

# CHAT

NEWSZINE OF THE CHATTANOOGA SCIENCE FICTION ASSOCIATION  
PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY DICK AND NICKI LYNCH  
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"When audiences come to see us authors lecture, it is largely in the hope that we'll be funnier to look at than to read." - Sinclair Lewis

DECEMBER CSFA MEETING BACK AT UTC....The Chattanooga SF Association's December meeting was at the First Tennessee Bank in Brainerd. Attendance was light due to the Christmas rush, but the crowd was good. Since the person who was to lead the book discussion was not present and only three people had read the book, discussion on the long-awaited Icerigger was cancelled in favor of watching the 1933 version of King Kong. The flick was enjoyed by everyone, especially when various people started making side comments about the movie as it progressed. The meeting-after-the-meeting took place at the usual eatery. Next month will feature discussion of Lucifer's Hammer by Larry Niven and Jerry Pournelle, and "Uncle Tim" Bolgeo will be looking for the most trivial person in the club who knows the works of Andre Norton. Questions will be drawn from books that were listed in the December issue of CHAT. Mike Rogers will be sponsoring an auction for the benefit of the club. Everyone who has things related to SF that they would like to donate to the auction is invited to bring it to the meeting. The meeting for February will feature The Winds of Limbo by Michael Moorcock and a reading by Ken Scott. The book for March will be Retief's War by Keith Laumer. January's meeting will be on Saturday, January 20, at 7:30 PM at the UTC Student Center. To get to UTC, take I-124 to the 4th St. exit (last exit before Tennessee River bridge). Go on 4th St. for about 8/10 mile to Mabel St., and turn right on Mabel. Go 2 blocks (bearing right) and turn left onto Vine St. (which is 1-way). Go 2½ blocks. The Student Center is on the left side; look for its sign. The meeting room is on the ground floor, near the information desk. For questions, call Rich Morehouse (755-4275). (NWL)

BUG EDDIE SEZ IT'S TIME  
FOR ANOTHER CHAT!

ODDS & ENDS....It's an abbreviated issue of CHAT this month gang, due to the closeness of Chattacon. See you there? \*\* LOCUS reports Ted White has resigned as editor of Amazing and Fantastic prozines. \*\* George (Gulu) Takei was in Chattanooga on Dec. 4, in conjunction with the opening of the new CARTA facilities. CSFA members AJ Barker and Tola Var-nell were among the group that welcomed him. Rumor has it that he'll be back in late January. \*\* Was KISS member Gene Simmons at WorldCon in Phoenix? CSFA member Shelby Bush III (in his WorldCon report) states that he saw Simmons at a private room party, and New Orleans fan Guy Lillian III (in his WorldCon report) says Simmons tried to gatecrash the Harlan Ellison Roast but was stopped at the door. But Mike Glycer (in File 770) says that Kiss Productions Inc. reported that all band members were in New York or London during Iguanacon. Will the real story please stand up? \*\* The recently formed Birmingham SF club meets the second Saturday of each month. All CSFA members are invited to attend. (Contact Wade Gilbreath, 4206 Balboa Ave., Pinson, Ala. 35126 for directions).

(cont. on page 2)



ODDS & ENDS (cont.).... \*\* Robert Silverberg will be Toastmaster at the 1980 WorldCon in Boston. \*\* In Memory Yet Green: The Autobiography of Isaac Asimov 1920-1954 will be the good doctor's 200th book, due out in February from Doubleday. (DL)

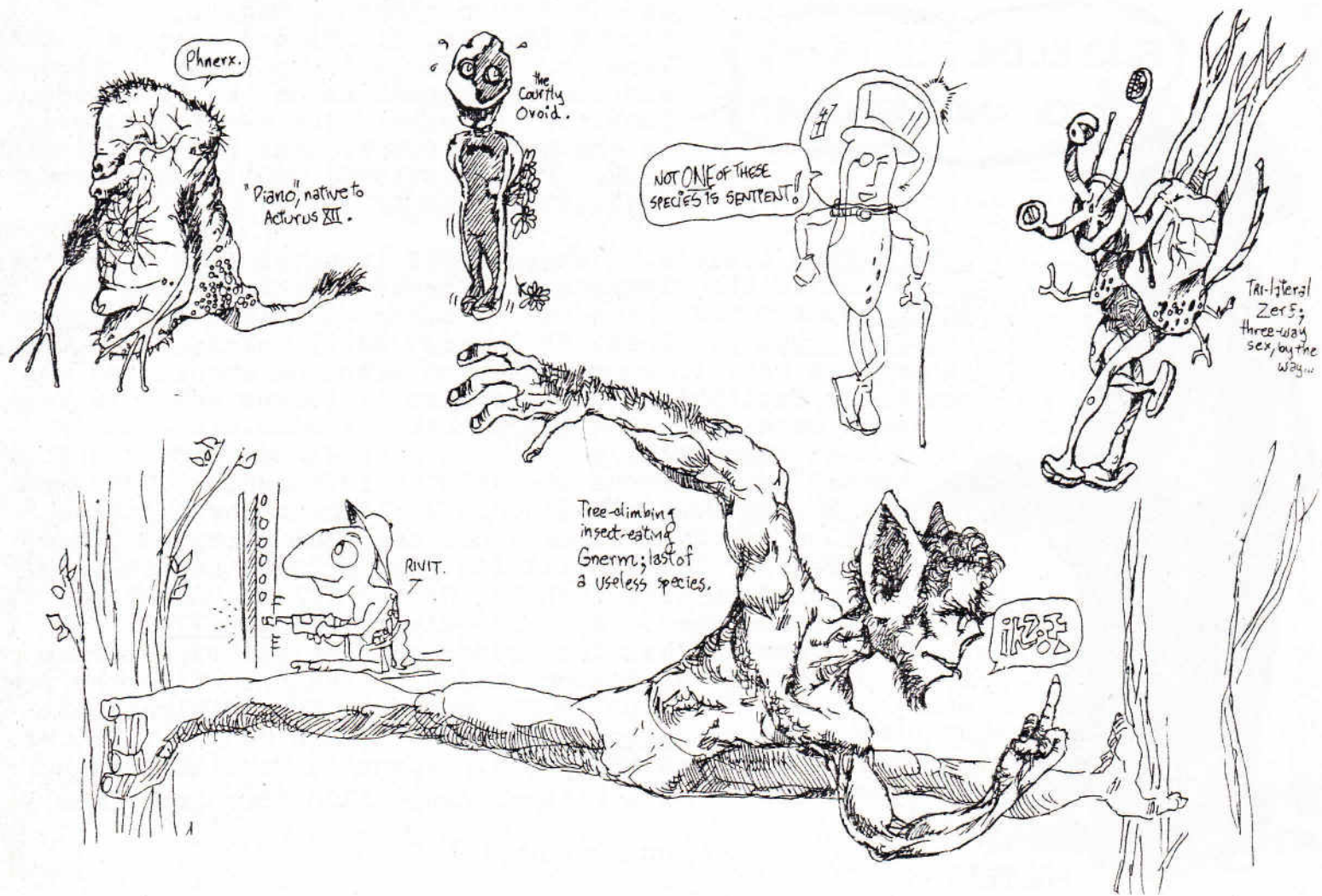
FEM FAN FEDS HOLD ELECTION....On Sunday, Dec. 10, the Southern Appalachian Fem Fan Federation held an election at the home of Janet Caruth in Cleveland, Tennessee. The Special Nominating Officer (SNO) presented the slate of officers, which was approved by unanimous vote. Effective February 14, new officers will be: Nickilyn Lynch - President, A.J. Barker - Permanent Vice President, Janet Caruth - Treasurer, Julia Wilhoit - Secretary, and Tola Varnell - Club Photographer.

The second issue of Thru the Worm Hole is now ready for distribution. You can purchase your copy from most any Federation member. Please support your local Fem Fan Fed. (AJB)

CHAT SUBMISSION POLICY....CHAT encourages submissions of art, reviews, articles, letters of comment, and the like. Written submissions should not be too lengthy -- try to keep them under one page as it appears here; also, make sure your name and address is on your submission. We especially need news items and artwork (double-especially artwork) -- free-lancers, here's your chance! Please note that we cannot pay for submissions; we provide a forum for fan writers and artists, and will give a complimentary issue of CHAT to all submitters who aren't already receiving it. And CHAT has been known to carry advertising (write for our extremely inexpensive rates).

# SPECIAL CARTOON FEATURE

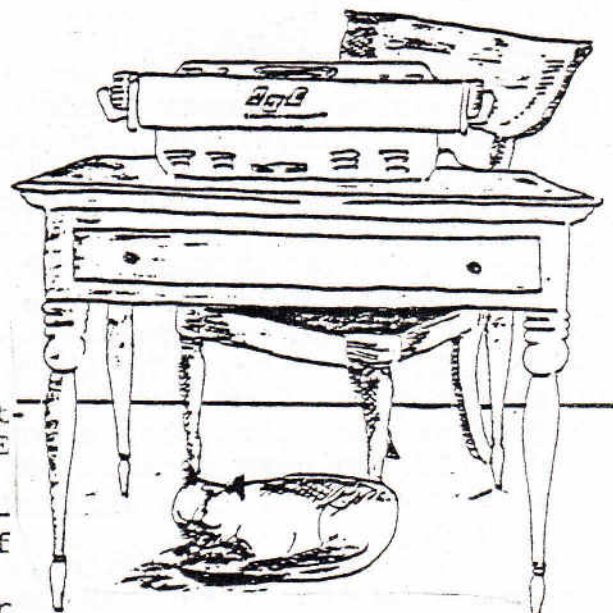
# CHARLIE WILLIAMS' INTERPLANETARY ZOO





# A. J.'s Corner

by A. J. Barker



Meade Frierson III, in the latest SFC Bulletin, referred to Wilhoit, Lynch, and myself as Julie, Nicki, and AJ-X---wait until he reads WORM HOLE #2.

Yes folks, it's finally ready. After melting four keys on the traveling typer, WORM HOLE #2 is complete. The use of blue paper should give a clue to all those interested in the content of this issue. The quantity and quality of the stories is much higher than before. (Sale of WORM HOLE #2 will be limited to persons over the age of 18. One irate mother-type person calling is enough.) ((Ed. note- WORM HOLE will be 75¢ a copy, I believe. Get a copy at ChattaCon!))

There have been several staff changes: I'm still Editor-in-Chief, of course; Julie has become Art Editor, which has freed her to really do some beautiful work; and Nicki, newly elected president of the Southern Appalachian FemFan Federation, has taken over the Litter Editor's post. Nicki has sorted through our litters of comment to come up with a great LOC department and has prepared an incoming President's Message. ((Ed. note- This is the official WORM HOLE spelling of "Editor" and not an error.))

Yes, there was a FemFan election. Sunday, December 10th at the home of Janet Caruth, our new officers were announced and elected by acclamation. New officers are: Nicki Lynch, President; Andre (AJ) Barker, Vice-President; Janet Caruth, Treasurer; Julie Wilhoit, Secretary; and Tola Varnell, Club Photographer. The new directions for the SASF are now being discussed and we are looking forward to a very full and profitable new year. New officers will be installed in February.

Would anyone like to register to win a free kitten? The prizes are beautiful All-American Domestic Shorthairs. Pretty Baby is getting wider by the day and being one to think ahead, I figure there are at least a dozen people out there who would just love a kitten. P.B. is turning into a trufan cat. Last night she was ~~axing~~ reading my copy of Ophiuchi Hotline.

I actually have two book reviews for this month: Multiple Man written by Ben Bova and published by Ballantine SF; and Boys From Brazil written by Ira Levin and published by Random House. As you may know I have been attempting to get these books read with the hope of doing a column on "cloning". Well, you will just have to wait for that. Neither of these, in my humble opinion, qualify as SF let alone books on cloning.

Multiple Man is a fast moving yarn set in the future. Exact duplicates of the President have been turning up---dead. Our hero, the President's Press Secretary discovers these strange incidents and begins an investigation which leads him to uncover some very strange goings on in the Executive Mansion. Cloning is taken slightly out of step in this tale. For one thing, if an infant was cloned at birth, all his "brothers" would be almost a year younger than he. These "brothers" would go through different stages of development at different times. One might come away with the copies being identical, but not to the original. I was trying to think of something new to say about clones and my supervisor said, "How about boring and redundant?" OK, but it was a good mystery anyway.

Boys from Brazil has been made into a movie but for the life of me, I can't figure out why. As in Multiple Man, cloning plays only a small part. Here the person cloned and the reason for the cloning are the prime movers.

(cont. on page 4)



AJ'S CORNER (cont.)

Somewhere in the world are 94 little Adolph Hitlers being shaped. When Herr Doctor Melenger sends out killers to do away with the fathers of the little darlings, the plot is discovered. The discoverer is killed by the Nazis before he can get the information to the Nazi hunter for whom he is trying to work. I was never quite sure who was the most senile: the hunter, the Nazi doctor, or me.

ADDED ON DECEMBER 27th:

I will never hand in a column before it is a week late again.

I finally got to see a good SF movie and I can't wait until next month to talk about it. The thing that makes this one so extra special is that it is a remake of my favorite old SF movie. It was one of the ones that kept me afraid of dark places until---I'm still afraid of dark places.

If you have neither seen the original and/or read the book then you are in for a treat. The Invasion of the Body Snatchers is here and, boy, are we lucky.

The bodies this time belong to the citizens of San Francisco, though it does seem that they have had enough problems lately. In the original, the hero was a doctor in a small rural California community, now he is a deputy commissioner of Public Health. His love interest is a female researcher, who is living with her boyfriend the dentist. This is the 1978 version of the nice school teacher girlfriend of the 1950's doctor.

The female researcher brings home an unusual blossom, one of hundreds which are growing in the park after a rain. Next morning the sports nut dentist has become Mr. Square in a three piece suit and carries out the garbage without being told. Stranger still is that the garbage man with truck is waiting for him.

The 1950's insurance salesman sidekick and wife has been replaced with a starving poet and wife, who runs a hot mud bath. It's an improvement, both are reasonably intelligent people. This time the wife finds the semi-complete body on one of her massage tables instead of her greenhouse. These two work so very well they are used and kept around. (By the way, who played the guy in the original? He looked a lot like Louis Nye but wasn't and he also played with Tony Curtis in the Thief of Bagdad. Who was he?)

This time we have added a prominent psychiatrist, friend of our hero and nemesis of the poet. Our hero takes the female researcher to see the shrink because she says her boyfriend isn't really the same person. Now we get to see Leonard Nimoy in action. He was just as convincing as he is on "In Search of..." You get the feeling that he knows what he's saying is pure crap, but he's going to sell it to you come hell or high water and he succeeds. The many years of playing emotionless Mr. Spock have been overcome only to play in a movie filled with emotionless pod people. Interesting. Very interesting.

Donald Sutherland and Brooke Addams play our hero and researcher respectively. There is some violence in this movie, but no more than is necessary for the plot, and very little sex. The only "sex" isn't really, it's only Ms. Addams running around the last ten minutes in the nude, and she's not too offensive, so it's O.K.

Go see this one, it's totally fantastic and keeps going right up until the credits. One hint: don't forget to go to the bathroom before you go in and don't get a coke unless you have a very strong bladder; it is scary.

ARTIST CREDITS THIS MONTH:

Bill Bridget (page 1)  
Charlie Williams (page 2)  
Julia Wilhoit (page 3)  
Dick Lynch (page 4)



# At the Co-op

BY

PERRY A. CHAPDELAINE, SR.  
COURTESY OF AUTHORS' CO-OP PUBLISHING  
Co.

SUBSIDIARY OF AUTHORS' CO-OP, INC.  
RT. 4, Box 137  
FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE 37064

GENERALLY BOOKS ARE PRODUCED BY THE FUNDS OF (1) THE PUBLISHER ITSELF, (2) OUTSIDE SUBSIDIES, (3) OR SELF-PUBLISHING. SELF-PUBLISHING BREAKS DOWN INTO (A) RIP-OFF, KNOWN AS VANITY PUBLISHING, OR (B) NON-RIP-OFF, KNOWN SIMPLY AS SELF-PUBLISHING.

IF IT ALL SOUNDS CONFUSING AND SORT OF MIXED UP, IT IS AND IT ISN'T.

EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS ABOUT THE PUBLISHER SPENDING HIS OWN MONEY FOR BOOKS. THE GREAT GALACTICA KNOWS WE HEAR ENOUGH CRAP OUT OF NEW YORK ON THAT SCORE: "ANYTHING LESS," THEY REMIND US, "IS EGOISTIC, DEFLATING, NOT KOSHER, PATHETIC, SOMETHING TO LAUGH ABOUT, A DEMONSTRATION OF INADEQUACY, POOR WRITING. . . . "A MANUSCRIPT WORTH READING WILL ALWAYS WIN ITS WAY" OR "ONLY THE GOOD STUFF GETS PUBLISHED" OR "THE SLUSH PILE (GET THE SEMANTICS? SLUSH) IS HELL, AND USELESS TO WADE THROUGH?"

AS A CONTINUING ASIDE, AND FOR THOSE OF US VERSED IN STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, NEVER DO SUCH DOWN-RATERS MENTION THE TRULY GREAT THINGS THAT SAT IN THE SLUSH PILE FOR UPWARDS OF TEN YEARS. THEY SPEAK AS THOUGH ALL SLUSH IS BAD; AND THAT ALL EDITORS JUST SIMPLY KNOW WHAT IS GOOD AND BAD AND/OR WHAT READERS WILL BUY.

EXAMPLES?

OK, GONE WITH THE WIND? THE TOLKIEN SERIES?

ENOUGH TO MAKE THE POINT?

ANYWAY, EVERYONE KNOWS THAT PUBLISHERS SHOULD SIT IN SOLE JUDGMENT AS TO WHAT IS PUBLISHABLE; THEY SHOULD PUT THEIR OWN MONEY INTO IT, WHICH GIVES THEM THE RIGHT TO JUDGE QUALITY, READER INTEREST, PROFIT POTENTIAL, ADVERTISING BUDGET, AND SO ON. WE ALL AGREE WITH THIS. RIGHT?

WRONG!

WHAT IS NOT GENERALLY KNOWN IS THAT CHUNKS OF THE NEW YORK PUBLISHING WORLD WORK UNDER SUBSIDY CONTRACTS. A SUBSIDY CONTRACT TAKES PLACE WHEN A PERSON OR PERSONS (INVESTMENT GROUP) FINDS A REALLY HOT-SHOT ITEM WHICH, IN THEIR OPINION, WILL MAKE MONEY IF THEY CAN ONLY GET IT INTO PRINT AND INTO THE REGULAR NATIONAL DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS. LET'S TAKE AN EXAMPLE:

JERRY NIGHTINGALE HAS BEEN STRUMMING HIS GUITAR FOR TWENTY YEARS. HAS MADE A MILLION BUCKS OR THEREABOUTS, AND SEEMS TO GROW A RATHER GOOD CROP OF HIT RECORDS FROM TIME TO TIME. HE DRAWS LARGE CROWDS AT THE LOCAL MUNICIPAL BOWL, WHAT WITH HIS UNUSUAL NASAL TWANG COMBINED WITH HIS FLUORESCING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE SEMI-DARK. SEVERAL UNAUTHORIZED BOOKS HAVE HIT THE MARKET OVER THE YEARS BUT WHEN YOU THUMB THROUGH THEM ONE DISCOVERS THAT THEY ARE MERELY PUBLICITY REHASHES AND NEWSCLIPPINGS AND OLD PHOTOS. AN INVESTMENT GROUP THAT CONSISTS OF BANKERS, INSURANCE VICE PRESIDENTS, ATTORNEYS, AND THE OWNER OF THE LOCAL GRAVEL AND QUARRY CORPORATION IS APPROACHED BY LOCAL NEWS WRITER JOE BLANC WHO HAS CONVINCED JERRY NIGHTINGALE'S AGENT THAT A REALLY HONEST-TO-GOODNESS DOWN-TO-EARTH AUTHORIZED STORY WOULD HELP PROMOTE JERRY'S UNUSUALLY GOOD IMAGE FURTHER. "IT WILL GET DISTRIBUTED ON THE NATIONAL NEWSTANDS.

THE MS IS KICKED ABOUT THE INVESTMENT GROUP, AND THEIR GREEDY, BEADY LITTLE EYES NEARLY GLOW LIKE A CERTAIN CHARACTER IN THE HOBBITS, BENEATH DEEP, DANK, CAVERNS.

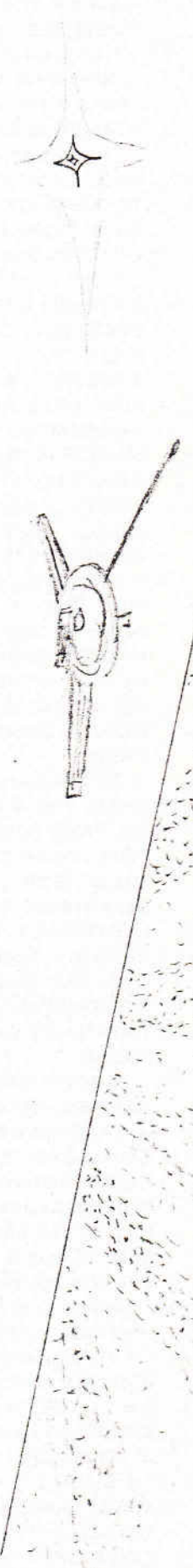
AT LAST THEY PICK UP THE PHONE AND CALL A CERTAIN NEW YORK PUBLISHING HOUSE, ONE OF THE BIGGEES. SHORTLY THEREAFTER THE MS IS INSIDE THE CRIME-RIDDEN CITY SOMEWHERE ON THE AVENUE OF THE AMERICAS BEING READ BY A YOUNG GIRL FRESH FROM COLLEGE WHO GOT NOTHING LESS THAN A's IN ENGLISH AND ENGLISH LITERATURE WHICH, OF COURSE, CONSISTED OF MOSTLY JUNK THAT NOBODY READS NOWADAYS ANYWAY.

EVENTUALLY THE MS FINDS ITS WAY TO THE PROPER COMMITTEE — PROBABLY AT THE SAY-SO OF MR. BIG HIMSELF, WHO HEADS THE COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES (HE GOT THE PHONE CALL BECAUSE THOSE CALLING WERE OF THE PROPER STATURE — SEE — LIKE IN THE MILITARY: COLONEL TALKS TO COLONEL, GENERAL, FIRST STAR TO GENERAL, FIRST STAR, SERGEANT TO SERGEANT: THE THEORY SEEMS TO BE THAT ONLY PEERS CAN UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE OF PEERS, WHICH CERTAINLY CREATES A HEAVY BABYLON, BUT THAT'S A DIFFERENT STORY.)

SINCE THE MS IS NOT A BLOOPER — THAT IS, THE COMPANY'S IMAGE WON'T BE SHATTERED IF IT IS PUBLISHED — WELL, WHY NOT? IT ONLY COSTS RESERVATION OF SPACE IN THE PRODUCTION SCHEDULE AND IT IS OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY!

SO, CONTRACTS ARE DRAWN, CALLED SUBSIDY CONTRACTS, SEPARATE AND DISTINCT

(cont. on page 6)





AT THE CO-OP (cont.)

FROM THE AUTHOR'S.

CAN YOU OR I STANDING NEXT TO THE NEWSRACK DETERMINE WHICH IS THE SUBSIDIZED WORK AND WHICH IS NOT?

I THINK NOT.

NOR CAN WE LEARN JUST HOW MUCH OF THE TRIPE — BIG NAME TRIPE — ON THE STANDS IS SELF-SUBSIDIZED AND HOW MUCH IS NOT, BECAUSE THE VERY IDEA OF SELF-SUBSIDIZATION APPEARS SO CLOSELY AKIN TO THAT OF SELF-PUBLISHING OR (AS THE NEW YORKERS WOULD CONFUSE US) AS VANITY PUBLISHING.

NOW VANITY PUBLISHING IS TRULY BEM OF ANOTHER SPECIES. ONE OF MY FRIENDS, NOW DECEASED, COULD NOT TOLERATE ETERNAL REJECTION SLIPS, AND HIS WORK WAS ACADEMIC, BLACK ORIENTED, HISTORICALLY ACCURATE, AND, WORST OF ALL, HAD SOCIAL REDEEMING VALUES. IT WAS ABOUT THE NAACP IN THE THEATRE SINCE EARLY DAYS. AGAINST MY ADVICE HE HIRED A VANITY PRESS, PUBLISHED THE BOOK AT A COST ABOUT TWICE TOO MUCH. THE ORIGINAL COMPANY FOLDED. FORTUNATELY WAS PURCHASED BY AN HONEST MAN WHO DID A FINE JOB OF EDITING. THE BOOK CAME OUT OVERPRICED, AND MY FRIEND, OF COURSE, HAD TO HUCKSTER HIS OWN BOOKS, WHICH HE DID, IN THE BLACK, ACADEMIC COMMUNITIES. IT SOLD WELL, AND NOT ONE GAVE A BLACK DAMN THAT IT WAS BY A VANITY PRESS.

ORDINARILY I'D SAY STAY AWAY FROM THEM, THE VANITY PRESSES, AND I STILL DO SO. TAKE THEM WITH A GRAIN OF SPACE DUST FOR WHAT THEY'RE WORTH, AND IF YOU MUST, STRIVE FOR ONE THAT'S BEEN IN BUSINESS AND HAS A REPUTATION FOR LEGITIMACY. MEANWHILE, DON'T CONFUSE SUBSIDY PUBLISHING WITH SELF-PUBLISHING, OR SELF-PUBLISHING WITH THE POTENTIAL RIP-OFF THAT MAY OCCUR THROUGH THE UNSCRUPULOUS VANITY PRESS.

IF YOUR MATERIAL HAS SOCIAL REDEEMING VALUES, OR CANNOT GET PUBLISHED FOR WHATEVER REASON, YOU MAY LEGITIMATELY CONSIDER SELF-PUBLISHING OR SUBSIDY PUBLISHING. IN MY OPINION, IT IS MORE EGOTISTICAL TO BELIEVE THAT ONLY NEW YORK EDITORS CAN AND SHOULD JUDGE THE MERIT OF YOUR WORK THAN IT IS TO TRUST YOUR OWN GOOD FAITH AND SELF-PUBLISH OR SEEK SUBSIDY PUBLISHING HELP.

SOMEHOW A STRONG EMOTIONAL BARRIER HAS BEEN HELD UP BEFORE US THAT KEEPS US FROM WRITING AND PRESENTING TO OUR FRIENDS AND WOULD-BE FRIENDS OUR INNER THOUGHTS AND FANTASIES ON THE SPURIOUS GROUNDS THAT SELF-PUBLISHING IS SOCIALLY UNACCEPTABLE.

I SUBMIT THAT THOSE WHO MAKE SUCH ASSERTIONS ARE THOSE WHO ALREADY RIDE THE EGO-TRIP OF THEIR OWN TOO-OFTEN COINCIDENTAL POSITIONS OF SUCCESS. IT IS THEY WHO, BY MAKING SUCH ASSERTIONS,

ARE REALLY THE EGOISTS — NOT THOSE OF US WHO SIMPLY WISH TO SHARE IDEAS, EXPERIENCES AND FANTASIES FOR MUTUAL ENJOYMENT.

ONE WOMAN WROTE ABOUT HER LIFE THROUGH GRADE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL AND COLLEGE, AND HOW SHE MET HER FIRST HUSBAND, MARRIED, HAD CHILDREN, AND HOW HER HUSBAND AND HIS FOOTBALL TEAM DIED IN A NORTH CAROLINA PLANE CRASH, AND HOW SHE REMARRIED.

WHAT A HORRIBLE PLOT LINE!

BUT IT SOLD WELL. SHE SOLD EACH AND EVERY BOOK HERSELF, AND DID WELL, AND NOW SHE'S WRITING HER SECOND BOOK. I READ THE BOOK AND WAS QUITE SURPRISED AT HOW INTERESTING SHE MADE THE ABSOLUTE MUNDANE. NO PUBLISHER — NOT ONE — WOULD HAVE PUBLISHED THAT BOOK. YET IT DESERVED TO BE PUBLISHED FOR HER OWN FAMILY, HER FRIENDS, AND FOR THOSE WHOSE KINFOLKS AND LOVED ONES WERE KILLED IN THE PLANE CRASH, AND FOR THE WAY IT WAS TOLD, AND BECAUSE IT WAS A HISTORICAL RECORD FOR HER CHILDREN AS TO WHAT HAPPENED TO THEIR FATHER, AND IT CERTAINLY DEMONSTRATED THE STRONG EMOTIONAL BONDING BETWEEN THE SECOND FATHER AND HIS STEP-CHILDREN!

I'VE CHATTED AT LENGTH TO SAY THIS:

SINCE THE NEW YORK MARKET HAS BEEN SWALLOWED BY FINANCIAL DRAGONS, THE SMALL PRESS BUSINESS HAS BURGEONED AND IS BURGEONING. WARREN CAUSEY SEVERAL YEARS AGO REMINDED THAT IN THE EARLY AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY DAYS, PAMPHLETEERING WAS THE IN-THING. SMALL PEOPLE COULD SAY THEIR PIECE, AND OTHERS WOULD READ WHAT SMALL PEOPLE THOUGHT. WELL, PAMPHLETEERING IS HAVING A COME-BACK.

ACROSS THE UNITED STATES THERE ARE ABOUT 3,000 SMALL PRESSES CONSISTING OF SELF-PUBLISHERS AND PUBLISHERS WITH GOVERNMENT GRANTS, AND PUBLISHERS SUCH AS AUTHORS' CO-OP, WITH GENUINE BOOKS TO SELL. CHAT IS A SAMPLE OF A SMALL PRESS OUTPUT, OF PAMPHLETEERING, OF SELF-PUBLISHING.

ABOUT HALF OF THE SMALL PRESSES CONSIST OF POETRY MAGAZINES. THE NEW YORK ESTABLISHMENT WILL TELL YOU THERE IS NO MARKET FOR POETRY, BUT THOSE WHO HAVE SOLVED THE DISTRIBUTION PROBLEM ON A REGIONAL BASIS WILL TELL YOU THAT THEY CANNOT QUITE GET ENOUGH POETRY PAMPHLETS (AT THE RIGHT PRICE, WHICH IS ANOTHER STORY).

IN A SENSE WE LIVE IN AN AGE OF MONSTROUS PRESS INHIBITIONS. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IS GIVEN ONLY TO THOSE WHO OWN NEWSPAPERS AND GIGANTIC PUBLISHING FIRMS, NOT TO US LITTLE FOLK. BUT IN ANOTHER SENSE WE'RE ALL QUITE FORTUNATE BECAUSE THE NEW YORK BIGGEES ARE LEAVING THE REALLY FINE STUFF TO US

(cont. on page 7)



# TECHNICAL REVIEW

BY R. M. SHELTON

PROGRAM REALISM AND QUALITY OPINION

BATTLESTAR: GALACTICA vs. STAR TREK

PART 3: LIGHT/FASTER THAN LIGHT DRIVES AND  
STORY/SCRIPT COMPARISON

Tylum, the Galactica's fuel, cannot exist, not even theoretically! Why? As shown in the 3-hour premiere, laser fire in the Tylum mines on Carillon ignited the ore there which eventually destroyed the entire planet. Volcanic activity would have accomplished the very same thing millions of years before. As for Tylum existing at all? Never as depicted, but under other circumstances, yes. Furthermore, Carillon cannot be a planet of eternal night so near a bright multiple star field as that 'thing' called the Nova Madigon.

No spacecraft, whatever its size, shape, or purpose, can travel at near light, light, or faster than light velocities until one of the most enigmatic and far-reaching laws of physics, the Law of Inertia, is conquered and brought fully under control. The definition of this law simply says: a body at rest remains at rest, and a body in motion moves in a uniformly straight course, unless some outside force acts on it. Dr. Einstein stated this much better in his theory of relativity:  $E=MC^2$ . This simply means that at light velocity, the inertial mass of a spacecraft is theoretically infinite, requiring an equally infinite amount of energy to achieve light velocity.

The matter/anti-matter engines of the Enterprise have the required power to batter their way up to near light velocity, but no faster. As for those engines creating a warpage of time and space to achieve faster than light velocities? Highly doubtful. Varying velocities of motion have their equivalent inertial constants, until they reach the absolute constant, light velocity. At that absolute constant, time appears to stand still...yet there is motion. The only way for the Enterprise to travel as fast as light cheaply is that its inertial constant must be maintained at the relatively low Earth equivalent for its mass, so the time factor will neither decrease, causing a speed up in the time rate, or increase, causing a slow down in that rate. With the speed up you age far more rapidly; with the slow down...you become relatively immortal. If you can survive the mental stress of the acceleration to light velocity. Without a maintained low inertia constant the physical stress of the acceleration is guaranteed to wipe you out. Control inertia, eliminate all gravitational influence, then a battery powered flashlight

(cont. on page 8)

## AT THE CO-OP (cont.)

SMALL PRESSES.

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TECHNICAL REVIEW (cont.)....could drive a multi-million ton spaceship at light velocity until the batteries went dead.

With a starship/warship with a 1 gee environment, such as the Enterprise or the Galactica, to travel near or at light velocity, it would first require at least a long life fusion (or even fission) reactor. Secondly, it would require an inertia absorption-redirectional field projector engine to use the very force of inertia itself to propel the ship. The reactor would be a very inexpensive source of power to an almost unbelievably efficient, and inexpensive drive. All that's needed is to be able to control and regulate gravitational and inertial wavelengths.

With such a system for sub-light and light velocities it becomes quite conceivable that such drive systems as the Enterprise has could easily push velocities far beyond that of light. This is one of the many flaws in the Galactica's scripts, even with its massive wasted budget. This is one of the very few flaws in the Star Trek scripts and stories, with its tight, well-used budget. On a scale of ten, Galactica rates 1.0 and Star Trek rates 10; I, by the way, am no great Star Trek fan.

In real life, if such a craft as the Galactica is ever built, it should be built for maximum defensive and offensive capabilities at the maximum efficiency for everything required for it. The initial cost would be great, but life expectancy is far greater, and it definitely would be cheaper in both short and long runs.

#### LETTERS OF COMMENT

Brian Earl Brown  
16711 Burt Rd. #207  
Detroit, Mich. 48219

I've enjoyed R.M.  
Shelton's "Technical Review of Battlestar Galactica despite the many valid

objections Bob Barger raises in his letter in the Dec. '78 issue. Actually Barger's analogies to World War I and II technology is probably the best analysis I've seen of the preconceptions used to design the shows.

R. M. writes this time "In a culture advanced enough to create and control gravity, energy shielding would be far cheaper and more easily producable by comparison." (page 6).

Now the Galactica could be cruising through the cosmos at a constant one gee acceleration instead of having gravity generators. This is a possibility, though ship's design doesn't support that notion.

But gravity control doesn't imply energy defense fields any more than apples imply oranges. Producing an artificial gravity field is comparable to inducing magnetism in steel. Gravity is a force we know exists; that it can be increased or decreased artificially is a reasonable conjecture. But an energy defense shield...?

By implication such a field must reflect or absorb beams of radiant energy. (I presume everybody in the show uses some form of radiant energy weaponry. There is no indication that they don't.) Now electric fields of energy will attract or repel charged matter. Magnetic energy fields will affect magnetic matter but not non-magnetic matter. ((ed. note - well, not exactly. Electricity and magnetism are two forms of the same thing. For instance, the earth's magnetic field bends the path of charged particles from the sun.)) A field of anti-gravity would repulse all matter - well, more correctly it would create a 'gravity hill' that matter must ascend to reach the craft. Because the mass of a photon is so slight it interacts with gravitational fields very poorly. A gravity field of one stellar mass (e.g. the sun) deflects light just a fraction of a degree. A gravitational defense against laser attack would require the craft to be surrounded by, in effect, a black hole (or its anti-gravitational equivalent). The energy requirements for such a field would be staggering. Energy shields have been a part of SF since Doc Smith but they aren't too credible, and in any case would result in the Galactica

looking like either a giant 8-ball or ball bearing depending on if the shield reflected or absorbed light.

R. M. also charges that the Viper craft constantly ignore the laws of inertia. Well, when you're the last remnants of humanity, you can't afford to go by the book... For that matter, perhaps those Vipers do ignore the laws of inertia; perhaps they have inertia-free propulsion systems like Doc Smith used in his Lensmen series. It would certainly explain a lot of why they do what they do.

What I don't understand is why they have to launch those ships by catapult - unless it's to throw the Vipers far enough away from the Galactica that the B:G isn't damaged when they turn on the thrusters (only I recall they fire their thrusters all the way down the catapult).

The sad thing about Battlestar Galactica is that when Roddenberry described Star Trek as "Wagon train to the stars" he was trying to make a new idea comprehensible to conservative programmers; when Larson described Battlestar Galactica as "Wagon Train to the stars", that's exactly what he meant!

Wade Gilbreath  
4206 Balboa Ave.  
Pinson, Alabama  
35126

The last issue of CHAT was very good, one of the best I've seen, in fact. Charlie Williams' back cover is a great piece of fan art. His work seems comic oriented and reminds me of Joe Statton.

I've had a thought. I don't know how many interviews you've run in CHAT ((ed. note: 3 so far)), but you might work up a compilation of them as a one-shot gazette, CHAT INTERVIEWS (imaginative, eh?) or some such title. I think it would be pretty prestigious as a club project. The last interview with Chalke was extremely good for interest and information.

((Thanks, Wade, for the compliments. A gazette of interviews is definitely a possibility as soon as we accumulate a few more of them. And we'll need artwork for it, of course \*hint, hint\*))