

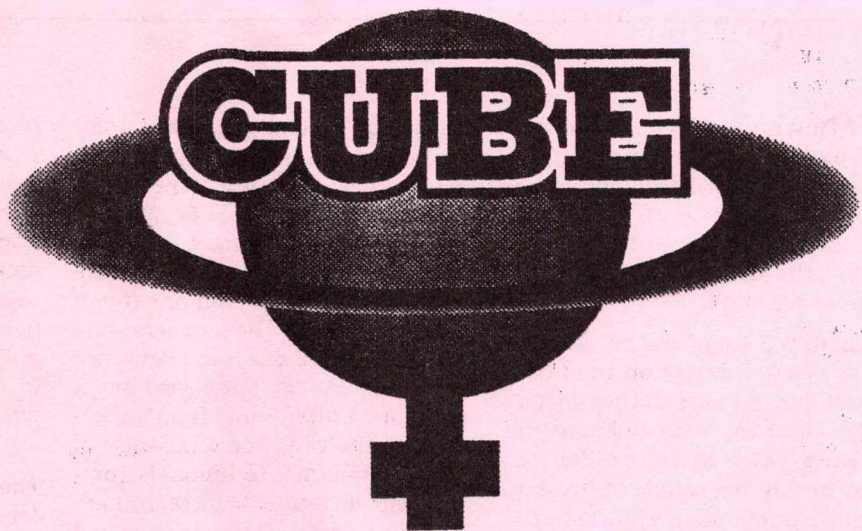
Welcome to *Cube* #47 (the 'h' is gone), latest (and we do mean latest, don't we?) in a series of clubzines published by various members of SF³, aka The Society for the Furtherance and Study of Fantasy and Science Fiction. SF³ in general and *Cube* in particular can be reached at PO Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624. Copies can be had for the price of membership in SF³ (\$9/year for a basic membership), in trade for your good fanzine, or in recognition of your faanishness by its editor. Consider your contributions to future *Cubes* aggressively solicited.

You'll find thisish has something of a "push it out of the garage, Mary, and see if it'll start up" feel to it. Former editor Andy Hooper—who offers all the expected/accepted apologies/explanations for the non-appearance of this zine during most of his editorial tenure—left us a lot of interesting material. Current editor Steve Swartz decided to publish much of it here (because it was there, OK? so don't ask!). As for the future, our plan is simple. We plan to publish an issue of *Cube* every two months. Each issue will contain announcements of forthcoming events, some regular features (book reviews, gossip, etc.), and a few articles addressed to an issue-specific theme. In honor of Julie Shivers' & Bill Humphries' wedding, the next issue of *Cube* will contain several articles on primary relationships. If you're interested in writing about that, or any other topic—or feel the urge to write a letter of comment—please have your contributions to the editor by Friday June 26th.

This issue of *Cube* is published in May 1992. The Publication Committee includes: Steve Swartz (editor), Bill Boddin, Jeanne Gomoll, Bill Humphries, Michael Shannon, and Tracy Shannon.

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The Best Fanzines of 1991: An Analytic Survey

Last year, while attending the World Science Fiction Convention in Chicago, Marty Cantor came up to me and handed me a copy of his new fanzine, *No Award*. "I think you'll like it," he said, "It mentions you." And Jophan found that it was so.

The zine featured an article by Mike Glycer, suggesting the possibility that we might develop a game like *Rotisserie Baseball* to apply to fanzine publication. Team owners would take turns drafting players at the beginning of the season, and receive points for both the quality and quantity of their work. It was a nice premise, I thought, but largely unworkable. How do you break down the subtle qualities that inhere in a good fanzine and express them in some form of statistic?

How indeed. I spent the first few months of the year (doldrums for both baseball and fanzines) pondering this problem, and I've come up with what is as rational a way of quantifying the quality of fanzines as I can imagine.

Each fanzine is rated for its quality in seven different areas. A ten is the highest score possible for each fanzine, so the highest possible aggregate score is 70 (amazingly, this past year produced a fanzine which came within 3 points of such a perfect score). The seven categories are:

Layout What kind of craftsmanship is displayed in the zine? How good are its physical qualities?

Art How well is art integrated into the production of the zine? Does the art serve the written material well, or alternatively, does it stand well on its own as a separate feature?

Congeniality How friendly is the zine? Does it encourage comment? Does it attract the reader to the subjects described?

Genre Does the fanzine focus on science fiction or fantasy? Does the zine openly espouse some other special interest?

Writing Does the written material embody that sheer sophistication of presentation, that fine characterization and narrative flow in its fiction, that clarity and inventiveness in its non-fiction, which we expect from our best fanzines?

Temporality Does the fanzine appear frequently and dependably? In the case of historical or one-shot efforts, does the fanzine successfully capture the quality of its moment?

Faanishness To what degree does the fanzine espouse faanish ideals, advance faanish causes, or provide information and education on the nature of fandom?

I handed out scores in each of these categories rather like boxing judges use the "ten-point-must" system, assuming that each fanzine has a ten in each category until strikes against it can be made. Of course, this system is hardly any more objective than Michael Ashley; my own prejudices surely came through my chosen ratings as well as they

would if I just ranked the zines in order of personal preference. On the other hand, I found that when I took some zines apart they turned out to be more worthy than I had thought, while some of my favorite fanzines failed to register high scores at all.

Here, then, is a list of the top twenty fanzines of 1991, based on the titles sent to me during the year. They do not entirely reflect my own opinions of what zines deserved recognition of quality, merely the results of my experiment in numeration. Fanzines tied in total score were sub-ranked by the frequency of the highest single score in their seven categories, or second highest score if ties persisted. Some ties were unbreakable under this method.

I think there can be little dispute about the top five finishers. *BEDEC* is an acronym for Walt Willis' and James White's *Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator...To the Enchanted Convention*. This project, one of the most eagerly awaited in fannish

history, has generally met with unfavorable reviews, but when judged on the same level as the rest of the field, it does quite well indeed. *SF Five-Yearly's* amazing score of 67 may seem like bombast or hype to some, but have another look at it, or find one if you haven't seen it yet. The mimeography and design of the zine is the best since Colin Hinz' *Novoid*, but covers much more worthwhile ground than the latter along the way. For a measure of how good its mimeo technique is, compare it with an issue of Mark Manning's *Tand*. Mark does a pretty good job, and achieves a few difficult textural effects in the process, but for clarity and aesthetic impression, it falls well short of both *BEDEC* and *SFFY*. No wonder they both look so good; both came from the able hands of Geri Sullivan and Jeff Schalles. Geri may well be the best layout artist in fanzines today, and Jeff's command of the aesthetic potential of mimeo technology is unsurpassed by any other active fan.

Also in the top group are *Mimosa* and *Trap Door*. The emphasis in each is faanishness and friendly demeanor, as you can tell from the ratings. But far from being lightweight, agreeable finz, both publish material from one of the best line-ups of artists and writers to be found in fandom today. They invariably contain material that is of interest to those oriented towards fandom's past as well as its future. Both of them are on my Hugo ballot.

The inclusion of *The Bakery Men Don't See* is a questionable decision. Clearly, if judged by the standards of most fanzines, it is a monumental work of high caliber. It was put together primarily by fans, used fannish methods, and to date has been read mostly by fans. But it might be more proper to count the project, which would have been laudable for its goal of raising money for the James Tiptree Jr. award even if it wasn't so good, as a non-fiction book in the SF/Fantasy field. As such, it is certainly more worthy than many of the books nominated for the Hugo award in that category in the past. You might act accordingly.

I have said elsewhere how much I like and admire Redd Boggs' *Spirochete*, so it was reassuring to find that it has some objective qualities on which I might base that affection. It is an impeccable little perzine, saying in 4 to 6 pages as much as some fanzines say in 65. It is personal, self-revelatory, and often sad writing. Redd is an older fan, and there is a sense of maturity to his work that stands behind the comical definition of he and other FAPAns (for *Spirochete* makes its primary appearance in FAPA; unlike other writers, I do not believe that original publication for an APA should disqualify a zine that arrives on its own to many readers), and stands in stunning contrast to the hot-headed rumblings of the Young Turks of the world. If Redd were able to put a little more art or visual variety in his zine, it would certainly be in the top five.

Redd actually tied with Mike Glycer's perennial all-star *File 770*. The virtues of Mike's zines are well-known: they are highly organized, purportedly objective accounts of life in fandom as it scrapes alongside the real world. The

1991 Fanzines	Layout	Art	Cong.	Genre	Writ.	Temp.	Fan.	Total
1) <i>SF Five Yearly</i> (1)	9	10	10	8	10	10	10	67
2) <i>Mimosa</i> (2)	10	9	10	6	8	10	10	63
3) <i>Tand</i> (1)	9	10	9	8	9	7	10	62
4) <i>Trap Door</i> (1)	8	9	9	8	10	8	10	62
5) <i>BEDEC</i> (1)	10	9	9	7	8	7	10	60
6) <i>The Bakery Men ...</i> (1)	10	7	10	8	9	8	8	60
7) <i>Spirochete</i> (2)	9	7	8	8	10	9	9	60
8) <i>File 770</i> (4)	9	9	7	8	8	9	10	60
9) <i>Spangler</i> (3)	8	8	10	8	8	8	9	59
10) <i>Yhos</i> (1)	7	7	10	6	9	9	9	57
11) <i>Folly</i> (7)	8	8	9	6	6	10	10	57
12) <i>Taffroom Window</i> (1)	7	7	10	6	9	9	9	57
13) <i>SF Commentary</i> (1)	9	7	7	10	9	7	8	57
14) <i>Bento</i> (1)	8	7	10	7	9	8	8	57
15) <i>S. Suppey's...</i> (1)	8	9	9	7	8	7	9	57
16) <i>Fanthology '87</i> (1)	8	8	8	7	9	9	8	57
17) <i>Sglodion</i> (1)	7	9	8	8	9	7	8	56
18) <i>Pulp</i> (1)	9	8	7	6	9	7	10	56
19) <i>Tendaberry</i> (1)	8	9	9	6	9	7	8	56
20) <i>Sisters</i> (1)	9	7	8	7	9	7	9	56

* Note: See page 18 for full fanzine names, and editorial information.

sparks from this encounter are beautifully rendered, and Mike happily is able to avoid the temptation to use such a lovely platform as a bully pulpit. Somehow *F770* has maintained that certain fuzziness which it possessed when mimeoed well into its new life as a paragon of desktop publishing, an effect which I appreciate. Mike's work is far more personal than that of many newszine publishers, and his attention to detail is also superior to that of many of his ilk. I'm always glad to see the next *F770* arrive.

Spangler, *YHOS*, and *Folly*, which round out the top eleven, are three slap-happy genzines jostling one another like Larry, Moe, and Shemp. Each is from a fan of long publishing experience (Garth Danielson, Art Widner, and Arnie Katz, respectively), and while they all have definite flaws in their physical execution (*Spangler* less than the other two), they manage to overcome any such shortcomings by presenting material filled with wit and variety. Garth's work swerves much more towards the personal than does either of the other two editors, but the vast number and intensity of his interests exceeds that of many genzines with eight contributors. The history of the circus peanut alone was worth an award of some kind! Art is just plain sloppy sometimes, a trait to which I can relate; it makes his zine one of my favorites even as it scores low in Layout and Art. Arnie has an amazing well of energy, but it sometimes seems as though he doesn't know what his articles are about until he finishes them.

I haven't the space here to fully evaluate the rest of the fanzines listed above, other than to say that they are as dissimilar to one another and the zines already discussed as the zines discussed are to one another. There is no set type of zine that succeeds more than others, neither a thematic nor a physical norm to which all the highest-rated fanzines conform, or even a color of paper which occurs most frequently. Zines of many different flavors (one-shots, genzines, perzines, benefits, newszines) appear in equal distribution, through both the top twenty and the remainder of the sample I studied. Besides lack of space, it also seems insensitive to rate

anybody's zine last or near last in a field of nearly seventy different titles. The problem is, if you apply any set of objective, reasonable standards to a large sample of fanzines, it becomes clear that most of them contain glaring faults in one aesthetic area or another, yet score high enough in their author/editor's presumed area of emphasis to be accorded something of a success. Passion often succeeds where reason does not; for this reason among others, there are many fewer fanzines at the bottom of the curve than the top, and even then, no fanzine dropped beneath 40 points out of 70. Even 40 may not be low enough to be accorded the status of crudzine, a title which after all seems more to do with attitude than execution.

I also don't have space to print all the criteria used in determining the ratings in each category, so I'll offer a sample in way of an example. This is the table with which I scored the temporality category; each yes answer meant the deduction of a point.

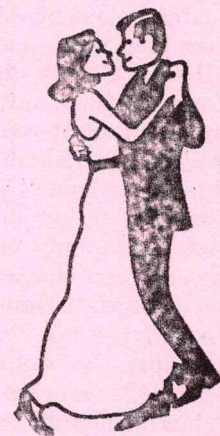
- 1) Is it impossible to tell when this fanzine was written?
- 2) Is it impossible to tell when it was published?
- 3) Do the individual articles fail to provide some rudimentary idea of their place in time/space?
- 4) Does the fanzine neither declare itself a one-shot nor intimate that it will appear again?
- 5) Is this zine late, by its own admission, or within your experience?
- 6) Does the zine present material which is out of date by your standards, without purporting to be historical material?
- 7) Has the zine neither presented a historical context for the material, nor made an effort to present what is by your standards current material?
- 8) Does the zine present dates or other temporal information which subsequent events have proven inaccurate?
- 9) Are there articles or information in the text which shift their focus due to the passage of time during the composition or production of the material?
- 10) Has there been considerable time between the purported publication date of the zine and the date of the postmark or the date when you received the zine?

My own fanzine, *Spent Brass*, rated a nine in this area, variously losing a point in different issues for being late, publishing out-of-date material or being sent to specific fans later than to others. Having more than one issue in a given year helps a fanzine rate higher than it might if judged by one example.

I don't know what the ultimate use of this scale may be, but it may represent a step towards Mike Glycer's dream of a world where all fanzines and their editors can measure success with a quantified framework similar to that within which baseball players labor. Unfortunately, we are unlikely to be paid seven million dollars a year for producing the raw data in the near future....

—Andrew Hooper

What is it about Guys and Dancing, anyway?



Guy says: "Maybe if they kept score, I'd understand..."

James P. Blaylock— An Appreciation

The works of James Blaylock

It should come as no surprise that James Blaylock's latest novel [as of the time of writing — ed.], *The Last Coin*, is his best and most original. Blaylock has been working his way toward this quirky masterpiece over the course of six novels, each one so steeped in its influences that the author's genuine eccentricities were often diluted in the process. Like the protagonist of *The Last Coin*, Blaylock may have been too distracted by his trivial obsessions to see the inner genius that he could have aspired to. Having read all of his novels (in chronological order no less), I feel a sort of accidental privilege in watching this genius evolve, and I thought a review of *The Last Coin* would best be served by an overview and appreciation of all of Blaylock's major works.

James P. Blaylock is a native of Long Beach, California, and an English graduate of The University of California at Fullerton. Much of his work is colored by his two favorite writers, both 19th century Englishmen—Robert Louis Stevenson (plotting) and Laurence Stern (style). His first novel, *The Elfin Ship*, was published by Ballantine Fantasy in 1982. Behind its [Tolkien-cum Terry Brooks-style cover art—ed.] was a whimsical, almost juvenile tale combining elements of *Wind In The Willows*, Jules Verne and *Tristram Shandy*. The book charts the adventures of Jonathan Bing (a name liberally borrowed from Stevenson) and Professor Wurzle on the trail of an evil dwarf with a magic watch. Despite its conventional fantasy trappings, many of Blaylock's trademarks became established with this novel: eccentric characters, anachronistic technology, and mundane items that take on powerful magical abilities. The "world" created in the novel (which is never named or mapped) has no internal consistency, geographic or otherwise, but takes on a warped familiarity as the novel progresses, as if it comes to the reader out of childhood memories.

It took a sequel, *The Disappearing Dwarf* (also published by Ballantine, 1983), to flesh out Blaylock's style and preoccupations. The protagonist from the first book journeys with his companions to a "parallel" world called Balumnia, where Blaylock lets his imagination sail into less familiar waters. Here, there is plot and counterplot surrounding a number of magical items, but Bing is all too easily distracted toward less important matters to see the big picture. As it turns out, these lesser trivialities conspire to point him in the right direction anyway. Blaylock weaves a masterful tale of serendipity, a formula he would use in many of his subsequent novels. There are also hilarious scenes of dazzling complexity when seemingly ordinary items like marbles and stuffed animals become involved in clumsy melees between the characters. It is as if the mere coming together of such items casts a sort of magic "fumble" spell on all those who handle them.

The *Digging Leviathan*, which appeared in 1984, was drastically different in subject matter from his first two works. The story is set in contemporary California and follows a group of oddballs and their plans to construct a diving bell that will reach the bottom of the ocean and eventually the center of the earth. Blaylock's 19th century muses take a back seat to more modern influences, most notably Edgar Rice Burroughs, H.P. Lovecraft, Phillip K. Dick and Tim Powers. The plotting of *The Digging Leviathan* is the most chaotic of all Blaylock novels; the actual construction of the device is often secondary to the paranoid preoccupations of the characters, who are convinced that vast ancient forces are working against them. The most unusual character, the piscine Giles Peach, seems almost normal compared to the eccentric suburbanites that populate the novel. Numerous inside jokes, recognizable to fans of Dick and Powers, make the book even more confusing for newcomers, but it was his best at the time. Free of the leashes of "standard" fantasy, Blaylock was able to explore his own interests and style, however incoherent they may have been.

Blaylock was able to reconcile his 19th and 20th century influences into one of his most popular novels, *Homunculus*, released in 1986. An overt homage to college friend Tim Powers, the action is set in Victorian London where nefarious forces converge upon the timely arrival of a magically-animated dirigible. Several characters from *The Digging Leviathan* somehow show up as major players in the farce, suggesting that the two novels are mysteriously related. Despite the fact that *Homunculus* was Blaylock's best-written novel at the time, it remains a sort of sidestep in his progression. There are moments of genuine hilarity throughout, but the muddled ending leaves the reader more bewildered than amused, as if too many in-jokes were missed along the way.

These problems were rectified in 1987's *Land Of Dreams*, which, despite obvious Ray Bradbury overtones, was his most original novel to date. Blaylock dispensed with the gonzo humor of his earlier works in favor of a haunting, often surreal tale of a small California town and their unusual 12-year festival. The adolescent characters, straight out of young adult fiction, stumble across giant shoes, mouse-sized men, the nefarious goings-on at a steam-powered carnival, and a phantom train that leads to the land of dreams, in which parallel timelines can be traversed. By setting his tale in a recognizable environment, Blaylock's magical world becomes more immediate, and commonplace items take on cosmic significance. This childlike view of the universe, which surfaced only briefly in his earlier pastiches and emulations, takes center stage in *Land Of Dreams*. It is something of a turning point for the author, a maturation of both style and substance, which is reflected in the orphan character Jack's coming of age during the course of the story.

Which brings us to *The Last Coin*, a perfect synthesis of the best elements of Blaylock's five previous novels. As if constructing a Sufi parable, Blaylock tackles transcendent Christian themes with wild humor and wide-eyed wonder. Andrew Vanbergen, a character clearly modeled on the author, shirks

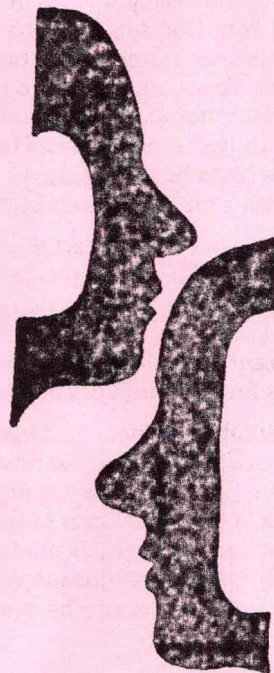
his adult responsibilities in favor of more frivolous passions, namely breakfast cereals and practical jokes. It just so happens, through a bizarre series of events, that he possesses one of the thirty silver coins given to Judas. The other twenty-nine are in the hands of the mad creature Pennyman, a tenant at Vanbergen's inn, who has no notion of his landlord's valuable cache. Ancient forces converge on Southern California as the coins are brought together, and Andrew finds his world of daydreams and Wheatabix the center of malign attentions. *The Last Coin* is, at last, a book to be compared with no one—it is genuinely Blaylockian. It is simultaneously one of the funniest books of the past decade and one of the most serious, reflecting the author's deepest concerns with the general order of things. What's more, the writing is unique and enchanting—as Andrew daydreams, so does the reader, both streams of thought finding new and wondrous territories and meeting somewhere along the way. This is a book to be savored and enjoyed repeatedly, not just for the guffaws along the way, but also the reassurance that amidst the muddled worlds each of us manage in our daily lives one may find the secrets of the universe.

One final note concerns the publication of *The Stone Giant* in early 1989. This is a "prequel" of sorts to Blaylock's first two novels, chronicling the adventures of Theophile Escargot in Balumnia. It is difficult to understand the author's need to return to more traditional fantasy (save, perhaps, contractual obligation), but Blaylock approaches his world with a more serious tone, one largely colored by *Land Of Dreams*. It is noteworthy for its many scenes of strange beauty and wonder, and the tumultuous final battle between skeletons, giants, homunculi and elves in airships may be viewed as a cleansing of Blaylock's own mental attic in preparation for more mature (though no less whimsical) pursuits. A minor work in the Blaylock canon, but still a worthy read.

Since this article was written, two major works by Blaylock have appeared. One is *Lord Kelvin's Machine*, a sequel to *Homunculus* and available only in a lim-

ited-edition hardcover by Arkham House. I have not had the chance to read it, but I am assured a paperback version will be released later this year. The other is *The Paper Grail*, available in mass-market paperback from Ace. This novel is a continuation of themes first explored in *The Last Coin*, painting a broader and less humorous picture. The protagonist, Howard Barton, a museum curator from Los Angeles, makes a rendezvous in northern California with Michael Graham, who has procured a very special piece of Japanese paper art. Graham has either died or disappeared and the artifact is now in the possession of the curious Mr. Jimmers, who is in league with Howard's uncle to keep it away from sundry no-goods. Naturally, the folded paper is nothing ordinary, but the story is, as Blaylock has forsaken much of his fantastical influences in favor of mainstream plotting and characters. *The Paper Grail* is overly long and meandering, qualities forgivable in Blaylock's earlier work in lieu of the colorful writing and characters. There are moments of genuine eccentricity, such as the secretive "gluer" population and the unexplainable recurrence of the Humpty Dumpty image, but it is clear that with *The Paper Grail* Blaylock is mellowing his style to attract a wider audience.

—Joe Caparula



Fantasy Review:

Tam Lin by Pamela Dean

Editor Terri Windling has fostered a new fantasy series by asking authors to retell classic fairy tales. She allows the authors to use any setting or form they please, and this has permitted them to break out of a mere mimicry of folk-tale style and into modern fiction. The fourth in the series, *Tam Lin*, has picked up the thread of the old, old Scots ballad and brought it, quite successfully, into 1970s college life.

The story of the ballad "Tam Lin" is the story of a young girl who takes a lover controlled by a queen of the fairies. After becoming pregnant by him, she learns he is to be sacrificed to the King of Hell. The only way to save him is to drag him from his horse as he rides by on Halloween and hold him in her cloak, no matter what the fairies transform him into. While this seems a rather unlikely theme for a novel set in a fictional Minnesota university, Pamela Dean manages to draw the reader into the story so deftly, disdaining to spend any time on dull descriptive passages, that even those who are looking specifically for the "hidden" fairy-tale soon forget their purpose. This book is a believable, engrossing tale of several years at college: friends, classes, interdepartmental politics, dorm life, cafeteria food. The undercurrents of fantasy are so well camouflaged that, renamed and with a mainstream cover, the book would undoubtedly sell wonderfully on the straight fiction shelves.

The fantastic elements within the book do make their presence known, however, and Dean consistently puts her reader in the uncomfortable position of knowing—or at least suspecting—far more than the characters. This creates a pleasurable tension while reading this hefty paperback, but it is perhaps sustained a little too long. By the three hundredth page, wondering when something is actually going to happen has started to become distracting. But once things start to happen, they come thick and fast, guaranteeing that the book needs to be reread

immediately; and the second time the reader has a chance to appreciate some of its other virtues. Anyone who has been to college will greatly enjoy remembering their own school days while reading this, including conversations about higher truth, late-night comparisons of poetry, and arguments about the significance of literature. Dean has also added the dimension of a young woman's worries, from dealing with her parents to the latent fear of pregnancy—which, of course, leads back to the underlying fantasy plot.

Tam Lin is a well-woven tale, and whether read for the characters, the fantasy, or a reminiscence of life at a university, it is sure to satisfy the expectations of the reader.

Other books in the *Fairy Tale* series include *The Sun, The Moon, and the Stars* by Steven Brust; *The Nightingale* by Kara Dalkey; *Jack, the Giant-Killer* by Charles DeLint; and *Snow-White and Rose-Red* by Patricia C. Wrede. More are forthcoming.

—Tracy Shannon

Pass Out and Review

The Difference Engine
by William Gibson & Bruce Sterling

This review of *The Difference Engine* was written early in 1991, while the book was only available in a British Hardback. The incredible hipness implied by the author's ability to obtain and direct his attention toward that kind of literary work typifies most of Bill's sercon fanatic; the fact that we've only managed to publish this review a year after it was written should in no way diminish your opinion of his forwardness.

Unfortunately, American readers who do not want to go to the trouble and expense of getting the Gollancz edition of Gibson and Sterling's long-awaited novel must wait until Bantam/Spectra releases it this summer [as you can tell, this review was penned before the American hardcover release last March—ed.].



In short, *The Difference Engine* nearly succeeds, where a longer book might have done so. Like a tightly packed portmanteau, it bursts when opened, scattering its contents across the room; yet even so, I think some key articles have been left behind. But what this book has been stuffed with is a beautifully thought-through alternate Victorian world.

It is 1855. Thirty years before, a group of radical industrial visionaries overthrew the old aristocracy in the House of Lords. Byron is Prime Minister, Benjamin Disraeli works as a ghost writer on Fleet St., and Percy Shelly is in exile. General Sam Houston has arrived in London to raise funds so that he may return to Texas and throw out the junta which has expelled him. What was the United States is locked in civil war, and Marx has established a communist state on Manhattan Island.

Over and above all of this is the mighty ratcheting of Charles Babbage's Difference Engines. Byron's daughter, Lady Ada Lovelace, has championed this nascent technology which the radical lords financed and developed.

This new culture is the main character in this novel, and all the humans have bit parts. Gibson's voice throughout the book is the steady roar of society; the jargon of "clackers," spinning an engine derived from the Jacquard loom. As in *Count Zero*, et al., he provides

information about the world through what people buy and wear: a cheap American cigar, Victory brand, sold during Derby Day at Epsom, where steam-powered racers have replaced thoroughbreds; a waistcoat made of cloth woven in a tiny checkered pattern named for Lady Ada.

The main plot could be considered a steam-driven *Neuromancer*. Edward Mallory, a paleontologist who has just returned from an expedition to the American west, stumbles upon a gang of hoods kidnapping Lady Ada and a set of punched cards. She entrusts the cards, supposedly a gambler's modus, a way to beat the house, with Mallory. The race for the hot software, while London endures a heat wave, thermal inversion, and attempted revolution, seems secondary to the fictive Victorian world. The events are there to bring our attention to the details of its construction, which is flawless.

Sterling attempts to look at all of this from a higher plane. This book shares his running thesis of the quest for an understanding of complex systems through analysis. Mallory subscribes to journals such as the *Journal of Dynamical Systematics* and is asked to undertake a study of the social systems of London using the resources of high speed engines owned by the Central Statistics Bureau. All the while, the heat waves make a discontinuous jump to the yellow fog of industrial exhaust gas held over London and the angry mobs bifurcate into revolt. Even the narration makes a leap in complexity as it realizes it has been observing itself at the end.

This is where the book fails. Its thesis is brilliant and the architecture it builds is a wonder to see, but Gibson and Sterling don't quite draw us in close enough to appreciate the greater scope of *The Difference Engine*. Both writers have problems fleshing out humans, or explore the setting at the expense of characterization. However, don't let this dissuade you from reading this book; it is certainly one of the best of last year.

—Bill Humphries

Don't Start Me Talking



Installment #1: I've built a little empire

I ran into myself at age fifteen the other day, in the science fiction section of Avol's book store. I had already made a small pile of things I wanted to buy—short story collections by George Zebrowski and Fritz Leiber, novels by Joan Slonczewski and J.G. Ballard—when I found myself reaching for a copy of George Alec Effinger's *The Exile Kiss*, and discovered that a fifteen year-old doppelganger of myself already had a grip on it.

Looking into that smooth face, under all that hair, I felt my heart give a little shriek of despair. Oh, I wanted to set

myself straight, to tell this lumpy apparition to stop wasting his time with all those damn Keith Laumier novels, and interminable Dorsai tales, those idiot Hoka stories. To put down that Jerry Pournelle, and run, not walk, to the nearest available volume of Frank O'Connor or Robert Graves. I thought of all the long hours I—he—would spend reading pedestrian trash that he—I—would later grow deeply ashamed of, and wondered if there was any way I could convince him that *Wuthering Heights* is a great book after all. Poor Mrs. Dowling was having a lot of trouble convincing him of that in English Literature class....

As if he read my pretensions from my face, my earlier self sneered, and yanked hard at the Effinger, pulling it out of my hand.

I responded to this indignity by taking a step back towards the beginning of the alphabet, steadying myself against a shelf filled with Poul Anderson (who wasn't happy about it, I'm sure). I looked away from my younger image, and tried to study the titles in front of me. "There's more of gravy than of grave about you," I muttered.

"Fuck off," said the fifteen year-old me.

We were unfortunately working along the shelf in different directions, so that we would meet again in the high B's. I looked despairingly at the filthy jacket with the sheepskin collar that I always used to wear, and shook my head. Whatever happened to that jacket? Did I know then how repulsive and scary I looked, wandering around with shaggy hair falling over my eyes, always armored up in that bulky coat? I knew that telling him—me—much about the life to come would be terribly dangerous, potentially paradoxical, but surely modifying my former sartorial crimes couldn't do much to alter the present.

I was pondering this as a nearly uncreased copy of Lois McMaster Bujold's *The Vor Game* hove into view before me, and I reached for it - but of course, my teen-age double had seen it at the same time, and there we were again, grappling for the book.

I tugged at it determinedly for a second, but he gave me a push, saying

"What do you want with this? It's space opera!" Which, I realized, was true. And I left him to gloat over his victory, and made my way to the register and thence out of the store, with my Leiber and Zebrowski, my Ballard and Slonczewski.

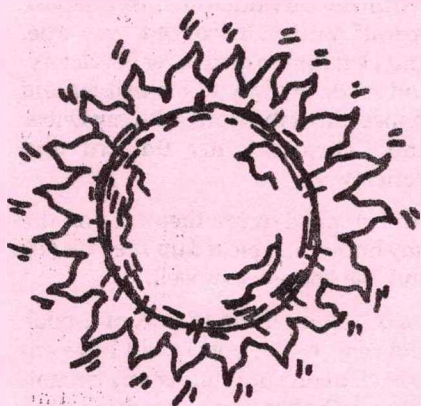
But I stopped at another store on the way home, and picked up *The Exile Kiss* and *The Vor Game* as well.

It's a striking thing to look at a book and realize that you would have enjoyed it at any age, under any circumstances. Crafting such a work is quite a coup for any author, a story compelling enough to transcend current tastes and strike something archetypal in the heart of the reading public. And such is the appeal of these two books, both of which build on some of the more basic premises of genre fiction in unusual ways.

Of the two, I felt the stronger was Effinger's *The Exile Kiss*, the third installment in the continuing saga of Marid Audran. Audran is a hustler, fixer, con-man, detective, cop, gunslinger, addict and wirehead—in short, the consummate cyber-noir hero—living in the Budayeen, a more degenerate quarter of an unnamed Muslim city (I think, myself, that it might be Beirut) in the Levant, some 150 years or more in the future. Audran is a marvelous character, continually struggling to define his place in the society around him, a process not yet complete through three novels. He is of mixed heritage, his father a transient French sailor, his mother a Mauretanian Berber, and Audran clings to this division between himself and the "Arabs" around him; for he is a man who longs for some degree of separation between his true self and the sometimes loathsome things he is called upon to do.

In continually pondering his role in his culture, Audran provides us with tantalizing insights into a fascinating future world, one in which I think Effinger could set as many novels as he can write, without ever becoming tedious or repetitive.

This is, of course, one of the most important attributes of good genre fiction, a high potential for continuing escape on the part of the reader. That



grotty fifteen year-old me especially appreciated authors who gave me series—Howard, Burroughs, Doc Smith, Laumier, “Kenneth Robeson” and so forth—that could keep me away from the miseries of the world for more than a single afternoon. In those days, I think it was his or her overall immutability that made a hero appealing to me; he would go from world to world, or dark kingdom to darker kingdom, essentially unchanged and dependable in values and actions.

Now it is the changes I see experience working upon a given character that are most compelling to me. And Audran has undeniably grown as a person through Effinger’s narrative. In the first of the novels, *When Gravity Falls*, Effinger reveals his aspirations for Audran in a quote from Raymond Chandler’s *The Simple Art of Murder*: “...He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world...” Yet, the morose pillhead we see shambling from one dirty set-up to another hardly seems ready to assume the mantle of Philip Marlowe. The process of attaining that level of moral identity is the central theme of all three books, despite the many twists and loops which Effinger weaves into his plotlines.

These are becoming less convoluted as Audran evolves, to the point where, in *The Exile Kiss*, we are quite certain of who Audran’s ultimate adversary is from the beginning of the book. Through the first two novels, Audran has acquired—somewhat unwillingly—the patronage of Friedlander Bey, a man who masquerades as a local crime boss, while maintaining

his true power base as a broker of international political information and influence. In *The Exile Kiss*, the Bey’s chief rival, Reda Abu Adil, casts his net to capture both Friedlander and his new lieutenant, Audran. They are falsely convicted of conspiring in a murder, and summarily deported to the Rub AlKhali, or the “empty quarter” of the Arabian desert.

What *The Exile Kiss* lacks in the subtleties shown by *When Gravity Falls* and *A Fire in the Sun*, it makes up for in the sheer desperation of the two’s situation, and the adventures they endure in their struggles to survive. This novel contains far more consideration of the Muslim culture in which it is set, a development which I applaud. One is reluctant to ascribe any motivation to any author, other than telling the story before us, but it seems to me as if Effinger is only now awakening to marvelous complexities and paradoxes of the Arab world in which he has set his tales. At first, the Budayeen impressed most through its alien quality, which did much to abet the image of the future which Effinger sought to create. But this most recent work is sensitive in its portrayals of the ideals and life-styles of the nomadic 22nd century Bedu, and their city-dwelling counterparts. In fact, I think these novels might stand as a painless introduction to some of the broader elements of Muslim culture, for people puzzled by, and perhaps frightened of, the brutal vitality and growing economic power of the Arab world.

Much of the substance of the novel is concerned with the nature of justice, and its opposition in the nature of its shadowy cousin, revenge. Effinger’s technique is an insidious one; one reads through these novels voraciously, hoping to find the solution to the mysteries posed within the plotline, only to find that the greater part of the narrative eventually concerns itself with solving the mysteries within the personality of the protagonist. And throughout *The Exile Kiss*, we have the promise of justice for Redu Abu Adil and his conspirators held up as the ultimate goal; yet, at the end of the book, it is Audran’s personal redefinition of justice that does the most to bring a satisfactory

conclusion to the narrative. That Adil himself does not fall under Audran’s efforts should come as no surprise to anyone; Effinger has spent a long, lean time writing, before finding a series as appealing and marketable as this, and no one can blame him for a reluctance to cut off a plotline that could sustain another novel.

If there is any real criticism to be offered in regard to the series or this novel in particular, it has to do with the cavalier way in which Effinger has added the use of cybernetic brain modifications to society at large, and specifically to Audran himself. Audran uses both drugs and “moddies”—programs implanted for the purpose of entertainment or personality modification or instant information retention—for a variety of reasons. Perhaps foremost is the deadening of sensation, primarily pain, to which Audran is prone through the violent nature of his professions. He avoids his own conscience through his courting of oblivion, and the growth of the character can be charted through the decreasing frequency of these episodes over the three novels to date.

Another use for these modifications is Audran’s effort to supplement his abilities and knowledge in order to meet the challenges put before him. These efforts have wildly mixed results; the sense of humor for which Effinger has long been renowned shines through in the misadventures which result from Audran’s attempts to be things which he is not. On the other hand, when Audran tries to seek further understanding of himself by accessing programs designed to provide philosophical and religious guidance, the results are compellingly positive. The idea that this too might be a taste of Effinger’s black humor is difficult to avoid.

Yet, does this use of information interface technology make this a scion of that supposedly moribund sub-genre, Cyberpunk? I find it hard to apply the term, yet equally hard to dismiss it. While both drug use and brain modifications are frowned upon in the conservative Muslim milieu, there is no question that they have become pervasive influences on both global and local culture. And there is a serious

dose of dystopian cynicism running through Effinger's world-view, which echoes classic elements of the cyberpunk ethos.

Ultimately, it is the ethical limitations placed on the adoption of these technologies which strike one as the most artificial elements of the book. The means exist for Reda Abu Adil to create perfect assassins, whose knowledge of their crimes could be ground underfoot with the moddy chips used to achieve them; but he, and the rest of society, remain as uncomfortable with the use of cybernetic modifications, and as tentative in adoption of them, as we might be. Yet, there is no objection to prosthetics, or even complete sex change procedures. I am undecided if these inconsistencies constitute a flaw in the novels, or are their greatest strength. Reality is, after all, anything but consistent.

Whatever answer the reader develops for these questions, *The Exile Kiss* and its predecessors remain excellent novels to be enjoyed on a number of levels, waters deep enough to admit you as far as you care to dive.

I am perhaps less enchanted with Lois McMaster Bujold's *The Vor Game*, and its companion volumes in the story of Miles Vorkosgian. There are more obvious flaws and limitations to the narrative than in the Audran novels, and Miles, while still far from perfect, seems entirely too good a person—in the moral sense—for the reader to truly identify with. Still, the universe presented in *The Vor Game* (and *The Borders of Infinity*, *Brothers in Arms*, *Shards of Honor*, *Falling Free*, *Ethan of Athos*, and the current [as of the time of writing—ed.] Analog serial, *Barrayar*) is an appealing one, replete with adventures and intrigues, heroes and villains of the old school, and perhaps best of all, the sort of space-faring battlefleets and drop-troops that fired our imaginations in the stfnal militaria of the past.

This last element is the source of my greatest admiration for Bujold, for she has the talent for portraying warfare in a compelling way, without losing sight of the broad misery it brings. In this, I regard her work far more pleasant to

read than that of S.M. Stirling, David Drake, and other practitioners of combat-centered hard SF, whose ubiquitous body-counts and dismissal of the possibility of peace have left me queasy and unable to finish their books. There is never any question in my mind while reading Bujold that she and I are in accordance on the notion that war is a Bad Thing, and while some may regard that as a minor point, in the world we live in now I have come to value it more than many other principles in my reading.

In discussing *The Vor Game*, it is impossible for me to avoid what I think is one of the major flaws of the work. This is close to being what is classically referred to as a "fix-up," that is, a novel which is actually a collection of novellettes, or even short stories, with additional narrative added in order to string them together. The first portion of the book appeared as a novella, under the title "Weatherman" in *Analog*. As such, it was one of the most worthy pieces of SF I read last year. Yet, the demand for Bujold's work is so great right now that she was moved to append another 250 pages of material, which, to my taste, are nowhere near the equal of the superb beginning she has made.

The first portion of the novel concerns Miles Vorkosgian's first assignment out of the Barrayaran military academy. Miles is the only son of the legendary Aral Vorkosgian, long-time regent of the planet Barrayar. He is a less than imposing figure, under five feet in height, suffering from numerous skeletal defects and other health limitations, flaws caused by an assassin's gas attack made on his father and mother while she was carrying him. Miles compensates for these limitations with an iron will; he is almost overtly seen as a metaphor for his planet's efforts to escape several centuries of superstitious isolation, during which children such as Miles would have been put to death as a matter of course.

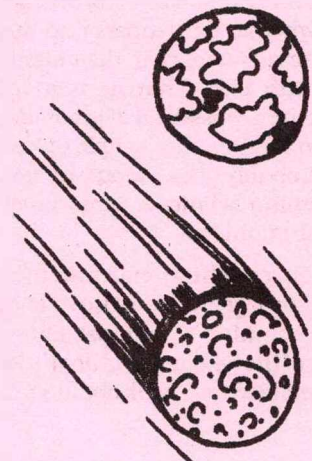
His first assignment out of the academy is not the space duty he has coveted; rather, he is assigned to the duties of weather officer for the most inhospitable post on Barrayar, the arctic Kyril island. His senior instructor explains to Miles that his intention in sending him

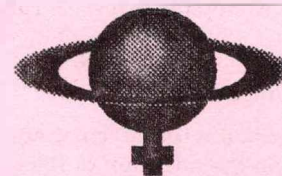
there is to assure himself that Miles will be able to correct the disconcerting tendency he has exhibited toward insubordination. Admittedly, this indiscipline comes naturally for the regent's son; yet, if Miles is to have a productive military career, it is essential that he learn to take orders.

What follows is a hair-raising series of meditations on the basic stupidity of human beings, and of course, rather than learn when to take orders, Miles learns that there are some cases where it is a soldier's duty not to follow them. This hard truth costs Miles dearly; indeed, the jaundiced view which Bujold takes of the Barrayaran military and its practices seems almost worthy of Joe Haldeman or Harry Harrison. The original novella was an excellent illustration of how Miles began his career as an irregular operative for Imperial security, with both a healthy disrespect for authority and an intimate knowledge of how to wield it.

After that, Bujold slips completely off the tracks and chews through another 200 pages of galactic scenery, crashing through attempted imperial abdication, interstellar war and internecine mercenary rivalry, before finally coming to rest on a spectacular *Deus Ex Machina* with the arrival of Miles' father in the Imperial flagship, all lasers blazing.

Now, this is the sort of classic blood and blaster stuff that I was just praising earlier, so I don't want to be construed as completely unmoved by the balance of *The Vor Game*. Perhaps the most difficult thing is reconciling the





WisCon 1992 Convention Report

Women at WisCon have not been a silent minority (at least not at the four WisCons I've been to). They've been active and noticeable, working behind the scenes and in front of the panels, raising pertinent questions about our world and raising plasterboard screens for art work. The only Science Fiction convention aligned with Feminism in the known universe, WisCon reflects a special attitude of equality and good will that is intricately connected to its subject matter.

Where else would you find a group of people who believe that the future is a place where we all can get along? People so dedicated and optimistic they think that regardless of race, creed, sex, or planet there is something intrinsic to all of us worthy of respect. And that ultimately this will be recognized by everyone, all over the world, all over the thinking universe! Well, maybe not everyone thinks this way, but few would squelch the hope that it might be possible.

Two panels that dealt with the difficulties of achievement and self-empowerment of women were the panel on *Thelma and Louise* and Trina Robbins' panel on "The History of Women Cartoonists." The vivacious Ms. Robbins displayed the artwork of women cartoonists and described both the mainstream art of past periods and the kind of art that it was deemed acceptable for women to do. Recognizing the "precious" quality of most of these early drawings of little kids, animals, and cherubs, Ms. Robbins pointed out the difficulties women had in getting accepted. She also pointed out that there was a market for this kind of art. Although they did not usually draw the mainstream action comic heroes, these women cartoonists drew for an actual market of fashion advertising, paper

unsteady cadet in the first portion of the book with the imperial security operative he has become by the book's end. Miles' lack of confidence on Kyril Island is also hard to square with the fact that we know he has already masqueraded as a mercenary admiral at the age of 17, and squirmed out of tighter corners with far less support.

In fact, the problem with the novel may be 180 degrees removed from what I have identified it as being: that Miles suddenly seems too real, to have much more prosaic and common concerns than we have come to expect him to have. The wild adventures that occupy the latter two-thirds of the book seem far more Miles' sort of thing than putting his head on the block to aid a group of insubordinate foot soldiers. But I certainly welcomed this change; I devoured the book, hoping that some further intrusion of less than aristocratic concerns would occur, and was somewhat disappointed when it did not.

I ought to admit that this plays on what is one of my current pet peeves in fantastic literature, and that is the preponderance of characters derived from the upper 1/10th of 1 per cent of the culture being portrayed. Is there anyone else who finds it difficult to read about these endless monarchical societies in space, about cultures which accept a degree of stratification and caste division which we would never endure ourselves? Miles Vorkosgian is an endlessly fascinating character, one I would love to read a hundred books about; yet I wonder what it is that has led Bujold to portray him as a member of the very highest levels of aristocracy, and whether her readers find that an asset or a drawback in their identification with him. That he is a "good" nobleman, possessed of great identification for the other people of his society, probably goes a long way towards redeeming whatever class envy the reader might feel.

This is something endemic to space opera as a genre, and I have to admit it is beginning to hamper my enjoyment of the field. I would dearly love to see Bujold write a book about someone

on the opposite end of Barrayar's social spectrum; after all, adventures happen to people without titles and position, too, and they might be all the more exciting for knowing that they don't have an admiral for a father, who will rescue them at the critical moment. But I'm not going to hold my breath waiting to see such a work. Much of the current space-faring fiction I've read seems prone to this syndrome on one level or another. Emma Bull's fine novel *Falcon* comes to mind, as does Iain M. Banks' *Use of Weapons*, where Chernadenine Zakalwe, the book's protagonist, is an aristocratic soldier hired by a culture with no respect for title or privilege of any kind.

Isn't a working class hero something to be anymore?

Well, this is drifting pretty far afield. I imagine that Bujold would be insulted by the characterization of her novel as a fix-up, but I'll qualify my statement by saying that it is about the best fix-up I have ever read. The author has a facility for making an interstellar community seem quite real, and as I said before, I would read about Miles doing virtually anything she can come up with for him. The success of the series stands as eloquent testimony that Science Fiction retains its escapist value as much as it ever has, and both I and my doppelganger would agree that that is nothing to be looked down upon.

Just as I was finishing the last page, the doorbell rang. I went to answer it; there, standing on the other side of the screen, was myself as a fifteen year-old. "You again," I said, "what do you want now?"

"Do you have a copy of *Skylark Duquense* yet?" I—he—asked. "I can't find it anywhere."

I went to my—our—collection, and got it for him. But at the same time I slipped him a copy of Ballard's *High Rise*. My thought was, if you're going to change history, after all, might as well change it for the better.

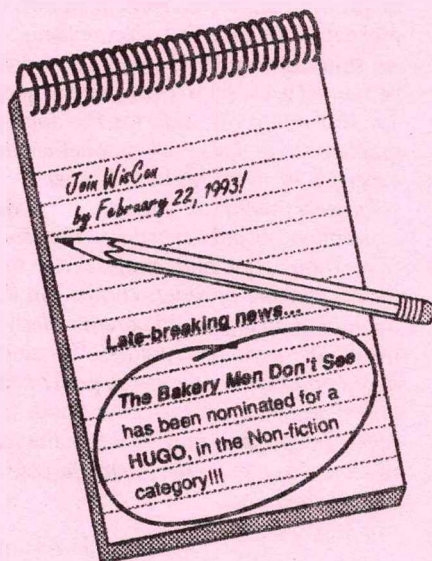
—Andrew Hooper

dolls, and later, under pseudonyms and with androgynous first names, they broke into the daily comic strips and comic books.

The *Thelma and Louise* panel drew some people who had not yet seen this "women's buddy film" but were interested in all the hullabaloo it caused. They were quickly warned that the ending would be discussed and some of them left. Those who stayed heard an impassioned testimonial: *Thelma and Louise* are part of every woman. *Thelma and Louise* travel from being women who hold onto stagnant, abusive relationships—to women who can tap their own resources, take control of their lives, and rely on each other for help. Although there was some disagreement over a few elements, the assembled group had one overwhelming conclusion: that it got made was the most remarkable thing about this film. The situations and frustrations with husbands, boyfriends, and the justice system are real. They are a part of our world, and it was nice to see them realistically depicted.

It appears that *Thelma and Louise* would have been characters some of the women cartoonists would love to have drawn: sexy, capable women who take control in a man's world. As it stands, we know such women can't survive alone. But with a lot of help from fandom perhaps some of us will not have to drive into the sunset.

—Pat Dyjak-Gleckman



Feminist Conventions Provide Child Care...Don't They?

When I entered the foyer area at WisCon 16 on Sunday to check out the freebie table, a flyer had been taped to the wall titled in large letters, "FEMINIST CONVENTIONS PROVIDE CHILD CARE." Around it grew an agglomeration of responses and comments scribbled on colored scraps of paper and in the margins of previous comments. The readers standing before the wall seemed dazed by the strong emotional content of the argument. This hybrid of graffiti and spreadout pages of zine raised many important topics amid the written impressions of raised voices, insults, tears, and fragments of reasoned debate.

In the interest of bringing this debate to the Cube membership I have transcribed the texts; a full transcription (which runs twice as long) is available to those who are interested. If we start with some discussion of the issue now, we will at least have educated one another by the time WisCon 17 rolls around. If you are interested in participating in a childcare program next year, now is the time to come forward to be part of the discussion. But talk is cheap. The new con com is looking for someone to coordinate a childcare program.—Jae Leslie Adams

....The most pressing issue in modern feminism is the right of the individual woman to choose whether or not to bear children.

It has been loudly and correctly pointed out that those who would see that right curtailed have done little to nothing for the children already here. Unfortunately, some women CHOOSE to BEAR children, and we have noticed that the people on "our" side also are doing little to nothing for the children already here.

At an early point in the second wave of feminism (ca. 1970s) childbearing and -rearing were unpopular topics. (They were linked to our exploitation and oppression.) This is no longer the case. Modern feminist scholars are researching and discussing everything from the history of childbirth

to parental leave.... Like it or not, childcare is a feminist issue—the brave daddies breaking ground as primary caregivers notwithstanding....

Too bad WisCon—the "feminist" convention—has chosen the other side. "A baby-sitting co-op or child-care exchange" might actually have worked, if WisCon had bothered to go to the trouble to help coordinate it....

I have spoken to a fair number of fannish parents (and remember, there are more of us every year as the tail of the baby boom hears that biological clock) who do not attend WisCon because of the lack of child care.... —Anonymous

Nothing gets done unless someone does it! Also think insurance problems... If you feel that strongly, then please VOLUNTEER to organize it!—Marginal scribbles

Excuse me—

I do NOT have children.

I am NOT ready for the costs, the sacrifices, and the COMMITMENT that all children require.

If you have children, then YOU have accepted the expenses, the traumas, and, most importantly, the RESPONSIBILITY of caring for small defenseless and (yes, I value them!) worthwhile human beings.

Your children are NOT my problem nor my responsibility! If YOU do not want to accept YOUR responsibility do not bring your children to cons.—Anonymous

1. I have a 16 year old and remember well the frustrations of finding childcare. I DO sympathize.

2. Now, more than ever, feminist groups are supporting efforts to help out women who want to participate in the "work world" AND in recreation, DESPITE having had kids. I guess feminism here is only empty rhetoric.

3. I DID volunteer but childcare was NOT one of the options available.

4. Even if it is not "do-able" HERE, there is no excuse for the RUDENESS I have seen. It's easy to express sisterhood towards those who agree with us and have similar life-styles; I guess few of us have the stomach for reaching out to women who have made different CHOICES than ourselves! SHAME—!

5. The concom could use a thicker skin and not go on the offensive at the least little criticism and stop blaming the economy for the poor turn-out. Maybe fans and volunteers are just tired of being treated like a WisCon "underclass." Try talking to us (civilly, please) and quit spending all your time hobnobbing with the IMPORTANT people (authors, GoH's, etc.) and maybe we'll even come back next year.

6. Please don't get huffy about this and start pointing out my grammar and spelling errors. [No problem—J.L.A.] You can't distract people from the issues by playing semantics games.

7. I'm not leaving early to avoid a face-to-face confrontation. BELIEVE IT OR NOT I have a LIFE to get home to.

8. If I decide to stay away next year, it will be with a heavy heart. I've enjoyed all these years, but enough is enough and I'd rather spend my time and money on something that at least TRIES to improve.
—Gerri Nylund

When people say "If you want childcare, organize it," they don't mean organize it at the con. No convention is REQUIRED to be all things to all people; what conventions turn out to BE is what their organizers are interested in creating. In comparison to the broad spectrum of feminist women, the WisCon concom does represent a narrow (though quite vital) subset of possibility. You don't have to fight to change the convention, you just have to join, work and realize your part of the vision with the whole. That's when feminism is strongest, and that's what makes WisCon strong in its own right.

What we need on this wall is the names and phone numbers of people interested in organizing the provision of childcare at next year's WisCon. The administrivia of government and the provision of a quality service both need to be dealt with. I'm certain the concom will support the effort; the fact that they're interested in doing other things shouldn't bother you, and pressure to make them do something other than what they want is ugly political oppression.

P.S.: Previous WisCons have offered childcare. It was expensive and underutilized. There's a chicken and egg thing that can be overcome in the fliers, but history is history.—Anonymous

I do not have children, but I STRONGLY support having childcare at conventions. Not only does it provide a service for parents of children—it also provides a service for people who don't want to deal with others' kids by providing a place for them that is away from the majority of convention functions.

Other small conventions (and ones that don't claim to devote any special energy to women's concerns) manage to provide child care. WisCon should too.
—Deirdre Murphy

Excuse ME —

I do NOT smoke.

I am NOT ready to partake in the pleasure of a good smoke, along with damage to my lungs.

I guess we shouldn't have the burden of the extra expense of a SMOKING consuite since not everyone smokes.

After all, we don't all have children.

As this patriarchal society teaches us, "Think about YOURSELF first."

I guess Number One is more important than caring about other people's right to have children and/or smoke at a con.
—Rachel Duhm

What surprises me about the "feminist conventions have childcare" argument was the initial broadside was fired by a huxter. An independent business wants the convention to provide services which a business should provide for itself. A huxter purchases services from the convention (space, local sales permit, security), and for a huxter to demand services for free is ridiculous.

The second thing which bugs me is the "my kids are the concom's responsibility" argument. The decision to have children imposes choices on the parent—in this culture having kids hobbles you (one reason so many people on the concom have no kids). But don't push the problem on us! The liability a child places on an individual is societal, not a plot by Mad SF feminist fans against mothers. You've a legit beef to address at the whole of society.

Finally—several writers made snide comments to the effect of "I can't come to the gripe session because I have to take care of MY children." Do you want to attend WisCon next year with your kids?

Then show some initiative and come to meetings. Otherwise, your unsigned complaints are rather hollow.—Bill Humphries

FREE?? FREE?? NO!! We've paid a MINIMUM of \$50/kid happily. NO—my children ARE my responsibility—ALL that is needed, according to your concom, is someone to organize it. Well, I'm sorry I'm moving, or I WOULD do it, but frankly, SF's "buy a membership, get the newsletter, come to the Con meetings, because our PUBLIC gathering at the Wednesday night meeting is JUST OUR FRIENDS" is NOT conducive to recruiting new blood, to say the least.—H. Woodward

At the wrap-up panel, Kim Nash remarked that the lame duck concom of WisCon 16 was not able to address the problem to much purpose at that point, but the next concom will. Diane Martin discussed what a huge gaff it was in the program book to have described the provision of childcare as "not the policy" of SF. A wider circulation of the discussion seemed important to me. As a parent I organize a lot of my life around providing childcare, but in my fan activities I am on my own time.

Finding coordinators for a childcare program has been a problem in Madison's relatively small fan population. The children's programming room this year was felt to be a good program for fans over the age of 6, but childcare for younger kids requires a different level of organization.

Would such a preschool or infant care program be utilized by enough parents to make it worth the effort of organizing? If so, state-certified child care givers might be needed to establish a program of quality. This might also address the liability problem. It is not yet clear whether the expenses of room and staff other than volunteers might be subsidized by the convention, or paid strictly by user fees. (You know what high professional fees those childcare providers charge.) In the absence of an organized parent collective within SF, perhaps a paid staff position might organize the necessary paid or volunteer workers. On the other hand, the present discussion may facilitate the formation of a parent collective for the care of our nursing fans.

—Joe Leslie Adams

James Tiptree, Jr. Award Presented at WisCon



A gender-bending SF award supported by bake sales presented chocolate typewriters and prize money to two excellent novels...

On March 7, 1992, at a banquet held at WisCon in Madison, Wisconsin, the James Tiptree Jr. Award was presented for the first time. The two winners for 1991 were Gwyneth Jones for *White Queen* (Gollancz SF) and Eleanor Arnason for *A Woman of the Iron People* (Morrow).

The James Tiptree Jr. Award was created to honor Alice Sheldon, who wrote under the pseudonym James Tiptree, Jr. By her chance choice of a masculine pen name, Sheldon helped break down the imaginary barrier between "women's writing" and "men's writing." Her insightful short stories—"The Women Men Don't See," "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" "The Screwfly Solution," "The Girl who Was Plugged In," and others—were notable for their thoughtful examination of the roles of men and women in our society.

The Tiptree Award, established last year by Pat Murphy and Karen Joy Fowler, is presented annually to a short story or novel which explores and expands gender roles in science fiction and fantasy. The aim of the award organizers is not to look for work that falls into some narrow definition of political correctness, but rather to seek out work that is thought-provoking, imaginative, and perhaps even infuriating. All too often, futuristic views of human roles are limited by the present world. To change the way that our society thinks about women and men, we need to show people in different roles. The Tiptree Award is intended to reward those women and men who are bold enough to contemplate shifts and changes in gender roles, a fundamental aspect of any society.

The winner—or, in this case, winners—are selected by a panel of five judges. The 1991 judges were Debbie Notkin (chair), Suzy McKee Charnas, Vonda McIntyre, Bruce McAllister, and Sherry Goldsmith. In addition to selecting the winners, the

judges compiled a "short list" of books that they seriously considered in their deliberations. (See page 14.)

The award ceremony and banquet culminated a year of enthusiastic and successful consciousness- and fund-raising. As a political statement, as a means of involving people at the grassroots level, and as an excuse to eat cookies, the award has been financed primarily through bake sales. During the past year, science fiction readers and writers raised over \$2000 through sales at science fiction conventions and bookstores. In addition, science fiction readers in Wisconsin produced a collection of recipes and anecdotes called *The Bakery Men Don't See*, raising an additional \$1800. These funds were supplemented by generous donations by Ursula Le Guin and the Tiptree Estate, totalling \$1000. Most recently, science fiction collage artist and silk screener Freddie Baer produced an elegant "James Tiptree Memorial Award" T-shirt, which was sold at WisCon with proceeds going to the Award.

The Tiptree Award was presented at a banquet held at WisCon in Madison, Wisconsin. Both Gwyneth Jones and Eleanor Arnason attended the ceremony. The presentation was made by Debbie Notkin, chair of the panel of judges. Each winner received \$500 in prize money, transportation and expenses at the convention, a certificate, and—in keeping with the fund-raising method and the spirit of the award—a typewriter and award plaque cast in pure milk chocolate.

The notion of an edible award was proposed independently by both Suzy McKee Charnas and Ursula Le Guin. To quote Charnas, the edible award serves as "a contrast to the sorts of things usually handed out on these occasions—hard objects of no possible use except display and (occasionally) as a bookend or door-stop." The use of chocolate reflects both the Tiptree Award's method of fund-raising, the transitory nature of fame, and the thought that many awards would be far better eaten than displayed.

In 1992, Pat Murphy and Karen Joy Fowler will continue to serve as primary

administrators for the Award. Bake sales will continue to be the primary method of fund-raising. If you are interested in running a bake sale, contact Pat Murphy (2238 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94107) for information. Plans are also underway for a second Tiptree Award cookbook: *Her Smoke Rose Up from Supper*, a title based on Tiptree's story "Her Smoke Rose Up Forever."

The judges for the 1992 Tiptree Award will be Michaela Roessner (chair), Eleanor Arnason, Gwyneth Jones, John Kessel, and Pamela Sargent. As was the case last year, the judges welcome recommendations from the science fiction community. Please send recommendations to Karen Joy Fowler, 3404 Monte Vista, Davis, CA 95616.

About the winners...

Eleanor Arnason—Eleanor Arnason's fourth novel, *A Woman of the Iron People* (Morrow), follows an anthropologist on her exploration of the culture on an alien planet. Arnason's previous novels include *The Sword Smith* (Avon), *To the Resurrection Station* (Avon), and *Daughter of the Bear King* (Avon). Arnason's short stories and poems have been published in a variety of science fiction and small press publications.

Gwyneth Jones—*White Queen*, Gwyneth Jones' fourth science fiction novel, is a complex, multilayered examination of the interactions between human beings and aliens. Her earlier novels include *Divine Endurance*, *Escape Plans and Kairos*. *White Queen*, *Escape Plans* and *Kairos* have all been short-listed for the Arthur C. Clarke award. Jones also contributes reviews, critical articles and short stories to a variety of science fiction publications. Her books for children, published under the pseudonym Ann Halam, include *King Death's Garden* and the *Daymaker* series of juvenile fantasy.

For more information on the Tiptree Award and photographs of the Award ceremony, contact: Pat Murphy, 2238 23rd St., San Francisco, CA 94107.

—Pat Murphy

The 1991 Tiptree Bibliography

Pat Murphy very kindly sent me a copy of the short list of books recommended for the award. Additionally, she sent me a list of books that were sent to her and that she forwarded to the judges. I have read a few of them and have been quite delighted so far. Please note that the material enclosed within quotation marks beneath book titles are uncredited comments of the Tiptree judges: Charnas, Coldsmith, McAllister, McIntyre, and Notkin.—Elsbeth Krlsor

The Short List

***A Woman of the Iron People* by Eleanor Arnason, William Morrow, \$22.95**

"Four-square grumpy humor and effortless inventiveness. It explores the situation of a people much more obviously (if not deeply) fixed in mammalian psycho-sexual wiring than we are (or think we are). No easy answers, no question begging, just a clean, clever job."

"That wonderful mix of 'sense of wonder' (alienness) and shock of recognition (humanity) which...the very best science fiction has and which... 'courage' in SF demands."

***The White Queen* by Gwyneth Jones, Gollanz, £14.99**

"The real reason this book is so good is its moral complexity. You don't know whether to root for the heroes as they challenge the seemingly benevolent aliens or to pity the heroes for their xenophobia. Jones makes that decision as difficult for us as the decision to support the PLO or the IRA or the Mojahadeen (take your pick) is for many people today. The book is infuriatingly and justifiably inconclusive; the characters are as confused as most of today's viewers are."

***Orbital Resonance* by John Barnes, Tor, \$20.00 (approx.)**

"This book deserves serious consideration because of the viewpoint character (a teenaged girl on a space station) and because of the changes Barnes postulates in people living in a new environment. It's very good science fiction; excellent speculation. Quirky & interesting politics. He's done a fine job of imagining what living in his creation would be like."

***Sarah Canary* by Karen Joy Fowler, Henry Holt & Co. \$21.95**

"Every bit as distinguished as *The White Queen*. After eight years of cyberpunk

as a more masculine than feminine endeavor, two very strong writers [Fowler and Jones] have invented a feminist reply. In so doing, they've made a long overdue contribution to the great dialog of the SF field."

***The Architecture of Desire* by Mary Gentle, Bantam Press, U.K. £13.99**

"Gentle not only successfully blurs the gender lines around rape, she raises all the questions so prevalent in contemporary culture about date rape, marital rape, and other situations where the lines are blurred. ... One of the best things about the book is that the protagonist understands what she's done, and why, and through that, comes to understand what the rapist did, and why. Gentle also, in the relationship between the protagonist and her husband, deals with two [essential] gender issues (or at least relationship issues)—love without beauty and love in a context of controlled jealousy."

***Moonwise* by Greer Ilene Gilman, NAL/Roc, \$4.99 (approx.)**

"Women of various ages and stages and forms struggle over a most basic and grand 'magical' achievement, the accomplishment of the winter solstice and release towards spring. A victory is won without the toot of a single war-horn or clash of battle, and it works—without argument, without over-protestation, without polemic of any kind, but just by being told, and well-told."

***He, She And It* by Marge Piercy, Summit Books, \$20.00 (approx.)**

"Women tend to talk differently from men ... Part of the reason women speak differently is because their concerns are different. I think that Piercy has taken on cyberpunk and made it answer the questions that women are most likely to ask about the future. Shira and Malkah, the protagonists, are not sleazoid-underworld-street-samurai; they're women who'd like to raise a kid successfully as well as jack in. ... This was new; it is not a minor triumph."

Novels/Stories Not on the Short List:

"Division by Zero" by Ted Chiang in *Fu! Spectrum 3*

"Too Wild for to Hold" by Nancy Kress in *Asimov's*

"Venus Rising" by Carol Emshwiller, published by Edgewood Press

The Gilda Stories by Jewella Gomez, published by Firststrand Books. The adventures of a black, lesbian, vampire from the days of slavery to sometime into the future.

Mistress of Ambiguities by J.F. Rivkin, published by Ace Books

Raising The Stones by Sheri Tepper
Bone Dance by Emma Bull, published by Ace

"Bapka in Babylon" by Batya Weinbaum, in *Dreams in a Minor Key*, edited by Susanna Sturgis

Barrayer by Lois McMaster Bujold (Baen)
Flameweaver by Margaret Brill (Baen)

"The Swordsman whose Name was Not Death" by Ellen Kushner, in *F&SF*, September 1991

"Angels in Love" by Kathe Koja, in *F&SF*, July 1991

World Spirits by Aline Boucher-Kaplan (Baen Books, 3/91)

Mirabile by Janet Kagen (Tor Books, 1991)

Possession by AS Byatt (Vintage, 1991)

Reefsong by Carol Severance (Del Ray, 9/91)

Shade by Emily Davenport (NAL/Roc, 12/91)

"Stigmata" by Wendy Council (the recommender said it was in March *F&SF* but it does not seem to be there. Maybe some other month?)

"Black Handkerchiefs" by Wendy Council (*F&SF* December 1991)

"The Birth of Sons" by Sharon M. Hall (*Interzone*, No. 54, December 1991)

"Emissary" by Carol Emshwiller (in *The Start of the End of it All*, Mercury Press)

"Evolution Annie" by Rosaleen Love (published in *Heroines*, edited by Dale Spender, Penguin, 1991)

Minicon 27

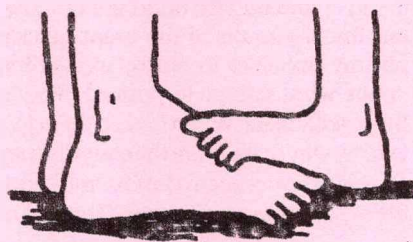
Right off the bat, here, I have a confession to make. I've been going to conventions for more than a decade, I've been doing low-grade fanwriting for the majority of that time, and yet this is the first substantial convention report I've ever attempted. Amazing but true. The thing is, you know how faanish I like to be, right? And you know how the faanish trip report has a form which must be followed (three pages on the trip to the convention, a couple of paragraphs on the convention itself, and a page on the trip home which starts out in the same scope as the story of the trip out and then stops quickly when the trip report's author run into a submission deadline). Well, my problem is that nothing exciting ever happens on my travels to and from conventions. I get in the car, I drive, and there I am. The only thing I end up being able to write about is the convention itself, and by doing that I get a black mark in my faanish records, the records that follow you past high school and throughout your productive life. Which is all to say, it's a problem, and I don't know what to do.

Take this past Minicon, Minicon 27. The story of my trip to Minicon would be the story of a driver sitting in the front seat of a Toyota pickup truck, worrying. Worrying about being late. Worrying about chores left undone at home, about construction around the Wisconsin Dells, about all those starving fen waiting for us in the Raddison lobby so we could all go to an Ethiopian restaurant for dinner. Now admittedly the prospect of bloodshed, carnage, and havoc from the fen-waiting-for-Ethiopian angle story is intriguing (have you ever made Bill Boddin wait three hours for dinner?), but hey, this is a family clubzine, we don't go in for that slasher stuff here. Absent the gore, what else is there to write? "First There were Two and Then There was One," the story of the real big dog and the real little dog out for a pee at the roadside rest? "Why Don't they sell Soda Here"? Or maybe I could write "If there are Two Lanes Entering and One Lane Exiting, Why are we going Less than Half as Fast as Normal?" No,

you're right, none of it works for me either. Oh well, I guess I'll just have to be unfannish and write about the convention. Forgive me, my elders, for I am about to sin.

Most of the conventions I've been to were East Coast production numbers, conventions like Philcon, Balticon, Disclave, and the Boskones of the early 80s. With the exception of Disclave, which I've always found comfortable and coherent, the East Coast eventually inures one to attending pieces of several conventions at the same hotel on the same weekend, each of which fragmented after coming too close to the others. I figured Minicon for a WorldCon wannabe, too, and when I got there I found I wasn't far wrong. Suppose you sampled all the people who browsed through the SF section at the local Waldenbooks—that'd be the Minicon attendees, overheavy on the Star Trek and fantasy sesquicentology readers, but hey, who's counting? Suppose you stapled together three pages out of every book you've read in the last two years—that'd be the programming, gleefully veering across the building and from Sercon to New Age in the blink of an eye. A little more than 5% of the dealers sold books; a little more than 5% of the art and costumes were worth observing; a little more than 5% of the time, you could sleep. Yep, those Minneapolis fen've nailed the big convention dead on, and if you picked it all up and moved it back east it'd fall right into the circuit and nobody'd notice at all.

Except for one thing: Minicon's shot through with style, with the spirit of Dada/Dodo, which makes it unique among the big conventions I've attended. When we got back from that Ethiopian dinner, for instance, the area around the pool was filled with all those Dead Heads who never get their



Miracle Ticket and spend the concert in the parking lot jamming away on found percussion instruments. Did the concom fly them out from California for the weekend, promising them that they'd be back in San Diego the following Monday to hang out in the parking lot outside the JGB's concert? Similarly, what was all that spleen business, anyhow? \$1500 in the budget for chocolate? Be real! And why did Nevenah come into the WisCon party on Saturday night wrapped in Red Tape? Nevenah, of all people! The thing the Minicon people seem to understand is that if enough stuff happens out of context the context eventually reconstructs itself to accommodate the bizarre. Having been, having experienced all this, I now understand why people have inexplicable adventures at Minicons. I'm also filled with a fair amount of admiration for the architects of its disorder; I can't think of many other ways where moderate intervention year after year could propel such a large gathering so far into the weird. Well done, concom, and I can't wait until next year when I can plan my addition to the scene.

How was the convention for me? you ask. Fine, fine. I went to a few programming events, bought a few books (and a real cool inflatable representation of Edvard Munch's "The Scream"), met a few Minneapolis people (and learned how many more there are to meet), and had an all-around good time. We threw a WisCon room party Saturday night, which turned out to be a lot of fun. The party was fun, that is, but the planning sure left something to be desired. You see, we were new to room parties at big conventions, and we didn't know how much bheer and soda and stuff to buy, so we asked our experienced faanish mentors for advice. "Would twenty cases of bheer be enough?" we asked Ellen Franklin, figuring she's thrown these kinds of parties in the past. "Yes," she assured us, "twenty cases would be enough." What she didn't tell us is that three cases would have been enough, too, which is why the basement of our house here is now filled with bheer (and why we can throw WisCon parties at the next dozen conventions we go to without having to spring for any



more stuff). I'm still not sure I understand what happened. At most of the conventions I've attended, putting free bheer in the bathtub is like spreading jam at a picnic—you attract lots of small life forms, the kind you can't get rid of later without a heavy dose of toxic chemicals. At our WisCon party, even with the open door and the stacks of bheer, we never had what you'd call a press of people in the suite; there were always places to sit and paths to use to get from one conversation to another. Moreover, since people seemed to believe that drinking our bheer obligated them to actually talk to us (a far cry from the traditions I'm used to, where it's quite acceptable to create a human chain to ferry bheer out of one party and into another when the latter's alcohol runs out on into the evening), the people who came were mostly pretty fun to get to know. Maybe there was enough going on Saturday night (what with Emma Bull's group's concert, and the dozens of parties being thrown, and the free bheer in the con suite) that there was no danger of any one place having to take the brunt of the social responsibility for the masses. Maybe fen don't think that feminists can party (if so, that's a mass reputation we should encourage—the graduate student bars stayed quiet and cheap around the Ohio State campus because the word got out that *gays* and *readers* and other queers hung out there). Whatever the reason, the party turned out to be the kind of place where you could sit around and talk and enjoy yourself (and eat $\frac{1}{4}$ of a bag of Oreo™ cookies in a half an hour—you know who you are, and I'm impressed). I think we'll have to have more WisCon parties, coming soon to selected conventions near you.

—Steve Swartz

The Walls Have Ears

This will be something new for all you regular Cube readers, and you're going to love it—trust me! I will be your eyes and ears—I will find out things no one was meant to know. My sources are everywhere, and believe me, they're ever-vigilant. (Good thing those photos had to pass my desk first—Whew!)

Who am I, you ask? Well that's not important now. What is important is that I've got the gossip you'll want to hear, even if you think you don't. Lifestyles of the poor and pathetic, and all the dirt no one else would dare to print—journalism at its finest!

So what's new and exciting in the world, you ask? Well sit down my friend, I've got some stories to tell you.

First of all, nearly everyone in the Universe knows about the upcoming marriage of Julie Shivers and Bill Humphries, but did you know that Bill, that clever rascal, has booked Fred Marquart's All-Accordion Orchestra for the event, a fact he's keeping secret from his snuggle bear so as to make her weep with joy at the surprise. My super-secret sources tell me that he's made them promise to play "Sympathy for the Devil," "Take me out to the Ballgame," and "An Ashokan Farewell" with which he plans to serenade his little dumpling of love in the tradition of his homeland. Words fail me in light of how touching this scene will be.

On a more serious note, it has come to my attention that someone has been breaking open packages of Oreo™ cookies at the store, eating one cookie, then cleverly rewrapping the package and replacing it on the shelf. Whoever you are, cut it out!

The fourth annual Potato Bug festival was held at Wallworth County Fairgrounds in early March. There was some consternation on the part of this reporter when it was noted that there wasn't a living Potato Bug for hundreds of miles, but the organizers of the event quickly put my anxieties to rest by explaining about what complete bastards Potato Bugs really were. When I asked them just exactly why, if this were the case, did they choose to honor such a loathsome beast, the answer was, and I quote: "Thar haint

much ta do 'round these parts come winter." I hope that you, my dear, gentle readers, appreciate the sacrifices I make on your behalf.

In other news, it has been noted that SF has elected new officers for 1992. They are: Jeanne Gornoll, President; Matt Raw, Vice-President; Pat Hario, Treasurer; Richard Russell, Recording Secretary-for-Life; and Steve Swartz, Corresponding Secretary.

Sharp-eyed readers will note that the elder Ms. Gornoll has established herself as a force to be reckoned with in WisCon country. Rumors are spreading like wildfire over hints that she had attempted to assassinate the Organizing Editor of the now famous Turbo-Charged Party-Animal APA, Tracy Shannon, at a New Year's Eve fete. The brushfire war between the denizens of Union Street and Bryan Street has since been settled somewhat peacefully (the Union Street forces surrendered), but one cannot help but wonder if tidings of Gornoll's nefarious plans had reached the ears of the Hario/Swartz Coalition, spurring them to a preemptive strike in defense of the unwitting victim-to-be.

Having been foiled in these attempts, word has it that Jeanne will next scheme to deal with Bill Bodden, under the guise of helping him decorate his new living quarters in the Krisor/Swartz household. Stay tuned for further updates.

On a sad note, Julie Shivers' longtime pet and companion, Frosty, died recently. Our hearts go out to Julie and her family. Frosty was a sweet dog, and will be missed.

Andy Hooper and Carol Root, longtime mainstays of Madison Fandom, have moved on. They've finally succumbed to the wiles of the Pacific Northwest, namely Seattle, just in time for the collapse of the local economy there due to Boeing's recently announced layoffs. Congratulations Andy & Carrie! We'll miss you! Write soon!

A reliable source informs me that he'll provide me with some embarrassing bowling scores for next issue. Something to look forward to!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Larry's Place: 116 S. Hamilton St.		1	2
May birthdays: Paula Lewis, 5/6; Dick Russell, 5/7; Scott Custis, 5/8; Spike Parsons, 5/9; Mary Kean, 5/15; Rachel Matthews, 5/25; and Diane Martin, 5/30.						
3	4 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	5	6 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	7	8 Ann Patchett reading (<i>The Patron Saint of Liars</i>) at Canterbury's, 7pm	9
10 <i>Mother's Day</i> Lou Reed book signing at Hotel Washington, benefit for Rodney Scheel House, \$5	11 Lou Reed at Civic Center, 7:30 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	12 Grateful Dead at the Club de Wash	13 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	14 Book of the Month meeting: <i>Voyage to the Red Planet</i> (Blason) chez J. Nichols (255-6786), 7:30	15	16 Chris Williamson & Trot Fure, Barrymore Theater, 8 pm
17 WisCon Meeting, Union South, 1:30 pm Gender-bending puppet show, Canterbury's, 1 pm	18 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	19 Molly Ivins, book- signing at Canterbury's, 12pm	20 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	21	22	23
24 Tracy Chapman, Civic Center, 8 pm	25 Memorial Day Poetry Reading at A Room of One's Own Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	26	27 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	28 Flying Karamazov Brothers at the Civic Center, 7:30 pm	29	30 Julie Shivers & Bill Humphries get legal
31	Bowl-A-Vard Lanes 2909 E. Washington					
				All activities (like WisCon meetings) scheduled at Union South are listed on "Today at the Union," which is posted on a 1st floor bulletin board.		

June 1992

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	2	3 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	4	5	6
7	8 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	9	10 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	11 Book of the Month meeting: <i>A Woman of the Iron People</i> (Ameson) chez B. Humphries (251-2664), 7:30	12 X-Con, 6/12-14, Milwaukee 4th St. Fantasy, 6/12-14, Minneapolis	13 Rhannon at Mills Hall, University of WI
14 FantasticCon, Sheraton Mayfair, Milwaukee	15 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	16	17 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	18	19	20
21 <i>Father's Day</i> Tolkien Society Union South, 7:30	22 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30 Summer begins	23	24 Wednesday night at Larry's Place	25	26	27
28 ComicsCon, 10-4, Howard Johnson's, 525 W. Johnson St.	29 Bowling at Bowl-A-Vard, 7:30	30				
					June birthdays: Cathy Gilligan, 6/2; Georgie Schnobrich, 6/4; Lorelei Manney, 6/16; and Lynne Ann Morse, 6/22.	

ADS

Magicon membership for sale at August 1991 price, \$85. Contact Scott Custis, 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704. 608-246-8857.

Wanted: News for *Cube*. Contact the editor, Steve Swartz, c/o SF.

Wanted: Main course recipes for the new Tiptree cookbook, *Her Smoke Rose Up From Supper*. Send them to SF.

Wanted: WisCon staff person to investigate and administer child care for WisCon 17. Contact SF.

Ellen Franklin needs to borrow a guitar for a week to bring to camp in August. Does anyone have one that they're not using? Call 233-0882.

Fanzines mentioned in "The Best Fanzines of 1991"

The Bakery Men Don't See, Jeanne Gomoll, 1991, Published by SF, PO Box 1624, Madison, WI 53701-1624.

Bento, Dave Levine and Kate Yule, 117 NW Trinity Pl., Portland, OR 97209.

Beyond the Enchanted Duplicator... To the Enchanted Convention, Walt Willis and James White, 32 Warren Rd., Donaghadee, N. Ireland, BT21-OPD.

Fanthology '87, Richard Brandt, 4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912.

File 770, Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave., #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401.

Folly, Arnie Katz, 330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.

Mimosa, Dick & Nicki Lynch, PO box 1350, Germantown, MD 20875.

Pulp, Avedon Carol, Rob Hansen, and John Harvey, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London, E8 1AB, England.

SF Commentary, Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195 AA, Melbourne, VIC 3001, Australia.

SF Five Yearly, Lee Hoffman (401 Sunrise Trail NW, Port Charlotte, FL 33952) & Gerri Sullivan and Jeff Schalles (3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315).

Sisters, Pam Wells, Linda Huntzinger, and Jeanne Gomoll. Copies available from J. Gomoll, 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704.

Sglodion, Dave Langford, 94 London Rd., Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, England.

Spangler, Garth Danielson, 3817 29th Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408.

Spirochete, Redd Boggs, PO Box 1111, Berkeley, CA 94701.

Sydney Suppey's Quarterly & Confused Pet Monthly, Candi Strecker, 590 Lisbon, San Francisco, CA 94112.

Tand, Mark Manning, 1400 E. Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112.

Tendeberry, Vijay Bowen, PO Box 1831, Brooklyn, NY 11202.

Trap Door, Robert Lichtman, PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442.

We Came In through the Taffroom Window, Jeanne Bowman (PO Box 982, Glen Ellen, CA 95442-0982) & Richard Brandt (4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso, TX 79912).

Yhos, Art Widner, 231 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563.

Art Credits

Connie Burkey — pp. 5, 8, 9, 14, 15

Jeanne Gomoll — *Cube* layout pp. 3, 6, 7, 11, 13

Bill Humphries & Jeanne Gomoll — *Cube* logo

This issue of *Cube* was laid out using a Mac IIx with Aldus PageMaker and Adobe Illustrator software, with a Laserprinter IIINTX producing camera-ready copy. Future issues may be laid out using a DOS version of PageMaker—depending on who does the layout. Submissions on 3½" disks—in either Mac or DOS format—are welcome. Type faces used: Stone Informal regular and semi-bold, for body and heads; Helvetica for small print; and Memphis for *Cube* logo. This issue was printed on SF's new mimeograph machine (a Gestetner 4130) with the aid of an Electro-Stenciler (a Gestetner 1103). [SF members take note: the mimeograph and E-Stenciler are available to you for any of your SF-related printing projects. Please remember to make arrangements for its use with its guardian, Steve Swartz. Call him a week or two before you go to press: 255-3396.]



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