

Lan's  
Blowtorch

Warning: May contain flames.

## Firestarter

I was sick at home earlier; yes, I've often done work at home, but today I was sick at home.

I've just come back inside from being interrupted earlier. See, I was nattering along at the keyboard when there was running in the hallway, and then someone was pounding my door. "Fire!" was being shouted.

I smelled smoke.

This is not jamais vu.

I snatched up my sneakers, and teleported outside, to join the crowd of a couple of dozen people watching the fire folk running in and out. Three trucks.

I watched the smoke pouring out of... the window under mine.

Isn't there more to fandom than repetition?

Happily, no harm was done to my apartment, or the building beyond the apartment below. They extinguished the fire after busting into that apartment, where someone had apparently been very careless, though the fire folk were vague as to cause: "something left burning on the windowsill, probably a cigarette."

And now everything in my apartment smells mildly of smoke again. How pleasantly nostalgic for me. This makes three out of the past six summers with a fire in my building, all three started directly below me, and doesn't even count the *other* fires I've lived through in the past (hey, Kate, remember the folks in the basement of 4227—Eighth Ave. NE. in Seattle whose enemies dragged the garbage can against the door and set fire to the house?).

Am I broadcasting mental commands causing people to turn into pyromaniacs, or what?

## Political Correctness

The term "Politically Correct" was *originally* (by originally, I meant "as my generation originated its own usage." It *originated* in commie/Mao theory.) used by lefty folk in the mid-Seventies (I particularly recall 1975-8) as a term of *irony*, of *humor*. It was generally used affectionately on friends who Were Going Too Far. It then slid into more of a term of serious criticism within the left, though still flavored heavily with irony, and then it leaped into general usage with an entirely new meaning

as discovered by the national media (particularly that first cover story in TIME around 1977) of This Is What Is Wrong With The Left.

It's never been the same yet, and history is constantly being rewritten, but I well remember the way my friends and myself, who were vaguely of the left, were using this term in the mid-Seventies before the national media drastically changed the meaning.

## New Technology

I recall the grumping when that newfangled technology of scrolls of sheepskin was invented and the Trufans knew that Stone Tablets was the only True way to Pub Your Ish; but the howls really went up when papyrus came in. Papyr-*you*, they'd say, not us!

## From a .sig File

“The Internet is not a Toy—Gary Farber”

This is number 9 in a  
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## The Lost Fanzines of Gary Farber

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