

ANVIL 9



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THE VOCAL FAN

EDITORIAL:

By Jim Gilpatrick

Welcome to the pages of ANVIL. As the new editor, I hope I will be able to continue the course laid down in the previous 8 issues by Wade Gilbreath during his tenure as founding President of the BSFC and as the only other editor ANVIL has ever had.

For the time being, I plan no major changes in ANVIL. We will continue to publish 6 times each year and will continue with our vaguely genzineish format. Contributors please note: ANVIL (and the B'ham club) now has a official and permanent address. So - our P. O. Box - it's the last change of address your file will ever need (ahem). The BSFC does seem to be settling into some sort of maturity after its first year. Our membership is stable, our programs (such as they are) continue, and we seem to have a better time with each other each month.

Elsewhere around the state, many other SF clubs are forming. Tuscaloosa has a young and enthusiastic club now. B'ham seems to be taking a guiding role with them for now, but before too long, I doubt there will be much we can show them. Their publishing schedule is certainly ambitions enough. They publish a monthly clubzine and a quarterly genzine. With T-town having a good club and Huntsville organizing, it looks as if fandom in Alabama is coming along nicely.

All in All, I hope ANVIL will continue to be the kind of zine you enjoy reading and the kind you enjoy contributing to! We can always use the help.

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The Committee Remembers

or
Half-a-Con from the Inside Out

Being the Distilled Reminiscences
of the
Con/2 Committee

The following was distilled from the reminiscences of the Half-a-Con Committee during a decompression session about a week after the con. Everyone just put their impressions down on paper and left it at that. Major Contributors include Charlotte Proctor, Frank Love, and Yr. Hbl. Edr.

Jim Gilpatrick, Beth Pointer and P. L. Caruthers making a mad dash ice run in the rain to the Liberty down the hill, then finding out that for the first time in living memory, the Hotel ice machines were sufficient to keep the con suite in ice all weekend// Jim winning his first fannish hearts game but only after he had been eliminated from the tournament// Frank Love getting the wrong pizza at Pasquales// Charlotte saying, "It's a good con- everyone knows me"// Joe Moudry binding books// Eating breakfast with Wade Gilbreath and Cliff & Susan Biggers figuring out why Larry Mason hated the toast// Frank showing Monty Python and the Holy Grail over and over. And over ("We are but eight score young women between the ages of 16 and 19½")// Dick and Nicki Lynch getting the wrong sandwich at Pasquale's// Charlotte's Tarot prediction for David Wood's sister about getting money in the mail coming true// Frank calling Charlotte "Valerie" in the slide show// The look on Wade's face after Jim left the door to the private con room open// Picking up the con suite// Charlotte and her green cloth// Valerie and the traveling cash box// Jim's dramatic reading of the hotel contract concerning pool use to the night manager at 2:00 AM// P. L. running for Vice President of SFC// The active silence one-shot// Waiting 45 minutes for service at Pasquale's// Regretting that we had ever learned the name "Pasquale's"// Ferd Pointer showing up with doughnuts// Beth impersonating Cerebus at the huckster room// Wade's dramatic reading of the trivia questions// Joe Celko telling mathematics jokes// Guy H. Lillian III pacing the pool during the degenerate scum meeting// To-la, To-la, To-la// Meade's disappearing bottle// Mel's falling at the dead dog party// Falling asleep Sunday night// Wade paying the bills with the Hotel Monday morning// Disposing of 22 cases of leftover drinks// Reading that the con hotel was sold to the phone company the next week//

With that behind us, here is a final balance sheet on the con finances:

Income

52 memberships @ \$5	260.00
42 memberships @ \$7	294.00
8 memberships @ \$5	40.00
6 tables @ \$10	60.00
6 cases bheer @ \$8	48.00
2 cases soft drinks	10.00
room reimbursements	15.00
garbage can	9.00

\$736.00Outgo

con flyers	16.57
SFC mailing	3.00
postage	3.90
name tags	21.20
bheer & soft drinks	376.34
calendars	28.41
garbage cans	21.18
ice	4.39
playing cards	2.50
Hotel bill	169.93
Frank Love's room	66.34
shower curtain	2.00
cash to BSFC	20.24

\$736.00

Half-a-Con made a profit of \$20.24 on an attendance of 102. Our only mistake was to badly overbuy on our drinks. Despite the sale of 8 cases to attendees, we were still in possession of 7½ cases of bheer and 8½ cases of soft drinks on Monday when the smoke cleared. One interesting statistic: of 102 members there were only 5 no-shows, and one of those was Janice Gelb.

SINE NOMINE

Trapped inside a Klein bottle

Seeking a better view

I use my Moebius telescope

To see the future, too.

The Universe slides down

A pseudocurve, I see

And soon will not exist when

We have zero entropy!

Dave Mathews

REMEMBRANCE II

A nameless world:
In the time of snows
Dragons soar silently,
An amber-tree grows.

Through endless corridors of night,
Gates of chaos, passages of light,
So long, so long...
A trail of tears.

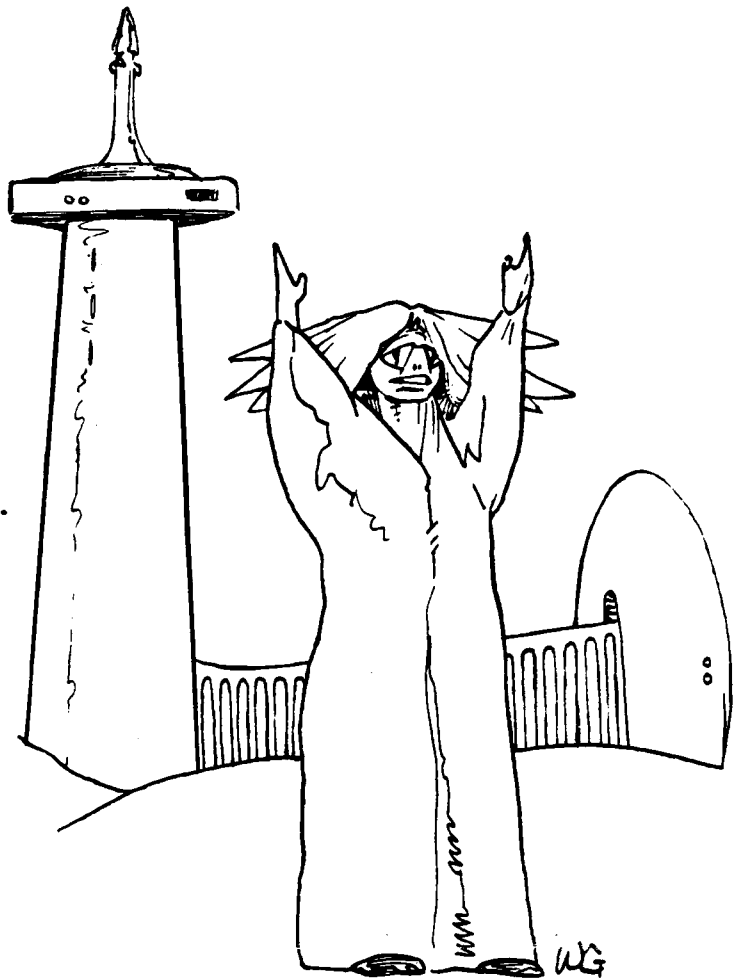
A chord echoes darkly
Down the halls of Hel:
Sundered worlds, shattered millennia...
So long, so long...

Like a wind sighing for home
So long, so long...
The long ships a-viking
Bridged the sea of stars.

Like a tiger in the night
Windsinging evergreens
Touch the face of night
And the wildflowers' mantra.

For now this world is ours
And we remember.
Yet tomorrow's dreams call...
And we will answer.

James Odom



CLUSTER -- by Piers Anthony -- A Book Review by Charlotte Proctor

CLUSTER is the first in a trilogy including KIRLIAN QUEST and CHAINING THE LADY. I've read only the first, but ye ed is crying for contributions to ANVIL, so here goes. Reviews of other members of this trilogy to follow.

The complete trilogy was loaned to me by Frank Love. He was only one of the several fans who had recommended it to me, dabbling as I do in the Tarot. More about that later.

CLUSTER gets off to a slow start, but that is as it should be, when one has a "big picture" to fill in. The protagonist, Flint, is a native of an "outworld", one of the furthest inhabited worlds in Sol's sphere. (The universe is divided into spheres of influence of various sapient species.) Flint is a primitive man, from a primitive culture, albeit an intelligent primitive man. The outer reaches of all the spheres have regressed from the technological level that placed them there, because the time, space and money involved in keeping contact is not sufficient to maintain that level. Got it? Never mind.

Flint is contacted by the Imps (short for Imperials) who prevail upon him to undertake a mission to Save the Universe. He is chosen because his Kirlian aura is 200+ the norm.

Short Intermission: Do you remember when Kirlian aura first came out? There was a big hoorah about it, and we used to have a book with pictures of the auras of leaves, hands, people, etc...anything organic. It was theorized the aura had something to do with life force. Anyway, the premise of CLUSTER is that one with a high Kirlian aura can transfer his aura, or spirit, or soul--the essence of himself, to a host body light years away (with technological assistance, of course). This is a cheaper way of maintaining communications than transmitting matter.

So. We have a mission: Save the Universe--the Andromodeans are coming!

We have a Hero--a tough, survivor type...curious, openminded, with a native wit.

The next few chapters are rather like short stories in themselves, as Flint visits first one and then another of the Spheres.

It is at this point that I am amazed and confounded by Piers' imagination and creativeness. He describes an aquatic, three-sexed species, their social setup and their sexual mores. He describes another society in which the Masters are insectoid and the Slaves are humanoid. Finally he describes the Sphere Polaris, where the spaiant species is spherical, and the highest authority is known as the Big Wheel.

Each of these cultures are observed from within, as Flint is transferred to a host body of that culture. He has access to that body's knowledge, and he quickly becomes acclimated to that body. Ideas, standards and values, that would seem strange to us, seem perfectly reasonable as seen from the alien point of view.

Case in point: Flint unexpectedly sees "...a grotesque creature. It stood on a split fundament, with bony joints at intervals. Two bent sticklike appendages projected from the sides, terminating in splays of minature digits. The thing was all angular and rigid, yet with an irregular covering of flesh that made portions of it bulge outward like spilling candle wax, half-congealed. At the top was a head perforated by several holes, half-buried under a tumbling mane of hairs." The "monster", when Flint reorients himself to see it with his own rather than his host's perception, is a human female, and a lovely one at that.

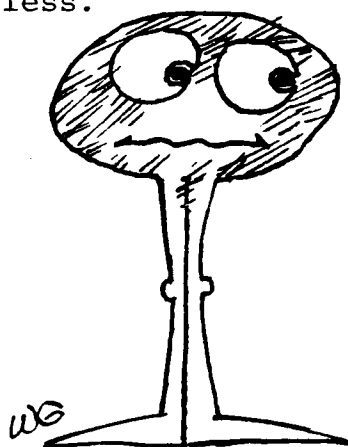
The Tarot mentioned earlier comes into play in the Polarian society. Flint visits the temple of the Hierophant and has a reading. The spread is the basic Celtic Cross, and the interpretations are the same that I use, only expressed more vividly and succinctly. I was particularly interested in the Tower of Destruction card.

It is a card of violent change...destroyed to make way for new understanding." It is quite fascinating to someone familiar with the cards to watch another at work with them. I understand the second book of this series contains more references to the Tarot.

But the most thought-provoking chapter of all dwelt on the circularity of the Polarians as opposed to the directness of humanity. In its simplest form, one could say this chapter was a comparative study of frankness and tact; of bluntness and diplomacy. The gimmick was that Polarians are a spherical species, and think in circles (beating around the bush, Flint thought), while the Solarians are angular and straight and go directly to the heart of a matter. The upshot of it all seems to be that things we have thought of as sly maneuvering, manipulation, skirting the issue, are not negative at all--but rather the better means to an end than forcing one's opinions on another. Better let him come to your conclusions himself.

All in all, Piers Anthony has written quite an enjoyable book. His way with words is fascinating and amusing, as when alien species try to overcome the handicap of a literal translator. And in a spherical society, the puns are endless.

The author's messages are obvious, but well-presented. The alien societies are well thought out and constructed. The writing is vivid and original. I'm looking forward to the next book, and the next.



SOMETIMES
I WONDER,
CAN YOU BE
A FILLO AND
STILL KEEP
A FANED'S
RESPECT?

A VONNEGUT OVERVIEW

by Virginia Martin

In deciding on a book to review, at first I chose JAILBIRD by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Someone told me that his writings were on the outer realm of science fiction, and might be worth a try.

Well, of all his books that I've read, JAILBIRD was the least candidate likely for an ANVIL review. So instead, I'm going to give an overall review of the nature of Mr. Vonnegut's works.

In what I believe is chronological order as written, my sources are CAT'S CRADLE, BOD BLESS YOU, MR. ROSEWATER, SLAUGHTERHOUSE 5, and, when applicable, JAILBIRD.

If one approaches his books with no preconceived notions, the SF element is rather strong throughout his "dialogues". And I must say "dialogues" because Mr. Vonnegut discourses on the affairs of human beings on this planet through the actions of his characters. His perspective is global and thus science fiction becomes conveniently worked in.

And science fiction is worked in through the books and characters of Kilgore Trout, an obscure writer appearing in several of Mr. Vonnegut's books, who reflects the character's and therefore the author's confusion at the world, but seeks to give solutions. In fact, like into a vacuum that needs to be filled, his Utopian dreams find fruition in the character of Mr. Eliot Rosewater, who like a born again Christian decided to give up his goods and live among the poor, loving the poor in spirit, the poor in money.

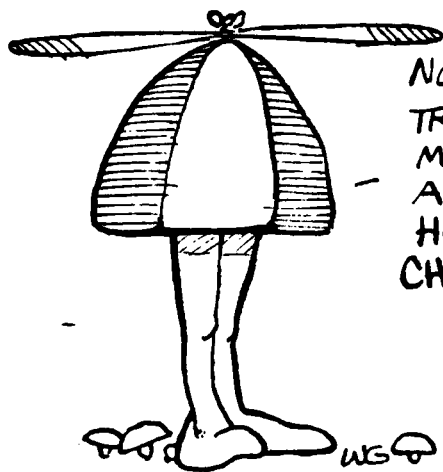
The main theme of Mr. Vonnegut's books are religion and how it damages the soul, war and how it damages the mind, and wealth and how it damages the heart. The powerful are unfeeling, the churchmen are insensitive, the soldiers are...well, never the same.

With themes of such magnitude, he seeks to see humanity in perspective to time, space, and God; seeking hierarchy in the anarchy, looking for truth if possible, and not really sure if it matters. His works end up full of unanswered questions.

If Mr. Vonnegut deserves a place in SF literature, it would be close to the other writers who deal with a pessimistic world. His books reflect the bleakness of man at his worst, giving us glimpses of our world that is neither flattering nor encouraging.

Maybe this is why Mr. Vonnegut, in spite of the recent direction of his writings away from it, has an admiration for the writers who stick to the main stream of SF--the fact that they do attempt to explain the inexplicable, the social fabric of man and the galaxy. As Mr. Rosewater said, staggeringly drunk at a convention for SF writers, "I love you sons of bitches. You're all I read anymore... you're the only ones left with guts enough to really care about the future..."

Interestingly enough, the character when sober goes on to say that SF people could't write, but that that didn't matter, they were poets just the same. Maybe Mr. Vonnegut feels that as he has progressed as an author he has "out-grown" SF.



NOW DAT I HAS
TRANSMORGIFIED
MYSELF, I NEEDS
A NEW NAME...
HOWS 'BOUT
CHEECH DEANIE...

NYAH.

I personally feel that's too bad. With his succinct deftness with the pen, his compassion toward all living things, and his skill at veering on the brink of reality--well, it makes one wonder.

Besides, if he had concentrated more out toward the stars than inward, he might have retained some of his optimism.

Beth Pointer

The last installment of the BSFC club notes ended with the exciting discussion of "Are we really doing a Half-a-con?". Now, four months later and eons worth wiser, I sit and not only try to follow David Wood (a hard act to follow), but also to inform you that we did, in fact, have a Half-a-con. You can just forget about the November club notes (since we didn't really have a meeting, properly speaking). Likewise, the December club notes will also go down the drain since all we did was sit around and talk at the Proctor's house on Valerie's birthday. Now, we are down to the true core of the recent activities of the Club.

On January 12th, most of us dutifully met at the Homewood Library to see if we could still remember how to hold a meeting and to elect the new slate of officers. Since 2/3d's of the officers-elect were not there until 8:15 (or was it 8:30?), Wade proceeded to "blow time" and instigated the pseudo-impeachment of the President-elect. Would that I had a picture of Gilpatrick's face when he saw Frank Love presiding over the meeting.

In spite of the near rebellion, Jim Gilpatrick was elected President (he had already gotten stuck with becoming the ANVIL editor, Charlotte Proctor was elected Vice-President, and Beth Pointer was elected Secretary-Treasurer. At that point, Jim took over with a firm hand and proceeded to ~~vote~~ tell the rest of the club about ABC con, the one-shot Oddli, to be auctioned later for fun and profit, and (do I dare write it?) a DSC bid for 1981. After recovering from the initial shock, the club voted to seriously consider a DSC bid, if feasible. Also, the club approved getting a post office box and a checking account for the club. At this point, we fled to Pasquale's for supper.

On February 8th, an enthusiastic crowd met at 7:45 at the library to have the regular monthly debacle. The high point of this meeting was the President's moving rendition of how he went and "talked to hotels" about a DSC. Jim Phillips, Clever chap that he is pointed out that the BSFC is unique in having a leader who talks to hotels, as opposed to one who talks to hotel managers. After regaining a portion of his lost dignity, Jim (Gilpatrick) auctioned Oddli to Jim (Phillips - again!) for the grand sum of \$7.50. There was some confusion about our P.O. Box number and our zip code. (Box 57031, B'ham, AL 35209) The argument over having extra programming at the monthly meeting continued from months immemorial. Finally, the club decided the SAM (Society for the Advancement of Macrofandom-Tuscaloosa) members could come to our meetings free, but subscribe for ANVIL at \$2/6 issues. After an edifying reading by the President from Airfoil 8 entitled "Fannish Social Mores", we hastened eagerly to Pasquale's.



(Sort of) Respectfully submitted,

Beth Pointer

IT'S THE FIRST

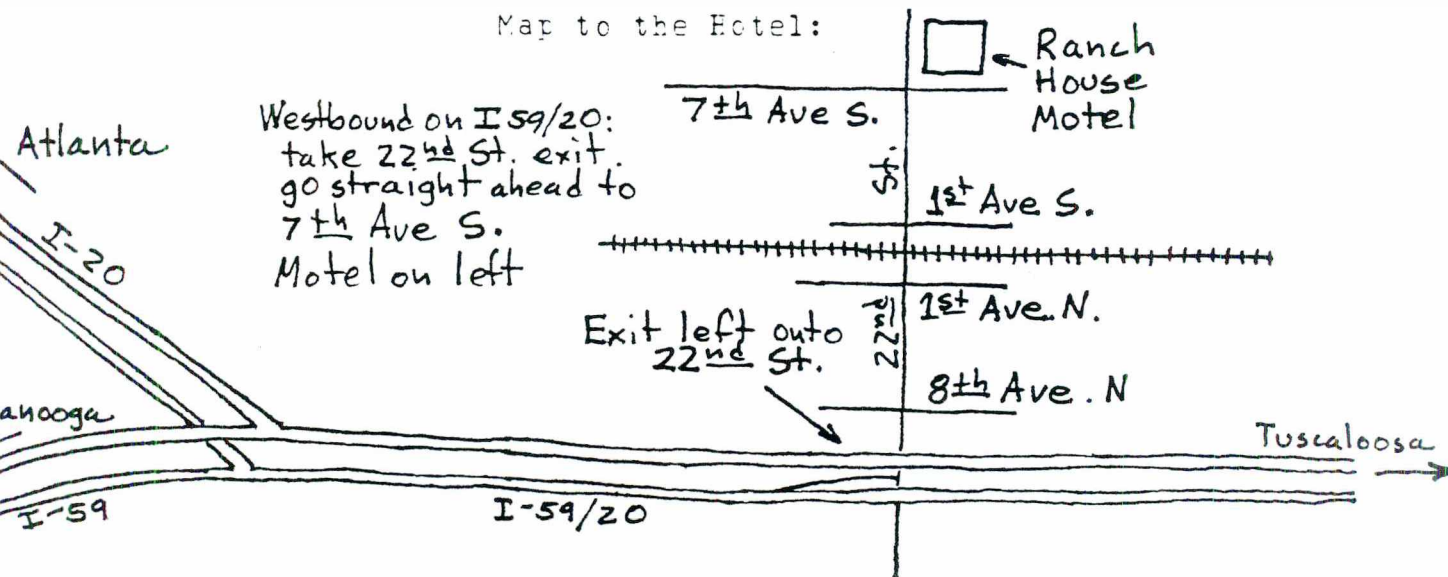
ABC CON

APRIL 12-13, 1980

This con is the first partycon for ABC members and guests. It's a chance for all Atlanta, Birmingham, and Chattanooga fans to deliberate, converse, and otherwise hobnob with our fellow ABC'ers. Our hotel is the Ranch House Motel, 2125 7th Ave. South, Birmingham, AL 35233. The fun will begin Saturday morning and will continue through Sunday afternoon. We are planning no programming except an ABC meeting, but a well stocked con suite will be provided. Any other programming is up to you! The only registration fee will be \$1 to help cover the refreshments.

Room rates are: \$18 single/\$22 double (not a misprint!)

Map to the Hotel:



This con is brought to you by the friendly folks at the Birmingham SF Club-

"The club in the middle of the ABC"

For more info, contact: **Jim Gilpatrick**
Birmingham SF Club
P. O. Box 57031
Birmingham, AL 35205

Brian Earl Brown
16711 Burt Rd. #207
Detroit, MI 48219

These eight issues of ANVIL have been mighty fine. The worst part of any club-zine is getting material. It would be nice to get stuff just from local members but most never write and sometimes those who do write write things one doesn't want to publish. I'm speaking from experience in Detroit. But you've done a fine job ((Wade)). ANVIL is one of the more interesting zines I've been getting, perhaps because it is frequent or perhaps because many of its contributors are familiar from other zines. ((I wish it were so Brian. I don't think too many of us have been published elsewhere as yet)) I wish Jim Gilpatrick the best of luck in his new editorship. ((Thanks, I'll need it!))

The space elevator idea is one of the crazier ideas I've come across in SF, and it's amazing that two writers decided to write about it at the same time. Personally I don't see how it works. Surely the lateral strains of something that long sweeping through space would be too much! Or am I assuming principles that only apply to loose objects in orbit?

James Odom will probably be elated to hear that a new Battlestar Galactica movie has been planned, set many generations in the future with a largely different cast. The programmers at ABC apparently decided that it wasn't BG's flaws that lead to its weak showing, but its Sunday night time slot against Archie Bunker. (Personally I think that its and Mork & Mindy's flabby scripts that kept them from affecting a vulnerable "Bunker"). A lot could be done with the Galactica's concept provided someone bothered to think them through. Of course the hanger bays could be covered with a forcefield. Since the Galactica already has gravity control, such a field wouldn't be beyond them, but the big question is why? Why are unspacesuited people wandering in an open hanger? Why are the Vipers always stored inside the Galactica? A lot of air must be lost every time a ship is launched or recovered. And why do the Vipers enter the bays at a large rate of speed since they could match velocities and dock with no noticable amount of speed? Note how dockings were done in the Star Trek movie. Galactica is just a WWII aircraft carrier moved to outer space without making any changes for the different environment or physics.

The idea of a mothership carrying smaller "work" craft is not without merit. C. J. Cherryh used something like that in her Faded Sun trilogy. There are definite economics to such an arrangement. The mothership might be the only one to carry the heavy FTL drive equipment, for example. All the crews could be maintained with one life support system, saving the others till they are needed, etc. But Galactica's launching and landing of ships doesn't make a whole lot of sense for a space ship.

The Christian parallels in BG have always been a little nauseous, like Commander Adama, Apollo, Athena, etc. Because they have

been almost always handled ineptly and contribute little to the show. The Entities are even more troublesome. To have a "Christian" devil and real, physical "angels" and a City of God" is distasteful because it denies the validity of Islam, Buddhism, or American Indian religion. Besides, Count Eblis and all the other Entities are evolved from lizard stock (the Cylons are all that remains of their civilization. Also note Count Eblis's true form before "he" vanished. God is a lizard?

Moving right along.... Buck Rogers has tried to make the characters more interesting than BG's were but the plots are so idiotic and saturated with comic book level super-mutants it's hard to accept the show as even good satire. For satire I'd rather have Quark

The commercialization of the Star Trek movie has put the commercialization of BG to shame, and BG was the premiere example of commercial exploitation of our times. Paramount, The ST copyright holders, must be making up for the long years when nothing was available about Star Trek except the plastic models. So it Goes.

Don't let Roy Tackett BNF you into using more staples than you need. One staple in the cover is all a small zine needs. Larger zines do stay together better when more than one staple is used, but ANVIL is neither big nor small, thus it could get away with however many staples it wanted. ((You will notice we use two staples now. I guess we strive for bigness))

James 'Merlin' Odom
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Bessemer, Al. 35020

Someone once asked me what I would do to to improve Battlestar Glactica, given the chance. Now is the time. What with Larson deciding to unleash BG once again upon us, I think it a nice idea to speak my mind (what little there is of it). As you may know, I am a BG fan. So what I suggest or what I may comment on is done out of love, not vindictiveness. Having read the novelized version, I can only say that first, the Cylons should have been reptiles with a thing for chrome armor. It would explain why the Cylon ships still have atmosphere and an occasional name. Otherwise, one would have to resort to having the engrams of once living Cylons impressed into cold metal. (There are other explanations for Cylons, but I'll save that for another time.) Another thing should have been making it more clear whether or not the Colonials had a FTL drive. The time scale and distances that seemed to be involved would indicate that they did, besides having one episode in an alien ship classified as sub-light. Cultures that don't have hyper-light capabilities would probably not bother to make a distinction between sub- and super-light ships, not believing such things are possible. Also, the word "galaxy" is tossed around unmercifully. The vast majority of usage has "galaxy" mean a collection of star systems,

like the Andromeda or Milky Way galaxies. Too often, I didn't know wheather a local solar-system, star-cluster in a galaxy, or a real galaxy were meant when referring to travel between galaxies. Referring back to hyperlight, the Galactica had to go slower than maximum due to the slowest ships in the fleet. Good grief, why didn't they stop somewhere to convert those ships to stardrive, abandon them and use the material to expand other ships to accommodate those extra people or leave some behind on the several habitable planets they found? Only God and Glen Larson know and neither of them are telling.

I agree, there all too often was a lack of character development. At first the theme was just how to escape the Cylons and find some Tylum. Then after a few episodes, the possibilities of what 220 ships had to offer were beginning to be explored and the characters started to interact some more. Still not enough, though, I admit (Cliff, are you listening?) And then, they found Earth on July 20, 1969. Darn. I was thinking it might have been Tau Ceti or some other star similar to Earth with our TV signal distorted by gravity and other spacial phenomena. But no, the dodos don't realize its Earth and go traipsing around the stars for all this time (until 1980). Boomer gets promoted and apparently Apollo gets killed (I missed the first episode of the new Galactica 1980 series, and saw the other two--would to God or the DOD (Deity of the Day) that I had seen that one and not the other two). But I could live with the character changes and some other things. I could also about as equally pleausrably, live with having my toenails pulled out an inch at a time). Worst of all, there was introduced the use of time-travel especially in reference to going back in time to accelerate Earth's technology in order so that when the Galactica arrives in approximately the present, we will be more able to help them against the Cylons. I hate time-travel stories. I didn't even like "The City on the Edge of Forever". In fact, the only time travel story or stories I've ever liked was/were Anne McCaffrey's Dragon series. Grandfather paradoxes and other problems crop up. And the way they were headed in the last Galactica 1980, it's going to be a lot easier to slip into formula. I hope to DOD that they make some more changes before they start the series again (or so I understand that they are). If they don't, I will notmourn when it perishes. But I will mourn what could have been.

Deb Hammer-Johnson	I'm sending you this loc with the intention that you pass
2 Tyler Street	it to Jim for publishable parts. I figured that since
Rome, Ga. 30161	you put out the last ish, you should get the loc. You
	might say old habits diet hard; this is the prime reason
Ihaven't lost that TEN pounds I swore I would in 1979.	

Now, I'll leap into my loc. When I finish my reviews for Sue Phillip's zine, my columns for FR and SIRIUSNESS, and "Starjazzzer" for SFPA, I'll turn my prodigious talents in the direction of ANVIL. It's really the only local club-zine that solicits such a wide spectrum of contribs. I'm getting my nerve up to try some more art. I realize I talk a great deal about what I "used to do", and show nothing for what I do now, but this can be overcome with a little obstinacy. I was going to take a local course in calligraphy, but it wasn't offered this quarter. I love printing, and feel I can do interesting things in this direction. I'm also going to start supplying more stuff into my own zines, and believe it will round out some of my odder moments.

Roc*Con 4 by Jim Gilpatrick reminds me that I'm getting a taste for lengthy con reports, and intend to do a biggie of Chattacon. Sometimes its the yucky cons that give the best steam, while a mellow "laid back" event like Halfacon will only pull out a few mildly euphoric paragraphs. Jim's account was very "Jimmish", and I feature him and his beeg, beeg steak (stick) in my Chattacon account. I love that man and his bunchy sweaters; that little glow in the dark affect of his is simply charming. The fanzine reviews are suprisingly good for a firsttimer (I've only been doing them myself for about a year...listen to me), and indicate that Jim has a basic grasp of "distillations of fannish essence" and will do well with ANVIL. I'm a bit prejudiced by his tastes because I'm a Hlavaty fan.

The epitome of thish, though, turns out to be Beth Pointer's reviews. What stands out in her treatment of all the books is a widespread knowledge of different types of literature. Working in a used bookstore as I do, I get to know the moods and feel of different genres, and can't help but look at sf from this perspective. She does a good analysis of structure and what pop culturists call the invention/convention aspect of a book. I found myself wrapped up with the Clarke/Sheffield reviews, and find it to be much more interesting than either of the books. Hah!

I enjoyed Merlin's last poem in ANVIL, and therefore didn't wince when I saw some new offerings. Poetry analysis isn't my bag, like Cliff's, so I tend to react to poems on an immediate basis. This one was full of well defined images, yet came across as spoken. Real poetry, in my opinion, is written to be said or sung (unless you're a wordpainter like e.e. cummings), and Merlin's passes the test. Keep that boy on ANVIL irony sheets and do us all a favor; he spoke once of doing some sonnets, and I'm curious to see what he would do with this form.

As for locs--the BeeGee-lactica controversy continues. I'd still like to see a piece by someone who favored the show on how they would have redesigned it for a second season. If I could redesign it for the FIRST season, I would have defined the time period, probably setting it in the far future. In the manner of the Dumarest of Terra series, I would have the fleet of survivors looking for Earth, but obviously existing in a rich and sophisticated interstellar culture of humanoids and non-humanoids that is a bit better defined than the series. I'd go more into the origins and parameters of the Cylon culture (such as the book had), and base the action more on the differences between the two opposing forces. With the Fleet, I'd deal more with the difficulties of feeding and living together of such a motley group, as they started to at first, and handled the characterizations on a more "adult" level. The warmed-over Bonanza atmosphere of Adama and his sons could have been a plus; Starbuck and the assorted females aboard could have been made digestable and more human from the start, instead of halfway through the series. I don't think that any tee-vee or movie sf story after STAR WARS is going to get away without the obligatory interstellar dogfights, but I miss the cleansweep days of STAR TREK where they just blasted each other from afar with phasers and beamed down to the planets, thus cutting a lot of superfluous plot complications about landing and taking off time and time again. I guess BG's biggest problem was that it couldn't focus on one or two lines of story development; it pulled in too many characters that just bogged down the plots; it was stuck between being a STAR WARS imitator and avoiding a lawsuit by being somehow different. BUCK ROGERS has it's own laurels to rest on, and though it is a dumber show, it's more interesting and watchable. It still insults our intelligence, but we don't mind as much.

Roy Tackett's comment on Southern Fen's pizza reminds me of the atrocious Taco Pizza we had as Pasquales during HALFACON. Shrimp pizza is worse though. Veggie is the only way to go!!!

Harry Warner, Jr.
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I'm sorry to learn that you're about to stop hammering out ANVILS. The fall issue is a pleasure to read, and slender enough to encourage a prompt loc. I never seem to find time nowadays to read the fat fanzines immediately upon arrival. And despite the theological implications of the cartoon in this issue's loc section, last year was by far my worst for loc production since 1961, when I had a good excuse, a long hospitalization following an accident. I've considered announcing myself gafiated for the coming three years untill I retire from my job, because I fret and fuss so much over the stacks of fanzines that never got locs, but since the first of this year I've managed to average three or four locs a week, and maybe I can continue this gradual recovery of my old knack for turning them out daily.

The Little Rock convention sounds in Jim Gilpatrick's report like one that would tempt even me to attend. I think I can still cope with about 150 fans at one time; it's the big cons that leave me feeling so fragmented and frustrated for inability to see people I'm looking for and to recognize more than one out of every twenty or so individuals in the halls and lobby. Of course, only one of the names Jim drops is someone I've met, Gordy Dickson, so maybe I would feel like a rank neofan even at such a small con as this one.

Family Relationships sounds like a possible contender for listing in the Guinness Book of Fannish Records, when it eventually is produced. I suppose someone or other published in the past a complete fanzine while even younger than Dottie Bedard-Stefl, but I can't remember such a thing happening and even if it did, it hardly had such a fabulous lineup of contributors. Merciful heavens, Dotti would have been only three or four years old the last time I attended a worldcon. And it wasn't so long ago that I was marveling over the existence of an APA-45 because that cut-off year for birth of members seemed so recent.

I like the way the Sheffield and Clarke books on the same general theme were reviewed in parallel manner. But it's pretty hard for me to take seriously the space elevator concept, simply because it inadvertently reminds me of two past matters. One was the famous beer can tower to the Moon that Berkeley fandom was pushing so incessantly back in the era when Terry Carr was still a fan rather than a pro. The other was a story in a long-ago issue of Amazing Stories on a similar theme, entitled I believe The Moon Waits. In that story, whose author I can't remember, the tower from earth into space was taller than the ones described in the two new novels, because it reached all the way to the Moon and had its other end permanently attached to that satellite. A couple of months later, a letterhack's complaint that this wouldn't be very practical

appeared in Amazing's letter section, but the editor seemed quite calm about the same thing, and replied in terms which, as I remember them, simply pointed out that even Amazing Stories authors weren't perfect.

Deb Hammer-Johnson asks what stories should be turned into movies during the science fiction boom. For starters, I think any of several Cliff Simak novels would be fine for that purpose. Ditto the earlier Heinlein fiction, either the novels or some of the short stories coalesced to feature length. They aren't strictly science fiction, but the de Camp-Pratt fantasies like the Roaring Trumpet would be ideal. And then there's the fact that Hollywood has overlooked, to the best of my knowledge, one basic science fiction theme, that of universal loss of memory. There are several good novels that are based on that gimmick, but I prefer McClary's Rebirth which was once serialized in Astounding.

Corruption exists in big business, just as it does in every other area of United States life. But I wonder about that statistic which shows convictions in 60 percent of the top 500 corporations. How many of those convictions, I wonder resulted from genuine conspiracies deliberately conducted by a group of key executives who wanted to beat the law? And how many of them resulted from the actions of an isolated executive who was being wicked on his own in a way that didn't come to the attention of others in top level management until prosecution began? And how many resulted from simple inability of the corporation to keep up with all the monstrous tonnage of the nation's laws, the regulations of government agencies, the interpretations by judges which normally are circulated only in legal circles? Corporations grow bigger all the time, the people in charge of one phase of activities are increasingly less aware of what goes on in the remainder of the firm, and even when the management is basically honest there's sometimes no way for someone responsible to know about a pollution situation or a violation of someone's retirement rights or any of the thousand other areas which can lead to corruption charges

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We'll miss you as Ed, Wade, but Jim certainly seems eminently qualified to take on the job. Anyone who writes as well as he can edit others. Of course, editing a club-zine also takes a strong streak of nastiness, an ability to bully others into producing promised material, and great wellsprings of tact--how do you tell a 16 year-old his writing is dull, grammatically infantile, and reeks of t.v. cliches? --and lots of time. Which is why I am no longer associated with the production of SMART-ASH. Time is the worst problem, it seems. I want more time to do other things.

Like writing LOC's. I enjoyed and appreciated the report on Roc*Con 4. I had planned to attend that but had to cancel at the last moment, I've been waiting to hear what I'd missed. It sounds like I really

missed a good con. Of course I knew it would be good. But it sounds impressive: a simple con, no banquet speeches, good filk-singing and parties--my kind of con!

The Club notes were as usual familiar. We have the same sort of meeting at CFSFS, and we too constantly wonder how to put life into the meetings. It seems that some go swimmingly and others just sink. Don't be discouraged: you are not alone, all club officers seem to encounter apathy and dull meetings. Be happy: at least your members show up for the pizza! We usually lose half the attendees as soon as the business is done (and most of those who depart are totally unhelpful with the business--I have yet to figure out what they got out of the club.) But I hear similar stories from others so I don't despair. Quite.

Reviews: Useful and interesting. Letters: I envy your LOC col. Unboring letters! Ah, and a subject for discussion: morality and Big Business. As a small businessperson (I own a book exchange store) I'm in a position in the middle: I am not making any "windfall profits" but customers are terribly suspicious of any business today. Me, I mistrust statistics; for instance, if was quoted that 60% of the top 500 corporations had been convicted of white collar rimes in the 70's. A point: our tax and antimonopoly laws are so complex and contradictory that even a well-meaning business constantly breaks some law or regulation; and these laws are enforced in a very arbitrary and erratic manner. I's love to see a breakdown on those figures and learn just how many of those "crimes" were acts I'd really be shocked by. Which is not to say that corruption doesn't exist...in every field. As you say, referring to Stanley Schmidt's editorial, all the people need to take part. You know, we tut-tut a corporation who evades taxes... but laugh when a friend confides his methods of cheating a little. It's only a matter of degree.

Which should get a few people writing! And I look forward to your next issue...whoever edits, ANVIL seems to grow in excellence.

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Start from the end, rather than the beginning is always a good policy, at least where fan-zines are the matter being discussed. I found the comments about Battlestar Galactica rather interesting. The show seemed to be going down-

hill as the season progressed with a continuation of that trend with the series shown this year. The best game was trying to find how many things, and from where, various items in BG were taken from. The "Christian Entities" episode was certainly high in the ranks in that category.

As for noises in SF media, I've stopped worrying about it. I just have to conclude that physical laws are different in hyperspace, including the ones concerning sound.

As to Deb-Hammer Johnson's question about what stories to be adapted, I'd think that most of the award winners could be done fairly easily. Admittedly, we'll have to wait a little bit on Stardance, but things like Persistence of Vision and Jeffy is Five could be done with a minimum of special effects and cost.

One Think Battlestar Galactica was not a victim of, and that is the state of the society. Two of the biggest booms in SF have occurred in rather complacent times, the 1950's and 1970's. What the public wants is escapism, but also quality, and BG just didn't deliver.

To the editorial. Trying to find that balance between club and outside material can get rather harried at some points. Obviously, a clubzine should be produced by the club, and usually paid by the club, but what happens when the members want the zine to continue, but don't contribute. What you have to hope for is that what does appear from the outside will appeal to the inside, and vice-versa. One can encourage the other, and thereby give a sence of vitality to the zine.

Next Meetings: April 12, (ABC con); May 10, at the Homewood Library, 7:30 pm

Art Credits: William Rostler- page 9; all other art by Wade Gilbreath, our illustrious Editor Emeritus.

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