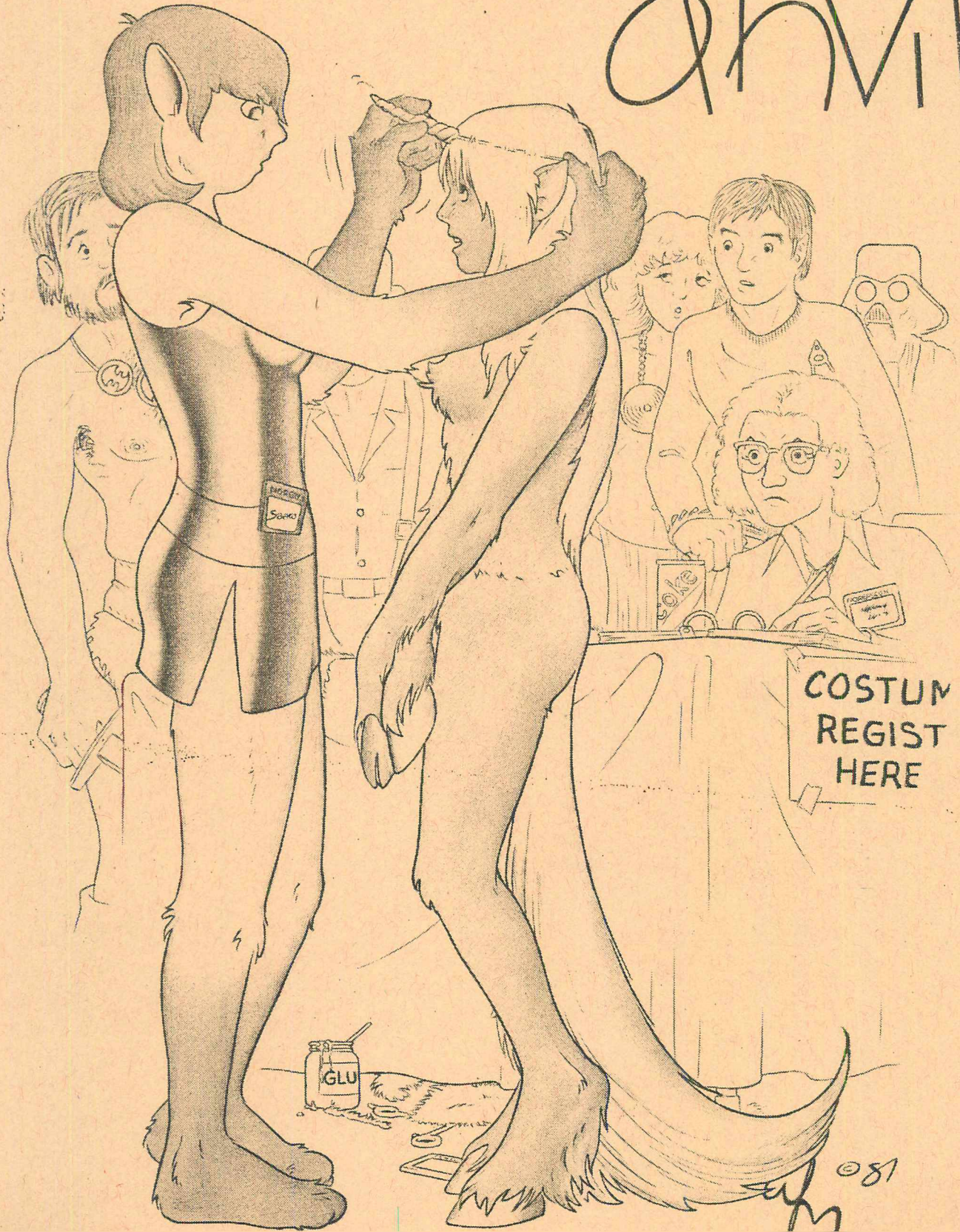


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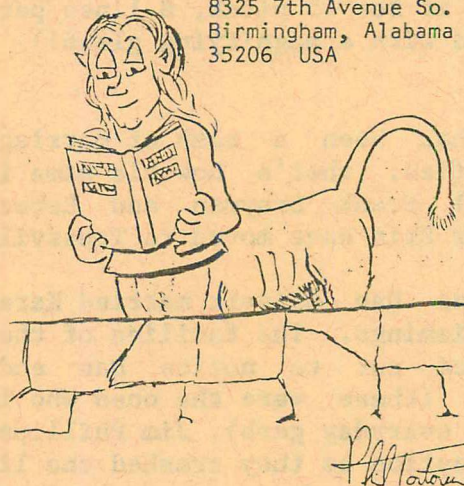
ANVIL

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ANVIL is available for the usual, or for \$6.00 per year, sent to:
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Charlotte's Web Editorial Natter	2
The Old Ironmaster Diversifies Buck Coulson	5
The Screwdriver as a Deadly Weapon	9
Hammer & Sickle, Part II Bruno Ogorelec	10
MuppetMania Taral Wayne.	14
Zero Gravity Six Richard Hyde	16
Tradezines	17
Reviews by Andrea	19
The ANVIL Chorus.	20
We Also Heard From.	38

ANVIL is edited by Charlotte Proctor. Funds for this publication are provided by the members of BSFC, a loosely-knit organization at best. Thanks to Merlin Odom and Penny Frierson for special grants.

June 21, 1988

CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Have you read Bob Shaw's The Ragged Astronauts yet? You know the second in the series is coming out this summer. Bob wanted to call it Overland, as it tells what happens to the travelers when they reach Land's twin planet, Overland. However, the publishers wouldn't let him call it that. They said that if he had wanted to call the second book "Overland" he should have called the first one "Land." They went on to dictate that having called the first book in the series The Ragged (adjective) Astronauts (noun), he had to call the second (and third, I guess) book The Something (adj) Something (noun). So So he worried about it for awhile, and finally came up with the name for the second book: The Wooden (adj) Spaceships (noun). That's all very well and good, but I wonder what the third book will be called? Bob may even be wondering. So I thought perhaps we could help him out, give him a few ideas to choose from.... fuel the creative fires, y'know. At the very worst, he would know what he's not going to call it! My contribution to the cause is: The Stupid Editors.

This issue of ANVIL has been keyed in on an IBM Personal Typing System. A computer it's not, though it is compatible with the IBM PC. For my purposes (a glorified typewriter) it's just fine. I've been listening to other new computer users, and reading their opinions, and like them, I have opinions, too. I'm probably the only "user" who prefers a daisy-wheel printer in this day of quiet writers, laser printers, etc. But I'm not interested in high-tech graphics -- my main interest is still typing stencils! It may seem incongruous to use an expensive machine to prepare for the most economical printing, i.e., mimeo, but one works with what one has. Actually, the word processor takes a whole lot of the drudgery out of typing stencils. Only those of you who have yet to get to know and love keyboards will fail to see the advantages. If ANVIL threatens to run too long, for instance, I'll just format it for 15 pitch, 8 lines per inch instead of 6. (Harry Warner will be provided with a magnifying glass!)

There has been a rash of marriages here in Birmingham -- besides Cindy and Sunny (Yes, that's how his name is spelled -- I goofed in the coverage last time.) Frank Brayman and Rebecca finally got married, and with Rebecca's daughter Erin have moved to Trussville.

Dangerous Dan Calvert married Karen in a traditional church wedding with all the trimmings. The families of the bridal couple were so happy that day they pretended not to notice Dan and Karen's wargaming and science fiction fan friends (these were the ones who looked as if a dress shirt and tie were not normal everyday garb). Jim Phillips' children, Amy and Chris, were the hit of the reception as they crashed the line for more mints.

I may have mentioned last time that we adopted Dan's cat when he moved -- Miss Kitty is a solid black, friendly female who likes high places. She so loved the roof of the house we finally taught her to use the ladder to get down. At first, she would cry for us to climb the ladder and carry her down -- but she had only to be shown twice before she had it down pat, not only for descending, but ascending. Not that she had forgotten how to use the dogwood tree, of course. Frank called the other day and asked to borrow the ladder, and I spent some time telling him how we would be more than happy to lend it to him, but that he needed to do all his chores at once and bring it back, else Miss Kitty would starve. Well, no, she wouldn't starve. We would throw food up on the roof first.

Remember Captain Midnight? Well, a couple of weeks ago he brought home a friend. Jerry was watching. "Here came Midnight," he said, "followed by a long tailed, long legged sleek-looking solid black cat. It was a young tom. You could tell they were friends, and Midnight had brought his new friend home to supper. But as he rounded the corner of the house, there was Miss Kitty. She was surprised, and hissed at them. The new cat retreated back around the corner."

As usual, I was at work and was getting a phone call to update me. I'm the only one who has a real-person schedule... you know, work in the daytime and sleep at night. Jerry and Forrest both work 3 or 4 evenings a week and are at home most of the rest of the time. "Well, what happened?" I asked.

"You know, Midnight went back after him, and I swear he talked to him: 'Come on, she's all hiss and no scratch, she won't hurt you. We've got two kinds of food in the house... come on!' And he did. I let both of them in to eat."

When I got home that evening, Jerry and Forrest were in the living room with the new cat, who had made himself right at home. "What's his name?" I asked. Forrest narrowed his eyes and speculated a moment. "His name is Nigel."

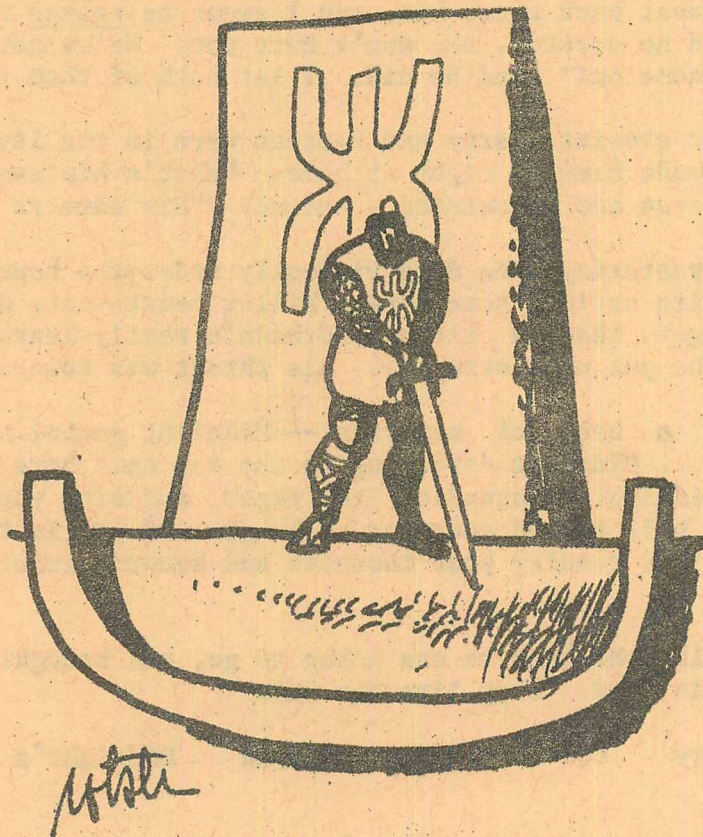
We buried Midnight yesterday. He died violently under the house, apparently fighting for his life against some larger killer beast--cat, dog or possum. He wasn't much larger than a kitten and hadn't really learned yet how to defend himself. But he put up a struggle. His throat was torn out.

Behind him he left a host of memories -- Midnight gamboling on the lawn, tormenting a chipmunk... Midnight deferring to the top cats here and making up to the humans... Midnight pretending to fight and bite your hand... and Midnight wrapping his tail around your leg as he greeted you in the morning on a dewy lawn... Midnight reading your thoughts and knowing instinctively that you wished him well.

Our son said: "It's like he knew he was going to go, and brought home his replacement." The Cat is dead. Long live the Cat.

(Thanks to Jerry for helping write Midnight's obituary.)

Precious bodily fluids--that's what makes an "R" rating! Did you see the Star Trek episode "Conspiracy"? There was graphic violence that used to be verboten on television-- you could see the influence of the chest-burster from Alien, too. So how did they get away with this, I wondered? It came to me that it probably was because the phaser works by drying out the animal matter before disintegrating it and producing an effect of instant cauterization -- there was no blood, no gore, no scrambled brains and neural systems when the host body's head exploded. No sooner than had we gotten over the shock of seeing this up close and personal on TV, and were beginning to assimilate the fact that it was dry, and the only bloody bits were in our own minds, than the parasitic creature burst from the now headless chest cavity. It, too, was phased to dry bits and the remaining hulk of the host was quietly smoking (at least I didn't hear anything). Something that happened recently made me wonder why they weren't wrinkling their noses in disgust and nausea (except for Data who probably wouldn't mind) at the odor of roast long pig. Well, of course, we can't allow that on TV. I guess a smell of long dead or burned up human flesh is just as much a no-no on TV as precious bodily fluids seem to be. Don't get me wrong, I don't long to see blood and pus and piss and gastric juices and mucous excretions in living color. It just came to me that by not showing some things, the directors can get away with showing other things, and leave the unmentionable to our own vile imaginations.



THE OLD IRONMASTER DIVERSIFIES—

Buck Coulson

I'd been wondering what to write about this time; that's when I wasn't wondering if the last column I sent in would ever be published. I even wrote a poignant little piece about having to shoot our dog because she had cancer, but that was last fall and the subject gradually became less immediate. Then ANVIL #46 arrived, and there was a letter from Murray Moore, mentioning Michael Shaara's THE KILLER ANGELS, and it provided me with a column subject.

Last summer, an argument came up in ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION about the relative talent required to write science fiction and other genres. Asimov said that science fiction was harder to write and a reader said she didn't think that a science fiction writer could write a better romance than romance writers do when they essay science fiction. Jumping in on Asimov's side, for a change, I wrote a letter which listed some of the science fiction writer who have successfully written other types of books. It was published in the Fe. 1988 issue (after most readers had undoubtedly forgotten the original argument), but it's my letter and I can expand it into a column if I want to.

As Moore says, Michael Shaara was a science fiction writer; a collection of his work, SOLDIER BOY, was published in 1982, and it's a very good book. THE KILLER ANGELS won the Pulitzer prize for fiction in 1975. (It should have won for history, in my opinion; there was very little fiction in the book.) There are two other people in "our" field who write history; Fletcher Pratt and T. R. Fehrenbach. Pratt was actually more noted for his history than for his stf, and it was better done. He wrote some great fantasy, but his science fiction was at best mediocre. Some of his histories, ORDEAL BY FIRE, ELEVEN GENERALS, and THE BATTLES THAT CHANGED HISTORY, are outstanding, as is his biography of Lincoln's Secretary of War, STANTON.

Fehrenbach has two major histories that I know about; FIRE AND BLOOD, and LONE STAR, histories of Mexico and Texas respectively. Both are excellent. His stf has been restricted to some reasonably good short stories.

Romance is a big field for science fiction authors. Juanita Coulson has written four gothic romances and two historical romances — also astrology articles and books on art appreciation. Ron Goulart wrote at least two Regencies, under the name "Jillian Kearny" (you can often find out interesting things about romance authors if you check the copyright information as well as the title page of the books), and has done one mystery, as well as a lot of non-fiction about comic books. I should state that the numbers given here are minimums; these are books I know about because I own copies. The authors may well have written more that I don't know about. "Jean" DeWeese, whose friends know him better as "Gene", has done four "romantic suspense" novels as well as adult and juvenile science fiction, plus some horror-fantasy. Marion Zimmer Bradley has done at least five gothics, along with a circus novel and a novelization of an occult TV show. She's also used pseudonyms on other work. I only own three romances by Anne McCaffrey, but there have been several others. RING OF FEAR might be particularly interesting to fans, because the

hero is Harlan Ellison. (The name has been changed, but the character hasn't.) I have five romances by Andre Norton, plus some juvenile historical novels. Andre did have trouble selling romances -- I suspect she put too much plot into them -- but eventually managed it. Bob Hoskins, who did a lot of copy-editing of science fiction, wrote romances under pseudonyms. In one of them, the heroine goes to a newsstand. "There were several science fiction novels, and from them she selected Bring The Jubilee by Ward Moore, and Juanita Coulson's Star Sister." Interestingly, Star Sister had been sold to Lancer, where Hoskins was working, but it was never published because Lancer went bankrupt. Juanita is currently revising it and expanding it for possible sale elsewhere. Richard Matheson wrote some romantic suspense.

Lee Hoffman has only written two science fiction novels that I know about, but has done three historical romances under pseudonyms and at least seventeen westerns, one of which, THE VALDEZ HORSES, won a Western Writers of American "Spur" award. I own one western novel each by Gardner Fox, Paul Fairman, Noel Loomis, and Chad Oliver, and two by Theodore Sturgeon. The library has two western anthologies containing sf writers; WESTERNS OF THE '40S, edited by Damon Knight, includes stories by Murray Leinster and Clifford D. Simak, while BEST OF THE WEST has contributions by Ardath Mayhar and Neal Barrett, Jr. In an old pulp, I have one installment of a serial by L. Ron Hubbard, who of course was a science fiction writer long before he became a cult leader and writer.

Sturgeon was also involved in a practical joke that became a best-seller. Back in the early 1950s, humorist Jean Shepherd had a popular radio program, and on several of his shows he talked about this marvelous historical novel, I, LIBERTINE. The book didn't exist, but listeners began writing in to the show and asking newsstand owners about it. Ballantine Books became interested, and eventually Ted Sturgeon was hired to write the book, under the pseudonym "Frederick R. Ewing". I've been told that the author's photo on the backcover is that of Shepherd; it certainly isn't Sturgeon. Kelly Freas did the cover, and the book became a collector's item once most fans of the time (1965) knew the story. It's a very funny parody of the bawdy novel.

John D. MacDonald started out as a science fiction writer before making it big as a mystery novelist. One of his science fiction books was reissued recently. Bob Tucker started with science fiction short stories, but I believe his first novel was a mystery, THE CHINESE DOLL, and he wrote several others. (The librarian who fawned all over him at one convention knew him only as a mystery writer.) Frederic Brown probably has a bigger name in the mystery field than he does in science fiction. Like Tucker, Joe L. Hensley began with science fiction short stories; so far, all of his novels have been mysteries, but some of his characters' names are familiar in the science fiction field. Anthony Boucher wrote both mysteries and science fiction, as well as being the first editor of F&SF and a major reviewer of mystery novels. Isaac Asimov, of course, has several collections of mystery stories among his hundreds of science fiction and popular science books. I own two historical novels and one mystery by Poul Anderson, and know of a couple more mysteries he's done. Jack Vance has written several well-regarded mystery novels.

There are other categories. Gene DeWeese coauthored a book on how to make folk dolls. L. Sprague de Camp has done five historical novels, plus some straight history and biography. H. P. Lovecraft wrote assorted non-fiction,

some of which was published by Don Grant in TO QUEBEC AND THE STARS. Bob Silverberg has done some excellent archaeological material, a historical novel, and used to write for TRUE STORY magazine. Phil Farmer did a modern novel of an interracial couple, FIRE AND THE NIGHT. Alfred Coppel used to write for PLANET STORIES; now he's a name in the international intrigue field, and still doing some science fiction. Harlan Ellison started out writing about juvenile gangs. John Jakes was a little-regarded science fiction writer long before he made his name with historical series. Pornography has been a big field for science fiction authors who needed some quick cash; Andy Offutt made a living from it for years, as did Richard E. Geis. Ed Wood has written it, as have numerous others whose names I don't recall. It's not exactly a literary field, so it's not really too pertinent to this column.

There is also the occasional labeling problem. In 1970, Fritz Leiber's CONJURE WIFE appeared as "An Award Novel of Gothic Horror", complete with a cover of a nightgown-clad woman rushing away from a castle, and an announcement that it had won first prize in the "8th Annual Mrs. Ann Radcliffe Award". A. E. van Vogt's THE HOUSE THAT STOOD STILL was published in the Nov. 1951 issue of DETECTIVE BOOK MAGAZINE, with a typical "private eye" sort of cover. Curt Siodmak's DONOVAN'S BRAIN was a Mercury Mystery in 1942.

What about outsiders writing science fiction? I'm omitting fantasy, because a lot of people have done outstanding work there, from academic J. R. R. Tolkien to romance writer Florence Stevenson. But straight, technical science fiction?

The most impressive is Goerge R. Stewart, the historian who wrote PICKETT'S CHARGE, ORDEAL BY HUNGER (a book about the Donner Party), NAMES ON THE LAND, and others. His EARTH ABIDES won the International Fantasy Award in 1951, making it probably the first award-winning science fiction novel, since the Hugos didn't begin until 1953. The IFA was presented by a panel of experts; in 1951 these included British critic Leslie Flood and author John Wyndham.

Then there's Philip Wylie. He started early; his WHEN WORLDS COLLIDE, co-authored with Edwin Balmer, was top quality science fiction in 1932, and his novel of a superman, GLADIATOR, was published in 1930. He continued writing science fiction, along with the mysteries, romances, and pop psychology that made his famous, up into the 1960s. I recall his short story, "Blunder", as being one of the stories that decided me to concentrate on reading science fiction. A few of his books are potboilers, but then so are a few of Heinlein's and his best was very good.

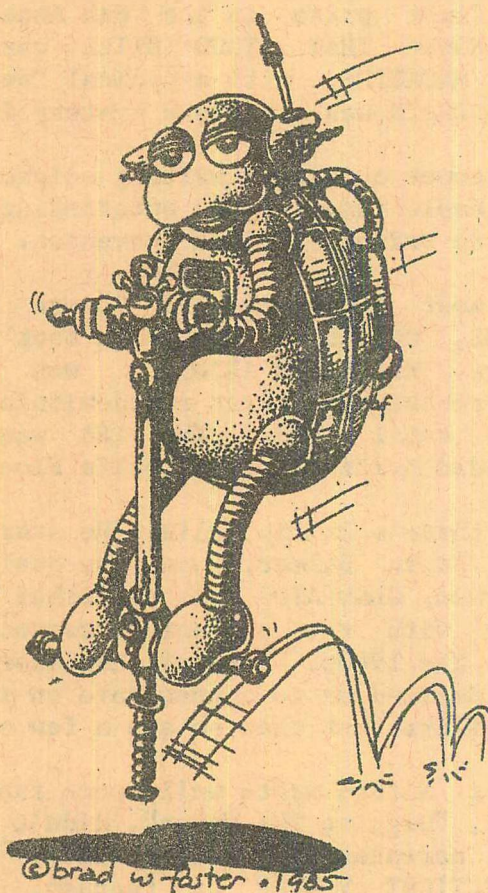
Robert Nathan wrote well-known fantasy as well as "straight" fiction; his one sf story, "Digging The Weans", didn't impress me when I read it, but it was hilarious when narrated by Theodore Bikel. Strict constructionists might list Mark Twain's CONNECTICUT YANKEE as fantasy, but time travel is generally considered science fiction. I was going to include Margaret Atwood, but I read somewhere that she is a long-time science fiction reader.

There there is L. P. Davies, who wrote mysteries, fantasy, and science fiction, and is perhaps the least known of the really good authors. Nearly all of his books are in the mystery format, and the main difference between them was the explanation at the end; you had to read the final page to discover if this was a fantasy or a mundane mystery. He was an expert at pulling the rug out from under the reader in the final pages; I remember one novel which had three consecutive explanations of the events, each one perfectly logical until the author pointed

out the flaws in it. A lot of his novels turned on identity. THE WHITE ROOM involves an actor of the future, who is conditioned into believing that he is actually a man living in 1969, when the story was published, for verisimilitude in a tv series. The reader shares the actor's viewpoint, and his bewilderment at events which aren't possible in 1969. THE MAN FROM NOWHERE (retitled WHO IS LEWIS PINDER? in the U.S.) is an amnesia victim admitted to a small-town British hospital. When a photograph of him is published in the newspapers, he's positively identified -- as four different people, all of whom are dead and buried. THE PAPER DOLLS are a set of quadruplets with a gestalt mind, similar to Sturgeon's MORE THAN HUMAN, but not at all identical to it; these boys have no separate identities. I own ten of Davies' fantasy and science fiction novels, and seven of his mysteries, and I have no idea if there are any more -- but if there are, I want them. Was he a mystery writer who wrote good science fiction and fantasy, or a stf writer who wrote excellent mysteries? I'm not sure that I can say.

I can say positively that I haven't covered every cross-genre writer in the field; perhaps not even all of the good ones. On the whole, though, I think that while it's possible for some "outsiders" to write good science fiction, it's much easier for science fiction writers to write well in other genres, and it's also much more likely that they'll do it. And I'm reasonably sure that the readers will bring up more names in the next letter column.

Here is a list of the L. P. Davies novels that I own; if anyone knows of a different title, let me know. MYSTERIES: The Man From Nowhere (Br.)/Who is Lewis Pinder? (US), A Grave Matter, Stranger To Town, The Shadow Before, Give Me Back Myself, What Did I do Tomorrow?, Assignment Abacus. F&SF: The Paper Dolls, The Artificial Man, Psychogeist, The Lampton Dreamers, The Reluctant Medium, Twilight Journey, Genesis Two, Dimension A, The White Room, The Land of Leys.



CAR 54,

WHERE ARE YOU?

or: THE SCREWDRIVER AS A DEADLY WEAPON

People who haven't raised teen-age children or who haven't an eccentric husband probably haven't had the police called on them often. How dull their lives must be!

The most recent time the cops were called on us had nothing to do with the teenagers (for once), but happened just after our friend Greg had read "The Screwdriver as a Deadly Weapon." I came home from a fannish gathering about 11 p.m. and found Greg, Jerry, Frank and Wayne in the backyard, taking turns throwing an industrial-strength screwdriver into a sheet of plywood, with the resulting thumps and thwacks resounding throughout the neighborhood. Sort of like mumbley-peg but using a screwdriver instead of a knife and with a man-sized target on the upright piece of plywood.

I stood at the back door, watching. "All right, Wayne," Greg said, "see if you can draw and dry-fire before I can hit the target... one, two, three..."

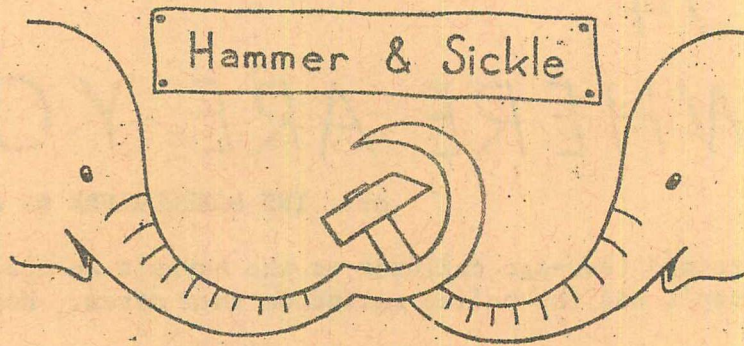
"THWACK!"

I watched for a while and declined an invitation to join in. "When you boys are through playing, would you please take the garbage to the street?" I asked, and went off to bed. As I lay there, I heard the sound of merry voices, hauling garbage, and then the more subdued chatter as they all gathered in the living room. Presently, I heard a car pull up out front. "I'll bet that's the police," I said to myself, and got up to peer out the window. It was.

A policewoman came to the door and knocked. Everyone shouted "Come in!" as is their wont -- I believe they would invite Jack the Ripper in. The view from the doorway was nothing but domestic, with Forrest perched on a chair in front of the TV playing video games, and Valerie and her friend Linda on the couch, petting the household felines. The unsuspecting officer advanced four steps into the room. There, surrounding her, were -- Frank on one side with a Swiss Army rifle leaning against his chair -- Jerry cross legged on the floor sharpening his kukri -- Greg with his .45 in pieces on a newspaper being cleaned -- Wayne sitting backwards on a dining room chair balancing a large screwdriver in his hand -- and in the center of the floor, a man-sized target, riddled with holes.

Just as the officer was reassessing the situation, I opened the door from the hall and asked: "May I help you?" (...had her covered from the rear...)

We never saw anyone move so fast. With her back to the screen door (and safety) she said with a voice so cool and unquavering that we were all filled with admiration, "A neighbor was complaining about noise. Have you heard anything?"



PART TWO: Elephant in the Media

by Bruno Ogorelec

In Part One I outlined an error in Time magazines' thinking on Marx, lined up the crosshairs and shot its notions down with a brief burst from the starboard gun. Afterwards I explained why otherwise reasonable people think an elephant is either a rope or a python. Further revelations follow.

Let's examine briefly the way Marxism, Socialism and Communism are usually presented in the Western media. To stick with Time even after Christmas of '86 (it offering much juicier conversation pieces about things Marxist than an average fanzine) the very next issue carried a Letter to the Editor (why they don't call them simply LoCs, beats me) decrying Time's comment of Soviet media in a previous issue.

"You note", wrote a disgruntled reader of Boston, Mass., "that the Soviet media routinely rake capitalist countries over the coals. How, pray tell, does the American press portray the people of the USSR? All I can see is that the Soviets never smile and have to stand in line to buy shoes."

This induced me to do a simple test. Leafing through the previous six weeks' worth of Time, searching for the stories on Communist countries, I found at least one in each issue. Every single one of them was negative towards its subject. Here's the lineup:

December 8

THE WAR AGAINST THE PEASANTS (a review of a book on Stalin's forced collectivization of agriculture in the Twenties and Thirties)

December 15

OLD NATIONALISM, NEW PROFITS (subtitled "In the Baltic republics, affluence -- and disdain for Moscow")

December 22

GLITTER THAT IS SKIN-DEEP (an account of Bulgaria's attempt to refurbish its unflattering image)

December 29

CARP CORRUPTION IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA (subtitled "Fishy dealings at Christmas" apparently you cannot obtain carp -- customary Christmas fare in Czech. -- without bribery)

January 5

PICKING UP WHERE HE LEFT OFF (subtitled "Back Home in Moscow, Sakharov speaks out on human rights").

OK, let's suppose that all those articles reflect the true picture. How then to correlate that picture with an item in the January 12 issue: The Long Hard Road to Moscow? (The subtitle is "After life in the West, 50 disgruntled emigres go home again").

Can't you just picture them, ensconced in the reclining chairs on the New York Moscow Aeroflot flight, waxing nostalgic? "You know, the Christmas carp somehow just don't taste the same without corruption" or something to that effect. I mean, why else would they want to return? Presumably they vastly prefer forced collectivization to the farms of the Corn Belt, or perhaps just miss the jolly old disdain they used to feel for Moscow. Who knows? They must also be rather fond of domestic repression. Nothing like a house arrest or two to make you feel right at home, I always say.

Or... could there really be something positive about the Communist countries? Something one would honestly want to come back to? Do Soviets sometimes smile then, even as they stand in line to buy shoes?

The answer to the above question is, of course, yes. But you'd be hard pressed to find the evidence of this in the Western media.

Media do not make a living out of truth and balance. Just as the Soviet media take the raw truth, bite on it, chew, ruminate, and then spit it out as an unrecognizable gob, so do the US media. Their guiding hand, their kind voices whispering advice into your ear, unfortunately shape your opinion whether you like it or not. If you want your opinions to be yours, independent, you have to fight against the tide first. If truth (or a reasonable facsimile thereof) is what you're after, disregard the media, or at least develop a dose of skepticism. Check your facts. Think. Over the stories in the papers in the papers and magazines, over the TV reportage, you should but chuckle with amusement. You would undoubtedly do so if you were reading Pravda or Literaturnaya Gazzeta; now you only have to apply the same amused detachment toward your own sources of news and commentary.

The only redeeming quality of the American approach to propaganda is a bit of humor injected into the process. Here the Soviet Bloc countries lag far behind. Not that they lack a sense of humor, far from it, but they have to pander to the different sort of customer. US media have to have a product that will move off the shelves quickly, to be able to make money, to be able to exist. In the Communist countries the media have to have a product that will get the ideological approval from above, to be able to get the money from the state, to be able to exist. American media are thus bright, colorful and exciting in order to engage and keep the interest of the consumer, while their counterparts can afford to have a drab package. Both have to fit the currently prevailing ideological climate, however. Otherwise the product will not sell in the US and will not be allowed to sell in the USSR.

Comparing them on quality is a thankless task. They can hardly be compared, really, being fundamentally different. What is quality in one case may well be a liability in the other. As a rule, the media in the Soviet Bloc countries are not commercial and function in a very similar manner to the arts. Quite often they are art -- and the Soviet system is rather good for art as long as that art does not run counter to the political climate of the moment. Free from the pressure to sell, the editors can afford to publish things of minor commercial

appeal, even rarefied intellectual treatises if they like, the stuff that would not sell anywhere, under any system. Great little literary magazines flourish, for instance. Soviet movies do not have to shine at the box office -- they are art, remember? -- and in consequence they often are just that. The Soviet movies of Tarkovski (to mention just the one name virtually everyone will be familiar with) would hardly see the light of day anywhere else and we would all be poorer for that. Ever hear of the Soviet classical ballet ensembles? Or of their piano players, or violinists? Van Cliburns are a dime a dozen there, but if they have a single Liberace they are keeping him safely locked away in a closet somewhere.

Such achievements are not the product of a market economy, but neither can they be created by brute force and coercion. They need a good cultural climate and a lot of loving nurture. Soviets demonstrably provide both. Of course, they keep it under careful political scrutiny but fortunately only a relatively small part of the arts deals with the overtly political topics. Of that small part only a small part again has a political slant running afoul of the Soviet dogma. The result is a very wide and abundant field of Culture (with the capital C) bordered by a distant barbed wire fence.

Is this good? I honestly don't know. Something in me cries out whenever I sniff censorship. Political control over art nauseates me. But when I see tired construction workers in the Moscow subway, getting home from work, huge muddy boots steaming, reading books to pass the time, Christ, I think, there must be something to their system. I mean, they read real, honest-to-God books, not paperback thrillers, romances, or skiffy in garish covers. Lowbrow pap is exceedingly rare in the USSR. And the similar pattern is repeated, with local variations, in most other Communist countries.

What would your own preference be? A lot of great art but of a somewhat restricted spectrum, or a rainbow spread of everything under the sun, from shift to art, with the former far outweighing the latter? High art with restrictions of pap with liberty? For me personally the choice is difficult even when the case is this much simplified.

In the end I'd most probably opt for liberty because I abhor the idea of control over my thoughts and opinions. It does not mean, though, that I am blind to the obvious advantages of the Soviet system. Even though I find it woefully inadequate in following Marx's noble ideas (and on those terms must pronounce it a failure) I cannot judge it a flop in absolute terms. Its achievements are far too many and too varied for that. I don't propose to deride the Soviets just because they have to stand in line to buy shoes. What if it's worth standing in line? What if it buys you more than just a pair of shoes?

For a balanced picture it is of utmost importance to realize that there's more to life in a Communist country than the lines at grocery stores, the KGB and the Gulag Archipelago. If their life were really that bad, do you think that people would stand for it for this long? Would they meekly suffer for seventy years? I doubt it. They are a bright, well educated people demonstrably capable of wonders in the arts and sciences, not a tribe of spineless zombies. I am, in other words, suggesting you go out and try to find more about them. Try to learn what makes them tick.

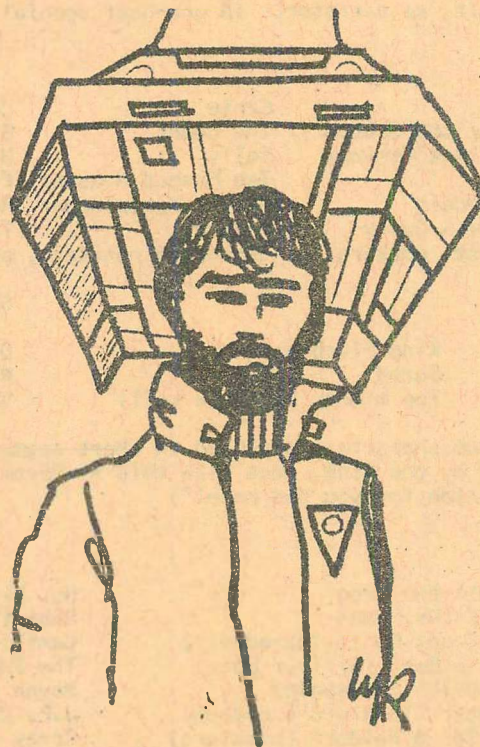
It won't be easy. The problem (or a part of the problem) is that the benefits of life in the Communist countries do not lend themselves easily to propaganda. They are not flashy, glittering, alluring at first sight. They are not obvious. Materially these societies are obviously poorer than the societies you are accustomed to, but fortunately Man does not live by bread alone. The drabness is often just the outer shell. Once a revolutionary society settles down into a more or less comfortable routine one of the first things that get into top gear are the arts. The art is a reward by itself, for one thing; an artists usually does not need much external motivation. Also, the State often supports the arts for propaganda purposes, as a showcase of its success. The cultural life that goes on behind the gray facade can thus be (and often is) much richer than in the wealthy Western Capitalist world. In the Communist societies Culture is inexpensive and you are expected to partake in and of it. You are constantly prodded, from your earliest childhood, to read, learn, attend theatre, concerts, art exhibitions, science lectures, museums. If there's but an inkling of talent in you there's state encouragement for you to develop it and the state wherewithal to finance it. The same goes for sports. Athletic talents are encouraged just as much as the artistic or scientific ones. In its way this is a great, stupendous achievement, isn't it?

While the quality of Soviet life is vastly different from that of the average US citizen, is it necessarily inferior? On TV and in the magazines you'll find the Soviets drab, threadbare, repressed and dull, but try to keep in mind that this is not the whole picture by far. What you have in your hand is neither a rope nor a python, but only a very small part of an elephant, an unpleasant part carefully chosen to represent the elephant in the worst possible light.

I do not intend to give you a guided tour of life in the Soviet Communist system, being largely an outsider myself. Living in a country that does not follow the Soviet model (even while pursuing the Communist ideal) I don't think I know Soviets and their allies in fine enough detail to write travelogues and offer piercing insights. (For further enlightenment in one easy and enjoyable step I recommend a wonderful book, The Russians by Hedrick Smith, the New York Times Moscow correspondent.) I would just like you to realize that value judgements in the comparison of Communist East and Capitalist West hardly ever work. The two systems are so different that new yardsticks are needed for a meaningful comparison.

I would like to to realize that your own common sense should be telling you, namely that an awful lot of people like living in a Communist country -- and to start wondering why.

((ANVIL 48, coming in November, 1988, will carry the conclusion to Bruno's three-part article. -- cp.))



MUPPET-MANIA

((Editor's Note: The following is a list sent to me by Taral Wayne McDonald... a fan's article if I ever saw one! It also (probably) has socially redeeming value... I mean, a lot of us have been on speaking terms with Muppets all our lives. They are a piece of Americana, and deserve to be cataloged, reminisced on and argued about. For instance, I thought "Labyrinth" was a fine movie, very entertaining, even if or especially because the sources were obvious. So I hope you'll help Taral with his research project by wracking your brains for more, other and different Muppets.))

THE INCOMPLETE WHO'S WHO OF THE MUPPETS

SAM AND HIS FRIENDS

(This five minute children's program aired from 1954 to 1958, on WBC, the Washington affiliate of NBC. It won an Emmy for local programming, and is the origin of all muppets. Although Kermit appeared in this show, he was not yet a frog. He was brownish-green with a long body, no ruff around his neck, and had unwebbed feet.)

Sam (main character)
Kermit (the not-a-frog)

Harry
Yorick (a skull)

Moldy Hay
Mushmelon

(TODAY, TONIGHT, & ED SULLIVAN SHOWS -- miscellaneous guest appearances.)

THE JIMMY DEAN SHOW

Rowlf (For three years, Rowlf appeared on the Jimmy Dean show, joking and making musical puns with the show's host. Those minutes were often the only bearable moments during an hour of wholesome country style family tedium.)

THE FROG PRINCE

Kermit, as the Frog Prince. (I'm afraid I never saw this one, and have no knowledge of other players.)

THE PRINCESS AND THE PEA

Kermit, as narrator. (A one-hour special with Carol Burnett, retelling the fairy tale.)

SESAME STREET

Bert	Ernie	Cookie Monster	Grover
Oscar the Grouch	The Count	Big Bird	Mr. Snuffle-Upagus
Sherlock Hemlock	Telly	Harry	Guy Smiley
Biff	Two Headed Monster	Forgetful (the cowpoke)	Grousetta Grouch (inventor)
Don Music	Harvey Kneeslapper	Roosevelt Franklin	Bentley
Vince & Sully	Beepers	Twiddle Bugs	
(Const. workers)	(Assorted monsters,	animals, and "anything" muppets.)	

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE

King Ploobis	Queen Penta
Scrod	Wiss
The mighty Favog (a well)	Vazh

(These characters appeared in short segments from the World of Gorch, whose national anthem, as sung by the king, goes like this -- "From the Rotting Forest, To the stagnant mud flats, This land was made for you and meee!")

THE MUPPET SHOW

Kermit the Frog	Ms. Piggy (Nurse Piggy)	Hilda (wardrobe)
Rowlf (Dr. Bob)	Robin (Kermit's nephew)	Vend-a-Face
The Great Gonzo (daredevil)	Camilla (Gonzo's chicken love)	Muppet News Announcer
Fozzie Bear (Officer Bear)	The Swedish Chef	Announcer (for Dr. Bob)
Sam Hill (the eagle)	Wayne & Wanda (dancers)	Gladys (cafeteria waitress)
Scooter (landlord's nephew)	J.P. Gross (landlord)	Luncheon Counter Monster
Statler & Waldorf (hecklers)	Crazy Harry (mad bomber)	George (early janitor)
Dr. Denson Honeydew (Muppet labs)	Beaker (Lab assistant)	Beauregard (later janitor)
Annie-Sue (Ms. Piggy's rival)	Foo-Foo (Ms. Piggy's poodle)*	Pops (backstage watchman)
Link Hoggthrob (Pigs in Space)	Dr. Julius Strangepork (ditto)	Gaffer (backstage cat)
Rizzo (the rat)	Muppy (terrier)*	Flying Zucchini Brothers
Louis Kazagger (sports announcer)	Uncle Deadly (Phantom)	Lew Zealand & His Boomerang
Sweetums (monster)	Timmy (another monster)	Fish

Throg (still another monster)
Bobby Benson & The Baby Band

The Swine-Trek (spaceship)
Marvin Suggs & The Muppaphones

Also "gawky birds", "boss men", miscellaneous pigs chickens, cows, dogs, whatnots, monsters, talking houses, frackles, Koozebanes, Snowths, Heaps, & Unnamable Hairy Things.

(* Both Foo-Foo and Muppy were at times played by real dogs.)

DR. TEETH & THE ELECTRIC MAYHEM

Sgt. Floyd Pepper (bass)
Janice (guitar & Nurse Janice)
Animal (drums)
Nigel (orchestra conductor)

Dr. Teeth (keyboard)
Zoot (saxophone)
Rowlf (piano)

EMMET OTTER'S JUG BAND CHRISTMAS

(This 1976 special was based on a book by Russel & Lillian Hoban -- of "Riddley Walker" fame. I haven't seen this program, only stills, and can only make a partial list of characters.)

Emmet Otter
The Riverbottom Gang

Ma Otter
Ms. Possum

THE MUPPET MOVIE & THE MUPPETS TAKE MANHATTAN

ibid

THE BREMMERTOWN MUSICIANS

(The name is all I've come across, but a correspondent describes it as narrated by Kermit, and names one character, Catgut.)

FRAGGLE ROCK

Gobol
Mokle
Doc (the one human, "Silly Person")
Marjorie (the trash heap)

Red
Wembly
Sprocket (his dog)
her rats

Groober
Uncle Travelling Matt*
Cotterpin (and other Doozers)
Gorgs (Mom, Pop, and Junior)

(For those of you who don't know, Uncle Matt is an in-joke. A "travelling" matt is a moving special effect, and of course that's just what "Uncle Travelling Matt" is. Additional characters were introduced almost every show, but almost never returned.)

THE TALE OF THE BUNNY PICNIC

(Never even heard of it. A correspondent mentioned it.)

Beans

Babble

Mugsy

and others.

THE DARK CRYSTAL

Characters include Delphins, good creatures and bad monsters, and a witch. If I had a copy of the book I could give the names, but...

LABYRINTH

(Never saw the movie and it was rated a bomb.)

THE EMPIRE STRIKES BACK & REVENGE OF THE JEDI

Yoda

AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON

rotted corpse of friend

DREAM CHILD

Mock Turtle
Dormouse

Caterpillar
Mad Hatter

Gryphon
March Hare

(In my opinion, the peak of Muppet technology, and also its most effective and evocative use appear in the dream sequences of Alice Pleasance Liddel in this British film.)

((Editor's note: This is the end of Taral's list... comments, anyone?))

ZERO-G 6

ZERO-GEE SIX, or: IN SPACE, NO ONE CAN EAT ICE CREAM

— Richard Hyde

It was foretold that one day a man, some might say a wise man, would tell of Zero Gravity Six. Now, this is truly a wondrous thing, because until now, no one knew of the Zero Gravity Six except space travellers. Some far-thinkers have realized their theoretical existence, but only those on the final frontier can embrace these concepts with total empathy.

ZERO-GRAVITY ONE: Sometimes called "The Big Uh-Oh". If man goes to the stars, can Tourista be far behind? Remember those little plastic panties that babies wear? Did they do a good job of holding 4 oz. of liquids and semi-solids? Were they water tight for more than a few minutes? Were they airtight? Well, just imagine how well four times the amount would strain their dikes. Even more so on an active adult, and believe me, any adult with this load would be very active. Just to be safe, go before you leave home.

ZERO-GRAVITY TWO: Never, ever allow yourself to throw up inside your suit with your face plate in place. Besides shorting out every circuit from your dome light down, you can never get the smell out. Stick-ups won't touch it. It's better to die from explosive decompression, and if you're fast enough you can open a window, upchuck, and close up again before vacuum knows you're there. Frankly, I would try this before I had to report I had tossed my cookies and can someone please tow me home.

ZERO-GRAVITY THREE: This is a minor problem, but it can lead to zero-gravity one or zero-gravity two. When in the Break Room, do not yell "Food Fight" and throw your freeze-dried peas in your roomie's face. Once might be fun, but after that, it's as much fun as being up to your ankles inside your suit. If the food is dry, as in peas, M&Ms, peanuts, etcetera, it might pass, but spaghetti is out. So is chicken noodle soup.

ZERO-GRAVITY FOUR: Since the common cold will be with us for a long time, learn how to not sneeze while in Zero-G. It's kind of rough on your eardrums and rectum (the former pop closed, the latter sometimes the reverse). But how does one wipe one's nose? More important, how does one clean one's windshield? I, personally, would find it difficult to look someone in the eye if they had boogers in their eyebrows.

ZERO-GRAVITY FIVE: In space, there is no Pepsi Generation. A soft drink would be a lethal weapon. Outside a ship, it becomes a retro rocket. Miller Time could be either lunar orbit or earth re-entry, depending on your orbit -- and talk about silver bullets!

ZERO-GRAVITY SIX: This pertains to sex, but can be used to cover nearly any zero-gee activity that deals with bodily wetnum: Never let loose with any type of liquid unless a tight-fitting receptacle is utilized. You might spit in your own eye.

As is true here on earth, I would rather enjoy a tight end than a wide receiver. More about that in an upcoming article "Zero-Gravity Sex". This article is gross and it's all Charlotte's fault. I said I was doing an article on Zero-G Sex, but she wrote that it would be six. It's taken a long time to write about six. This was all I could think of. Sorry.

TRADEZINES

8 1/2 x 11 Zine #4, Committing the Cartoonist to Paper. David Thayer (Teddy Harvfa). 7209 DeVille Dr., MMH, TX 76180. Lots of fun artwork. A small zine, but nicely laid out and printed. The usual.

AirGlow. T.L. Bohman, Box 14, East Thetford, VE 05043-0014. The usual or two for \$1.00.

Besfazine #178, 180. The British Columbia Science Fiction Assn, P.O. Box 355777, Stn. E, Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4C9. Ask Mr. Science, a regular feature, is witty and well-done. Membership \$12.00.

Brumgroup News, #197. The monthly newsletter of the Birmingham (England) Science Fiction Group. Dave Hardy, editor. 160 Beaumont Road, Bournville, Birmingham B30 1NY U.K.

Bruzzfuzzel News #53 & 54. Baton Rouge Science Fiction League, Inc. Clay Fourrier, ed. P.O. Box 14238, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-4238. Interesting article on non-functioning fans by fully functional J.R. (Mad Dog) Madden in #54. The usual or \$10/year.

Centaur Notes Vol. 1, #1&2. Off Centaur, Inc. P.O. Box 424, El Cerrito, CA 94530. #2 includes some information about the 1986 Hugo and song listings and how to order some of the music.

The Dillinger Relic #57, the Special Forbidden Lust Issue. Arthur D. Hlavaty. P.O. Box 52028, Durham, N.C. 27717. The usual or \$1.00.

Eldritch Science #1. Genzine of Yet Another Medford & Suburbs Science Fiction Club. George Phillips, ed. 87-6 Park Avenue, Worcester, MA 01605. \$2.50/issue. Poetry, prose, artwork.

Fanthology 1986, the Best Fan Writing of 1986. Mike Glycer, ed. Available for \$3 (US) from Dennis Virzi, 618 Westridge, Tuncanville, TX 75116. Highly Recommended.

(*) File 770.72. Mike Glycer. 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401. 5 issues/\$5.00.

(*) FosFax #125, 126, 127. Supported by The Falls of the Ohio Science Fiction and Fantasy Association. Timothy Lane, ed. c/o FOSFA, P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281. Lots of good reviews. \$9/yr.

FTA/Phoenix Vol 5, #4. Newsletter/clubzine of the Science Fiction Assn. of Victoria. Tami Hayes. Box 1772 Victoria, British Columbia, Canada V8W 2Y3. Fiction and poetry as well as reviews and art.

Galactic Dispatch vol 13, #6. Joe Sokola. 5333 Cracker Barrel Circle, Colorado Springs, CO 80917-1803.

Great Wall #188. apazine, George Inzer. 582 Ashville Road, Montevallo, AL 35115.

Hi-Fi Sci-Fi Vol 2, #2&3. Tony Renner. 2340 S. 39th St., Apt.C, St. Louis, MO 63110. Excellent book and comic reviews and other stuff. SASE.

I-94 #2. Spike. P.O. Box 535, Madison, WI 53701. The usual. Enjoyable!

(*) Lan's Lantern 25. George Laskowski. 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013. The usual or \$2 US. The hefty Hugo award winner.

(*) The Mad 3 Party "more than you ever wanted to know about running a Worldcon." Noreascon, editor, Leslie Turek. Box 46, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge MA 02139. Free copies to newszines and others, or \$1/ea.

The March of the Fanzines. Harry Andruschak. P.O. Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309

Mimosa #4. Dick and Nicki Lynch. 4207 Davis Lane, Chattanooga, TN 37416. Transcription of the live fanzine done at Chattacon 13. Delightful! The usual or \$1.50.

The NASFA Shuttle Vol 8 #3. Nelda Kennedy, ed. 7907 Charlotte Dr., SW, Huntsville, AL 35802.

Nova Express, the 'Zine of the Avant Garde Vol 1 #3. Michael Summers. 115 Drava Ln., Houston, TX 77090. \$5 for a year, but they've got a special discount for ANVIL readers, folks, \$4 a year! Short fiction, articles, reviews and editorials. #3 is the Howard Waldrop issue! Recommended!

Phoenix Quill Vol 2 #3. Brenda Sutton. 201 Greencrest Ct., Marietta, CA 30067-3312.

Pulp #6. A bi-monthly fanzine produced alternately by Vinc Clarke, Avedon Carol & Rob Hansen. 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB, England. Delightful! Available for trade.

Pulsar! Science Fiction Quarterly Vol 2 #1&2. A.E. Uebelhor. 2425 Highway 41 North, Suite 134, Evansville, IN 47711-4063. Free to qualified applicants. Sample copies \$2. Beautifully done on a Macintosh Plus with an Apple Laser Writer Plus with offset printed cover. Big name interviews, fiction, regular columns and departments!

Quinapalus #7. M.K. Digre. 4629 Columbus Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55407. The usual or 60 pages/\$1.00. This issue included a bonus zine, A Poke in the Eye with a Sharp Stick done by Eric Biever.

Secant #3. Greg Hills. GPO Box 972 G, Melbourne 3001, Australia. Relaxed, fannish and fun. The usual.

Shards of Babel. Roelof Goudriaan. Caan van Necklaan 63, 2281 BB RIJSWIFK (ZH), The Netherlands. Very nice little "European SF newsletter" done in English. The usual or \$8 US cash or \$10 US check.

Smart-Ash #40. From the Chimneyville Fantasy & Science Fiction Society. Tom Ferrer. Box 13626, Jackson, MS 39204. \$5/yr.

South Pacific Penguin, #1. Lon Levy. P.O. Box 1505, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1505.

The Space Wastrel Vol 2 #8. Michelle & Mr. Loney. P.O. Box 428, Richmond Victoria 3121, Australia. Hilarious but for mature readers, got it?

Tahti Vaeltaaja #34. 1987. Toni Jerman. Viljelljantie 4-6 D 103, 00410, Helsinki, Finland. Beautiful semi-pro zine, lots of art, comics, photos. Slick covers. Too bad we can't read any of it.

(*) The Texas SF Inquirer #23. Published by the Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc. 618 Westridge, Duncanville, TX 75116. Trade or \$6 for six issues. Always interesting.

Torus #3. The Kamikaze Editorial Collective. P. O. Box 186, Stn. M, Toronto, Ont., M6S 4T3 Canada.

Trash Barrel. Donald Franson. 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606. 100% fanzines reviews, and good ones, too.

Warp #59 & 60, the official journal of the National Association for Science Fiction. Nicholas Smeaton, ed. 33 Twyford Street, Bishopdale, CHCH 5.

West Wind #126-128. Clubzine of the Northwest Science Fiction Society. Robert Suryan, ed. P. O. Box 24207, Seattle WA 98124. Easy on the eyes, beautiful covers. Reviews and stuff. \$12/yr.

Woftam #1, the Western Australia Science Fiction Fanzine. Kevin McCaw. 20 Dodd Street, Hamilton Hill, W. A. 6163, Australia. The usual or 1 issue/50 cents. (I suggest sending \$1 for this zine -- overseas postage, y'know.)

YHOS #42. Art Widner. 312 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563. Well done and interesting as usual. The usual.



REVIEWS BY ANDREA

Greenmantle by Charles de Lint, Ace paperback \$3.50 U.S., 4.75 Canada.

An excellent fantasy/thriller! This is only the second book by Charles de Lint I've read, but it confirms my conviction, formed after reading Yarrow, that he is a master storyteller.

Like Yarrow, Greenmantle is a contemporary fantasy. The first four pages read like a gangland thriller. For a while I honestly thought the fantasy cover had been put on the wrong book. De Lint leads the reader from the gritty reality of 1988 to a realm of magic. He writes without the archaic language and high falutin' sentence structure that clutter so many fantasies. His dialogue is flawlessly realistic, his narration straightforward, lean, and riveting. You'll find no clunkers, no potholes, nothing to jerk you out of the Greenmantle world.

With so many marginal fantasies on the shelves, de Lint's work is a welcome change. He is strong in almost every area: writing style, plot, pacing, and characterization. Not only does he tell a gripping story with the tension of a suspense thriller, he also has the knack of creating really memorable characters. De Lint has a wonderful feel for the inside of the criminal mind, from small-time crook to amoral, sociopathic killer. His bad guys are convincing and terrifying. His good guys read SF and fantasy -- need I say more?

If you want a story with nice, strong archetypes (the Norse Avenger and a slew of others), you'll find them here, but I don't want to get artsy-fartsy... Let's just say there is some literary merit here as well as entertainment. Okay, so maybe this isn't the Ultimate Fantasy Novel, but it's Damn Good.

Greenmantle is not for the squeamish, but if you can handle some rough language and violence (neither are gratuitous - they are appropriate and requisite in this story), don't miss Greenmantle. You'll love it.

Sorcery and Cecelia. Patricia Wrede, Carolyn Stevermer. Ace pb. \$2.95 US, \$3.95 C.

A light, entertaining fantasy set in Regency England. Recommended reading for one of those down times when you have the no-money blues or a cold coming on. This is one of the only books written in the form of letters that I have ever liked. It reads very smoothly, perhaps because the "letters" are actually first person narratives. Almost as interesting as the story itself is how it came to be written. The authors were playing "the letter game" and realized they had a novel! Be sure to read their explanation at the end of the book of how it happened. If you like Georgette Hyer's work, you'll like Sorcery and Cecelia even better!

When Gravity Fails. George Alec Effinger. Bantam Spectra \$3.95 U.S.

Effinger has been recommended to me before, but this is the first book of his I've read. I'll definitely seek out more. When Gravity Fails is a cyberpunk detective story. High Tech meets gumshoe. It's a real page-turner: violent, fast-paced, and written with smooth precision. I highly recommend it.

THE ANVIL CHORUS

There will be a slight change of format in the Chorus this time... I can't seem to get my handy-dandy wordprocessor to understand the little box around the name, and I just got tired of fooling around with it. My machine is PC compatible, so if I ever put DOS into it, I can use Wordstar, which I understand does everything! But even with the imperfections of this system, I wouldn't go back to typing stencils for anything!

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

Your Mafiaette field trip was very amusing. Hagerstown has an unusual distinction: it's the only town I know of that has an "adult" book store right in the town square, smack in the center of Hagerstown. The local tourist authorities try to impress on visitors the fact that Hagerstown had the first bookmobile in the world or that its park was once describe as the second best natural park in the nation or that two blocks on its South Prospect Street are virtually unspoiled Victorian architecture, but instead tourists leave here remembering Hagerstown as the city with one of Those Stores in the center square. Some years back, the city fathers decided to give that square a facelift and among the changes was the establishment of bollards all around it. Nobody seems to have realized until these things were in place that some people would assume they are advertisement for the sex shop, looking very much like circumcised phallic symbols. Now the town has decided to end this source of ridicule (as well as the expense of replacing a bollard every time an auto runs out of control and smashes one). So next week there will be official ceremonies marking the end of the bollard era in the square. Dignitaries will take turns swinging sledgehammers at bollards and there will be a contest to determine the identity of the best-dressed bollard, among other activities, all of which would have made Freud very happy. I hope the first auto that goes out of control after the bollards are gone will go right through the front wall of that establishment and demolish its interior.

I'm glad to see Buck Coulson giving H. L. Gold a big play among the most important editors around the middle years of this century. I feel that Gold was as significant to the science fiction field as Campbell in most ways. Quite possible, his name turns up so infrequently compared with the publicity still lavished on Campbell in fanzines for two reasons: Gold couldn't attend cons and he didn't run a letter section in his prozine. These were forms of behavior inimical to fandom which tends to pay the most attention to the pros who make themselves most often available for face-to-face encounters and those who run fan features in their magazines. Gold loosened some old rules and taboos in the science fiction field and bought fiction of a more experimental nature than the other big name editors of his time. I'd like to see anthologizing statistics because I suspect that Galaxy may have had a greater proportion of all its fiction in its best years reprinted in book form than Astounding-Analog did.

Cindy Riley couldn't have been any more agitated by her trailer delivery problems than I was the day about a year ago who I bought a new refrigerator. It didn't occur to me to measure the refrigerators when I was shopping for one, and when the one I chose was delivered, it was a traumatic hour while the delivery men tried to squeeze it through the front part of the house and into the kitchen. I thought

sure I would lose the glass in a large bookcase, the linoleum in the kitchen, and one of the refrigerator's doors. It was such a relief when it finally was in place with no serious damage to anything that I hardly felt the anticlimax: the wall socket was incompatible with the plug.

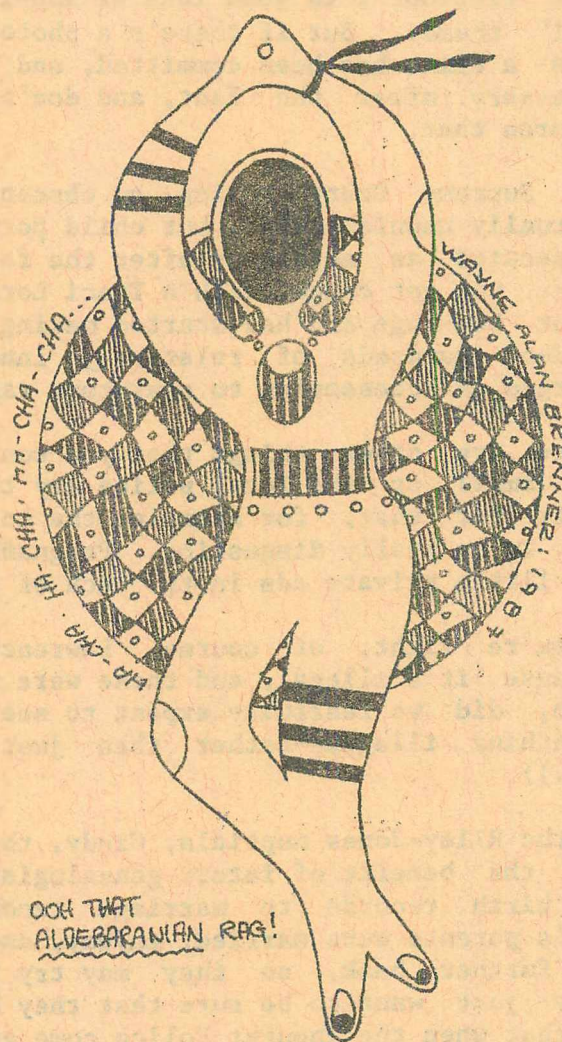
I remain unconvinced that communism can be achieved without such strict control of every citizen's life that said life will hardly be worth the bother of living. Communism works beautifully in anthills, because ants if they have any personal preferences are able to repress them for the good of the anthill. But humans aren't made that way. The same objection exists to almost all the utopias that fiction writers have dreamed up, the elaborate plans for establishing efficient giant communities in the immediate future, even planning and zoning laws. The whole shebang falls apart unless everyone is forced to submit to discipline as severe as that imposed on jail prisoners or soldiers in basic training.

Marc Ortlieb must have misunderstood at least one portion of that yarn. The items that came out of the Roneo in the cavern couldn't have been distributed in FAPA. That organization requires 68 identical copies for inclusion in its mailings and every sheet of stone seems to have had a different fossil in it.

Didn't Sam Goldwyn say it first? Brian Earl Brown's remarks about a trip report being an unwritten obligation of a TAFF delegate reminds me of Sam's explanation that an oral contract isn't worth the paper it's written on.

Lawrence Watt-Evans, 5 Solitaire Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Patrick Gibbs and I violently disagree about The Forge Of God; for me, there was no suspense at all, because the outcome was obvious right from the start, and without suspense, there's nothing to the book. The characters are all flat, the events illogical (but still predictable--a tough, and very annoying, combination!). It just doesn't work. Please don't give it the Hugo just because Greg Bear's previous work has been great!



Mafiaettes, in regard to, "...we were all relieved that child porno was not displayed..." Child porno is illegal. At least, anything with pictures; if its' just fiction, I've seen lots of non-illustrated paperbacks on the "Daddy's Little Girl" theme. But if there's a photo of a minor involved in any sexual activity, then a crime has been committed, and anyone making a profit from that crime is an accessory after the fact, and don't think for a minute that the police wouldn't enforce that.

The Supreme Court ruling on obscenity is the "local standards" apply, which is virtually unenforceable, but child porn doesn't get prosecuted as obscene, it gets prosecuted as accessory after the fact to child molestation. Ask any video shop owner who got caught with a Traci Lords tape when Lords announced that she'd lied about her age and had started making porno flicks when she was sixteen; all of a sudden, hundreds of relatively innocent shopkeepers were finding themselves charged as accessories to statutory rape.

There are other things that you won't find in porno shops, because the market's too small or the local police say they violate local standards (I've seen exact lists for what, for example, the Los Angeles police say is going too far); they tend to be really disgusting. Pregnant lesbians (though weird) aren't disgusting; the little private ads in the back of some of the magazines are disgusting.

((You're right, of course, Lawrence. The reason we didn't see child porno is because it's illegal, and these were no doubt law-abiding shops we entered. Why, then, did we fearfully expect to see it? Probably because we felt we were doing something illegal--rather than just socially unacceptable-- by being there at all.))

On the Riley-Jones nuptials, Cindy, they wanted to know where your mother was born for the benefit of future genealogists, who work backwards from marriage records to birth records to marriage records and so on, ad infinitum... assuming that one's parents were married, anyway, and of course, the records get spottier as you go further back, so they may try to get a couple of generations in at a time. They just want to be sure that they know exactly which Cindy T. Riley you are... so that when the Thought Police come after you, they won't get the wrong one.

In regard to Marxism, I don't think that TIME and its ilk are so much confusing Marxism with Stalinism as with Leninism. Everybody knows there's such a thing as non-Stalinist Marxism, but the distinction between what Marx actually wrote and what Lenin said Marx meant is less well known. It was Lenin who made the Soviet Union a one-party state, not Stalin; Lenin who set up the Cheka, not Stalin. If Lenin's older brother hadn't been hanged by the Tsar's police, we might have a very different world today.

Ben Schilling, 45605 Fox Lane East, Apt 206, Utica, MI 48087-4228

If you have a savings account, you're a Capitalist. Money saved is capital accumulation. You're probably like me, a fairly small scale capitalist. // I have to push "War for the Oaks" as being one of the best fantasy novels of 1987 and the best first novel that I found last year. We get rock and roll elves fighting for control of Minneapolis/St. Paul and it actually works.

From the Detroit News, porno star John Holmes dies of something like AIDS. Also states that he claimed to have had sex with 14,000 women!? a claim that I find hard to believe. Figure it out on a per day basis to get the number of years involved. I have heard of pregnant lesbians before. One case from the Detroit area involved some means of do-it-yourself artificial insemination, source of same unclear.

Seems to me that Marxists and Fundamentalists have something in common, a revealed Word which cannot be changed. That's unfortunate, because the world refuses to stand still for either one.

Re Bruno's comment on languages: The Mexicans don't speak quite the same language as (eg) the Argentines. There are regional differences.

Vytautas J. Vitkauskas, 7033 So. Campbell Ave., Chicago, IL 60629

I hate to send locs just because I feel obliged to. Thank goodness the Mafiaette Field Trip report makes me want to write. Your all-female group had a fun time visiting a porn shop. Society considers them taboo, but your group approached it as explorers. You saw, learned and had some laughs. I'm happy for you. Your open-mindedness was refreshing. I'm sure some readers will take you to task for not making a serious, socially redeeming stand concerning pornography. "Pornography" triggers so much meanness. I'm glad you didn't get mean and chose not to include a somber analysis. It made for a pleasant surprise.

I look forward to Bruno Ogorelec's Red Ruminations, Part II because he writes to clarify so well. Why couldn't both parts be published together? I had to be held in suspense for no reason. ((But there is a reason, Vito. Part II, as you probably know by now, is followed by Part III, which is the conclusion. The whole thing was entirely too much to print at once, especially if I wanted to include other socially redeeming articles such as Mafiaette field trips or essays on Zero Gravity Six.))

Alexander R. Slate, 5502 Timber Jack, San Antonio TX 78250

This is a rarity for me, a timely loc. Yes, many of us know what it is like trying to get something out on a regular schedule and we can sympathize. You do better than most of us. It is particularly bad when an editor is handicapped by contributors who don't get things to him/her in a timely fashion. ((I try not to get myself in that position, and suffer the agonies of the damned if I do. I like Buck's way of contributing best of all: when he receives an ANVIL, he sends his next column (double-spaced) with a loc about a week afterward. I realize that the phrase "dependable fan" may seem to be mutually exclusive, but every now and then you find one, and his price, like virtue, is above rubies. I have been known to go to press without material that had been promised to me. This may be self-defeating, as the contributor may just decide not to promise anything anymore, or that you don't really need his/her stuff. But I get rebellious sometimes, and refuse to be held hostage. Uh, sorry, didn't mean to get carried away there. And now back to our letter.))

While I usually find Buck Coulson's column to be an exercise in esoterica that I cannot under the reason for, the column in issue 46 I understand and enjoyed. Yes, Buck is correct about the Hugo for Best Editor especially where it concerns the book editors. This is a point that I made about two years ago in an editorial in my own 'zine that probably no one read, after Atlanta, and the dubious awarding of the Hugo to Judy-Lynn del Ray because she had recently died.

About Communism and Socialism. Communism as a system fails in doing what it attempts to do. As a system Communism (or Socialism) was designed for an industrial society. However, it is exactly in this sort of society that Communism has not worked, without resorting to tyranny and oppression. And even then, there is no incentive for the production so the system still fails. Curiously, it is in the rural or agrarian environment that this sort of system works. Communism was the perfect economic system for mainland China after WW II. It has been a true success story if one looks, not to the political excesses of things such as the Red Guard purges, but to the economic development of the People's Republic of China. Now, that China is becoming more industrialized, their leaders realize the importance of an incentive system and are working to institute some elements of capitalism into their society to keep the system working.

Thoroughly enjoyed Marc Ortlieb's piece. A bit disappointed at the cover, though. Not up to the usually high standards of the ANVIL covers I've seen in the past. ((What??? That was a cover by Taral. I like his stuff and so do a lot of other people. Actually though, you may have been turned off by the lousy reproduction. This cover has been veloxed so it will copy better -- and it does, doesn't it?))

Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, IN 47348

Your letter of the 14th mentioned that you'd mailed ANVIL "last Tuesday," which I assume means March 8. It arrived today, March 24. All hail postal efficiency... ((Actually, Buck, I think that's pretty good considering it is mailed bulk rate and everything that isn't delivered here in B'ham goes to Atlanta first. So two weeks two days isn't all that bad for third-class mail.))

I enjoyed the Mafiaettes' adventures in the sex stores. Offhand, I can't recall ever entering one, though I know that a lot of midwest fans did, in search of the complete works of Andy Offutt. Years ago, Penny Tegan did an article for someone about her efforts to run down Offutt books; as I recall, she said that the male customers were very nervous about having their territory invaded by a real live woman.

The US has also had Socialist candidates for President, and one state (Wisconsin? Minnesota? Somewhere up there) I believe has had a Socialist governor. The best-known Socialist presidential candidate was probably Norman Thomas, who ran back in the 1930s. A few years ago I read an article which pointed out that nearly everything in Norman Thomas's presidential platform had since been enacted into law by Congress. As for Bruno's comment that even Heinlein would have to agree with Marx on some subjects: the May ANALOG has an article by Michael Flynn, "An Introduction to Psychohistory". Topic isn't pertinent to this discussion, but Flynn quotes various people to illustrate his points, and the pair of quotations illustrating one particular point are by Robert A. Heinlein and Karl Marx, and they're remarkably similar. Communism, on the other hand, seems to bring on dictatorships all too often for my liking. j Of course, capitalism has been known

to do the same thing; look at Latin America or the Philippines. Marcos, Somoza, Batista... But so far, capitalism seems to have a better batting average.

Matter of fact, Bruno, yes, the Mexicans do speak Mexican. It's called Spanish by outsiders, but it's considerably different from the language of Spain. However, I admit culpability in referring to the Austrian language; I wasn't thinking. Another Yugoslav fan wrote me much less temperately, and I snapped back at him, for which I do not apologize, but I must say this discourse is fascinating. And makes me glad that I wasn't born in Yugoslavia.

Thanks to Murray Moore for giving me a subject for at least part of my column. I do have eight Flashman books, but they're in the humor section instead of history. It's a tossup on category.

((Well, since you brought it up, Buck, I might as well let everybody in on the letter written by a "less temperate" Yugoslav fan that prompted you to snap back. I suppose this only proves that US fandom isn't alone in having smart-mouth or obnoxious fans. For your information: I, too, wrote to Pavel [before I knew that you had] defending you and chastising him. I think he's probably just young.))

Pavel Gregoric Jr., Tuskanac 22, 41 000 Zagreb, Yugoslavia

When I read Buck Coulson's letter in ANVIL 44 I was amazed how silly question he asked at the end of the letter. I'll give him the answer: There are not three major languages in Yugoslavia. There's only one - Serbo-Croatian. There are six republics in Yugoslavia and each republic has its own language. They are all varieties of Serbo-Croatian. All that languages have basic features of Sloven languages (like: Bulgarian, Russian, Hungarian, Romanian, etc.) In habitants of each republic can understand each other, but not as well as Americans and Englishmen, for example. However, they can communicate. As I already said, there aren't big differences among these languages except two of them: Slovenian (northern) and Makedonian (Southern). They are almost totally different. So major language is Serbo-Croatian, and the minor are Slovenina, Bosnian, Montenegrin, Macedonian, Serbian and Croatian. You supposed that one of the minor languages could be Austrian. Now, I would ask you a question: What the major language would be in United States? English, Canadian or Alaskan, perhaps? What? Austrian language does not exist. In Austria is spoken German language, and in Canada is spoken english as well.

If you haven't understood what I wrote try over and over again, unless you understand it! O.K.?

If you are interested in some other things about Yugoslavia or Europe just ask! I would be honoured if you would ask me a question like previous one. And at the end, I would like to tell you something very confusing - here in Yugoslavia exists two letters: latin (western) and cirillic (eastern). ((Spelling and grammar as written.--ed.))

((Later.... I received another letter from Pavel, in which he confirms his tender years, and gallops along in the unbridled enthusiasm of youth. Here it is:))

Yesterday I received Bruno's letter within I found yours. In this short letter I would tell you just few things. Very, very old Chinese proverb says: "It isn't

shame not to know... Shame is not WANT to know.", if you understand what it means. You should never, ever, hesitate to ask lest to be called silly. You would be called silly if you won't ask. It's the one not want to know in quoted thousand years old proverb. Inquisitiveness and curiosity are one of the things which puts us on the very top on living Earth as Homo Sapiens (in old Latin language that means smart, intelligent man). You may raise any question about Yugoslavia and I assure you, my dear Charlotte, you won't be called silly, even if you ask me where is Yugoslavia situated. // Sorry if I was too hard on ol' Buck. However, I don't think he spoke without thinking, but...

Well, I guess, this is it! When I receive ANVIL #46, I hope you'll get a bit longer letter. Until then I would like to receive your letter full of questions, but don't forget I'm only 16 years old! As a matter of fact my birthday will be on 3rd of April.

I also hope you don't mind my, I would say corrupted and monotonous English, but believe me, I always give my best! // And a question for you: How can I write articles in fanzines? Do I need some predispositions or some special features? You know, I'm still a Neo-fan and I dunno much about fandome. If you're not very busy at the moment, can you, perhaps, tell me something more about it?

((Well, I hope you can see my problem. Does Pavel seem condescending to anyone else [besides me] in the audience over 30? over 40? Whatever happened to the European tradition of respect for one's elders? Does someone with more patience than I (or Buck) volunteer to reply to Pavel and explain it kindly? Or am I just getting crotchety in my old age? -- This kid may be the Yugoslav Harlan Ellison of the Future!))

Lloyd Penny, 412-22 Riverwood Pky, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M8Y 4E1

Re Mafiaettes Raid Sex Shoppe: Only certain men inhabit such shops... and more fantasize about going into such shops... most never go in or think about going in to those places. They're full of fakery and gimmickry. Yet... I think the forbidden-fruit type of anticipation gives a mini-rush to both sexes. After such a safari, do you feel men are immature emotionally and sexually for supporting such places, or do you understand the attraction? You've stood in male shoes now...

Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224

Guess we're all slowing down. I'd hope to put out three issues of Stickey Quarters by now -- it appears I'll be lucky to find the money to put out two. Worse, I'm beginning to wonder if I shouldn't just chuck the whole idea. The egoboo, as they used to say about FAPA, isn't enough to support life.

Patrick Gibb's "Year in Review" is always fun to read; to compare my list (as it were) to his. Since I don't keep lists, it's a bit hard to compare or to be sure what are the novels of 1987. I remember liking Emma Bull's The War of the Oaks and Gene Wolfe's Soldier of the Mist, and Never the Twain by Kirk Mitchell, which I think are all '87 books. Most of Patrick's choices I must confess I haven't read. // Mafiaettes raid sex parlors. hmmm, yes, interesting thought... how would a woman redecorate?

Best Editor (Hugo) used to be "best magazine", and it's remained that despite the name change. To accommodate Damon Knight's Orbit, Carr's Universe, etc. And despite having her name on every cover, Judy Lynn Del Rey had to die to win a Hugo. And D.A.W., who has done so much to advance SF has never won a Hugo. ((I've been meaning to ask: Why hasn't anyone mentioned Groff Conklin? He edited -- admittedly a long time ago -- the first SF books I read. Does anyone else remember him? -- cp))

Maneuvering a 16'x76' trailer anywhere has got to be a challenge, let alone up a steep, woody hill.

I quite enjoyed Bruno Ogorelec's first installment on Marxism. He makes a good point that what we see as bad about Communism is really Stalinist fascism. Even the USA has lots of socialist programs we will never reject -- Soc. Sec., ADC, SBA, FIDA, etc. The most refreshing history book I ever read was Childe's What Happened in History which used a slight Marxist perspective on familiar events. War as the world's first labor saving device. Wow! What a concept! -- Gotta go. Great issue. Keep up the good work.

Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage City, KS 66523-1329

Lots of feedback on ST-TNG. People, people, it's television -- it's not sup posed to be good. I think the best things about it are the special effects and the potential of the characters (not that the potential has yet been scratched). It was pretty amazing that I don't actively dislike any of the female characters. Yarr would be better if they'd let her kick more ass, but I don't honestly believe that's going to happen. If the Betazoid were the air-fairy sort of creature she could be, given the character, I'm sure I could work up an antipathy, but the actress who plays her is substantial and womanly. In fact, I actively dislike only one character--little Wesley, and that's mostly because he's overused; saves the ship every other episode or so. I'd dislike Ryker except that he seems to have no character or function, now that the Kirk-look-alike-contest of the first episode is past. ((Speaking of Wesley--in a recent ST parody I saw, it ended with "Join us next time when our topic will be: Wesley Crusher--Threat or Menace?))

Of course Harry Warner Jr. is right that most of what's listed in Factsheet Five aren't what he means when he points to fanzines. Pagans and anarchists and back-to-the-landers aren't fans. A lot of the kids who do punkzines are fans--of music. Some of the people who would have been fanzine fans or fanzine editors are doing their thing on computers (I gather; I'm computer illiterate.) And FF doesn't even delve into the world of small press comix, or mediazines. So what we're looking at is immense diversity and greater difficulty in being able to point to something and call it a fanzine in the classic sense.

Milton F. Stevens, 7234 Capps Avenue, Reseda, CA 91335

Patrick Gibbs' attempt to give an overview of the novels of 1987 is a valiant effort. The thought of 1600+ SF and fantasy novels is a bit more than overwhelming. I'm glad there are people out there plumbing the literary depths, so I won't have to develop terminal eyestrain myself.

Short fiction is a different matter. I can sometimes almost keep up with the short fiction. However, I was behind this year, so I resorted to using the Locus Recommended Reading List. Having now read most of the stories on that list, I've

noticed something that surprised me. If you added up all the stories that involved space, other worlds, aliens, and far future civilizations, they wouldn't make up 10% of the total. Time travel and alternate worlds do a little better than that. There are more stories I would class as surrealistic fiction rather than science fiction or fantasy. By my definition, surrealistic fiction is fiction that functions primarily on the symbolic level. In fantasy, things happen for magical/supernatural reasons. In surrealistic fiction, things happen for no reason at all.

I'm presuming that the Locus List is representative of the overall short fiction of 1987. I'm not advocating surrealistic fiction should be suppressed, but I do find the abandonment of the traditional science fiction venues to be surprising. With the tremendous expansion in the number of novels published, it isn't surprising there has been some dilution. However, the short fiction market has contracted, so I can't see any similar explanation for the decline of traditional SF themes.

I agree with Buck Coulson that Lowndes did a fine job of editing with his limited budget. When John Campbell died I thought it would have been interesting to see what Lowndes could have done with Analog. Apparently, the publishers wanted a younger man with a background similar to Campbell's. Since neither Bova nor Schmidt have done a particularly impressive job with Analog, I still think Lowndes would have been a better choice.

Sam Merwin is another editor who did an impressive job. He upgraded Startling and Thrilling Wonder from mediocre magazines to quite good ones. In later years, he had a couple of other minor editorial jobs, but he never was actually in charge of a magazine again.

Bruno Ogorelec should be glad American attitudes towards Communism have mellowed out a lot in the last thirty years. Communism used to be equated with Absolute Evil. Anything that resembled Communism was also absolutely evil. Communism was also contagious, so you could be tainted by mere proximity to a Communist.

In the early sixties, I attended a few meetings of the John Birch Society. At the last meeting I attended, the speaker stated Fidel Castro was importing Congolese cannibals into Cuba and allowing them to run around the countryside eating people. A companion and I waited until we got outside before going into hysterics. We were perfectly willing to believe Soviet leaders were ruthless men who weren't too picky about the methods they used to advance their interests. However, the idea of promoting cannibalism was just plain silly.

In the fifties, Communists were almost credited with the invention of sex. (If that wasn't enough to foment Red Revolution, I doubt anything else ever will.) The idea was that Communists, plus their stooges and dupes, were constantly working to promote the moral degeneration of American youth. Of course, this was a vile canard. Speaking as an American youth of the period, I can state we were doing a perfectly good job of promoting our own moral degeneration without outside help.

Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Road, Strafford, Penn. 19807

I'm glad you've persisted with me and kept on sending ANVIL despite my uninspiring response record. I have far less time for fanac than I used to, but ANVIL, seems to be a really superior production (too dignified, obviously, for me to offer you any of my infamous artwork, the likes of which you may have seen in *Holier Than Thou*) and I managed to read #46 over breakfast this morning. ((Aw, come on, offer!))

I'm afraid I didn't find Bruno's article very enlightening. I was hoping for a vivid and anecdotal account of what life is like for an average person in a Communist country. What I got was a turgid theorizing, which make me suspect that Bruno writes entirely too much in the (yawn-provoking) style of Marx himself. In fact there is precious little idea content in this piece at all, save the familiar cant that anything bad you hear about Communism or Marxism can be blamed on the evil deviations of Stalin. (Itself a debatable point. The most devastating criticism you can make of either is that Stalin and even Pol Pot are logical extremes from the theoretical base. They are. How better to establish a rule of the workers than to kill off everyone who isn't officially accepted as a member of the Working Class? No aristocratic or bourgeois backsliders that way.)

I question your contention that most Americans don't know anything about Communism. Of course most Americans don't think about anything but the details of their own daily lives, but for the more thoughtful there is a great deal of reliable first-hand information available. I mean refugees. It seems a universal characteristic of Communist societies that the government must guard the borders to keep the people in. Admittedly those who have escaped are biased. They were dissatisfied enough to take the very real risk of escaping. But, if you want information on life inside a prison, you have three sources: the warders, the inmates (who are answerable to the warders), and the escapees. Who do you believe?

We've all grown up with refugees from Communism. A little before my time, it was the Chinese. (I knew a fan whose father was a refugee from Communist China.) When I was in gradeschool, it was Cubans. When I was in high school, due to the peculiar nature of that particular school, it was Hungarians and Poles (including most of the faculty). We also had a Russian. Today, American kids are going to school with more Cubans, Vietnamese, and Cambodians. (My younger brother, who teaches small children, has had Cambodians in his classes. They are usually severely disturbed and unmanageable: Holocaust survivors who have had no psychological counselling.)

So, when your classmates have had to flee for their lives and their parents can tell you all about it in considerable first-hand detail, one doesn't have to rely on the press or official propaganda. It still gives most Americans an unfavorable view of Communism.

I like Marc Ortlieb's piece very much. It had the ring of truth to it. I assume this is a factual account and not fancy... and that only rising postal costs have prevented fanzine fandom from switching over from the ephemeral twilltone to this more durable medium...

Buck Coulson only touches on the great editors of our field's past. Let me nominate a few, first two who have probably shaped the field more than even John Campbell:

Walter Bradbury. He was the editor of the Doubleday SF line in the early '50s. He effectively started commercial SF hardcover publishing. That the first Doubleday SF book was The Big Eye by Max Erlich we can overlook. Some early ones include Pebble in the Sky and The Martian Chronicles. Had Walter Bradbury not shown that SF sells in trade hardcover, there might be no science fiction best-sellers today. Before he did it, there were only a few scattered books from the trade publishers, and the rest from fan specialty presses.

Ian and Betty Ballantine. Their revolutionary innovation was a high quality paperback line, thus assuring that SF books wouldn't be isolated incidents, but a steady flow of at least one a month. They raised the standards enormously, publishing within the space of a year or so Childhood's End, Fahrenheit 451, The October Country, More Than Human. If you look through the ads in the backs of old Ballantine books, you'll find that virtually all the books they published are still in print 30 years later, and they're classics. The few non-classics, like Hero's Walk by Robert Crane (reportedly a good book anyway) stand out as striking exceptions.

Sam Merwin. He was the editor of STARTLING STORIES and THRILLING WONDER STORIES from 1946 until about 1951. Just when ASTOUNDING's arteries were beginning to harden, Merwin showed that there could be an adult-level SF magazine other than Campbell's. And strikingly different too. He published a good deal of Bradbury, including most of the stories from The Martian Chronicles, plus Fred Brown's What Mad Universe and Arthur Clarke's Against the Fall of Night, and he discovered and developed Jack Vance. All of which made for a substantial body of high-grade non-Campbellian SF. Before H. L. Gold or Boucher and McComas, Merwin broke Campbell's monopoly on adult SF

((You know, Darrell, a vivid and anecdotal account of life in a Communist country is exactly what I wanted, too, but I didn't express myself too well. This piece came in--and I like it better than you do--and I decided to run it anyway, but now that we've made our wishes public, perhaps we'll get some vivid anecdotes!!))

Roy Tackett, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107

ANVIL 46 arrived a little while ago and I suppose I should do my fannish duty and LoC the thing. // A "living fanzine"? That would be different, I suppose. Wouldn't the mailing list be rather restricted? And how in the world would one send a letter of comment? I'm not sure I'd want a living fanzine showing up in my mail box. Would I have to feed it? Could one send it by mail or have to use UPS? O, well, with things like "Neutering Your Pet at Home", I'm not sure I'd want it anyway.

You may try your best to be a capitalist but it would be a surprise if you made it. You don't feel like a capitalist? Of course not. You are one of the workers. Workers are not capitalists. They are, well, they are workers--a lower form of life. Being a secretary you may be considered a white collar worker which in the strata of life in the USA puts you a rung up on a blue collar worker. Never mind that a blue collar worker may make twice as much as you do. A blue collar worker is always a lower form of life than a white collar worker. Your bosses' great-grandfather, who made the family fortune, was likely one of the "robber-barons" of the later 1800s who exploited everything in sight to make his fortune. That's the way it was in those days. Things are somewhat better these days and we can all

thank Franklin Roosevelt for that. He figured the workers had better get a little bit of the pie in order to head off a revolution.

As for private sector "contributions". Sure. Give a hundred thousand to the new civic center which will give us a better crack at the contract to built it and if we get the contract we stand to make ten million. Oh, they are doing it out of the goodness of their heart? Sure.

((I'm sorry you feel that way, Roy. Charitable trusts don't let contracts. Neither do personal trusts that specify a certain percentage of its income be given to charity each year.))

"Officially registered science fictional societies" of Finland. There is some sort of message there but I'm not sure just what it is. It could be that the government of Finland recognizes science fiction as a legitimate form of literary/social activity which should be encouraged by government grants. I suppose what bothers me about it is that there are bound to be strings--the government will have a say in what is printed; if the government doesn't like it the grant can be withdrawn. I wonder if Finland has any fanzines pubbed by individual.

That's a problem I have with most of the socialist countries, too. There are all sorts of fanzines, they say, but they all have to have some "official" connection. The free-wheeling sort of individual publications we have would seem to be unknown.

I've read only two of the books on Patrick Gibbs' list: "The Uplift War" and "To Sail Beyond the Sunset." The Heinlein wasn't all that thrilling but reading Heinlein seems to be a habit. He writes them and I read them. "To Sail Beyond the Sunset" may well be the end of this particular set of stories. It finishes with "and we all lived happily ever after" so we may hope that any further books will involves something new--and more interesting. As for "The Uplift War", excellent use of formula with all of the hooks attached to make today's readers go for it. The neo-chimps, with their references to Goodall and Tarzan, are sure-fire reader hooks. After all, we all love chimps, do we not? There is only less than 1% DNA difference between us and those murderous little monsters so we are bound to be attracted to them. Cute little killers, aren't they? But that's what binds us together: we're both killer apes.

Be that as it may, I enjoyed "The Uplift War" despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that it was such an obvious story. And, yeah, the Gubru were interesting. Intelligent chickens? Oh, well.

There are lots of dirty movie houses in Albuquerque. That's one of the reasons I don't go to movies much anymore. Get tired of kicking popcorn boxes and stepping in spilled soft drinks. Some of the theater managers are making a minor attempt to clean up but the great movie going public isn't noted for paying attention to exhortations not to litter. Or are we talking about the same thing?

Gee, maybe Andrea should open up a porn shop. She seems to have ideas about how to make the place more attractive. Sparkley stuff and little stenciled hearts. Yes.

Turning to Bruno Ogorelec's pages... I suppose one of the problems we have with socialist/communist regimes is that the governments are, generally although not in

all cases, repressive. OK, so this is Stalinism and not Marxism. Nevertheless much of what we see are restrictions that are, to us, intolerable. Control of the information media is one example but even more intolerable is the control of the individual. But an authoritarian regime is the same whether it be socialist or fascist. From the outside they appear the same. I'm not all that fond of the restrictions that are being put on the individual in this country either.

Cindy T. Riley, Route 6, Box 1050, Pell City, AL 35125

Imagine my surprise when I opened ANVIL and saw the article there immortalizing for posterity's sake my marriage to Sunny Jones. I was at my sister-in-law's home when ANVIL was delivered and was scanning it when I was brought to a screeching halt by the article in question. "Did you know about this?" I asked Andie. "Yes," she answered. Hrrumph. Can't even trust your own relatives. My mother, by the way, thought it was hilarious and is using it as a formal (sort of) announcement that she is sending to out of state relatives.

Jeanne Mealy, 4157 Lyndale Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55409

Nice illo by Taral for the cover, though the blacks were too gray. ((We have corrected that problem by veloxing the cover this time -- better, huh? and worth the expense.))

I greatly enjoyed reading your natter -- whatever possessed you to reread the Hornblower saga? ((Well, why not? I often reread my favorite books--doesn't everybody?))

Oh, my, the Mafiaettes are at it again. Very amusing plot device, the aside comments from Lydia on her innocent rep and true 'worldly ways'. Reminds me of a similar scouting mission I went on with a male-type person. Luckily, he didn't mind the semi-muffled giggling and pointing; he did some of his own. HE'S the one who showed me the power switch for the vibrator display... and helped retract my eyeballs when the devices began humming, buzzing and shamelessly swiveling. The Squirmy Rooter is hand-cranked?! Oh, those mimeo fans!

I sent off a copy of Rune to Don Lee ("a self-confessed neofan"). If he drops out of fandom and runs away to Disneyland, do NOT blame me. ((Thanks, Jeanne. I hope you'll help me with all this correspondence overseas, too. Fandom is just blooming in the Eastern European countries, and as you can tell, I have more correspondents that I can handle on a personal basis -- want to write to Pavel?))

Garth Spencer, #3 - 4313 Watson St., Vancouver, B.C. V5V 3S2 Canada (COA)

Interesting to read ANVIL's current reviews and articles and check back on the address. Either Alabama is more cosmopolitan and aware of the outside world than outsiders believe, or you're going to have a broadening influence.

Can't claim for myself that I'm trying to be a capitalist; I have at least as much as I can do, just trying to stay employed. From your description of your employers, you might enjoy a wonderfully sill book, The English Gentleman, especially its bearing on public service.

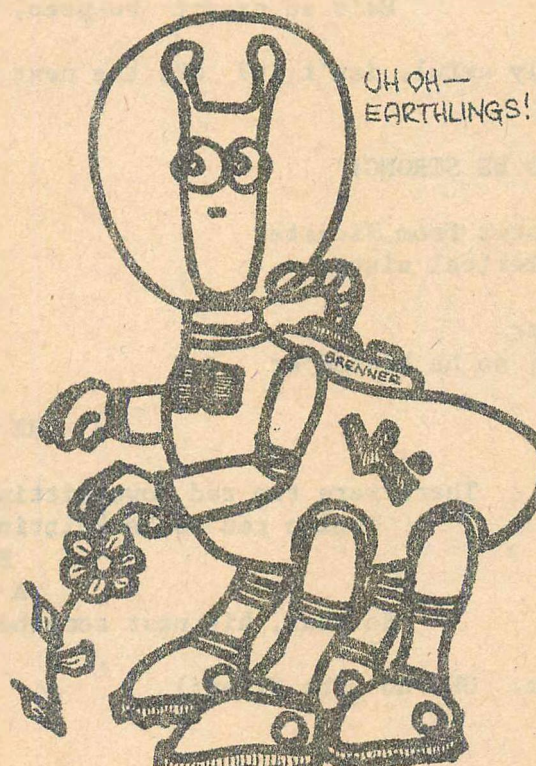
Who is Bob Johnson and why is he writing these terrible things about me? I didn't do anything wrong (that anyone can prove, anyway).

((Having vented our spleen earlier in the loccol on poor Pavel from Yugoslavia, I would like to share a trio of letters that more than make up for Pavel's lack of social graces... this first seems also to be from a young person, but one with better manners. -- cp))

Berislav Pinjuh, Gustava Krkleca 9, 41090 Zagreb, Yugoslavia

Dear Miss/Mrs. Proctor, Your ANVIL fanzine is so famous that I wonder how come I haven't written to you earlier, but the circumstances, you know... I'm writing this letter in hope your big and good heart will have a little mercy for a poor boy who is desperate (I'm only kidding), and I beg you (you're the third person on this Earth I beg, the other two were my girlfriends) to send me a copy of ANVIL. With me, you can be sure you'll get a Loc (if if you send...) My address is (above). Don't pay too much intention to my mistakes.

((To begin with, Berislav, you may call me Dear Charlotte. As to your how-can-I-refuse-it? plea for an ANVIL of your very own, I will make this concession: There are, judging from my correspondence, ever so many readers of ANVIL in Zagreb, and I will henceforth send an extra copy to someone in that city. Postage costs prohibit my sending one to each correspondent, I hope you understand, but I will send an extra one to be passed around.



Krsto Mazuranic, D Zokalja 1, 41430 Samobor, Yugoslavia

It seems we're destined to never meet. I couldn't attend ConFed, you didn't Conspiracy... the story of our lives, wouldn't you say? ((Yeah, but how about New Orleans????))

It seems I managed to snatch a few minutes of my time to type a letter before another "What the heck happened to..." reminder. Well, you know me by now: locs in droves for a while, then silence for a year or so. ((this must be the beginning of a drove...right?)) ANVIL 45 was the latest ish I received and now it's too late to loc it. Too far in the past. Let so much suffice: a stupefyingly stunning good cover! More! More!

I can't remember if I've seen a limerick pubbed in ANVIL. Is it the editorial whim, or is it that your contributors are dispoetic? At some time in the past I was possessed by composing limericks. They hardly scan, they're not at all enough dirty, but they're quite esseffish. Or rather, Larry Nivenish. Please find them enclosed and do whatever you will. I mean, pub them pronto in ANVIL or else.

((Another how-can-I-resist-it plea!--cp))

NEVER THOUGHT OF IT, HUH, MR. NIVEN?

There is a Bandersnatch shamefully lazy
Who likes to lie hidden behind of a daisy.
If you say him never
It's because he's clever:
He's an expert bo-peep, he's totally crazy!

(Aside from Krsto: Totally awful, isn't it? OK, the next one:)

YESSIR, WE JIXIANS TEND TO BE STRONG!

There was a flatlander Mister from Bicester
Who ambushed my ugly, athletical sister.
As soon as he glimps't'er
He frowned and dismissed'er
But she was much stronger, so he kissed'er

THE FLIGHT OF THE HORSE

There were two red cows sitting in a cherry tree,
Woolen red socks knitting, singing merrily.
But look in the sky!
A horse is flying by!
So what, his nest somewhere around, must be.

(Krsto: I'm ashamed, I am. OK, no more Niven:)

THANKS, OGDEN NASH!

The bosomous alien envoy to Natchez
Complained of the masculine stares she catchez:
"They all stare in between
As if what I do were a sin:
Whenever my middle boob itchez Ah skratchez!"

(Ka: Worse and worse. OK, the worst for the end:)

There's a Denebian sports-crazy Centipede
Who's hungering after a ride by velecipede
His wish is unfulfillable
'Cause bike's uncentipedalable,
So he might as well be a Googolcentioctopede!

(Ka: Weeeell, what can I do? They are funny to me...)

((I just hope this doesn't have a bad influence on our readership, Ka. If they start sending limericks and doggerel, and poems, for-crying-out-loud, just remember, it's all your fault. Uh, oh! I feel a limerick coming on....

The obnoxious young fan from Yu-go,
He pissed off Americans two, though
His manners, in truth,
Were only the proof,
That he's just an ord'nary Ne-0!

))

((This last is from Samet--from whom we haven't heard in a long time. He explains why, and wonders if it is cotton-pickin' time down South...))

Samet Nuhlu, Leninova 8, 91000 Skopje, Yugoslavia

Hi hoods, ((what does this mean? Do you suppose he is referring to the Mafia-ettes?)) Long time no heard of me..ye. Well, I had to serve my due to my country. I was in the army. Buck would said: The old Ironmaster confess again. All in all army cost me: ConSpiracy. No, I don't think you wanna know other things. Enough of private tales.

I lo(ok through) ANVIL 44 and a couple of older ANVILs with a hope that I'll see something from New Orleans fandom... result: nullity! ((I have sent Sam a flyer)) Gee, anybody alive there? I got the impression that Worldcon in '88 will be a discovery Con. Then I had a blink of enlightenment... maybe it's the season of cotton vintage? Noo, I say to myself, as far as I know New Orleans is in USA... they have machinery there!?

What are they waiting for? Shit, I even don't know how the state is spelled (I think it's Lousianna) (sic) I haven't seen the name of the state in any fanzine. Yes, I can look in the vocabulary (er, I did, there's no sign of state) but...

Hey you down there! Write something. Is it safe...? Do I need a gun, a blaster or a trumpet for New Orleans? Some say New Orleans has a soul... fine, do I need a talisman? New Orleans, New Orleans...do you read...

Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325

Being a WAHF has its advantages. I continue to receive ANVIL so it can't be that big a disgrace. So, once again, thanks for A#46. A sporadic ANVIL certainly is better than none at all. // As the oil business here in Texas slowly fades away, at age 34 I'm wondering if it isn't time for a drop in income, but a dramatic rise in job (and life) security. As you say, we do indeed live in interesting times.

Andrea Gilbreath's fanzine reviews were like a breath of fresh air, mainly because she devoted a lot of words to discussing them. Too many times fanzines reviews are nothing more than a listing of the contents. Inquiring minds want to know more.

Being basically lazy, I depend on Year in Review type articles to keep me current on what's out there to read and see. Patrick Gibbs' short overview is a good place to start, but not nearly as complete as most.

The Mafiaettes' adventure continues its laugh-provoking ways. This time around even we males could relate to the trials of entering porno palaces.// Brevity this go'round has resulted in a variety of articles that end all too quickly. It's hard to comment on them, except to say none were boring and long-winded.

Reading Walt Willis' letter sparked a thought about Bob Shaw's Slow Glass stories. With all this shared world anthology bullshit, wouldn't it be nice if we could get a Bob Shaw Slow Glass anthology with contributions from folks all over (Walt's idea for a story sounds like a good place to start).

Also, tell Brad Foster his Mech Things is great and one of the B&W comics I read. I hope Renegade will publish it for a long time and that orders will increase.

Richard Gilliam, Box 25676, Tampa, FL 33622-5676

...enjoyed the entire issue, particularly "Mafiaettes Raid Sex Shoppes -- Film at 11..." The reference to the atmosphere in the porn store being like "the shops on the Strip in Tuscaloosa in '73 and '74" is an interesting association, and one that, upon reflection, is quite correct.

There were no "sex shoppes" in Tuscaloosa during that period, and perhaps this might have been mentioned, since most ANVIL readers are probably unfamiliar with Tuscaloosa and with the Strip. The Strip itself is a series of stores located along either side of the main thoroughfare which cuts through the campus of the University of Alabama.

These stores, at least during the period I lived in Tuscaloosa -- 1968 to 1974 -- for want of a better term can be called "Sixties Shoppes." Mostly they were clothing or record stores, often selling both. These were the stores where you went to buy the latest Led Zeppelin album, tie-dyed Tee shirts, black light posters, or incense.

I well remember the battles the city of Tuscaloosa fought to protect the morals of the city. Films rated "X" were banned, which wasn't much of a problem until Oscar-nominated productions such as "A Clockwork Orange" and "Last Tango in Paris" were declared verboten. Here reason overcame censorship. I recall seeing the "X"

rated version of "A Clockwork Orange" in Tuscaloosa. The film was recut shortly after it was released (a common practice for Stanley Kubrick's films---"Dr. Strangelove" and "2001: A Space Odyssey" were also recut.) The "R" version is the one that typically turns up on cable TV or in video stores.

There isn't much difference in the "X" and "R" versions---only about 90 seconds of running time. The most significant deletion comes in one of the rape scenes (choreographed to a Rossini overture) where the victim's legs are pulled apart to the direct view of the camera. Critical opinion doesn't distinguish between the two versions of the film. The cuts were minor enough that there was little complaint.

There was a movie house on the Strip that sometimes showed low-budget "R" movies with a high level of sleaze content, but in no way could it, or anyplace else in Tuscaloosa during that period, be considered a porn shop. You had to know where to go just to buy a copy of "Penthouse."

Tuscaloosa during the Viet Nam era was a town full of contradiction and contrasts. There was a sense of community and yet it was a community divided. In many ways it was a lot like fandom.

Phil Tortorici, P. O. Box 057487, West Palm Beach, FL 33405-7487

#46 was a good vintage. I particularly enjoyed the Mafiaette field trip. The adult child part of me understands the story's bent; the cartoonist in me doesn't believe it because everyone knows women don't enjoy sex. As an occasional purveyor of things carnal, I see a lot of desperate men hanging out in those establishments. [The cartoonist adds that there are a lot of desperate men...and women...in fandom, but that is another story.] It is truly saddening to see grown men eke a little pleasure out of observing what should be a participatory experience.

Also my kudos to Bruno on an enlightening article on Marxism. I listen to a lot of local talk radio -- you (and he) would be horrified to hear how ignorant, yet vocal, the masses are---especially about Marxism.

Roger Weddall, P. O. Box 273, Fitzroy 3065, Australia

The same time as ANVIL arrived, so did news of this year's Best Fanzine Hugo nominees... I was hoping that ANVIL would be on that list, but alas it's not. I can't help feeling that your fanzine was awfully unfortunate to first appear on that ballot the year there was the campaign for "no award"... given the overall abominable quality of the fanzines given the nod that year (including, I'm afraid I must admit, the eventual winner), I nevertheless felt that ANVIL would have been quite an acceptable Hugo winner. What happened, though, is a matter of record: the (quite legitimate!) campaign for "no award" failed by the merest margin, and I can't help feeling that, ever since then, there's been, along with a certain amount of cynical resentment, a labelling of your fanzine as "okay but not good enough." All this, I remind you, is the thinking of someone far-removed from all the debate going on at the time. Nevertheless ANVIL remains one of my favourite fanzines -- along with, say, "Trapdoor" and "Mimosa"... and I'm glad to see another issue after what feels like such a long break.

Speaking of "Mimosa", I liked your article/talk in #4, and can't wait to be able to convert the videotape of the live event that Dick & Nicki sent over, from your TV system to ours. I suspect that seeing you--and others--"in the flesh" (almost) again will make me feel a little homesick, but it will be worth it. Homesick -- I mean it would be lovely to be able to get over to see you at some stage. It can be terribly frustrating at times to be able to write to someone and read their fanzines or letters, and even to 'phone them, but not to be able to touch. Hug, shake hands, whatever. Which brings me back to ANVIL and the people in it. I say 'people in it' and not 'the articles' because in ANVIL it feels to me that there are people I'm reading or reading about who I'm coming to get to know, without every having met. I'm probably going to make a fool of myself one day by presuming that a friendship exists between myself and, say, the Gilbreaths or one of (or all of? heh heh) the Mafiaettes, or Buck Coulson or one of your other regular contributors, where in fact all I've ever done is read about them, their lives, their tribulations and adventures.... ANVIL, you see, is that sort of fanzine for me -- in a sense it is an ideal, a place I go to where everyone is a bit like a part of a big family, or perhaps more accurately (for it would be a rather incestuous family) a collection of old friends and true, a place where we can natter on as we please, much as the fans do in the setting for Marc Ortlieb's "Rock of Pages". Nice work, Marc--if you can't see your way to regularly publishing your own fanzine these days, then at least keep on writing for Charlotte.

All this is not to say that sometimes I won't find fault with what appears in ANVIL -- I've already dashed off a short note to my mate Bruno, chiding him for being so bloody defensive about communism, instead of telling us all about the workings of his own democratic communist Yugoslavia.

If I have criticisms of anything or anyone in ANVIL, it is not the scolding by an impatient teacher of a child whose work does not measure up; it is the cry of someone listening to an anecdote, who wants to know "what happened next"/"tell me more"! Although this probably won't mean anything to you (although if Marc should ever somehow see this he'll know what I meant), reading ANVIL is a lot like sitting in the bar of the Victoria Hotel during a con. Amiable, relaxed, interesting. Hey, I liked the Mafiaettes adventures -- the shifting narrative worked really well. Talk about shifting, though, I metaphorically grimaced as I read of Cindy's trailer being put into place. I just hope she never ever expects to move again, is all.

WE ALSO HEARD FROM: Dave Gorecki who read about us in Lan's Lantern; J. Wayne Sadler, who sent money; Lisa Jenkins who describes herself as a trusting sort of girl; David A. Hardy, newsletter editor for BSFG as well as F&SF and Analog cover artist.
