

# WIZ

is published on an irregular but, hopefully, frequent schedule by Richard Bergeron in a misguided attempt to fill the fleeting moments between issues of Warhoon. Go Thou and do likewise. #1, Nov. 5, 1982. RSVP for future issues and please indicate whether you mind being quoted.

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**Yahoo!:** Has fandom been "H-Bombed flat" (to quote, I think, Greg Pickersgill,) by the recent ChiCon? Or were you all so depressed by the spectacle that there seems no future in fanning? Every year I seem to forget the post-Worldcon slump that fandom falls into -- or is it that an empty mailbox is more noticeable in this paradise of a Siberia to which I've exiled myself? Of course, we're also in the post-Pong depression but that isn't as glaring as it would be without Izzard doing its bit to breathe life back into a supine fandom. And now here I am -- having bought all my own arguments to the Nielsen Haydens -- opening the Caribbean crifanac front in this best of all possible fandoms...that gauntlet keeps getting caught in my bridgework. Let us now pray to Saint Bostick.

**Not a review of Not Science Fantasy News:** Vince Clarke is a mad pill popping genius who writes ersatz verse on cue (better than writing on your shirt cuff, as he might say). At least that's the way it looks in SFN #2 wherein he fashions an incredible poem based on Abigail Frost's observation that he is "a constructor, not an expresser". Be that as it may, I was slightly bemused by Vince's confession "To me a fanzine is a semi-public letter to friends ... an extension of the ego on paper, communicating with people I'd rather talk to face-to-face" taken with another statement of his that Wrhn 28 is "the best fanzine in history". No, I'm not just quoting ego-boo -- I'm about to make the point that I can't imagine any fanzine more diametrically opposed to the first set of dicta than Wrhn which is never conceived as being any kind of substitute activity. The art of the fanzine is very singularly itself and not something created because I'd rather be doing something else. The trouble with conversation as an artform is that the only evidence it leaves behind is of the rather lame "I guess you had to be there" variety. Attempts to communicate the vividness of good conversation in a fanzine often end up most unsatisfactory: eg. Bill Rotsler trying to catch the in person flair of recalled Burbee in a recent Boonfark or, indeed, all descriptions of the great raconteurs at Oblique House (who may have actually been no more exceptional than those at Towner Hall). One form does not translate into the other -- which, probably, is why I usually find transcriptions of convention speeches in fanzines (where the personal essay or article should reign supreme) to be curiously flat and lifeless: a speech often depends on timing and feedback from the audience; without its proper context a large part of its impact is missing and merely puzzling or flat on the page. Jokes (which in an essay require visualization of the well turned phrase) limp inanely on paper and seem oddly stupid and heavy handed...even when (and here I may be committing sacrilege) they're by Bob Shaw. I regard convention speeches printed in fanzines as filler.

Very little conversation achieves the level of good fanwriting. Conversation is so, how shall I say?, first draft? Impossible to revise, impossible to edit, lacking in punchlines, and often consisting of little more than grocery lists (I liked this, I didn't like that, etc). How much more satisfying to be enthralled by a Patricia Nielsen Hayden article. To the extent that Warhoon is successful as a fanzine I would say to that extent it resembles face-to-face communication not at all. (I might point out that in these pages I can address 75 of you simultaneously. If I could have you all over for the evening, I doubt you'd all shut up long enough to let me address you at anywhere near this length and if I collared you individually I'd be hoarse by the time I'd repeated the contents of this issue 15 times. Bored to hell, too.)

Strange then that in his efforts to find a new form for the fanzine, Vince has hit on the concept of "theme" issues. Given his perception of the fanzine as a replacement for in-person meetings I find this oddly similar to inviting one's friends in but first warning them that the only subject anyone will be allowed to talk about will be, oh, "residence" (that being the topic chosen for the next SFN). I see Harry Warner informs Vince that there has already been a whole amateur press association devoted to this particular obsession to exchange viewpoints on a given topic. Of course, there was "Who Killed SF?" and "Why Is A Fan?" back in the 50s but I suspect Vince hasn't heard about 4 Star Extra -- the fanzine published, edited, and written by Joyce and Arnie Katz and Bill and Charlene Kunkel which was nothing so much as a party among the four at which none of them was allowed to talk about anything except the pre-arranged subject. They did it with such style that each issue was a minor delight and, come to think of it, the seven issues (published from May, 1978, to November, 1978, on a monthly basis) would probably be a good subject for a facsimile edition. The first issue was devoted to the automobile. #2: The World Of Kids, #3: Mystery radio programs of the 40s, #4: The World At War, #5: Summertime, #6: Renegade Culture (porn parlors and the like), #7: Monstermania. The 8th issue was to have been about "The Holidays" but may never have been published.

Well, I don't actually have anything against theme issues (see Wrhn 28) but given the unpredictable and unexpected range that is the peculiar joy of the fanzine one wonders why a mad genius would want to venture into so confining a form?

**Gift horse:** Teresa Nielsen Hayden caught me rather short in Izzard #2 where she confesses to having once thought of herself as a/the Lone Ranger. Well, I knew she

hadn't done any of the typing on Wrhn 30 (she and Patrick did most of that work on #29, but then I got off their backs and sensibly bought my own Correcting Selectric) so the other likelihood is that she's a mad pill popping mindreading genius. I turned to page 63 of the latest issue of the great blue beast which blunders about in the red desert (presently available only in an edition of one copy which is in the custody of P&T) and perused my own remark on fandom: "a hobby horse on which I can play the role of the lone ranger". Maybe we're all mad geniuses (in which event, it's the morons who are the intellectuals).

**Bergeron never forgets (sometimes)**: Redd Boggs sent me a copy of his latest Fapa-zine (Scintillas From World's End) which is a lovely tribute to Gretchen and, in its own way, constitutes an incredible example of the consistency of Redd's fanac over the years. "A real little time machine. Pages 1 and 2 step right out of Chronoscope (circa 1948?) in format and that pica is the very machine you used on Caprice, isn't it?", I asked in a note. Redd replied: "Well now, this is not the same typewriter used for Caprice, 'April, 1947'. It's a machine of more or less the same make, since that was an old mechanical L.C. Smith, and this is an electric Smith Corona -- and I'm not entirely sure of the continuity between the old L.C. Smith company and the present one. I gave the old typewriter to my sister as long ago as 1955. It wound up in the hands of one of my nephews, but when I inquired about it a few years ago, no one could remember what had become of it. :: But I am overwhelmed that you remember Caprice, of which I think I published only 40 or 50 copies. I can't remember exactly how many, but very few. A few years ago I acquired a copy from my former co-editor of Tympani, Bob Stein, and I looked at it with amazement. This particular copy was stapled along the wrong edge, an error never corrected, and probably the copy was thus never really read. I note that I published it before I began to use lettering guides, although I obtained one or two guides along with my first mimeo, as lagniappe. They were generous in those days. It has my address rendered as Minneapolis 13, and I believe the zone was changed to 18 just about that time -- in fact, I thought it was earlier than that. There are stylistic differences, of course, such as 'April, 1947' -- I haven't used a comma in such a dateline for many years -- and 'St.' as an abbreviation for street, which likewise has been obsolete in my style book these many years. But I notice on page 2 the title interlined between dashes, and this is a little form-atic gimmick I'm still partial to."

**Cash for your trash**: Is the first issue of one's fanzine complete without a letter from Bob Tucker? Just to moot the question, I think I'll quote this note Bob wrote to Fast & Loose on May 1, 1980: "Dick Bergeron was speculating about the price of fanzines. I was in Toronto for a convention last week and made it a point to discuss the price of fanzines while on the fan panel. It was easy; a dealer named Anne Sherlock in Toronto made it easy for me. :: Her catalog lists fifty or more ancient fanzines, ranging in date from 1938 to perhaps 1970 and I found the prices most astonishing. I asked her if she was actually getting those prices and she said she was. The high priced items move slowly, but they do find buyers. :: She was offering copies of the 1938 Year Book of SF, and the 1939 edition of the same. I published them for 15¢ each in those dear dead days but now she is asking \$25 each. She had copies of Yandro, and Sigbo, each containing articles by me, and was asking \$7.50 for the one and \$15 for the other. :: Now why wasn't I smart enough to save boxesfull of my fanzines and offer them for sale in 1980?" I wonder what these old copies of Novae Terrae which I was about to throw out are worth?

**Condensation**: Teresa and I have been discussing the problems of the "ensmalled" (Redd Boggs, c.1962?) fanzine lately and I want to use a passage from her letter which is too good not to share. Especially since the last sentence exemplifies the kind of writing she and one other fan consistently excell in (can you name that person?): "Another thought vis-a-vis the fast & frequent format is that even at short lengths I think it's possible to interestingly manage more sheer content than Pong did. Not to criticize the zine; it was wonderful and very much itself. But I think Dan and Ted sometimes put that thing together out of sheer style and a few cobwebs. That's a good antidote to all the fanarticles that run on for two or four pages more than they ought to, but I think I'd get bored with /doing/ it after too short a time. It seems to me that it ought to be possible to write well and interestingly about complex topics at very short lengths, if one thinks about the point to be made first instead of rambling on, inserting every idea that occurs that could possibly have relevance. By way of illustration, I think that Arthur Hlavaty could publish some of the most brilliant postcards in fandom."

WARHOON #30

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