

20

ANVIL



Forging Ahead

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Well, we've
finally managed
to put the
Buffalo out to
graze in Whippany...



ANVIL EDITORIAL

by dlburden

How long does it take to write a letter? Just a brief, to-the-point note. Five minutes? It will cost you a 20¢ stamp, a sheet of paper, an envelope.

The letter campaign that saved Star Trek is equalled in memory only by the one that changed the name of the shuttle. We now face a cut-back in the programs that will one day take us "where no man has gone before". ANVIL's locol is full of references to solar power--what are WE, as SF fans, doing to promote solar panels (or a lunar base, or space colonies, or ...?) as a reality?

Reagan wants to cut government spending; another letter writing campaign is called for to prevent his cutting what he considers excess dollars from the space program.

Many mundanes want to know what this "space stuff" has done for them. While the material benefits (calculators, digital watches, home computers, remote monitoring systems in hospitals--see Trudy Bell's SPACE: IS IT WORTH IT? in Future Life, Dec. '80) are great, I believe that for most fen it is the dream which is most beneficial. I want to be on that first station when it's built! For now I do what I can to spread the word that we can help the dream become reality. We can start with letters and one of the best sources for info on who to write and how to do so correctly is Write Now, P. O. Box 36851, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

It starts with a letter--write now.

This is ANVIL 20, Vol. 4, no. 2, February-March 1982, and is edited by dlburden (Jim Cobb will return when his hectic schedule permits). It is the clubzine of the, Birmingham Science Fiction Club, and is available for LoC, trade, contribution, or 6 for \$3.00, sent to P. O. Box 57031, Birmingham, AL 35259-7031. This issue was typed on an IBM Executive typer and reproed on a Xerox.

What If...?

by Cindy T. Riley

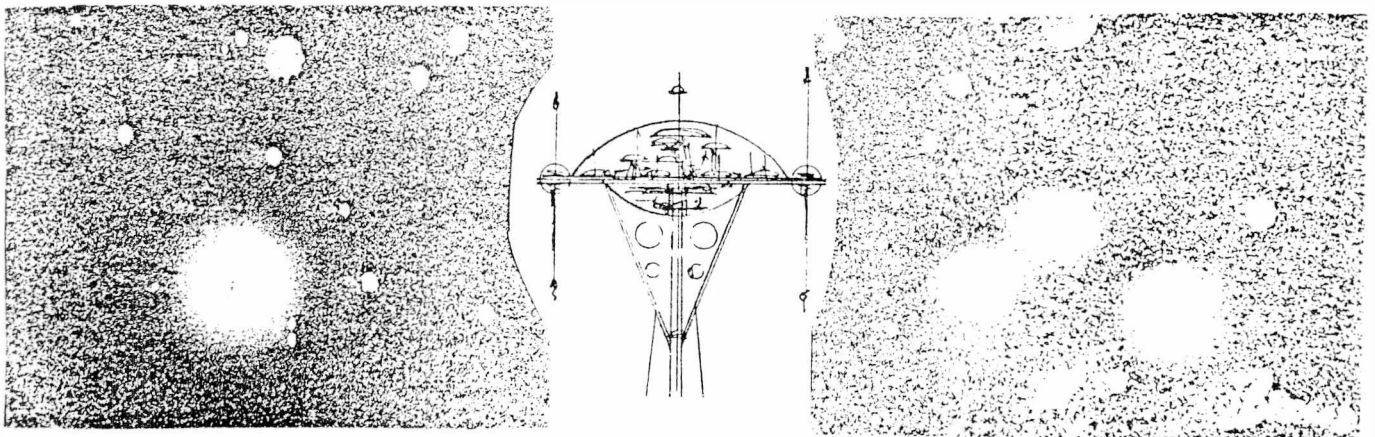
What if...? Two small words that carry perhaps the largest meaning of any phrase in the whole of the English language (or any other language no matter how it's translated). The whole genre of science fiction is based on that one phrase.

What if...all of mankind were resurrected, all at once, on an alien world? The River-world series. ...the snakes in a medical caduceus really had something to do with medicine? Dreamsnake, by Vonda N. McKintyre. ...a man committed murder in a world inhabited by mindreaders? The Demolished Man, by Alfred Bester. And on, and on, ad infinitum. One last I can't resist...what if the world really went to the dogs? (City, by Clifford Simak)

Of course, what if spreads out beyond SF. What if man could fly? We all know what happened as a result of that one. What if man could go to the bottom of the ocean or he could breathe underwater? (if Jacques Cousteau had never felt the need to invent scuba equipment, what would all of those scuba divers be doing now?) It's a basic tenet of human nature to ask why, and of the science fiction writer to ask "What if..?", and then ask why, and how.

If we don't ask what, why, where, and how, we might just as well crawl back into our caves or up into our trees and quit. For what would be the use? We would be little different from the animals then; it is our ability to question that is one of the main differences between Homo Sapiens (wise? sometimes one wonders) and the rest of the inhabitants of Spaceship Earth. It is this questioning that has gotten us as far as we are, and hopefully will help us over the hump (what if there were a nuclear war? We can imagine only too well) so that we will go out and beyond, to where we must ultimately go, those stars that at times seem so close you can touch them.

What if, somewhere at this moment, there is a kid reading a story about faraway worlds and strange beings, about FTL travel and black holes, about "crazy Eddie" points and wormholes in space, and s/he wonders...how could we get from here to there? This child grows up, graduates from MIT, puts in years of research, never loses that sense of wonder, and one day.....



Of Vice & Fen

OR MERLIN EXPLAINS HIS POETRY.....

When I first joined BSFC I knew little about writing, let alone writing well. I knew little about fandom and fannish writing. All I knew was that ANVIL appeared every other month as if by dwarvish magic. I had only the dimmest of glimmerings that somehow, someway fans wrote it.

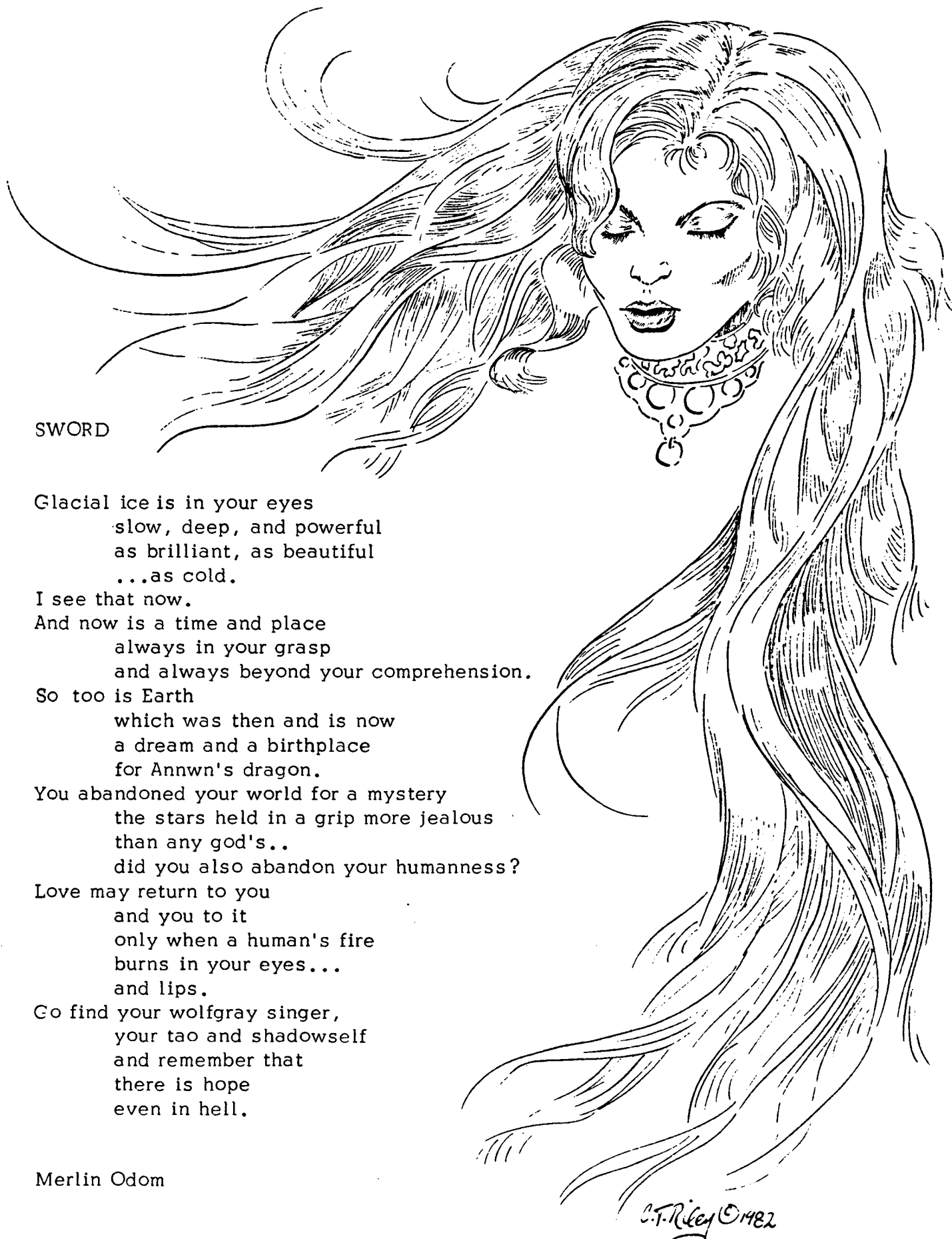
It was about this time that I decided to become an English teacher, an ill-fated choice at best. This is done by reading a lot of English and American literature, history, and semantics and by writing a lot on English and American literature, history, and semantics. This can produce several reactions. One is a feeling of utter fecklessness. One realizes that one will never be as good as Shakespeare, Chaucer, or Blake. So you give up writing. Or you are goaded into action, which is what happened to me. In a Southern Lit class one of our assignments was to write something creative on our own. I had always thought it might be interesting to see how science fiction might mix with poetry, having seen almost no SF poetry before. So I seized the opportunity and had at it. I'd written very little poetry prior to this and it showed. It was all sound and no fury; all image and form, but no substance. I thought. However, the professor in his infinite wisdom saw something in them that I didn't and, being thus encouraged, I decided they might be worth sharing with fandom.

It's hard to separate the madness from the method I use to write my poems. When first I wrote SF poetry I worked within a world of my own creation. I projected a future wherein for various reasons Mother Earth is abandoned for the mysteries the stars hold. Eventually most of these Earth-descended would come to believe their place of origin to be only a legend or a myth, no longer in existence, or lost forever if real. And the few left behind find that they are no longer alone. Those who left Earth encounter all sorts of interesting things and some forget what it is to be human.

If they are lucky they rediscover what it is they are missing. Or for the first time in racial history they may find what it means to be a human being. To do all this I have gone mostly to Celtic and Norse myth and legend and liberally added SF concepts. To add the necessary human element I have drawn from my own well of experiences, thoughts, and feelings.

That's the foundation for what follows. How do my "epics" get written? I keep a record of everything I've written so far. This includes anything and everything, including those that never saw print. I find inspiration from many sources since nothing is held particularly sacred. All that exists has something to contribute and when something comes to me I write it down just in case of premature senile dementia.

To read me is to know me.



SWORD

Glacial ice is in your eyes
slow, deep, and powerful
as brilliant, as beautiful
...as cold.

I see that now.

And now is a time and place
always in your grasp
and always beyond your comprehension.

So too is Earth
which was then and is now
a dream and a birthplace
for Annwn's dragon.

You abandoned your world for a mystery
the stars held in a grip more jealous
than any god's..
did you also abandon your humanness?

Love may return to you
and you to it
only when a human's fire
burns in your eyes...
and lips.

Go find your wolfgray singer,
your tao and shadowself
and remember that
there is hope
even in hell.

Merlin Odom

C.F. Riley © 1982

Review

Jerry Proctor

MOON OF ICE, by Brad Linaweaver (March, 1982, Amazing)

Brad spins a new tale from an old theme, an alternate history in which Nazi Germany won the war through timely development of an atomic bomb. The plot is seen through the eyes of Dr. Joseph Goebbels, Adolf Hitler's propaganda minister, now an aging elder statesman who cannot comprehend the strange society into which Naziism has metamorphosised. In the end he ironically falls victim to the crazed fanatics of the new SS nation of Burgundy.

Burgundy itself runs off the edge into fantasy: It's ruled by a super geneticist who's developed a virus which will kill everyone except blond, blue-eyed nordic types. Now you want to hear the clincher? The geneticist is secretly a Jew who through persecution hates the whole human race. (His SS underlings merely hate everyone non-Aryan.) Complications are tossed in: Goebbels' son is a member of the cult, while his daughter has joined a band of liberal freedom-fighters and ultimately migrates to the U.S.

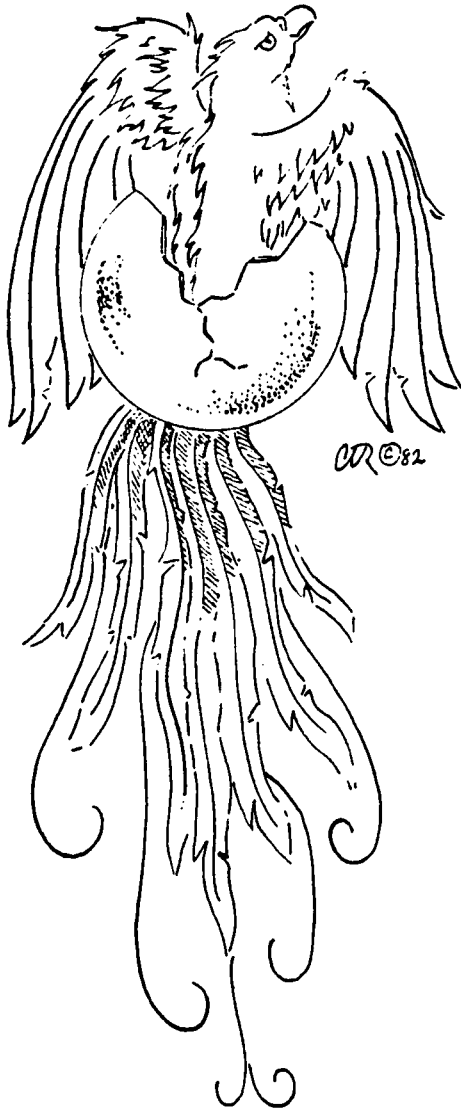
It's easy reviewing a story like this to become the nit-picker--to say this or that COULD NOT have happened. Yet what could be more fantastic than the career of Adolf Hitler? In essence Linaweaver's alternate history is no stranger than the FACT that an unemployed Austrian handyman assumed total mastery of the most modern state in Europe, conquered all of Europe, plunged the whole world in war and caused some 50 million people to die. If such a tale were penned back in the 1930s it would have been hooted by true-fans.

Linaweaver's tale is grounded solidly in history. We know Heinrich Himmler, Hitler's sinister SS boss, had turned that organization into a mystic cult and dreamed of making it a separate sub-nation of Germany. From there it's only a hop and a jump to Linaweaver's Burgundy, with its castle and laboratory. It's also not difficult to swallow Burgundy's Jewish-scientist-boss. Many European Jews survived the holocaust by adopting protective camouflage. Surely a super brain could do the same.

Even the various defections of Goebbels' children don't jar the senses. Everyone with kids knows they don't always follow Pop's party line when they grow up---the reverse is more often true.

The character of Goebbels is beautifully drawn. We know from history the propaganda minister was an intellectual, a shrewd cookie who worshipped Hitler but who kept a tongue firmly in cheek toward other Nazis and their philosophies. Linaweaver's Goebbels is older, mellower with the rough edges of fanaticism honed down. Like any father, he can't comprehend the vagaries of his children. And like any older man, the weirdo new generation shocks him.

Goebbels is especially appalled by what the new generation has made of the Nazi creed. One can almost hear him reciting T. S. Eliot under his breath: "No, that's not what I meant at all."



Once one has accepted these premises, it's not outlandish to picture a kindlier, more tolerant Nazi Germany where a considerable latitude in freedom is given the upper classes to dabble in alien philosophies. History teaches that even the fiercest cultures (witness the Mongols) must bow to change, and that change is more often than not in an unpredictable direction.

The subject begs so many questions that one wishes Linaweaver had made "Moon of Ice" a novel so we could enjoy all the various possibilities-- Hitler's relations with a defeated Soviet Union; what happened to Communism throughout the world?; how did the Nazis get along with Harry Truman?; and a host of others.

At least make it a series, Brad.

(Ed. Note: Jerry Proctor is News Editor of the BIRMINGHAM NEWS, and husband of Bisficfan Charlotte.)

Half-a-Con Report

by Charlotte Proctor

Twelve Bisficfans went to Rome... that's including Meade and Penney's 3 boys. I think we had a good time in spite of (or because of) the politicon atmosphere.

There is really not much to tell about since there was no programming...just Hearts and smoffing and relaxing. There were 61 members registered.

After we had been home a couple of days, Julie and I tried to remember everyone who was there. We listed 46.

Main event: Celko Roast, top-notch. After everyone told their Celko stories, Joe stood up and told his Celko stories. Did anyone record it? Hope the concom took in enough money to reimburse their special guest for his room.

Party Report

BSFC Room Party Without a Con

Well, you see, our regular meeting room wasn't available for the March meeting so I said, "Let's have a party." Jim Cobb said, "Yeah, let's rent a room." So we did. Everybody brought \$2 for the room (a nice suite at the Sheraton Downtown) and their own refreshments:

It was your regular room party...smoffing, gossiping, backrubs, going out to eat, and tickle-time.

Jim's watch still plays "Dixie" at the drop of a Jim Cobb.

Mike Weber spent a lot of time and quarters on the Pleides video game downstairs.

We drove seven miles to a Waffle House at midnight only to find one a block from the hotel when we came back.

Charlotte Proctor

#####

A Feghoot?

Do you remember the maiden sacrificed to the dragon at the beginning of "Dragonslayer"? She fit and she fought and nearly (but not quite) got away.

She was listed in the credits as "Victim". Earlier in the production, she had a bigger part, with lines and all, and the character's name was "Yna", pronounced Ee-na.

Mike Weber supposes this would have made her Pure Yna, Dragon Chow.

#####

April The auction of the year! Anything & everything is up for grabs. Personal services! Books! Whatnot! Bring MONEY!

May: You loved him last year and you'll love him even more now. David Mann returns with an update and Ghu-knows-what on the space program. Any maybe the Jupiter NON-EFFECT.

June: Possibly the more-or-less ANNUAL BSFC summer party. If not, then ye olde Program Director ~~demands~~ requests suggestions.

Merlin Odom

forge difficulties

Julie Wall

Submitted by dlburden

FANZINE REVIEWS

FANZINES REVISITED

'Zine reviews by Ceceila Martinez

I rate fanzines by the asterisk method. That is to say, all the way from a rating of *(ick!), on up to ***** (gosh!wow! The perfect 'zine!) which I have yet to find. I'll keep searching, however, I'm sure that the creature lurks out there somewhere. Meanwhile, on with the show.

oOo

THE LOOKING GLASS #23---Ben Fulves, 25 Parkway, Montclair, NJ 07042

First impressions are important to many things. The first impression I received from THE LOCKING GLASS was favorable, very much so. However, one shouldn't always depend on first impressions. TLG is graphically stunning, with professionally laid out copy, but the content is lacking something. The thing that I enjoy most about fanzines, is the fact that the editor, or the contributors seem to be talking directly to the reader so that it's not so impersonal as most prozines. I very frankly found TLG to be boring. It has no spirit, no soul to it. A review on THE HOBBIT went into depth about why it is a bad book, (Bilbo Baggins only got through the book by "liberal dollops of luck." I know a lot of people who get through life the same way.) The reviewer did not take into account that THE HCBBIT, was, after all, a fairy tale, written as a juvenile almost thirty years before THE LORD OF THE RINGS. The reviewer does admit that he hasn't read the RINGS trilogy, which he says may "provide it with excuses for being a lousy book." I do agree with the editor that two articles he reprinted from the Jersey Journal, and the New York Times, about a baby killed in a voodoo rite was indeed in questionable taste. All in all I think I found THE LOOKING GLASS something I can do without. On the basis of its "stunning graphics", however, I'll give it **.

Available for 50¢ a copy, or \$2.00 per year

FILE 770 #29---Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401

FILE 770, on the other hand, (at least this particular issue) gave me a favorable impression which stayed. Although made up basically of bits and pieces of news from hither and yon, it was all very competently put together and never failed to be interesting. Mike Glycer knows his business. A comment here, a remark there, it all pulls together. There was a short article by Marji Ellers for would-be masquerade judges which brought out a couple of relevant points. The wrap-up, in Glycer's "Roundfilings" column, besides reviewing Alexis Gilliland's first novel and its sequel (that was news to me, the cartoonist writes!), touches on what seems to be favoritism as far as publishing the facts and figures of the final Hugo vote count goes. It seems that LOCUS was given the results long before anyone else got them. Glycer reports this fact sensibly and without getting too bent out of shape. By this time I have seen 'zines which would not have been able to talk about such an injustice without waxing poetical in four letter words, which does nothing but weaken the impact of what they're trying to say. FILE 770 gets *****½.

FILE 770 is available 5 for \$3.00,
as arranged trade with other club
and newszines, for news, for hot
gossip, and the always appreciated
expensive long-distance phone call
(not collect) to (213) 787-5061.

oOo

Other fanzines received;

ASFCAWN #'s 5 & 6

BCSFAZINE #'s 102, 103, 104, 105

BRSFL NEWS #'s 15 & ?

DASFAX Vol. 13, #'s 11 & 12

THE DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP # 19 & 20

FILM AT ELEVEN #'s 2 & 3

FILE 770 # 30

FROM THE ASHES Vol. 2, # 12

MOBILE AREA COMICS SOCIETY # 13

NEOLOGY Vol 6, #5

NEW CANADIAN FANDOM # 2/3

PHOENIX Vol. 2, #4

WESTWIND #'s 54 & 55

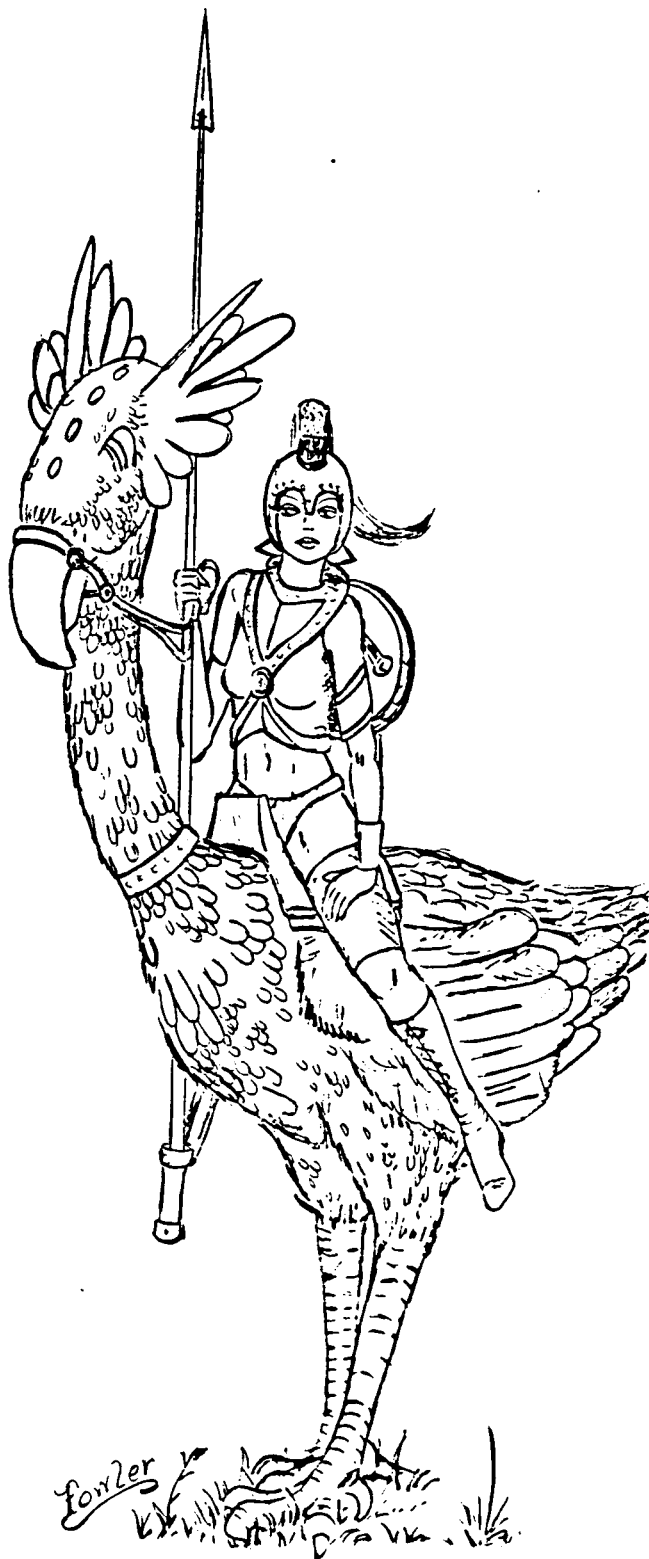
WHOLE FANZINE CATALOGUE #'s 20
& 21

oOoANDoOo

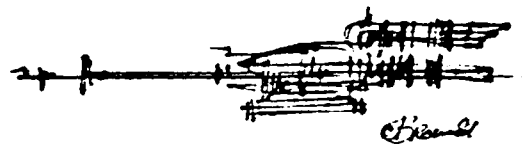
HOLIER THAN THOU # 12

ILLUSIONS Winter, 1981

MIMOSA #1



LOCS



Diane Fox
Box 129 P. O.
Lakemba NSW 219s
Australia

LoC on ANVIL 17--

Laughed over Jerry Proctor's Rubik Cube article. John bought one and devoted hours unto its arcane mysteries. Finally the evil effects of this alien monster in cubic form seemed to be wearing off. Aha, my husband was at last free from its unholy dominance, thought I. Naive fool that I was! For a month ago, he acquired the dreaded spawn of the cube, the Rubik's Snake, which now writhes diabolically atop a cupboard awaiting the day when it and the cube can get together and breed!

Beautiful poem from Stuart Herring (with most appropriate illustration). A well-written sonnet which captures the mood of a lovely night sky.

Agree with Merlin's comment about literary versus media fandom. The worst aspect of exclusiveness is that it has to continue to find people to exclude, and eventually becomes increasingly hair-splitting and heresy hunting, driving away anyone who is interested in creativity--the creatives of the world would like to include, those people out to control a small bit of territory totally would like to exclude. At times the two impulses clash in one person. If exclusiveness and finickyness is not controlled, it can destroy all appreciative enjoyment and alienate the talented.

I found Patrick Nelson Hayden's comments on fanzine fiction rather uncomfortable as John and I publish fiction in "Rhubarb". Poor old fan-fiction, how oppressed art thou! Very few writers start as first-rates. Some very good ones start as second or even third rates and gradually acquire greatness as they learn technique to express it. And one persons first rate is second to others, and vice-versa.

I think that the unpopularity of the destructiveness of technology stems from the fact that it is controlled destruction. For example, the idea of 100 people being killed by a volcano is grim. Dropping a bomb on the local town during a war and killing 100 is another matter. Herding 100 Jews into a van and gassing them is yet another. In each case there are 100 deaths--it isn't the destruction itself, it is the feeling of being at the mercy of people. Human beings rightly do not trust one another. Blind nature is cruel but does not set out to persecute, random chance at least gives one a "fair go".

Nuclear power isn't dangerous. In the hands of the sane and sensible, nuclear power is an excellent method of coping with the energy crisis. In the hands of the irrational (which is what most people are when their egos are threatened) it is deadly. I can think of 2 or 3 or more scenarios that basically consist of a nuclear power plant being turned into an instrument of political tenor by disgruntled or nasty people. A siege mentality could develop. ("Us" inside versus "Them" outside: Behave or we'll dump on you!). Or there could be a serious leak, and the public would not be informed. The rationale: evacuating the area could cause resentment to flare, riots, perhaps someone might not

get enough votes. So it's decided to risk the contamination of the area. The gamble is unsuccessful. Several thousand people cop a fatal dose. But even this could be covered --radiation victims could be told they were suffering from some plaque--or simply "die off" once they go into the emergency "plaque hospitals". As fans are emotionally involved in nuclear/non-nuclear they fail to use their imaginations to the utmost trying to visualize what could be done with a nuclear power plant and its capacity for mass death.

Incidentally the solar power from space via laser is a somewhat hazardous idea. Beam it at cities to blind the inhabitants, etc. Just as terrifying as the neutron bomb (here a good psychological weapon!) it doesn't cause poisonous radiation, and best of all, society is dependent on it for survival. Blowing one of the things up means millions will starve or freeze. Like having the sword of Damocles but in addition you die if the sword is taken away!

--Delightful dragon cover from Cindy Riley, and her beautifully drawn alien creatures for the fanzine reviews seemed even better.

David Palter
1811 Tamerind Ave. Apt. 22
Hollywood, CA 90028

Since Harry Warner tells me that I misunderstood him, I re-examined his earlier letter and found that indeed his remarks could have been interpreted differently. While I had accused Harry of dismissing the SPS as being equally dangerous as nuclear power, it is true that what he actually said was merely that the SPS has its dangers too, not that it is equally dangerous. No doubt it does have its dangers too, although it did seem to me that he was exaggerating their extent. If the point is merely, as his latest letter states, that nuclear is not all bad and so ar not all good, but both have advantages and disadvantages, well that undoubtedly is true. I'm glad to hear that Harry considers solar power to be "the only sane method of solving the energy problem on a permanent basis." Since his earlier letter (issue 17) states that he supports nuclear power (although he suspects that he does so only because he is disgusted by the excesses of its opponents) I must conclude that he favors the use of nuclear power only on a temporary basis. That too I can go along with. I see no necessity to close down all nuclear power plants immediately; the best approach undoubtedly is to phase them out gradually as they are replaced by solar power.

Since George Flynn is still concerned by the possibility that the SPS may add excessively to the planetary temperature (although I am sure that many people this winter would have welcomed such a development) let me suggest that space technology offers a possible remedy for that as well. If the Earth is seen to be overheating, it could be cooled off quite nicely by the construction of a large sun shade in space, to cast its shadow on the Earth (possibly, for our convenience, in a relatively uninhabited area.) This would be expensive, but is undoubtedly technologically feasible. And again, wheather the Earth overheats or not will be more dependent upon the amount of power used, than the specific method of generation (although the burning of fossil fuel is clearly the worst, since in addition to adding heat directly, it also adds carbon dioxide to the atmosphere, making it more retentive of heat - the famous "greenhouse effect".)

Marc Ortlieb suggests that we ought to be building our nuclear reactors so that they last much longer than their current expected lifetime (barring accidents) of 50 years; I wish to point out that there are reasons why this limitation is unescapable by currently known technology. The massive amounts of radiation produced within a reactor have two cumulative harmful effects on the building that houses it: the materials composing it become brittle (an effect similar to metal fatigue, caused by the shattering of crystal-line atomic alignments by the impact of the radiation) and the material will also gradually become radioactive itself (by reason of the absorption of slow neutrons, transmuting the elements.) The result of this is that the building becomes steadily weaker, until it eventually would collapse under its own weight, while at the same time it becomes steadily more hazardous to the health of those working in it. That is why, no matter how well you build one, or what pains you take, you can only use a given nuclear reactor for a limited number of years (actually with an enormous amount of lead shielding, you could undoubtedly extend the lifespan somewhat, but not enough to make the shielding cost-effective.)

Since the Clean Air Act is now under attack and probably will not survive in any useful form, and the Environmental Protection Agency has already been paralyzed by the Reagan administration (with its metastasized laissez-faire philosophy) it is likely to become increasingly important in the coming years, that we generate our power in a way that produces the least possible pollution (any pollution that is produced, we will have little protection from; Reagan doesn't care if we all choke to death.) Hence the hoped for solar transition becomes ever more urgently needed.

Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, MD 21740

If Cindy Riley thinks she's suffering from a flood of science-fiction she should have been around in prehistoric times like those I experienced when I was just getting interested in science fiction, and all that was available was two or three prozines a month and perhaps six or eight hardbound books a year. To me, the flood came about one-third of a century ago and today's situation is a galaxy of water, not just a measly little flood. But I didn't realize how hard it is to keep up with all the new books and all the new writers until just recently, when I found myself mystified by the lists of forthcoming cons which appear in certain fanzines: one con after another would list a pro GoH whose name was unknown to me, pros who had risen to prominence outside my ken.

Charlotte Proctor's thoroughly amusing and vivid ASFiCon report reminded me in several places of a biography of Maurice Barrymore I read a few months ago. His sons and daughter are better remembered Barrymores nowadays. One paragraph told how Ethyl as a rapidly-rising young actress had a roommate who was startled in the middle of one night by Ethyl waking suddenly, sitting upright in bed, saying "My God, how boring this is!" and promptly falling asleep again. Obviously she was born too soon because nowadays she could have gone to cons and experienced sleeping adventures in hotel rooms like those Charlotte writes about, losing thereby her boredom.

I wouldn't have guessed these fanzine reviews were written by someone with so little exposure to fanzines. They're very well done. But it would be nice to have a full name for the byline.

It's a good thing James Van Hise doesn't work for a newspaper. He would have considerably more to worry about in the form of truncated publication of what he writes than he ever will experience in fandom.

Your cover is quite good: different from the topics currently in favor for fanzine covers, and also distinctive in style, and most of the interior illustrations are good. I liked particularly the unicorns on page 4. Did I overlook the art credits or did you fail to include them? I've never been skillful at identifying artists by microscopic signatures or initials and I have no idea who may have drawn some of the small illustrations in this issue.

Art credits appear on the back cover of ANVIL each time. dlb



Roy Tackett
915 Green Valley Road NW
Albuquerque, NM 87107

Nice to see ANVIL again. So it is a little late? So who cares? At least you managed to get the zine out. A lot of us aren't doing that anymore. One of the reasons, I suspect, is apparent in the stamp on my copy. Through no doubt mysterious and bureaucratic means you are able to post ANVIL at 8.4¢ per copy. On the other hand it costs me 20¢ per copy to post my zine which is one of the main reasons Dynatron is over there in limbo somewhere. I note also that you are listing the 9 digit ZIP code. From me you're going to get (with reluctance) five...

So ANVIL has new editors named "dlburden" and Jim Cobb. Okay. "dlburden". Sure.

Is the south ready to host a Worldcon, you ask. But you don't know. Why ask us? Let's see there was Suncon in 1977 but it was, apparently, run by a bunch from New York or New Jersey and before that there was Nolacon but that was 1951 and that was a long time ago. A worldcon in Atlanta? I suppose it is as good as anywhere else. Not that it makes any difference to me as I have sworn off worldcons. Too big and too commercial. I went to Denver because it was close at hand and for sentimental reasons but unless and until things concerning worldcons change considerably that was my last one. Judging from the fans who were NOT at Denvention I am not the only one who feels that way. I think a lot of us are going to simply abandon worldcons to the media freaks and groupies and high-pressure hucksters and ego-tripping would-be authors. There are other places for fans to get together.

Cindy Riley is right.. it is a veritable flood of so-called science fiction. Most of it is crud. Some sort of mathematical rule? The more books there are on the stands, the less

I buy. Sturgeon's law: 90% of SF is crud. Currently 90% of what is sold as SF isn't SF and by applying Sturgeon's law we reach the conclusion that one book out of a hundred is worth laying out money for.

Beth Pointer's comments on Benford's Timescape point out that it is one of the few good SF books to appear in several years. Good story, good writing, good characterization and good science. Well, it was good science when the book was written; at the moment it looks as if a lot of physics is going to have to be revised. (According to several notes in SCIENCE NEWS^c astronomers have discovered around a dozen objects moving at more than the speed of light and that shoots down a lot of Einstein's theory. One quasar which has been under close observation for the past ten years has been clocked "unarguably" at 9.6 C and the astronomers are gleefully watching the physicists sputter and stammer.)

Yes, dlburden because:

- 1) No one pronounces my first name with 3 syllables--I finally gave up and now ask to be called D.
- 2) I believe that every other female born between 1953 and 1957 was named some form of Deborah combined with Lynne, Ann, or Jean (so I exaggerate, at times it seems that way) I got tired of being another Debbie.
- 3) Single females should not advertise that fact in the 'phone directory (why do you think they're called directories?), or on a mailbox, etc., as it isn't safe.
- 4) The lower case letters came about because an Applied Design Instructor insisted initials looked too "initially" to be used as the basis for a design. Mine don't.

dlb



Buck Coulson
Route 3
Hartford City, IN 47348

Ha! Cecilia shouldn't kid herself that it's hard to make enemies by just giving a brief synopsis of zines; that's what I do, and I've probably made as many enemies as anyone in fandom. Mostly for the zine reviews, too...the number of outraged fans has dropped off considerably since I quit doing so many reviews. Interesting batch of zines reviewed; underlines what a small percentage of the field I get any more. (When one reviews everything that comes in...everything comes in.)

Of course nuclear power is a threat. Of course it will kill people; sooner or later there will be an accident with fatalities. What it isn't likely to do is kill as many people as coal power has done. Insurance companies have statistics on it (now that they'll insure miners at all); so many tons of coal produced equals so many casualties. Nobody in fan-

dom objects to coal-powered plants because nobody in fandom is a coal miner, Nuclear plants are less fatal, but manage to spread the potential around... which makes them more democratic, perhaps? they might kill one of US. which is terrible; the miners can look after themselves. Solar power? If enough can be produced to power Chicago - or even Hartford City - I'm all for it. But solar power is going to kill people, too, you know. Probably not as many as nukes....

Note to Sheila Strickland: it's not the "fun" that motivates con committees; it's the power trip.

Note to Harry Warner: Juanita has already demonstrated hand-cutting of illustrations at conventions.

A continent where the closest fan enclaves are 400 miles apart? But one gets that in California, where Los Angeles and San Francisco are 379 miles apart according to my atlas. The two fandoms seem to mingle on every possible fannish occasion. However, Australians are one nationality which isn't bothered by distances in the US, or at least I've never heard one remark on it or read anything about it. (Are there still fans in Perth, Marc? And if so, do they come to your national conventions? That would be equivalent to an Angeleno at a New York con-which happens.)

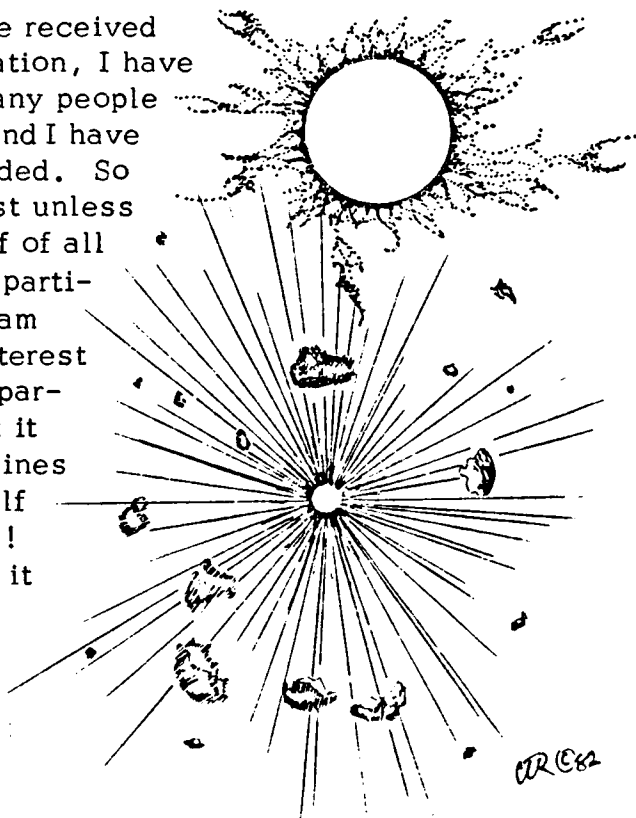
Oh, I'd heard of the Windscale incident, to go back to #18. I admit that Brown's Ferry wasn't familiar. There was a Canadian one, too; Chalk River? Can't recall the name of the place for sure. I haven't read the book he mentioned; I have read other books.

Phyllis Light Griggs
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For two years now, I have received ANVIL. From this publication, I have come to know and like many people whom I have never met, and I have

felt a part of many cons and parties I never attended. So when ANVIL arrived marked "This will be your last unless we hear from you..." I decided to write on behalf of all fans who cannot always actively, or physically, participate in cons, meetings, or other activities. I am sure there are many people who avidly take an interest in science fiction and fantasy, horror, science, parties, backrubs, etc. etc., but who just can't get it together to come to events but support fans and zines in their own way. I am one of these. From myself and others like me, keep up the good work!!!!!! Here is my \$3 for 6 more issues. Wouldn't miss it for the world.

I decided it was time to weed out the mailing list. We do not ask that you attend meetings in order to receive ANVIL. Just read and enjoy and, occasionally, contribute. Be it art, reviews, or a subscription.



dlb

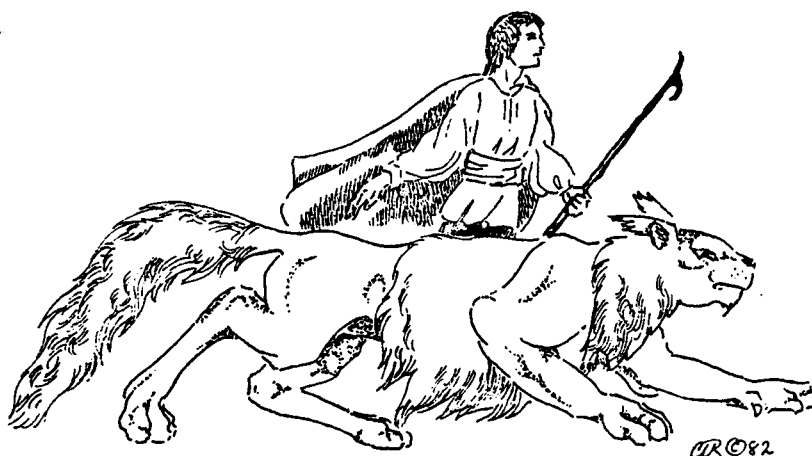
P. L. Caruthers-Montgomery
1320 Potter Drive #314
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Glad to see that a change in editorship has not meant a change in ANVIL's usual high quality of reporting. I much enjoyed reading the con reports on con I would have attended had not the lusty process of courting and getting married distracted me from more conventional matters.

The "Feghoot" was atrocious. (C'mon Ward, you can do better! Encore, y'hear?)

Larry and I will be at DSC for sure; what a honeymoon! We hope to re-say our vows in front of Rev. Rusty Burke of Knoxville. We were hoping that we could go to Kubla 10- it'll be the first Kubla I have missed since #2 -- but it's too damn close to the DSC dates, and we'd rather hit DSC if we have to choose. (After all, we first met at a DSC...How Romantic!)

Quite an interesting assortment of LoCs! There's nothing like a vocal readership.



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I don't think Cindy Riley will be much longer troubled by the deluge of unknown SF authors packing the bookstands. As the continuing comedy/tragedy we know as "The National Economy" collapses upon itself the publishing industry will be forced to cut back its number of releases. Really big bucks will be paid to those writers who can sell beyond the still limited "regular SF" market while new writers will go back to the magazines, if any of them survive the crash.

Charlotte Proctor's con reports are always a pleasure to read.

I see the debate on nuclear power is still going on, but for what reason I don't know. Look, boys and girls, the nukes are already here! Millions of people are running their VCRs and electric typewriters from Mr. Atom and that's the fact, Jack. Yes, yes I know they can be dangerous and no I don't want my children born with three eyes or glow-in-the-dark bellybuttons. But look, can anyone point to any death that can be directly linked to nuclear power? (Forget Karen Silkwood, that was a car crash, whatever reason it happened.)

You may have heard or read about the coal miners who were recently killed in Eastern Kentucky. One can definitely say that each year people are going to die working in a coal mine. Is the possibility of getting cancer in fifty years really worse than the certainty of black lung in ten or twenty?

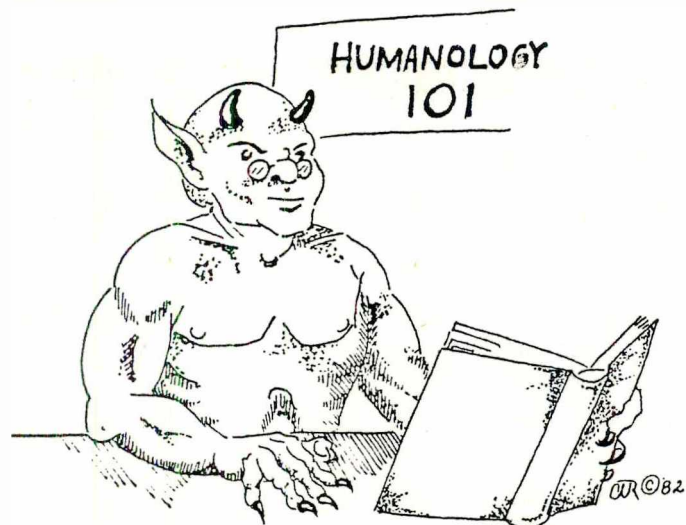
Dave Szurek
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The wording of my own letter, I'm afraid that I'll have to admit, deemed it almost incongruous to anyone who didn't know what I was talking about, before reading the thing. Either that, or you had considerable trouble deciphering my penmanship, and ended up printing a few things that don't even make sense. It looks as if I wrote the previous loc in a hurry, and while I don't sweat "formal" rules in personal communication, this doesn't even communicate! Naturally, I'm alluding to Harry's document, not Nukes, per se, as "cerebral and educated rather than rhetorical." I've never met a Nuke that was particularly cerebral and educated, have you? Did I really refer to Nukes as "who" rather than "what"? Maybe my thought processes had been over-amping? Sorry for being truthful, but I agree with Palter. I, too, think that nuclear power, or more to the point, nuclear power in the hands of human beings, (which, to the best of my knowledge, is the only species about to use it) has had plenty of time to prove or disprove itself. The dangers and various mishaps haven't given it a very enviable track record. Excuse me, but in my opinion, only the possession of blinding rose-colored glasses which give a specific type of bliss, can permit the escape of such a detail. Perhaps I'm not as tactful as humanly possible, but mincing words ain't my style when I feel strongly about something. Give nuclear power a chance, huh? To do "what"? Kill us off?? Come on, now, man- I've forgotten which of you answers the letter, so I don't know who to address--but hasn't it been given enough of a chance? Are you under the impression that the world began in 1968? I don't know about you, but given a choice between an imperfect energy source, and an imperfect species of sentient, I'd opt for the latter evil. Forced to choose between fancy-ass "glory" and simple "survival", I'd go for the latter again. Yeah, concepts might look nice on paper, but alas, this world isn't made out of paper, and certain things must be taken into consideration. Which strikes you more important, life or fiction? This might come off as the ultimate insult, and I'm not saying it just to be nasty, but I'm not going to take it back, either, but I suspect that you "HAVE" grown too hung-up on abstract stuff that you've read. If I thought you'd take my advice, I'd urge you to put the book down for a second and experience real-life for a change. As for your answer that nuclear power "might" be all that profiteers tell us it is, I guess that "anything" is possible, But do you realize that what you recommend equals saying that because a would-be murderer hasn't struck us with a bullet "YET", we should give s/he a "chance" to do so? I thought that line about the incurable optimist falling out the top floor of a ninety-story building and saying "So far--so good" as he passed the eighty-fifth floor was supposed to be a joke? Let's just lean back and "hope" for the best, eh? When a hurricane is headed in our direction, it "might" not harm us, but there's a better chance that if we don't move out of the way, it will!! Rolling over to play dead is no solution. Damning those who "don't" impersonate the deceased is "certainly" no solution!! Vicarious dreaming is a poor substitute for real escape! Like Andruschak says, there are times when rather than being blissful, ignor-

ance can be fatal! Literary knowledge is fine if that's a person's trip, but if we're blind to certain "FACTS", we're in a hopeless situation.

Do you "REALLY" refrain from editing locs out of space considerations? That astounds me. When I write a loc, I very rarely, if ever, presume that, should I rise above the WAHF column in the first place, "ALL" of my words shall see print. (Oh, I "DO" indicate if I don't "want" something quoted, so don't misunderstand this, Please. If a good portion of my loc is published, so much the better, but it's a surprise!) But I do appreciate when Fan Eds are able to figure out what parts I consider most important, which doesn't happen all that often. (ANVIL is one of the fanzines with which I haven't had this problem.) Too many have sacrificed space that could've been devoted to more relevant items (and this includes ones that "made, or tried to make a point" rather than qualifying as aimless rambling.) to superfluous filler along the lines of "I liked this, or didn't like this." My own memory has revealed to me that the above has been a trend to the extent that I have to wonder about the Fannish frame of mind on occasion. A small number of fanzines have lettercolumns wherein it seemed that nobody ever says a damn thing! When I remember "saying something" in my last loc to one of those zines only to have it hit the cutting room floor, it's automatically telling. I can understand Fan Eds having to cope with space limitations, but where do some of them dig up their set of priorities?

Another trend I've noticed is that my criticism of Fandom's Status Quo has rarely been printed. I commend those who've stepped out from the crowd, and whether or not we



agree, permitted my thoughts to be known. The only time that editing has seriously bothered me was when, as if systematically done, (and I wouldn't be stunned to find out that it was) a certain Fanzine Editor misrepresented my attitude TOTALLY--neglected to reveal the "fact" that I'd written to clear up in the first place, but was far from shy about running actually immaterial details that taken out of context painted a dreadfully unflattering portrait even by my standards. I'd put my name on the line to say what I wanted to say and that's where it stayed, but my "reason" for putting it there remained hidden!

I know what Van Hise is talking about, alright. It does seem that in zines when it's a toss between dealing with fantasy and reality, fantasy too often wins out. In a subtle way, this syndrome is reflected in the Fannish redefinition of "serious conversation" which usually means reference to the relatively superficial (tho sometimes pompously stated) topic of the State of Fiction or the State of the Art rather than the State of the World. In a subtle way, it's reflected in the habit many fans have of "TALKING" "radical", but the hesitancy to get off one's asshole long enough to tackle the things being complained about. (of course, Fandom isn't alone in this) I'm not about to dictate involuntary lifestyles, but when an individual "CLAIMS" to care substantially about a specific issue, but gets more excited about a weekend of recreation or the discovery of a work by their pet author, than about progress in that area, Fandom strikes me as a moderately shallow place, despite the inescapable self-proclamations of out-sized brains

on parade. I could rant and rave for a while, yeah, but I really don't have anything new to say that anybody wants to hear. So I'll simply offer my observations of Van Hise's assertion in case it should need any back-up. Fanzines "have" run things of substance on infrequent occasion, and most of those have been among my personal favorites, but that's not the kind of thing that traditionally gets a F.A.A.N. nomination. Does that say something in itself? I'm not going to carve it in stone, but it is food for thought.

Your letters are always food for thought.

After reading your previous letter twice I decided I was still missing some of your points so I typed it before editing it. I usually have whoever helps type ANVIL read over the letters and tell me whether or not what I've chosen makes sense. Yours did, according to what you had written (the original was stapled to the typed copy for easy reference.)

A number of people misunderstood me--nuclear power, as a source of energy, could be the answer to the energy shortage, but people, and probably our ability to handle nuclear power, prevent it from being "safe", at least, as safe as other sources, so far as the public is concerned. No one source is completely safe, and no, the world did not begin in 1968.

As for "cutting" letters--obviously I can't run all of every letter we receive or ANVIL would become a letterzine (this issue's locol comes from 17 handwritten pages and 7 typed pages), but if it takes every word in a letter to develop an idea then I run the whole letter. I edit the letters and then start tying--the loccol runs for as long as I have letters and comments.

I'd appreciate it if you'd explain "radical", and about "claiming to care". If you're referring to people who talk but don't do, i.e. write their Congressmen and President about the value of the space program, or find some other way to promote the reality of space as our next home, then you're right, fandom is shallow.

dlb



WAHF: Paul & Lynne Delaney, P. L. Caruthers-Montgomery (again), Harry Andrushak.

Our special thanx to Charlotte Proctor & Julie Wall for getting ANVIL 19 together for us.
dlb and Jim Cobb

This issue typed by dlb and some of the various contributors. Proofed by Richard Hyde.

BSFC meetings: second Saturdays, 7:30pm, Homewood Library. Next meetings: April 10 and May 15 (as the second Saturday coincides with Kubla Khan 10).

Art Credits: Cindy T. Riley-cover, 5, 7, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21; Wade Gilbreath-2;
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