

TWINK 13

CONTRIBUTIONS GUIDELINES

Available for "the usual" defined as follows:

Articles. Check with us on anything over 2500 words. Some SF/fantasy/fandom content is preferred.

Relevant book or movie reviews.

Convention reports.

Letters of comment.

(All written material is subject to editing for length and content.)

We are not interested in publishing: fiction, poetry, mundane travelogues.

Art is always welcome but we're pretty well stocked for interior illos at this time. Artists are encouraged to check with us about possible covers.

In trade for other fanzines.

Editorial whim.

CONGRATULATIONS

...are in order for Steve Stiles, the recipient of the first Rotsler Award presented by Loscon for lifetime achievement as a fan artist. Steve modestly allows, "Bill and I collaborated on a number of things and I've always enjoyed and appreciated his cartooning/writing/art. I like to think that had we lived in the same area we would've become better friends -- and that would've been to my benefit." Any recognition of Steve's contributions to fandom is due, overdue, and past due.

Additional congratulations to: Velma "Vijay" Bowen, TAFF delegate, who is probably in U.K. as you read this; to Australian Open champions Martina Hingis and Yevgeny Kafelnikov; 1999 U.S. figure skating champions Michelle Kwan and Michael Weiss; and to Melissa Miller, who set a U.S. pole vault record at the Millrose Games.

THIS ISSUE'S ODDITIES

Okay, we promised a Franz Miklis cover -- it just wasn't planned to be this one. We had picked out one of Franz's less extravagant (read: clothed) ladies; but then his letter arrived, with this wonderfully goofy drawing. We had to copy it down a little to fit it on the cover, but we couldn't resist.

As for the proposed "Frohvet-Party", some of the credit/blame goes to Harry Warner Jr., who first joked about it in

the letter column. However, we do have a membership for the 2000 Worldcon. The best we can promise at this moment is that barring unusual developments, we plan to be in Chicago. We will try to arrange some sort of gathering. A dinner outing? (Anyone who knows Chicago want to suggest a place? Casual -- but with a liquor license.) Or would a private room party be preferable? Pink shirts optional. Stay tuned for further developments.

For content, we start this issue with Elizabeth Osborne's charmingly detailed account of the biggest event of the S.C.A. year. As promised, we collated the replies from numerous readers into the "SF 102" article. Joseph Nicholas and Patricia Russo sent reviews. Sue Mason sent more art, which you'll be seeing over the next several issues. And Taral Wayne provided the new logo for "The Half Naked One"; it took a little creative photocopying to fit her into the allotted space, but we managed. In addition to all the standard features.

At this writing (first week in March) we have not committed to a cover for #14 but possibilities are being explored. We will probably use at least two short articles of our own: our response to some things we were sent on how to do a fanzine, and belatedly, we will use Trinlay Khadro's art of "Chateau de Frohvet" and the piece we wrote to go with it. Possible articles and reviews from others have been discussed, but nothing has been committed to #14 yet. Should anyone care, there will probably be at least two more in our "We're All African Anyway" series but we make no guarantees at this time as to when they will appear.

OUCH

We saw it first in Knarley Knews, and read it over about five times before it sank in. Buck Coulson died in February. Mortality is part of the game, and fandom has suffered some cruel losses lately, but this one got us on a personal level. It seems hard to imagine we won't get another of his LOC's, manually-typed on both sides of one sheet, full of anecdotes from an eventful life in and out of fandom. We're following Henry Welch's precedent of pubbing Buck's last LOC; but it takes on a new meaning now.

This is issue #13 of Twink, a quarterly fanzine from Chaffinch Publications. Next issue: July 1999. Deadline for next issue: May 31, 1999. Twink is available for "The Usual" -- see editorial guidelines. Our main focus remains on SF/fantasy/fandom. All letters received will be presumed to be intended as LOC's and considered for publication unless specifically marked DNQ.

Mailing list policy: Anyone who writes/contributes/trades more or less regularly (approximately every other issue) is likely to stay on the mailing list. Anyone who is sent unsolicited issues, who does not respond at all after two issues, may be dropped from the mailing list without further notice. If this title page is highlighted in yellow, you may assume you will not receive further issues without responding in some manner.

This issue is dedicated to the memory of Karen Powell. If you don't know who that is, don't worry about it. We know, and that's what matters.

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pp. 15,32: Lydia & Phil Tortorici
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Twink

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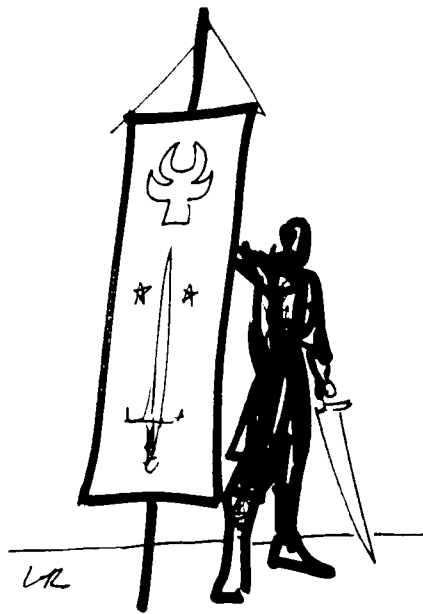


Elizabeth

For those of you who don't know, the Society of Creative Anachronisms is a historical recreation society that seeks to re-enact the Middle Ages, mostly the period from 600 A.D. to 1600 A.D. Its largest gathering is the Pennsic War, held each August for two weeks in the woods of western Pennsylvania between Slippery Rock and Pittsburgh. This event has been held the last 21 years at Cooper's Lake campground. For the last few years, nearly 10,000 people (the official total for 1998 was 9,992) have travelled to the area from around the country and overseas to attend this event. This chronicle is a look at this year's [[1998]] event and a look at the past.

Why review this event in an SF fanzine? Well, the SCA's had strong origins in the SF/fantasy community and can still find threads linking the two groups. Many a time I have sat under a tent or park shelter during a rainy afternoon only to hear the conversation switch to something like, "Did you read that latest Jack Vance novel?", or "What have you heard about B5?" Indeed many of SF's biggest names, Poul Anderson, L. Sprague deCamp, and Bjo Trimble have also had long careers in the SCA, and in some instances, infamous ones. In general, the SCA pulls in the same type of people that SF fandom reaches. Talented, creative, independent yet wanting to belong to a group where they feel at home, the SCA often provides the awkward teenager their first taste of social success, the geeky nerd with respect for his knowledge, the bored middle aged man or woman an outlet for the interest they had all their lives but couldn't find the time for in the past: a scope for the person who loves to read history and a stage for the former high school jock who always wanted to be a knight in shining armor.

The SCA spread to the Midwest when a gentle, Cariadoc of the Bow, travelled to



Osborne

the Berkeley CA Worldcon in the early 1970's. There he saw an SCA demo that fueled his desire to form a group in his native Chicago. At the next Windycon, he held the first SCA event in the Midwest. Soon he was the first King of the Middle Kingdom, and the history of the Pennsic War was on.

As King, he sensed the need for a focus for the fighters of the Midrealm to rally against. Due to a job transfer Cariadoc had to step down as King and as he did so, he sent an arrow to the Eastern Kingdom demanding control of certain lands on the frontier. After moving to the Eastern Kingdom, he soon became its King, and in this position he accepted the War Arrow from the Middle Kingdom, becoming the only King ever to declare war on himself. The first five Pennsic Wars were held around Cleveland OH but they were not successful and after the fifth year, there were great fears the wars would end. Then the war moved to Cooper's Lake campground, where it has stayed all this time.

As with Worldcon, planning for Pennsic Wars starts early. By the end of one year's war, next year's officers and heads are already named. Planning goes on with staff meetings and long distance communication all over the country.

For the general member, planning for Pennsic starts as early as April. That's when the pre-registration forms arrive in the mail (or should). These also include general information and guidelines for the events, as well as a list of officers and department heads. Also at this time comes the request for land grab (at which different groups request how much land and where they want to camp). This year, however, the death of Prince Jafar, heir to the Midrealm throne, had thrown a wrench into the works. Instead of material arriving in April as usual, the booklets did not get mailed until June. Happily,

many people could register on-line and keep up to date by the web site.

In view of the upcoming event, I had bought a used minivan in April (something I have needed for years) rather than trying again to rent a larger car to take all my stuff to Pennsic. Unlike a Worldcon, at which all you have to take is yourself, your clothing and maybe a few things, at Pennsic people have to take virtually everything for two weeks. This includes a tent, clothing, kitchen equipment, food, personal stuff, plus for many people art supplies, heavy armor, and sometimes wooden structures to build temporary housing at the War. The Cooper's campground does not allow RV's or trailers, and the area does not have enough motel space for even a fraction of those attending.

The van was being repaired (rebuilding the transmission) up to mid June and I worried that it would not be ready in time. I had never been able to go to all two weeks of Pennsic, but this year was a special case. I missed the second weekend due to change in the date of Lima OH's Square Fair (Lima's largest annual art and crafts fair) to the second weekend in August rather than the first. Unhappily the Square Fair is the largest recruiting event that our local SCA has. This year, instead of leaving Friday afternoon, I was in town until Monday and then had to stay even longer because of van breakdown. The van got fixed Monday afternoon and I was able to leave by late afternoon. After driving three hours, I stopped at my Dad's house to visit and stay the night. Early Tuesday morning, I left for the rest of the way. Another three hours' travel, last year over nearly empty highway, this year filled with road construction and traffic. I reached Cooper's Lake campground.

As usual the first thing I saw from the highway was the fields full of parked cars and later thousands of brightly colored tents. As I pulled into the campground, I was unhappy to see the field battle taking place to my left but the line to the entrance to the campground was mercifully short. The second weekend of the War is the busiest arrival time and I had missed the rush. I checked in and didn't have to pay anything due to pre-registering. I also found my camping area had been listed on the camp map and I was on top of the Runestone Hill. Great!! The area was a new addition to the campground but was very full by the time I got there. Happily, a

single camper was welcomed by the group (from Ann Arbor MI) camping near my area and I set up my tent and campsite that afternoon.

I was very tired that evening but after I took my car to a nearby lot, I went to the camp store to buy ice and milk. I also called home to tell my Dad that I arrived safely and was set up. This year I did not travel into town to shop at the local supermarket and hardware stores but I have in the past. The War brings a fair amount of money into the area each year and it is not unusual to be in McDonalds or K-Mart and see someone in medieval garb. Hardware and sports stores are usually busy and at times stripped bare. Last year during the UPS strike, there was a run on wicks for Coleman lanterns and I don't think for a time there were any in two counties. Local farmers bring in loads of corn on the cob and firewood to sell and the area propane dealer has a weekly delivery for people needing to refill their tanks.

I picked up a copy of the daily Pennsic newspaper and went over the program and list of activities and classes. I checked in at Troll, as I planned to work there at Pennsic. All activities at Pennsic are done by people who volunteer on their vacation time. Once it got dark, and after visiting the Masked Ball taking place in the barn on top of Runestone Hill, I walked the camp. After watching the dances I visited at a few campgrounds, including Red Spears Camp, my home group from Toledo OH. I also noticed some of the camp architecture that was new this year. Many groups put up gates, fences, and even small buildings to mark their campsites. I was most impressed by the Gate of the Royal Trioraries (from Florida). This gate included gas jets which lit the area. I passed by several very large scale parties before returning to my camp and turning in.

Next day, I dressed early and worked at Troll (registration area). Then did some errands. Local services are offered at Pennsic. The Cooper's sets up a "bank" to cash travellers' checks and sell post cards. I bought some and walked to the temporary post office. This is a small trailer painted in the Post Office colors and sells stamps and collects packages for mailing. Unfortunately they did not have a special Pennsic Cancellation stamp as in past years. I mailed my post cards and

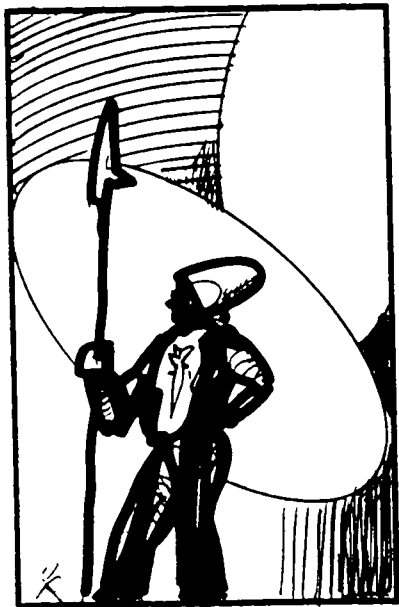
ate lunch at the food court, a series of stalls that had set up kitchens and sold fast food (pizza, Chinese, Greek, and burgers as well as a deli). The campground has its own pay phones but they are not enough for the number of people. The local phone company brings in extra phones on trailers for people to use. The single most common item of high technology, however, seemed to be the cell phone. Any emergency or desire to make an important call, sick child, AAA, pizza order, would be met by half a dozen people reaching into their pouches or baskets to pull out a small black square.

Special services at Pennsic were handled very well (as usual) by a corps of volunteer security, fire marshal, and medical personnel. In a place where 75% of the lighting is open flame, the danger of fire is very real. Last year, a group left a candle alight inside their tent, which burned with them inside it. They escaped unhurt but lost virtually all their gear. This year, a group was travelling to Pennsic towing a trailer behind them. Someone threw out a lighted cigarette and it landed on the top covering the trailer. It took fire and only the arrival of a truck driver with an extinguisher saved the day.

That Wednesday I spent the afternoon walking around with my video camera and visiting the different merchants. Shopping at Pennsic is the second most popular activity there, and people and merchants were certainly happy to be there. Many merchants were very pleased with their

sales. Even without any UPS strike, the merchants were selling out of their stock. An example, I was looking for a portable Hole (a type of metal stand, which can hold a banner or flag pole). I heard that a merchant brought 15 of them but when I got there he had sold out; he bought more iron, made 7 more and sold all but two of them. I bought one right there. I also walked out to the archery field to sign up as a volunteer Marshal in Training (MIT). To be able to oversee any of the combat activities, you must become a Marshal and undergo safety training. After walking back and getting lunch at the food court, I worked some time at the Troll booth. The crush was not very heavy and I enjoyed myself very much. I planned to take off for some classes but the ones I wanted were all filled. I ate dinner and returned to Troll so that other people could go to Atlantian court. After a few hours' work, I got off for Midnight Madness shopping.

On Wednesday, the Atlantian Royal Court held a children's party during the afternoon. This was a big plus as more and more SCA people are having children and bringing them to Pennsic. There are scheduled children's activities and a new playground for young children. This year, however, the playground was closed due to sand wasps and the children's activities are limited by time. In the past Pennsics, the staff has suggested that Pennsic is a great time to have the kids visit their grandparents; but more and more children are coming with their parents. Last year, there were nearly 400 children under the age of 5, more than the total number of people who attended the first Pennsic. They are getting younger and younger; I thought the limit was reached when I noticed a want ad for a babysitter for a 7-week-old baby during Midnight Madness but I was wrong. I was talking with some people at Troll about this when they told me about an 18-day-old baby at Pennsic. The parents had pre-signed themselves and Baby (after counting the dates). Nor did this turn out to be the lowest number. A couple from upstate New York had arrived early in the first week of Pennsic. The wife went into labor on Tuesday of the second week so she and her husband jumped into the car and drove back home to the hospital. As the wife was climbing into her hospital bed, she told her husband to





drive back and pick up the camping gear they had left behind. I heard this story as we wrote out a parking permit for the husband to go in and pick up their gear.

The second Wednesday is Midnight Madness. It is supposed to be a time when the merchants sell at discount prices. Usually the merchants close around dusk to join in the parties, etc., but on this night they stay open until midnight and often hire musicians and dancers to entertain the crowds. The

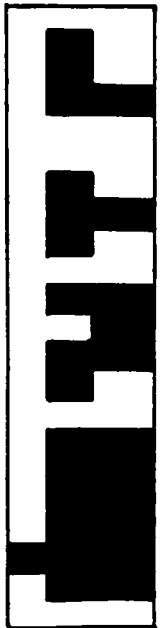
merchant area was packed and people were buying like crazy. Despite the 10% discount that was usual in the past, merchants were not knocking down their prices very much. A few consented to drop the sales tax for one night but it was not a place for great deals. You can get good stuff ranging in price from \$1 to \$3,000. Pennsic has a rep for very high prices but it is a great place to get hard to find items. I got my first saris at a Pennsic and after years of searching found Japanese obis for less than \$50. It is a good place to get traditional archery equipment, fighting armor, rattan (for sword making), Irish harps, bagpipes, hides of tanned leather, metal swords and other hard to find items. Prices at Pennsic are higher than at other SCA events but often lower than most mundane retail outlets. I bought nearly \$100 worth of books and then off to bed I went. The only thing I missed that night was the Japanese Tea Ceremony.

Thursday I overslept; I planned to work Troll early again and missed it. Troll was nice this year and the people who worked there were well treated. Last year, there had been a never ending flow of snack food and drink, donuts, rolls and hot drinks in the morning, cold soda and snack food the rest of the day. This year the freebies were certainly on the smaller scale. This may have been due to reduced donations, the food budget comes from people throwing money in a kitty, or that the person who was in charge of Troll ended up in the hospital from heat and stress. I spent most of the morning trying

to get to a few classes that were not filled. One of the main reasons that I attend Pennsic is the variety of art and craft classes that take place. This year, I didn't go to that many, mainly because I was working so much, but so many of the classes were filled. This year many of the classes seemed to be in the fiber arts (how to use a spinning wheel, fletmaking, beginning flax spinning, table top weaving etc.) and they all had a limit on the number of people who could attend. By the time I got to the Art/Sci tent many of the classes would be filled and with a waiting list! Many classes were repeats of those last year. This was good in one way because I was able to pick up a Kumihimo loom (Kumihimo is the Japanese method of braiding) for \$20. I took the class last year but didn't buy the loom as I thought it was too expensive. Then I saw one in a craft catalog for \$80.

The afternoon, I worked at the Archery Field helping do inspections (all equipment is inspected for safety before use). The experience was OK. It was a very hot day but I was in the shade which helped and the place kept busy so I wasn't bored. The water bearers came with gallons of fresh water every two hours but I was glad to get out of there. On my way back, I finally got to see a battle, the unbelted champions battle, which the Middle Kingdom won easily. I got a great view but I am sorry to say that I didn't have my video camera with me. I ended up back at my tent, made dinner, and got dressed for Midrealm court.

The Known World is divided up into ten kingdoms; most of these have their royalty at Pennsic. Each kingdom has a court at Pennsic where they recognize people and hand out awards. It is a chance for people to dress up and take part in the pageantry of the Middle Ages. The Midrealm court is one of the largest events at Pennsic and took place in the main Barn. I took my video camera and tripod and stood on the edge of the action. Good job, the court started only 15 minutes late with Queen Karan and Their Royal Highnesses arrived



with their followers all dressed up in Middle Eastern garb. The glitter, as always, was wonderful; but after a while the award handing out began to get dull. It is always best if you are seeing people you know rather than strangers. They made three people Laurels and two Pelicans. These are peerage positions. Laurels are people rewarded for their skill in the arts and sciences, and Pelicans are for service. I had a good view where I was but had a great number of people walking in front of me, and after an hour and a half I left. I stopped by the Troll booth but they didn't need any help so after an hour I turned in.

Working at Troll has its high points, you do get to meet everyone at the War. Pennsic has a rep for being a magnet for people who have no interest in historical recreation. "Hey man, I heard that there was this great party on the Internet" is the usual story but people like that are few. Another neat event was the time a gentle drove up in a tractor trailer cab. It was part of one of those huge 18-wheel jobs and the traffic and parking people were going crazy because it was too big to get through the roads of the campground.

Friday was my last full day at Pennsic and I finally made it to some classes. I spent most of the morning in the Art/Sci area and working at the archery field. Again, it became very hot but we were well watered and a baroness sent a watermelon to those working. After that, I did some last minute shopping including buying a new camp stool. Strangely, I found myself at loose ends the rest of the afternoon. I made an early dinner for myself and I headed up to the Barn for Great Court.

This time I was able to get on the balcony in the Barn. This seemed to have become the informal "press box" as four other people with their video cameras had already set up. It was roasting that day and the late afternoon had not brought a reduction in the temperature. One merchant had the great idea of putting their logo on paper fans and handed them out. Everyone it seems was waving a fan back and forth. My video looks like a flock of flying insects at rest with all the wings waving to and fro. It was hot in the balcony but there was a huge ceiling fan running right behind us. I worried that the noise would get on my tape but it did not. The event

was only 45 minutes late. Starting with the King and Queen of the East, each of the Majesties of the Known World marched into the Barn and up to the staging area on which each pair of thrones was placed. Personally, I think the entrance of Queen Kara and the Middle Kingdom was the best. Her followers threw candy to the crowd which is always a big hit.

The court started with each of the crowns rising and making a speech of thanks for such a nice Pennsic and everyone's hospitality. The first crown to speak were Their Masteries of Drachewald (Europe). They were German nationals and spoke English very well. As these speeches were made, a terrible thing became known. It was almost impossible to hear anything. Although there were heralds, their voices were not carrying. For once, I wished that I knew sign language as all major events at Pennsic are signed. There were quite a number of events including a knighting. I gave up after an hour. I talked with a merchant for about 45 minutes and then picked up my van. I drove back to my tent, filled the van with trash and took it to the nearest dumpster. This was right next to the Barn and court was still going on! I ceased to feel guilty about leaving early.

While I planned to pack up and leave on Saturday, I was surprised to see so many people also packing. One couple I talked with was from New Mexico and had 36 hours of driving to do. On the other hand, there were many people arriving on Saturday and were disappointed that everything was closing up. There were no classes on Saturday, the last battle took place early afternoon. Only archery and some merchants were left open by afternoon and there was still Last Court to take place.

I was up early on Saturday and after breakfast I was up at the archery field for two hours running the practice field and the children's shoot. Back to camp to finish packing, then I drove to the battlefield. The second field battle took place and although this did not count toward the final score, the Middle Kingdom and their allies won the day. When this battle was done, I quickly slipped into my van and headed west for home.

The 27th Pennsic was a great event. It was the result of the hard work of lots of people. Pennsic 27 was a success and I look forward to next year.

SF 102

You may recall that this project was brought up in the "Miscellany" section of #11. You are teaching an SF survey course at the local college. Assume your class consists mainly of mundanes. It is your responsibility to select the Required Reading list: not more than 15 books which will give your class an overview of SF.

Yes, okay, it's an obvious variant on the old "desert island" thing. (Geez! Sandra Bullock, okay? Now can we get on with the subject?) The difference is that you were supposed to select, not your 15 favorite SF books, but 15 books which are most representative of SF as a coherent entity, assuming that to be the case.

We're going to begin with our selections, largely because we can do this part now and deal with your responses at a later date. Again we emphasize, not necessarily our 15 favorite books, or even the ones we consider the "best" (though there's some overlap with both of those lists), but 15 books we consider best displaying what SF is about.

20,000 Leagues Under The Sea, Jules Verne. This is arguably the first true SF novel, according to the classic definition: take away the technology that did not exist in Verne's time and it comes unglued. It's still a good adventure story, still a good basic oceanography text, and you can make a case for it as the linear predecessor of, say, The Dispossessed: Nemo the early anarchist hero, who answers to no authority except himself and his God.

War Of The Worlds, H.G. Wells. Imitated, ripped off, and parodied endlessly, this remains the standard against which the alien-invasion story is judged, from Out Of The Depths to Men In Black. Everyone is so "familiar" with this that few have actually read it. Personally we feel In The Days Of The Comet is a better read;

but this book, more than any other, created modern SF.

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley. The grandest of the dystopian novels, a clear, mad, cruel vision that still ticks over like a fine Swiss watch. BNW takes every standard by which our society is judged -- religion, sex, merit, self -- and twists them through a funhouse mirror. The debt owed to this book by three generations of SF writers has never been fully paid. (For just one example, see the uterine replicators used by Bujold in Shards Of Honor and Barrayar.)

The Martian Chronicles, Ray Bradbury. Bradbury was SF's first great stylist, bringing to SF a literate edge missing in the pulp adventures. The Chronicles used SF to acknowledge a debt to the past ("Usher II") while showing a vivid future on identity ("The Third Expedition", "Night Meeting"), race ("Way In The Middle Of The Air"), and even sexual humor ("The Silent Towns"). All written in a swirling bright style that prefigured the New Wave by a generation, this is indispensable.

City, Clifford D. Simak. The author was so noted for his pastoral approach, his love for the rustic wild (raccoons are probably mentioned more in Simak than in all other SF combined) that his quiet creativity is overlooked. In City he weaves humans, dogs, robots, Jovians and ants into a centuries-spanning gentle epic.

The Caves Of Steel, Isaac Asimov. If Simak used robots, Asimov was robots. An understanding of the Three Laws is fundamental (if only because so many others have used them as background), and the good doctor spent decades merrily playing on the edges of the Laws. Here he combined SF with mystery, introducing one of SF's most memorable characters in Daneel.

Dune, Frank Herbert. SF's most striking work of the 1960's -- some might say the best single SF book ever -- was all the more amazing in that it seemed to come out of nowhere. Rightly called grand epic, Dune has an internal aspect, a subtle detail of creativity, that still amazes. If Herbert never matched his achievement before or after, this masterpiece is only slightly diminished by several ill-advised sequels.

Moon Of Three Rings, Andre Norton. Norton's contributions to SF, and her merits as a writer, are exactly the opposite of Frank Herbert's. Without producing a single great work, she turned out dozens of good ones. You could select nearly any Norton book from 1952-1970: Catseye for its sentient animals, Judgement On Janus for its clever bioengineered disease, Ordeal In Otherwhere for its early female protagonist. More than any one other, Andre Norton remains a role model for female SF/fantasy writers.

The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress, Robert A. Heinlein. Still arguably the standard by which SF writers are judged, Heinlein peaked with this book more so than the startling (at the time) but over-rated Stranger In A Strange Land. As an AI story it surpassed anything done to that time (except perhaps Asimov). It's a whacking good adventure; a first rate political allegory; features a mixed-race amputee as protagonist, and is written in a singular if rather choppy voice.

The Witches Of Karres, James H. Schmitz. This possibly surprising choice makes our cut for two qualities then (and still) sadly lacking in SF. First, it's permeated with a sense of joy and fun in a largely somber genre; second, it's a book written to an adult reader which still features children as major characters. It is also one of the few books the awkward term "science fantasy" fits like a glove.

The Left Hand Of Darkness, Ursula K. LeGuin. This predictabel selection makes everyone's list of classic SF. Its take on human sexuality remains amazing; but it's also a seamless exercise in world-building, has a religious sensibility rare in the genre, accessible characters, and -- oh yeah -- works just fine as a story. You cannot claim to be an SF reader without this book.

Dreamsnake, Vonda McIntyre. Rarely can an author spin a first-rate short story into an equally good novel. McIntyre did it here in the best book of an otherwise unremarkable career. Dreamsnake has a simple, almost a humble grace, and makes a complicated setting effortlessly clear without lumpy exposition. It is (okay, admittedly strange simile here) like a perfect hollandaise sauce: simple, but perfect of its kind.

The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy, Douglas Adams. We hear you saying, "Huh?" Indulge us. This is one of the best parodies of SF ever invented. Okay, it gets old pretty soon; but you have to admire any book that leads with destroying Earth, the Vogons are priceless, and there are good moments in the second half (e.g. the falling flower pot).

Downbelow Station, C.J. Cherryh. As Heinlein was to the 1950's/early 60's, Cherryh is the standard of her time. Downbelow is arguably not her best book. (On purely personal terms, we might have chosen The Faded Sun or The Pride Of Chanur.) But this is the focal point, the hub around which the whole of Union/Alliance space revolves. It also has the Downers, among the most engaging of the author's many aliens: the scene in which dozens of Station Downers crowd devoutly around a single, sick old woman, is eerie.

Neuromancer, William Gibson. Computers change everything, and Gibson was among the first to fully grasp the possibilities. Seen through clear black glass, his cyber-future proves that silicon, not sulphur, is the key element in Hell; and this spawned a subgenre as distinct in its time as the New Wave was in the 1960's. Sadly, one is forced to note that while almost everyone admires Neuromancer, we have encountered few who will claim to have liked it.

Steve Sneyd begins the discussion with: "Since students don't buy books, in 'real life' your list of 15 is going to be conditioned by what your college library has or you can persuade them to buy (which depends on how high up [the] pecking order there's serious support for your course)."

John Hertz responds, "I assume for the exercise I can get anything I want, haven't looked to see what might be in print." Given that this is largely a theoretical article, Steve, we have to admit our view is closer to John's. And in the U.S., generally college students are expected to buy their books. Although in practice, yes, the "recommended reading" lists do tend to coincide with what's available at the college bookstore and library.

The original question stated only "books", and most people, like us, came up with mainly novels. A substantial



minority, however, recommended (either as part of or in addition to their lists) the merits of anthologies of short fiction. Michael Waite went further, suggesting specific short fiction including "The Nine Billion Names Of God", "The Persistence Of Vision", and "A Rose For Ecclesiastes".

Since we're primarily a reader of novels we were initially resistant to this notion. On further consideration, we've come to appreciate the merits of the idea. Not only could some short fiction be included in or supplement the course material, short stories also offer the advantage that one could read aloud to the class, so only the students absent that day could claim not to be familiar. We can think of some we'd include: Clarke's "The Star", Heinlein's "Our Fair City", and Zenna Henderson's "The Closest School" all come to mind. Yes, okay, we'd probably sneak one of our own stories in there too!

While there was general support for teaching "classics", however defined, several of you pointedly included recent SF. Going beyond support for modernism, Patricia Russo says she actually "suffered through" such a course because the instructor insisted on assigning E.E. Smith. "I'm sorry. No. The worst thing you can do -- the biggest turnoff possible -- is to assign your class badly written books, no matter what their historical significance."

Similarly, Michael Waite stated, "It is very important to pick the right stories when introducing 'mundanes' to SF. I

learned my lesson introducing my (ex) girlfriend to opera. I took her to see Wagner's Parsifal. I haven't seen her since..."

Joy Smith put the question on her website and got responses from several other webfans, for which we are grateful. There was a brisk discussion of the respective merits of Brave New World and 1984, both suggested by others also. In addition there was a separate discussion of alternate histories, which as far as we could tell were being perceived as distinct from SF. (We tend to view SF as inclusive of AH's; Robert Sabella, however, defines all AH's as fantasy.) Harry Turtledove's Guns Of The South was mentioned repeatedly. A fan who goes by the nom de electron of "Presterjon" brought up other titles, mainly alternate-Civil-War. If we were getting into that, we'd mention Ward Moore and Bring The Jubilee; but we may have wandered a touch from the topic.

Not surprisingly, the most votes (8) went to Robert Heinlein. Preference was divided among several titles, however. Our choice of Harsh Mistress got 3 votes; but Podkayne, Citizen Of The Galaxy, Stranger In A Strange Land, Space Cadet, and Starship Troopers were also mentioned.

The next largest number of votes was 6, and again it comes as no shock that the recipient was Ray Bradbury; patronage was evenly divided between The Martian Chronicles and Fahrenheit 451. (Did you know there's a Cliff Notes for Fahrenheit 451? The introduction says, not quite in these words but the intent is clear, something like "We know this seems like science fiction, but it can't be SF because this is good.")

The most votes for any one title was a tie at 5 between The Left Hand Of Darkness and Neuromancer. We'll be interested to see if anyone comes forward to dispute our view of the latter as an admirable but not likable book.

There were 5 votes for Alfred Bester, 3 for The Demolished Man and 2 for The Stars My Destination.

Arthur C. Clarke also received 5 votes, being 3 for Childhood's End and one each preferring Rendezvous With Rama and The City And The Stars.

In addition, 5 votes for Larry Niven, divided among Ringworld, Neutron Star, and The Mote In God's Eye.

Isaac Asimov received 4 votes, of which 3 were for our choice The Caves Of Steel; Michael Waite suggested The Foundation Trilogy although as we recall, he may have mentioned that in terms of supplementary reading. You don't think the Foundation books are a little ponderous for mundanes?

Several writers got 3 votes, beginning with Jules Verne -- Journey To The Center Of The Earth was mentioned in addition to our selection. Andre Norton also got 3 -- by an eerie coincidence, out of all the possible Norton titles, Janine Stinson came up with the very one we listed! (It was one of the few SF books in her junior high library, she says.) Joy Smith listed The Beast Master.

Three votes for C.J. Cherryh, and again, one individual duplicated our choice of Downbelow Station and one had our alternate selection, The Pride Of Chanur.

Hal Clement had three mentions, with one each for Needle and Mission Of Gravity, and Henry Welch opting for the slightly more obscure Iceworld. Good choices all.

Patricia Russo and Steve Jeffery both wanted Philip K. Dick's The Man In The High Castle; while a third party preferred a collection of Dick's short fiction. Incidentally, Patricia and Steve had six titles in common, and one other author as well -- by far the most overlap among any two lists. Patricia, meet Steve. Steve, say hello to Patricia. You guys should talk.

Of the several anthologies mentioned, Robert Silverberg's The Science Fiction Hall Of Fame Volume I was nominated by 3 readers.

Two votes went to Wells' War Of The Worlds, ditto 2 to Huxley's Brave New World, Frank Herbert's Dune, and Theodore Sturgeon's More Than Human. Joy Smith, well known as a James Schmitz fan, voted for his Agent Of Vega to supplement our nomination of a Schmitz book.

Two nominations went to Samuel R. Delany and Babel-17. We have to agree that if we were planning to teach any Delany book, especially to mundanes, Babel-17 would be the one.

A further 2 votes for: Walter Miller's

A Canticle For Liebowitz, L. Sprague de Camp's Lest Darkness Fall, A.E. Van Vogt's Slan (classics all, and all in our collection), and the anthology Adventures In Time And Space, Healy & McComas, editors.

One reader selected "James Tiptree"'s Her Smoke Rose Up Forever, while another went with the generalization of "a Tiptree collection". We might have gone with Up The Walls Of The World.

One vote each, in no particular order as they were mentioned:

Gordon R.
Dickson,



Tactics Of Mistake.

Keith Laumer, "a Retief book", not otherwise specified.

Anne McCaffrey, either Dragonflight or The Ship Who Sang.

C.L. Moore, Jirel of Joiry.

Eric Frank Russell, Men, Martians, & Machines.

E.E. Smith, The Galaxy Primes.

James White, The Aliens Among Us.

Octavia Butler, Dawn.

Nicole Griffith, Slow River.

Someone whose surname is "Noon", a book entitled Pollen. We have to admit, this is one of the few instances where we had

never heard of either the author or title.

Mary Shelley, Frankenstein.

Joan Slonczewski, A Door Into Ocean.

J.G. Ballard, The Atrocity Exhibitions.

Mary Doria Russell, The Sparrow.

John Wyndham, The Midwich Cuckoos.

Joanna Russ, The Female Man.

Greg Bear, Queen Of Angels.

Vernor Vinge, A Fire Upon The Deep.

(Curious that no one mentioned a book hugely popular in its time, Vinge's ex-wife Joan Vinge's The Snow Queen. Is it perceived that this is a book whose time has come and gone? That might also explain the surprising lack of support for Dune. Though one person expressed disinterest in "any book that's been made into a movie", which would disqualify at least 14 books mentioned herein.)

George Turner, The Sea And The Summer.

Greg Egan, Permutation City.

Harlan Ellison, Medea: Harlan's World.

Ian McDonald, Terminal Cafe.

Mike Resnick, Santiago.

Morrow (?), Towing Jehovah.

Orson Scott Card, Ender's Game.

Alan Steele, Orbital Decay.

G. Mikki Hayden, Pacific Empire.

Alexei Panshin, Rite Of Passage.

Frederick Pohl & C.M. Kornbluth, The Space Merchants.

Mark Twain, A Connecticut Yankee.

Hermann Hesse, The Glass Bead Game AKA Magister Ludi. John Hertz called this "the only Nobel Prize SF novel". We have to dispute that. Yes, it won the Nobel; but is it SF? Clearly not by intent. Okay, Brave New World is not intended as an SF novel, but it uses a lot of SF-nal ideas and tropes; Magister Ludi simply imposes a sterile intellectual cult on what is otherwise a 19th Century environment.

J.R.R. Tolkien, The Lord Of The Rings. Perhaps our use of the specific term "SF" discouraged more of you from mentioning this? Though John, again, calls it SF, "treating the effects of a manufactured device". But the device was produced by magic! Doesn't that make it fantasy?

Algis Budrys, Michaelmas.

Tim Powers, The Anubis Gates.

Vincent diFate, Infinite Worlds.

John Brunner, Stand On Zanzibar.

L. Ron Hubbard, Battlefield Earth.

Harry Harrison, Star Smashers Of The Galaxy Rangers.

Several other short-fiction anthologies were mentioned by one or another of you, including one person who recommended only "the current" version of Gardner Dozois' Year's Best SF; apparently on the theory that Mr. Dozois' taste is so reliable that any of his collections will be worth reading.

Total writers nominated: 67 by our count, so there's clearly a wide variety of taste out there.

Of the 15 writers we nominated, 12 were mentioned by at least one other person. The McIntyre and Adams books were obscure enough, we were not surprised they failed to elicit any other patronage. We have to admit being distressed that no one other than us brought up Clifford Simak! Is this due to the same syndrome as Andre Norton? (Lots of good books, no one conspicuously great one.) Or is Simak just being forgotten? That's sad.

Nearly as shocking, with the exception of Michael Waite's specific short fiction titles, no one mentioned either Roger Zelazny or John Varley. There were no votes for Poul Anderson, Spider Robinson, or Jack Vance at all! Possibly the term "SF" may have attracted attention away from individuals perceived largely as fantasy writers, e.g., Fritz Leiber.

Interestingly, no one suggested any of the very popular books of Marion Zimmer Bradley, Elizabeth Moon, Lois McMaster Bujold, or -- with one exception -- Anne McCaffrey: an illustration of where "favorite" (we'd describe all four as among our "favorite" writers) failed to coincide with "most representative".

There seems to have been a concensus in favor of teaching Heinlein, Bradbury, LeGuin, and probably some short fiction. Add in some "classic" SF (looking back, we wonder if our own selections were not a little too conservative/safe) and some more modern, perhaps controversial style, and you have the making of a well-informed course. Now we just need to find a college that will let us teach it! When we do, invitations will be in the mail for guest instructors. See you in class!

Corrupting Dr. Nice John Kessel

Time travel novels fall into two groups: either passive tourism of the past or future, with the intent only to observe; or a variant of the "what if?" school of historical speculation, where -- instead of a changed past being accepted as a given -- the present or the future actively intervenes to modify it. Corrupting Dr. Nice falls into the second group; but there the historical engineering ends and the satire begins, as the 21st Century future deliberately sets out to exploit the past for its own benefit.

In 1st Century Jerusalem, the tempnauts of the rapaciously exploitative Saltimbanque Corporation have booted out the Roman occupying forces (but then promptly rehired them, with assault rifles, as a local militia), turned Herod's palace into a luxury hotel, put up a baseball stadium next to the Temple, and commenced flogging imported geegaws to the local youth -- who have responded by copying future clothing and musical fashions and dreaming of escape to the promised land up-time. The Zealots, disgusted by this corruption, begin having weapons smuggled in from up-time for the rebellion which will eject these new invaders and return Israel to the pure of heart. They include the former disciple Simon the Zealot, driven by Jesus Christ's abduction up-time just prior to the Crucifixion, so that instead of ascending to Heaven he now does dog-food commercials and celebrity spots on 21st Century TV chat shows.

Kessel gets around the problem that a wildly changed past would produce a completely different future than the one from which the tempnauts come by some neat double-talk about "quantised time" and "moment universes", which allows them to "burn" one of the past worlds while leaving others of the adjacent moments available for non-interactive visits (in this novel, one to see the assassination of Julius Caesar). Quantum theory's "many worlds" hypothesis, in other words -- but sod scientific veresimilitude, because the real target of Kessel's attack is soon obvious: the First World's contemporary craze for tourism to exotic Third World destinations. And just as First World tourists arrive to spend two weeks on a newly private beach from which the locals have been barred, with one or two half-day trips into the nearest town to sample local "customs", so in 1st Century Jerusalem the tempnauts regard the locals as cheap labour to be patronized with cleaning or portering jobs, paid menial wages, and abused for alleged laziness. Just as the profits of the luxury hotels in which the First World tourists spend their money are repatriated to their Western-based TNC owners, so the Saltimbanque Corporation is siphoning everything it can out of 1st Century Jerusalem -- musical instruments, camels, oil which won't be discovered for another two millenia: other people's possessions, relabelled as souvenirs.

The Zealots' rebellion of course fails, and a group of them, including Simon the Zealot, are sent up-time to stand trial for briefly taking hostage the three characters from whose viewpoint the story is told: August and Genevieve Faison, con-artists and scam-merchants, and the innocent but well-meaning Dr. Owen Vannice, pursuing some daft theory of dinosaur socialization. Thus, in the second half of the novel, the focus of Kessel's satire switches, to address the contemporary sense of post-modernist relativism which reduces human history and culture to a superficial smorgasbord from which we pick and choose



Only our opinion...

whatever we think will gratify our consumeroid desire for ceaseless novelty -- giving us, for example, cocktail parties at which the inhabitants of the 21st Century dress in the costumes of the past, while "historicals" extracted from every era available -- Shakespeare, Ben Franklin, Konstantin Tsiolkovsky, Carl Jung -- appear in the fatigues of lunar colonists, and a super group comprising John Coltrane, Franz Liszt, and Wolf Mozart lays down some nifty blues. (Kessel cites Bruce Sterling's short story "Mozart In Mirror-shades" as his prime source of inspiration, in a closing acknowledgement which also contains a magnificent three-line send-up of Hollywood acceptance speeches.) If some of this is less laugh-inducing than the first half, it's probably because there are fewer deliberate anachronisms available, but it's just as on-target -- and from that perspective it doesn't really matter that we never quite get inside the minds of Kessel's three chief characters. Or even that of Simon the Zealot, at whose trial Abraham Lincoln and Jesus appear to deliver the closing speeches. (He gets off.)

I don't think I ever laughed aloud during any of this -- but I did snort and giggle quite a lot.

Antarctica Kim Stanley Robinson

Those who haven't read Robinson's Mars trilogy may be unfamiliar with the depth and breadth of thought invested in his recent output. As an SF writer, he's always been more cerebral than most, but it's only when one stands back and takes a more disengaged look at his recent work that it becomes evident that the action necessary to keep the plot moving forward is vastly outweighed by the freight of description it also carries. Sometimes, this description acts to slow the plot down completely -- in Green Mars, the middle volume, there are points when the story comes to a halt while the characters hold extended disquisitions on the details of terraforming or the prospects for an environmentally inclusive economics -- but only the completely action-oriented are likely to resent this, and they probably wouldn't be reading these novels anyway.

The action-oriented should therefore stay away from Antarctica, which has scarcely any plot to speak of, viz: a Congressional aide is sent on a fact-finding tour of Antarctica to help his Senator argue for a renewed and strengthened Antarctica Treaty, and becomes caught up in some ecotage by those trying to evict mining operations by non-Treaty nations from the icecap; all ends safely with everyone sitting down to discuss their differences and how best to manage the continent in the future. In fact, it takes at least half the novel for the outlines of this plot to become apparent; and not until two thirds of the novel have passed do we meet our first "ferals", the unauthorized groups pursuing a secret existence on and under the ice (rather like the Martian underground in Green Mars). But it never flags, and one never grows impatient along the way, for one is being painlessly educated in the history of Antarctic exploration, how to survive in the Antarctic, the nature of the icecap, Antarctic geology, current research priorities and theories of ice formation, and a scientifically plausible speculation as to how Antarctic mining might help stabilize climate change (specifically, extracting the methane hydrates from the seabed before the Earth has warmed enough for them to release their methane into the atmosphere, and shipping the hydrogen for use in energy-poor Third World nations). Indeed, Robinson's grasp of current Antarctic research is so up-to-date that he has his fictional scientists discuss the emerging ideas on dynamic fluctuations in the West Antarctic ice-sheet (a "purge" which in fact real researchers suggest we may now be witnessing).

Of course, it's rather utopian to suggest that the differences among the researchers, the miners, and the "ferals" could be resolved by a civilized discussion which helped the Senator get the Treaty renewed, even if the "ferals" are divided into fundamentalists who want the icecap left as pristine wilderness and pragmatists who are willing to accept some mining provided it benefits the world as a whole -- but that isn't the point. What Robinson is doing is using the threat of

the huge inundation which would result from the melted Antarctic ice, to advance an environmental argument for learning to co-exist with the natural world rather than attempting to dominate and exploit it. Domination and exploitation, he reasons, leads only to destruction -- of ourselves as well, because we cannot exist without the natural world to support us. And that, at base, is a more important argument than any promoted by the gung-ho space pioneers who clog up the rest of the SF shelves.

[[Editor's note: See also Joseph's LOC in the letter column for discussion of the nature of book reviewing. As always, discussion is welcome.]]

REVIEW BY PATRICIA RUSSO

Stardust Neil Gaiman Spike/Avon Books
1999 \$22.00

Most if not all of you will know who Neil Gaiman is -- creator of the Sandman graphic novel series, co-author with Terry Pratchett of Good Omens, author of the short story collections Angels And Visitations and Smoke And Mirrors, and of the novel Neverwhere.

What Stardust, his new book, is, is a novel of Faerie, set in an English village called Wall in the early years of the reign of Queen Victoria. Wall is named after a literal wall, which serves to mark and maintain the border between the real world and the Lands Beyond. There is only one entrance in the wall, a gap about six feet wide, which is guarded by the villagers day and night to prevent the inhabitants of Wall -- or any other humans -- from stepping into Faerie.

Once every nine years, this prohibition is lifted, and the Faer Folk and humans from all over the world meet and mingle in the meadow on the other side of the gap, and engage in trade.

Stardust starts off very well and very engagingly, with an omniscient narrator giving an amusing and clever overview of the history of Wall and of the Fair that's held every nine years. For the first couple of chapters, I was charmed. I thought: This is going to be good, this is going to be a knowing, admiring homage to earlier practitioners of the form (and in fact, there are nods in the text to

several of them, including Dunsany, Eddison, and C.S. Lewis) but with a modern, edgy sensibility.

Yeah. For a while.

Then, unfortunately, it all gets rather ordinary.

A half-Faer boy goes on a quest to retrieve a fallen star, which in the lands beyond the gap takes the form of an attractive young woman; meanwhile two other parties are searching for the star for their own more-or-less nefarious purposes. The boy has adventures. He meets up with the star. He loses the star. He finds her again. He and the star have more adventures, separately and together -- some narrated in full, some mentioned only in passing. The nefarious others are defeated; there's an unsurprising recognition scene toward the end; and all concludes happily.

Throughout the main character's time in Faerie, Gaiman tries to provide wonders and glimpses of the strange, the uncanny, the fey. But there's nothing really fresh in his descriptions of animate, predatory trees, or in people being enchanted into the forms of birds or dormice, or in the characters who make up the triumphant Queen of the Witches. Reading Stardust, I not only had the flat feeling of "been there, done that", but the rather worse one of "Come on, man, I know this story."

I thought, for a while, that there was going to be a bit of a twist at the end, a little swerve in one of the plot strands. I was hoping for it. But Gaiman again takes the traditional approach to this last plot resolution, which was a let-down.

The book is well-written, and goes down painlessly. But -- and nobody is sorrier about this than me -- it's nothing new.

REVIEWS BY E.B. FROHVET

H.G. Wells, Aspects Of A Life Anthony West 1984 Random House

Mr. West is the child of Rebecca West (nee "Cicely Fairfield": she adopted a new name from a character in an Ibsen play) by H.G. Wells. Presumably, West seems never to have doubted his paternity, referring to Wells as "my father" in the third line, and continuously thereafter. Granted, "the middle aged married man my

mother foolishly allowed to impregnate her" is not the most felicitous usage. Mr. West's defiant insistence on creating this false sense of intimacy probably stems from, as he eventually admits, "I was allowed to call him Wellsie, but expressly forbidden to speak to him or of him as father, papa, or daddy." Indeed the aspect of Wells' life that concerns West almost to the exclusion of any mention of literature, is the awkward, on and off affair between Wells and Rebecca West. So we have, in effect, the biography of a doomed relationship between two not very appealing people.

Once A Hero Elizabeth Moon 1997 Baen
\$6.99

There was a mutiny and a battle -- thus linking this book (at a tangent) to the trilogy that ended with Winning Colors. Esmay Suiza, a very junior officer whose assessments all described her as reliable but not a leader type, was in the thick of both. After the court-martial, and a gruesome visit "home", Suiza had to reassemble what was left of her life and career. It was harder than she expected to slip back into careful anonymity: once a hero, you can't go back.

Interesting to compare Moon's take on the military life with that of Lois Bujold, or both with, say, fellow Baen author David Drake. Bujold seems to regard the military as, at best, a necessary evil; Moon finds things to admire even when being aware of its shortcomings; Drake, like many male writers, seems to believe in combat as a desirable end in itself.

Summon The Keeper Tanya Huff 1998 DAW
\$5.99

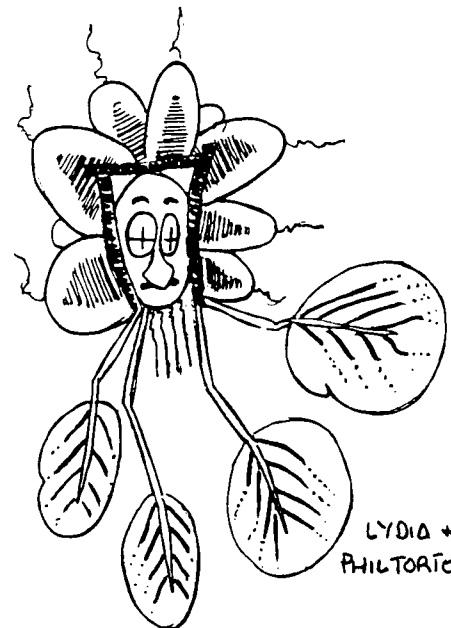
It was a dark and stormy night... Well, sorry, but the book does open on a dark and stormy night in Kingston, Ontario, with a travelling witch and her cat-familiar looking for a room for the night. All the hotels were full. The rambling old Victorian guesthouse that Claire suddenly discovered she owned, had problems: the woman in Room 6 had been asleep for 40 or 50 years, and somewhere there was a hole in the universe. On the bright side, the handyman was a major hunk...

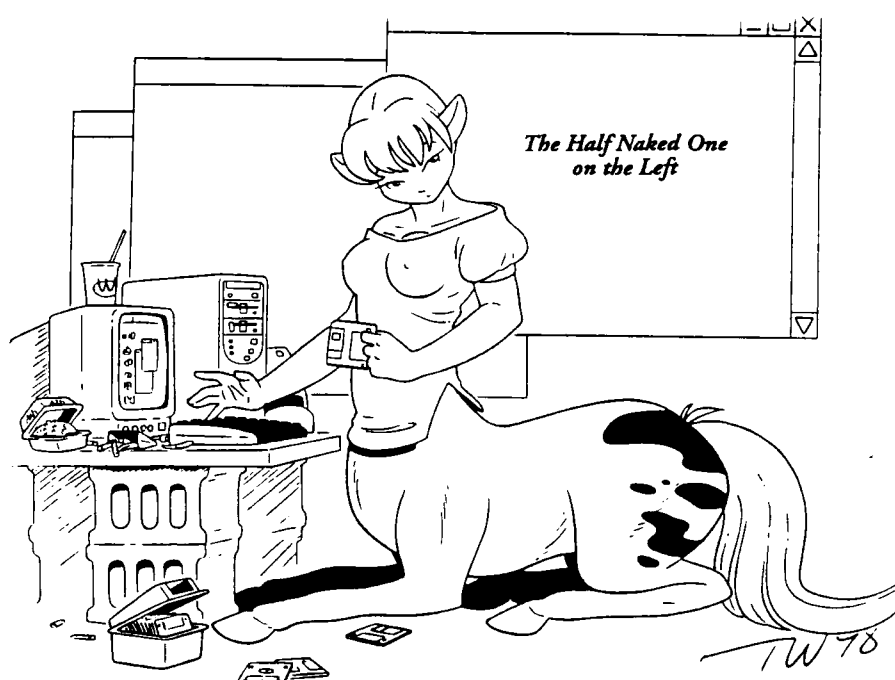
Up to a point you have to admire someone who can take material this hokey and create something readable. It's sort of a cross between Sabrina The Teenage Witch and Buffy The Vampire Slayer. (Yeah, one of those, too.) We know we've said this before, but: It seems like a book more intended for the mundane reader.

Nameless Magery Delia Marshall Turner
1998 Del Rey Discovery Series \$5.99

Lisane (which in her own language means "nameless") was stranded in a society that took for granted only males had the Power. The Magicians' Council grudgingly gave her a year's half-hearted training and sent her on a Quest, assuming she would either fit into their system, or get herself killed. She did neither. Deprived of the destiny for which she was bred and trained, Lisane had to decide what she owed to a society in which everything was upside down.

The plot here is not so much linear as zig-zag. Characters appear for a chapter or two, then get on with their lives as the story moves elsewhere. It's like what might result if John Barnes wrote a female fantasy novel. Not wildly original, this does have an uncommon air of security for a first novel. Turner may not have complete writerly skills yet, but her confidence never wavers. We can see how this got rave reviews in the Barnes & Noble SF newsletter. Of course they're not in the business of telling you a book is not worth buying, but still...





Conferring With Earthquakes #3
 Brin-Marie McLaughlin
 247 19th Avenue
 San Francisco CA 94121

A smaller issue of this pleasant personalzine. McLaughlin reflects on little things that have and haven't happened in her life, including a 4.1 quake while she was working on the zine! Let's hope she doesn't change the title to The Sun Goes Nova. Also extracts from a few LOC's.

Barmaid #4
 Yvonne Rowse
 Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimpey,
 Worcs, DY12 1NP, United Kingdom

This 16-page personalzine showed up unannounced in our mailbox. A Novacon report, comments on music both generally and in the bar where Rowse works, quick views of her home life. We found this of interest more for the numerous aspects of the editor's personality it reflects. LOC's are encouraged.

Vanamonde #'s 283-287
 John Hertz
 236 S. Coronado Street #409
 Los Angeles CA 90057

Members of APA-L will probably get more out of this APazine, but we enjoy its diverse comments on Persian cooking, the origin of the term "time-binding", the Flying Karamazov Brothers, and a detailed critique of an obscure art film. He also met TAFF's Maureen Speller at a dance.

Nova Express Vol. 5 #1
 Lawrence Person
 P.O. Box 27231
 Austin TX 78755

This is worth having just for the interview with the incomparable Gene Wolfe. Nick Gevers analyzes Wolfe's Book Of The Long Sun; John Clute gleefully trashes the Melbourne University Encyclopaedia of Australian SF; other detailed analyses and reviews, a few LOC's. ...We have ambivalent feelings about NE. Sercon fanzines, let alone ones this good, are so rare, each is important. Yet the very specific focus of NE (dense literary high concept SF) strikes us as distant and more than a touch elitist.

The IF Files Vol. 2
 John Berry
 4 Chilterns, South Hatfield,
 Herts, AL10 8JU, United Kingdom

The second volume of reprints of Berry's articles from the 1950's concerning the lively personae of Irish Fandom: Walt Willis, James White, Bob Shaw, etc. Published with help from Ken Cheslin; original art by Atom included. If we, not knowing the people, didn't get a great deal out of this, we know fans more into fanhistory will cherish it. Which is as it should be.

Data Dump #34
 Steve Sneyd
 4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield,
 West Yorkshire, HD5 8PB, United Kingdom

This is the Ansible of SF/fantasy poetry, a small neatly (hand)printed newsletter of what's happening and being published in and about that subgenre. Also a listing of related chapbooks published by Sneyd. A definitive source for those who are interested in that area.

Niekas #45 ("Essays on Dark Fantasy")
Edmund Meskys (Guest editor Joe Christopher)
RR #2, Box 63, 322 Whittier Highway
Center Harbor NH 03226

We'd take up a column just listing the contributors to this 120-page theme issue. Articles, some rather academic in tone, analyze the appeal and technique of the Dark; ranging from the obvious (Lovecraft, King) to the obscure. We have not read all of it yet and already there are pieces we want to re-read. Handsomely presented with a red-black-&white cover and good interior art. It's almost more appropriate to think of Niekas as an unscheduled small press rather than a fanzine.

The Knarley Knews #73
Henry L. Welch
1525 16th Avenue
Grafton WI 53024

A very consistent bimonthly genzine. Further details of Don Pattenden's epic around-Australia trip; Charlotte Proctor reviews some books & films; this issue consists mostly of a busy letter column. We enjoyed Welch's explanation of how he managed two Christmases for the three little Knarlettes.

Memphen #251
Tim & Barbara Gatewood
3125 S. Mendenhall Road, #353
Memphis TN 38115

Randy Cleary cover "launches" this typical good small clubzine of the Memphis group. Club news, fanzine reviews by Tim Gatewood (who politely has a few kind words for Twink), a brief discussion of James Hogan's Outward Bound, and a few LOC's. Better than other monthly clubzines we've seen.

Probe #106
Deirdre Byrne
P.O. Box 781401
Sandton 2146, South Africa

We're probably the last person who should say this, but for a fanzine that has reached 106 issues, this has rather a neo feel to it. Most of the content is amateur(ish) fiction; some of it has the virtue that it seems to be intended for parody. There are several gosh-wowie Worldcon reports; among which Neville Beard's "Baltimore is a city much like any other American city -- large, concrete, impersonal" leaves us wondering about his qualifications to make such a statement. One gets the sense, not surprisingly, of a fandom operating in a vacuum.

Derogatory Reference #91
Arthur D. Hlavaty
206 Valentine Street
Yonkers NY 10704

Typical personalzine of the "whatever I feel like writing about" school. Sometimes but not often, this coincides with SF and/or fandom.

Banana Wings #12
Mark Plummer & Claire Brialey
14 Northway Road, Croydon,
Surray, CR0 6JE, United Kingdom

This issue of the most notable British genzine was mainly written by the editors: Brialey on shopping with Maureen Speller for the latter's TAFF trip, and a picnic at an RAF base; Plummer discusses the oddities of fandom; Paul Kincaid deconstructs crifanac; other articles and a sound lettercol. Recommended.

Kerles #2
Tommy Ferguson
40 Deramore Avenue, Belfast, Northern
Ireland, BT7 3ER, United Kingdom

A fanzine which exists to review other fanzines, principally on the basis of how fannish they are: the very fannish Squib is much praised, the more general Banana Wings generates much less enthusiasm. We rejoice in the diversity of, uh, fandom.

PhiloSFy #11
Alexander R. Slate
8603 Shallow Ridge Drive
San Antonio TX 78239

Consistently among our favorite zines, and not just because we contribute to it. News about Alex's family's life and times; short book reviews; more discussion on ethics in medicine and government; an article about monasticism (okay, that one is ours), a very interactive lettercol. Lots of good stuff in a medium-sized package. Bulletin: the editor appeals for art. Okay, all you artists, start sending stuff to Alex Slate!

Vance World #2
Franz H. Miklis
A-5151 Nussdorf 179, Austria

An uncommon artzine which obviously cost a bundle to produce. Full-color "Demon Princes" cover and full-color small prints of eight other paintings, all inspired by the writings of Jack Vance. With Franz's explanations of each piece, and comments by others on VW-1. Sadly, we're not well enough read in Vance to get all the references, but a vivid tribute zine nonetheless.

Mimosa #23
Richard & Nicki Lynch
P.O. Box 3120
Gaithersburg MD 20885

Another high-quality issue of the most famous fanzine out there has mainly a Worldcon slant. The editors report their time at Bucconeer; we especially enjoyed Mike Resnick's various Worldcon memories (laughing out loud as he mentioned his wife going topless at the 1973 Masquerade on "three or four vodka stingers"); Jeanne Mealy compares Worldcon to the State Fair; more fanhistory articles and letters.

FOSFAX #194
Elizabeth Garrott & Tim Lane
P.O. Box 37281
Louisville KY 40233

Quarterly, but up to 84 pages this time, of which more than half is lettercol. Of course much of that consists of hacking

President Clinton into small bloody bits; but there's ample of fannish interest, including Joe Mayhew's hilarious fanart on p. 27, Joe Major's continued analysis of Heinlein, and more Worldcon reports.

Gegenschein #83
Eric Lindsay
P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach,
Queensland 4802, Australia

Alas, the final paper issue: Lindsay admits he just can't afford the copying. Check with him about e-mail or websites. Another of his trip reports, Australian politics, short book reviews. We regret losing one of our few resources in Aussie fandom, though he claims to be "not entirely a gafiate". Hopefully not.

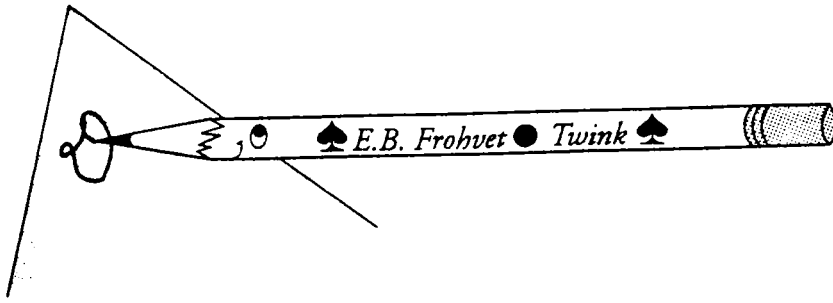
Lan's Lantern #47 (Poul Anderson special)
George "Lan" Laskowski
2466 Valleyview Drive
Troy MI 48098

We admit, this was a surprise: we had thought LL was discontinued a long while ago. Essays in praise of Anderson and his work; several are by pros (Stanley Schmidt, Harry Turtledove, Jerry Pournelle) and familiar fan names (Bob Sabella, Patrick McGuire). A bibliography requires 12 pages! A fitting tributezine to a distinguished and versatile career in SF.

Visions Of Paradise #79
Robert Sabella
24 Cedar Manor Court
Budd Lake NJ 07828

Well, this VOP has an article by us, a LOC from us, Robert devotes his fanzine review page to Twink, and we nominated VOP for the Hugo this year (though with no expectation it will make the ballot). So we are of course completely impartial when we say we like this combined gen/personalzine. Books, China, family life, LOC's, all get equal billing.

Vanished in the mist Dept.: The Jezail (March 1998), Sqiggledy Hoy (June '98), scopus 3007 (August '98), MSFire (September '98).



Rheaders Rhevenge

[[Editorial comments appear in the customary double brackets.]]

JOSEPH T. MAJOR
1409 Christy Avenue
Louisville KY 40204

Editorial: "Required Reading" is so dependent on other interests that it is hard to make such a list. In this age of Processed Fantasy Product, such a list may be necessary. To quote a respected faned, consider "the fine old fannish dictum of 'That's a good idea, you do it!' "

We're All African Anyway, Part IV: The Day After Tomorrow has an interesting history. In the late 1930's, John W. Campbell began a story titled "All", which recounted the conquest of the U.S. by an Asian nation, and how a small band of scientists, hiding in the remote mountain fastnesses of the Rockies, with the help of a new field of scientific discoveries, liberated the nation. For whatever reason, it did not sell. In 1940 his hot new writer came to New York and Campbell described the plot to him. Heinlein said he did not like writing the story that much -- because of the scientific problems involved, and he "had to reslant it to remove racist aspects of the original story line." (Expanded Universe, p. 93)

[[If the original was substantially more racist than the finished Heinlein story, we cringe to imagine.]]

Since Matt Dodson in Space Cadet hears this comment: "Mr. van Zook, in the Patrol we never ask a man where he is from. It is all right for Mr. Romolos to volunteer

that he is from Manila; it is incorrect for you to ask him." (p. 17), it can be concluded that the Space Patrol is being portrayed as being genuinely anti-segregationist, instead of, say, "multi-culturalist". Also recall that Matt's tutor was a Lt. Wong. He seemed to find it easier to deal with Orientals.

My Favorite SF Writer Of All Time: er... the "habiline husband" in Michael Bishop's "Her Habiline Husband" was a Homo habilis, not a H. sapiens neandertalensis.

John Hertz mails out Vanamonde in monthly packages to his non-APA list, e.g., you and me.

The Cabal has the habit of retitling their zine. Once it was Ploktaratchik...

Be careful, I could do you next in No Award.

[[If you feel the urge. We're not afraid of fair criticism. But since you are only discussing in detail one fanzine per ish, there are many other zines worthy of your attention.]]

One of the original appeals of Masonry was that it was not religiously linked. There was a case of a French Napoleonic officer who escaped from Haiti to the U.S. and was sent back to France by two other Masons in South Carolina. He was Catholic. One of his brothers was Protestant, the other one was Jewish.

Yes, you are going to be sorry you asked about "crottled greeps".

The First Occasional Twink Awards: Thank you, thank you. On this occasion I would like to thank all the little people who made this accomplishment possible, beginning with the Nashville TV stations who had plenty of people reading off the text

on the screen, thus showing that little boy in Hopkinsville the connection between the sounds and the forms. Then there was [approximately 17,000 words snipped] You like me, you really like me!

I quit watching the Oscars about 20 years ago -- now I just satirize them -- and one of the reasons I quit was that I could no longer stay up that late at night, watching the honorees thank the janitors at their psychiatrist's office.

I have seen at least two bookstores in Louisville and one in Clarksville, TN with separate sections for fantasy and SF. Only one rack out of three was media tie-ins?

Unfortunately, the Analogs are packed up, and A Requiem For Astounding does not cover that period. I will say that Christopher Anvil was a real contributor to Analog; he had a wicked eye for satire...

NED BROOKS
4817 Dean Lane
Lilburn GA 30047

Much thanks for Twink 12! My own It Goes On The Shelf 20 is somewhat delayed by the move to Georgia -- after six months I am still unpacking.

It has been many years since I read Citizen Of The Galaxy so I don't remember details of the plot -- though I still remember the van Dongen cover art for the magazine version. But I see no reason for a galactic civilization to connect its slavery problem to the particular situation on one corner of ancient Earth where people of African ancestry were enslaved. Most of Earth's cultures had slavery at one time or another, and the slaves were of all races. The Egyptians enslaved the Hebrews, the Romans enslaved Greeks, the Spanish enslaved the Indians. ...The persistence of the worst aspects of human nature was pretty much a given in Heinlein's philosophy.



[[As we said, we were considering the subject "in the usual American view". The author and, we assume, most of the readership, were American.]]

I was surprised at the article by Rachel Russell saying that she could no longer enjoy adventure fiction since having a child, because of the risk of life and limb involved in such stories. It would be interesting to know how common such a reaction is! No doubt you will get letters from other mothers. My guess is that Rachel will recover her taste for SF eventually!

I have seen book-chain stores with separate sections for SF, fantasy and horror -- and I usually see books that seem to me to be in the wrong sections.

There was a well-known SF writer who published as "Christopher Anvil"... Aha -- I see that Clute's Encyclopedia identifies it as a pseudonym of Harry C. Crosby Jr. Crosby is apparently a mysterious character as Clute gives no dates for him. "Anvil" was primarily an ASF writer and has not been very active since Campbell died. There are three letters to Crosby and one to Anvil in Campbell's published Letters, but none mention the story you describe.

[[If anyone comes up with a title or issue date, we'll pass it on to the person who was looking for it.]]

It's depressing to hear that the Baltimore public school administrators believe in witchcraft enough to suspend a student for "casting a spell". I doubt there was any prior warning in the student handbook that such activities were forbidden.

You seem to believe -- you used it twice at least, underlined -- that there is such a word as hommage. I still haven't unpacked the OED, but the Webster's International does not recognize this alternate spelling of "homage".

[[Hommage is a correct spelling in French.]]

HARRY WARNER JR.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown MD 21740

The latest installment of your survey of black characters in older SF intrigued me. I think we ought to pay honor to those writers who did it, even in a cautious way, because they were ahead of the thinking of the great majority of the white American public at the time and ran a certain risk of alienating the pulp magazine readership. As for your aside regarding baseball, I've never read any details of how the major leagues decided on a doubtful player's race but I suppose it happened in discreet silence in the commissioner's office. However, it is very unlikely that Jackie Robinson was the first black to play in the major leagues in the 20th Century. A Chicago Cubs pitcher who had pretty good success for several years before Jackie's arrival was almost certainly a mulatto. It's very doubtful if all the Cubans whom Clark Griffith imported for the Washington Senators had less than the minimum black ancestry to qualify as "whites" in the eyes of bigots. Babe Ruth himself was under suspicion throughout his baseball life, because some persons found his facial features semi-Negroid and he was very swarthy...

I've never read much of Michael Bishop's fiction, preventing me from sharing Robert Sabella's high opinion of him. But I'm very happy that Robert chose Bishop as his favorite SF writer, because it's a welcome change from the three or four author's almost always chosen... Fandom has been tending in recent years to be more conformist in taste and iconoclasm is always a good way to combat the tendency.

To some extent, I've grown to share Rachel Russell's aversion to fiction that depends on nasty events to make its effect. However, it's TV where my dislike of violence and cruelty has really taken a turn for the better (or worse depending on how a person feels). I simply can't bear to look at all the movies produced in the past dozen years or any of the series that have crime as a recurring ingredient. The commercials are often worse in this respect than the regular programming...

[[We're reminded of the stunt coordinator on Starship Troopers, who reportedly spent \$30,000 on ammunition. On being questioned, he replied innocently, "How

[[Editor's Note: Steve Sneyd sent us this clipping from the "Advertising Archives" of the U.K. newspaper Guardian, for a clean-and-dye-at-once product. Apparently women were encouraged to hustle party invitations under the slogan, "Come and wear your Twinked frock." We continue to be amazed at the real-world uses of a term we thought we had made up! On the other hand, as we pointed out to Steve, no one has yet conclusively shown a real-world use of "Frohvet".]]

We bought it then

Twink
CLEANS AND DYES
AT THE SAME TIME



P.P. You should see this...
you'll love it!

Lady "D" invites
her friends to an
afternoon Twink party-



It's a case of "Come and wear your Twinked frock" to this party, which is bound to be "bright" frocks renewed by the lovely new Twink shades. Give your frocks and blouses to suit your style and colouring, for some days colour is style. The Twink way is so easy. There are sixteen shades of Twink, each 7 1/2 oz. packet.
If all Cleans, Creams, Bares, Oils, Conditioners, etc. LATER BOTTLES SHOWN, SEE STORE

THE ADVERTISING ARCHIVES

Before the Tupperware or the Ann Summers party, the Lever Bros Twink party, a celebration of the product that cleans and dyes at the same time. "Come and wear your Twinked frock," said the small print, in one of the beautiful shades. It was obviously a classy affair. It came from Lady D.

can you make a movie without ammunition?"]]

At least two names can be added to your list of those who refused further nominations after winning one or more Hugo Awards: Ted White and my humble self. I did so after winning two for fan writing but I didn't reject the one that came a couple of decades later for the hardcover edition of A Wealth Of Fable.

[[Good for both of you! We note, if any reader was unaware, that Mr. Warner was the only two-time recipient of the Fan Writer Hugo in the award's first eight

years (1969 and 1972).]]

Crottled greeps apparently came into fandom via interlineations by Art Wesley: "But, if you didn't like crottled greeps, why did you order them?" Fandom at that time was very fond of playing with strange words and these two got widely spread on quotecards. Andy Young eventually published a recipe which he claimed would produce the mythical foodstuff: a Nabisco Wheat Thin placed on Borden's Cheese 'n' Bacon, topped with Ann Page strawberry preserves. Please don't ask me what interlineations and quotecards were; I went to a lot of trouble writing A Wealth Of Fable to enlighten fans on such things.

It was tempting to look up the answer to the question about the premiere of that Tchaikovsky concerto. But it would be unfair because I have a half-dozen books devoted solely to Tchaikovsky where it would be too easy to find the answer, which I assume is St. Petersburg because it's the only other Russian city I can think of at the moment.

[[A good guess, though it doesn't happen to be correct. Anyone want to take a shot at William Tuthill's contribution to music? Hint: something still in use.]]

JOY V. SMITH
8295 Selph Road
Lakeland FL 33810

I like the cover; the beanie dotting the "i" in Twink is cute. (I finally gave up trying to make a 12 out of the 6-legged flitterkitty, unless if I multiply 2 x 6, I get 12! Or count the eyes, ears, and wings! Drat. The tail throws the count off. Wait! I can only see one eye.)

[[We trust Sheryl will be gratified at your compliments; but you're trying to read something into it that is not there. It was a generic Twink cover Sheryl did a while back, and pure coincidence that we didn't get to use it until #12.]]

Thanks for the Hugo nomination suggestions. I must add MSFire, which besides all the regular fun stuff, has science news, Scifaiku, and fascinating interplay between its demented, I mean, scintillating wits/editors.

[[Don't blame us, Oino, she said it! Seriously, we like MSFire too, in fact we

nominated it last year. But we like to spread our nominations around.]]

Another excellent chapter -- the in-depth look at blacks in Heinlein's work -- in your "We're All African Anyway" series. As is Robert Sabella's examination of Michael Bishop's work, an author I confess I'm not familiar with, though I just read a great review of his Count Geiger's Blues in The Knarley Knews.

I loved Rachel Russell's article "Why I Can't Read Any More". Yes, sometimes the real world is all I can handle too. (Having to dispose of animals' bodies over the years, I do not find dismembered bodies in movies amusing, or children at risk, or that dog chained to its doghouse in the Jurassic Park sequel...)

Interesting report on the Darkover convention. I wasn't aware that someone else was writing the series. Yes, if I wrote a book, I'd certainly want my name on the cover. Also, I don't like being misled as to whom the author is...

[[If we did not make it clear, Adrienne Martine-Barnes says that she did consult with Marion Zimmer Bradley, who had final approval over the last few Darkover books. But Martine-Barnes did at least 90% of the actual writing thereof.]]

I enjoyed your reviews, especially of the non-fiction book Close To The Machine -- a scary expose' of the world computer system... I especially liked Teddy Harvia's Unpopular Hugo Voting cartoon.

...I read about the Wiccan student in the newspaper. She says she didn't cast any spell. Of course, the real shame is the other student who was reduced to hysterics by fear and superstition.

I'd like to know more about Who Shaped Science Fiction? (I hope you review that.)

STEVE SNEYD
4 Nowell Place, Almondbury, Huddersfield
West Yorkshire, HD5 8PB, United Kingdom

Giving up on submitting your story after one silence and one knockback seems very unHeinleinian -- one of his rules for writers was "keep sending it out till someone takes it."

[[Umm, that was six rejections and one no response, Steve. What, like Heinlein was an expert on rejection?]]

Using first person plural for yourself used to be limited to Royals here. Others who thought selves posh/high class used "one" when referring to self. The dreaded Maggie Thatcher was widely mocked for Queen-aping when she said, "We are a grandmother." But I've noticed recently it's crept back in among rock stars & the like; perhaps as spinoff from U.S. ditto. I've noticed in interviews that country & western stars particularly always refer to themselves as "we". In your case, I've wondered if it was another case where there was an invisible pet animal co-editor Harvey the Magic Rabbit-wise.

Ha -- I was wrong in assuming pink shirt was a tribute to Twink being Pink Fairies drummer.

[[Okay... What?]]

LOIS McMASTER BUJOLD
6216 Hansen Road
Edina MN 55436

Thanks for the nice review of Memory.

Re: Rachel Russell's article "Why I Can't Read Any More" -- assure her from me, It's The Hormones. I went through a similar shift of taste/interest/tolerance when I had my two kids. The weirdest part was the coming back out of it, a few months after stopping breast feeding, because that was the first time I'd realized what was going on. Recovering this lost, more aggressive self that I hadn't been for a time, and never expected to see or be again, made me feel as if I'd been taken over by aliens, and had just escaped, blinking, back above ground -- or some other sort of thought-control. Very SF-nal, in a way. Note, you never cross the same stream twice: my views about, well, everything didn't exactly return to where they'd started; they'd all been put into a new and rather startling frame of reference that now encompassed both states of mind. Tell Rachel, don't worry about it, enjoy the new view; the ultimate result will be both/and, not either/or.

It makes sense from an evolutionary standpoint, given that we're all descendants of a long line of survivors. A mother has to be on top of her little kids every second -- the age from the time they

start walking to about age 3 I've described as like living with a suicidal maniac -- but when they get older, she also has to be able to let go. I can't exactly tell if the mother of teenagers has another set of hormones that cut in, but let me tell you, by this time I'm not merely ready to let go, I'm willing to actively push.

P.S. I bet Georgette Heyer would go down well for Rachel right now; do recommend that author to her attention.

RICHARD S. BRANDT
4740 N. Mesa Street #108
El Paso TX 79912

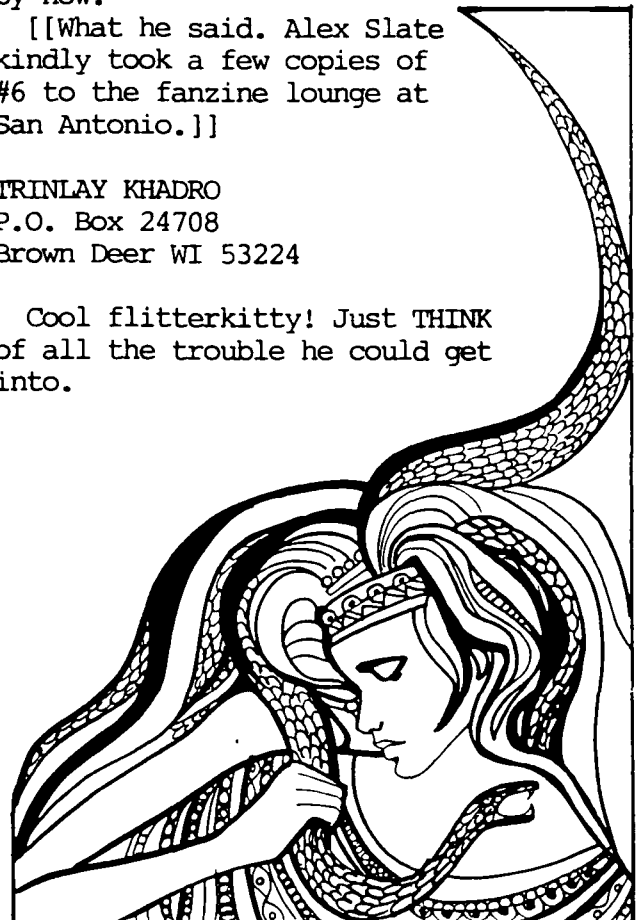
A quick note to acknowledge receipt of Twink #12 and apologize for not having LOC'ced sooner. (Guilty admissions time: I even picked up an earlier issue at last year's Worldcon.) Best intentions of LOC'cing but I've been swamped in unLOC'ced zines and am just gradually digging my way out.

Agree it would be swell to see Sheryl on the Hugo ballot after all this time, and Stiles should have won by now.

[[What he said. Alex Slate kindly took a few copies of #6 to the fanzine lounge at San Antonio.]]

TRINLAY KHADRO
P.O. Box 24708
Brown Deer WI 53224

Cool flutterkitty! Just THINK of all the trouble he could get into.



It was a real thrill to see Dewachen in "Half Naked". I'll be more stable typewise nextish. (So many fonts! So little time!) Typos were entirely mine in most cases.

What are "Crottled Greeps"? Any relation to The Monster Under The Bed?

[[Go forward a couple of pages to Harry Warner's letter.]]

OK! Let's all nominate Mr. Stiles and Ian Gunn for Fan Artist!!

I used to do Tarot cards as a game/party activity until people were taking it far too seriously for me and I quit doing them and haven't taken it up since.

I'd just like to let everyone know that Joy Smith has her origami dragon as a result of E.B. relaying her request. Maybe I should be selling them.

Harry Warner! For shame! Don't you recall War Of The Worlds where despite the technological advantage the aliens were slain by the common *achoo!!* cold. Though perhaps the 1918 flu has something to do with alien contact. Hmm... next on The X Files.

[[Actually, the influenza pandemic of 1918 (thousands died in North America and Europe -- don't take our word, ask your doctor) does have an SF connection in David Palmer's Emergence.]]

Lyn! Condolences to you and the goose-ladies on Curly's untimely death. I hope that you and Dean are not too traumatized.

Yep, noticed the evolution from "employee" to "team member". It's supposed to improve quality, but since management attitude usually remains in the "Lord of the Manor" format it doesn't make any difference. What makes the biggest difference in employee attitude is genuine respect of management... How often have we worked in places where it seemed unlikely the Boss even knows what we do?

Different racks for SF and fantasy? Wow -- A friend once relayed this bookstore tale: he was browsing and noticed that the books on Zen were stacked "all over the place". When he inquired of a store clerk he was told, "Because Zen has nothing to do with itself."

Trivia ? reply: Chicago maybe?!

[[No, but closer than other guesses we've received.]]

PATRICIA RUSSO
341 73rd Street
North Bergen NJ 07047

On transmission of germs, Martian to us, or ours to Mars: Allegedly, the probes and rovers and such we've been and are sending to Mars are sterile. Or so NASA says. As for possible microbes on the outside of a Mars lander surviving takeoff and flight through our atmosphere, then a year or two of exposure to interplanetary space (the cold, the hard UV), and then re-entry through the Martian atmosphere -- they'd be some tough germs. But while it's unlikely that we've accidentally contaminated Mars this way, I wouldn't claim it was impossible.

More troubling was an article I read a couple of years ago, written by a serious scientist (sorry, the name escapes me now), making what sounded like a serious proposal -- that we seed Mars with earth bacteria, now, as the first step to a complete terraforming. And this, before we even know for sure whether native Martian microorganisms exist, or once existed. That struck me as a good example of human arrogance.

E.B., do not suspend your Story Project. What you've got to do is write another story, and start Story Project Part Deux...

[[You gotta be yanking us! We have a whole drawer full of unsold stories. Maybe we should send you a dozen or so, and you can pick out the ones we should send out...]]

ROBERT "BUCK" COULSON
2677 W 500 N
Hartford City IN 47348

Oh, Heinlein was always in favor of survival of the fittest, though he occasionally showed some latitude in what he considered the fittest. Consider Podkayne Of Mars. Juanita insists that it's an unrealistic portrait and she should know, but Heinlein was willing to present a female hero when nobody else was doing it. Even if he got it wrong, he made the effort. (And it sold well: I own three paperback editions.)

Almost any fiction for adults offers the thrill of danger, Rachel. The audience wants to read about heroes and heroines surmounting danger, not about their humble daily lives. On the whole, I don't think most parents worry nearly as much as you seem to.

[[We're beginning to see a Gender Gap pattern in the response to Rachel's article...]]

Agreed with Steve Stiles. Juanita's and my fanzine was nominated for Hugos ten



years in a row and won once (spoiling our slogan of being "the world's best second-rate fanzine") but that was a long time ago and I'm still enjoying fandom as much as I ever did.

I've been scratched by a cat a few times, but I've never had a dog attack me. I was bitten once, but the dog was aiming for my dog and I just got in the way, and the dog apologized for the mistake.

[[We've been attacked by dogs in the public street more than once. Once by a Dobermann (which the owners let run loose fifty yards from an elementary school). They were not best pleased when we showed up at their door with the police.]]

Look at the other side of the picture, Harry; perhaps we've had no alien visitors because they're afraid of catching our diseases. We have plenty to pass around, and the law of averages would predict that one or two aliens would be less dangerous to us than a few million of us would be to them. A Few cold germs might destroy an intergalactic agreement.

Well, Sheryl, the 1952 Chicon was the first con I attended, I knew nobody there and made the acquaintance of nobody, but I kept coming to cons. It was the second con I attended, a regional, that almost put me off going to any more, but I've told that story before.

LYN McCONCHIE
Farside Farm, Ngamoko Road
R.D. Norsewood 5491, New Zealand

I see you are doubtful about possible inserts in the Heinlein book The Day After Tomorrow and the novella "Magic Inc." You wonder if certain passages might have been inserted in a later re-write. I began reading SF in 1962 after I left home at 16. That year and for several more I read everything in the F/SF area I could lay hands on including both books. The copies I had at the time were a little past 1949 but included the wording that nothing had been omitted OR ADDED. And a few years after that I had a friend who'd been reading SF from a lot earlier. We often discussed Heinlein's work and I'm sure had either work had additional PC material added, she'd have realized and spoken of it to me.

[[We stand corrected. It's possible we may have misconstrued the copyright wording to imply a re-write which, in fact, never took place. Or possibly we read something about it elsewhere.]]

But on Podkayne Of Mars where Poddy claims Maori ancestry while having blonde hair and blue eyes, Heinlein was quite correct. By Maori custom if you have ANY Maori ancestry you can claim full Maori rights and responsibilities under tribal law. My best mate next door is 1/16th Maori with red hair and blue eyes and a very fair skin. Under Maori law, she's



Maori if she wishes to claim that. It's quite common to see a blue-eyed blond in a Maori dance competition along with darker friends. It's accepted quite casually, so much so that I had to think about your comments briefly before I saw why you were mentioning it at all.

Now -- Rachel Russell wants a "good fantasy/SF milieu with no orphans". The problem with that is that it isn't reality.

The only milieu where there's no orphans is a world where there's often no kids. Any of those? For a start she could try the James White "Hospital Station" series ... Then there's the wonderful books by Janet Kagan, Hellspark and Mirabile. Solid SF, brilliant concepts, but all the kids have families. And the "Warlock" series by Christopher Stasheff. All kids happily with families, and an excellent fantasy background. There's the "Honor Harrington" series by Dave Weber... but the books are military SF and very hard-edged about lethal battles and crews on the spaceships dying. I'd recommend: by Andre Norton, Wraiths Of Time, and the Witch World series. By Anne Logston, Shadow, Shadow Hunt and Shadow Dance. By Grant Callin, A Lion On Tharthee. By Alan Dean Foster, Shadowkeep. Gordon Dickson's Spacepaw and Spacial Delivery, and the "Dragon and the George" series. That should give you something to go on with if you can find them...

[[We're embarrassed that we overlooked the joyous Mirabile, and the Dickson books. But in the Stasheff books, were not the young witches and warlocks sheltered in the Queen's coven precisely because they were thrown out by their families? We're not familiar with all of the others.]]

To Catherine Mintz, an English friend once told me that the village motto in most rural U.K. communities was-- 'ere's a stranger, let's 'eave 'arf a brick at 'im.

December started with me wandering about the local graveyard after midnight. ... It was a cool clear night with a half moon. Not wanting to walk down the local roads since local traffic tends to zoom about with the velocity of jet-assisted takeoff and with the heedlessness toward pedestrians generally supposed to be French, I nipped along to my boundary, up the track and through the cemetery gate next door. There I could stroll along the neatly gravelled paths for a time before returning to bed... My feet were clad in light rubber-soled slippers and I was simply enjoying the cool air when I passed between two of the large memorials and saw before me the kneeling shape of someone else.

"Hi, there," I said casually. The figure rose vertically with a sound midway be-

tween a squawk and a gulping grunt. It passed through the gates at a speed comparable to a low-flying jet and vanished from my sight. I have no idea who the person was although judging by the reaction they MAY have been there for illicit purposes. Whoever it was clearly thought Judgement Day had arrived prematurely... Which makes me wonder -- how many ghost stories began on such a mundane basis?

Soon after this incident Tiger and fruit became entwined... I noticed I wasn't seeing a lot of Tiger... It had been drizzling gently. Dancer loves to sit in that. She looks mystically at the drops spangling her fur and meditates. Tiger usually comes inside muttering about a fella getting wet. I marched out to find the attraction. One look explained all. Encouraged by an early wet warm summer the red currant bushes were ripening early and prolifically. Sir was on guard. At attention under the nearest bush, just waiting for the first blind, stupid starling to home in on red currants. So far the score is Sir and starlings -- nil. Me -- 12½ kilos of ripe red currants. I'm happy with that.

December proceeded very pleasantly with the arrival of a small heavy parcel. I took one look at the return address and knew... I'd won the MUSE MEDALLION for the third year in a row. The medallion is awarded by the International Cat Writers' Association for "Best Short Fiction"; it judges "cat stories".

SUE MASON
3 York Street, Altrincham
Cheshire, WA15 9QH, United Kingdom

I don't find requests for specific fillos at all pushy, I actually prefer them. Though the infamous CONFABULATION request of "a moose skipping across the Austrian Tyrol, in a nun's habit, with edelwisse" was a little much. This was way back when the Plokta hive-mind was evolving from being the FOURPLAY filkcon committee into the CONFAB Eastercon in '95 committee (the year of the Worldcon in Glasgow and we foolishly thought that running an Eastercon would give us a "get out of Worldcon free" card. Wrong.).

[[One of the stone cool things about fandom is that we can write off to a total stranger requesting art of black

people, jewelry, and an orange tree, and get ALL THREE, sight unseen, no questions asked. (Which will be lead illos on articles over the next few issues.))]

The winged cat seems to be an American phenomenon. It would take a mighty pair of wings to get my pear shaped pussy off the ground but mice with rocket packs might just do it.

As with all things fannish, the more I read Twink, the more I enjoy it. When I first went to a con in '82 I didn't know a soul there; gradually over the last decade and a half I have come to make more and more fannish acquaintances and friends and now when I go to a big con (like Eastercon) I know a good 80% of the old

hacks. I'm only now expanding my friendships across the big pond. The Plokta mind-hive has decreed that they will have me up on the net this year -- I'm a computer incom-



petent but they keep force feeding me discarded hardware. Their idea of old tech is anything over six months; in this house we keep tech until it becomes a collector's item. We only got rid of our 1972 Hoover a couple of years ago when I finally convinced my mother that even though it still made an optimistic "voom" noise, it had ceased to pick up dirt years before.

I'm flattered by your Hugo nomination, though I think it'll be a good few years before enough Americans have heard of me. D. West is by far the best British artist we currently have...

[[We encourage you to send stuff to more American fanzines, Sue, and for more American faneds to ask you for stuff. You should be better known.]]

I liked the rocket ship you used on the cover of #11 but the girl with the poodle crossed over the line between retro and cute; sometimes I regret sending fillos when I see them in print and I do too much twee and cute.

[[We love it when you Brits say "twee". Don't know what it means, but we love it.]]

I'm glad that you liked Banana Wings, the Croydon fans are a really nice bunch and even though I'm a charter member of the Plokta cabal, I still do silly bananas for them. And they put me up when I'm in Croydon for the big pagan craft fair... One year I want to come over to the States and do a couple of RenFairs (I do arts and crafts for a living) and I must take a table at a U.S. Worldcon one year. One year I might think about TAFF.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS
15 Jansons Road, South
Tottenham, London
N15 4JU, United Kingdom

Thanks for Twink 12 -- although, as with the past couple of issues, there is little in it which moves me to comment. So I think I'll have another moan

about the length of your book reviews, which continue to be too short to tell us anything of great value about the titles in question -- or indeed, with respect to your comment about Stuart Hopen's Warp Angel, anything of any value at all. My immediate response to a one-sentence review of that nature is to suggest that if you found the thing too silly to read beyond the first chapter, why mention it at all? Why not use the space thus wasted for increased wordage about a title that you consider of more moment, and which therefore deserves a longer review?

As I've said before: If you're going to review a book, then you should concentrate on those titles worth reviewing, and review them at the length they demand, rather than compressing the reviews to

fit in as many titles as possible. Your yardstick should be quality, not quantity ...The fact that Twink is not alone in its vain pursuit of the chimera of comprehensive coverage (the squibby one-paragraph book reports in FOSFAX spring instantly to mind as another example) is insufficient to justify the practice.

[[There's a distinction between "criticism" and book reviewing. We figure anyone who's been with us long enough to have some sense of our taste, can decide whether our opinions are useful to them. And we have no delusion that our review section is anything like comprehensive.]]

But talk is cheap, did I hear you say? Very well, then; I place my keyboard where my mouth is, and offer two examples of the approach which I think you ought to adopt for the fanzine to improve...

[[Thank you!]]

ALEXANDER R. SLATE
8603 Shallow Ridge Drive
San Antonio TX 78239

Thanks for the latest issue of Twink. You seem to have settled down now into a "comfortable" format. Sorry that I was not able to attend Worldcon. I would have enjoyed meeting "the other half of my fannish personality". Alas, the combination of schedule and personal finances wouldn't permit. In fact, finances are such that I might have to cut PhilosFy back to two a year, but we'll see.

[[Any cutback in PhilosFy would be distressing; it's one of the fanzines we always look forward to eagerly.]]

Enjoyed the article on the Tarot. I was even able to learn a thing or two. I used to play with the Tarot years back and at one time owned two decks, the Rider-Waite and the Golden Dawn. But that too was a thing of the past.

Anyway, just a short note to let you know I'm still alive and kicking.

LLOYD PENNEY
1706-24 Eva Road
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2, Canada

Many thanks for Twink #12. Another good-sized fanzine is thrust lengthwise through my mail slot, and that certainly deserves

a comment or two. Or several, all imagery aside...

[[Dude, whatever is happening among you, Yvonne, and your mailbox, is none of our concern.]]

Your Hugo nominations: I am highly flattered, and I thank you. I would be floating at 30,000 feet if I was ever to appear on a Hugo ballot, and I'd be in high orbit if I ever won. I can dream, but I dream big. And, I have those shirts. I've said it myself, the usual fannish suspects appear on the ballot. I know of their achievements, and wouldn't deny that being on the ballot is deserved. Yet, seeing new names on the ballot is a good sign that others are rising, and I have enough ego to hope that my name will be there some day.

I just checked my bookshelves, and I have nothing by Michael Bishop, although I may have read a short story by him... I will have to do something about that, based on Bob Sabella's recommendations.

I understand Rachel Russell's opinions about SF/fantasy. When I first started reading this wonderful stuff, it was about robots, rockets to distant planets, and time travel. It was pure escapism... SF has become more violent and warlike, more rooted in reality and the present, and less about wonder. We still need to escape, but as we need to escape more often, and further, our escapist literature roots us too close to reality than we'd like.

The Darkover series never appealed to me, though I have read a book or two. I did know that the Grand Council met in the Baltimore area. Was it Timonium or Towson? We may have driven past the hotel on the way to BucConeer this past year.

[[Timonium (a northern suburb). If you came down I-83 from York/Harrisburg PA, you passed within 100 yards of the Holiday Inn where Darkover is held.]]

Good fanzine list. The MSFire group have placed the fanzine in some sort of limbo right now, as suddenly the fanzine they produce, presumably the clubzine of Milwaukee SF Services, has been replaced by another zine as the clubzine.

[[That's news to us -- we'll see what we can find out. It should not affect delivery of Twink, which we send to Lloyd Daub's home address anyway.]]

Corflu Sunsplash will be held at the Sandpiper/Beacon Motel, Panama City FL, from April 30 to May 2. Attending memberships are \$45, and supporting memberships \$15. Send money and hotel room requests to: Suzanne & Shelby Vick, 627 Barton Avenue, Springfield FL 32404.

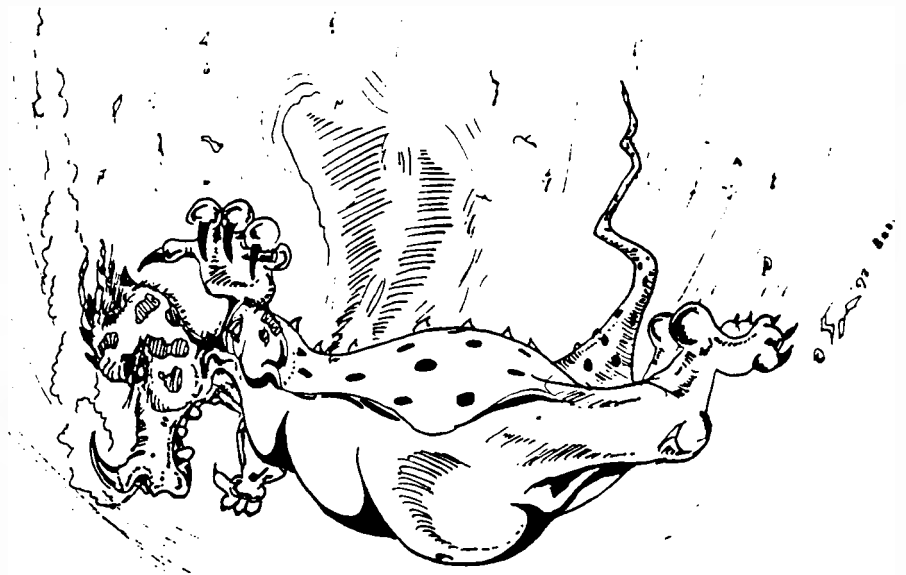
Now for the news I read recently. Dave Langford's Ansible reports that you'd been "outed" (that was the term used), and your real name ~~[[deleted]]~~ was being reported. Does this change anything here? Does E.B. Frohvet go into hibernation? I don't know if you'd be upset over this, or amused. I think you'll find that in this fandom of nicknames, few will change the way they treat you or communicate with you.

[[Ansible's source was Victor Gonzalez. Our response: Any inference that Victor Gonzalez has drawn is his inference, and we accept no responsibility for it.]]

FRANZ H. MIKLIS
A-5151 Nussdorf 179
Austria

First of all a loud mioouww for Twink #12, arrived some days ago. You have a good taste in choosing nice and colorful covers, and for this one Sheryl really deserves a kiss -- what lovely a piece! Very interesting to read your Hugo nominations -- I always thought this being the mostly hidden secrets of fandom. Well, and so I was astonished enough to read that you even choose to nominate a weird and distant fanartist from down there up in the Alps. (Actually I had to read this twice to believe.) I instantly had to celebrate this sensational revelation with a massive Celtic houseparty, inviting my ole homedruids and the Salt Queen of the Oichten-valley. We opened a crackerbarrel of beer and had a fresh hog and much fun.

Back to the zine: Again you brought some interesting reading stuff together. For me, Bob Sabella's article makes me hungry to try some new books. Very useful reviews and a funny lettercol rounds your good dozen up -- good work.



NOW -- it's time to take a look into the future and see what is going on at the famous and nearly legendary "Frohvet-Party" in Chicago. (See the included drawing.) [[See cover and editorial!]] You know: once you have planted this virus there is no way back -- so folks, look for some pink pants or stuff and come over.

Thanks again for your zine and nomination.

[[What? You had a fresh hog and barrel of beer and didn't invite us and Buck Coulson? / Seriously, we try to nominate a variety of people; but our suggestions don't imply a place on the ballot. Yet.]]

RODNEY LEIGHTON
RR #3, Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia
BOK 1V0, Canada

Thanks for Twink #12. How come you don't have a WAHF list to put me in?

[[We do keep a WAHF list. In #12, we simply ran out of space at the end of the letter column.]]

Thanks also for the DUFF ballot. I see Hooper is bound to win... I'm finding these things amusing. They promote them as being North America to Oz, or Europe, and vice versa. Yet, how many Canadians ever find themselves on any ballots? How many Mexicans? Why not make the thing truthful and say it is for residents of the U.S. to travel to Australia and the U.K. and vice versa? Yes, I know that Marty Cantor's ex is a Canadian but she was resident of the U.S. at the time. Tell me, some of you DUFFers: has there ever been a Canadian winner, resident of Canada? Besides Mike Glicksohn.

[[We can't claim to be expert on the

history of TAFF and DUFF, but our limited experience tends to agree, Rodney. We'd like to see at least one Canadian run for TAFF at the next opportunity. Volunteers?]]

I greatly enjoyed your awards page. I was halfway expecting to see "Most Irritating Correspondent" in front of my name. Nice of you to give Sheryl an award. I think I will start a campaign for someone to create a "Nicest Person In SFandom" Award. Sheryl would win that one hands down.

I wonder if Steve Stiles published a trip report after his TAFF journey the year I graduated from college, 31 years ago. Good gracious, Gertrude.

As it happens, the original of Franz's cartoon is on my wall... I still get a kick out of it. I wish I wasn't so broke. I would order a copy of the Walt Willis book. But \$10 US is about \$15 Canadian...

I don't really see much value to the Hugos. Sure, I would like to see Joe Major win one, since it appears he wants one. I would like to see Tom Sadler win one or two, since he wants them. I would like to see Sheryl win one if she desires the thing. All are deserving...

If I were nominating Hugo candidates, Banana Wings would get the nod as Best Fanzine. The Reluctant Famulus would be second... I like Challenger but always find myself wondering if each new issue will arrive. FOSFAX would be third. Mimosa would be #4, Twink would be #5. These things are subjective, right.

Fanartists would be easy. Sheryl Birkhead is #1. Haven't seen much by my darling lately but Peggy Ranson has to be #2. Franz Miklis, Margaret Simon, Diana Harlan Stein.

Fanwriters: Claire Brialey is the best writer in the fan universe. Joseph Major, Mark Plummer, Paul Kincaid, Sheryl Birkead. LOCcer's are not fanwriters. There you go...

CATHERINE MINTZ
1810 S Rittenhouse Square, #1708
Philadelphia PA 19103

Although I did read Twink right away, I was recovering from what was diagnosed after the fact as the latest, most up-to-date version of the flu. I wasn't answer-

ing the telephone, let alone the mail. Advice from the weary: Do get a flu shot.

As one contribution to the ongoing "We're All African Anyway", I enclose a copy of the Burroughs Bulletin with an interesting article about racism in Burroughs and London. The second is the observation that one of my Asian acquaintances, not Siamese, finds the "Siamese Cat Song" in Lady And The Tramp profoundly offensive. She does not, however, see anything wrong with Mark Twain using "nigger". Perhaps we tend to react to our own ox being gored...

I think at some point we have to admit that writers seldom escape being representative of their time, which includes the bad as well as the good... But it is impossible to read anything without interpreting it according to the milieu you live in. You may, by conscious effort, understand not just the story but the context. However, you'll never read it as those it was first written for did. I don't think many people who actually read Huckleberry Finn are confused about Mark Twain's opinion of slavery, his quite-correct-for-the-time diction notwithstanding.

Steve Sneyd asked about "persons of color". It has come back into use, but does not mean what it did before World War II. In general use it may include not just blacks, but also Latinos, Asians, Native Americans, and curiously, for they are Aryan despite often being quite dark, Indians, as well as any mixtures of the above, plus any mixtures of the above with whites that don't look white. In short, anyone who might be taken as not being white, and so treated differently on that basis.

[[Yes. Here's a chilling thought: "persons of color" is regarded as a polite expression. Which it is, considering the alternatives.]]

MARTY CANTOR
11825 Gilmore Street #105
North Hollywood CA 91606

Your writing about Heinlein vis-a-vis race seems to be more or less on target. I say more or less because I am one of those people who do not rail against people for not railing against the mores

of their times. And I say that because I am one of those who did achieve that higher level of thought. Even though I spent my earliest childhood in middle class white West Hartford CT, when I moved to the San Gabriel Valley, CA I started meeting students of other racial persuasions. During most of my life since then I have lived in integrated areas...

Robert Sabella's SF is most definitely not my SF as I consider the "New Wave" garbage to be just that, with the "New Wave"-influenced stuff not much better. But then, most fans who know me also know that my likes in SF have been described (even self-described) as dinosaurian.

In looking at your mention of No Award #4 you write about the zine, "This seems to us to be a little unclear about what sort of fanzine it really wants to be." Let me clarify the matter for you. I prefer material which is humorous, which contains smartassery or allows me smart-ass commentary, is fanhistorical, is well written. In other words, it's a genzine. In still other words, this being a fanzine I am still at the mercy of what is contributed. Whilst I would prefer all of the contents to be "off the wall", good material of all sorts can find its way into the pages of the zine... As an aside to this, my interest in fanhistory should be evident to those who remember my previous fanzine Holier Than Thou... I have only been in fandom for some 24 years and I am interested in what took place in fandom before I found this hobby...

[[Thanks for the clarification. We have to admit, we failed to grasp the humor in an article about the L.A. Coroner's Office website...]]

MURRAY MOORE
2118 Russett Road
Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1C1, Canada

In Twink #11 your statistical analysis of the pattern of winners in the Hugo [fan] categories was interesting. I remain unconvinced that a multiple winner should be prevented from being a nominee subsequent to winning. The results reflect the interests of the voters. If the voters are less than optimally aware of all the better fanzines, so it goes.

Are those ... in the letters printed in

Twink, indicators of words that you have not printed? If a letter writer... includes a... in his letter, how... do you deal with that situation?

[[Just like this, Murray, and let the readers sort it out as best they can.]]

I was as underwhelmed, reading your account of attending the 1998 Worldcon, as you were in telling about it. I do like the idea of E.B. Frohvet groupies wearing pink shirts and white jeans at Chicon in 2000. I will be buying a Chicon membership Real Soon Now. Torcon (1973) is my lone Worldcon.

[[See the editorial. The idea seems to have taken on a life of its own. Ack! Do we have "groupies"?]]

I had not known that George VI was a Mason. Attending Masonic Lodge meetings would not be a novelty for a king. He would be used to wearing costumes.

Twink #11 is not entirely without potential controversy: the Portugal-bashing on p. 10: an Anne McCaffrey novel is "the Portugal of Pern novels -- an attractive backwater in which nothing much of importance is going to happen." Tsk.

[[Hey, thanks. We thought that was a pretty clever simile, and you're the only one who mentioned it. Guess we don't do "clever" very well. Note, we did say "attractive". And they make nice rose wine.]]

...Discussion of your editorial persona in the lettercolumn has refused to die, as late as the lettercol of #12. Lurching into pseudo-philosophy, how well do any of us ever know another person? All of us, presumably, are at our best in print. The fact that I don't know you as the name as your country's Internal Revenue Service knows you, I have come to accept, is unimportant. I no longer think of you as Mystery Fan hiding behind a pseudonym.

Even your use of the royal "we", fails to annoy me by issue #12. Your responses to your readers are briefly bright -- "Thud. Thud. Thud." ... and consistent with an amusing, communicative persona.

Comment has been shared with you that Twink looks like a fanzine of the 1950's and 1960's. I like the Twink look. Readable type in size and face, sufficient and various art spread through the articles and letters; covers that are simple and attractive.

My sharing, in the lettercol of Anvil, of my enjoyment of Michael Bishop's "Her Habiline Husband", brought me a surprise: a letter from Bishop. Normally, the fans communicate their admiration to the pros. The letter was hand written on lined paper. I caught Bishop's attention because I had read "HHH" at least three times as it was printed and re-printed.

MICHAEL W. WAITE
105 W. Ainsworth
Ypsilanti MI 48197

Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No. 1, in B Flat Minor, Op. 23, was first performed in Boston, MA, October 13, 1875, by Hans von Bülow, conducted by Benjamin Johnson Lang. I assume this was the world premiere. My first, unassisted guess was St. Petersburg, Russia.

[[Right you are, Michael. Tchaikovsky had a furious row with the pianist, Nicholas Rubinstein; rejecting all advice from friends, he declared the work would be played as written or not at all, and sent it off to von Bülow, an old friend.]]

ERIC LINDSAY
P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach,
Queensland 4802, Australia

You certainly have a fine, active letter column in Twink #10.

Your Tarot article in #11 was interesting, but I admit to not being able to concentrate on any of the details of almost anything involving cards. Books on it remind me of stuff like "Star Names, Thier Lore And Meaning" which are interesting historically, but not very much use.

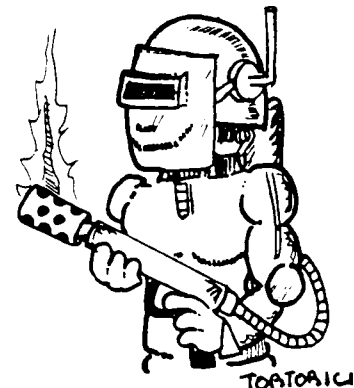
[[Well, we collect obscure words. Not every subject has to be of "use".]]

Living in a country with very few "people of color", I've managed to avoid noticing most of the U.S. problems in those areas. My rule of thumb is that any visibly different group does fine until they range between 1% and 10% of a population, at which point there is likely to be trouble.

...Rotsler was drawing on real ceramic plates at Corflu Los Angeles, and many were stolen from the hotel by fans! Later conventions tended to get in large supplies of paper plates if Rotsler was attending.

ELIZABETH OSBORNE
137 Emerald Lane
Lima OH 45805

Hello there. I hope that your readers enjoy the article. Your views on the S.C.A. are not unknown. At many demos and public events, the main point of interest is often weapons and fighting. This is because many S.C.A. members believe that fighting is a highly visual item, sure to gather lots of public interest. Since the purpose of most demos is membership re-



cruitment, fighting is an easy way to gather both public and media interest. The thinking goes that more people will be interested in watching two people go at each other with swords than watching someone do anything else, say, spinning wool. They also make better pictures for the newspapers and other media. A good demo will have more than one activity going on, such as dancing, music, or a short play. The feeling is, however, that a display, some fliers, and two fighters make an acceptable demo.

There are people in the S.C.A. who believe that fighting is the only worthwhile activity... I am not one of them. If I was interested, I probably would have written more about the battles, fighting, etc... Those people (men and women) who are only interested in fighting are called "sword jocks" and have a fairly poor rep...

[[It was the fact that most of the S.C.A. demonstrations we saw, involved only or principally fighting, that tended to drive us away from pursuing any interest in the organization.]]

TARAL WAYNE
245 Dunn Avenue #2111
Toronto, Ontario, M6K 1S6, Canada

Very old fashioned sort of zine -- the sort of thing I used to cut my teeth on in 1974, when I was just entering into the world of fanzines. Unfortunately, I have not had much time to really keep in touch. trying to make a living through my art is a job-and-a-half. Long hours -- low wages -- I'd be physically better off wrapping burgers for a living. What keeps me at the art is that it's the only thing I'm good at. I'd be a lousy lawyer, lackluster gas station attendant, but a great cartoonist. Unfortunately the world tends to treat artists the way SF fandom does -- an afterthought, a bit of embellishment for something else, a comic gag -- not something worth really putting yourself out for. So low wages -- long hours. Sigh.

Of course you could always write a science fiction novel. A friend of mine did that to get out of a financial bind. Other writers we know read and praised the MS, but it's been sitting unread at Tor for two years. The days someone could just write a story, get in published in Astounding three months later and break into the field, are long over. There's a "right" way to do it now, and it takes years... It's not the same world it was.

But at least, like Twink, not all things have changed.

[[We didn't set out deliberately to do an "old style" fanzine, it just worked out that way. // Two years seems too long even for an unagented MS; if we were in that position, we would just withdraw it and try elsewhere.]]

HENRY L. WELCH
1525 16th Avenue
Grafton WI 53024

Thanks for Twink #12. I would include Ian Gunn on your list of Hugo nominees.

[[We would be neither surprised nor displeased to see the Fan Artist award voted (posthumously, alas) to Ian Gunn.]]

Milwaukee (re: MSFire review) has fandom and cons. I have no idea why Lloyd Daub has yet to attend a con since most of his local readership attends one or more in the area.

Cupid may have survived since it has changed time slots, but I haven't seen it for a few weeks. As for the Greek vs. Roman mythology, most people couldn't sort out Eros/Cupid, much less keep Zeus/Jupiter straight. Hercules and Xena use the same license.

[[Sorry, Cupid was cancelled -- as we predicted. Two wrongs, or three, don't make a right.]]

SHERYL BIRKHEAD
23629 Woodfield Road
Gaithersburg MD 20882

I have my (uh -- change that -- I just dropped the envelope into the mailbox) nominating ballot done -- but I have a strong suspicion it was a mistake. I panicked when I saw that it needed to be postmarked by the 23rd... I think I left "Dramatic Presentation" blank and only filled out the fan categories. Drat.

Cold -- this no heat business has gotten old -- REAL FAST.

I admit (as does Rachel) that I like Darkover too -- but I also haven't read any for a LONG time.

I enjoyed Cupid -- no thinking involved -- but it was cancelled.

I presume you've heard Buck Coulson has died -- totally surprised me -- I thought he was recuperating. Juanita sounds, understandably, pretty down.

[[Like you, we were completely taken aback by the news.]]

Uh -- did "we" ever discuss the pronunciation of "Frohvet"? I pronounce it as it looks, "Fro-vet", but I've heard others say "Fro-vay", i.e. French twist, so to speak -- just wondered.

[[Frohvet. Like "Corvette". Accent on the second syllable. Alsatian, you know.]]

The Tortorici pieces are a bit different than what I've become used to seeing -- nice. Nice to see Teddy's Hugo voting commentary.

Uh -- I don't recall the illo two issues ago but I CAN tell you I've never a cockroach.

[[We took it to be a cricket.]]

[[WAHF: Leigh Kimmel, Edmund Meskys, John Hertz, Steve Stiles, Ken Cheslin, Janice Murray, Garth Spencer, and Janine Stinson.]]

M

I S C E L L A N Y

Patricia Russo sent us an article, apparently from the Sunday supplement of her local paper. The African-American writer Walter Mosley says that SF "speaks most clearly to those who are dissatisfied with the way things are" and thus has, or ought to have, appeal to black Americans. We'll agree with the first point; observation seems to argue against the second.

Didja ever try to explain to a child the difference between angels and faeries? Don't. The child will win every time, or at least argue you to a standstill. The kid, having dropped the subject, will be off happily scarfing down pizza while you're left ruminating fine points of theology.

Save The Finches!

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If there's no light at the end of the tunnel -- set fire to something!"
-- Lyn McConchie, in correspondence.

Perched in a tree, a broad-winged hawk fades almost invisibly into the grey-and-brown of a winter landscape. Which, we suppose, is the point.

Jay Harber, 626 Paddock Lane, Libertyville IL 60048, is a fan whose illness includes visual impairment. He is looking for fans who can correspond with him via audio tape.

In the late 1940's, Oldsmobile marketed cars under the model name "Futurica". Apparently they were considered pretty stylish at the time.

Sheryl Birkhead advises on good authority (the Lynches) that Disclave, the D.C.-area con (notorious for the water-pipe/bondage debacle of '97) has been cancelled for 1999. This of course raises the likelihood that it will vanish forever, and also impacts the possibility of that area bidding for any other convention (e.g. Worldcon, Corflu).

Here's one: Why is it that Britfans (British fanzines in particular) almost never put return addresses on envelopes?

The Reader's Chair, P.O. Box 2626, Hollister CA 95024, (800)-616-1350, offers unabridged audiotape performances of most of Lois McMaster Bujold's books. They also do Dean Koontz novels, mysteries, and other material.

To this day we don't have a clue as to who won the 1998 FAAn Awards. Maybe this year someone will bother to inform us. (A Reliable Source suggests that Twink received 3 "best fanzine" votes at Corflu-U.K. Interesting if true; we'd have guessed it was unlikely we'd get any...)

It is not yet clear how the changes in postal rates will affect Twink. If, as we suspect, domestic rates stay about the same and overseas rates go up significantly, we may have to be a little more strict looking for responses from out-of-U.S. We're committed to sending out about 25 foreign copies of #13 and we regard fewer than half of those as regular trades/contributors.

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"Have you ever looked in the mirror so long that your face just doesn't make sense any more?"

-- Noelle (Uma Therman's character in The Truth About Cats And Dogs.)

Is it true about the Seattle 2002 Worldcon bid? And does that leave San Francisco uncontested? We don't have any problem with San Francisco, we just have a problem with uncontested "elections".

Lois Bujold indicates that after her next Vorkosigan book (working title A Civil Campaign, due September) she hopes to take "at least a one-book break" and turn her attention to writing something else. What, is not specified.

True to our prediction, ABC's fantasy-slanted Cupid has been cancelled. Pity. How many TV shows have lines like, "Uncle Apollo doesn't like jazz."?