



BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS

THE BATON ROUGE SCIENCE FICTION LEAGUE NEWSLETTER

**VOLUME 1, NUMBER 54
APRIL/MAY, 1988**

RANTINGS AND RAVINGS BY CLAY

Looking out the window on this bright Spring (going into Summer) day, one gets to yearning for a taste of the old fannish trips of old! How I remember plowing the fields until my knees bent, then taking a sideways glance at the nearest convention listing and rushing without any sense towards the oncoming fans! My brain still tingles with thoughts of bulbous people with cokes and comics gripped in their hairy mittens, their eyes large with wonder and their stomachs larger with eaten whoopers. The bitter smell of hot dealers laying their hot bodies over the rows of well-organized books and magazines, bubbling in a holy fizz of warm beers and stale chips. Still I can see the convention Suite; its bathtubs stocked with generic colas and untitled liquids. How easily one could stand the pain as one's hand plunged through the ice and water towards those special brews. ...and the costume contest! Forever within my brain dances the 250 lb woman in the one red stocking and the oak leaf...and, unfortunately, little else. Hords of horn-rimmed barbarians with Casio watches and dirty white sneakers trudge through my fevered dreams of yesterday. The alnight screams of 15 year old kids away from their parents for the first time enters my head still!

(At that point Fourrier awoke with a scream that filled the small chamber. Somewhere, in another corner of the room, a rubber plant died.)
CLAY

SUNDRY SCRUTINIZINGS! A LOOK AT BOOKS WITH ANTHONY WARD

I bought a new hardback recently that I enjoyed very much, on several levels. While it is only peripherally science fiction (future history?), it is a very good adventure novel that has both good characters and, from my background, a very high level of military realism. The book is *TEAM-YANKEE*, by Major Harold Coyle, Presidio Press, \$17.95. I got it on sale, but you all might check your local libraries or wait for the paperback to come out. Like it says on the cover, it is "A novel of World War III". However, this is not your standard post-apocalypse novel about Mad Max types running around a post nuclear American landscape shooting up mutants and Commies (or Commie mutants or even mutant Commies). The book was written by an active duty US Army Armor Corps Major and is about as close to the way "experts" think the opening battles of WWII might be fought as you will probably ever read, without having the author subjected to real combat in a WWII, of course. But it isn't a textbook or a training manual, it is a very exciting novel about real people

living under some of the nastiest conditions imaginable.

In peacetime, company commanders, normally captains, command units consisting of from 100 to 150 personnel who are either pure armor or pure mechanized infantry troops. Mech infantry units consist of riflemen riding into battle in armored personnel carriers, a.k.a. APCs, a.k.a. "tracks". But modern military history has shown us that pure units get whipped by "combined arms" units in battle every time. Even the fantastic Israeli armored units rediscovered this when they attacked Egyptian positions without infantry support in 1973. They were destroyed. Modern combined arms units normally have infantry, armor, sometimes engineer, and many times self-propelled artillery units mixed together and commanded by either a Captain or Major (depending on the number of troops in the unit).

The creation of these combined arms units, called teams, is normally done by mixing various numbers of the subelements of companies, called platoons, together under one commander. One of these combined arms teams might consist of three platoons of mech infantry, one platoon of armor, and a mortar or antitank section (normally consisting of two vehicles and their crews). This unit would be called an "infantry heavy team". Or the unit might consist of three platoons of armor, plus one of mech infantry, and with an artillery section. This unit would be called an "armor heavy team". Because this creation of combined arms teams is not normally done in peacetime, when the teams are formed, normally just before combat begins, the members of the teams will not know or trust each other and the unit



BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS is published 6 times a year by the Baton Rouge Science Fiction League, Inc., P.O. Box 14238, Baton Rouge, LA 70899-4238. Subscriptions are \$10 per calendar year (includes membership in the club) Also available for TRADES and CONTRIBUTIONS (Type all materials in 5 1/2" columns)
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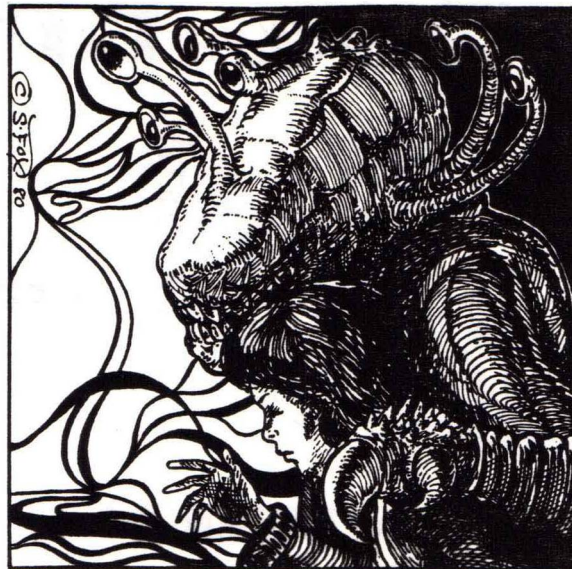
commanders and leaders will not have regularly practiced combined arms leadership and tactics. At least before the first battle. This is not good, or especially smart, planning, as the novel shows.

TEAM YANKEE is about the people who make up an armor heavy team, code named Team Yankee, and how they fight, and attempt to survive, the first battles during the first weeks of a nonnuclear WWII for control of Germany in the very near future. Because Coyle is a real army officer, the jargon may sometimes be a little thick for the civilians in the audience. However, the strongest point of this book to me was not the blood and gore, the fancy technology, or the tactics of modern battle, but the character of the troops that make up the Team. These soldiers are not Rambos or John Waynes, they are just ordinary soldiers trying to do their jobs and stay alive. Some of them are not too bright. Some are not too brave. And many die too quickly. But they fight for the same reasons that human soldiers have always fought, because they don't want to look like fools or cowards in front of their friends, and because this is what they have been taught to do, and they carry on in spite of being scared to death.

This book also examines some of the main differences between modern battles, as has been shown in various recent wars, from the Arab-Israeli series, to the Argie-Brit dustup in the Falkland Islands, to the Iran-Iraqi mess of today, and the famous battles of history.

His first point is: in a modern war, a lot of expensive, hi-tech equipment is quickly going to get bent and broken. On a modern battlefield, "if you can see it, you can kill it" may be a cliché, but it is also true. Another cliché is: "He who fires first will probably be the only one to survive to fire again." But this high level of lethality means that more tanks and APCs will be destroyed in the first few days of battle than the US can produce in a year. We will quickly run through a lot of all types of supplies; of food, of ammunition, of medical supplies, of spare parts, and of trained people. If the battle goes on much longer than a couple of weeks, the war will either change back to WWI style trench warfare or forward to nuclear style Armageddon.

Second point: Modern battles are intense. There will be twenty four hours a day fighting, at least for the first few days. I have had to operate like this in FTxs (field training exercises). Major Coyle points out one of the big problems I have noticed from personal experience with this type of fighting/training. It is that after a couple of days of this full-out, never-



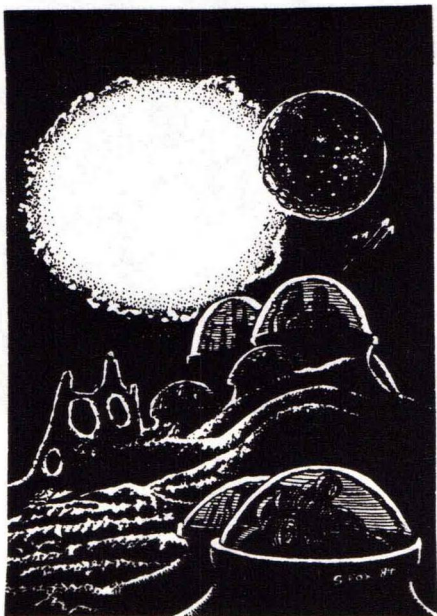
rest, almost-no-sleep action, people start falling asleep with no warning. Like right in the middle of talking, or driving, or even firing their weapons. And as leaders get tired, their ability to think and communicate clearly begins to degrade, very quickly. But like someone who has had too much alcohol, the person who's mind is degrading often doesn't notice it while it is happening. Not something to feel good about when the person whose intelligence is breaking down also may control hundreds of kilotonnes of nuclear warheads.

Battles and wars may not be glorious, or heroic, or even smart. In fact wars are mostly a pretty stupid way for civilized beings to act. But they are often necessary. If, God forbid, the balloon ever does go up and we ever get into a real one with the Soviets, the war may well start out a lot like the scenario presented in **TEAM YANKEE**. I hope we never have to find out just how close to reality Major Coyle's book is. I give it a 8.5 for sheer readability. However, I don't recommend starting it just before going to bed. You will probably have trouble staying awake at work the next day because you won't be able to stop reading it the night before.

David Drake saw some real combat in Viet Nam. When he writes a combat scene, to me, who has only been a peacetime soldier, it rings true. He has a new Hammer's Slammers book out called **COUNTING THE COST**, from Baen Books, for \$3.50. The Hammer's Slammers series is set in his future in about 2500 AD. By this time, Humanity has settled on hundreds of planets. Most were settled by pan-national organizations or joint multinational consortium. The only problem is that while Humanity has grown more knowledgeable, we haven't grown any smarter. After achieving independence from Terra, war after war has broken out on most of these worlds as various national/racial/religious groups have gone after other different national/racial/religious group after deciding that their planet wasn't big enough for the different groups to continue to coexist.

But with the huge growth in the number of wars, there was a corresponding growth in the number of soldiers. And when some of these various wars were finished, many of the soldiers couldn't or wouldn't return to civilian life. Many became mercenaries. And the best mercenary unit there ever was is the armored cavalry regiment called Hammer's Slammers, commanded by Colonel Alois Hammer.

COUNTING THE COST takes place in the capital city of a mostly Catholic settled planet. The original colonists were either European or South American Catho-



lics. Later, a few Arabs settled a different continent from the Catholic settled continent. The Slammers were hired by the civilian government to put down the "rag-heads", i.e. the ex-Islamic converts to Catholicism, who had settled on another continent and were acting almost totally independent from the Central Planetary Government and the Central Church. But before the "Holy War" could be started, the Planetary Archbishop, and his clique, attempted a coup against the "democratically elected" government. (For the Planetary President and his wife, read the fun-loving Marcos family.)

The whole book takes place over one long, more than 24 standard hours long, night. Our "heroes" are mostly members of the Slammer's, and other merc, rear echelon units. They are the only military personnel, other than the Ceremonial Guards, left in the Capital. These mercs are mostly supply, training, air defense, and reinforcement types who get caught up in the the various coups and political power plays between the various political/religious factions and the mobs in the Capital when almost everybody tries to take over the Central Government.

There is a lot of bloodshed, violence, and action in this book, but it is not "violence pornography". Killing is not "fun" to Drake, or to most of "his" Slammers. The Slammers don't kill just for the thrill of it. It makes some of them sick. But it is what they get paid to do. The killing actually takes place because the politicians and religious leaders, who should know better, think they can control the level of violence needed to accomplish their various political purposes. But violence often takes on a life of its own. Just ask the first leaders of the French, Russian, or Iranian revolutions. Drake makes the many times learned, and just as many times forgotten, point that once violence starts, often the only way to stop it is to counter it with even more violence. But this way can just as likely end in a situation like Beirut, with all against all, as in peace.

I found the story to be fast and fascinating, most of the main characters (both "good" and "bad") to be fairly interesting, and the moral of the story both realistic and fully understandable. I give it a 7.

ARROWS' FLIGHT, by Mercedes Lackey, DAW, \$3.50 is the second book from a well known, in filk fandom anyway, filksong writer. While it is the second book in a yet another trilogy, this book is able to stand on its own fairly well. It is the continuing story of Talia, who is still a Herald-in-training. In the author's universe, this means considerably more than being a herald in our universe. First, each Herald has a Companion. A Companion is a horse-like, white, sapient being with the power to mentally contact each other and their Herald. Sort of like a Unicorn, but without having a horn and a strange desire for virgins. All Heralds are loyal, brave, trustworthy, etc. or their Companions leave them. Most Heralds also have a variety of psionic powers. But each Herald has a different power. Heralds are also not virgins. Oh my, no.

However, Talia is special, even for a Herald. She is the Queen's Own Herald. It is her job to make sure the Queen (or King) stays sane and just by always telling them the truth. Even if it is to tell them they must resign for the good of the Kingdom. In the first book, Talia was born and still living in a "fundamentalist" sect's homestead. Instead of killing herself because of the sexist and intellectual repression, she was found by her Companion-to-be and taken back to the "University" at the Capital. The University teaches Heralds, Nobles, Healers, and Bards how to do their jobs. The present book is the story of Talia's first 18 months on the circuit as a Herald. To the Kingdom, Heralds act as judges, news collectors and dispensers, tax adjusters, and general trouble shooters and spend most of their time riding patrol/circuit.

While traveling her first circuit, as a rookie with an "older and wiser" partner, she has various adventures and is forced to grow up and develop her Power. Her Power is the ability to "heal" mental illness by manipulating other people's emotions and emotional state. But she begins to wonder if her "healing power" can also "heal" normal people and make them love and obey her. Some faction in the Court starts rumors that she is a monster who is going to take over the kingdom by mental manipulation. And after some strange events, Talia begins to wonder if the rumors are true. Is she crazy and subconsciously manipulating people's minds? Even that of her Companion?

I find Lackey's world to be more interesting than the normal generic fantasy world. The Heralds' Kingdom was settled by the survivors of an ancient magician's war. Due to the extreme destruction and the deaths of so many of the magicians, there is very little "magic" left in the world. But the Heralds have a few half remembered spells, their psionic powers, and their Companions. And with these few extras, try to keep order and the peace through out the Kingdom. They are like semi-magical Texas Rangers. I like the world, the characters, and the first two thirds of Talia's story. I give it a 6.5, rising to 7.5 if the last book of the trilogy is as good as the first two.



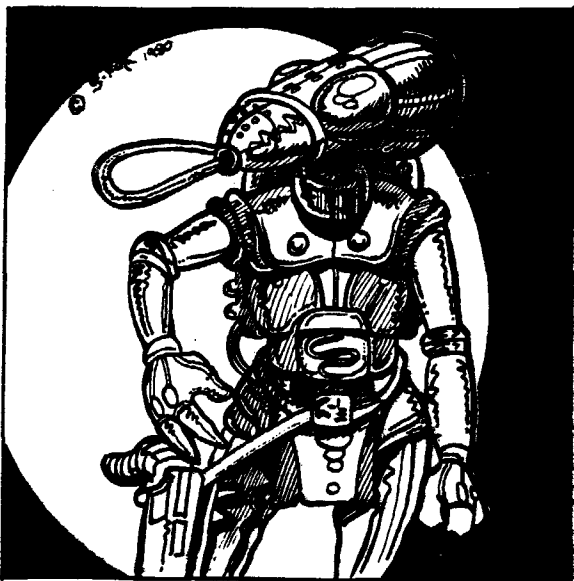
Remember how originally STAR TREK was sold to the networks by The Great Bird of the Galaxy as "Hornblower in Space"? Well, STrek may have turned out a little differently, but Bill Baldwin obviously had that description in mind when he sat down to write his first two books. GALACTIC CONVOY, by Bill Baldwin, Questar, \$3.50 is the second book in a space opera series with a lot of action. And it is a science fictional Hornblower in space. And it is not a bad pastiche, either.

The series is set so far in the future that Earth has been totally forgotten. Several human interstellar civilizations have risen, and fallen, since our period. The multiracial, but Human led, Galactic Empire is under attack from another Human led civilization based in several extra-galactic globular clusters. This League of Dark Stars provides the bad guys to the series. The Empire has ruled the galaxy for over 50,000 years, but science is no longer a factor in either Human civilization. But under the influence of the War, engineering advances are again being made.

To give the reader some scope of the time span that Humans have been traveling in space, in the first book Baldwin sets part of the book on one of the main bases of the Imperial Galactic Fleet. The Base was set on what was, at one time, a fully terrestrial planet. However, the planet's star was a dying Red Dwarf and could no longer keep the planet's average temperature above freezing and most of the biosphere had died eons ago. But there were still wooden buildings standing from when the planet still had a living biosphere. The base had existed there for so long that the only thing keeping the planet semi-habitable was the waste heat from all the factories and shipyards.

GALACTIC CONVOY is the second book of the continuing story of LT Wilf Brin, a Helmsman in the Imperial Galactic Fleet. The first book covered Brin's first several cruises after his graduation from the Academy. His ship fought in several battles against the League's advancing fleets and he was decorated for bravery. In this book, the League has almost managed to crush the Empire's Fleets. But after eight years of war, the League's advances have almost been halted, due to the attrition of their forces. But the League's remaining fleets are within striking distance of the Galactic Imperial Capital on Avalon. But there is one final major Imperial Naval Base that must be taken before Avalon will fall to the League's hordes. LT Brin's new ship is one of the Imperial Fleet units sent to hold the Base.

Over the length of the book there are several fleet battles, convoy attacks, ship boardings, planet-



ary bombardments, and even a little sex. LT Brin has several chances to be a hero, and he performs magnificently. The science is mostly of the "super-science" type. But just when you think Baldwin is just making up gobbeldy-gook, he rationalizes his technology in terms that almost make sense. There is enough humor to make you realize this is a fun book, but enough blood and destruction to make you realize the author knows real war is not fun and games. I have enjoyed both of Baldwin's books so far, and hope he can keep up the pace. I give this book a recommendation and a 7, but just don't take it too seriously.

FIRST CITIZEN, by Thomas T. Thomas, Baen Books, \$3.50 is another fun book with an underlying seriousness. FIRST CITIZEN is the, sometimes self serving and some times brutally honest, autobiography of Granville James Corbin, the winner of the Second American Civil War, Savior of the Republic, and finally First Citizen. If you have read anything about the life of Julius Caesar, you soon realize that Corbin, and Mr. Thomas, have also.

Corbin is born in 1970 to an upper middle class family. His father is a petroleum engineer who spends most of his life moving around the World looking for oil for a major oil company. Corbin and his younger sister are mostly raised, alone, by their mildly alcoholic, but snobbish, mother. They eventually settle down near Monterey, California. Corbin is a rich punk whose major interests are girls, picking locks, and karate. When he and a girl friend are attacked by five punks, he kills one and drives the other four off. His family gets him in to UC Berkley for prelaw studies. After having an affair with an aging "revolutionary", making a life long enemy in school, and finally graduating from Harvard Law, he gets a job with his father's oil company.

In Saudia Arabia, he meets an ex-GI, Amerindian, helicopter pilot. They have several adventures and become friends. Both are "let go" by the company and Corbin becomes a partner in a high class law firm in San Francisco. But the economic and social fabric of American life is unraveling in the mid-1990s. Law Day becomes the day lawyers, judges, and their ilk are shot and lynched, the National Debt is finally totally repudiated by the Federal Government, and a Constitutional Amendment is passed forbidding the FedGov from raising money by taxing the American public. Almost everything the Federal government does is either done by the individual states, private industry, or paid for by users fees. The DoD is reduced to our nuclear forces paid for by airport users fees. After several years of extreme turmoil, private enterprise makes the US richer than ever. Including Corbin and his Indian friend, who make their first fortune in recycling waste by buying out the local Environmental Protection Agency office in Silicon Valley when the FedGov goes belly up.

When terrorists nuke Washington DC, most of the remaining FedGov dies. The surviving Speaker of the House pushes through another Amendment that makes him Acting President until the next regular presidential elections can be held. Due to increasing civil unrest, they never are. It is pointed out in the novel that the literal translation of the Latin word "dictator" is "speaker". As the FedGov is so powerless, most Americans don't care. But the politicians slowly see to it that national political power once again comes to be consolidated in our new Capital in Baltimore.

When the Mexican economy finally falls apart, so does the Republic of Mexico. Communists soon take over the oil fields in Yucatan and several other Mexican states. Because the only remaining FedGov forces are the people manning the strategic nuclear forces, the individual American states are authorized by the FedGov to raise state militias and also allows any rich American, who wants to play General, to do the same. Corbin raises his own aircav division. He turns out to be a very good tactician and strategist and becomes warlord of much of Mexico. The various Mexican states are gradually brought into the "Old Union". However, Federal law states that no private armies will be allowed to enter any of the original 51 states.

As one of the "saviors" of Mexico, Corbin leaves his army in Mexico and returns home to Texas to be elected to Congress. The Speaker of the House finally is forced to retire and a free-for-all begins in Congress to decide who will take his place. Corbin, and two other political light weights are "temporarily" appointed as a governing triumvirate. As civil and military unrest strike more and more American and Mexican cities, the FedGov becomes more and more powerful and repressive. When Corbin is falsely accused of treason by other House Members who are his political enemies, he calls his Divisions home from Mexico. And soon the Second American Civil War is on.

The book is action filled and very exciting. It has military and political fighting. It has heroes who have feet of clay and it has villains who do heroic things. It is a fast read that has some interesting

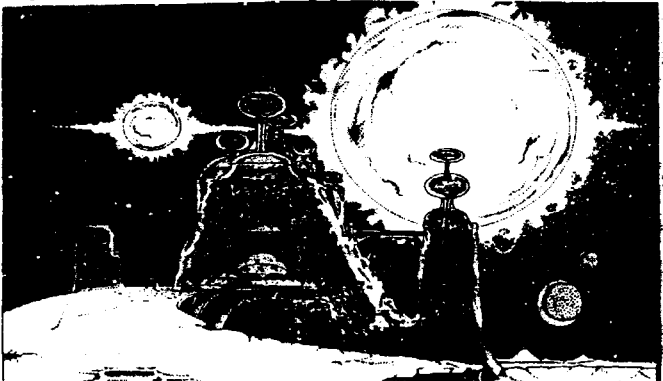
things to say about politics, liberty, and responsibility. I liked it and give it an easy 6.5. You might scale it higher if you like the life story of Big Julie Caesar. I never was able to decide if it was a satire, or not.

I know all of you have been waiting with baited breath (what a disgusting mental image) for my opinions about STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION. Well now you're going to get them. First let me say that at this point I've seen about seven episodes, along with the pilot movie. My initial stab at forming an opinion is: I feel it isn't bad. That doesn't sound to good, so let me upgrade it to, I like it. Why, you ask? Well...

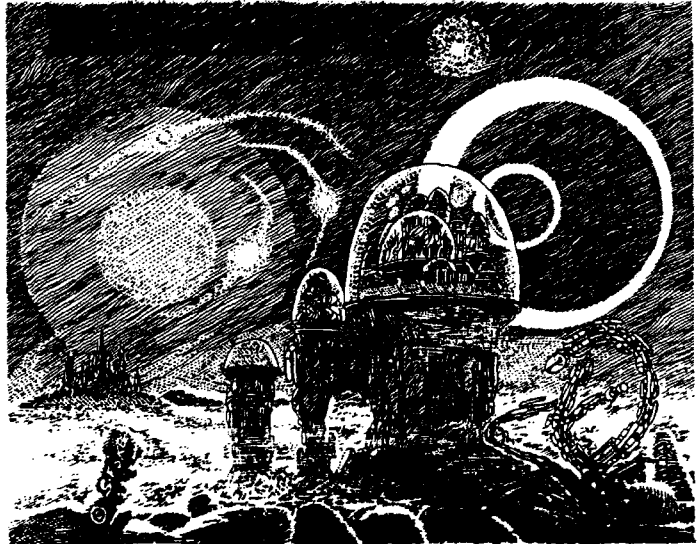
First, the characters (and the actors playing them) are pretty good and I like most of them. I think my favorites, in order, are The Captain, Commander Data, the XO, LT Yar, and the Klingon. I haven't seen enough of the Ship's Doctor or the Councilor, to make up my mind about them. I do not love The Kid, but he may grow on me. But then the production crew, and actors, are still getting the fine details of characterizations laid down, so I'm still open minded about them all. Remember, the first episodes of STAR TREK didn't have the Big Three fully developed, either.

Second, I think the special effects are very nice. I know the F/X can't make a bad show good (remember Cattlecar Galaxitive?), but the lack of same can kill a SF TV/movie. So far, even the small stuff is great. Even though I know it will probably never happen again on screen, I liked the separation of the saucer section from the rest of the ship. I really like some of the sets. The conference room is terrific and the bridge is very nice. I also like the way you can see the stars out of all the port screens. The engine room needs work, but we can't have everything.

Third, I like the background underlying the series. I get the feeling that while the Federation and the Klingon Empire are not at each others throats, they aren't unified by any means. Look how the Klingon's uniform is more modified than the normal Star Fleet uniform. Today's nations sometimes exchange officers, who than work in each others armed forces. Even we and the Peoples Republic of China are doing it. Possible, this is what is happening here. I like the characterization of the Ferengi as space going Yankee traders. They aren't imperialists, they just want a fast buck. And they don't let anything stand in their way. Even though their beliefs are obviously different from the Puritanical Yankees, they are just a fanatical in a religious/social way. And evidently with as many, but very different, sexual hangups.



I feel there are a few problems. I feel only a couple of stories so far have been excellent and several have not been very good. Not "third season" bad, but not up to STrek standards. (We can fight about which ones are which, later.) I feel they need a good comedy episode. They also need a good battle episode. Things have been to "nicey-nice", so far. I like the new "bad guys", but we need a nice ship to ship battle with the Ferengi. But then not all the original episodes were winners, either. I'll finish with the cry of: More action!



WANDERING RUMBLINGS: THE FANNISH TRAVELS OF J.R.MADDEN

Who are the Observers?
by
J. R. "Mad Dog" Madden

In recent years, there have been growing complaints about the increasing size of conventions. WorldCons now have attendance figures in the range of five to seven thousand regularly. Regional cons are topping two thousand quite often. For some in the volunteer ranks of convention runners, these large numbers of attendees are not as welcome to see as they once were.

There have also been comments about the changing nature of fandom. While there have always been fans with specialized areas of interest (sercon, fannish, media, costume, etc.), the degree of specialization these days has become even more pronounced. Fans at conventions are finding it harder to talk with each other as areas of mutual interest are more difficult to locate. Conventions are starting to specialize in one area of interest, sercon, filk, costume, fantasy, for examples, in order to attain a more focused outlook.

Add to these factors the sheer number of conventions now held throughout the year in the U.S. There are some weekends with four or five conventions going at the same time. There are a few fans able to attend 20-30 cons a year but most folks can only afford one or two. With only a limited number of fans able to afford travel across the country, conventions are finding their attendance shifting to a more local/regional mix rather than the national pattern of, say, ten years ago.

I would suggest part of the problem is not necessarily the growing number of fans, nor of specialized interest, nor the growing number of conventions. Instead, the growing ranks of the "observers" are leading to a lot of the problems faced by fandom in general.

Conventions originally began, more or less, as parties put on and attended by folks who knew each other through correspondence and fanzines. Today, I would hazard the guess that most folks who attend cons do not write letters, have never heard of a fanzine, and most do not read science fiction -- they are fans because they attend cons. A huge number of folks who consider themselves to be fans just go to conventions and a big portion of those just go to cons in their immediate area. Usually, they attend solo and remain that way or they go with friends and stay with their group throughout the weekend. That is, they do not go

to meet other fans from different areas. they go to attend programming, shop the hucksters' room, see the film & video, and watch the costume contest. They are observers.

At a small convention in Biloxi a few years back, I was asked by another member why I should have been selected as Fan Guest of Honor. He felt that he was just as big a fan as I was: he had a huge collection of comics, he played role-playing games, he went to sf movies. Gee, what more could someone ask of a fan? I did not tell him part of the reason I was a Fan GoH was I had done things for other folks in fandom. The honor was not just based on my collection or having seen Star Wars fifty-six times. His entire experience of fandom had been through conventions and some pretty poor ones, fannishly speaking, at that. He thought fandom was just buying things, watching movies, playing games. Even though he was more involved than most, he was still an observer.

In the early days, all fans were participants to a greater or lesser extent. They wrote, they organized, they published, they collected, they dreamed. Fanzines and letters crisscrossed the country tying widely separated fans together. Letter columns in the prozines introduced new fans to the group by printing addresses allowing personal correspondence to be established. Bookshops, new and used, were scoured for those rare things called science fiction books. Conventions, few and far between, attracted fans from across the country; some hitchhiked, some rode trains, some drove in rust-buckets that wouldn't pass vehicle inspections today, but the fans would get to the con barring acts of God (or Mother). For perspective, I have heard fans complain about a con being "too far" to attend; it was all of 150 miles away -- two and a half hours via Interstate! Compared to Damon Knight who hitchhiked as a teenager from Oregon to New York for the first WorldCon in 1939, these must be some pretty wimpy fans. For the early fans, fandom was, indeed, a way of life.

A lot of early fans felt they had a mission: to bring science fiction to the "masses." To them, science fiction bore the message of the future and should be shared with everyone. They sought to bring respectability to the genre which was considered by the educated to be merely "pulp" rubbish. For some, this goal appears to have been achieved. Science fiction represents a large portion of the publishing industry. Science fiction film is usually quite popular. Robots and spaceships are popular toy items. In 1983 at ConStellation, Dave Kyle, in his Fan GoH speech, maintained the early goal had been achieved and now the goal should be to bring "quality" science fiction to the masses.

Today, the sense of mission regarding science fiction has been replaced by a hobbyist attitude. Science fiction is an avocation rather than a vocation. This is not a bad thing; it is a more healthy perspective to hold most would agree. The fervor still remains however. The "sense of wonder" is still there nonetheless.

The term "observer" is a new classification group to apply to fans. Except that, to my way of thinking, observers are not really fans at all. At least, costume fans, filk fans, media fans participate to some extent. Observers are merely present. Those to whom the term "fan" applies are "doers"; they write, they organize, they publish, they collect, they dream. The observers just attend events and soak in what is provided for them by the fans.

The observers are not only seen at conventions. In larger cities, with organized clubs, the observers often appear sitting in the back, never speaking to anyone, never attending any social events. They do not speak up when asked about programming, they do not want to talk about science fiction. Most of the fans wonder just why they come to the meetings in the first place!

The observers have appeared in recent years due to the growing acceptance of science fiction by the general population as witnessed by the popularity of sf films and increased sales of books and magazines. It is now "safe" to let it be known that one reads or watches science fiction. But that is all the observer wants to do unless there is a club or convention in town which they might join but do not ask anything more of them.

The problem with observers is that things have to be done for them -- they will not help. At conventions, this means room must be provided for them, events must be programmed, staff must be allocated. They require planning for but you can not get them to help. A few years ago, if a problem arose at a convention, the word would go out and usually more folks than needed would respond immediately; getting volunteers to help was fairly easy. Today, conventions, from opening day to closing, are constantly calling for help from the membership and not getting it. Why? The observers are there and they are not going to stop observing for a minute to help. It is not in their nature.

Some folks figure the observers will be converted eventually into active, participating fans. I do not think so. The real fan is already within a person just waiting for the opportunity to get out. The discovery of cons, the first fanzine, a club in town, these let the latent fan spring to life. People are not "converted" into fans -- they either are fans from the beginning or they are not.

If fans are willing to provide for the observers, that would be nice. But that is asking a lot from folks who might have just only so much time and energy available. Conventions can keep getting bigger, of course. But, the job of running the con will keep getting harder with fewer people to shoulder the load as more and more folks discover it is not fun anymore. Fandom is supposed to be fun, remember? It is just a hobby!

* * * * *

FAN FICTION

JENKINS' CONSTERNATION--PART III by MICHAEL C. RUSH

Summary of Parts I and II

Jenkins is called to Consternation, an asteroid inhabited by a select group of SF fan, by his ex-brother-in-law Chael Tidem in his capacity as social systems analyst. The VNL (Vellicating Neural Lattice) is quick to cooperate, seeing an opportunity to get a report on a unique and unstudied social system. Chael reveals that he is caught up in some political infighting and that his faction--ConCom Guestion--is doomed if their key member--Dr. Miyak Kasternon--is not quickly found and returned. Chael believes him to have been kidnapped by one of the rival ConComs and taken off-world.

Before he can begin to investigate the situation, Jenkins is recalled to Earth, where he meets with Dr. Cornelius Thrab, legendary founder and president of the SSA. Dr. Thrab tells him of the grave situation on Earth, that all of the world's best minds are vanishing without a trace! The VNL, in an unprecedented and unfathomable move, has demanded that Jenkins be brought back from Consternation to work on this case.

Confused and unsure of what to do next, Jenkins returns to his office, where he finds a mysterious message waiting on his monitor. It says that if he wants to find the 'missing brains', he should go to Askradon 5, where he will be given more information. Heartened but wary, he goes and is met by Dr. Kasternon and a frog-like Vinjan named Rrella. He asks them to explain what's going on, but Rrella sees someone coming and Miyak quickly translocates the three of them out of there. As he fades out, Jenkins notices that the ring given to him by the Succeds on Eburpul (see Jenkins' First Case) is glowing.

Through the darkness which engulfed him, Jenkins felt a warmth begin in the finger on which he had just seen the red coral of his Succed-made ring begin to radiate a pulsating glow as Dr. Kasternon had activated his translocator device. It began to spread out from his finger into his hand, up his arm, and farther, until he felt as isolated from the unseen environment as he had while shielded in his climate suit from the volcanic atmosphere on Askradon 5.

But he was still wearing his climate suit, he realized, though before the warmth had enclosed him he'd felt the strangeness of the unseen conditions around him directly on his skin as though he'd been naked. His climate suit had evidently been neutralized.

He was considering these things when he felt a sudden jerk which threatened to realign the configuration of his internal organs. He was thrust into an unbelievably harsh light, against which he squeezed his watering eyes shut, and he fell with a groan to the rocky ground, pledging to never again complain about a VNL translocation.

His eyes still closed, he unsealed the hood of his climate suit and flipped it back onto his neck, where it collapsed to form a thin collar. Bending forward, he instinctively attempted to straighten out his stirred innards by relieving them of their inertia-obeying contents, a task in which he was aided by the strong odor of sulfur which assaulted his nostrils.

When his heaving desisted, he straightened up and carefully opened his eyes. Before him, in phalanx-formation, stood a score of beings, each about two meters tall and brawny, with a reddish-brown covering of fur that extended from the shoulders upward.

"Succeds!" he cried, staggering to his feet and looking up at them in astonishment, "What are you doing here?" They must have somehow yanked him back from the others in mid-translocation, he thought. No wonder he'd gotten sick!

One of the Succeds broke away from the group and stepped forward.

"We have come to protect you, Robert Jenkins," he said in a controlled monotone that exuded power, "to prevent your being abducted by disruptive elements."

"Disruptive elements?" Jenkins frowned. "I haven't seen any disruptive elements." He looked around.

"Except maybe all this sulfur." "I was referring to the two beings with you a moment ago," replied the Succed.

"You mean Dr. Kasternon and Rrella? They're not disruptive elements. I can't say as I know just what they are about, but I'd hardly say they were..."

"I assure you, Analyst Jenkins, that those two are very dangerous. They are committed to the destruction of the Galactic Unity. Did they tell you that?"

"Well, no, but we didn't have much time to talk," Jenkins blinked, "What's the Galactic Unity?"

The Succed gazed back at the others of his group, then looked at Jenkins. Jenkins, still a little weak, sat down on a large boulder, but the Succed continued to stand stiffly, his arms at his sides.

"The Galactic Unity," began the Succed, "is the network of all civilized worlds in the Galaxy. Organized by the Succedaneum, it is the policy-making body which,

in overseeing interstellar affairs, keeps political strife and other concerns from developing into dangerous situations. It is the highest achievement of the galaxy's peoples."

"Why isn't the Earth part of the network?" asked Jenkins.

"I said all 'civilized' worlds," answered the Succed, "Perhaps someday it shall be."

"Oh," Jenkins tried not to look offended.

"However," continued the Succed, "despite its efficient stabilization measures, radicals do emerge. The two who tried to abduct you are members of such a group, small but obdurate. It is fortunate that we were able to thwart their efforts," he smiled with a small, quick twist of his cartilidge lip ridges, "Revolutionary fanaticism can be most unpleasant."

"I am familiar with all forms of governmental overthrow," replied Jenkins stiffly.

"Of course."

"What I don't understand is how you found out about my meeting with Dr. Kasternon."

"We were alerted by the VNL of the message on your terminal. We acted immediately to come to Askradon 5, but there were, ah, difficulties."

"Umm."

"What did the radicals want of you?"

Jenkins shrugged. "I'm not sure."

The Succeds bristled and started muttering amongst themselves. The spokessucced looked hard at Jenkins. "What did they tell you?"

"Only that they were the ones responsible for the message," he answered, "They didn't have a chance to tell me anything else." He thought a moment before adding, "One of them was a Vinjan, though."

A loud hiss came from the group of Succeds, which was immediately silenced by a sharp glance from the leader.

"A Vinjan, you know," said Jenkins, "Looks like a big frog."

"We are familiar with the Vinjans," replied the Succed.

"Oh," said Jenkins.

The Succed leader thought for a minute and then came to a decision. "I suggest you prepare yourself, Robert Jenkins, for the VNL is about to return you to the SSA Home Office on Earth."

Sure enough, he barely had time to snap the hood closed on his climate suit before he dematerialized and was gone.

The Succed turned and joined his comrades. This wasn't good; things were beginning to move very quickly. He turned a dial on the silver staff he held, and the Succeds, too, left Askradon 5. It was time to report.

to be continued.

COLLECTED CORRESPONDENCES



Fellow Bruzzfuzzies:

Having at last heard from the inimitable Jenkins, I am enclosing Jenkins' Consternation--Part III. Upcoming episodes should soon follow.

As I write this on the last day of yet another year, I find it difficult to believe that I shall be beginning my eighth year as a Bruzzfuzzlian, albeit from some distance. It is an association that I have enjoyed and one that has been instrumental in encouraging my first tentative steps into the alien milieu of fandom. I hope that it continues well into the future.

To help insure this, I am enclosing my 1988 sneaking-in-at-the-last-minute-at-the-old-rate dues. Alas that economic necessity should finally force an acknowledgement of reality after so many years of admirable resistance. I find it particularly unfortunate that they should be increased by a factor of 2.4, rather than by some more moderate increment, but I suppose it can't be helped.

I hope that all are doing well and have an exceptional holiday and new year. Now, if you'll excuse me whilst I ride off into the sunset?

Fannishly,

Michael C. Rush
MICHAEL C. RUSH
3308 W. LAURIE LN
PHOENIX, AZ 85051-5918

P.S. Best of luck on SwampCon this year. It doesn't look as though I'll be able to make it, but one never knows.
¡Hasta luego!

Dear Lord Klaivos,

I think that I need to take time from my writing-schedule to send a response of sorts to Scotty's rendition of the events in my suite at SwampCon Six on the night of 25 April, last.

Miss Radford and Mr. Williams ^{were} the first arrivals at my suite, that night, started things off by making disparaging comments about the brands of liquors and mixers I stock, went on to open the conversation

by trying to brand my old friend, Jerry Pournelle (who was not yet present, at the time.) a poseur, a fool, a liar and a fascist. If Mr. Williams is truly a pacifist, as Miss Radford later, loudly averred, he gives a very good impression of a young man endeavoring to pick a fight and he had been at me for most of an hour before Scotty and his family arrived. I got up and left when I did because I realized that my self-control was slipping and, as I was then only something less than three months out of major, thoracic surgery, I recognized that a fist-fight might well be quite literally the speedy death of me.

From the time that I got up and went over to the bar-group until Jerry Pournelle and Roberta arrived was a period of about forty minutes and, during that time, John Steakley—who owns the well-known ability to get along with almost anyone—went over, sat between Miss Radford and Mr. Williams and endeavored to find out just why they were so very antagonistic toward Jerry and yours truly. He came back to the bar in only about ten minutes with the comments that neither of them seemed to be strung together at all tightly and that Mr. Williams, in particular, seemed to be absolutely set and determined to precipitate trouble with someone that night, anyone he could sufficiently provoke.

Then Jerry arrived and, after having talked briefly with both John and me, went over and spent a good half hour trying to reason with Mr. Williams. I have known Jerry for many years and I can say that I have seldom seen him so calm, so courteous, so utterly reasonable toward any announced antagonist as he was that night toward Mr. Williams. But Jerry finally excused himself, arose, came over to John and me and said, "Do not ever try to talk sense into a closed mind, gentlemen; it's an exercise in futility. I need a drink, now, a stiff one."

By then, I had been on my feet for over an hour and I was beginning to feel it; the only chair not then occupied was the one I had had to start, so against my better judgement, I hobbled back over and sat down in it...whereupon, Mr. Williams took up where he had left off—needling me, being provocative and snide. When he stood up with one two empty glasses, clearly headed for my bar to prepare another brace of drinks with my inferior-quality liquor and mixers (Jack Daniels and cola, as I recall), I decided that enough was enough and I told him in words of one syllable that, as he seemed determined to disrupt my party, I would have to request that he leave it. His reply was a sneer and then, as he passed before me, he "accidentally" bumped me, his elbow striking me hard in the lower ribs (which he had earlier heard me say had been broken during the restarting of my heart after surgery, only seven weeks before..)

My memories are not at all clear after that. Alexis, who was sitting nearby, says that I called him "a dirty, little prick", while my wife avers that I said "white-trash prick", then grabbed the collar of his leather coat and started trying to turn him to face me. I do remember being grabbed by about twenty hands and pushed back into my chair and there held down. That was when Miss Radford, seeing that I was being restrained, came at my eyes with her nails, screaming that Mr. Williams was a pacifist. My wife, however, interposed herself and ordered the hysterical woman out of the suite...or else.

Yes, as Scotty informed you, I do ask some underage persons to depart my suite-parties. There are two very good reasons for this: 1) I keep a full bar (Beer, wines, liquors) in my suite, there are such things as minimum-age liquor-laws in all states, I have not yet seen the interior of the Baton Rouge City Jail and I have no desire to go just so some snotty kid can get boozed up at my expense; 2) I maintain the suite to party, not to host all-night television viewing.

Scotty could not have seen Mr. Williams elbow me in my still-sore ribs, my body was between him and Williams, Alexis did, however, and she says that her one thought when she saw it was, "Oh, shit, the little fucker has bought it, now!"

And yet, you know, I maintained a party-suite at Confederation, in Atlanta, at the Hilton, at the '86 WorldCon, for five nights running. Jay Kay Klein, who was there every night, estimates that as many as 1200 hundred people enjoyed my hospitality...and there were no fights, no forcible ejections of any nature and only one instance of strong words (When a couple decided to use my closed bedroom for some hanky-panky..).

If I can secure a decent facility at the Rodeway Inn, I'll see you all at my parties at SwampCon Seven, next year. Have a nice Holiday Season and God bless.

Sincerely,



Robert Adams

Author of the "Horse Clans" Series

Robert Adams
Apopka, Florida

Dear Clay,

Thanks for the Fiftieth issue of the BRSFL News. I enjoy seeing my name in print, but it really knocked me over when I saw how many times my name turned up in the index. Egobo, pure egobo.

If anybody cares about who this non-Baton Rougian is who reads a lot, I'm sending a biography. Just like the ones found on the backs of dust-jackets. First imagine a picture of a middle aged guy, wearing a tweed jacket with leather elbow patches, and holding a pipe, leaning against a tree, with the wind blowing through his hair, and the Look of Eagles in his eyes. That isn't me, but it sure sounds good.

54-8

Anthony D. Ward is an active duty Army Officer presently working for a DoD Agency near Washington DC. He has been a practicing Science Fiction Fan since fourth grade. Due to his incredibly bad eyesight, he was not able to attend the Air Force Academy and become an astronaut like his mother wanted him to. When her second choice, chicken plucking, ruined his nails, he went to college, majored in physics, and joined the Army five days before receiving his draft notice in 1971. He has done many strange things and gone to many strange places in his Army career. But none stranger than the many SF Cons he has attended since 1968's Worldcon in Oakland, CA. After being just a Face In The Crowd at the last Swampcon, next year he hopes to move up to Major Nonentity.

See You All Soon,



Anthony D. Ward

Dear Clay,

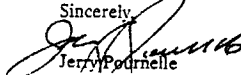
Thanks for Bruzzfuzzel, whose existence I hadn't suspected, but it gives me an opportunity to thank Baton Rouge fandom for having me as Guest of Honor at the last Swampcon.

I had a terrific time. I hope the rather bizarre incident in Bob Adams' suite isn't the only thing people remember. Me, I have framed copies of my certificates as Honorary Mayor-President and Chief of Police of Baton Rouge, and my wife has prominently on display a photo of me as King Crawdad with robes and crown. I don't think I've ever looked sillier...

Adams' account of the affair squares with my recollection. I think it says a lot for fandom in general that an incident in which no one was harmed, no blows were struck, and the worst that happened was that some people left a party gets such large play; we are, in fact, a pretty non violent group.

Once again, my thanks to everyone in Baton Rouge for a really good time. It really is impossible to exaggerate Deep South hospitality.

Sincerely,



Jerry Pournelle

3960 LAUREL CANYON BLVD., SUITE 372, STUDIO CITY, CA 91604-3791

Dear Bruzzfuzzel:

Thanks for the last couple of issues. Your zine still looks pretty professional. The print is a bit small, but that's probably a good way to get a lot of stuff into one issue.

The short story was silly, but the poem was interesting. The artwork was good, and the holiday ornament was cute.

J.R. Madden's article on the Worldcon was provocative. As a Westener (at least until next year when we move to TN) I wonder if the West Coast will ever host a Worldcon again.

The book and movie reviews were good. The great variety of books discussed was enjoyable.

Your letter column was very interesting. Kathleen Gallagher's personal reminiscences were a delight to read!

Thanks again!

Michael Peralta
400 N. Acacia Ave., #C-26
Fullerton, CA 92631-4011

Hello Clay,

I received the Bruzzfuzzel News issues 49, 50 & 51. Thanks alot! The index that you also sent was a world of help in trying to figure out how much art I've sent you. I've counted about 122 illoes thusfar.

Anyway...I'll be sending you a batch of new stuff in the near future.

Steven Fox
5646 Pemberton St.
Philadelphia, PA 19143

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(Available to the fannish public at 2¢ per word per issue.)

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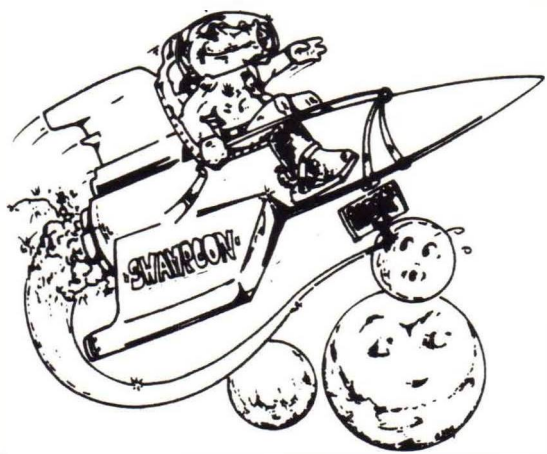


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April 21-23, 1989

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