the deputies to "dress her out," put her in civilian clothes for the trial, and tried to readjust my wits to act as a zealous advocate, not an angry and ignored counselor. I had a couple of nails on which I could hang a hat: Dulcea's story wasn't so extreme as to *sound* phony, and the state based the possession accusation on *residue*, microscopic remnants of cocaine they'd found inside the pipe. I don't like residue cases. Knowing possession of even a molecule of coke is enough to support the crime, but I figure, if you can't see it, or smoke it, it's not dangerous, and therefore falls outside the intent of the anti-possession laws. Indeed, some judges have held that residue only proves that the pipe was indeed crack paraphernalia. So the crime it underscores is possession of *that*, not of cocaine itself.

During jury selection I exercised only one challenge, for a middle-aged woman whose son was an FBI agent. The cocky ADAs ~ a couple of young guys ~ did little more. The six folks we were left with were middleaged black citizens of the sort familiar to Orleans Parish juries, but rare as candy-striped rubies in Jefferson. That should have given me hope. Black jurors are generally more amenable to defense cases, although that's been changing. They're as sick of cocaine as the rest of us. It was still just a swearing contest.

At least it went quick. The ADAs' first witness was the young technician who'd tested the pipe for the cocaine. She talked about gas chromatography and mass spectrometry and so forth, interesting but not

particularly germane. I asked her about the amount of actual cocaine involved, and got the answer I wanted: too little to see, taste, or smoke.

Then the arresting cop came forward. Burly white guy, rather easily nonplussed. He seemed to get annoyed when I dragged him back over the arrest, seeking details ~ details that may have seemed irrelevant, but which, since he was flustered, made him look like he was having to make up his answers on the stand. Oops. That was it ~ the entirety of the state's case. Jeez, said I to myself, they goofed. There's a break in the chain of evidence. I'll explain that it time.

So it was my turn. I put Dulcea on the stand. To be blunt, she did not cut an impressive figure. She looked skinny and streetworn and she was missing teeth in the front, and the guards had dressed her in beat-up castoffs: right off the cover to **Crack Whore Monthly**. Furthermore, my first question had to reveal that she had a record for cocaine use ~ otherwise the prosecution would have brought it out. We couldn't look like we were hiding anything. Then I let her tell her story. The cop had found nothing on her, she said. He found the pipe underneath the car seat after she was brought to jail.

I'd had a couple of "backseat" cases in the past, and know them to be complicated, judgment calls. To win ~ at least in an unbiased jurisdiction ~ the police need to establish that (1) that they found the coke stuffed into the car seat right after the defendant had sat there, (2) that no one had been on that seat since the defendant, (3) that the backseat was searched as a matter of course after every arrestee is transported, and (4) that the cocaine could not have been there earlier because of that. I won one case because the cops were green and couldn't tell me if anyone had tossed the car after the last arrest, who that arrest was, and so forth.

So my tactic ~ born on the spot ~ was to claim that Dulcea's cop had made up the story of finding the pipe in her pocket *because* he knew that the *real* story was complex and he couldn't prove it and yeah, I know, pretty lame stuff. But Dulcea had backed me into a corner and I had to argue what she'd left me. I waved my arms around in front of the jury and told Dulcea that if she got more time than my plea bargain, it wasn't *my* fault.

The jury went out to deliberate. They came back in 15 minutes.

In the meantime I talked with the young ADAs. To my surprise, they weren't confident. Orleans Parish, they assured me, was a different *world* from Jefferson. The sight of a cop in Jefferson ~ the parish built by "white flight" ~ was almost always enough to ensure conviction on its own. In Orleans, where Antoinette Frank and Len Davis had moved from the police force directly to Death Row, trust in police was nowhere near as automatic. *Haw!* Anyway, one ADA told me he'd had friends who'd gone from being assistant DAs in Orleans to the public defenders' office in Jefferson ... and they'd *never* won a case.

Still ... 15 minutes is an awfully short time. As the jury foreman handed Judge Petruzello the verdict slip, I couldn't imagine a Not Guilty.

Petruzello read, "Not Guilty."

I stared at the ceiling. *Mars*, I thought. *I'm on Mars*. Honestly, I didn't know whether to rejoice because I'd won a case ~ and a residue case, at that, a definite moral victory ~ or feel like an idiot because I'd tried my damndest to get my client to plead. So I felt both.

I turned to Dulcea. "What'd I tellya?"

## MILLIE

Jessica called me. "Millie's brother came by my house this morning," she said. "He said to tell Millie that her mother died."

For the past week or two, Millie ~ funny, smarty, sexy Millie ~ had been in jail. Not her fault; a screw-up by the probation people. It would be easily fixed once we got her before the court. The last time we'd talked, she'd mentioned that her mother was very ill.

Millie's phone privileges were restricted and Jessica, who grew up with her, couldn't get in to tell her. That left it up to me. I picked up Jessica and brought her to the lock-up. We wrangled with the chief but there

was no way she'd allow Jessica to come in with me. I had to go in by myself. The short walk back seemed like a walk straight up Everest.

From behind the glass in the visitor's room, Millie, in her orange jumpsuit, looked up with a smile. I sat on one of the tiny stools and she faced me and we both picked up phones. She raised her palm to the glass and I raised mine, as close as we could come to touching.

First I told her that the probation matter was promising and would be resolved. But then I fixed her eyes with mine and pressed my palm hard against the glass and said quietly, "Millie, your mother died."

Her face widened, then crumpled. Shock into grief. Perhaps something more than grief.

I gave her the terribly few details I knew. That all of her brothers and sisters but one had been at her mother's bedside. That it had happened five days before. I knew nothing else.

"I told my cat to kiss my mama for me," she said, voicing those off-center thoughts that come to you when the world falls in. "I told him to kiss her twice for me."

I had to leave after a few minutes. I told one of the guards that a chaplain was supposed to come talk to Millie. Millie herself assured me she would be all right. But it was still a raw thing to have to leave her sitting alone in that orange jumpsuit in that glass room in that horrible place. Thinking God knows what. How her mother had died and she wasn't by her side like her siblings. She was in jail because she was a dooper fuck-up and she hadn't been at her mother's side when she died. God knows what.

Whatever, a few days later we fixed things with the court, and Millie was let go, and smiling for real now, better, she thanked me for being there. My pleasure, I said. Meaning, not exactly pleasure.

## ATROCITY

In March I sat next to a client who had been convicted of possession of one rock of crack cocaine. Had this been his first offense, his sentence could not have exceeded five years. But this was his third strike. The prosecution charged that he was a repeat offender: specifically, that he had been convicted twelve years before of possessing cocaine and six years ago of selling it. Three strikes ...

There's little a lawyer can do in such circumstances. All the prosecutor has to do to prove his case is produce the court records of the defendant's earlier, or predicate, cases. He must show, of course, that this is the same person as was convicted or pled guilty to that crime. He has to prove the crime occurred less than ten years before the current offense or "link up" to another case in the chain. Finally, if the prisoner pled out to the predicate, he must show that he was properly informed of his rights. If those three pieces fall into place, the judgment falls ... right onto the defendant, and like a ton of bricks. Three strikes, you're out. My guy drew life imprisonment. I've seen shoplifters who've also drawn life as third strikers.

I imagine there are people who take pleasure from destroying lives under the color of law. They tell themselves, their constituents and the media, that they are protecting the innocent by enhancing the penalties exacted upon the guilty. Never mind the seriousness of the crime standing by itself: what matters is the pattern. Ambitious assistant district attorneys, cynical legislators, paranoid policemen. And there are legions of frightened citizens who are perfectly willing to let them do it ~ just as there were legions of frightened, bitter people who cheered the murders at Kent State and the assaults in Eureka, where cops smeared caustic acid directly into the eyes of environmental protestors, an act so heinous Amnesty International protested. There are always people like that.

I only hope there are also always people who will tell them they are wrong. Who will remind them that decency implies balance and judgment, and that sadism is even less justifiable when it is committed by the State in the name of justice. A man who shoplifts does not deserve the same sentence as Charles Manson, no matter what he's done in his past.

Frightened people are dangerous. And untrue to the better angels of their ~ our ~ nature.

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## COLORADO

My father was a basketball player in high school. My mother, at another school, was a cheerleader. They never understood my attitude towards adolescence. Adolescence was fun for them ... or at least they remembered it that way. My memories - as you can well imagine - are somewhat different.

Those memories are not entirely angry or bitter. I had my successes. I was on stage in my senior play and was editor of the school newspaper, won the National Council of Teachers of English Award and took Allison Kern to the Senior Prom. But high school always looks better in retrospect, even to science fiction fans. Our innocence, our inexperience, even our perplexity and our hurts look more and more cute the further we get from them, our social pain and anxiety the equivalent of our embarrassment over zits. Now I realize that even though I felt rejected I was just as obnoxious and intractable as those I imagined were oppressing me, that I hurt as much as I *was* hurt, and that the really tragic thing about the experience was how much I missed hiding behind my shields.

Besides, it ended. The great lesson of life applied: *this too shall pass*, and pass it did, and I went on to Berkeley, the widest world possible, and I began to learn about "the different kinds of men - the other lives". There's no denying that the rejections and agonies of high school marked me - they still mark me - but at Berkeley other experiences also marked me, just as yet other things touched me in North Carolina, and New York, and here - and I learned a lesson I always try to believe: that life is *far* bigger, certainly, than I ever dared imagine. There is absolutely no rule that tomorrow must be the same as today.

Would to God I could have whispered that truth into the ears of those boys in Littleton, Colorado, in mid-April. I think I'll always hear the cracked voice of that boy on the **Today** show, the kid who lost his sister, telling the father of another victim how his boy had died. That's something you never can forget.

The noise is predictable, and that's all it is: noise. My liberal brothers were spouting anti-gun rhetoric before the last echoes faded. Likewise, winger suits have been blathering their cultural morality theme to any television camera within earshot. The issue failed miserably in 1998; maybe it will play in 2000. They certainly aren't above using this horror to test the waters.

Trouble is, I agree with both perspectives. Our culture is an amoral mess, we could use a return to basic principles ... but gun worship is part of that culture, and the basic principles I believe in - *all men are created equal, love one another* - sound awfully wussy to a lot of people. Their idea of principle is a dress code. They seem to think you can put a chain on psychosis if you regulate the color of trench coats. Pull the plug on **The Matrix** and bring the dead back to life.

What we are dealing with here is not a fashion statement nor more proof that America has too many guns. What we are dealing with is infinitely more personal, and more human: loneliness, hopelessness, and the inability of the psychotic to have empathy or hope. Because if they'd had hope they'd've known that the ills of their present lives would pass, or at least be surpassed. And if they'd had empathy they would have never used a shotgun on another person. They would have heeded the poets, to be secret, and to exult, and to leave the rest of the world to heaven.

In the meantime, we who know better can only understand, and hear the grief of those who were there. Once again, more precious blood has been shed. We have our duty; we bear witness.



I want you to meet the toughest human being I've ever known. Not Muhammad Ali nor Andre the Giant: this is her, Sara C---, and she's 13, less than five feet tall, and if she tops 80 pounds I'd be astonished. This photo was on the front page of the local newspaper, a disarmingly natural kid just crossing that magic line between child and child-woman.

One day last summer she was sitting in her mother's car at a convenience store while her mother went in to pay for gas. While she waited, Billy Pittman, cook and psychopath, jumped into the car and drove off. After discovering that Sara was with him, he drove to a secluded area, walked her behind some trees, tore off her clothes, raped her, then told her to shut her eyes. She thought he was going to run away, but instead he fired a 9mm. pistol point blank between her eyes.

When the cops found her, they thought she was dead. They took photographs I was later to see. Sara lies half-naked, splayed on her side, covered in blood. She looked dead to me too. When she moved, the cops freaked, got an ambulance, took her to surgery. She lived. Her forehead had split the bullet.

They caught Pittman that night and tried him in February. Her brow still marked by a red bruise, her taste and smell senses forever affected, Sara had recovered enough to walk into the courtroom and point: *That's him.* In 75 short minutes the jury GACKed him on all counts, and the judge maxed him: life plus 125 years. That very day Sara revealed her identity, defiant of the very idea that a rape victim has something to be ashamed of. Had Pittman marked more than just her forehead? No, she scoffed ... he was just white trash.

I watched the trial. For Pittman's lawyer I felt nothing but admiration; Walter A---, a former sheriff's deputy, is the loving father of a teenage daughter and reacted to his client with utter loathing. He could barely sit at the same table with him. But Walter is a professional and he put together a professional insanity case. For Pittman ~ who expressed no remorse, ever ~ I felt nothing, a kind of weird indifference, the sort of offhand natural disgust one feels for offal on the sidewalk: you wonder only when somebody will wash it away. Apparently his fellow prisoners felt the same: hardly a day went by that he didn't come into court with a fresh shiner or a smashed foot. Criminals are criminals but some of them are also fathers. Pittman will not last long in captivity.

Sara? She's got what it takes. She took the worst from the worst, and came back to spit in the face of the creep who did it to her and send him to jail forever. And to show people everywhere what it means to be strong.

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