

ANIL

#36



BRUNO GONZALEZ

ANVIL

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CHARLOTTE'S WEB

-- Charlotte Proctor

In the high and far-off times, when the world was new and all, oh Best Beloved, it happened that Penny Frierson, Jim Gilpatrick and I, Birminghamians all, were referred to by some members of the then-fledgling Atlanta in '86 worldcon bidcom as "the Birmingham Mafia". Rather than taking umbrage, we rather liked the designation, and when Jim moved up North, Penny and I realized that we were now the Birmingham Mafiaettes. We recruited Julie Ackermann and Linda Riley to go with us to worldcons and throw bid parties. (Parties are our forte.)

The home front consisted of Jane Gray, Marie Harrell and Cindy Riley. When the bidding was over, and the worldcon was won, we looked around for another purpose in life. It was Penny who gave us our new direction: the appreciation of fast cars and good-looking men. (Or was it good-looking cars and...?) Our insignia, she decided, would be crossed keys.

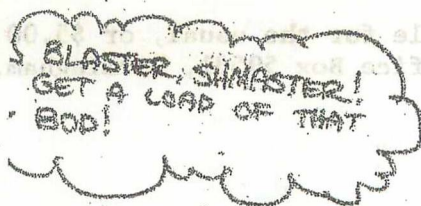
We are never very visible, ~~being a low-key organization~~ but the effects of our efforts are felt throughout the South. For instance, you may have wondered why Chattanooga won the DSC bid last year. Birmingham was bidding, too, but upon reflection the Mafiaettes decided they had rather appreciate men and cars (and bourbon, don't forget the bourbon) than work themselves to death putting on a medium to large-size convention. So it was arranged that the voting went the way we wanted.

Lately the mafiaettes have gotten into publishing. We recruited Wade Gilbreath and Bill Brown as honorary mafiaettes, and are putting out the ConFederation progress reports. The Atlanta committee knows nothing of this, and thinks they appointed the staff, so don't breath a word of it.

Things are getting rather out of hand now, though... your humble editor of ANVIL is leaving the country soon (Aussiecon Two, here I come!) and the mafiaettes are threatening to put out an ANVIL while she is gone. Forewarned is forearmed. Read the next issue at your peril.



And if you are ever at a Southern convention, say like Kubla, or DSC, or Chattanooga, or Constellation, or even ConFederation, and should happen to run into a Belle from Birmingham -- if you are male and reasonably good-looking and have your own transportation -- watch out!! She may be a Mafiaette...



HOW TO BE SICK

-- Bob Shaw

It all started about four years ago, the year I didn't get my usual pre-Eastercon pimple.

Decades of carefully irrigating my system with Guinness have given me a clear complexion, but just to show who is boss my skin likes to produce one really good pimple at a time to coincide with each major convention. It likes to appear right beside my nose and it always is one of the angry red variety which feels like an implanted coat button. It seems to feed on antiseptic creams, and trying to squeeze it or do anything like that only turns it into a painful, throbbing mound which glows like a stop light. And, adding insult to injury, the brute always vanishes without a trace the day after the convention ends.

It was a great relief to me, therefore, when the eve of the Glasgow Eastercon dawned and the Shaw countenance remained unblemished, but my pleasure was short-lived. My body chose to have 'flu instead.

I couldn't even consider passing up our major convention, so I decided it was mind-over-matter time. No mere bug was going to knock me over. Dosed up on aspirins and whisky, I went up to Scotland and soldiered my way through that con, fannishly heroic, probably infecting half the population of Clydeside. By the last day I was beginning to feel reasonably fit and I returned home flushed with pride and Johnny Walker, boring everybody with my new lecture about how an iron will can vanquish any disease.

So far so good -- then I discovered I had The Cough.

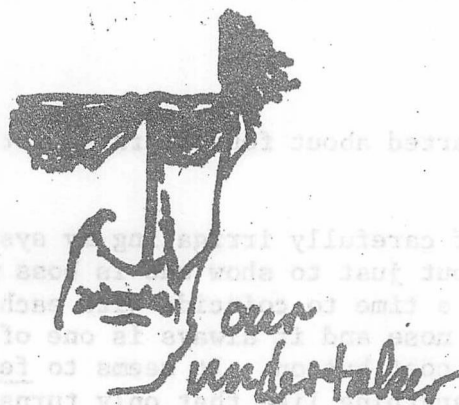
This was no ordinary cough. It was so violent that it could blow paperwork clean off my desk, and it actually hurt the eardrums of people in the same room. Also, it was persistent. Four months later my doctor had tried almost every remedy he knew, all without success, and he was becoming irritable with me for obstinately refusing to get well.

"It's probably just some vague virus," he kept grumbling. Yeah, and so is cancer, I kept thinking. On his orders I gave up smoking my beloved pipe, but even so I got that I couldn't go into a pub without the smoky atmosphere causing me to blast the froth off pints ten feet away. Life was losing its sparkle.

After six months of this caper I was beginning to get alarmed and went privately to a consultant physician for new X-rays and full tests. The morning of the physical examination will never fade from my memory.

The doctor picked up an instrument resembling those tongs they handle food with in good shops, the main difference being that these tongs were immensely strong. He squeezed them together with obvious effort, inserted the contraption into my right nostril and let go! There was a loud twang and my nostril distended out to somewhere near my ear. I could see it. A kind of flat plain of nostril reaching to the horizon.

After shining a lot of lights up the resulting cavity -- possibly he was examining the underside of my brain -- the doctor repeated the process with the other nostril, then he told me to stick out my tongue. Wondering what indignity was coming next, I did as requested, whereupon he wrapped a length of gauze around the timidly protruding piece of flesh. This, I soon learned, was to give him a good grip. Using muscles he must have toughened with the tongs, he pulled my tongue out so far that I could see it. I didn't know I had that much tongue. The doctor then shoved more lights and things down my throat, and all the while I was retching like a hippopotamus with morning sickness.



The final humiliation came when he closed the drapes, popped a small but powerful light bulb into my mouth, plugged me into the mains (it's 220 volts in the UK) and switched me on. The whole room lit up with a pinkish glow which was emanating from my head, and the doctor and a colleague walked around me for a few minutes discussing intimate details of my internal construction.

After it was all over the consultant gave me his scientific findings. "There is nothing organically wrong with you," he said. "You just have this cough."

I thanked him with as much sincerity as I could muster, drove back to Ulverston at dangerous speeds and downed four pints of Hartley's best bitter in about ten minutes. My regular doctor next started trying increasingly exotic pills and capsules which had no effect on the cough, but which reduced me to a zombie-like condition in which I could hardly stay awake let alone earn a living. My friends began to talk about me in worried whispers. I found myself falling asleep while people were trying to hold conversations with me, and by the time of my second trip to Birmingham, Alabama -- for Boshcon -- my vital forces were at a low ebb indeed.

The whole thing might have been more bearable if I could have looked sick. It would have been quite nice to waste away a little -- I've always wanted to look pale and interesting, like a consumptive poet -- but instead all the drugs and inactivity made me put on a lot of weight. By the time I visited Poland for the 4th International Convention in Cracow I had been coughing for nearly 18 months, and had got to the stage where I had to sit down and have a coughing session after every 100 yards of a walk. Some students at the convention became so worried that they wanted to take me to a world-renowned allergist who lived quite near, but there was no time.

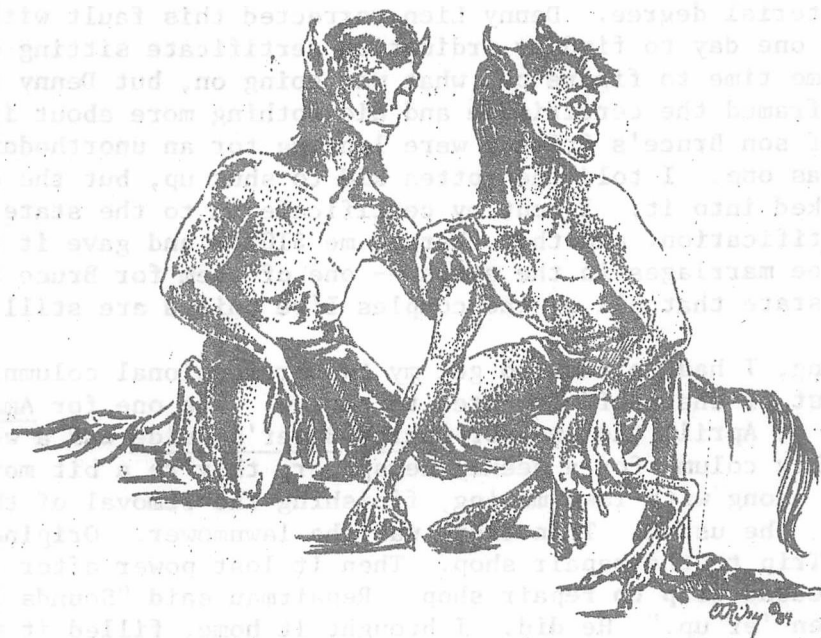
The only relief I got during that trip came when we visited a very old and deep salt mine south of Cracow. The air is so pure down there that they have a permanent hostel for chronic allergy sufferers about 300 feet below the surface. I remember walking around in the cool dimness for about two hours without coughing once and enjoying the simple pleasures of feeling normal.

Back in England, after another month or so of renewed misery, I was beginning to wonder if I might actually be going to die -- and I took a momentous decision. The medication was doing me no good at all, and all the joy had gone out of life, so I decided that I was going to deal with the problem by letting the forces of homeostasis do their work in their own way. I dumped all the pills and did everything I could to induce a relaxed and optimistic frame of mind.

My technique went contrary to orthodoxy in that it involved my taking up smoking the pipe again. Not only did it not make me choke when I lit up, but when I went into a pub armed with it my smoke seemed to immunise me to other people's smoke. That may sound like a contrived rationalisation to members of the anti-tobacco lobby, but I'm only reporting the facts.

Gradually, over a period of six or eight weeks, the cough faded away, and I became more active and began to shed some weight. And one glorious day, nearly two years after that initial bout of 'flu, it came to me that I was healthy again. It was only then that I began to realise just how sick I had been, but perhaps that is nature's way of helping you to get through an illness.

I'll tell you one thing I've learned from the experience. If you ever come down with 'flu just before a con -- stay at home in bed and keep in touch with the programme by phone. It's the best way.



THE OLD IRONMASTER FEELS RUSTY

by Buck Coulson

It didn't sound so bad when I agreed to it: two conventions on succeeding weekends aren't all that tough, are then? Even at my age? But then things began getting complicated, starting when I told my boss at Overhead Door that we were driving to Conquest in Kansas City, and would therefore be gone three days one week and the first two days of the next week. Complications arose because my replacement when I'm gone was already replacing someone else, who was recovering from cancer surgery.

So I got a brand new assistant from Manpower, with three weeks to train her to do a job that really requires more like three years training. There were some compensations; Christi is young, blonde, sexy, and intelligent. But then, she already has three or four boy friends (I lose count), and a totally mundane outlook on life. Doesn't know her Asimov from a .. oh, you've heard that one. Anyway, I was more interested in the fact that training her meant taking time away from doing the job, which meant lots of overtime, to do the job after hours. It didn't help much when the powers that be scheduled two of the busiest weeks in company history during the training period.

The wedding came first, at the beginning of the training. On April 20, I united Van Siegling and Carol Elsessor in more or less holy matrimony. My career as a minister came about quite oddly. My church is the Universal Life Church, the well-known ministerial mill. But unlike many fans, I had no interest in it and never sent my name in for a ministerial degree. Denny Lien corrected this fault without telling me, and I came home one day to find my ordination certificate sitting on my typewriter. Took me some time to figure out what was going on, but Denny eventually confessed. I then framed the certificate and did nothing more about it, until one day when a couple of son Bruce's friends were looking for an unorthodox minister, and Bruce told them I was one. I told the rotten kid to shut up, but the damage was done, and I was talked into it. I sent my certificate in to the state of Ohio and asked for state certification, and they charged me \$10.00 and gave it to me. I've since performed three marriages in the state -- one of them for Bruce and Lori -- and I can at least state that all of the couples I've united are still together.

Following the wedding, I had to rush to get my two professional columns in; I hadn't even read most of the stuff I wanted to review. The one for Amazing Stories got done by the end of April; the one for Comics Buyer's Guide was a week late, but since that's a monthly column for a weekly newspaper, they're a bit more flexible. Overtime continued, along with lawn mowing, finishing the removal of the dead evergreens on the place; the usual. Then there was the lawnmower. Originally, it refused to start. Trip to the repair shop. Then it lost power after a few minutes and stalled out. Second trip to repair shop. Repairman said "Sounds like the carburetor; I'll open 'er up." He did. I brought it home, filled it with gas, put the gas can away, and noticed a stream of gasoline running out of the air filter. Seemed as though maybe he'd opened 'er up a bit too much. Third trip to repair shop to close 'er back up a tad. Now it's stalling again...

Then Ken Ozanne called. Last year, when he was preparing for his trip to the U.S., I'd written and said if he came this way we'd be glad to see him. Then, of course, I'd forgotten about it. I still wanted to see him, even if it would be just before Marcon, so we made arrangements. Ken, Marea, and son Alex arrived May 7 and left May 9. I was still training Christi, so I couldn't get off work, but I did cut down on the overtime. And of course, like all fans, we stayed up until midnight or 1 a.m. and then I got up at 6:00 to go to work. The Ozannes could sleep late, so when they left, they were in better shape than I was.

May 10 we left for Marcon. Nice convention. Marcons of old were noted for being stodgy: one fan described them as "the major entertainment being the reading of the minutes of the last Worldcon business meeting". Things have improved vastly. Anyway, this is the con where we get revenge on the kids, so we have to go. Other conventions, Bruce and Lori share our room at Marcon, we share their room. Let them support a pair of deadbeat parents for a change... Anyway, we had fun, and I could sleep late and catch up a bid on my rest.

Conquest wasn't so easy. We were scheduled to leave on May 15, so of course on May 14 I had to work 12 hours. Should have done more but enough is enough. I was not in the greatest shape when we set out. We took the trip in two stages stopping overnight with Leigh Couch south of St. Louis, both going and coming. (Which not only saved hotel bills but provided a highly enjoyable evening for us. I wouldn't guarantee how enjoyable it was for Leigh....) Again, the con was pleasant. Most of my con-going time I spend in talking to people mostly about trivialities. I have a lot of fun, but it doesn't make for a brilliant con report. I'm getting used to all the new authors being young enough to be my children, but this time Brian Thomsen was there -- he's outrageously young, and an editor (Warner Books). The mind boggles. Editors are supposed to be grim, gray-haired men with vicious tongues (Don Willheim on a bad day, or Lester del Rey ditto). Still, Brian promised to put me on Warner's review list and to try to get me on the Tor list, so he's got a lot of good in him. I'm not sure that editors are supposed to have a lot of good in them, but times change....

Then back to work and more overtime. This column is past due, the deadline for the next Comics Buyer's Guide column is approaching, and I'm tired. This weekend we mowed the yard, burned three weeks' worth of trash, tilled and planted the garden, sprayed the apple trees, put manure on the garden, put manure and dirt on the compost heap, and I finally finished reading all the mail that had accumulated while we were gone. I should have tallied it, but it filled a normal sized mail bag: mostly ads, but also bills, fanzines, a few business matters, and even a few letters. Now all I have to do is answer them....

Maybe next issue I'll feel bright and fresh and funny: right now I'm an old fan, and tired.



FORGED MINUTES

-- Beauregard O. Possum

April 13, 1984... Auction Time!!! Word must have gotten out, as we had visitors: Becky and Robert Zielke from Chattanooga; Holly Hina from Kentucky; Pat Gibbs and Leon Hendee from Atlanta; Nancy Adams and Zeb Adams from Huntsville.

Cindy T. Riley, our auctioneer(ess), was dressed for the occasion in dramatic black, with lace jabot and cuffs. Perhaps some of the high bids can be explained as the fellows not being able to resist the pleas of such a pretty lady. (We took in over \$300.00).

Marie Harrell, Linda Riley and Warren Overton kept track of who bought what for how much. I, Beauregard, also sat up front with the other officers, but refused to touch the money... not my job! (An aside here... Jane Gray, our treasurer, who has been announcing her imminent departure for two (2) years, finally is leaving. She had a going away party and all. BUT she was at the meeting anyway... to turn the books over to someone else... Warren went around muttering "some people are born to be treasurer, some strive to be treasurer... I have it thrust upon me...")

Nettie Hayden brought baked goods, at the command of the membership, and they brought good prices. Bill Brown sent some artwork that was scarfed up by collectors, and the usual books sold well.

Charlotte and Holly had decided privately to each buy one of the two wedge-shaped pillows that Nettie's mom had made and donated... they were perfect for sitting up in bed to read. However, Linda, who didn't really want one at all, ran the bid up to over \$10.00 before she said "oh, I can make one for myself for \$2.00". Holly and Charlotte got their pillows, and the club got a lot of money!!

There was a special item auctioned... Holier Than Thou # XX. That was the double X-rated issue... at least the cover by Brad Foster was double x-rated. We, being pure and wanting to stay that way, kept it in a plain brown wrapper and auctioned it to the highest bidder. For those of you who may be interested, the two most enthusiastic bidders for this pornography were... are you ready? our critic-in-residence, Pat Gibbs, and the lady doctor, Holly Hina. Holly got it for \$11.50.

Cindy, who besides being an auctioneer(ess) is a costumer, brought a teddy bear dressed in leopard skin... a barBEARian. Brisk bidding went on between Jane and Becky, who both wanted it, ostensibly, for their children. Every time Becky would raise the bid, she'd ask Robert "is that all right?", and he would sink lower in his chair and groan. It went for an outrageous price... but then Julie Ackermann who works in a toy department kept throwing out such tidbits as "Today I sold a stuffed duck for \$40.00!!!"

Speaking of Julie, she announced her resignation as Program Director, as she and Eric are moving to Virginia in June... he's going to work towards his PhD in archeology at William & Mary. We immediately made plans to rent a van and come visit her, and go on to see Jane who will be in Washington.

FORGED FIGURES

Beginning Balance \$207.32

And then we took in some money, and we spent some money, but Warren doesn't know exactly how much, and it really doesn't matter anyway...

Ending Balance. \$460.27

[illegible]

S U M M E R P A R T Y

This seems to be a good place to announce our *Summer Party*.. It will be on July 20, 1985 (Moon-landing day, how appropriate!) at Warren Overton's house - 1820 30th Street W. Phone: 781-1635. The club is buying barbeque, you bring soft drinks and munchies.

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* "AND NOW A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR."

L-5 TRIP REPORT

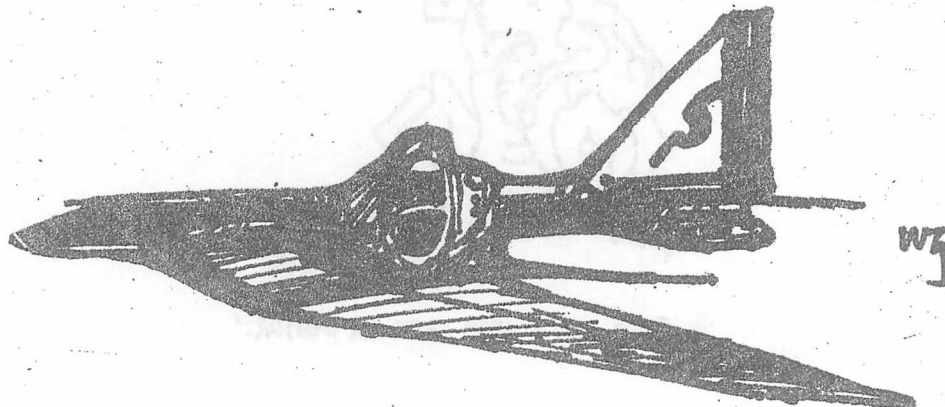
-- Warren Overton

Captain's Log: 85.4-29; Seven days ago, we received a distress call from SPACEPAC urging our attendance at the fourth annual space development conference at Washington, D.C. The SPACEPAC message cut off abruptly while trying to set up warning beacons. By a supreme engineering effort they were able to utter one last directive "...maintain single minded purpose." We immediately dispatched our chief engineer, science officer, and medical officer aboard the shuttle craft "S.B.F. Caravan" to investigate. The following report is from that survey crew:

Upon exiting the ship our attention was immediately drawn to several space bouys directing us to the space station without allowing deviation to our ultimate goal of the LaGrange point colonies. This was a little disheartening since the facilities at the space station are so limited. But we were able to keep up morale on the journey by replaying some old tapes of folksongs, meanwhile keeping sensors primed to detect debris from several NASA projects shot down by BUDGET. Sometime during our fact-finding mission we would have to contact BUDGET's controllers and persuade them to defect.

After negotiating many time-consuming barriers we docked at the space station weary of maintaining constant watch but eager to begin exploring Washington, bastion of antiquity, seat of so many forward and backward thinkers. We sealed the "Caravan" leaving only a console sensor activated and settled in the crowded quarters of the space station. Fortunately, chief engineer Overton can sleep anywhere, even a sleeping-bag billet.

The next waking period we beamed down to Washington via the Metro line and visited the grand memories of man's first forays into sky and space on display at the Smithsonian. We wept together that it took so long for the forward thinkers to come into power, and are even now having to fight for the high ground. How much farther we would be if there weren't so many downcast eyes. Still, it is a glorious display well worth viewing.



Our first action for the official con was to contact BUDGET and see if a pittance of their enormous available funds could be diverted to make the space station more habitable. We beamed directly to the briefing room and experienced an immediate shortness of breath. Science Officer Gray took tricorder readings, found the air stuffy but breathable, and Medical Officer Harrell made things easier by administering a tri-ox compound.

The briefing was very informative. SPACEPAC had done their homework well. But they failed to mention an effective member of the political arm - the phone tree. This was particularly irking to our engineer since the phone tree is his adopted bairn. At the end of the scheduled briefing he rose to correct the omission only to find that his name was known but not his face. One of the hazards of the telephone is voice-only communication. One of L-5's lobbyists, Sandy Adamson, then suggested that Overton be the next American Express Commercial.

The crowd split up into states to contact their Congressmen. Our particular contacts went well, possibly because the bulk of the work force for the space station are in their constituency. Even though they are not in the ascendancy of BUDGET's controllers, they still have a powerful voice to add to those of us crying in the wilderness.

We attended L-5's birthday party that night and were struck again by the stuffy atmosphere, mostly attributable to the location of the con and the presence of all those three-piece suits. We realized then and there that our mission would include rescuing a goodly portion of the attendees. (Whether with tri-ox or Fosters was yet to be determined.) We retreated to the room to change into appropriate garb to identify us to those wishing to be rescued. Overton, of course, wore his "L-5, making it in space" t-shirt. Many individuals were located and plans were laid for "Operation Room Party".

The next morning's keynote address featured Dr. Gerard O'Neill, father of the modern day concept of the LaGrange point colonies. His sights are still set on the space colonies but his feet are firmly planted on Geostar, the global communication and locating satellite. One super line stands out - not one penny of federal funds has gone into the project.

The remainder of the day was spent in sessions that were informative but mundane dealing with space station logistics and politics, lunar and asteroid mining, and space-based industry. Some of the sessions dealt with ways and means of accomplishing these goals but some were actually showing reasons why we should. Of course we should! That's not even a debatable point. Critics of the Luna Restaurant were claiming "No atmosphere" even though they served Italian Space Colony Rose'.

A bright spot in the day came from Students for the Exploration and Development of Space. SEDS is a growing movement of college and high school students working toward the next generation of space developers and entrepreneurs since 1980. Reagan's Young Astronaut Council is a direct offshoot of SEDS.



Lunch was spent in an enchanting place called the Brickskeller, a magnificent tavern boasting 500 different imported and domestic beers. The members of Caravan's crew raised many a toast to Medical Officer Marie Harrell and her insight to bring along a guide book of Washington as we made a dent in their stock taking a comprehensive sampling. We each had our favorites but it did seem that our engineer was drinking his Toothy KB from an oil can and our science officer had something called Black Velvet? Feeley Fandom rode the escalators to the Metro for a long chain of blissful backs with a new twist. Fandom convert Alan from California joined us and suggested that free fall feeley fandom would resemble a spiraling pyramid to return to the last/first back in line.



Upon returning, we stocked the room for our rescue operations and prepared for the Con Banquet. Showtime, folks! We sat at table one with the esteemed personality, Eric Drexler, who gave us copies of a paper on nanotechnology. This involves genetic engineering to provide molecular switching for computers, next generation material! Several microchips worth of storage in a space the size of a microbe. A photographer came over and set his camera on Eric's shoulder to take a picture of --- our engineer! It seems that the phone tree wanted a face to associate with his voice, since most of them didn't have videophones.

Banquet toastmaster was Ben Bova who announced that the L-5/NSI merger was in the talking stage. He described it as "not a marriage yet but there's definitely some heavy petting going on and we think they are ready to go steady."

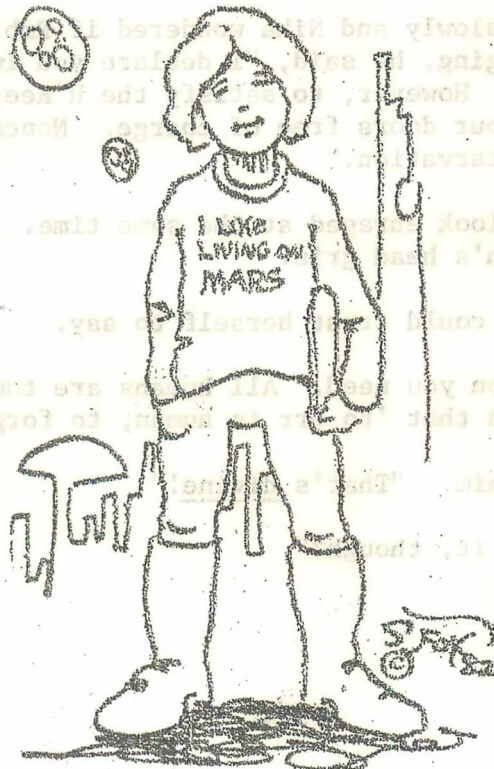
The room party was a great success!! We located many individuals ready to escape and some would actively support us. Among the wonderful people who joined our "Southern style, fan-type room party" were Kelly and Polly Freas, and C. J. Cherryh, who said she could add several unaffiliated nets to our phone tree. There was apparently a perpetual motion device of metal rings and a tiny shuttle, background filksinging, space colony pictures plastering the walls and enough lubrication to plaster the filk. We were pleased to add another voice in favor of Australian brew. Art Bozlee, noted expert on the Soviet space program and holder of the Medal of Lenin, entered the room, looked at our engineer's oil can, and said "Fosters, civilization!!! Where can I get one?!" Since we aim to please he soon had an oil can of his own. (Art will be with us at DSC where we will try for a repeat performance of the Rescue Room Party.)

The last day of the convention was mostly a blur of sessions but some items stick out as very interesting. In a session entitled "The Space Tourist", Charles Walker showed home movies of the shuttle trip that had just landed a couple of days before the con. Group pictures, activities and such. And in "Cultural Drive for Space", C. J. Cherryh and Kelly Freas told of the goal that drives us so strongly to relocate into space, its aspects in literature and art. C.J. Cherryh later conducted a filksing for the faithful.

We beamed back to the space station to return to the shuttle "Caravan" only to find that the console sensor we had left on drained the battery dry. Fortunately, our California friend, Alan, gave us a boost to start us on our way. We left for home feeling full of information for the Captain to start an education program and a personal boost to our senses.

Our trip back was much like the trip down except I'm afraid we'll have to report that some of the bouys were removed, allowing passage through the LaGrange points. We passed a very peculiar one that said "Bullocksville, state recreational area." And at one point a Waif traveling with us said, "Warren, pretend you're alive."

Another sad duty is to report that Science Officer Jane Gray has become smitten with the Washington, D.C. area and has decided to take the good ship "Caravan" and return, taking the waif with her. We will miss her but we wish her Godspeed on her journey.



BIRDS OF A FEATHER

-- Merlin Odom

The care and feeding of extraterrestrials can be extremely profitable, and the Final Frontier Emporium did a brisk business catering to the whims of esoteric ETs. However, it is not without its risks, as Nika van Rhine was finding out. Nika had known the Final Frontier would be overrun by alien policemen when she had decided to inform the authorities of a dead pseudo-avian in a private booth.

"Miss van Rhine, you are charged with murder in the death of the H'Ree Ambassador. Do you deny that you, or someone in your hire, poisoned Ambassador SKz'rii? Or, possibly you are yourself a feline's paw?" said the Rmb' Tribune.

The Tribune, himself a pseudo-minotaur, continued. "Keep in mind that I am a Tribune. I can try and execute you on the spot -- or find you innocent. Bribery or threats will result in immediate execution. My patience is not infinite.

"Of course, I'm innocent, foo--! The very idea of assassinating a customer before he pays is unethical, immoral, illegal, and extremely bad business. So how was I to know Big Bird was out on a lark incognito? It was a good chance to try out a new item on the menu -- giant cotton-eating insects on a bun. I only had two, so I gave him the lesser of the two weevils. The close-mouthed paranoid secretiveness of the H'Ree is proverbial. How was I supposed to know they go into terminal anaphylaxis when they ingest bird-seed sprinkled buns?"

The Tribune nodded his head slowly and Nika wondered if Rmb' executions were by impalement. Instead of charging, he said, "I declare you innocent of the murder most foul of the Ambassador. However, to satisfy the H'Ree, I order you to serve all H'Ree who pass through your doors free of charge. Noncompliance will result in the H'Ree executing you by starvation."

Nika managed to shudder and look enraged at the same time. A smile of triumph turned into an agonized death's head grin.

"All right." It was all she could trust herself to say.

"Miss van Rhine, it's a lesson you need. All humans are too ethnocentric. Indeed, one of my people's sayings is that 'to err is human, to forgive, bovine'."

She automatically corrected him. "That's divine!"

The minotaur winked. "Isn't it, though?"

ELFQUEST ENDED

Elfquest Book 4 by Wendy and Richard Pini; The Donning Company/Publishers, 56559 Virginia Beach Boulevard, Norfolk, Virginia 23502. All four of the Elfquest color volumes can be ordered directly from The Donning Company/Publishers at the retail price of \$12.95 per volume plus \$1.00 per order for shipping and handling.

ELFQUEST is different. It's billed as a graphic novel, that is to say, an illustrated novel. Compared to what I've seen of most comic books, it could qualify as that.

ELFQUEST tells the story, in twenty black and white issues, or four full color collections, of Cutter and his band of elven wolfriders and their quest for others of their kind on their earthlike world. Whoopee. A fairie tale. Not only that, a comic book fairie tale. But, - ELFQUEST does not recognize any limitations that either of these two genres might impose. The series has characterization that grows with each succeeding book. The art is usually quite good; by the end of the first book you can easily recognize the main characters, although any background characters do have a tendency to look alike.

It is interesting to note subtle changes in Wendy Pini's style as you read through the series from beginning to end. It tends to get freer and looser, more confident, as she grows more familiar with the elves and the trolls and humans that populate their world. She doesn't hesitate to experiment with novel ideas in her frames, such as interesting ways of suggesting movement, or using unusual poses or angles. Most of the frames could just as easily been the storyboard for a movie, and in fact Wendy Pini has said that she had that idea all along; that she always wanted to see her elves move, and planned the series with that in mind. The option for an animated ELFQUEST has been picked up by a Canadian movie company, however, it is quite a long way between an option being picked up and a movie actually being produced.

The scripting of the series was done by both Wendy and her husband Richard Pini. While the graphic novels read nicely, the companion novel, Journey to Sorrow's End, is amateurish in style and phraseology; the kind of book that you read and say "I could do at least this well." Also the novel follows the first five books of the series almost frame for frame, expanding very little on the characters at all.



THE ANVIL CHORUS

-- Charlotte Proctor

Seems like only yesterday, or maybe as long ago as last week, that I was trying to get up my nerve to jump into The ANVIL Chorus -- but it's been three months, so here we go again. We'll start with a late loc on #34, from Toni Jerrman.

Toni Jerrman
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00640 Helsinki Finland

Seems like I'm always making promises that I cannot keep. I promised to write back quicker next time but here we are, it's been a couple of months since I got ANVIL 34. And I'm also been able to lose all my notes I made when reading ANVIL. But let's still try.

Coulson writes always well and interestingly. Yumphen was very interesting. I would have liked to read much more. I don't know anything about fandom history in USA, but after that article I'm hungry for more. You have to get Warner write more, please. Promise me?! ((Harry, you hear that? I'm sure there are young American fans, as well as Finnish fans, who missed out on earlier fanhistory articles. -- cp))

Now that's bad, I'm sure that I had much to say about the review of Startide but I really can't remember what. It's in one of those notes I can't find. Damn. It was something that it seems to be interesting and I might read it because it's said to be partly good also in Finnish fanzines. The Tea with Black Dragon or something like that was in Finnish fanzines said to have some good ideas but resemble too much American TV series in events. It's wrong to lower an ancient dragon to an adventure like Matt Houston or Magnum. The letters were also interesting as always. And now of course something about the art, ha haa. Hab hab hih hoo, I liked the picture in page 27, but the others... some had something good, but still, there weren't any really bad ones. But now, when you turn to page 35, there is one quite big pictures and believe me or not, I love it. It's great, it looks good and it has the Feeling. Wau! That's the way. Could it be possible that I'd get a permission to use it also in Tahtivaeltaja sometime??

((So you like cute animals, huh? Cindy Riley did the dragon on p.27, and the one on p.35 is a several-year-old drawing I found in Bill Brown's fannish portfolio. I'll ask the artists if you can print them and drop you a line with the originals if they agree. // READ "Tea With The Black Dragon"!! I don't think dragonhood was besmirched, and though voluntarily lowering himself in his search for truth, he was not lowered. -- cp))

Brian Earl Brown
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Detroit, MI 48228

It's good to see a new issue of ANVIL after too long a time. I miss the days when ANVIL was a regular bimonthly fanzine. It makes me positively nostalgic for the days when not only was ANVIL bimonthly, but there were monthly CHAT and ATARANTES. Ah, those were the days. It's hard, I know, to do a fanzine every 60 days come rain or shine, sickness or good heath. You deserve to be congratulated for seeing ANVIL to it's 35th issue. ((Sounds rather like a marriage.))

I started a new job as a chemist for the city's wastewater treatment plant. The pay is good (expect to see more fanzines from me), the people very friendly and the workload embarrassingly light. (God, it's true what they say about municipal workers.) I'm writing this at work because I have the time to loe whereas at home there is so much else to do - eat, sleep, pub my ish, watch TV, talk to my wife... the only pity about this job is that they won't let me bring a typewriter in to work. I guess it too unprofessional. ((In my profession, a typewriter is a tool of the trade, so I do all my fannish work at the office. When I quit work (I hope, hope), I'll have to buy a decent typer or use the old manual and hope for the best -- cp))

Your fanzine reviewers have all quit? Say it isn't so! Valerie McKnight did such a fine job that I'm really going to miss her. She reviewed zines with such good sense and uninhibited expression. A good critic is hard to find, and she was good. ((I showed this to Valerie, trying to motivate her... we'll see -- cp))

Krsto's tale of woe was delightful to read. It's always easier to read of another misfortune than to live it. But if one is going to have misfortune, better to face it with a laugh. Our car was wrecked 3 years ago and while insured, we also had just sunk a lot of money into it -- brakes, tune-up, radio... after the wreck we not only had to buy a new car but still had to pay for all the now worthless work we'd had done on the car. That was the unkindest cut of all.

Krsto shouldn't worry about being seen with a briefcase. All the best smofs are distinguished by the briefcase growing out of their left hand. Krsto's briefcase just confirms what he is -- the chairman of a large convention. He should carry his briefcase with pride.

Steve Bullock's "A Grave Report" is the standout item in this issue. He's taken a little, but delightful, idea -- people's different response to the stars above -- and built it into an airtight exercise in logic and science (well, maybe metalogic and quasi-science). It is a supremely "fannish" piece that not once becomes cloyingly self-conscious of its fannishness.. a wonderful piece.

Steve does err when he says that light does not have mass. If such were the case light would not be bent by gravity. What Steve meant to say, I'm sure, is that light has zero rest mass. As light is energy and energy is matter, light must have some kind of mass and therefore is as much affected by gravity as any other speck of matter.

I wonder if the lightheadedness fans experience when exposed to the heavens couldn't be used as a space drive. It seems entirely reasonable that if one could collect enough fans together and exposed them to just one heavenly object, the combined attraction to that stellar object would be enough to break the bonds of gravity to good ole earth. It's at least worth a try. Maybe ConFederation should organize a worldcon levitating experiment.

Pat Gibb's book reviews are always interesting and well put together. He makes this Earthchild trilogy sound worth reading; I have lots of reservations with Sharon Webb's thesis that creativity and mortality go together at least to the extent that a 16 year old has to choose between one and the other. There is some sense that creativity is limited over one's lifespan -- how many writers have remained fresh and original past their first decade. Ditto for composers and artists. And there is some evidence that scientists, too, are most creative in their early days, perhaps because they're less committed to defending any status quo. Do Webb's Immortals experience 10 good years of creativity followed by an eternity of rehashing old material or do her immortals just lose all interest in being creative?

There are few things as unpleasant as getting a letter like Toni Jerrman's which seems to do nothing but insult your fansine. I generally admire the art that appears in ANVIL. A lot of it is light works of cartooning that perhaps wouldn't appear to a serious and constructive fansine editor but where does it say that fansine art has to be on the level of a Bok or Whelan? Give me a break from pretensions. Fandom is a hobby foremost and "standards" should be whatever you like. There is fan art I wouldn't use in my fansine -- works that either lack a sense of humor, or of design or of execution. But... Toni's Finnish fansine may have more in common with Starlog than (with) ANVIL, but I wouldn't go so far as to say that it isn't a fansine. A semiprozine after all is a professional fansine.

Oh God, Pat Gibbs is feuding with Joy Hibbert... Joy is reaching the point occupied a few years ago by Joseph Nicholas of being a full-time gadfly. Joseph was so predictable in his bashing of bad standards, Americans and nuclear weapons. Joy seems every bit as determined to find some insult to feminists everywhere she looks. Tedious, very tedious.

Krsto Mazuranic says Viking is a present participle and I confess it embarrassing when foreigners start giving us English lessons! Viking must be a noun or how else do we get books entitled "The Viking" and a movie with that title? English words aren't tied down to any one meaning, as Lewis Carroll pointed out a century ago. They tend to mean what we want them to. People who go 'viking' came to be called Vikings, and while viking parties probably did not carry along their womenfolk on a raid, when Viking becomes synonymous with Norse then one can legitimately speak of Viking women -- even though these Viking women never go viking. So everybody is right and everybody is wrong.



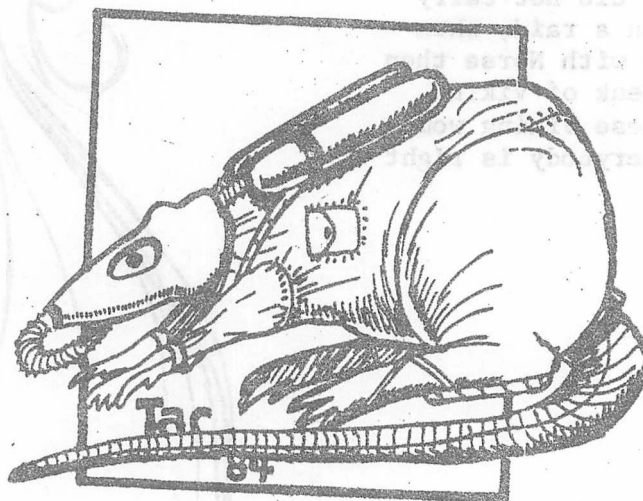
It does seem strange that Eric Lindsay can't buy a US-made Healthkit computer (I assume that's what he's talking about) because the defense department is afraid the Soviets might perfect an ABM system using it. I can see restricting the export of a CRAY super computer but can't imagine that a Healthkit would have anything that could help the Soviets, especially since most of the components are probably made in Japan. It's a strange, strange world.

Sue Phillips wonders why Valerie McKnight said of one ST novel that it was so good, that with a few changes, it could have passed as a "normal" SF novel. I think Valerie's point is that some people will not read a ST book no matter how good it might be just as some fans will read any ST book no matter how bad it might be. A good book like "The Final Reflection" is ultimately caught in its narrow definition as a ST book.

Years ago, David Gerrold wrote a Star Trek novel that didn't sell. This was back when ST novels weren't being published for god knows what foolish reason. In any case, Gerrold made a few changes and Presto! "Yesterday's Children" (which, I gather, is being made into a movie. A movie from a book inspired by a TV show...) Gerrold's book might not have sold, too, because it is a story of the Enterprise suffering from battle fatigue and that is an "unthinkable thought" for ST. (Just as Ellison's first draft of "The City on the Edge of Forever" was good, but not ST.

A few words in defense of Tony Cvetko... Does he need any? Does he deserve any? Why, he made me pay \$1 for my "I'd kill for Tony" button after all I've done for him! If Valerie wants to see "Sci Fi fans from Hell" as a criticism of those pre-tentious BNFs who complain about the shrinkage of fanzine fandom, she's welcome to do so, and if Joy Hibbert doesn't want to, fine. The way I see it Valerie figures that most of those BNFs she's talking about wouldn't mind taking a Uzie to a fancydress and eliminating some of that element that's causing fanzine fandom to decline, i.e. con fans, at least in their fantasies. By putting their fantasies into print Tony reveals them for the silliness they really are. And Frankly, most conventions would be better off with a few less blowjobs in the consuite bathroom. ((I beg your pardon?? I hope that's a euphemism... -- cp))

And in conclusion I hope that Pat Gibbs realizes that when he writes "maybe that is what turns me off most about Liberals these days: they are so busy passing judgment on everyone else..." he is passing judgment on liberals just like he complains they do. He's no better than they are... *sigh*.



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Once again, the ANVIL curse has struck: I am getting an issue which makes it abundantly clear (its numbering, for instance...) that I have missed the previous one. And the lettercol makes that previous issue sound so interesting (not to mention this answer to a letter of mine, which letter I have never seen in print) that I really can't find the energy to comment on this one. (No. 35. I have received 33, and not 34.)

((You think you got troubles. About the time you got #35, I mailed 15 copies of it to Australia. Yesterday three of them came back. They had made it as far as California before the post awful rejected them (a) for their unsafe staple and (b) because "item prepaid at letter rate must be in envelope or prepared according to Package form IMM 221.422. I suppose the other 12 got past the postal inspectors. In any event, I have bought envelopes for this issue, and not only will 3 Australians get two ANVILs at once, but I'll put #34 in your envelope, too. And art in Toni's envelope... -- cp))

This issue was quite enjoyable, however. This zine seems to get better and better. Bold statement to make after reading 4 issues (and skipping one...) ((Gee, thanks))

Krsto Mazuranic wrote an excellent article on his accident. I admire the calm with which he took such a traumatic event. I certainly would not have had the same detached attitude. ((I think that's called shock. -- cp))

Re: travel restrictions. So they seem to apply to civilians working for an (essentially) military organization. Makes more sense.* Dragging into the debate the question of the difficulty to enter the USA does not make much sense: if it is difficult to enter the USA, and to leave the USSR (for instance), it's probably because there is an overflow of people trying to get into the former, and an equally impressive number of people trying to escape the latter. Supply and demand.. I do not doubt that Yugoslavs have no problem leaving their country, witness the high number of YU migrant workers in the Federal Republic, and elsewhere. But then again, what of Yugoslavian military personnel? Can they travel freely? Or must they check with their superiors?

Hey, I don't mind feuds, fake or otherwise. As long as they don't take themselves too seriously. Of course we've had enough serious ones this past year to be sick of them. But now, clamp down on healthy debate and insult-smithing, and insist that everybody stick to some clean-toothed liberal insipid gruel of opinions ... it'd be too damn boring.

*than saying people working for the government would be prevented from going!

Tony Cvetko 20750 Colwell #1 Farmington Hills MI 48024	Code-a-phones <u>will not</u> , I repeat, <u>will not</u> steal your souls. They will simply walk over your souls with spiked heels for awhile before nailing them back in place with 4" long cement nails.
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I showed Joy Hibbert's letter (A35, p.28) to various Lifers up here in the Magnificent Midwest: it was to laugh. One comment to Ms. Hibbert: Joy, how can you be so wrong?

Oddly enough, I continue to find your how shall I say it?.... fanzine?..... curiously refreshing. Cut out the sci-fi stuff, add some pasta recipes for the yuppies and the concept could really fly.

((Linda said you supply the pasta recipes and we'll print them. -- cp))

Brad W. Foster I was greatly surprised to see that fillo on page 23, having no
4109 Pleasant Run recollection at all of having done it. But it says right there
Irving, TX 75038 in the credits that I did, so I must have! Guess that just
 shows I've been working too hard lately and haven't kept track
of all my stuff. Funny though, how I also seem to have aped Wayne Brenner's style
when I drew it. Boy, wonder when I'm going to start doing Whelan-style paintings?

((All right, all right, enough already! Boy, you never let us editors get away
with anything, do you? I had a letter from Wayne Brenner about that self-same
fillo... -- cp))

Hey, you want a fanzine reviewer? Just forward all those zines you don't know what
to do with to me and I'll be more than happy to write up reviews on them! Course,
I get to keep the zines, too, right? (Hmmm; maybe I shouldn't be in such a hurry
to volunteer -- "tons" of fanzines on hand?) ((That's the third offer I've had --
maybe fanzine reviewers do exist, after all. -- cp))

Ya know, it's really frightening to read Mazuranic's piece at just this moment. Ya
see, I've been having some trouble with my own car off and on and just this morning
finally took it in to the dealer to have it worked on. I just walked home from the
shop (four miles, but I needed the exercise, too used to driving everywhere), and
while waiting for their call in a few hours to tell me what the trouble is, and
how many months of my income it will take to repair, thought I'd answer this pile
of zines. Of course, the first one is ANVIL, and the first article is all about
car problems. This had better not be some kind of weird omen!

Moring's "A Shocking Report" surprised me, as I thought the "shock" of it was in
finding someone who admitted to not only not minding leaving messages on answering
machines (I've never heard them called "code-a-phones" ((brand name))), but
actually liked to do it! I've got one since I sleep very irregular hours and never
know when I'll be in or out, or asleep. And it gets a little boring listening to
an endless succession of "blanks" on the incoming tape each day, then have people
tell me a few days later how upset they were that they couldn't get hold of me!

I want to give a short rebuttal semi-review to Sue Phillips' semi-review of "So
Long and Thanks For All the Fish". I enjoyed the first three books very much, so
got this one as soon as it was out, and was greatly disappointed. Just didn't
have the gonzo-wildness of the first ones, pretty standard going ons and characters
until near the end when they got off the Earth and Adams had room to stretch out
and again with his subject.

Harry Andruschak
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California 91011

I have received ANVIL #35, and about the only thing that triggered anything like the desire to loc was Joy Hibbert, and her anti-sexist language crusade. The reason it interested me is that as a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association, I have been following the discussions that have been going on about the direction the new Hymn Book is to take as far as de-genderization goes. Our church hopes to get the new hymnbook out by the end of the 1980s to replace our current books.

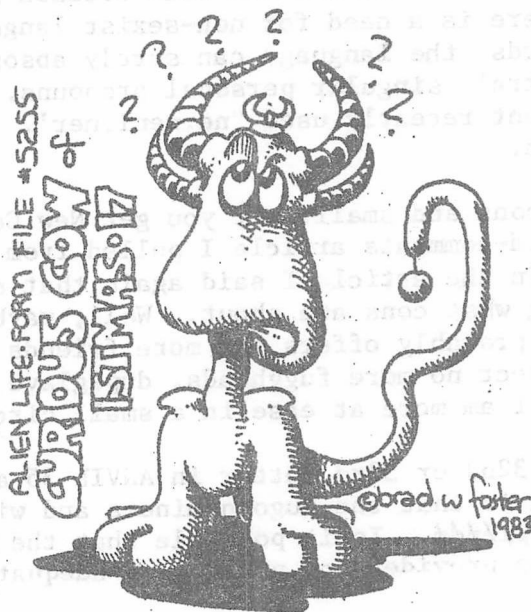
Mind you, they have enough problems selecting a variety of hymns for the spread of beliefs that we have in the UUA. Some churches have no objection to hymns about Jeasus, as long as "Christ" and "Savior" are left out. Others want hymns without Jeasus, but just to God, a really strict Unitarianism. And some churches, like my own Throop Memorial, prefer hymns with no mention of God at all, being strictly Humanist.

You can see the problems when you try to include de-genderized hymns. Even that great hymnbook of the 1960s, SONGS OF FAITH IN MAN, will have to be re-titled if it is every revised and re-printed. The real problem comes with historical hymns where "man" is used for both sexes, which is what Joy Hibbert seems to be all upset about.

Some would be easy to change, and one example came up a few weeks ago when a song with the words "fathers" had resulted in the word being inked out in the hymnbooks and the word "parents" substituted. Fine, since the word was in the middle of the line. Some hymns cannot be so altered without affecting the rhyme scheme. So perhaps quite a bit of re-writing will be necessary. This will be opposed by the members who feel that authenticity and scholarship should not be sacrificed.

As a matter of interest, the British Unitarians have just come out with a new hymnbook, and I am sending off for a copy. Perhaps I might do a review of it in regard to the question of genderization, and then you can get some of your readers to review the hymn books their churches use. It might be the start of something new.

((A review of a hymnbook? Do you suppose that would be a fanzine first? Gee, I didn't know when I fostered this little feud that we were going to get into religion and all. And what about political implications? -- cp))



Garth Spencer
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Canada V8V 3E1

If a feud is to be fun, then everybody should have a chance to see the gag and get in on the act. I am presently staging a mock feud with all America, on the basis that Canadian SF fans (particularly Northwest Nice Fandom) can make a bid to Take Over, and Oregon and Washington belong to us anyway.

This conflicts with my previous remarks about feuds but consistency is the bugaboo of small minds.

I am torn between pity and laughter as I read Krsto Mazuranic's adventure. More and more I feel that Canada and Yugoslavia are really the same country. Maybe Canada and America are separate planets, and Yugoslavia is on the other side of this one... same things happen, anyway. // A local flat-earthier on City Council thinks first-generation immigrants shouldn't get the vote, and we'uns shouldn't miscegenate, and like that. It's so foreign when something like this rears up...

I could use some of Bob Shaw's info on fansmanship. I'll never get a fanzine Hugo, otherwise! A fan named Rolf Sachweh, in Germany of all places, heard of my Maple Leaf Rag in Shards of Babel and subscribed. Later I found that he somehow thought MLR was a Big Name Fanzine. To some fannish circles I'm an information source. To most of fandom, and the world at large, I'm unknown. My strongest reaction is: "of course".

Re Toni Jerrman: Yup, looks like this guy didn't have the politically correct definition of 'fanzine' there. I think the Finnish publications he describes are semipros. On the other hand, Canada has an offset fanzine/semiprozine, Solaris, which features some fannish news, locs, fanzine reviews and fiction, interviews with authors, and pro news, all in a typeset, offset magazine format. The whole shmeer is in French.

Joy Hibbert on linguistic chauvinish: the case can be put more cogently. Pat Gibbs, Krsto Mazuranic and Buck Coulson made good points in response. To the sexist that there is a need for non-sexist language... English has absorbed a lot of loan words; the language can surely absorb some more. Principally, I see a need for neutral, singular personal pronouns. I tend to use 'hir' in writing. A correspondent recently used "ne, neni, ner". It'll take a while for anything to get into use.

On big cons and small: If you get New Canadian Fandom #8, you will probably see a collected-comments article I pulled from MLR, in an attempt to collect conrunning info. In the article I said again that small cons have a better chance of accomplishing what cons are about. Well, maybe I'm projecting... Yes, Mr. Coulson, a big con probably offers one more friends from faraway; and yes, Krsto, a big con may collect no more fuggheads, dupeglave, media hustlers, etc.; BUT like Brad Foster, I am more at ease in a small circle of friends.

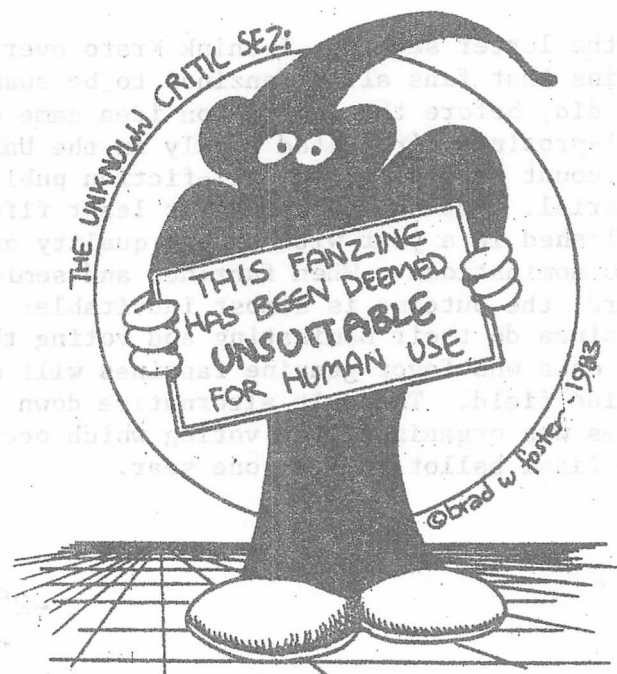
Krsto's 32nd or 33rd letter in ANVIL 35 also mentions the fanzine Hugos. My understanding is that the Hugo nominees and winners largely tend to the same small circle of friends. Is it possible that the meaning and nature of the fan Hugos are not being provided and publicised adequately?

Buck Coulson I can sympathise with Krsto's story in ANVIL 35. I've never gone to sleep at the wheel, but I've wrecked a few cars. The most spectacular was the time I was driving to work (I lived in a small town 11 miles from my job) and suddenly realized that the car heading for a country intersection at right angles to mine wasn't going to stop as it was supposed to, but was going to go right through the intersection at about 70 mph. Actually, it only got halfway through. That car was a total loss, and on mine, everything in front of the windshield was replaced (surprisingly, the windshield wasn't damaged, and neither was the passenger compartment; the car spun around several times but stayed on its wheels. Nobody hurt in my car; I was carrying two passengers. The other driver was dead.) My insurance company and the other driver's estate paid for the repairs, but the car was never the same after that. It gave me a years-long respect for the sturdiness of Fords, though. The police took my rather shaken statement, and that was it. The other driver had run the stop sign, and a farmer who lived nearby said that he did it every morning; this once, he didn't get away with it. But it's very unpleasant to realize that you're going to crash and there's nothing you can do about it. I've felt it on other occasions; once when the wind blew us off an icy road in winter (and blew another car into the ditch right beside us), and once when I was sitting on ice at a stop sign, unable to move rapidly enough to get away, while an out-of-control car came skidding straight at me. That time, the other driver managed to miss me and take out some signposts instead.

Moring Davis has a very nice article, but actually we get messages from fans all the time on our answering machine. It's the local non-fans who won't talk to it. Maybe Moring has a strictly southern fannish phenomenon there.

Somehow you mangled the punctuation on my letter so that I come out sounding like I think Bob Leman, Ed Bryant, etc. are book reviewers. No. I referred to Frank Catalano as a book reviewer, and somehow a comma (and perhaps a parenthetical phrase?) got changed into a period and beginning a new sentence. ((picky, picky, picky. -- cp))

Note to Eric Lindsay: the "Go Away" door-mat is getting worn out. I think it's the people who come down hard on their heels as they spin about to leave; very hard on the mat. Eventually we probably will have most of our outer walls lined with bookcases here, but I have to build them first, and there are so many other things that need doing first. At least, we did clear out the previous resident's junk from attic and basement, so we have places to store our junk. That frees up some wall space for bookcases. This past winter we had our walls lined with cardboard boxes filled with godknowswhat.



Harry Warner, Jr. Krsto Mazuranic's description of how his car came to its sad
423 Summit Avenue end is yet another link in the chain of evidence that fans
Hagerstown, MD 21740 are the same all over the world. United States fans have had
a remarkable record of betrayal by their motor vehicles. Obviously, fan abuse by automobiles also occurs in Yugoslavia and presumably in every other part of the world where conditions permit fans to own automobiles. But Krsto may be fortunate to have had this accident under these circumstances in a European nation which probably isn't as computerized as the United States. I'm sure that a driver who had been ordered to get a tail light repaired and then totaled the vehicle in the US would become the victim of relentless computer pursuit, receiving repeated instructions to comply with the tail light repair order long after the wrecked vehicle had been converted into scrap metal, being threatened with arrest or loss of license for failing to take this safety measure, and facing the agony of running from one agency to another in an effort to get the matter out of the computer and probably being forced to buy another car immediately and smash its tail light so he could go to a garage and have it repaired.

Steve Bullock made me feel sort of important when he told about the way even the smallest object has an effect on all other things in the universe. I've never felt myself imposing physically, and yet I surmise that the Great Nebula in Andromeda would be in a somewhat different situation if it weren't for my gravitational force on it. However, I don't understand completely how this works. I feel an enormous attraction on me exerted by Julie Andrews, but in all the things I've read about here, I've never seen any reference to the fact that she should be suffering from exactly the same degree of attraction in the opposite direction.

I don't like code-a-phones, even if they don't think my soul is in good enough condition to be stolen. One thing I've often wondered: whether a television script writer or a mystery novelist has ever used the things as a plot gimmick in a kidnapping or hostage situation. A criminal who didn't want his calls traced should be able to avoid it by putting his demands on someone's code-a-phone at a time when he knows the owner won't be home, another good reason for distrusting the things.

In the letter section, I think Krsto overlooks one important matter when he complains that fans allow fanzines to be swamped by semi-prozines on the Hugo ballots (or did, before the separation idea came up). There are only a half-dozen or so semi-prozines circulated widely in the United States and United Kingdom, even if you count several of the all-fiction publications which pay regularly for all their material. But there must be at least fifty or sixty generally circulated fanzines published in a year with enough quality and readership to have a chance to get Hugo nominations. When fanzines and semi-prozines are in the race for the same award, the outcome is almost inevitable: convention members who read only the semi-prozines do their nominating and voting thing among just a few candidates while the ones who favor genuine fanzines will scatter their ballots lightly among such a wide field. The only alternative down through the years in the fanzine Hugo races was organized bloc voting which occasionally caused a fanzine to appear on the final ballot in just one year.

Roy Tackett
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Albuquerque, NM 87107

The solution, of course, is for us all to be independently wealthy and then we would not have to worry about mundane concerns such as jobs interfering with our fanac. But if we were independently wealthy we probably would not be concerned with fanac. Fandom seems to be a rather middle-class activity: the poor cannot afford it and the rich have better things to do. And, generally, when there is a mundac/fanac conflict, it is fanac which givee way. So it goes. ((Actually, my last day of work is July 31, and I will be independently poor. My husband affords me free room and board, but I can't see asking him to support my ~~vices~~ fanac, so I'll probably work for a temporary agency when I need money for cons, ANVIL, etc. -- cp))

I want to comment on the Freedom to Travel subject mentioned by Lindsay, Hibbert and Mazuranic in #35. Do NATO governments prohibit government employees from visiting eastern bloc countries? As far as the U.S. is concerned.. it all depends... I've discussed it with a couple of fen who are government employes and they have told me that there is no way they could get permission to visit eastern Europe. However, they work at jobs which the government classified as "sensitive"... whatever that may mean.

I also work for the federal government but my job is mundane and non-sensitive. Consequently, when I informed my boss a couple of years ago that I was taking off a few weeks for a visit to the USSR there were no objections or arguments about it. I did have to be briefed by the intelligence section which warned me to be careful but that was about the size of it. (Incidentally, I was on the same plane to Yugoslavia as was Krsto who was returning home from Chicon.)

So, yes, there are some restrictions but no blanket ones. They apply to certain individuals only. I would agree with Drsto that it is probably easier for us to enter Yugoslavia than it is for him to enter the U.S. We had neglected to get entry visas for Yugoslavia since we were just passing through, changing planes in Belgrade. No problem. The immigration official simply stamped entry visas into our passports at the airport and off we went. I have never had any trouble getting my passport and the most official red tape I've had to go through involved getting visas from the USSR. That takes a while. Presumably because the Soviets run a thorough check on all potential visitors. A bureaucrat at the copyright office in Moscow seemed to know more about me than does my family. And that leads to all sorts of interesting thoughts about the state of the world, no?



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I like to see fanzine reviews. Now that WoFan is gone, it's more difficult to find reviews. (I do subscribe to File 770 and receive many fanzines, but I appreciate knowing of more.)

So Ka Mazuranic is going to Aussiecon? (or not?) I am, and am interested in meeting people. As opposed to, say, wombats... // I agree with Ka -- it is easier to lose a 'dupeglava' in a large crowd. (There's no guarantee of success, tho.) I also like the available variety: I feel like a fish swimming in a stream, going from party to consuite to movie room to lobby to etc., etc. -- sometimes with a feeling of swimming against the tide (too many people in elevators, or at an event - I'm relatively short and too easily blocked from seeing).

Did Buck really have a "Go Away" doormat? ((yes.)) I hear Marc Ortlieb (I think it was) considered one that said "Piss Off". Maybe it wasn't Marc. Sounds like Marc...

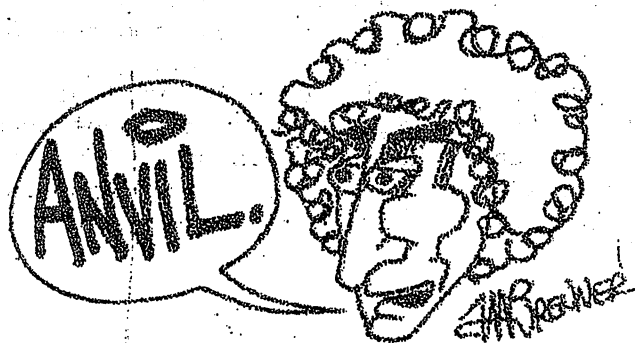
George "Lan" Laskowski
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Feuds. Yes. There are feuds, and then there are FEUDS. The kind you want are those in which things are discussed calmly and rationally. Those are the good, constuctive kinds, and much can be accomplished.

The nasty types of feuds get into backstabbing and name-calling, anonymous zines sent out to people, letters "accidentally" sent to the wrong people. Little is accomplished, and lots of hard feelings are left behind.

Buck's column talks about the TAFF uproar, a good feud which just may be the one of the decade to leave shattered feelings in its wake. This is the kind that could have split fanzine fandom in half (or the Midwest from the rest of fandom--who said the Midwest is the "Wimpy Zone"?). I would say though that most of the fans handled the discussion quite well, but then I usually skipped over a lot of what was said--it got to be too much for me to keep up with. I had other things to read, like stories in the magazines so I could make informed nominations for the Hugo Awards. But I do hope that Martha Beck, the write-in candidate, does go to England and shows everyone how nice a person she really is, even though she does not publish a fanzine. I know that the more I talk to her, the more endearing she becomes. And I know that this is not just particular with me; Martha has had the same effect on lots of other fans.

The snowstorm Buck speaks of his Michigan, and we were most fortunate to have a day off from school. And all I did was read a novel, Stick, by Ellmore Leonard. I had his books recommended to me by huckster extraordinaire Howard Devore. So when I saw that one of my student's mothers was reading Stick, I expressed interest, and a few days later it appeared in my mailbox at school. What else was I supposed to do? I read it, and enjoyed it.



And speaking of books, I liked the review of Sharon Webb's trilogy. I haven't read it yet, but I did read the novelette "Earthchild" which appeared in IASFM in 1981. I remarked to Maia at the time that I was very happy to see Sharon write some serious SF. Her Terra Tarkington stories were fun, but got to be somewhat wearing after a while. I have to agree with Patrick Gibbs and his comment:

"It is my belief that many modern readers are reluctant to 'work' hard in their fiction reading. It is so much easier when you are reading a realistic novel and it is not necessary to infer the basic features of the novel's universe."

Samuel "Chip" Delaney wrote an essay about reading and understanding SF which appeared in ANALOG (May, 1978 or 79, I believe; I don't have the reference immediately available) which talks about the same thing. Try, for example, the sentence, "Suddenly her world blew apart." In a mainstream novel, this refers to some sort of emotional crisis. In an SF novel it could also mean the same thing, but it could also be literally a woman's planet being blasted to dust. Try that with sentences like: "He turned on his left side" or "He screwed up his mind." A person reading SF or fantasy must have an open mind, and read the first several pages of a novel carefully so to learn the parameters of the world in which s/he finds him/herself.

Chip relates a story about a friend of his who earned his degree in Edwardian English literature, particularly in the study of the works of Jane Austin. The friend eventually started reading SF, and got to the point wherein that was the only kind of fiction he was reading. He decided that he should go back and read an Austin novel, and found himself trying to imagine the kind of world in which those social customs had arisen. In other words he was approaching it as an SF novel. And the world was a strange one.

Aha! A car story. Ka Mazuranic's story is funny. Especially with some of the odd phrases indicative of someone not entirely familiar with colloquial English (or American English, which at times is a lot worse!). However, I also have a car story, about the purchase of our new one.

On Monday, January 28, the weather was particularly bad. It had snowed the night before, and the roads were slick. My wife, Maia Cowan, was driving her Datsun to work, and although she was able to stop behind a line of cars for a light, the car behind her couldn't. She and the Datsun were pushed into the car in front of them, and thus popped both the boot and bonnet, shortening the car on both ends by about six inches. The car was still drivable, even though it now had strange sounds from loose parts, and it looked corseseyed at night. The body was rippled, sort of a free-form exterior design, especially liked by those with an artistic bent. And the horn sounded like a wounded moose.

The next day Maia took the car to the insurance company claims adjuster, and both agreed that the cost of cosmetic surgery for the Datsun was prohibitive, and settled for totalling the car. She did make sure that we could still get insurance (the no-fault coverage required by state law, coverage for the passengers, and for the 'other' car, should we get into another accident with it). When I got home from school that afternoon, Maia told me what happened, and we agreed that we should look for a new car. Mine was on its last wheels, and sounded terrible. We would trade mine in and keep the Datsun.

Maia went out that afternoon and shopped. She checked out prices for the Dodge Aries, Datsuns, and Renaults. The Renault was the cheapest of the three, and her research in the Consumer's Guide indicated that it was the best buy. However, the closest AMC/Renault dealership seemed uninterested in selling cars. When she asked questions, the salesmen seemed not to want to talk to her, as if they were waiting for her spouse to come in. An ad she found in the paper the next day sent her about 15 miles to Motor City AMC, and there was where she made the deal for the car, a Renault Alliance.

The salesman wanted us to pick up the car on Thursday, the 31st of January. I had to be there to sign for the car (I would pay for it, Maia would drive it). Unfortunately, I was unable to do so. I had commitments after school and in the evening (an Academic Review meeting, in which we discuss the students getting D's, E's or incompletes). We did feel bad for the salesman, for he would not get this sale on his January commission, but he would have a good start for February.

Friday right after school I had a make-up work duty session, but as soon as I got done, I rushed home, picked up Maia, and off we were to the dealership. We got to one of the main intersections and the car would go no further. As much as I revved the engine, it would not move. I then got out to raise the hood, to let those behind me know of trouble, and noticed that there was pink fluid all over the engine cavity. There was only one thing that used pink fluid, so I knew what was wrong. I pushed the car into the gas station on that corner, paid for two quarts of transmission fluid, and transfused it into the car. We made it to Motor City AMC with no trouble after that (with a few prayers).

The salesman was happy to see us. The trade-in on my Dodge Aspen came to \$150.00. At that point, I didn't care if we got anything for it, as long as we didn't have to drive it back home. In fact, I was surprised to get that much for it. It took a little bit of time to get the paperwork done (their computer was on the blink), and they had to do some re-figuring. It turned out that from January 31st to February 1st the interest rates for car loans went from 12 3/4% to 10 1/2%. That made our monthly payments drop by about \$10 a month. That Academic Review meeting was the most profitable one I had ever been to.

Now, how about the Worldcon? In times past there used to be a supporting membership a lot lower than the attending membership. I know of many fans who are unable to attend a Worldcon, and would like to support it (and thereby vote for the Hugos, the primary function of the Worldcon), but are unable to because of the high price. The privilege to vote on the site selection for the Worldcon was the same as the supporting membership, and a conversion to attending membership was possible for a modest fee. LACon changed that, making the voting privilege/supporting/attending membership the same price, and increasing attending memberships right after the Worldcon (at which the voting for the site was held, i.e., Chicon) was over. Aussiecon and ConFederation have both followed LACon with the high price of this supporting membership. I say that \$20 is a bit expensive for just the privilege of getting the progress reports, voting for the Hugos and for the site of the next Worldcons. \$10 would be more like it, which would offset the cost of the publications, and also be supportive of the convention functions which the attending members enjoy. What do you, or your readership think?

((Lan, \$10 would only cover the cost of the four progress reports and the program book, and possibly the postage... there would be nothing left to "be supportive of the convention functions". And just to be nit-picky here, let me remind you that another privilege of a supporting member is to nominate for the Hugo Awards, as well as to vote on the actual winners. Supporting memberships are certainly a lot less than at-the-door rates. But I will forward your letter to the powers-that-be in the committee; certainly we need the input of fans like yourself in order to make fair and equitable policy. Presently, the rates for ConFederation are:

Attending --	\$45.00	(The prices are good)
Supporting -	\$25.00	(through August 1, 1985)

Sent to: ConFederation - Membership
Suite 1986
2500 North Atlanta Street
Smyrna, Georgia 30080.



Joy Hibbert	It bothers me a great deal that you are so under-
11 Rutland Street, Hanley	confident about the readability of your fanzine.
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire	I refer, of course, to the mention on the contents
ST1 5JG United Kingdom	page of "The effects of gravity on human sexuality"
	when the article refers to "mental processes" (as
an aside, Patrick would have had no qualms in calling the article "The effects of	
gravity on mens sexuality" - do you still think it would get the same idea across?).	
I don't think the article needs that sort of support.	

((Now wait a minute, Joy. Your're reading meaning into something that... uh, you're leaping to erroneous conclusions. You assume that I was motivated by underconfidence. You know me not, Joy. Actually, the story behind the production of ANVIL 35 was this: I absolutely had to get it out. It was time. So, on Saturday, I typed (at my office) 8 solid hours. On Sunday, I finished it in four hours -- just in time to begin the upteen page Brief that had to be filed in Federal Court the next morning; all the while neglecting my home and family. By the time I got to the contents page, I was a little spacey. I typed "The Effects of Gravity on Human Sexuality" (why I was thinking of sex at a time like this, I don't know), and then saw that the title was actually "Human Mental Processes". I said to myself, "What the hell, it's not much of a joke, but I'll let it stand. I had to window in illos and do the titles, and Monday night I printed it. Tuesday and Wednesday it lay on my dining room table. Thursday night, people came over and collated. Friday night I left town. Late Friday night, Stuart brought over the mailing labels. Sunday night I got home. Monday, I took the whole kit and kaboodle to the post office, renewed the postal permit and bought postage at the front of the p.o., drove around to the back where one mails bulk rate mailings, and opened the door to my little VW bug, put my mailing sacks all around me, and stamped, labeled, sorted, bundled and sacked the mailing. (This was on my lunch hour). Several days later, Steve Bullock, who wrote the article in question said he did a double take when he read the contents page, as he didn't remember writing about that. So I had my little joke, and was satisfied.

[This is still editorial comment inspired by Joy's letter, and we will get back to the actual letter in a little while.]

All this puts me in mind of the older retired couple who lived next door to us at one time, and an extreme case of misinterpretation of motives. One morning as I left the house, they accosted me at the fence, and began ranting and raving. I don't mean talking, discussing, questioning -- I mean ranting and raving. They demanded to know why I did such a terrible thing to them - what had they ever done to me? - how could I be such a terrible person - why did I insult them so? - in short, why did I bury my cat "under their noses?".

When I had recovered from the shock of this unexpected attack, and they had paused for breath, I explained that one did not bury one's cat in the middle of one's yard, but rather on one side or the other. As it was at night, and the light happened to be shining on that particular place, that's where we buried poor Calico. I went on to say that Calico was the only cat we had ever had to die of old age and she was, in fact, older than our children. In conclusion, how could they think that at such a traumatic time for me and my family that they even entered our minds?

Calico had been, truly, a fine cat, with a strong personality. Several people who had known her and/or had adopted her children, came to pay their last respects. Bill Roberts came straight from Southern Research Institute in his business suit, and stood with me at the gravesite, admiring the stone and the flowers. Janice Sharp and her husband came by. Barbara Wood was overcome with emotion as she approached Calico's last resting place and fell to her knees, sobbing.

This did not appease the neighbors. They put a piece of tin on their side of the fence, so they wouldn't have to see the grave, and dug up their flowers planted there. My husband, who does weird things sometimes, put a tall white cross on the grave -- one that would be visible above the aforementioned piece of tin. That tore it. They put for a "for sale" sign.

But before they could sell and move, an innocent little SCA party caused them to call the cops on us -- but, as they say, that's another story. And now, back to Joy's LoC! -- cp))

One of the things I found surprising about the fuss over Beck on this side of the pond is the assumption that since she doesn't belong in the fannish fans fandom, she doesn't belong in any one elses, and vice versa i.e., that fannish fans belong in everyone's fandom. Where the American side of TAFF is concerned, if I vote, I vote on reputation or on which I think has written the most attractive platform. On this occasion, I voted for Beck. She seemed the most interesting person going by what it said on her flyers. I'm not terribly impressed with the Neilsen-Hayden's attitudes, and Rich Coad doesn't belong in my fandom because I've never read anything of his. I'm not getting at Coad, just using him as an example. He doesn't belong in my fandom, as Beck doesn't belong in fannish fandom. But I didn't go round getting signatures for a petition saying that if Coad won the funds should be frozen - which is what fannish fans did when they realised there was a chance of Beck winning. Now they've changed the rules, so that a candidate must get at least 20% of the votes on both sides of the pond to be a potential winner. It would have been more interesting to hear Buck's viewpoint on some of the other aspects of the controversy. What does he think of the list of names non-fannish fans could use as a reference when they sent their votes in (I seem to remember he was on the list)?

Surely the absence of religion in the Webb trilogy is due to immortality? Religion, at least recently, is all about some sort of life after death. An immortal doesn't need life after death. In fact, the association of religion with life-afterdeath is so strong that it needs a strong effort of brain to "think into" those religions (early paganism and Judaism) which had a meaningless afterlife that on one bothered about very much. It isn't clear from the review whether the immortals age, in the cosmetic sense, at all after the treatment, but if they do, surely it would be possible to give the treatment and pretend you haven't, thus giving the best of both worlds. If people stay the same age, cosmetically speaking, it should still be possible to get away with this for 3 or 4 years?

I don't have female chauvenism. Some of my best friends are men. Even my husband is a man. I never claimed to have read the books, my criticism was of the terminology. Have to differ on this question of "Viking", I was taught they were people who raided us at a point in history. "Viking" was the name of the people, maybe the men invaded and the women stayed at home like civilized people, but Viking was the name of the people, male and female, violent pillocks or homemakers. I'm prepared to be corrected on this next point, but I understood that the man who committed violence against Felice did so without her prior consent, in which case it's not S&M, it's just sexual assault/rape. Just because an author says something, you don't have to agree with her. Bradley said "Shattered Chain" isn't a feminist novel - would Pat agree with that? Language is in fluctuation, people use whatever form of it suits their prejudices/beliefs. I believe that men and women are equal, so my use of English reflects this. If Pat thinks otherwise, that's his problem. Orwell was not warning against the widening of language by, say, feminist additions, but the narrowing of it. My point about the word 'sexist' was that Pat is treating it as a meaningless insult, and answering it accordingly (i.e., not with "No, I'm not", but with 'that's not a nice thing to say'). It is changing in the same way "bastard" changed. If someone calls you a bastard, is your first response to reach for your birth certificate? Probably not, because it's become a generalised insult. Words are loaded. If he used the word "nigger" to describe a member of the Negro race (this assumes that he's white), he wouldn't be surprised at being called a racist. If he uses demeaning words about females he shouldn't be surprised at being called sexist. I'm sure that if Pat thought about it he would realise that liberals are made, not born, and we had to work through out prejudices before passing judgment, unlike him.

WAHF: Cris Brunton, Nettie B. Hayden and Bill Zielke.

Next meetings: July 13, August 10, September 14, 1985 - Homewood Public Library, 7:30 p.m.

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