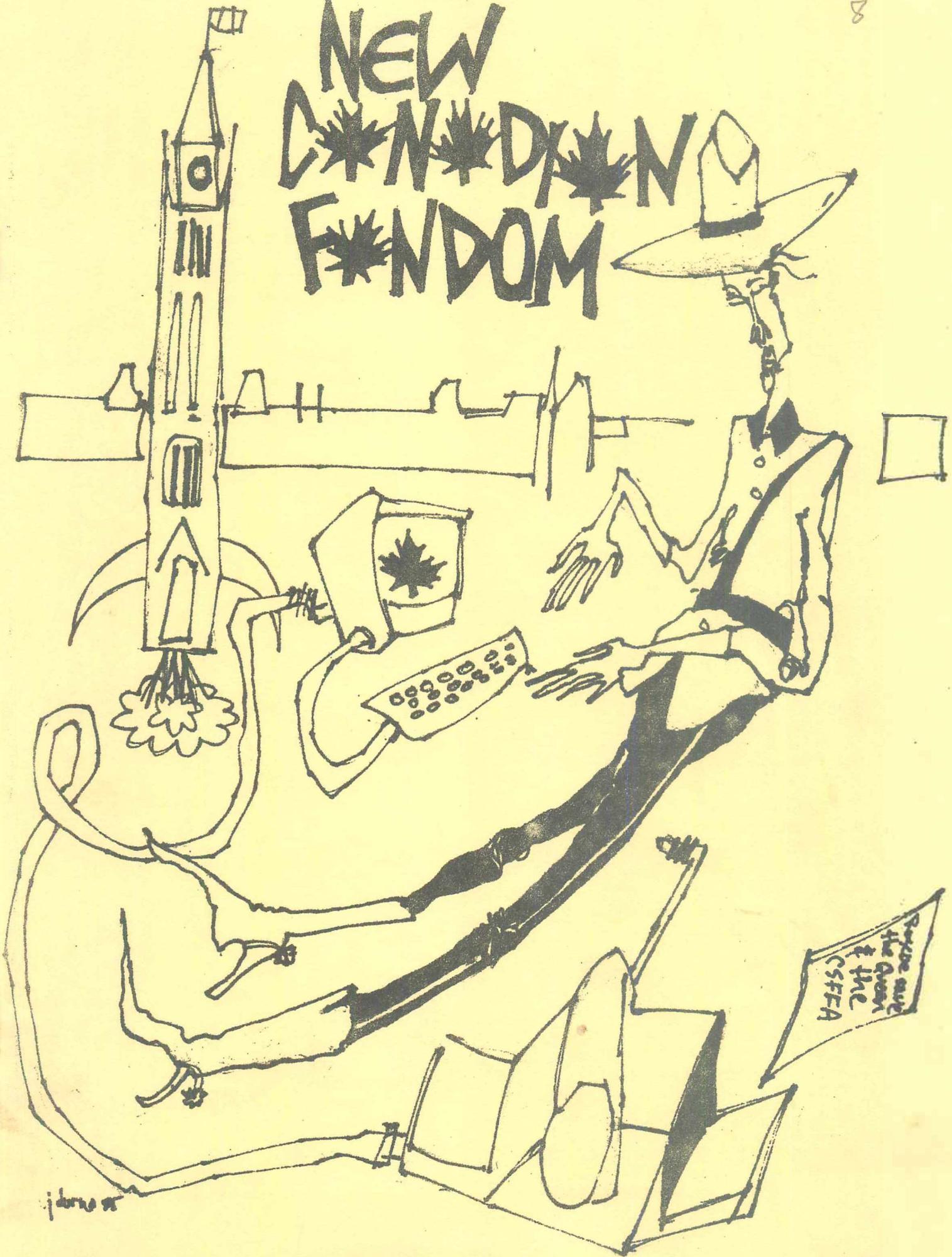


NEW CANADIAN FANDOM



NCA CANADIAN FANDOM

NEW CANADIAN FANDOM

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Subscriptions are not available. *New Canadian Fandom* is available for \$2/issue (make checks payable to Robert Runté); letters of comment; editorial contributions (I could use some more art, folks, and essays and/or humour pieces); trades with other fanzines; subscriptions to *Maple Leaf Rag* (see page 10 for address); and editorial whim.

Selected articles from *NCF* are available on the Compuserve Information Service. See pages 16-21 for details. *NCF's* Compuserve mail address is 72326,730 if you would like to submit stuff in electronic form so I don't have to retype it. Let's move with the times, folks.

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NO PAIN, NO GAIN



-allan brockmen

No pain, no gain.

Recently i decided to be rich, so i applied for work at several places which offered high-paying manual labour outside the city. I nagged the staff in the personnel offices constantly. They really got sick of me. One day i walked into the CNR [Canadian National Railway] main office, while they were trying to contact someone else to fill my future job.

"He's not answering his phone, i'm here and i'm eager to work. Perseverance and effort should be rewarded," i say to the office in general. I tend to make speeches, a fact that annoys all businessmen who expect mediocre, but would gladly have obsequious, underlings. "And if you hire me you will be graced with my ensuing absence." This quip brings puzzled frowns, a foreshadowing of future events. I try again: "Like man, if i'm out in the bush, i can't be in here bitching for a job every day!"

The sudden gleam in their eyes is really a reflection of the ray of hope in the faces of the clerks to be finally rid of me. They have to deal with me day in and day out.

"Well, you have to be at the worksite by tomorrow" they say.

"Where?" i ask.

"Fort Ningly B.C., can you do it?"

(Where the hell is that?) "Sure, no problem." i smile.

"Good, here is your Greyhound ticket, you leave in an hour and a half. Bye."

I dash to the library, just blocks away.

"Quick, where is Fort Ningly? What is the weather like? Can i xerox this map?" Then grab a taxi to my parents, which is where i stay when i am really poor, which is why i decided to be rich. I fill my duffel bag and leave a note on the fridge saying:

*Have found job
might be late
don't wait supper
-al*

then get back downtown to the Greyhound terminal.

The trip is sheer hell, 18 hours trapped in a seat. I am going crazy. I can't even read my book. Reading and riding always makes me ill. The only thing that keeps me sane is watching this ethereal pale-skinned redheaded guy in the seat in front of me. I would much rather be squashed next to him, sardine-like, than the Yahoo i spend the trip with. When the redhead and his textbooks get off in Kamloops i am forced to return to earth from the clouds of sexual desire, where i have been therapeutically

vacationing only to find that on that earth i am told ethnic, sexist, and homophobic jokes by my redneck Yahoo. What is worse, the jokes are old, and as dull as himself.

Finally we arrive in Fort Ningly, which is just 30 minutes from Vancouver. The Yahoo, named Tom, asks, "Hey how do you get to the CN office around here?" (God, have i told you, you have a strange sense of humour... well, what kind of people did i expect to work with?) Eventually we both get to the camp.

Let me describe the camp. There are two railway tracks. On one a train rollicks by at 80 clicks¹ every forty minutes. This causes earthquake-like phenomenon, 5.7 on the Richter scale, to be felt by the unfortunates who live in the camp, or 'the white fleet' as it is called. The fleet rests on flattop cars on the other track.

There are sleepcars. In each there are three rooms, two beds to a room, 2.5 square feet of unclaimed space per bed. There are washcars, seven working chemical toilets for sixty men, four shower stalls and hot water for the first twelve guys, sinks, and, in some, old ringer-washers. I, at 24 years of age, am one of only 3 people old enough to understand how they work. There is the TV car which has TVs capable of picking up two channels, niether² of which is PBS, TVO, Access, etc., and if there is something good on CBC (it happens lots) the crew switches on the VCR and rewatches one of their old porno movies.³ Then there are, of course, the kitchen and dining cars. There such tasty dishes as boiled BBQ chicken await your palate. Yes, not only can you get chicken boiled in BBQ sauce, but vegetable mush boiled in gravy, and carbohydrates plus starch boiled in grease. (I'll just nip off and shoot myself in the head, that would be more humane.) So why don't i get fat...? The work!

Shall i describe the work for you? We get up when the sun is rising two time-zones in the east. We work 8 to 19 hours a day, averaging 13. We work 17 days straight, then get 4 days off. The work is heavy, hard and in some cases dangerous. In the first two weeks i go from doughy (well, what i consider doughy) to being svelte and solid (a miracle).

Our job is replacing worn ties (the wooden supports for the steel rail). This involves all

¹ slang for km/h or km

² iether: inclusive or - one or the other

either: exclusive or - one or more

niether: inclusive nor - not one or the other

neither: exclusive nor - all or nothing

definition of a dead language - one that's not growing

³ I don't find skin movies or books, straight or bent, to be erotic, just dull.

sorts of bizarre machines which ride on the track, tunnel under it, hammer it and straighten it simultaneously.

It also involves people with sledgehammers who smash off rail anchors, at 1.3 per second. People with tie-tongs who fling 150 lb. ties out from beneath lifted track at 1 per second (these two are my jobs). People with spike mauls who spike the track back down. And a series of other jobs so wimpy that i leave them for the hets to do.

But we do work, most of us, very hard. Whenever we are working any track through a town, tourists bring their families and their cameras. They love to capture those candid moments when a youth with rivulets of sweat, soaking the few clothes he still has on, backhandedly swipes from his mouth any froth that is accumulating there. They gush, louder than the sweat in our boots does, to their beloved, when they see dust and grease being cleaned from a washboard stomach by a trickle of blood sliding, unbeknownst to its previous owner, from a fresh wound sired by the rusted and broken corners of thoughtlessly held metal refuse. In short, if one of those fucking breeder tourists fell into the undercutter's rotating choppers, i'd laugh till i puked.

If a job is to be done one has tremendous respect for those who work and contempt for those who shirk. I work hard because i like physical work and i feel guilty if i get paid to work and don't do my best. This inclination for hard work will come to my aid later when my inclination for hard bodies becomes common knowledge. But more on that later.

Now i suppose its time to describe the men (most of them boys) that i work with. (OK, wait, in every story i've read, the protagonist is described in the first 5 paragraphes. Aren't i the protagonist in this non-fiction story? Shouldn't i have described myself long ago?) I am 185 cm tall, white skin, brown hair, (i've just pulled one out, and it measures 45 cm long). Some of my associates tell me i have feminine mannerisms, some tell me i have none. Some ask why i flaunt my orientation, others ask me why i hide it so completely. All this tells me nil about me but much about them. Really i'm just your ordinary intelligently paranoid, dislexikc, monotheistic, solopsistic, homosexual, socially ferrel, anarchistic, small 'c' christian phenomenologist (on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays...)

Tom, the Yahoo, and i arrive at camp on the same day. Only one two-bunk cell is free. So Tom is my roommate. He distrusts me. I don't do anything unusual, but still even i, socially retarded as i am, can tell when i'm not liked. Since Tom does not initially display his dislike of me, since he's a crowd follower who should expose any peculiarity he suspects to the mob, that being the nature of the mob he follows; since he believes that the judgement of guilt by association is just and since there is only one 'crime' that it is not safe to expose your roommate for, it is obvious that he thinks i'm homosexual. Why his conclusion? Who



knows? On the trip out he talked constantly with a man on the other side of the bus-aisle. A man who was obviously, even to me, trying to pick Tom up. Yet Tom thought he was a "real swell guy". Perhaps it was the fact that i read Paul Scott's The Raj Quartet and he read Fearless Ninja Warrior magazine that caused the initial dislike. He responded to everything people said with iether his hyaena cackle or "Whoooohw FUCK". He's said twelve sentences so far and 'whoooowh Fuck' is 93% of them, some others are "my kid brother is gay, i haven't talked to him since he was twelve" (Kid brother, count your blessings) and "Fuck, i just fell off the fuckin' [choose appropriate object] and fuck, i almost broke my Fuckin' [choose appropriate body part]." All told though, not a bad guy. Not malicious (that's the important thing). But not much of anything else. If forty guys were skinning someone's grandmother i could see him helping neither party.

Then there is old Al, 'old' to distinguish him from me in conversation. He is 32 but looks fiftyish. His body decay and brain atrophy are both due, we suspect, to chronic alcoholism. To picture old Al, envision a 30% shaven grizzly with anthrax taking lithium and LSD, with an alcohol chaser. Old Al is my inseparable friend. The similarity in our names is enough on his part to warrant blood-brotherhood. That is, until the ninth day, when someone, who knows who, tells him that i'm homosexual.

How do others find out? They probably know about me the same way that others 'know' that my straight roommate is gay. By jumping to conclusions.

"Ugh. Man not from my tribe."
"Ugh. Strange man not smoke peacepipe."
"Ugh. Sneaky wizard know much magic words."
"Ugh. Man is different, different is evil, fag is evil and different, so he is fag."
"Ugh."

An unsound but correct conclusion. In any case the rumours start. Fueled no doubt by my lack of gracelessness and continued abstinences from booze and drugs. The rumours do have one good effect. Old Al stops being my friend (my prayers to Sredni Vashtar⁴ have been answered.) With old Al, the most ridiculous man on the track, openly hating my guts, most of the others, for fear of being lumped into the same muddle-headed category as him, refrain from open confrontation or conformation. Well, most refrain. Some have to take me aside to give me a chance to deny the rumours. Stumpy Steve, a reformed alcoholic and redundantly born Christian, with whom i discussed theology and personal growth, asked me "Marylou, (my nickname, everybody has a nickname) are the rumours true?"

"Rumours?" i ask.

"Yeah. That, well, you're a fag?"

"Yeah." i keep working. A pregnant pause follows.

"But you're a nice guy" he says.

I say over my shoulder. "Yeah, you too." I turn to look at him and ask "Are the rumours true about your... fornicating with loose women?"

He smiles, gets back to work and says "Yeah".

Others ask, and i make my responses as straightforward as they have the guts to make their questions. Finally, as six or seven of us cluster around the campfire in the woods to escape the rain, Phil, 'the instigator', asks "So is it true?" Phil is an amazing character. Bright, street-smart, glib, creative, a perfect person-manipulator, and pathetic. At least i find him pathetic. In one of the many schools i went to while growing up across this nation, it was a habit to psychologically test all learning disabled children. In the course of testing my dyslexia they determined that i had 'a pathological hatred of conformity'. I said i had a natural fondness for variety in individuals, and an understandable sorrow for their complete subsumption; also that any psychological test that was accepted and administered by the school system, a socializing agent, would have in it 'a pathological hatred of nonconformism'. Pathological or not i still find the maliferous herd mentality galling and unfathomable. Phil, with an intelligence i envy, does not need to run with the crowd for protection. He can either abandon, upgrade, or lead the gestalt mind of his clique. Instead he acquiesces to its every whim. I feel ill when i think of that 'gunpowder' brain obscenely chained to a 'talcum-powder' will.

"So is what true, Phil?"

"That you have a black husband."

When i recover from my paroxysms of laughter i say "For the record, yes i am a

⁴ The god you pray to to kill powerful malicious unavoidable superiors. From a story by Saki.

cocksucking, limp-wristed, candy-assed buggerer. But no, i don't sleep with 'my black husband', i sleep with a knife, and i'll use it, like i have in the past, if i get any late-night callers, understand?"

With chalk faces they explain "It's cool, like, man, no one was even thinking of giving you a blanket party..." . A blanket party is where many guys attack one, throwing a blanket over his head so that he can't identify his attackers, or fight back. i was later told while out drinking with the boys in the town, that on that night an impromptu gathering discussed whether or not it was moral not to beat me up: True, some of them liked me, and no, i hadn't done anything against the camp rules, but still there was a duty to do and a queer to bash.....

Then John, an assistant foreman who really has his shit together, pointed out the obvious. If i was carted off to the hospital, which one of them would take my arduous job? They reconsider. I survive. Certain people made half-hearted attempts to subdue me; none successful; one resulting in a badly slashed-up bedsheet. But really they are very decent people. They push the macho shtik a bit and they do think ill of every other race, class, sex, etc., but that is just their cultural conditioning. Certainly they are a hell of a lot saner than univeristy students or executives, but perhaps that's just Stockholm Syndrome⁵ in action.

From the confirmation day onward there are remarks with varying degrees of malice and humour to which i responded in kind:

"You know, Mary, back home in Lebanon we shoot fags like you on sight."

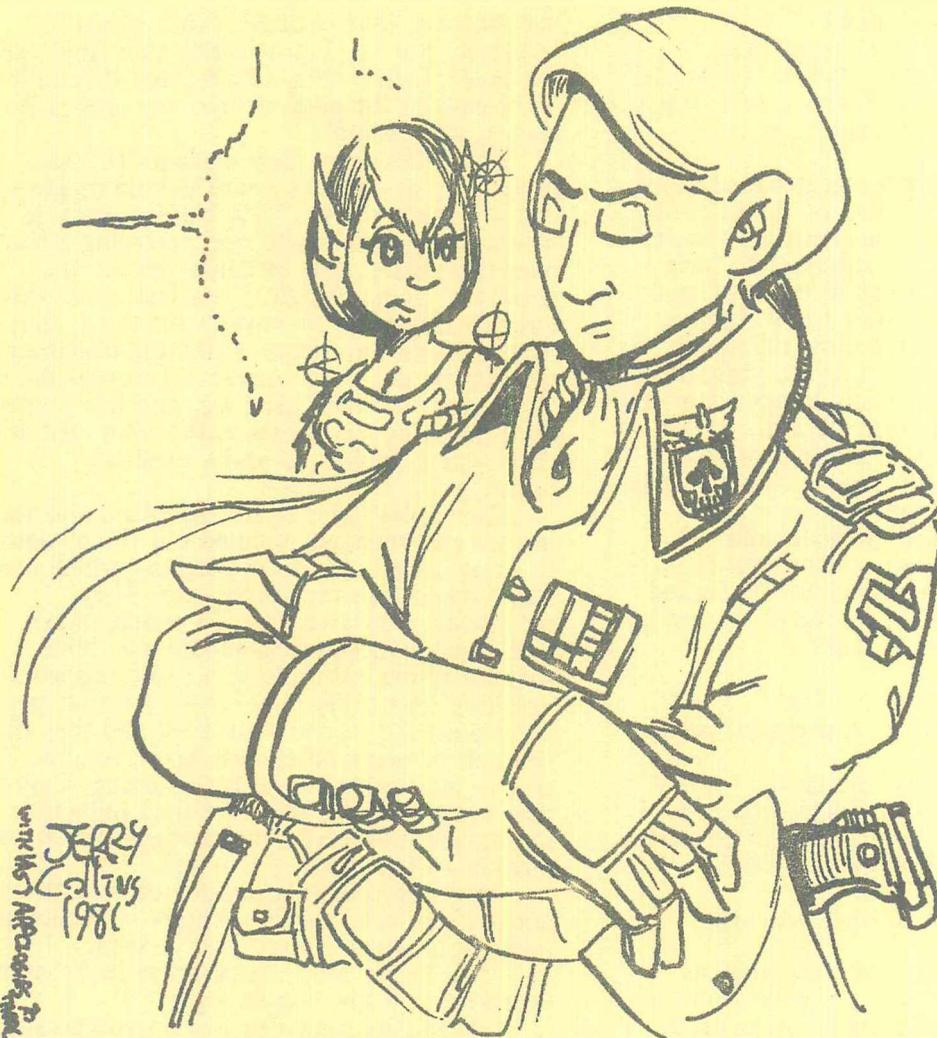
"Oh Mohammed, i'm so glad you escaped with yor life."

Jeff, Tom's best friend who loves his long hair, gets his fleece shorn. Guilt by association, remember. Tom moves into a spare bunk in Jeff's room. (Good riddance.) Some, like 'Tex', who accept me with a 'live and let live' attitude, when my homosexuality was just a rumour, had to disown me afterwards. But for some, like 'Flex', 'Hippy', 'Amy', 'the Lebs', and others with less interesting nicknames, it is business as usual. A precarious peace ensues. To survive i walk a line between sarcastic self-assertion, and self-denial. Since the weak are abused, show no weakness, yet don't threaten.

I tell some lies to stay safe.

1. I have a man at home, (i wish), a beautiful oriental, modelled on someone i knew (oh how i wish), and i am monogamous.
2. That there are 4 other homosexuals on the gang. At the time i said this i only knew of 2. But by the end of the season i discovered 5, making 6 out of 65 men. Could those fantastic rumours of 10% be true?

⁵ the process by which you fear your kidnapers' wrath so you try to be friendly to them.



3. The important lie. I am not turned on by any of the guys on the labour-gang. Truth is, only 4 of the 60 guys didn't turn me on. Fortunately all but 5 of them also turned me right off, and like most homosexuals my self-control is perfect.

"Mary Lou, when you're in the shower after work with the rest of us, how do you restrain yourself?"

"I just have to, Amy. I'd be up shit creek if i looked at you guys strutting your stuff in the shower and broke down laughing, wouldn't i?"

I think i confuse them somewhat. Most of them have never met a 'pervert-and—proud-of-it' before. They ask very strange questions.

"Which one plays the man and which one plays the woman?"

"Mary, you go to university. You could get a black guy easy. You know blacks have bigger pricks, and that's what fags like?" This said by one of the dusky Indian Sikhs, that comprised 50% of the work-gang. Honest to god, where does one start to deal with these misconceptions?

"Mary, since you're gay, i guess you've tried animals, right?"

"Oh right, of course, sometimes we all get together and jump into a swimming pool brimming with shaved camels and snakes. Don't

you know most of the AIDS cases in the city are behind bars at the zoo?" Sometimes even this level of sarcasm escapes them, but by telling them the worst and weirdest they are forced, reductio ad absurdum, to realize and admit---because they figured it out for themselves---that their questions and fears are infantile.

"Mary, of all the kids you've tried, give us the truth now, which was the youngest?"

(I get it, i'm gay, so therefore a pedophile. Ugh.)

"Well once i toyed with a woman who was carrying an unborn boy." They saw through that one instantly.

"Oh, come on now Mary, the truth?" This is where i tell them my personal life history. That i have had three loves in my life and the first had been beaten to death by queer-bashers (Let's install guilt). And that i had tracked down his killers, putting some in the hospital. This is of course untrue, i had already moved out west by then. ⁶

Eventually old Al is collected by the CN psychiatric ward. With him leaves the constant reminder of how pathetically irrational homophobia is. Within 2 weeks everyone with the exception of my new roommate, the

⁶ Some ask me why i hide my orientation, others ask why i reveal it.

foremen, and a few friends, completely ignored me. Being ignored means that while i sip my Drambuie reading Ghormanghast and listen to Mussorski's Pictures at an Exhibition in my room my door is *not* flung open by a gang of men wanting to know if i feel like getting shitfaced or like 'cracking open' some strippers. My new roommate, Gerome, still has to deal with me. He seems to use the camp as a place to hide from the police. He tells fantastic stories of past wealth and shady dealings in controlled substances. Also endless stories of his wife and kid (OK Gerome, i get the idea).

He gives me a ride into town to do laundry when he goes drinking or to see a game. This taxi service cost me a round of beer for Gerome and his francophone friends, one of whom i have great *Y&Y* respect for.

One of the Sikhs named 'Stretched Steve' also offered me a lift. If Allah breathed not just life but grace, vitality, and poise into a blend of Wendy Pini's Rayak and Michaelangelo's David carved from mahogany, you have some idea of Stretch's beauty.

Imagining a sponge on quaaludes gives you a similar picture of Stretch's mind. He and his Sikh friends were going to hop into his big black van with the crushed red velvet innards, and drive to Vancouver. In a packed and noisy dining car Stretch asks me if i want to come with him. Total and instantaneous ~~silence~~ reigns. There are rumours about the Sikhs on the gang. Everyone is watching to see what i'll say.

"Sorry. Go without me. Being gangbanged by a bunch of black bastards isn't my idea of a good time." Instantly Stretch blurts out:

"We would not! Never! We'd take you one at a time!" Too late, his hand is slapping over his mouth, his eyes bulge as he realizes what he has said.

You don't have to be good-looking to be good in bed. You don't need to have scholastic success to be psychologically stimulating. But i really don't get off on a man with fewer scruples than a female Praying Mantis.

This is the depressing thing about this summer job, most of the guys i work with are real wimps. I don't mean they have weak bodies. Almost all of them are stronger than me. But as Phil says "You don't think you work that hard, but i think you work as hard as you can." He's pissed off because his friends have deserted him, leaving us to finish off the last of the work. A common occurrence, which leads eventually to my being chosen to go on the team that earned overtime pay by starting first and ending last.

I don't mean they have weak minds. Sure they look puzzled when i say "Beauty is in the eye of the narcissist" as they flex in the washroom mirrors. But they have a gut-level understanding of human nature that leaves me behind. Not partially and temporarily, but completely and permanently.

I don't mean that they have weak hearts. They withstand pain better than me and they show both more courage and sensitivity than myself. When, for example, i stupidly jump in

the wrong direction from a moving train, hit a gravel mound and slide down the incline getting closer to the grinding train wheels, some turn away nauseated at the prospect of seeing what would be left of me. I become quite beside myself at the realization that i might end up 'beside myself' only after Richard, ' to whom i, literally, owe an arm and leg, pulls me away from the edge of the track where i hold to my precarious perch, all at great personal risk to himself.

I am saying they have weak wills most never push themselves, physically, mentally or morally. Everyone praises Richard's bravery to his face but then conclude, because no other conclusion is politically correct, that he must be a fag to risk life and limb just to save a fag. It's not so much the fact that they're bigots, it's that they cultivate and worship bigotry; even though most of them privately hate and fear bigots. Most are so horrified of being persecuted that they backstab their best friend if it directs the crowd's malevolent attention away from themselves.

Of course there are exceptions; 'Psycho', who is most of the time aloof, almost brooding, and the rest of the time unleashing his violent physical aggression on innocent inanimate objects, tells me, "I understand people, they're all cocksucking cunts, who needs them?" I can see Psycho's point. Still i think he is being a bit hard on all of humanity. Like you and me, most of the guys on the track have their good and bad sides. Yet being trapped with the same people i find their bad sides increasingly intolerable. My spirits drop so low that the other guys on the gang complain that i'm just not keeping up my half of the snappy comeback conversation. I think i am depressed not because the boys are imperfect but because i just can't click with these people. I don't mean because i am gay and they are straight. The other homosexuals fit in fine. It is hilarious watching the straights trying to find the gays, using only their misconceptions for a guide; and the gays trying, guideless because their misconceptions have been dashed but not replaced, to find other gays. Also i don't fit in with other homosexuals. Sorry to say i find gay culture more plastic than Macdonalds (where i never eat) and more glitzy than West Edmonton Mall (where i never shop).

I have a few gay friends and could have hundreds of gay enemies if i were forced to live my life in a gay ghetto. I also have a few straight friends and could have hundreds of straight enemies if i were forced to work on the same labour gang with them.

I begin to really look forward to my four days off in Vancouver so i can take in the sights, go to an Esperanto conferance (cu vi estas samseksemulo?), maybe go to a BCSFA ' meeting, or the U.B.C. and play with their computers. But most important to get away to

' With the exception of Richard, all the names herein have been changed to protect the innocent, embarrass the guilty and avoid slander proceedings

Wreck beach and have some totally anomomous PRIVACY.

"Mary Lou, how did you get your ass sunburnt?"

By the end of the season i am really in a bitchy mood. When they ask "What does your chink hubby like in bed?", they obviously want to hear some kinky story to distract them from the boredom of camp life. But do i deliver? No, instead i give them the most nauseating thing they can take.

"I think the thing he loves in bed is ... me." I start silently counting: one, two, three, four, someone groans, catching on, five, six, seven more groans, they all get it now. The sound of mass wretching graces my vengeful ears. I never claimed to be a nice guy.

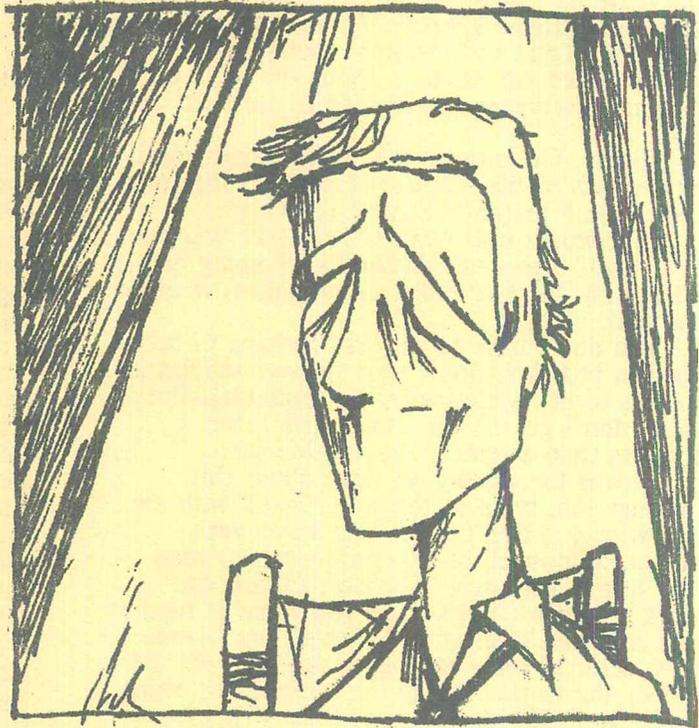
I may have made the job sound pretty bad. But who wants to hear descriptions like : if-only-you-could-have-seen/felt-how-beautiful/grand-the-scenery/smile/

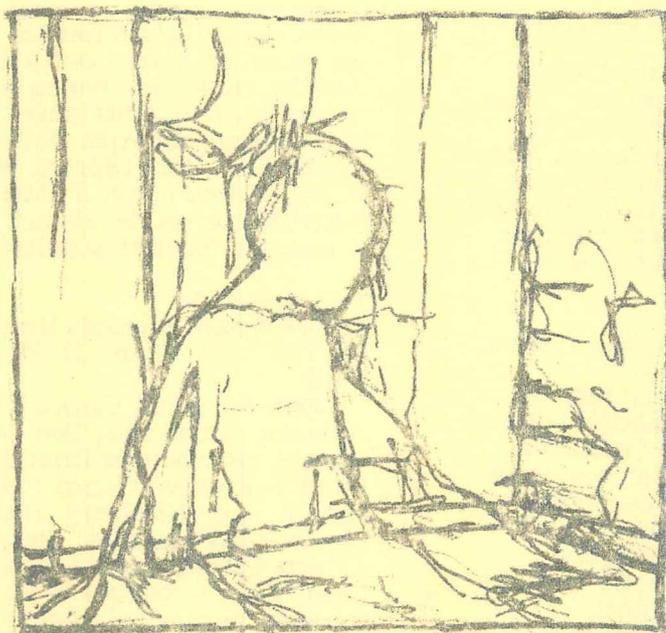
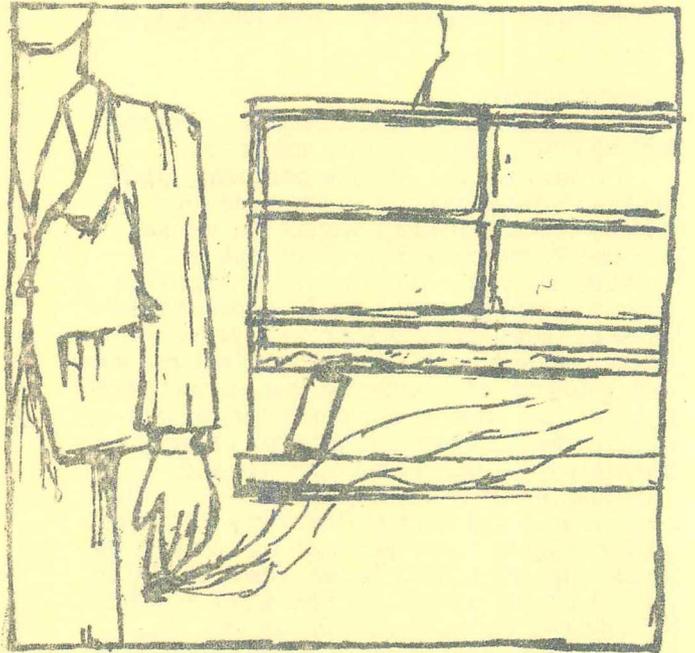
sense-of-accomplishment-was-when, etc....
Actually i liked it. It could have been better, but there are worse jobs (working inside the post office) and much worse jobs (proofreading my spelling) and on the whole i don't ~~feel~~ dread the idea of going back to work. In fact i'm already packing. Now where the hell did i stash my suntan lotion, bug repellent, Laurie Anderson tapes, switchblade...

No brain, no pain.

' A sf. fan club in BC. I crashed at JoAnn McBride's place. She's a typical fan, financially poor, mentally rich. She knows i'm gay and trusts me to babysit her 4 year old son. Culture clash on the weekends or what?

THE NIGHT THEY SAID GOOD-BYE #1





fanzine reviews

British Columbia

BCSFAzine

Barbara Przeklasa, BCSFA, P.O. Box 35577, Stn. E, Vancouver, BC V6M 4G9. \$10/yr or trades; offset; pp.; 14x21.

Beats me; they haven't been sending it to me.

Cause Celebre

Garth Spencer, 1296 Richardson St., Victoria, BC V8V 3E1. 15pp.; 21x28; mimeo; \$1

In this one-shot *MLR* supplement, Garth makes a valiant attempt to trace the short history of the Canadian Science Fiction and Fantasy Award (CSFFA). This task is complicated by the fact that no two accounts seem to agree on what actually happened and most of those involved seem to have had only a foggy notion of who else was involved and what was going on. (It's amazing that anything ever actually gets done in fandom, since we seem to operate on this chaotic basis a lot.) Garth manages to be reasonably objective and thorough in his reporting, and so I think that anyone who was interested now has sufficient information to form their own opinions on the remaining issues. Fran Skene, Chair of V-Con 14 (which will present the next CSFFA in May of 1986), is currently chairing an apa-like discussion of what to do with the award from here on in.

The Electric Gang-Bang Pork Chop

E. B. Klassen/Derek McCulloch and friends. 2pp.; mimeo; 21x28.

This one-shot is another in the Derek McCulloch tradition that any time two or more fans (who are not related by marriage) get together, they have to put out a fanzine. This is why Derek has one of the largest total page counts in the history of Canadian fandom while still remaining relatively unknown. Pointless verbiage unless you know the participants.

Faces: A Portfolio by Garth.

Garth Spencer, 1296 Richardson St., Victoria, BC V8V 3E1. 10pp.; 14x21; xerox.

Not satisfied with being a first rate fan writer and editor, Garth has branched out into artwork. This 14 page portfolio (which was likely only distributed to other fan editors he believed might be interested in his artwork submissions) is very uneven. The cover self-portrait and a cartoon showing him answering a long distance phone call from the shower are quite good, but the other illustrations are generally...well, better than I could do I guess, but then that's why I collect rubber stamps. Needs work, Garth.

From The Ashes Feb. & Mar 85

James Dean Waryk, Science Fiction Association of Victoria, P.O. Box 1772, Stn. E, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y1. 4-8pp; 21x28; xerox/mimeo; \$10/yr.

Upcoming events, editorials, club minutes. Of interest to members only.

The Maple Leaf Rag # 's 6-17.

Garth Spencer, 1296 Richardson St., Victoria, BC V8V 3E1. 18pp.; 21x28; mimeo. Available for news, articles, art, trades, \$1 or \$8/year.

Canada's regular newzine, *MLR* keeps getting better and better. Most *NCF* readers are presumably already familiar with *MLR* since our mailing lists overlap, but if you do not already subscribe to *MLR* do so immediately.

The Newzine # 's1-2.

Leonard S. Wong, see below. 21x28; mimeo; 10pp.

News supplement to *Plastizine*. Ok if you're at all into comics.

Plastizine #9.

Leonard S. Wong, The Vancouver Comic Book Club, PO Box 48873, Bentall Station, Vancouver, BC V7X 1A8. 14x21; 40 pp.; xerox; \$0.50/issue.

A great comics zine, this issue featured Leonard's editorial on censorship in comics (fairly well thought out, too); Lance Gueck's review column which focused on great comics you've mostly never heard about before (rather than the routine and boring Marvel and DC reviews found in other zines) and an interview with underground artist George Metzger. Sadly, rumour has it that Leonard Wong has quit the VCBC, so who knows if there will be any future *Plastizines*, let alone if they will be able to maintain this high standard.

Potboiler #8/9.

Lari Davidson, Richards Road, Roberts Creek, BC V0N 2W0; 72 pp.; 21x28; typeset and offset; \$2.50

Potboiler is still Canada's undisputed champion fiction zine. This double issue includes contributions from Billy Wolfenbarger, Bruce V. Kalnins, Gerald J. Brown, David Sheskin, Gary Kienberry, Jim Latimer, Jovan Panich, Gary Magallon, Steve Frederick, Annette Crouch, Myra Lee, and comics by Earl Geier. Geier's comics are the weakest pieces in the issue, but the lad shows potential and there's lots of other art in this issue which is quite exquisite. Recommended for anyone interested in fiction zines.

The Return of the Son of the Second Central Ganglion, Part IV.

E.B. Klassen, 582 John St., Victoria, BC V8T 1T6. 4pp; 21x28; mimeo. Available for the usual, or try \$0.50.

Bernie's V-Con report, this makes ok reading, but the artwork--it looks like the kind of stuff I cleaned out of my files a while ago. (Come to mention it, this *is* the artwork I cleaned out of my files a while ago.) You know, Bernie, why don't you ask Garth Spencer for art?

The SFA Digest #7

Jim Welch/Marg Galbraith-Hamilton, c/o #303-13325105 Ave., Surrey, BC V3T 1Z2; 14x21; 30pp.; mimeo (brown ink); 3/\$4 or the usual.

Notwithstanding that this issue is subtitled "Toilets In Space", it's not a bad little fanzine. Articles and reviews by the Surrey Contingent are generally interesting and occasionally even thought provoking. Worth a subscription.

Alberta

Neology Vol 10, #'s 1-3

Georges Giguere, the Edmonton Science Fiction and Comic Art Society (ESFCAS), Box 4071, Edmonton, AB T6E 4S8. 21-26pp.; mimeo (some colour); 21x28. \$8/yr or the usual

Georges continues to put out the best clubzine in Canada and one which contains much of interest to readers elsewhere (unlike many clubzines which are of interest only to their own members). #2 features a piece on Russian SF, including a short story, two paintings, a photo, and a list of Russian fans, artists, and writers who wish to correspond with fans in the West. #3 has an interesting piece on the relationship between fans and art by AnnDel O'Brien and Tim Hammell (which pulled too many punches, but should still prove reasonably controversial). Georges is losing patience with the locals who have been giving him a hard time about costs, controversy, and executive control, so send him a loc and encourage him to continue. (I strongly suspect that if Georges gets fed up with all the local complaints, he will quit and the club will be left without any newsletter editor at all, as happened the last time the club gave the editor a hard time...)

Prefix Code #8

James Saito, Loyalist Association of Star Trek Fans, P.O. Box 1477, Lethbridge, AB T1J 4K2; 26pp; 21x28; blurry offset(?); \$2.95

A typically over-priced Star Trek zine, the lack of artwork and the unimaginative layout make this seem even less impressive than it is. Nevertheless, the LASTF is a very successful and active club and they take their ST seriously. (The Assistant Editor, for example, sounded quite hurt when asked if their continuing ST story in previous issues was supposed to be a parody.) Of interest to ST fans.

To Be Announced #1 & 2.

Strawberry Jam Comics, 1056-73 St., Edmonton, AB T6K 2S8. Derek McCulloch, Mike Bannon, Paul Stockton, Rick Wilson, and company. Offset; 18x25 ; 34pp.; full colour cover; \$1.75

Ok, you know and I know that this isn't a fanzine, but this seems as good a place for a plug as any, so what the hey.

There is no easy way to describe *TBA* to the uninitiated--how do you make in-jokes about penguins comprehensible to someone whose never even heard of the Mike Bannon Fan Club?--but you might get a glimmering if I tell you the lead story in #1 is "Sesame Street Blues". That's right, the cast of Hill Street Blues finds itself patrolling Sesame Street in the warped universe created by Derek McCulloch and Mike Bannon. Would you believe the police having to break up Bert and Ernie's domestic quarrels? The emphasis in both issues is on TV parody, but not at all like those found in, say, *Mad Magazine*. The closest approximation I can think of to describe *TBA* would be as a comic book version of SCTV. Well worth the \$1.75, especially since Mike Bannon is bound to become a syndicated comicstrip artist any moment, and these will become priceless collectors items.



You Can't Get To Heaven On Roller Skates Infrequently #1

John Durno, 14307-49 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6H 0H7. 7pp; 21x28; xerxo. Partial colour cover. Available for the usual.

Wow! John's writing and artwork blow everything else reviewed in this issue right off the face of the Earth. It's intellectual, poetic, witty, insightful, personal, dadaistic, and entertaining. Which ain't bad for six pages. The only flaw is that John's typewriter does not like the letter 'a', which makes this a bit hard to read in some places. If you always wanted to sit in a beatnik coffee house while some cat read poetry to the beat of bongo drums, but were

born 30 years too late, try getting hold of a copy of this. Highly recommended.

Manitoba

The Swamp Gas Journal Vol.3 #7/8.
Chris Rutkowski, Box 1918, Winnipeg, MB R3C 3R2. 14x22, 10pp.; xerox.

This issue features Chris on Tectonic Strain Theory, a sort of neo-Fortean explanation of everything; newspaper clippings including why we should use a pre-emptive nuclear strike against Halley's Comet; an article linking psi and ufos; a bunch of cartoons; book reviews; etc. Chris packs a lot into his ten small pages, though at times the reduced type and blurry photocopy make you wish he didn't pack things quite so tightly. Chris never takes ufology or himself too seriously, but manages to provide a sort of overview of what's happening in the field in an entertaining package. I always enjoy each issue.

Too Twisted Tales

Roldo, 1232 Downing St. Winnipeg, MB R3E 2R7. 10pp; 18x21; offset. \$2

Roldo's underground comix are entertaining, though \$2 seems a bit steep for 10pp. This one's from 1982 (for all that Roldo's crossed out '82 and written in '85). Presumably it's still available along with his other classics, so send him \$0.50 for a catalog.

Ontario

arc: a magazine of poetry and criticism, #14
Christopher Levenson; Guest Editor for this issue: John Bell. English Dept., Carleton University, Ottawa, K1S 5B6. 80pp.; 14x21; typeset; offset; 2 colour cover. \$10/4 or \$3 for #14.

Most universities put out a literary magazine of some type, and most of these eventually get around to having a special SF issue. Such publications usually do not go over well in fandom because (a) fans mostly don't like poetry or serious criticism, (b) fans don't like academics messing with their turf, and (c) a lot of such publications are either hopelessly pretentious and obscure, or try to pass off a lot of obvious observations fans made years ago as profound new discoveries, or both.

This particular one, however, is not too bad, presumably due to the presence of John Bell. (Bell, of course, is one of Canada's leading SF critics and bibliographers. He, John Robert Colombo and Douglas Barbour are about the only Canadian academics fans can trust to handle such a project.) Bell has managed to gather a credible list of contributors, including Colombo, Lesley Choyce, Robert Frazier, Steve Rasnic Tem, and another eight Canadian poets (some of whom do not attempt SF) for this issue. I would have liked to have seen something by Gotlieb (even a reprint) but we do get Bell's bibliography of her work. And where is Douglas Barbour? A Canadian SF poetry issue without Barbour?

Still, that's hardly a fair criticism since no one tried to claim that this was a definitive collection. I enjoyed most of this issue, even the non-sf poems. It is easily worth \$3, unless of course your brain explodes upon contact with poetry or literary criticism.

Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme, Vol.6, #2, Spring 1985.

204F Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele St., Downsview, ON M3J 1P3. 110pp; 21x28; Offset; typeset; \$7.

Speaking of special SF issues... This issue of CWS/cf is subtitled *The Future/Le Futur* and while not strictly SF, there is much here of interest to the SF fan. Elisabeth Vonarburg has an article on women in sf; there's an article on LeGuin; another on the female characters in Orwell's 1984; six short sf fiction pieces; and a selection of articles on women and the future. A fair bit is in french (and therefore not easily accessible to moi) and I found the sheer size of the thing is a little intimidating, but its undeniably an impressive, slick publication worth investigating.

(Ironically, CWS/cf hired former fan, Christine Kulyk, *after* this issue was published, thus just missing the opportunity to tie into the (feminist) fan network that could have turned this issue into a "must have" publication.)

Carefully Sedated #4,

Catherine Crockett and Alan Rosenthal, c/o 117 Wanless Ave., Toronto, ON M4N 1W1. 30pp.; 21x28; mimeo/xerox.

To begin with, this zine has 4 front covers, various stages in the development of a commission by Taral. Taral's brief account of the work is hopelessly pretentious in its denial of pretentiousness, but this is more than made up for by the really great/terrible punchline. This is followed by a Roldo short story, followed by an article written by the protagonist of Roldo's story.

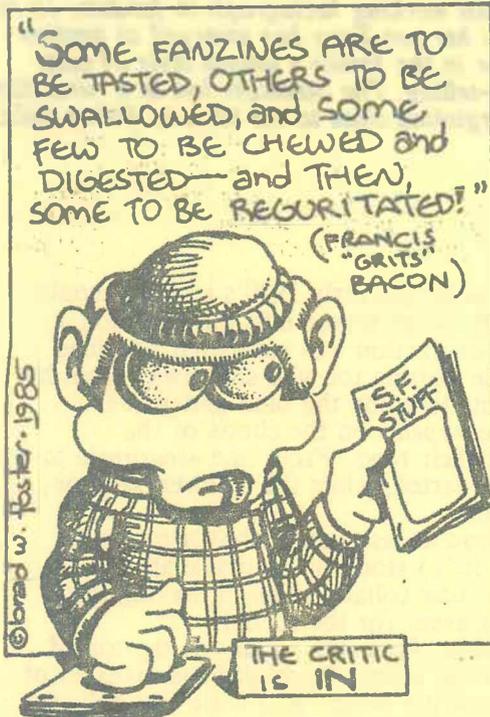
The highlight of the issue, however, is a piece by John Berry (no, not him, the one in England!) and a loc column featuring the likes of Walt Willis. (I mean, do you believe this? A couple of kids from Toronto with guys like Roldo, John Berry and Walt Willis writing for them? Hell, I have a hard enough time getting Taral to write for me. What if they're making it all up? I mean, who'd know? When was the last time *you* wrote Walt Willis and asked if he was really loccing *Carefully Sedated*?)

The editorials this time, however, are disappointing, just brief updates on what's happening. That would be ok, except that I have gotten use to their insightful and thought-provoking writing, and was really looking forward to another article or two from them. The big names are great, guys, but it's the editorial presence that makes for superior fanzines. In this issue, it almost reads as if Taral is the editor...

Starsongs #62.

c/o Dennis Mullin, 6-69 Donald St., Kitchener, ON N2B 3G6. 21x28; 18pp.; (brown) xerox.

Typical clubzine, this issue features election results, convention photos (more or less discernable too), and the winning entry in the club's short story contest. Ok, but mostly of interest to members.



Quebec

Carfax #'s 5-9.

Pierre D. Lacroix, 102 Boul. Riel, Hull, PQ J8Y 5Y2. 21-24pp (#5=60pp); 14x21; offset; \$8/yr. (in French only.)

Carfax has recently switched from a quarterly to a monthly schedule and so has dropped from 60 to about 24pp/issue, but is packed with fiction and reviews. While not as slick as *Solaris*, it has the unbeatable advantage that editor Lacroix is also one hell of an artist. Front and back covers to #5 are especially striking, and it is a complete mystery to me why Lacroix would use other (inferior) artists for the covers to #'s 8 & 9. I hope to be reprinting a fair bit of his work in future issues of *NCF*. Recommended if you read French.

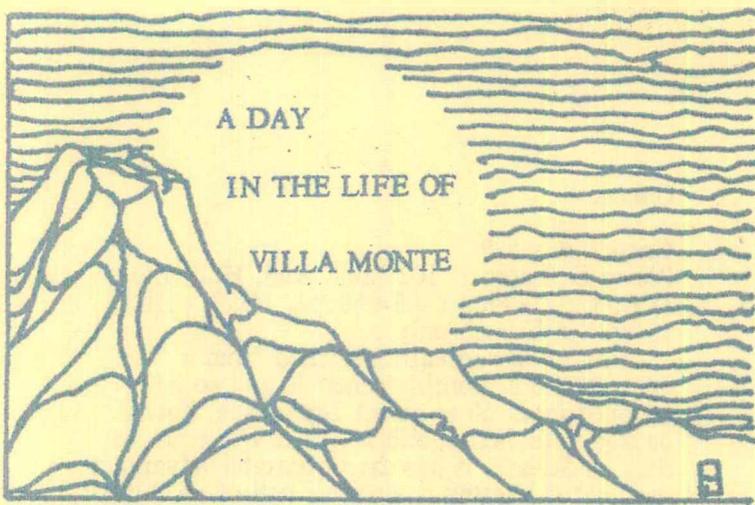
Solaris #'s 59-62.

Elisabeth Vonarburg, et. al., 266 rue Belleau, Chicoutimi PQ G7H 2Y8. 45-50pp.; 21x28; typeset; offset; \$14/yr. \$2.50/issue. (In French only)

Still the flagship of Quebec fandom, each issue has fiction, reviews, news, interviews, comics, and artwork, all presented in a slick format. (It occurs to me that one good reason for having a separate category for French language publications for the Canadian Science Fiction & Fantasy Awards may not only be that it's necessary to give the francophones an even break in voting numbers, but to give anglophone publications a shot at the competition; nothing in English Canada comes close to matching *Solaris*'s production values.) Recommended.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

William Bains, 146 North Road, Combe Down, Bath, Avon, UK
 Michael Hall, #301, 11010-82 St, Edmonton, AB T5H 1L1
 Marianne Nielsen & Steve Fahnstalk, 7616-86 Ave., Edmonton, AB T6C 1H7
 Lloyd Penney, 412-22 Riverwood Parkway, Toronto, ON M8Y 4E1
 Randy Reichardt, #194-10333-121 St., Edmonton, AB T5N 1L1



by Mae and Tony Strelkov

Mae Strelkov is a long-time fan, best known for her delightful autobiographical pieces and her pastoral artwork, reproduced in colour on the last working hectograph in fandom. In recent years her son Tony has emerged as another writer in the family's unique style of quiet story-telling. The Strelkovs live in a rural district of Argentina close to the town of Palma Sola.

The Palma Sola police force stood in a row looking serious and formal. The crowds celebrating the *Dia de la Bandera* milled around the *cancha*, with soft and careful laughter and low remarks as yet. Everything was as it should be for a great festival like this: the day when we "Honour The Flag", and remember the creator of our *Bandera*.

More and more cars were arriving. The *Intendente* of Palma Solo descended from an official limousine with his wife, his second and his second's wife, and a flock of other local leading lights; and other national and provincial authorities.

All was well. The Solemn *Acta* began; the hymn (it's a bit sorrowful but "firm", shall we put it?) was sung with appropriately slow and stately measures. The school children of our local grammar school of San Rafael, some 300 metres or so from our house, stood in their perfectly straight rows blazing in the sunshine, thanks to newly starched white aprons and brand-new white sneakers on every foot, tiny and big. The sneakers were all spanking new thanks to the fact that an enterprising *Busca* (salesman, or at times, a "*buscador de productos*") had driven from hut to hut the very day before to supply the children's urgent needs for clean new sneakers. (Most needed new sneakers by then, thanks to our precious Sylvia and Tony, who have fired the whole neighbourhood with ambitions to be the "Greatest Football Team", the "Greatest Volleyball Team", the "Greatest Sports Personalities" of our whole North West. Among the sneakerless leading sportsmen was Tony, totally without a sneaker to his name. But he had on a newish pair also, lent him by one of the boys on his team who'd bought himself a still newer pair from the *busca*.)

Bravely, firmly, the hymn went on and on, while the earnest, quavering voices high and low tried to put new vigor into it. (Our children likewise have sung the hymn their whole lives long since kindergarten days, and I always feel myself back at church as a child in Shanghai, hearing it sung. A very devoted Christian

congregation of the early 1920's and 30's could have put no better fervor into the rendition.)

Comic distraction was somewhat provided by one little visiting tot who shot away from his grandparents to study the blue-and-white circular *escarapelas* on the chests of the children in their rows. From one *escarapela* to the next he darted, while the children sang on, ignoring him.

The hymn at last ended, the Directora (a plump old lady) stood up to praise all and sundry for their collaboration in making this day a great event for the school.

Meanwhile, from the heights at the top of our long, wide valley, descended the manager of a huge lumbering firm; "El Fuerte" we call that site, there up in those cold, lonely heights beyond us to our south. He came with his fur-clad mother-in-law and fur-clad wife though it was an unusually warm day. (Winter solstice on the morrow!) As Sylvia and Tony welcomed them and led them to the place of honour where all the ruling figures (and "leading spirits" like Sylvia and Tony) were arrayed in their grandeur, the newly arrived threesome whispered, "Why so many police?", a bit troubled by that display of the Arm of the Law. As the manager in question was a former army man, he imagined troubles must be brewing for this to be the case.

Sylvia and Tony laughingly reassured him that all was well. They'd come to celebrate the great day with us all.

The *Acta* over by then, a sudden turmoil occurred: the policemen (until then so impeccable in their dark blue uniforms and their shining guns) began stripping. Stripping and stripping, throwing their clothing and guns down in heaps.

What next? In shorts and white gym shirts they leaped to the playing fields, newly tidied the day before by the devoted contingents of school kids and teenagers and workers from the lumbering concerns on both sides of us.

(Hereupon Tony takes over the story:)

Well, mother dropped out, insisting that she can't write about sports, which don't greatly

interest her and which she didn't even watch; she just wanted to make sure that the events of that day would be recorded for posterity.

The first encounter was the soccer game between the police team and the local team. Unfortunately, in spite of the great interest that this game awoke, there were relatively few spectators, for, as the *Acto* had taken place about an hour behind schedule, the *asado* (barbecue) was already ready when the soccer began. The local team won in spite of a few mistakes by the referee--the most remarkable was when he failed to see that the chief of police made a goal with his hand instead of his foot, after knocking the ball out of the hands of the goal-keeper.

This engratiating action on the referee's part was somewhat wasted, for our chief of police is a good sport and he happily admitted to us after the game that, as he couldn't reach the ball otherwise, he really had no choice there.

After lunch the pattern of events diverged from the standard. Instead of everyone sitting around with the debris of the *asado*, drinking a bottle or two of wine and chewing "coca" to "aid the digestion", people began to move quickly over to take their places around the field where the game of *pelota al cesto* (a game similar to basketball) would take place. A team of girls from the high school of Palma Sola, brought by the police filed out to face the local team captained by my sister Sylvia. It is always my fate to referee in these clashes, as one has to be very good at ignoring all the criticisms of the public, and the complaints of the players whenever one fails to notice some fault of the opposite team.

The atmosphere was noticeably tense as the play began. The local public cheered enthusiastically at every intervention of their two stars, my sister Sylvia, impassable in defence, and Vicky, a girl who never misses a shot in the attack. The visiting girls began to get desperate, while the line of cops vainly called encouragement and instructions to them, and one officer tried to replace me as referee, to no avail. Then, in the second half of the game, with the local team drawing far ahead in the score, one of the visiting girls fainted and had to be carried off the field. Immediately, a big, musclebound cop leaped into the field, prepared to take her place. As the girls here are perfectly accustomed to play against men, they normally might have accepted, except that I knew this cop to be dangerously uncontrolled from the times when I gave Karate classes to the Police in Palma Sola so I refused point-blank. A moment later, the girl was back and ready to continue the game. The final score was 20-4, a source of great bitterness for the locals, who like our games to be won by a bigger margin.

Then the police got their own back. In volleyball they beat us clearly. Of course, they play every day, so it had been our great ambition to surprise them. Unfortunately, we had been counting on their becoming angered when they'd made some mistakes, and then we'd have taken advantage of their anger to get



ahead. This strategy would have worked, except for the chief of police, who kept down the temper of his subjects and made the game cool off, every time we tried to heat it up. The referee in this game was a young fellow from Palma Sola, who looked to the Chief of Police before making each decision. But this was balanced by the score keeper, a very respected landowner from here, who would certainly be above cheating, so nobody watched *his* numbers, and he often knocked off a couple of points against the cops, but to no avail.

The fiesta continued till dark with improvised teams of boys and girls forming to play volleyball, while the more traditional *criollos* went to the back to play *tabear*, a game that consists of throwing a knuckle bone called the *taba*, in a certain way, and everybody bets on the throw.

Of course, *Tabeadas* are strictly forbidden by law, because of the knife-fights that might at times accompany the game. But what problem could there be with so many law enforcers at hand? Indeed, our jolly police chief proved to be quite unbeatable at throwing the bone, and made off with a tidy little sum.

Late in the night, as we prepared to go to bed, we heard the ambulance passing with siren blaring. Moments later, it roared back towards Palma Sola. "Must have been a knife-fight near by", we concluded. Then, to our astonishment, we heard the ambulance maneuvering to turn around nearby again. There was much starting and stopping and siren-blaring, disrupting the quiet of the night. "What could be going on?" we wondered. At last the ambulance stopped at our home and the driver came towards us.

"Anyone need to go to the hospital?" he called.

"What?"

"I came to get a patient, but I can't remember her name!" he answered sheepishly.

We discussed for some time who the mysterious sick person might be but as the driver was tired of his house-to-house search, we all decided to call it a day, and the ambulance headed back for Palma Sola.

SF and Fandom



ONLINE

Robert Runté

Ok, let me begin this with a warning: everything in this article costs money--lots of it. Compuserve costs about \$6 US per hour, and Datapac (the long distance computer network you need to talk to Compuserve, unless you live in Toronto or Vancouver) costs you another \$10 US per hour, or about \$22 Canadian per hour altogether. And, as the saying goes, time flies when you're having fun. So watch yourself or this could turn out to be more expensive than drugs.

In other respects, though, electronic fandom is pretty much the same as the "real" thing, only faster. The proportion of interesting people/writers to twits is about the same, the topics are familiar (only less perzine material), and most of the activities are recognizable adaptations of fannish traditions.

I'm using Compuserve as the example because it's the service with which I'm most familiar, but many other commercial and private bulletin boards work on the same principle. One of the more active groups in Calgary fandom, for example, is the one that uses the University of Calgary computer to run an apa: members sign on at their convenience, read all the apa contributions since they last signed on, and respond with mailing comments. This generally turns over *much* faster than a normal apa mailing would, and it generally includes a higher percentage of "Hi, how are you"s than a regular apa, but if anything, this seems to make it more interesting to its members. The Calgary group has taken to issuing (heavily edited) hardcopy versions of mailings in order to attract new members, but this is strictly optional.

Anyway, I will assume that you already own or have access to a computer and a modem. To hook into Compuserve you need a password and registration materials. Buy these at Radio Shack under the name "Videotex" (about \$30 Canadian, significantly cheaper than the same thing through other outlets) and follow the instructions for signing on through datapac, tymnet, telenet and/or a local compuserve phone number. Once you have signed on (and signed away your first born via Visa or Mastercard) you are ready to enter the almost exciting world of electronic fandom.

Ok, let's walk you through a typical session. Step 1 is to sign on to Compuserve.

Host Name: [You type:] cis
User ID: [You type your id #]
Password:[You type your password]

CompuServe Information Service

00:12 EDT Sunday 08-Sep-85

[What follows is a typical opening menu, but we will just ignore it in this example]

What's New This Week....NEW-1

- 1 User's Guide Shipping Details
- 2 Travelshopper Made Easier
- 3 DEC PC Forum Now Live
- 4 CB Gathering In Memphis
- 5 New Commodity Price Feature
- 6 What's New - Previous Weeks
- 7 Forum Conference Schedules
- 8 CompuServe Community News
- 9 Online Today Magazine

Enter choice ! *[You type]* go hom29
[hom29 is the "address" for the SF subsystem]

CompuServe HOM-29

Request Recorded,
One Moment, Please

[If there are a lot of people signed on to compuserve (peak hours) this "moment" can stretch to nearly a minute...and of course the meter's still running.]
Thank you for Waiting

Welcome to SF&Fantasy Forum, V. 4A(45)

Hello, Robert Runte!

Last visit: 04-Sep-85 22:49:04

Forum messages: 30815 to 31307

Last message you've read: 23570

9 members are in conference.

Short Bulletin:

Many Thanks to the SIG members who came to NASFiC and helped out with the CIS booth and the party!

There will be a CONference about DUNE this Saturday, September 7th, starting at 10:00 pm. Come join in the discussion!

OPUS CON Conference! Next Saturday we will have a live link-up with OPUS CON! Be sure to stop in starting at 10:00 am (CDT) and say Hello to our guests from OPUS CON.

The T Shirts are being mailed today! They should arrive in your home within a week. If they don't, I want to know.

[All of which will be self-explanatory, except that "9 members in conference" means that 9 people are actively communicating with each other, not that there are only 9 others using Hom29.]

SF&Fantasy Forum

Function Menu

- 1 (L) Leave a Message
- 2 (R) Read Messages
- 3 (CO) Conference Mode
- 4 (DL) Data Libraries
- 5 (B) Bulletins
- 6 (V) View Member Directory
- 7 (SS) Set Sub-topic
- 8 (OP) Set User Options
- 9 (I) Instructions

0 (E) Exit from SF&Fantasy Forum

Enter choice or H for help :

[Well, you could choose '5' and go talk with the 9 others in conference, but I'm going to show you NCF, so type '4' for "Data Libraries".]

Data Library Sub-topics

- 0 General
- 1 Fantasy/Horror
- 2 Star Trek
- 3 Science Fiction
- 4 Doctor Who
- 5 Fandom/Conventions
- 6 Costumes!!!
- 7 Comic Book Corner
- 8 Pern's #1 Weyr
- 9 Writers Corner

Enter choice :

[Let's start with 0]

Using Section 0 data library.

Press <CR> to continue:

["<CR>" means the "return" key]

DL 0 - General

- 1 (DES) Description of Data Library
- 2 (BRO) Browse thru files
- 3 (DIR) Directory of files
- 4 (UPL) Upload a new file
- 5 (DOW) Download a file
- 6 (DL) Change Data Library
- 7 (T) Return to Function Menu
- 8 (I) Instructions

Enter choice or H for help:

[The first time through, you may want to start with '1', but '2' is generally the most useful response here. It gives you a list of files with a brief description of what each file contains, then the choice of reading it or going on to the next one.]

Enter keywords (e.g. modem) or <CR> for all:

Oldest files in days or <CR> for all:

[If you know the file you're interested in, you could type a keyword, like "NCF" and the computer would give you all the NCF files in this area. If you have been in this section before, and only want to read the files since last time, you can type in the number of days, and it will only give you the files uploaded since then. Here I simply typed <CR>]

[70040,104]

HINTS.SIG 16-Jun-85 6440

Accesses: 79

Keywords: HINTS SIG

This text file is a list of helpful hints to help you get the most out of the SIG without wasting connect time.

Enter command, N for next file or <CR> for disposition menu:

[This tells you that the file was entered by member 70040,104 on June 16, that 79 people have read it before you, and that its about hints on using the special interest group files. If you wanted to read the file, you would type "r". Since I've already read it, I typed "n" and got the next file"]

[70137,2260]

RICK.CO 19-May-85 16065

Accesses: 19

Keywords: RICK STERNBACH SPACE ART ANIMATION UNIVERSAL ONLINE CONFERENCE

The 5/18/85 CO with world-famous space and science fiction artist Rick Sternbach.

[The second file in the general section, then, is an edited transcript of a conference with Rick Sternbach. I'll skip this one too.]

[70307,541]

ANDERS.TXT 25-Aug-85 6065

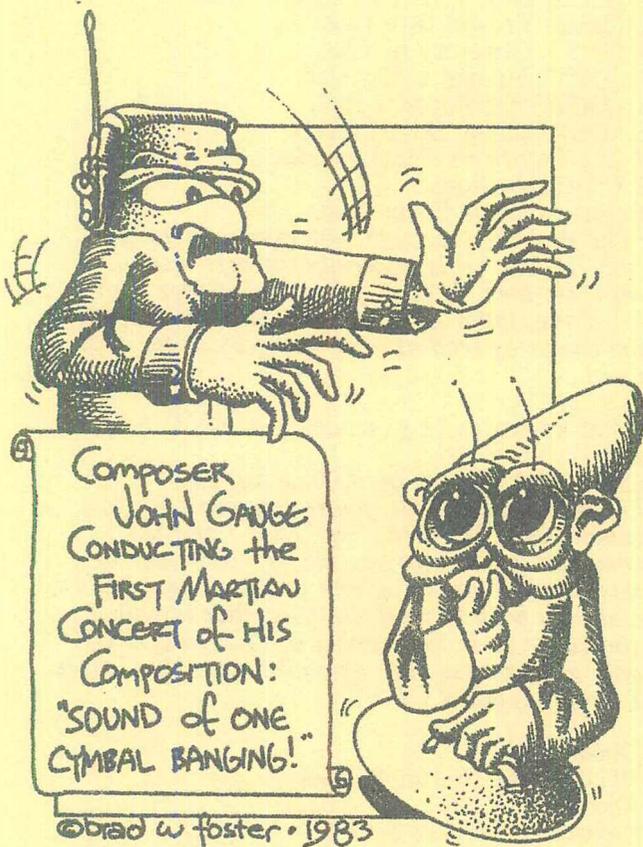
Accesses: 9

Keywords: THE GAME OF EMPIRE: EXCERPT OF A NEW BOOK BY POUL ANDERSON.

Here is an excerpt of a new Poul Anderson novel about Dominic Flandry's daughter, Diana. Read and enjoy! Leave any comments at 70307,541

Enter command, N for next file or <CR> for disposition menu:

Now at a bookstore near you from Baen Books--Poul Anderson's first Terran Empire/Polesotechnic League novel in years!



[Ok, let's go for this one. Hit "r" for read].

THE GAME OF EMPIRE

Dominic Flandry has fought the good fight-but now he is of an age more suited to deciding the fate of empires from behind the throne. Others must take up the challenge of courting danger on strange planets filled with creatures stranger still... and such a one is Diana Flandry, heir to all her father's adventures! Here is an excerpt from THE GAME OF EMPIRE:

She sat on the tower of St. Barbara, kicking her heels from the parapet, and looked across immensity. Overhead, heaven was clear, deep blue save where the sun Patricius stood small and fierce in midmorning. Two moons were wanly aloft. A breeze blew cool. It would have been deadly cold before Diana's people came to Imhotep; the peak of Mt. Horn lifts a full twelve kilometers above sea level.

[And so on. This is one of the neater features of the Compuserve SF SIG, regular excerpts from new releases. Sure it's advertizing, but where else do you get to reply to the sponsor (70307,541)? The theory is that you get to decide whether to buy the book by reading this three or four page excerpt. Where the theory falls down is that for those of us paying \$22/hr, it's almost cheaper to buy the hardcover than to read the excerpt.... Next.]

[72247,2132]
STURGE 27-Jul-85 7400
Accesses: 18
Keywords: STURGEON

This is a eulogy written by Brian Aldiss, printed in Cheap Truth fanzine and electronically available in the SMOF-BBS (512-UFO-SMOF). Thanks go to Vincent Omniaveritas for permission to present it here. We will all miss Ted Sturgeon, and this piece is the best I've seen about him.

File:STURGEON EULOGY

CHEAP TRUTH Special Unnumbered Edition

STURGEON: MERCURY PLUS X

Sturgeon? The name was magnetic. There it was, perpetually cropping up attached to the stories I most admired. Sturgeon: quite an ordinary Anglo-American word among exotics like A. E. Van Vogt, Isaac Asimov, Heinlein, Simak, and Kuttner. Yet - spikey, finny, ODD. And it was not his original name. Theodore Hamilton Sturgeon was born Edward Hamilton Waldo. To the usual boring undeserving parents. That was on Staten Island, the year the first World War ended.

Ted died early in May in Oregon, of pneumonia and other complications. Now he consorts with Sophocles, Dick, and the author of the Kama Sutra. He had returned from a holiday in Hawaii, taken in the hopes he might recover his health there. That holiday, incidentally, was paid for by another SF writer -- one who often gets publicity for the wrong things. Thank God, there are still some good guys left. We are also duly grateful for the one just departed.

--Brian Aldiss

CHEAP TRUTH 809-C West 12th Street
Austin, Texas 78701 U.S.A. Special
Unnumbered Edition. Vincent Omniaveritas,
editing. Todd Refinery, graphics. "Ars Longa,
Vita Brevis"

[The first and last paragraphs of this long eulogy (I don't, afterall, have reprint rights) illustrates Compuserve's news function, and also gives a sample from another electronic fanzine, Cheap Truth. However, if you think \$22/hr is expensive, try phoning long distance to Cheap Truth someday....

Eventually you'll run out of files in this section and the computer will take you back to the data library menu. (Or you can leave before reaching the last file by typing "T" (for top menu) at the prompt.)]

DL 0 - General

- 1 (DES) Description of Data Library
- 2 (BRO) Browse thru files
- 3 (DIR) Directory of files
- 4 (UPL) Upload a new file
- 5 (DOW) Download a file
- 6 (DL) Change Data Library
- 7 (T) Return to Function Menu
- 8 (I) Instructions

Enter choice or H for help:

[By choosing "6" from the menu (for change data libraries) you can move to another data library.]

Data Library Sub-topics:

- 0 General
- 1 Fantasy/Horror
- 2 Star Trek
- 3 Science Fiction
- 4 Doctor Who
- 5 Fandom/Conventions
- 6 Costumes!!!
- 7 Comic Book Corner
- 8 Pern's #1 Weyr
- 9 Writers Corner

Enter sub-topic selection: 3
Let's choose "Science Fiction".

Using Section 3 data library.

Press <CR> to continue:
DL 3 - Science Fiction

- 1 (DES) Description of Data Library
- 2 (BRO) Browse thru files
- 3 (DIR) Directory of files
- 4 (UPL) Upload a new file
- 5 (DOW) Download a file
- 6 (DL) Change Data Library
- 7 (T) Return to Function Menu
- 8 (I) Instructions

Enter choice or H for help: 2
[Ok, this time let's find the NCF articles.]

Enter keywords (e.g. modem) or <CR> for all: [type]NCF
Oldest files in days or <CR> for all: [hit return]

[72326,730]

CHARAC 14-Mar-85 6155

Accesses: 35 10-Sep-85

Keywords: CHARACTERS

CHARACTERIZATION SF NCF

Steve George discusses what makes a character a memorable one in science fiction novels.

Reprinted from the April 1985 issue of New Canadian Fandom.

Enter command, N for next file or <CR> for disposition menu: <CR>

DISPOSITION

- 1 (REA) Read this file
 - 2 (DOW) Download this file
 - 3 (T) Top Data Library Menu
- Enter choice or <CR> for next:

[72326,730]

CLASSI.TXT 10-Mar-85 20900

Accesses: 8 05-Sep-85

Keywords: MOVIES CLASSICS REVIEWS

NCF

Dave Szurek reviews over 20 low budget sf/horror films, most of which you will never have heard about before. Reprinted from the April 1985 issue of New Canadian Fandom.

Enter command, N for next file or <CR> for disposition menu:

[72326,730]

REVIEW.TXT 14-Mar-85 4380

Accesses: 1 07-Jul-85

Keywords: SPACEHUNTER MOVIE REVIEW
NCF

Robert K. Hinton reviews Spacehunters, a 3D sf movie. Reprinted from the April 1985 issue of NEW CANADIAN FANDOM.

And so on. I didn't get printouts of these since you have presumably seen these last issue. But now you know how to access NCF electronically.

Other typical files have included a Star Trek trivia quiz; a basic program to generate terrible sci-fi plots for TV shows; an American Express ad featuring Darth Vader; a basic program to catalog your Dr. Who video tapes; a Dr. Who episode guide; computer-generated pictures of various sf subjects; a Hugo ballot; news of Hugo winners; book reviews; movie reviews; interviews; etc. In fact, pretty much anything you'd find in a print fanzine.

Data Library 9 has a full-fledged apa run by Diane Duane (author of The Door Into Fire and The Door Into Shadow). Apa29 tends to attract more fiction than most, and tries to downplay personal stuff (this is a fairly public public forum afterall) but is otherwise a fairly straight foward transplant from print fandom.

Once you get tired of reading files, you might want to read messages.]

Message Sub-topics Menu

- 0 General
- 1 Fantasy/Horror
- 2 Star Trek
- 3 Science Fiction
- 4 Doctor Who
- 5 Fandom/Conventions
- 6 Costumes!!!
- 7 Comic Book Corner
- 8 Pern's #1 Weyr
- 9 Writers Corner

ALL All authorized sub-topics

T Return to Function Menu

Enter choice : [We'll take:] all

Read Messages Menu

- 1 (RF) Forward - oldest first
 - 2 (RR) Reverse - newest first
 - 3 (RN) New - not yet read by you
 - 4 (RM) Marked - messages for you
 - 5 (RS) Search mode
 - 6 (T) Return to Function Menu
- Enter choice or <CR> for more : 1

Forum messages: 30815 to 31307

Start at what message number: 31300 [to pick a number at random]

: 31300 S7/Comic Book Corner

11-Sep-85 22:25:12

Sb: #31090-The Doom Patrol

Fm: Marv Wolfman 74405,1033

To: Charles & Debbie Thomas 75265,1711

As I mentioned I really have a knee jerk

reaction to bringing back characters from the dead unless the idea originally was to do such. But the Death of the Doom Patrol was incredibly strong...they gave their lives for 14 people, not in some super-heroic way, and I honestly feel that to bring them back would be to weaken them somehow. Also, I don't believe we have many GREAT people available to write a DP series again...yes, the people exist, but they simply aren't available, and I'd rather see the Patrol remembered fondly than brought back badly.

I keep remembering other books people couldn't wait to see come back-Captain Marvel being one of them. For all those early stories were worth they may as well kept the Big Red Cheese dead. If the proper talent existed to do the Patrol today I'd say yes. I mean, if John Byrne wanted it, or... well, you get the idea.

Enter command, N for next message or <CR> for menu : n

: 31301 S7/Comic Book Corner
11-Sep-85 22:28:20
Sb: #31188-CRISIS
Fm: Marv Wolfman 74405,1033
To: chris claremont 70337,1527
Chris;

I agree that only a Thor The Frog type would be interested in Bob, but somehow he did find someone nonetheless. That she came from the Hellen Keller Institute may say something, but I'm not quite sure what.

Oh, liked #200, and I'm still trying to track down BD #1...I know it's in my house someplace.

Enter command, N for next message or <CR> for menu : n

SEZ LUDWIG VAN B.



: 31303 S7/Comic Book Corner
11-Sep-85 22:39:56
Sb: #31187-death
Fm: Marv Wolfman 74405,1033
To: chris claremont 70337,1527

I can't argue with that except to say that as it relates to Crisis is just fine...in our handling. See page 39 Crisis 12. What happens afterwards I don't know. On the other hand, speaking as a fan, Christopher, possessing as I do certain privileged information regarding upcoming events in X-Factor, I think the upper hierarchy at your end of the street should be ashamed of themselves. I sincerely hope that the information I've received about one of the final (distaff) resurrections in XF--and what follows regarding character and bok--is erroneous, because if it isn't I think it stinks (and I'm right it does!). As humanism, feminism, good story/series construction, good heroic premise, it strikes me as at best insulting and degrading and at worst a loser. If it indeed is something that had to be done, it should simply have been fought to the death and prevented and the concept and resurrection be put out of their collective misery.

My God, there ain't no utopia, is there?

[Well, enough of that. This illustrates several points about the message board. First, taking potluck often gives you 15 messages in a row on a subject that bores you; thus its often better to pick a subject in which you're interested. Second, there are some Big Names floating around the system. There are a lot of comics fans who would love to tune into a conversation between Chris Claremont and Marv Wolfman. Third, messages don't always make a whole lot of sense when you tune in half way through an exchange. However, one of the commands available allows you to follow messages "threads", ie., in order of message/reply/counter-reply rather than in simple numerical sequence as here, which makes it a lot simpler to follow the exchange. And you pick things up pretty fast if you get involved, just like in an apa whose mailing comments seem pretty esoteric when you first sign up. Of course you can enter your own two cents worth at any point.

Or you can enter a conference in "real time". Often you will simply find a bunch of fans "talking" when you sign on and can join in. On Saturdays, there is usually a major conference with a big name writer. Here's a short excerpt from one with Anne McCaffrey:]

(1,chaos lord) alright...Are "marks", the pernese currency, backed by anything hard (i.e. gold)? And why did Lytol's dragon change color from green to brown between Flight And Quest? ga.

(1,Anne McCaffrey) Marks are backed by gold and other precious gems which are kept by the lord holders or the craftmasters. The color of Lytol's dragon was at one point dependant on the typesetter.

(1,Merlin) My question has to do with Dinosaur Planet & seq... Whatever happened to the carnivorous eating habits of the

heavyworlders??? A major motivation for the schism between groups, but not resolved! ga
(1, Anne McCaffrey) The damned heavyworlders kept right on eating red meat. That's why Varian finds whatever his name was trying to kill a fang face, to get the liver which is the most nutritious part, having more Vit. A in it...

(1, KEL'E'EN) Wow... I want to start right in and ask about the movie...and about your opinion concerning fan fiction...Ridenow should appreciate that! ga

(1, Anne McCaffrey) The movie..yes, well, that's a problem in the lap of the Gods of HOLLYWOOD. The script is done, Diane and I worked very hard. Sorry but I don't have a chance to read much fan fiction...nor, sorrier to say, the time in which to read it...ga

(1, *Excelsior*) Have you ever considered adding a character from earth such as a survivor of a starship that doesn't wish to be found out. ga

(1, Anne McCaffrey) Absolutely not. I wish to keep Pern totally uncontaminated by any further influx from Earth....or its colonies....

(1, Bombshell) First, Anne, so pleased to meet you. I understand profit and all that...and I'm all in favor of it... but these special editions at \$80+ of Coelura and Girl who Heard are too much for many of us. No more? (not being angry, but it's hard to miss them!

(1, Anne McCaffrey) The profit is the publishers, but all the special editions will eventually come out in paperback. Not to worry. Meanwhile the libraries buy the hardcovers so you can get your jollies first and own later! ga.

[And so on for as long as you can afford to stay tuned in. Still, I suppose it's cheaper than flying to a con to talk to a writer. (I guess there are fans who do go to cons to talk to pros....)]

And there you also have an example of the one aspect of on-line fandom I really hate: almost everyone uses "handles". I have trouble believing that anyone who calls themselves, "Ralph the Horrible" or Captain Kirk's "Mistress" could possibly have anything worth saying, especially when it costs me \$22/hr to listen. If people can't be bothered to sign their real names, I tend to assume that they are not prepared to stand behind their statements, and are therefore wasting my time. And most of the pseudonyms are embarrassingly pretentious as well. Any bets that "The Barbarian Lord" isn't a meek 98 lb., insignificant bureaucrat who faints at the scary bits in Bambi? But in spite of my prejudice against such pseudonyms, I've had to admit that at least some of the folks using them are ok.

Well, having run out of money long since you sensibly decide to sign off. You simpy type "bye" at any prompt.]

Exiting at 11-Sep-85 23:16:17
Last message in forum: 31310
Last message you've read: 31307
Thank you for visiting SF&Fantasy Forum
Off at 23:17 EDT 11-Sep-85
Connect time = 1:15

Well, you ask, is it worth the money? Of course not, but then neither is fandom. (I can still recall Mike Hall trying to explain to his sisters, back when we started publishing *The Monthly Monthly*, that we expected to lose money on the zine. "But then why do it?" Damn good question, and one for which few fans have ever managed to come up with a really satisfactory answer.) No information you can get out of the Compuserve's SF forum is ever going to be worth \$22/hr. You know that before you ever sign on. But then flying to cons is not cheap either, and with compuserve you don't have to leave your cat for the weekend. Uploading a short story or book review or essay to *Apa29* and reading the feedback every night for the next month will cost you plenty; but so would putting out a fanzine. (Did you notice how much postage was on your *NCF* envelope? Multiply that by 400 and then ask which fannish activity is the more expensive.) How much is it worth to you to be the first one on your block to read part of the latest Kingsbury or Anderson novel? How much is it worth to ask Anne McCaffrey about dragons? How much is it worth to read Brian Aldiss on Sturgeon? How much is it worth to communicate with fellow fans like "Howard the Invincible" or "Fred the Pompous"?

Hmmm, now that you mention it, it really *isn't* worth the money, is it?

In the end, it really depends on:

1. How much you love playing with high tech (There is an element of novelty here, afterall)
2. How much you love fanac (Are the regular channels sufficient or can you never get enough?)
3. How pissed off you are with your local fandom (Who needs you bums?! I've got Compuserve!)
4. How close you are to a Compuserve port (it's cheaper if you don't have to tie-in through one of the networks, like datapac)
5. How much you earn in a month (There is ultimately a bottom line to how much you can afford of anything...)

Of course, the best way of dealing with electronic fandom is to find a friend with a computer who will download everything interesting for you (for the prestige of being the first on the block with the goods), thus saving you the time, energy, and above all, cash, necessary to keep abreast of developments.

If you want to contact me via Compuserve, my number is 72326,730. Be patient, though, because I really can't afford to sign on very frequently....

INTERVIEW

An Interview With Michael Whelan

by Pierre D. Lacroix

As a freelance illustrator, Michael Whelan specializes in fantasy and futuristic subjects approached in a naturalistic and surrealistic manner. Since beginning his career in 1975, most of his professional work has been cover illustration. He has created more than 200 book covers, in addition to magazines, record albums, and other art. While continuing to take on unusual editorial work, he looks forward to directing more of his effort to challenging motion picture projects. His work is regularly seen in the Best-of-Year Show of the Society of Illustrators, and he has been Artist Guest of Honour at numerous sf and fantasy conventions. He has won the Hugo (World SF) Award for Best Professional Artist, the Howard (World Fantasy) Award for Best Professional Artist, the Saturn Award for Best Book Cover, the Frank R. Paul Award for Outstanding Achievement in Science Fiction Illustration, the Balrog Award for Best Artist, and the DESI Award for Graphic Design, USA.

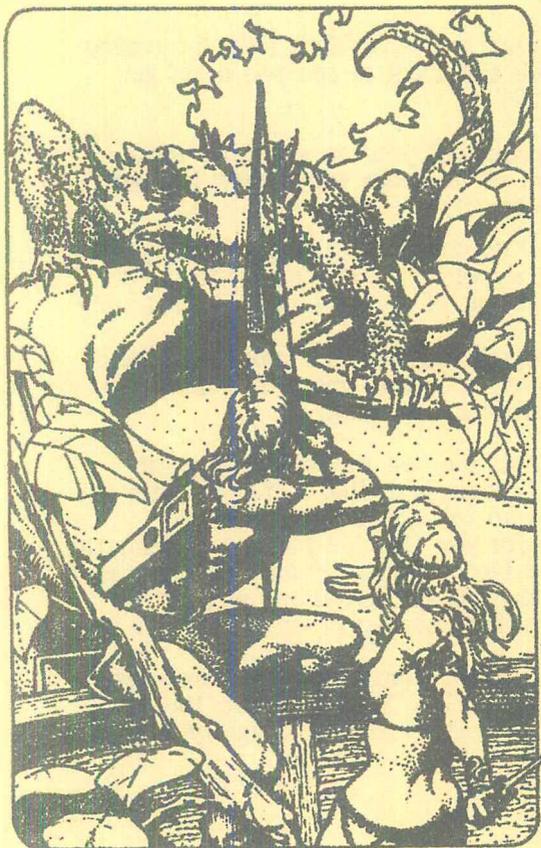


Illustration for *Under The Green Star's Spell*

Lacroix: What kind of a person is Michael Whelan? What are your interests besides your work?

Whelan: Well, I'll give you a general idea. I am married to Audrey Price who actually *is* Glass Onion, and we are the proud parents of Alexa who is almost 5 years old. I enjoy my family life very much and am trying hard not to overbook my schedule so that I can spend more time with them. I am studying Karate and Kung Fu. I've only been studying it for a little over four years, but I am so enthusiastic about it that I'm proceeding rapidly. I am also teaching myself the Japanese language with cassette tapes and books. These are my current passions besides work.

Lacroix: Was it hard for you, as an artist, to get your first piece of work published?

Whelan: No. The first three places that gave me jobs were DAW Books, Marval Comics, and Ace Books.

Lacroix: What does an editor actually ask from an artist? Does he let you go free for a book cover painting?

Whelan: I usually work with the Art Director and I have to read a manuscript, submit a few sketches and then do the final painting. Because of my position in the field, I am given a lot of freedom; Art Directors have confidence in me to turn in a good job. I have been very fortunate that I haven't been restricted very much at all.

Lacroix: And for yourself, how do you go about doing a cover painting?

Whelan: I read the manuscript, sometimes two or three times, do some quick pencil sketches all over the pages, and then do a number of black and white and colour "comps" that are roughly the same size as the book cover will be. This gives me the best idea of how the title and author's name will fit in, etc. I then pick the ones I like the best and send them to New York for the Art Director to see. In the meantime I've started work on another project so that I'm not delayed while waiting for the Art Director's decision. After I receive the sketches again and I see which one he has chosen, I go to work on the finished painting. I approach every painting differently and I don't have any set procedure that I follow, so I can't answer much more than this.

Lacroix: How much time do you work on a single painting?

Whelan: Five days to two weeks. It depends on whatever the painting demands.

Lacroix: What do you like about doing a painting? Are you satisfied when it is finished?

Whelan: I like creating the fantastic--making the unreal seem real. Usually I am satisfied with the painting when I send it in to the publisher because I don't let it go unless I'm pleased with it. I try not to let a deadline

determine when a painting is finished; I make sure that I give myself enough time to finish it to my satisfaction before it leaves my studio.

Lacroix: You seem to work most of the time with acrylics colour. You prefer acrylic to oils?

Whelan: Yes, they dry faster.

Lacroix: I found that you don't do many spaceships in your paintings. Why is that?

Whelan: I enjoy characterization the best. Most stories are about characters whether they are human or whatever, not the spaceship. But I do enjoy keeping my hand in hardware and I've probably done more than you are aware of because of the distance. I mean, I do some hardware every year, but you may not be familiar with it in Canada. Since the success of *2010:Odyssey Two*, I'll probably be asked to do more than ever.

Lacroix: Those Little Fuzzy are sure cute. Are they your own creation or your interpretations of the books by H. Bean Piper?

Whelan: They are both.

Lacroix: Frank Frazetta tries to keep all of his original paintings. What about you?

Whelan: We keep a lot of them and sell some.

Lacroix: And how much would an original painting by Michael Whelan cost in the fantasy market today?

Whelan: My originals sell for \$2000 to \$5000 at present. Some are higher.

Lacroix: What was your first influence in fantasy illustration?

Whelan: Science fiction art from the 50's.

Lacroix: Are there some artists today whose artwork you like? Like what would you say if I mentioned to you, Don Maitz, Mike Kaluta, or Krenkel?

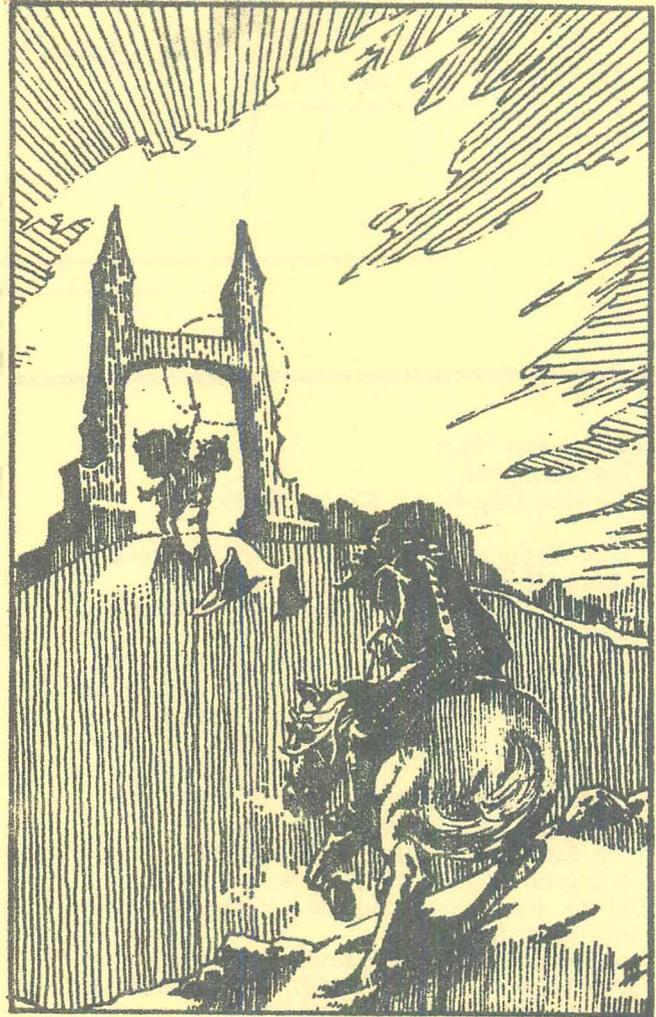
Whelan: There are many artists whose work I admire. My favorites are Bruce Pennington, Tim White, Alan Lee, Syd Mead, Ralph McQuarrie. The ones you mentioned are good too.

Lacroix: You've created and run the Glass Onion Graphics Productions to sell reproductions of your own artwork and there are already over 25 prints available to date. Why did you start it?

Whelan: I really don't have much to do with Glass Onion except provide the art. Audrey really handles most of it with the help of our secretary Pam. She started it because the people who had done prints of mine before weren't doing a very good job and we wanted better distribution. It's a successful business in the SF world, but we'd like to branch out to the Fine Art world now.

Lacroix: Do you often exhibit your artwork in galleries?

Whelan: Yes, whenever possible. Often at the Pendragon Gallery in Annapolis, Maryland, and also in museums around the U.S.



Lacroix: How does Michael Whelan see the future for himself as an artist?

Whelan: My future looks great I'm delighted to say. TV and movie projects are in the works, in negotiation, as well as new books. I'm also looking forward to taking time off to do some things for myself--maybe even a portrait of my daughter!

Lacroix: Thank you, Michael Whelan!

Wonderworks, a Michael Whelan artbook with 100 reproductions, 58 in color, and essays by various big name sf authors is available for \$11.95 from Glass Onion Graphics, 172 Candlewood Lake Road, Brookfield, Connecticut 06804 USA.

off the shelf

doug barbour

Tourists From Algol

by Tom Henighan

The Golden Dog Press; 80 pp.; \$6.95

Tom Henighan is a Canadian writer whose first book, *Tourists From Algol*, shows him pulling out all the stops as he struts his stuff. And, boy does he have stuff to strut!

Henighan is not really a pure SF writer, yet many of his nine stories play with SF themes or tropes, and all of them refuse to take the conventions of realism seriously. The title story reads like an example of historical journalism, documenting the changes a rural community goes through when an expensive and income-generating tourist facility is built there. No one ever sees the tourists; so are they aliens? Or simply examples of late-twentieth century alienation?

A similarly subversive intellectual wit informs all the stories, whether they be sardonic pastiches of H. Rider Haggard ("The Explorers"), sexual phantasias ("Captain Flynn"), bitter fables of alienation ("Sargon and the Fabulous Guests," "At Approximately Three P.M."), or Borges-like inventions ("Massanet and the Disappearing Sopranos," "The Borges Transfer"). Henighan writes with wit, intensity, and stylistic flair. His short book is worth many five times its size. *Tourists From Algol* is a shockingly good introduction to an imagination both weirdly lit and extraordinarily expansive.

Ring-Rise Ring-Set

by Monica Hughes

Methuen Magnet Books; 122 pp.; \$2.95

Some of the best writing for young people today can be found in the genres of fantasy and science fiction. One of the most interesting and highly thought of writers in the field is Canada's own Monica Hughes, whose books have won the Canada Council's Children's Literature Prize for the past two years.

Many children's authors use basic sf themes, but lack narrative complexity. They focus on a single character; their language and syntax and moral quests are simple; they are like extended short stories. Hughes demonstrates her clear superiority to the general run of such

writers in *Ring-Rise Ring-Set*, a real though small novel, full of varied characters, two well-described cultures, and a tough, individualistic protagonist who learns from her own mistakes to make large moral choices which affect not only her own life but the lives of those closest to her. What is really exciting about the book is that it shows her learning who those closest to her really are.

Ring-Rise Ring-Set was a deserving runner-up for the Guardian Award in 1982. It is set in the not too distant future, after a nearcollision with a huge comet has left a ring of particles around the Earth which blocks out the sun's rays for much of the year. In northern Canada, one group of scientists work out of an underground City studying the rapid glaciation, while in space others work to find a way to remove the ring. Life in the City is highly regulated, and women and children have been forced by circumstances back into earlier roles.

Liza, a fifteen year old born and raised in the City, is too imaginative and bored to conform, so she stows away on a scientific expedition to the glacier fields. The sled she chooses is left behind as a supply depot for the return trip, however, and Liza seems doomed by her foolish act until an "Ekoe", a young Inuit, finds her and takes her back to his tribe. His people have reverted to their old ways and they have already made up myths about the Ring and the new heavy winters. They see her as a returned dead child and they offer her a felt love she never knew in the City. She becomes Iriook, the missing daughter, because it's her only way to survive but also because she learns to give back love for love.

Later, when the scientists in the City begin to use a new deadly virus to destroy the snow, they are unaware that they are also destroying a whole culture's way of life. Liza must return to the City to try to stop the scientists, but they insist they must act for the greater good of all humanity. At this point Liza/Iriook makes some very hard decisions, and *Ring-Rise Ring-Set* turns into a superb and moving study of ethical and emotional coming of age.

The Summer Tree
by Guy Gavriel Kay
McClelland & Stewart, 323 pp.; \$19.95

I must admit that I wasn't expecting much of Guy Gavriel Kay's first novel--a fantasy which promised to be just another rip-off of the Tolkien cosmos. Well, Kay surprised me, for *The Summer Tree* caught me up and held me entranced throughout. Oh, this first volume of a projected trilogy--The Fionavar Tapestry--borrows liberally from earlier classics all right, but Kay has woven these disparate strands into a fine cloth of his own.

Five University of Toronto students are 'chosen' by a mage from Fionavar to cross over and be present at the fiftieth anniversary of the present High King of Brennin. But neither Silvercloak, the mage, nor they can guess that they will become the central figures in the latest battle between the newly escaped renegade god, Rakoth the Unraveller, and the various peoples of the Light.

All this is familiar, but what raises Kay's novel above many other such works is his characterizations, both of the five students, and of the princes, mages, dwarfs, warriors, priestesses, and other people of Fionavar. With a generally well-wrought style and a thoroughly adult sense of personality and life, Kay creates characters whose stories we want to know more of, and whose future we care about.

The Summer Tree is a superior example of high fantasy, and about the only complaint I can finally register is my disappointment at having to wait at least two years before I can find out how the story ends.

Samuel R. Delany
by Seth McEvoy
Fredrick Ungar Publishing Co., Inc., New York; 142 pp.; \$12.95/\$6.95 ISBN 0-8044-6462-6

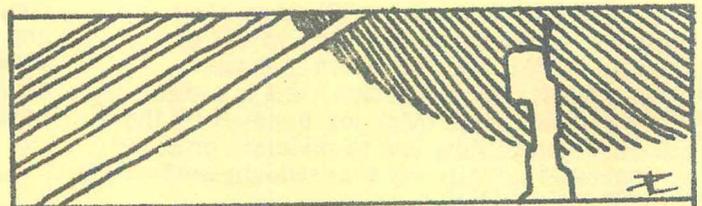
Every so often a book appears which simply cries out for the hatchet. On the whole, I prefer to avoid such books, since, despite the personal fun involved in going for the jugular, it's not only a messy business but it probably does nobody any real good. Still, Seth McEvoy's study of the writings of one of the most interesting, profound, and intellectually provocative writers in the field of science fiction is so bad, and, appearing under the imprimatur of a major publishing house, reflects so clearly the continuation of the attitude that after all, it's only sci fi and we can shove anything, no matter how poor its quality, down their throats, that I feel it's my bounden duty to point out just how completely it insults the intelligence of all its potential readers.

On the second page of *Samuel R. Delany*, we find this trying to pass itself off as a sentence: "Even when attending the prestigious and progressive private school of Dalton, dyslexia was not yet known as a brain dysfunction." I was tempted to let this quotation stand as the complete review of this disaster of a book, but there's more, oh so much more of the same and worse.

Repetitive, superficial, poorly written and edited (not to mention utterly lacking any sense of audience), this book also displays a towering ignorance of all previous serious criticism of Delany's works. (I admit my bias here, for I have written some of that criticism; but I am not alone, and much of what has been written about Delany's work is worth an interested reader's time, as this book so definitely is not.) Its only value, indeed, lies in the biographical data which Delany generously gave to McEvoy, data which he then misuses at every turn to apply a reductionist biographical analysis to Delany's subtle and complex fictions. And these simplex analysis are always *at the expense of other possible readings of Delany's multiplex and formally innovative writings.*

One of the delights of reading Delany is that his style, though often complex and demanding, always rewards his readers with insights and a sense of just how much the language of fiction can do in the hands of someone who loves its play. One of the many drudgeries of reading McEvoy is that his writing, though intellectually simple, is so full of common errors and downright dumb statements that it obscures even the plainest points he wishes to make--about the social relevance of Delany's novels, for example. Indeed, the only writing worth reading in this volume is contained in the many quotations from Delany; the rest is sludge.

This volume is part of Fredrick Ungar's "Recognitions" series, and I can't, for the life of me, figure out who its intended audience is. Any serious reader, let alone student, of SF will find it superficial, and offering as analysis less than they would already know from a careful reading of Delany's always challenging and entertaining works. Moreover, they will have to put up with the way McEvoy continually uses the exclamation point to suggest the immense importance of such statements as "One of the puzzling things about ancient Greek playwrights is that they would produce a trilogy of plays that were on a serious theme, which they called a tragedy, and then would always have a fourth play called a comedy, which parodied the first three, and the four were always put on at the same festival, in that order!" (This, by the way, during a 'discussion' of--not *Nova*--but *The Einstein Intersection*.) Again, I ask, Who is this aimed at? Well, I can tell you one thing; for sure, it was not aimed at me, and I wish it had missed. If the rest of the Recognitions texts are anything close to this poorly written, researched and edited as this one, they are to be avoided at all costs. Samuel R. Delany and science fiction deserve far better than this crass exploitation of their acknowledged popularity.



Heya-hey! allan brockmen

United States Live
Laurie Anderson
3 record set, 1985

Heya.
The natives are our heritage.
Heya-hey.
The maple leaf is our symbol.
Heya.
The CBC is a slice of our commitment to upgrading our culture.
Heya-hey.
The Hudson Bay is our mythical retreat from Americans, the present, and reality.
Heya.
None of this zine is in French.
Heya-hey.

Sometimes when you or I are trying to explain a new idea to a friend, we use an analogy. "A koan is like a wigwam", or "military intelligence, Post Office efficiency and casual sex". But what about truly alien concepts? Can you use an analogy to explain Pink Floyd to one deaf from birth? Clearly, then, analogies fall short as a universal medium of communication.

But besides getting an idea across concisely, they have other uses, one of which is making a tough idea more palatable. Example: poet Laurie Anderson in *United States Live* raps that "walking is a controlled state of fall; that you step or fall forward on one foot, then catch yourself in time to step or fall forward on your other foot." But prior to this there was another rap which seemingly made no sense at the time:

"I wanted you, and I was looking for you, but I couldn't find you. I wanted you and I was looking for you all day, but I couldn't find you. I couldn't find you."

What I get from this Rorschach blot is that attempting--not just succeeding--in an endeavour other than walking can be beneficial.

She mentions Finnish farmers who administered euthanasia to the mangled remnants of Russian killers dropped roughly from the sky to lie buried in the holes their falling dug in the snow. She then speaks of American ICBMs waiting out in midwest farmer's fields. My conclusion: this is a plea for a grassroots arms reduction imposed by the individual disregarding law to maintain order. But could she actually say that straight out? Think of the backlash.

On the track, "Odd Objects", she states that war and international capitalism are similar in that they involve the foisting of unwanted material upon other nations. The next track is the sound of the dogs of war accompanied to the music of the previous track titled "Mach 20" in which America is suggested to have impregnated Japan with American culture during WWII. The implication of all this is that America and Japan are now at economic war because America's economy can't tolerate competition and that it is dependent upon supremacy to function.

I have probably extracted more from her work than is there, and missed some other messages. But the point I am trying to get across is that an analogy can be used to soften hard facts: by the time you figure out what is being said, you feel so familiar with the message that it is almost as if you said it. And as we all know we are not heretics, there is no need to close our minds to the conclusions we reach by just listening to some records. The problem is that the message is so softened and encrypted that only a starving information vampire is strong enough and desperate enough to draw the bloody message out of the rock-hard analogy (as is the case with my opening paragraph).

Usually I eschew sesquipedalian circumlocutions of obfuscation so why do I now praise it? Because on certain topics your choices are: silence, duckspeak, or sowing subtle seeds of doubt. Anderson resorts to this tactic because she is dealing with a nebulous concept which is, unless I have interpreted wrongly, that America is no longer an ideologically motivated nation, that somewhere along the way the people moved away from self-government and high political standards and they are sliding smoothly and peacefully in the direction that the Greeks slid during Pythagoras. I think also that she never sums up consciously precisely because it would unweave her nebulous tapestry if it were cut to fit the standards of Joe Lunchbucket's social conception (just as this article probably has) and because the sliding of America may have progressed to the point where it is dangerous to express independent, let alone unamerican, opinions.

SOL TYS CANADIAN BOOK REVIEWS COL

Book Reviews by Keith Soltys

The Space Transportation Systems Reference
Chris Coggon, ed.
Apogee Books, Sault Ste Marie, ON; 288 pp;
hardcover; \$34.50

This book is a techie's dream: everything you ever wanted to know about the Space Shuttle, and more. Editor Chris Coggon produced this book from reams of NASA briefing material, all of it in the public domain, that he collected at a launch. The book contains sections on every major aspect of the Shuttle's operations from launch to landing. The material, written by NASA for the working press, is clear, concise, and includes many illustrations and photographs. There are eight gatefold illustrations of the shuttle-instrument layout that will provide armchair astronauts with many hours of fun.

This book is self-published so it's unlikely you'll find it in your neighbourhood bookstore. It can be ordered from Apogee Books, 37 Hawthorne Ave., Sault Ste Marie, ON, P6B 1C6 or by calling toll free 1-800-268-6364 with a charge card number. It is a beautiful production and a must for anyone with an interest in the space program.

Tsunami
Crawford Kilian
Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver, BC; 218 pp.;
hardcover; \$16.95; ISBN 0-88894-366-0

Crawford Kilian is a Vancouver writer who is best known in sf circles for his novels *The Empire of Time* and *Eyas*. Commercially, though, a disaster novel, *Icequake* is probably his best known book.

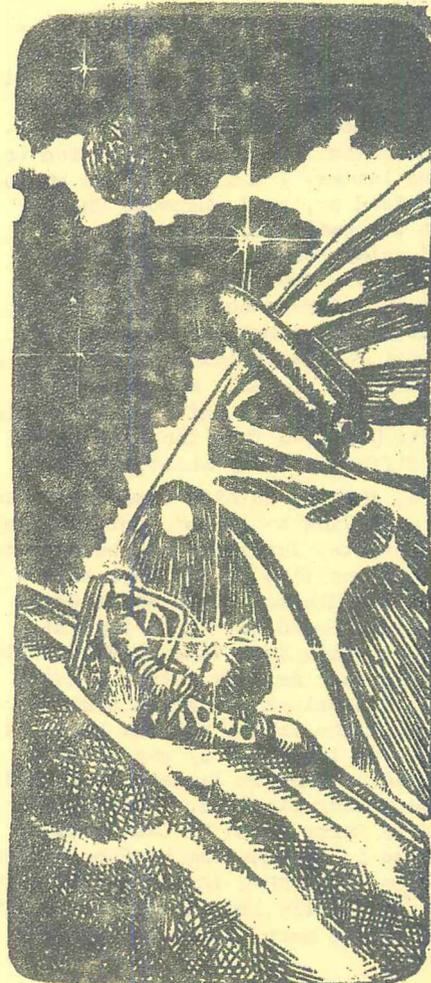
Tsunami shares the same setting as *Icequake* but is not a direct sequel. Sometime in the near future the core of the sun has gone out. The ozone layer has been wiped out by solar flares. Whites risk almost instant sunburn and blindness from the high ultraviolet levels.

The story begins where *Icequake* left off, with the melting of the antarctic icecap and the protagonist on the Bay Bridge in San Francisco watching a tsunami roll over the Golden Gate. The wave wreaks havoc on a city already damaged by recession and food and energy shortages.

The crew of an oceanographic vessel try to organize a mission to salvage the oil from a sunken tanker. Kilian intercuts their story with that of a group of Hollywood movie people who set up a stronghold much like that in Niven and Pournelle's *Lucifer's Hammer*. In their struggle to survive they develop into a quasi-feudal fiefdom fighting the oceanographers for the oil.

Kilian paints a grim and all too plausible picture of a society brought to its knees by a series of natural disasters. (Perhaps his living in Vancouver has influenced him, for that city fares much better than San Francisco.) Yet he's created characters who refuse to give up hope. Like some of Heinlein's characters they are ordinary people thrust into abnormal situations; people who discover that they may die but at least they are going to die trying.

The scope of this novel isn't as wide as Kilian's last novel, *Eyas*. Like that book it shares the author's eye for detail and strong characterization. Kilian is a writer worth reading and *Tsunami* is a cut above the usual hackwork that characterizes the disaster novel genre. It's fair to say, based on his four sf novels to date, that he's one of the best sf writers to come out of Canada.



Same As It Ever Was

Taral Wayne

"On the Canadian ASF Association"

by Taral Wayne

In BGSFazine #136, Gerald Boyko reviewed the reprinted History of the Canadian SF Association, done by Mike Horvat a while ago. I have no criticisms of the review. I thought I could shed a little light on the subject of the CSFA though.

The original publication was in a little-known zine called Fan To See, the January issue, most likely in 1953. The editor was Larry Tuzinsky, a St. Louis fan. Jack Bowie-Reed seems to have reprinted this article in the same year, though the reprint has neither credit for publication, nor a date in it anywhere. (However, the last page does have the line "the dawning of 1953 sees the state of the CSFA as follows".) Bowie-Reed, by the way, is a Montreal-area fan who seems to have been last heard of in the late 60s or early 70s.

Mike Horvat seems to have been inspired to re-reprint the CSFA History with an inadequate history of the text. I am curious to know if his booklet reproduces the Fan To See text or the reprint. If the former, then there were no significant changes in the text from one edition to the next. If the latter, I'd like to know whether it is Jack Bowie-Reed or, as I suspect, Chester Cuthbert who was the real publisher.

I suspect Chester because my copy of the reprint came ultimately from him. Moreover, it has been Chester who, throughout CSFA's history, has given it what little substance it ever had.

The only other CSFA material I've seen are a fan directory (about a fall '52), and the second issue of the CSFA Newsletter. But I've been able to talk with older Canadian fans too, and they tell a bit of a different story about the CSFA.

For starters, there's nothing important that's factually wrong with Jack's account, but it is misleading. The Derelicts, for instance, were never a formal club -- it was five or six guys with a mimeo'd fanzine. Les Crutch would sometimes drive down from Parry Sound for a get-together and shoot the breeze with Beak Taylor, Fred Hurter and a couple of others. As Jack puts it, however, "The first glimmerings of light broke through in 1942 with the trusty work of three of Canada's 'senators of fandom'. It was in this year that the Canadian Amateur Fantasy Press was formed with three member fanzines. These were Light, published in Parry Sound by Les Crutch; Censored, published in Kapuskasing by Fred Hurter; and Canadian Fandom, published in Toronto by Beak Taylor." While not totally inaccurate, the formation of the CAFP sounds more impressive the way

Jack puts it. My version is closer to the truth, however. In fact, the CAFP never amounted to more than a notice on the covers or in the colophons of three fanzines. There was no formal organization at all. Though I have come across references to printing a small press edition of something or other, it was never done as far as I can tell. Curiously enough, some years after the CAFP faded from the picture, Gerald Stewart took over CanFan and re-established the CAFP logo in his personal zine, Gasp, but not on CanFan.

I might also erode confidence in the CSFA History further by pointing out that Fred Hurter doesn't seem to have ever lived in Kapuskasing, and all copies of Censored I have originate either from Aurora, Ontario, (an hour's drive north of Toronto), or from Montreal. Quite clearly the CAFP is a pretense by a small number of friends who saw each other regularly, not the organization of national scope that Jack makes out.



Home Truths



Garth Spencer

-- THE WORLDCON '89 AT MYLES BOS' HOUSE
BID: A mysterious group of Victoria fans is still bidding for Worldcon '89 to be held at the house of Myles Bos, in the Saanich suburb of Victoria, B.C.

Reportedly, Myles Bos was visited by a lightning bolt which came down and told him to hold a Worldcon, "and the crater is still there," as he told Vancouver's Ether Patrol in an interview. Activities at Boscon, says John Herbert, will include a video tent (featuring a pocket Donkey Kong game), goats, a torpedo drop zone, goats, two golf courses and an elementary school nearby, Goats, a rock quarry, and other places to play hide-and-seek. Post-panel activities include a dead goat party. The orgy will be held indoors. Karl Johansen recently won a puppet, so now the concom has four in which to hold events.

Memberships so far are somewhere between 5 and 2000. One Vancouver fan (whose initials may begin with G.B., I'm not sure) sent a million non-dollars for 250,000 non-memberships. He may be confusing BosCon with NonCon. All fan parties anywhere in the world in '89 are automatically part of this Worldcon. Some of the people who will not be attending Boscon include half the membership of SPWA, L. Ron Hubbard, Rob Runte, Cordwainer Bird, Sammy Fing-Fong, Alison Lanier of the Star Wars Fan Club, and Garth Spencer, reputed author of The Making of Potato Joe Mows the Lawn and scriptwriter of Maple Leaf Rag -- The Motion Picture. Well-known Canadian comic artist Dave Sim has given a definite non-commitment. Lloyd Penney has volunteered to be FanGOH; he has been passed up for Denise Underwood of Port Angeles, Wash.

Members of the concom include Myles Bos, "who can take the simplest task and make it ten times as difficult," Robert Gunderson, William Froog, who slavers to work on Security at Boscon, Marsha Chondrite, and Monika Bandersnatch, who has invited all the leaders of all the nations on the planet to attend Worldcon '89 at Myles' House. (hoping Muammar Qaddafi stays home). Carolyn Mitchell of Kanata, Ont. has won the first DDOFF fund to enable a deserving fan to attend Boscon -- one-way bus tickets.

Sneeology, the progress report, claims New York has dropped its bid for Worldcon '89, and Spokesmen for Boston are said to be worried. You see, they don't offer goats. Bidding parties for Boscon at Ad Astra and V-Con have been a roaring success.

NOTA BENE: The site of Worldcon '89 will be a Nuclear Free Zone. So there.

-- MYLES BOS IS TO TOUR CANADA in 1986. THE MYLES BOS 1986 "LOCK UP YOUR GOATS" CANADIAN TOUR will feature THE WHO's P.A. system, consisting of 80 800W Crown DC300 A amplifiers and 20 600W Phase Linear 200's, providing sound levels over 120 decibels. The light show will feature lasers, smoke pots, fog machines, and over four tons of lights.

No stops are yet confirmed, although it can be assumed that any city with a waterslide park will be included. Spokesman David F. Zimmick says that stops are planned at Vancouver, Spuzzum, Dease Lake, Takla Landing, Smith River, Otter Park, Habbay, Meander River, Entwistle, Didsbury, Manitowadge, Oba, Moosonee, Val-d'Or, Baie Comeau, Richibucto, and other big population centres.

Myles is quoted as saying, "I thought we'd open the show by showing The Road Warrior, and then bring out the goats. Then we shoot off the smoke bombs while I sing "Theme from Killer Socks" on the nose-ophone. I'm going to get my drivers' license sometime soon, and if I'm really lucky I'll have the Land Rover fixed by then so I'll have something to carry those four tons of lights around in."

Tour jackets and T-shirts will be available soon, as well as the official Myles Bos 1986 "Lock Up Your Goats" Canadian Tour Goat Handcuffs.

U.S.

-- LET'S GET ON-LINE: Cheap Truth is now being advertised as an on-line SF fansine; SMOF-BBS is accessible at 300 baud at (512) UFO-SMDF. It might come as a surprise to Earl Cooley, a.k.a. Vincent Omniaveritas, that he is not the first faneditor to go on-line, as he claims; Dave Langford points out that the first was Starlight SF, on Micronet.

(Ansible \$42/Uncle Dick's #10)

WHAT A CON SHOULD BE

Peter Roberts, writing on the World Fantasy Con, said something very interesting: "Something meant for recreation shouldn't involve work." Now think about that.

I have always thought of recreation as some form of activity, sometimes hard to distinguish from work. But perhaps Peter Roberts is showing me that not everybody thinks that way ... which would explain why rather few people really get behind organized fan activities.

What kind of con is a concom setting up? Does everyone more or less know and understand what the aim is? Does that understanding extend to other fan groups in the same city? If different people on a concom are working on different models, and if this breakdown in understanding is even realized, the concommers may just get stubborn and refuse to change objectives, or reach an agreement.

One fairly simple definition of "con" comes from Joe Casey:

I guess what a con is, is a group of friends getting together and saying "Let's have a party." There should be an air of welcome and ease in the con. What a con should not be is too heavily structured or you stifle the fun. A con should be open to anyone and preference should be given only to the guests. The concom should at all times remember that it is to a large extent due to the local fan clubs that they can exist, as without them, there would not be the work force to draw from. (Jan. 16)

Different people acquire a taste for different kinds of con, of course, but the purposes of a con, as stated above, are probably best met at a low attendance, say 100 - 400 people. What do you think?



CONCOMS

Several human problems can arise when a concom has assembled. More than once a concom has come up with utterly grandiose objectives for a convention, far beyond their abilities ... and put forth very little effort, inadequate even to meet modest objectives. Marc Gérin-LaJoie has written to indicate that Maplecon III sustained some behavior like this, and it did in a con called Gallifrey I or Pendulum. I'm sure we can come up with additional tales.

Some fans on any concom are liable to talk a good fight, but don't get down to doing anything. Also, fanaticism of any kind, and conrunning as well, are to some people simply a source of self-aggrandizement. And then, too, it's possible for one member in authority to keep changing his/her memory of confirmed guests and programming, or to keep "improving" on reality; if even one such member refuses to be open, honest and accountable (as by changing contractual agreements unilaterally, or refusing general access to committee records), a concom can go down in flames.

There are ways to solve these problems ... mostly by averting them. One of the advantages of officially incorporating a society to run conventions is that it requires some form of constitution and bylaws, which need not be extensive or strangulating to dictate some financial and executive responsibility. It is not impossible, or undesirable, to specify that concom executives had better have some convention experience.

Mind you, a constitution and bylaws are in some ways only as good as the people enforcing them. No amount of verbiage is better than the basic honesty, or know-how, of the concom.

FINANCES

Will somebody please tell me how conventions scrape up their starting capital? All I have deduced is the need for monies to be responsibly handled.

I've probably run too much news on V-Con 12's financial problems, and too little on the Baltimore Worldcon's problems. In the case of V-Con, none of the committee seem to have been familiar with how to keep books, how to assign and enter expenses ... in the case of Baltimore, from this distance (and lapse of time) it's hard to tell anything.

KINDS OF CONS

One of the advantages of having been on a concom before, or at least having seen some cons, is a sense of the range of cons put on every year, as well as what is customary and what is not at a con. Joe Casey writes:

I've been to five different kinds of con: Cangames, only good if you're really into gaming, but if you are, look out. I worked on the D&D tourney at CG 1 and Monopoly at CG 3 ... Then there is Maplecon. So far I'm batting six for six and working on #7. Maplecon is a high-pressure con, and there are always three or more things going on at any one time ... Incognicon is, I guess, what is known as a relaxicon: one room plus consuite, five dealers including Maplecon & OSPS, and a very sedate pace. Ad Astra I liked as a rather

sedate con but with a video room. And Capital Con I at the Tob Brown arena (was in) one room, and lots of fun. (Jan. 16)

Lloyd Penney writes of Ad Astra (responding to Taral):

The Ad Astra update was a surprising read, seeing it didn't come from any of the concom, and the writer isn't the slightest bit interested in attending, anyway. The largest Ad Astra so far was Ad Astra IV, with 445 paid attendees. The reason Taral may think that AA appeals to costumers, filkers and VCR/media-fen is that these people are the ones who are willing to hold and run a panel. We ask what other people want, and what we get is, "It's fine!" or deafening silence, otherwise. From the response that we get, we appear to please the great majority of our attendees. I have tried to ask for changes to appeal to a greater spectrum of fans, and I have had some success. True, Ad Astra has been an SF literature convention, but we certainly have time for the fans of other aspects of SF, such as comics, gaming, Star Trek, Elfquest, etc., to let them run their own panels for themselves. We know we are the only large convention in the Toronto area, and with the variety of fandoms in the area, it wouldn't be fair to appeal to some and ignore others. Most of the readers of this zine would enjoy Ad Astra ... (Jan. 21)

To keep some sense of scale, Maplecon enjoys (I understand) an attendance of around 800.

It is worth noting that a concom may, or may not, choose to try to appeal to all the fandoms in the city. In fact it can be argued (and has been) that a con had better not try to please everyone, or it, well, takes on too much to handle.

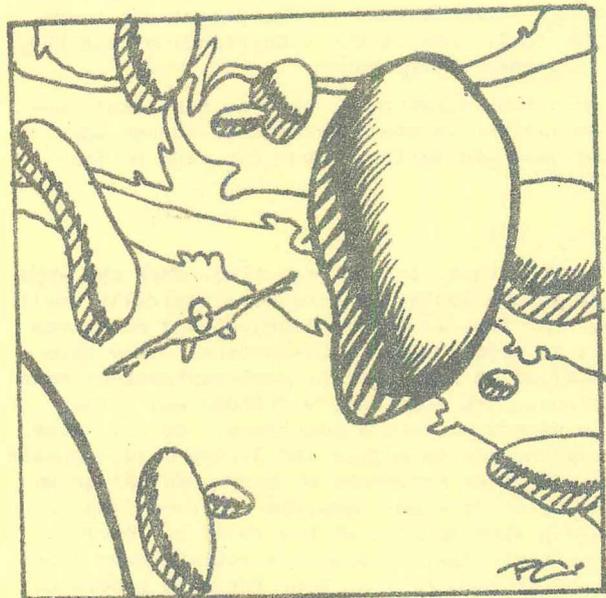
Diane Walton-LeBlanc writes:

Small cons have a hard time appealing to all levels of fandom, and most end up being either too fannish, too serious, or too cute. All tend to be a bit schizophrenic. Who do you appeal to? Who is the audience at a con?

NonCons have tended to try to appeal to the fannish, and to the 'artsies.'

Some years ago, in Callisto Rising, E.B.Klassen argued that the large cons that seem to be mushrooming up everywhere should be divided up into small cons, each appealing exclusively to one interest group, in the interest of manageability ~~and keeping the price~~. We'll return to this later.

Despite the difference in convention emphases -- for fanzine fans, mediafans, fandom fans, etc. -- a few policies are common to any SF convention. This is why Halcon 4, as reported in New Canadian Fandom #1, seemed so strange; the concom made some policy decisions about programming and membership which were apparently made in ignorance of standard practice. Allowing members to see one film or one programming event, things like that. Again, Maplecon persists in having two co-con-chairs, a practice which Marc Gerin-LaJoie insists is unwise, and has also seemed a little overprecise (at least to Erwin Strauss) about how to send in membership cheques, in what size envelope.



Now, to some extent, we're all ignorant of some things that "everybody knows" somewhere. Are there convention policies so taken for granted, however, that they're never stated and so that many fans never hear about them?

A balance between imagination and realism also has to be observed on a concom. In discussing the Constellation affair, Gerald Boyko wrote:

"Just about any dream can be realized if the dream includes people skilled at mixing a healthy dose of reality into the dream.

"... Down-to-earth planners would never think up any dream themselves. They need the dreamers for that. Dreamers would never get grounded enough to make their dream a reality. They need down-to-earth planners for that. Dreamers and planners need each other, by themselves nothing would get done. If a group of fans, or any organization, has the right mixture of dreamers and planners, then the sky is the limit, for the dreamers; and the balance sheet is excellent, for the planners."

It sounds as if convention planning requires a brainstorming phase -- coming up with any and all programming plans and possible activities -- and then an "editing" phase, where blue-sky ideas can be criticized and weeded out. I've never had any trouble seeing obstacles or problems to overcome. Only once have I witnessed people with no sense of caution or moderation, no inclination to listen to warnings.

So I will confine myself here to pointing out some limiting factors, for the other born critics. In June 1983, in an editorial post-mortem on Constellation Con in Victoria, I concluded that a successful con has to take into account the site, the potential attendance and participatory support, the available capital, and the experience of the people on hand. Then you can reckon up what sort(s) of con can be put on.

By contrast, if some critical control is not placed on the con ... well, Erwin Strauss wrote to me about the 1983 Constellation in Baltimore:

The problem in Baltimore was that control was

not exerted from the top (or more exactly, the middle managers refused to give the top a mandate to take command -- the department heads took their jobs on the understanding that they would have a free hand).

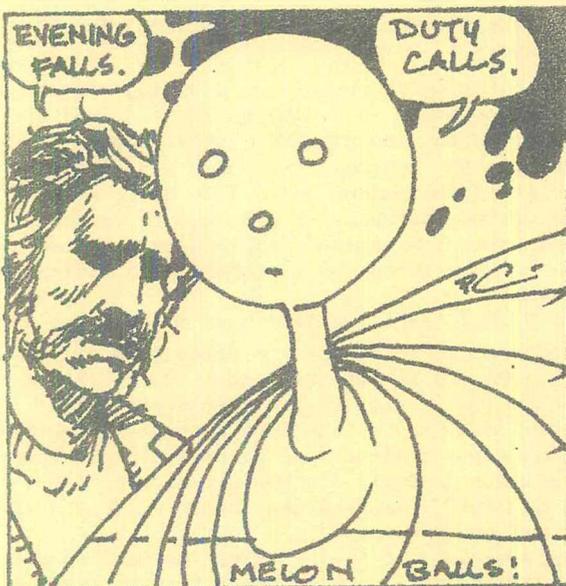
The result was, apparently, that no financial control was exerted on the programming; no-one was checking back and saying, "Thus far, and no farther."

SMALL CONS

I gather that, in the beginning, ~~when the World was small~~ in the 1930s, SF cons were basically small meetings for fans in correspondence, and occasions for them to meet authors face-to-face. They were also modelled on less social, more business-oriented conventions, with readings, workshops and rather academic papers presented sometimes. By now, cons have proliferated in number and diverged in emphasis and the number of attendees at many cons has grown a great deal. It's now possible for some fans to start a con with no idea of how to do so (such is communication); for Worldcons to attract over 8000 people and SF cons over 30,000; for many people to see these as commercial events, and for a few cons the social or academic functions hang on. ~~Why?~~ I think the social function is better accomplished when the attendance is in three figures.

In the aforementioned issue of Callisto Rising, E.B. Klassen surveyed the problems arising from large cons (weapons incidents, Logan's Runs), and wrote:

I think that ... perhaps the time has come to split large cons into a larger number of much smaller con gatherings designed only to appeal to a very limited group of people. Comicons are a distinct entity apart from SF cons, so wherein lies the impossibility in holding, in one center, only at different times, a videocon, film-con, a con for fans of the Lucas/Spielberg canon, a convention dedicated only to the trivial or inconsequential (Battlestar Galactica, Dr. Who, Blade-runner, Logan's Run, E.T.), a weapon-freak



con, et bloody cetera. Victoria, I am quite certain, could support three or four conventions of this nature in a year. And if this cultural backwater can do it, I see no reason why larger centers would find it impossible to follow suit (or better, lead the way).

Now, Elisabeth Vonarburg wrote:

Seems to me that trying to run a con where there is no real organized fandom is a self-defeating proposition. When we first did it in Quebec (I did it, in Chicoutimi, which is very far from the main centers, and more than 100 attended, which was a BIG success and told us the time had come) there had been a magazine for five years, regular club-like reunions in Quebec and Montreal ... The subsequent conventions (in Quebec, in Montreal twice, and the big one, back in Chicoutimi in '82) have always had an attendance of about 100 (more than 200 in '82), and in spite of the organizational problems here and there, the custom seems well-established now.

From this I take it that one's expectations may vary as much as convention attendance figures. Perhaps, for the first two or three cons in a given area, one has to adopt a "wait and see" attitude before expecting a given number?

BIG

In October 1982, in BRSFL News #21, one J.R. Madden (I think?) wrote on the current ~~over-~~ overblown nature of Worldcons, and argued for their reduction.

The Worldcon does not have to be huge. Granted, it does make the Worldcon a major convention in the eyes of hotels and cities and, as such, something to be sought after. But almost all the other large conventions have some sort of paid, professional staff that handles a vast majority of the work ... We, the fans, should either have totally volunteer concerns and smaller Worldcons, OR go with bigger and bigger Worldcons BUT find some way to finance a professional cadre to handle the advance work ...

After I asked what was a "professional" con, Elisabeth Vonarburg wrote, "What, indeed? A convention organized by professionals? What kind? Are the Worldcons professional conventions? I don't think so." It is worthwhile to note there that "professional con", as I understand it, refers specifically to cons organized by people who make it their business, do all the planning for a fee, use labour drawn from local fans, and take some or all of the profits. The most blatantly self-serving professional con organizer, according to the cry of it, is a person (?) in the Los Angeles basin. Do you guys have any more information on this "professional" business?

In describing Quebec's cons (Boreal isn't the only one, is it?), Elisabeth Vonarburg said "the more activities there are, the less likely one can attend them all... But 'to each his own' really seems to be universally agreed upon ..." Which is probably why seasoned congoers don't attend programming, or very little, or wind up on panels themselves. They know a convention is a social occasion, so they'll socialize and ignore whatever tries to get in the way.

Correct me if I'm wrong ... but I have no reason to think that big cons are a major attraction to neos (within 24 hours of my first V-Con I knew what I wanted to be there for). For myself, I don't find a glitzy, hard-sell, polished, big con very attractive. Something smaller, quieter, unvarnished and more real might be fun; not otherwise.

A CANADIAN WORLDCON?

Canada (well, Toronto) has hosted two Worldcons; Torcon 2 was described as "the last fannish Worldcon." Taral's fanhistory of OSFIC indicated that Worldcons tend to "burn out" local fandoms, and that that was the case in Toronto.

Jan Howard Fifer writes:

... I personally would like to see the Worldcon go around the world more often. However, I'm also realistic. If Canada bid and won a Worldcon, I'd suggest your holding it over Thanksgiving weekend (yours). It is also a three-day weekend down here.

That's good to know. What would be even better to know is a) that a Worldcon is desirable, b) that there is sufficient support somewhere in Canada for a Worldcon (both enthusiasm and experience), c) that a Canadian Worldcon would be feasible. We know that it has been.

Keith Soltys has reported that a panel at Ad Astra came to the agreement that, currently, there are insufficient active and experienced fen in the Toronto area to stage a viable Worldcon bid right now.

ADVERTISING

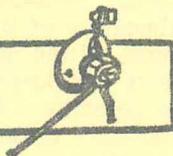
Lloyd Penney writes:

Re advertising for a convention ... I've been in charge of flyer distribution for Ad Astra for some time now, and in the past, telling newspapers and broadcast stations about your convention is a waste of good postage. ... We used to inform every newspaper and broadcast station of Ad Astra, but the silence was deafening. As I said in MLR 11, cons often fill their quota of crazy stories to use as filler.

Maybe you could ask for a public service message, and supply the particulars? Or did you do that?

I guess one has to fall back on paid ads, or on leafletting and postering. Ad Astra finds the best place to advertise is at -- Ad Astra.

space & hi-tech



An Interim Space Plan for Canada was announced by three ministers on March 20.

Tom Siddon, Minister of State for Science and Technology, the Hon. Marcel Masse, Minister of Communications, and the Hon. Robert E.J. Layton, Minister of State for Mines, announced details of the 1985-6 Canadian space plan, to cost \$194.1 million (\$45 million more than in 1984-5). The government is committed to maintaining and developing Canadian capabilities in space, and the Interim Space Plan is

to serve as a first step. Objectives are to develop viable space industries, develop the potential for competitive space industries and ensure excellence, and support satellite-based services to Canadian economic development. Much of the funding in the coming fiscal year will be reallocated from existing resources.

Canada has accepted Pres. Reagan's invitation to participate in the definition stage of the U.S. Space Station Program (also called Phase B). Canadian participation is to be finalized by signing a Memorandum of Understanding with NASA Real Soon Now.

News releases from the relevant ministries tell us that the space station will be the major civilian initiative in space for the rest of the 20th century, and will change the space business; that Canada expects to reap economic benefits to the tune of at least \$2 billion by the year 2000, and some thousands of jobs.

The National Research Council is to carry out project designs and preliminary definitions studies, to develop specific proposals for Canadian participation by the end of 1985, as a condition for further participation. One proposal is for an Integrated Servicing and Test Facility on the station, with a new generation of remote manipulators and other equipment.

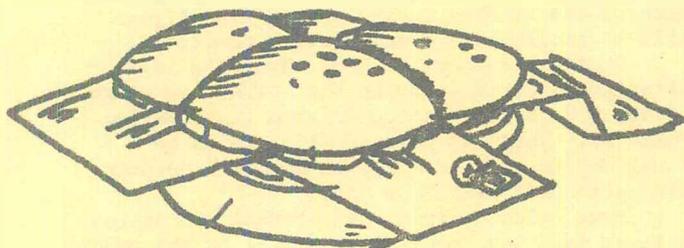
The Interim Space Plan includes three major projects -- implementing a commercial Mobile Satellite Communication System, an industry-led joint venture with the U.S., to improve service to rural and remote mobile phone and radio systems; (MSAT); continuing phase B of the RADARSAT program started Dec. '84, to remotely sense data for far-North navigation, geological and weather-related resource management, and energy development needs; and the Integrated Servicing and Test Facility.

Planners are looking at ways for RADARSAT to contribute to the Space Station, as by an in-orbit servicing option.

The Space Station, to cost \$12 billion with \$8 billion from the U.S., and \$1 billion from Canada, is needed to complete many future tasks requiring periods longer than a Shuttle can stay in orbit. Plans are to start with a minimal "base camp" and build up in modular stages for at least 25 years of operation. Rotating crews of 6 - 8 are planned for the space habitat.



CREAM CHEESE AND



LOLS

ON A BAGEL!

Pierre D. Lacroix
102 boulevard Riel
Hull, PQ
J8Y 5Y2
85.04.14

I'd like to talk a little about the Pomerleau article on "Ten Years Of Quebec Fandom With Requiem And Solaris". I was frustrated to see that he didn't even mention the fanzine *Infos Bulletin*. It was also a Quebec fanzine born around the same time as *Imagine* and *Pour Ta Belle Gueule D'Ahuri* and founded by myself. *Infos Bulletin* was devoted to fantasy and science fiction illustrations and interviews with artists and writers. Three issues appeared under that name, and then changed to *Imagiers-Infos* a year later and ran another seven issues.

Well, I think that's the way it is in that kind of article: people think of their own work first and forget about the others, even if they are part of their fandom. It always happens like that and I guess it will not change tomorrow for the better. It's a kind of "fanzine war" in Quebec at the moment. Everyone of them thinks that they're better than the others. It started with *Requiem* and *Imagine* of course, but by now it's also *Pilone*, *Blanc Citron*, *Cinetik*, *Energie Pure*, *Rose Nanae*, *Oh Jake*, and *Resonance Magnetique*: all Quebec fanzines. It seems that they don't know what friendship between fan-editors means. No one has the guts to say it, but Quebec fandom (and some people) are totally pretentious. Of course, I mention no names here, and I'm not talking about Pomerleau especially. I generalize.

Sam Moskowitz
361 Roseville Ave.
Newark, NJ 07107, USA
85.06.10 & 85.07.17

I must say that I was favorably impressed with *NCF* and have completely read the entire set. What impressed me particularly was the emphasis you managed to give to the Canadian angle on most of the items you published. Yours is not a fan magazine which happens to be published in Canada, but a fan magazine which is obviously Canadian and therefore of contemporary as well as historical importance, providing information and a perspective not available elsewhere.

My current interest was aroused by a review titled "A Belated Discovery of Canadian Science Fiction (and Fantasy)" by David Ketterer in the March 1985 issue of *Science Fiction Studies*. The piece was on what he had seen in some of James Blish's letters, and among the great "mysteries" he conjured up was the spirit of Nils H. Frome, whose name appeared there and whose name Blish borrowed as a pen name. "Who was this Frome?" he asked. "What role did he play in the life of Blish and in science fiction?" The article ended with the line, "Frome is emerging from obscurity."

This annoyed me since Frome was the Number One Canadian fan in activity during the period 1936 to 1941. Since I had published his stories and artwork, contributed to his Canadian publication *Supramundane Stories*, carried on correspondence with him and had copies of virtually everything he ever placed in a fan magazine, and had written him up in my book *The Immortal Storm*, he was obscure only because no one had ever bothered to inquire about him. I wrote a 8000 word piece on him, most of which will appear in the July, 1985 *Science Fiction Studies* and sent a copy to John Robert Colombo for the archives of the Spaced Out Library.

Since I had not continued contact with Frome after the end of World War II, Colombo sent me a photocopy of the article "Nils Helmer Frome Found And Lost" by Michael Dann, with Brenda Yvonne [in *NCF* #6]. I wrote a review of this piece, properly credited, which *Science Fiction Studies* will publish in its October, 1985 number. I was not aware of your publication or that article until this point, and almost all the information was new to me and others who knew Frome back before WWII, and constitutes an excellent piece of research. That piece impressed me because instead of a fan sitting around wondering what became of Frome, Dann apparently struck out and found relatives and interviewed them. This is something rare even in the supposedly scholarly *Science Fiction Studies*.

I still have unpublished fiction by Frome in my files, since from 1937 on I conducted a manuscript bureau, placing material written by fans in appropriate fan magazines. I placed quite a number of Frome's, though his Lovecraftian-style script was devilishly hard to read--he didn't own a typewriter.

I think a Canadian fan who deserves a long

article is Chester D. Cuthbert. He sold several stories to Hugo Gernsback's *Wonder Stories*, one so outstanding, "The Sublime Vigil", that I anthologized it in *Editor's Choice In Science Fiction* published in 1954. More importantly, he probably is one of the leading, if not the leading, science fiction collectors in Canada and has as much Canadian fantasy as anyone in the country.

Kyle R. Kirkwood,
6680 Winch St.
Burnaby, BC.
V5B 2L6
85.05.01

The University of British Columbia SF Society is not in decline as reported last issue. We've had a 25% increase in membership in the last two years, a library that has jumped from 700 books to well over a thousand (not counting a magazine collection dating back to the mid-fifties), and a successful mini-con, Unicon 84, which netted a profit. (A second con set for 85 was cancelled due to asbestos removal from our chosen site.)

The UBCSFS has also returned to the publishing game, doing to literature what Dr. Who does to television. Our zine, *Horizons SF* has been revised because we asked our members, and other students what they liked in a fictionzine, and they told us. We have a 20 odd page report just on what they want. The zine is not perfect, but if more fans are willing to submit more and better stories, as well as a little constructive criticism, we can work the bugs out.

Along with *Horizons SF* we try to help our members with their own writings, and some seem to be doing quite well. We hold an annual Halloween-Costume dinner (always in some unsuspecting Mexican restaurant), theme parties, video nights, and a summer beach party. We have stacked many a theatre balcony just ogling the new releases (Buckaroo Bonzai three times--we all hid in the bathroom).

We have just finished writing a radioplay which we hope to produce with our membership.

Outside UBC our influence is not nearly as strong as we would like, but we try. We enjoy ourselves at V-Con 12, hopefully reaffirming our presence, and for V-Con 13 we plan to raise holy terror. The silent feud between BCSFA and ourselves seems ended, and we plan to adopt Leonard Wong of the VCBC (either that or give him a key to the office). We are starting to correspond more regularly with other clubs, now that they know we once more exist. Even Garth Spencer acknowledges our presence, although he continues to address his letters to someone named "Fellowbeing".

Some members have discussed a possible apa, even a criticzine (synopsing all the books of one author an issue, and rending the best and worst apart one by one; of course every fan gets his say). All we need is the interest, and the support of everyone out there.

[[I'll be happy to do my part by reviewing Horizon's SF in these pages, but first, Kyle, you have to send me a copy....]]

Gary Crowder
3109 King George VI Highway
(In a posted Deer-Crossing Zone)
Surrey, BC
V4A 5B2
85.07.23

Michael Coney's letter is intelligent, well-written and well-considered; even more so is your reply, Robert. I read both, later re-read them, and will likely re-read them again. As to Michael Coney's statement about disliking nationalism because it's a principal cause of wars: Yes, chauvinistic ultra-nationalism is a cause of wars; should Canada therefore follow a strategy of unilateral cultural disarmament? I really don't think the American fans will resent us for having a national award and giving our authors some special attention. I favour special attention for Canadian literature, and to that extent I guess I'm a cultural "nationalist".

On Leslie David's loc: you exercised admirable restraint in not giving Leslie the obvious reply, "Spoken like a true American cultural imperialist." Why must anti-nationalists label Canadian nationalists as being anti-American?

Garth Spencer
1296 Richardson St.
Victoria, BC
V8V 3E1
85.03.20

You are failing to make your point about Canadian suff, because you know what you're pointing at, but half your readers are *never* seeing it, to know what the words are talking about. You are not convincing me that an award is bringing attention to any Canadian SF or authors. If anything, the veribage that is reaching me all says "*Nobody is handling publicity.*"

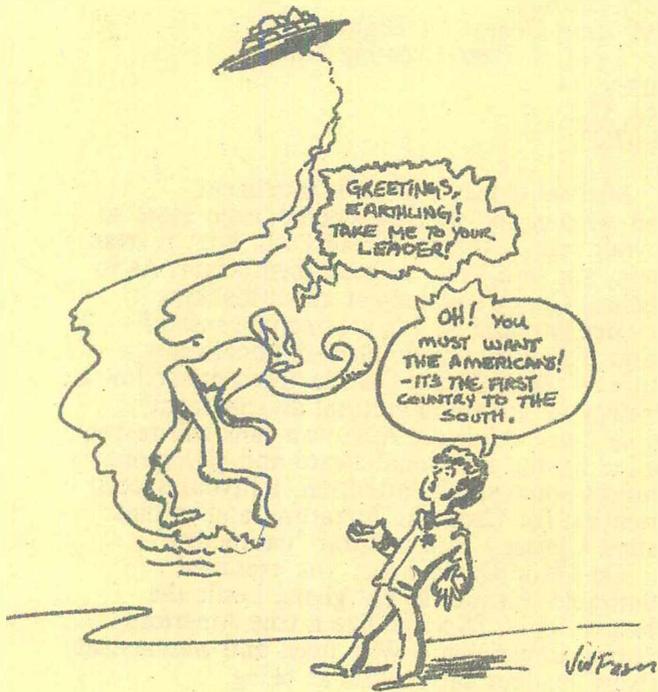
Let us just publicize Canadian authors in the first place, whatever else we do, okay? Tell me who-all they are. Or Canadian SF, all right? All I know is what I am printing in MLR, or who I am sending it to, or who I get mail from.

Lee Pelton does not know that American patriotism is the (insecure) result of a massive advertising campaign, kept up for generations, from right after the Revolution, intended to *create* an artificial American national identity.

William Bains
146 North Road
Combe Down
Bath, Avon
UNITED KINGDOM
85.06.08

Thanks for *New Canadian Fandom* late Cretaceous edition.

Your fanzine reviews almost convince me that it is worth writing off to a few editors for copies. Almost because, well, I never seem to get around to these things. Very unhelpful, I know, but there it is. I thereby deduce Bains'



Law of Reciprocal Fanac: the number of fans doing something is inversely proportional to the number of them doing it. Few fans loc everything, most fans loc only a couple of fanzines. I think that it would be deducible from quantum thermodynamics, thus proving that fandom is made up of inelastic spheres moving at random, or, as we scientists say, a load of balls.

[[I think I almost understood that....]]

Why do people go to big conventions? 'Tis beyond me. Almost as beyond me as is, why they organize them. Your review of the problems someone had with Constellation '83 merely underlined the point that it is an enormously difficult and totally thankless task to organize a convention, and you would be better off robbing banks, which is at least profitable. I suppose someone must enjoy it, however, as the cons keep on cropping up.

Ah, now Dave Vereschagin's article struck a chord. We were in the USA for over two years and during that time I took great care never to be ill. I believe that the USA medical system, as well as being vastly over-priced, is significantly under-talented. We mixed with quite a few doctors at Stanford, and most of the foreign ones and about half the US doctors had something damning to say about the practice of medicine in their speciality. An anaesthetist told us that operations take two or three times as long in US hospitals he had visited because doctors were not sure what they were doing. This correspondingly put up the risk of side-effects from either the operation or the anaesthetic. One English GP told us with some alarm that he had heard recently of someone being treated for back trouble by an operation for vertebral fusion--an absolute last resort anywhere else in the world. And, of course,

there are coronary bypass operations, now widely held to be of marginal use even in otherwise healthy patients with a cardiac disorder. And the amounts of antibiotics fed to the population alarms even some US doctors.

One doctor told my wife that whatever happened, we must not land ourselves in the emergency room at Stanford: they x-ray you, test blood gasses and metabolites, put you on an intravenous drip (so the drugs can be administered through it later) and then ask you what is wrong. This was a practicing US doctor speaking. They are, of course, all barbarians.

Speaking of unreal government, Lee Pelton has a totally unreal view of his country's government. American nationalism may have died in 1776, but its resurrected corpse still walks the Earth as one of the most active zombies of modern times. Every time Reagan gives one of those oh-so-sincere, grandfatherly speeches about how the Contras in Nicaragua are no different than the Founding Fathers, the thing called American Nationalism takes another step towards straddling the whole world.

American (oh, by the way, I assume that he means the US, like most US citizens when they refer to "America") nationalism oozed out of the plastic work at the L.A. Olympics, bravely faced down 700 Cuban maintenance engineers with 10,000 marines at Granada, fuels the largest military buildup of all time, and has made the USA a byword for brash self-opinionated burks everywhere in the world. Among the liberal educated SF readers, US nationalism may be dead, but I doubt it. But unless we are to begin to suffer hallucinations that our views apply to everyone, we should all--especially Lee--watch the TV news to see what the outside world is doing. It is usually frightening.

Your 'Canadian SF' debate is very silly, as I hope you have realized by now. It rests on a fundamental error: that there is such a thing as Canadian *anything* outside the Canadian government. This is quite wrong. To take one example, some of the 'Canadians' you are exhorting to write 'Canadian' SF would write it in French, the rest in English. The idea is as silly as that of an 'American' (meaning US) SF. How could Ursula LeGuin, living in the dark forests of Oregon, write the same SF as Niven or Pournelle revelling in a high-tech Los Angeles? Contrast *The Word For World Is Forest* with any work by Larry Niven where the trees are invariably hostile to man. There is no such thing as a 'Canadian' SF other than in the trivial sense of one full of moose and parkas which you rightly reject. There may be an SF which reflects the concerns and feelings of a section of Canadian society, and even a section found nowhere else on earth, as John Wyndham's stories emanate uniquely from the urban middle-class of mid-20th century England. But it is not *Canadian*, only Vancouver-suburban, or whatever.

And of course, once you have identified a particular SF as Vancouver-suburban or whatever, you will find that much of the SF being written in Canada is being left out. Hence artificial geographic awards, such as a

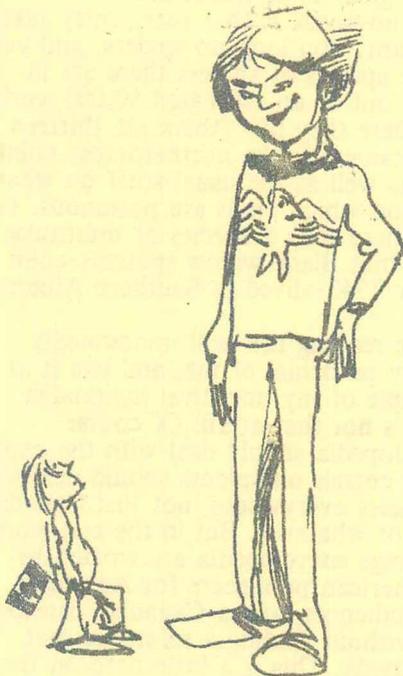
Canadian SF award, are as silly as Michael Coney suggests. (And this is the man you say remains British?! Sir, anyone who puts maple syrup on *anything* is jolly well not British. By George, I say not.)

[[I have never exhorted anyone to write Canadian SF. I do not want to impose a national culture on anyone. I do not expect Phyllis Gottlieb to write like Elisabeth Vonarburg. (If there is a unifying theme to Canadian culture, it is a celebration of our cultural diversity.) All I have ever suggested is that a national award might focus attention on those Canadian authors (of whatever subculture) who might otherwise be overlooked by New York editors and American/British readers.]]

Mary E. Gray (formerly Tyrrell)
414 Winterhaven Drive
Newport News, VA 23606, USA
85.08.03

One reason why U.S. citizens may tend toward some forms of cultural imperialism, namely, assuming that U.S. = "American" is that we have no proper name to call ourselves. Others can say, "I'm Canadian, I'm Mexican, I'm British, I'm Greek," etc. What are we going to say? "I'm an USian?" "A Stateser?" Yech! So we fall back on "American" which, if not totally accurate, is not totally incorrect.

[[Oh I don't know, USian has a kind of a ring to it....]]



"IT'S LIKE ANYTHING ELSE—
YOU GOT YUR DOMESTIC
AN' YOU GOT YUR
FURRAIN SF!"

Brad W. Foster
4109 Pleasant Run
Irving, TX 75038
85.04.05

Bruce Townley's three 'toons this issue were the high points of the art: a little rough as drawings, but very funny, clever stuff. Enjoyed Taral's article as well; nice seeing such coverage of fanartists, some I'm familiar with, some not. Taral seems to do so many indepth historical type articles, it's a wonder he ever has time to do his own art as well. Does he have a job or is he a full-time fan?

[[He is a full-time fan.]]

Dave Szurek won my immediate support in his article when the first movie he listed is one of my own personal favorite bad-movies, *Astro-Zombies*. I've always felt this one was badly neglected in most listings of bad-movies. Nice to see it getting some coverage. (Not quite up there with the ultimate bad flick, *The Creeping Terror*, but pretty damn close!) Many of the other films I've not seen, and so have filed the titles away in my memory in hopes that, next time they show up on the Late-LateShow, I'll be sure to give them a look. I look forward to seeing *Teenage Zombies*, which sounds wonderfully horrendous!

Howard Scrimgeour
Compuserve 75126,2744
85.07.08

One of the hazards of publishing infrequently: your announcement of Michael Wallis' marriage reaches us nearly a year after his separation (84.08.31).

I was mildly interested by Taral's fan history column. It was at least an improvement over the fiction that he's been running in *MLR* under the same title. He's at his best when dealing with the long-past history of fandom. When he gets close to the present, he has great difficulty maintaining any semblance of objectivity. For example, his description of Toronto fan artist Elizabeth Pearse as "a neo-like enthusiast of advanced years" is uncalled for, and hardly fair. Taral also states, "I have not attempted to discuss convention artists...because I don't think an artist who has never been in a fanzine is properly a fan artist". This in spite of the fact that he mentions Julie Lewis, who, he says, "has never been published", and Elizabeth Pearse, who works with acrylic and sometimes airbrush, and is noted for her work which appears in convention art shows. Taral, however, is well known for his elitist attitudes, and his animosity to much of current Toronto fandom, and Elizabeth Pearse in particular. He also states that he finds it "difficult to imagine why...the fan artist isn't equally interested in fanzines as a showplace." I'm not aware of any satisfactory means of reproducing watercolor-and-ink drawings, acrylic paintings, and three-dimensional sculptures with the use of a mimeograph machine, but perhaps Taral, with his vastly superior knowledge and experience with this medium, has achieved this. Frankly, my opinion of Taral's definition of a "fan artist" is best put in his own words: "If this isn't snobbery, it is at least of limited academic value."

On The New Canadian Encyclopedia

I have just received in the mail my copy of the first new Canadian Encyclopedia in two generations. It is three volumes, \$125, available at your local bookstore or direct from Hurtig Publishers in Edmonton.

The work was started by a \$4 million dollar grant from the Alberta Provincial Government and its promise to buy a set for every school in Alberta, and libraries in cities across Canada, as one of its more constructive 75th Anniversary projects. The colour printing was paid for by the Nova Corporation, so you are getting more than one could reasonably expect for \$125 in a strictly commercial undertaking. The whole thing was five years in the making, and will take another two years to translate into French for "*L'Encyclopedie du Canada*".

My first impression was somewhat negative. The frontispiece is terrible, a "colourful" collage of famous Canadians drawn in the worst tradition of junior high school textbooks. Not only is the artwork predestrian (and for some annoying reason, all the people are depicted as having shiny noses), but the choice of Canadian heroes and objects are stereotypical and cliched. I mean, a totem pole? Canada Geese? A bush plane? Give me a break! Is this the image of "Canada" we want to project to ourselves or others? Bah humbug!

Once past the frontispiece, I quickly noticed a second feature that annoys the hell out of me. Everything in boldface is *smaller* than regular type. Why put a proper noun or title in a typeface that's harder to read than the regular text? It looks awful! But then Mike thinks I'm brain damaged when it comes to choosing typefaces, so what do I know?

Then I tried looking up some famous Canadians. I started with John Robert Colombo, because that seemed a fairly good test of how inclusive and up-to-date they were likely to be. Well, there he was on page 375, 56 mm of print. With a large hole in the middle of the passage. The colour printing for the photo on the reverse had torn the page. This seemed highly symbolic: The first entry I look at, and it's torn. I was not impressed.

The entry itself seems accurate and informative, though it does not, of course, mention his importance to SF.

Fantasy fiction is given one whole column under "Popular Fiction in English", written by--you guessed it--John Robert Colombo, and a third of a column under "Popular Literature in French", by Benoit Melancon. Colombo's review is hardly inclusive, but he does manage to pack an incredible amount of information into this brief entry, including his own interpretation of why Canadians don't write much SF and what constitutes Canadian fantasy

in the first place. While I do not always agree with Dr. Colombo, I certainly have to agree that he was the logical choice to write this entry, and have to congratulate the editors for knowing enough to know that.

(One sometimes gets the feeling with such projects that the entries are written by the editor's friends, or by whomever was handy. This has certainly been the case on some curriculum projects with which I have been involved. Here, however, most of the examples I have seen have been written by the leading Canadian authority in the field.)

Once skipping through the obvious SF references, I also checked out a few examples from my own field of expertise. I was gratified to find that the entries on Canadian sociologists, political economists, and so on, demonstrated a high degree of scholarship and included at least brief entries on all of the names I expected to find. Entries on subjects like "Social Mobility" were informative and politically correct, and generally included a suggested reading for further study (in this case the classic *Vertical Mosaic* by John Porter).

The really great thing about the encyclopedia, however, is that *every* entry takes a Canadian slant. You look up spiders, and you get how many species of spiders there are in Canada (1300 out of an estimated 50,000 world wide), and where they live (there are thirteen species on Ellesmere I, the northernmost point in Canada), as well as the usual stuff on what they live on and which kinds are poisonous. (I didn't know there were 9 species of tarantulas in Canada or that Black widow spiders--color photo on page 1742--lived in Southern Alberta, either.)

Americans reading this will undoubtedly think this very parochial of me, and cite it as another example of my uncritical nationalist fervor, but it's not that at all. Of course ideally, encyclopedia should deal with the entire universe, and entries on spiders should deal with all 50,000 species everywhere, not just Canadian or American or whatever. But in the real world, English language encyclopedias are written by British or American publishers for American and British audiences, and a Canadian can look for months without finding a reference that applies to Canada. This is a little hard on the self-image of the Canadian student. It's as if we didn't exist, or that nothing important was ever discovered or happened in Canada. A student trying to find out about spiders ends up giving a report on spiders which are found in Montana or Africa, but is unable to tell his classmates if spiders can live in the arctic.

And it's not just a question of bias either. While an American publisher would probably find an entry with American examples inherently more interesting than one with

Canadian illustrations, the real problem is that with all the stuff that happens everywhere in the world, the number of things to come out of Canada which effect nonCanadians is going to be a relatively small propotion of the total. If you are going to have write-ups on the top ten sociologists in history, you write about Marx and Durkhiem and Weber and Talcott Parsons, and not about Harold Adams Innis. Innis is incredibly important to the development of a *Canadian* sociology, but who has ever heard of him outside of Canada? He's not included in American undergraduate reading lists because he wrote and theorized about Canada, and there is no earthly reason why American undergraduates should bother with him. It's not that he's not important enough to warrent an entry, but that he is only important if you are interested in Canada.

The danger is that if American encyclopedia don't mention Innis, and the only encyclopedia in Canadian schools and universities are American, then Canadians might not ever hear of him either. Thus, an important part of our Canadian heritage might be lost in the smothering avalanche of our (equally important) European and American cultural heritage.

Thus, on general subjects, I see *The Canadian Encyclopedia* as an exciting supplement to the already existing and widely consulted American and British encyclopedia. *The Canadian Encyclopedia* makes no attempt to replace these other references, and they will still have to be consulted for information on, say, the life of Karl Marx. Many such subjects simply cannot be addressed in these three volumes.

In other areas, *The Canadian Encyclopedia* deals with the subject, but primarily as it relates to Canada. For most purposes, the information on spiders in this encyclopedia will be sufficient, but if not, by all means consult *The Encyclopedia Britanica*. Or start with *The Grolier Encyclopedia* for general background, and turn to the *Canadian Encyclopedia* for Canadian examples or applications.

Of course, on Canadian subjects, the new encyclopedia is a unique reference work, and can stand alone. There really is an amazing amount of information in these three volumes, and it's tempting to just browse the text at random. After reading a number of entries, each emphasizing Canadian content, it's almost possible to believe that we really do have a separate definable Canadian viewpoint. What a concept!

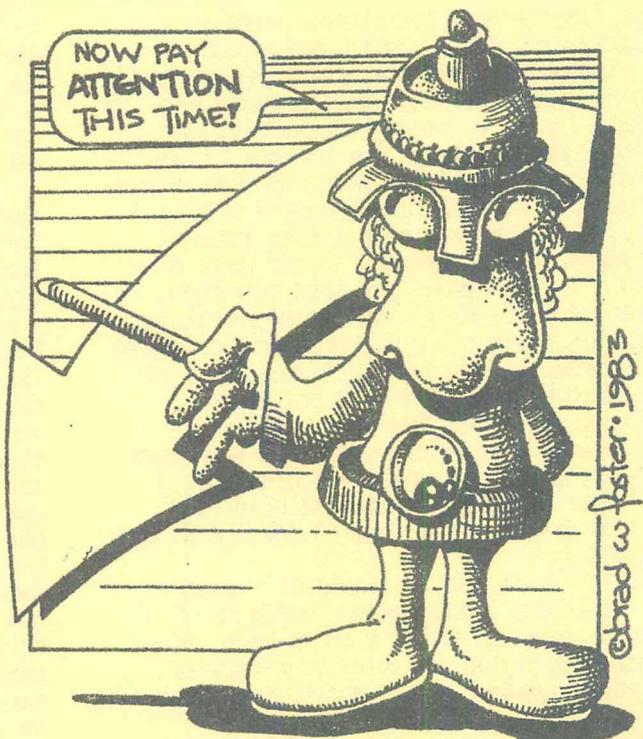
On the whole then, I was very impressed with the encyclopedia, and highly recommend it to Canadians. And at \$125, where else are you going to get a set of encyclopedia? (Or do you want people to think you read sf because you're not smart enough for the other stuff?)

On Increasing Productivity

Of the many things for which I have to thank Mike Hall, the most important is pressuring me into buying a computer. No, no, don't skip to the next section yet; I promise not to go on about hardware and bytes and CPU and like that. Ghod knows there is nothing more boring than a computer hack discussing various esoteric aspects of whatever brand of computer he happens to have, unless it is a fan talking about printing equipment. (Have I mentioned my three new Gestetners yet?) But there are three things I have simpy got to tell you.

First, if you do not now own a computer but use a typewriter, sell the typewriter for what you can get, and buy a computer. If you think a computer is just a faster, slicker version of a correcting selectric, think again. It's a whole new ball game.

Let me give you a personal example. When I did my master's, I typed my thesis myself. Since one wasn't allowed any typos, it took me about an hour to type each page. (Knowing you can't make mistakes slows you to a quarter your normal speed.) Each time a prof wanted to revise a sentence in the thesis, I ended up having to retype the whole chapter because the revision changed where things ended on the page, and of course everything in a thesis has to be just so. So I figure I must have typed the whole thing through about ten times. Multiply approximately 300 pages by ten by an hour per



page and you get 3000 hours of typing. Which divided by a 30 hour week comes out to 100 weeks or roughly two years of typing. Of *TYPING!* Talk about wasted effort. By the time I was through with typing my thesis I was so sick of it all that I swore I would never go back.

Enter word-processing. I typed and edited a friend's thesis in four months. The profs demanded revisions, and we made the lot in about six hours. Six hours verses two years. I decided to go back to university for my Ph.D.

I wrote my lastest (80 page) term paper in three days rather than eight weeks. Then I recycled it as an issue of my personalzine. (No retyping, even though I cut parts out, added new stuff, changed from term paper format to two column newsletter format and added 15 illustrations). Then I recycled it again as a submission to a small press university mag. (New format, no new typing.)

Or take my prof. He hadn't published one article in the ten years that I'd known him (well, he was a terrific teacher), until this year. He got a MacIntosh in May, and he is currently working on his third article. I tell you folks, this stuff is magic.

But it's not just that word-processing is faster than typing, though I have doubled my typing speed since getting a computer (because who worries about typos anymore?). It's not just that you can go back and correct typing mistakes or make revisions without having to type the whole thing over again. It's not even fancy stuff like getting the computer to *point out* your spelling mistakes and correcting them for you, or compiling indexes and aligning footnotes properly at the bottom of every page, and building filing systems and databases. That's only the beginning. The real quantum leap in productivity comes from the fact that it changes the way you think about writing.

Used to be, when I had typed a page of a term paper or fanzine, that was it. To change it would have required retyping the whole page, so it became frozen in stone, because who had time to retype anything? But because I knew that whatever I typed was going to be it, it had to be perfect. So each time I started writing, I had to get the first sentence perfect before I could go on to the second. I would spend three weeks on the first page, and then two nights on the remaining 19. Now, with word-processing, this rigidity is gone. I type everything stream of consciousness and then go back and revise later.

Used to be I hated to take out a good paragraph, no matter how redundant or off topic, because it represented effort I was loath to waste. Now, thanks to word-processing, I "save" it to another disk and use it another time. (Or anyway, that's what I tell myself as I edit it out.)

Used to be that if I thought of a really great point after I had passed were it fitted, I used to leave it out rather than go back. With wordprocessing, you can move any block of type from anywhere to anywhere. Now, I go back.

Look, maybe you are not as rigid or lazy as I am, so maybe you don't have trouble getting yourself to write fourteen drafts, or to

abandon unpromising leads, or getting footnotes just right, or retyping the description of the scene before the dialog (when you realize you should have the hero meet the heroine before he speaks to her); but for me, word-processing has been incredibly liberating.

It's not just that this is an easier technique. It's that it represents a new gestalt; that the improvement is more than the mere sum of its parts. It's not so much a technological change as a change in attitude. It's like the automobile: Sure the invention of cars made it easier to go to the next village, but the import of that was that who you married changed (because you could choose from the next village too), dating patterns changed (because why bother with chaperones if the guy was going to run out of gas on the way home?), cities changed (because cars made freeways and suburbia and shopping malls possible), *everything* changed. It wasn't just that a two hour walk became a ten minute ride, it was that our attitude to distance changed. Word-processing is like that.

So, unless you're Harry Warner, Jr. (who is a word-processor) go out and get a computer and see if I am not right. I positively promise it will increase your productivity, and if writing takes up a significant portion of your work or leisure time, it may even change your life.

Ok, that's number one. Number two is that *NCF* is heavily computerized. The only way I can even think about putting out a fanzine these days is with the aid of word-processing. I use this typeface and this layout because it's incredibly easy, not because I'm trying to look like *Locus*. In future, Mr. Hall and I will try to work out a less pretentious typeface, but in the meantime try to be understanding. (*NCF* retains its fannishness, however, in using mimeo reproduction---have I mentioned my recent purchase of three new Gestetners?---rather than selling out to quick print photocopy.) If you are already using a word-processor and own a modem, we would appreciate receiving your submission in electronic form. The less retyping we have to do the better.

And speaking of modems, Number three is that portions of *NCF* are available in electronic form on Compuserve. To be honest, we get less feedback through Compuserve than we do in print, but I just love high tech. I have enclosed a longish review of Compuserve in this issue because (a) a number of readers commented that the brief instructions for accessing *NFC* via Compuserve listed in the colophon last issue were insufficient, and (b) I think everyone should know about such developments, even if they are not interested in participating themselves. We are going to have to stop telling neos, for example, that fandom consists of fanzines, conventions and clubs, because now there is the fourth option of computer bulletin boards. I realize that there are some trufans who remain skeptical of cons and clubs, let alone these bulletin board upstarts, but the nature of our beloved fandom is changing, and we have to be aware, if not always approving, of these developments.

On Gestetners

I recently made the deal of the century on three used Gestetners. Mike Hall found a tiny ad in the back of the newspaper saying that Gestetner were selling Gestetner 460s and misc. supplies for two hours on a Saturday. (The local office had just been designated the distribution centre for the Western region, so they were trying to clear out the garbage from their warehouse in anticipation of taking on additional new inventory.) Mike lent me his car and I arrived an hour early and was third in line. The first guy grabbed a 460 and all the ink. The second guy got all the paper. I bought the second 460 and two 320s at the incredible price of \$70 each. (Going rate for a used 460 is about \$500; \$350-400 for a 320.) I also bought two used cabinets for \$30 each. Everything in the warehouse was gone in about 40 minutes.

Why buy three Gestetners? Well as every trufan knows, it's an incredible pain to change ink colours on mineo duplicators, so mostly no one ever bothers. With three machines, however, one simply uses black on the first, blue on the second, and red on the third. Of course it takes a while for the last of the black ink to work itself out of the machine (since I don't have proper colour change kits) so some of the printing this issue may be a bit off, but please bear with us. In the long run, *NCF* and probably *MLR*, will be using a lot more colour.

By my count, this recent purchase makes Edmonton one of the Great Fannish Duplicating Powers. In addition to these three new machines, I have a handcrank ABDick, a 1930's handcrank Gestetner 26, and an electrostenciler. Mike Hall has two 460s, a Gestetner 260, and an ABDick. Georges Giguere has two Gestetner 260s, a Roneo, a ditto machine and a broken electrostenciler. Derek McCulloch has a Gestetner 366.

The great irony here, of course, is that after twelve years in fandom, I finally get the print shop I always wanted just in time to gafiate. I

mean, aside from *NCF* and *I'm Not Boring You Am I?*, what do I need all this printing equipment for? Where was this stuff 6 years ago when I was trying to put out *Neology*, *The Monthly Monthly*, and a dozen apazines? Where was this equipment when Edmonton was still a major fan publishing centre? Who does fanzines in Edmonton any more?

Sigh By the time you're old enough to buy all the toys you want, you're too old for toys....

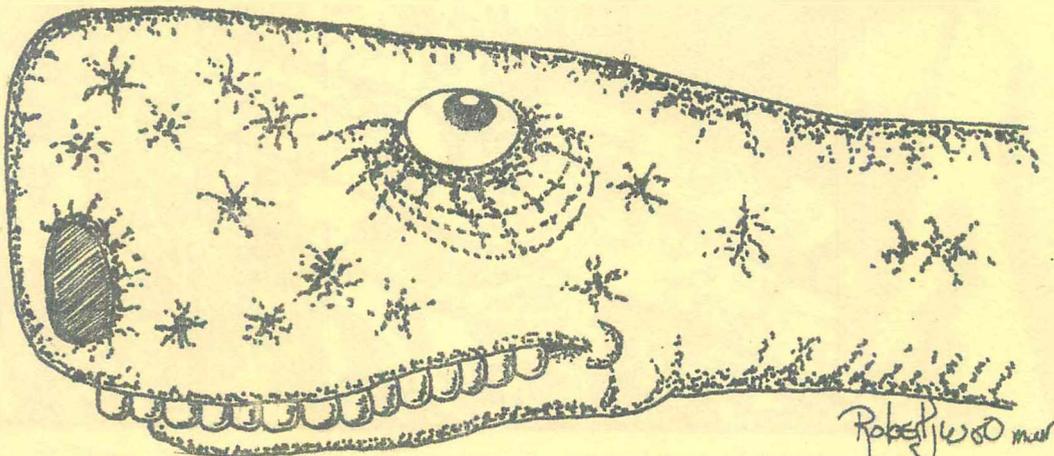
On University

This year I have three comprehensive exams to pass; each comp is a week long and can be on absolutely anything that pops into the head of one of the examiners. This is fairly scary stuff, since it is the first time in a long time that I might actually fail at some academic endeavour. (To bring the point home to me, the department just failed another Ph.D. candidate in his orals this month. Five years down the tubes for the poor bastard.) It looks like I'm actually going to have to do some work for a change.

I'm also teaching a new course, Educational Foundations 360, "School and Society". Once again I find myself teaching a course I haven't actually taken myself, but this *is* stuff I'm supposed to know, so I guess it's ok. It's the first time that I have had to more or less write the whole course myself, since the first year course I had taught previously had a specified curriculum, text, assignments, etc., and was highly structured and closely supervised. Here I'm on my own. Mostly that's an advantage, since I like to do things my own way, but it is a lot more work.

I was also gratified to see that some of my students from Ed.Fdn.201 signed up for 360 and did not ask to transfer out once they found I was teaching it. Perhaps there is hope for me yet.

LET'S SEE - RIGHT REAR LEG
FIRST, OR IS IT RIGHT FRONT LEG? OR
MAYBE IT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH
THE TAIL...



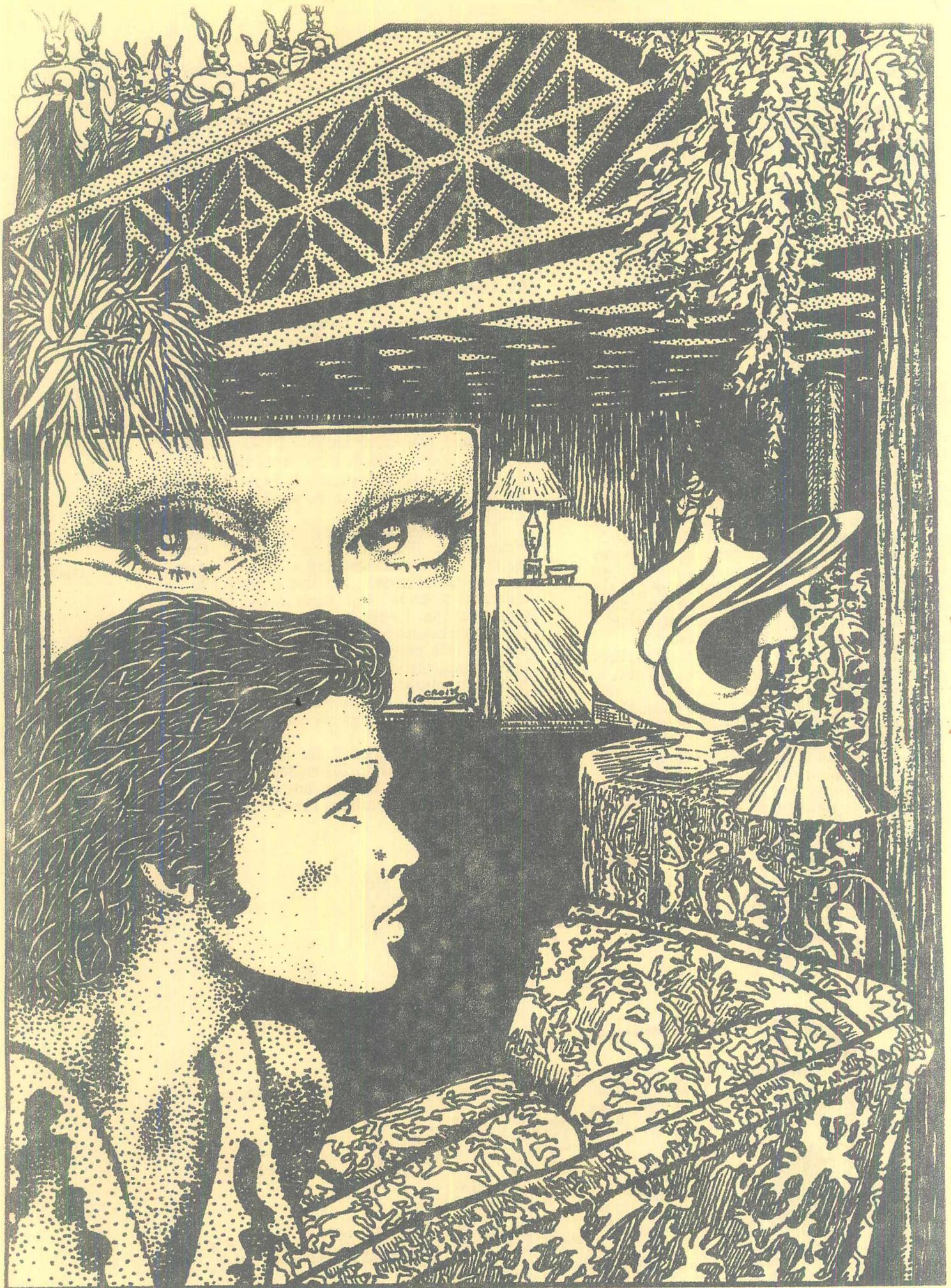


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