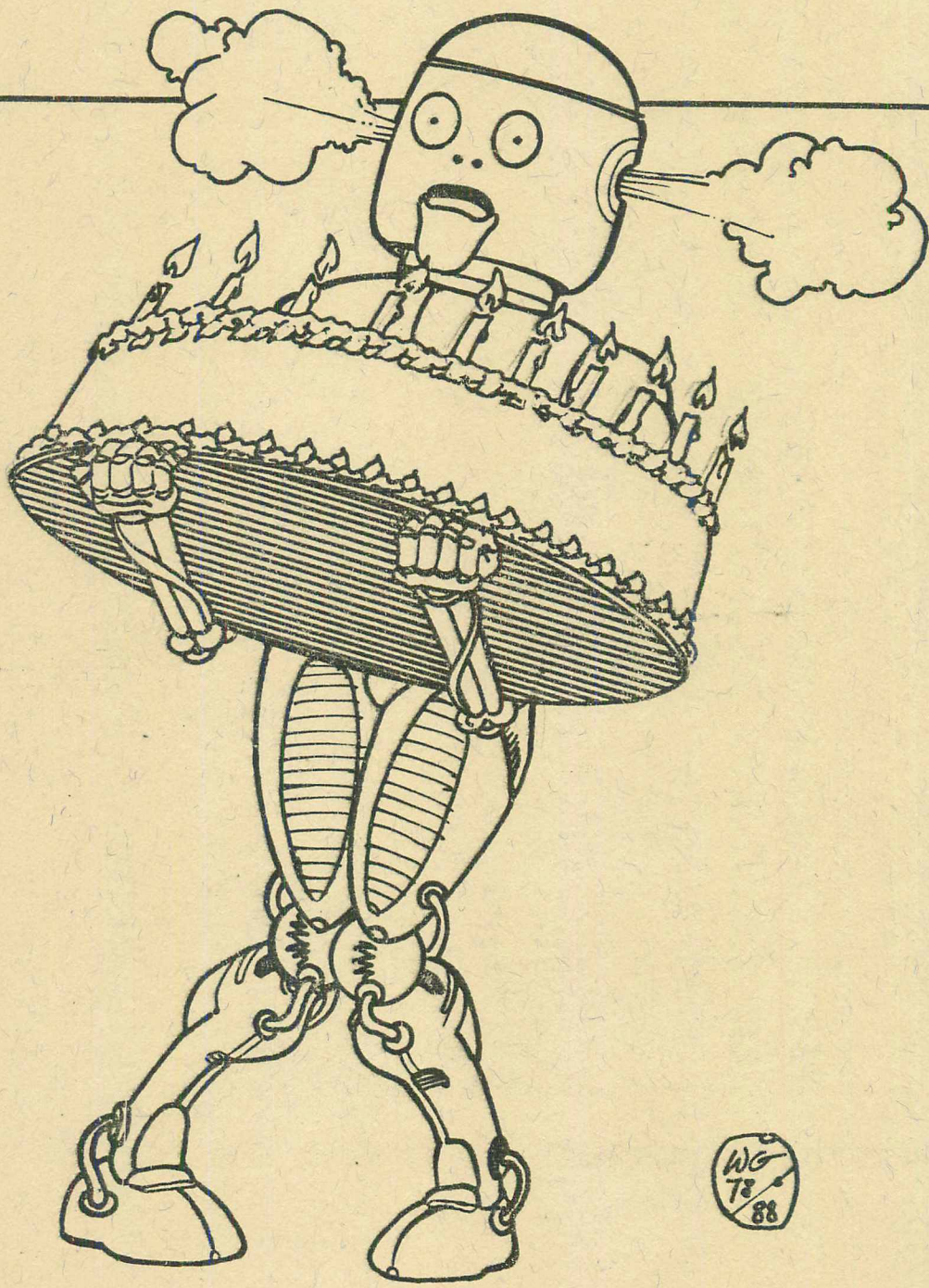


# ANMIL





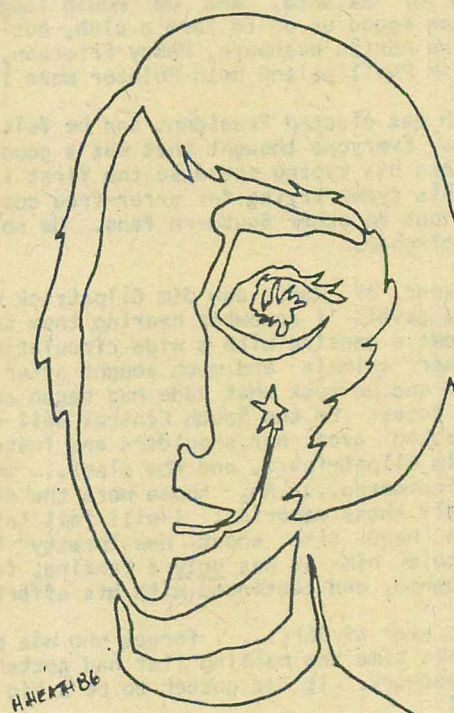




# ANVIL

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ART CREDITS: Wade Gilbreath, Cover; Hank Heath, p.1; William Rotsler, p. 3, 7, 13, 21; Diana Stein, p. 5, 24, 28; Brad W. Foster, p. 9, 14; Bruno Ogorelec, p. 10; Phil Tortorici, p. 16; Steven Fox, p. 19.

WAHF: James O. Caruthers; Patricia M. Konarski; Kathleen Gallagher; Mike Resnick; Dallas Swan; Boris Zavgorodny; C.S.F. Baden; Diana Stein; Frank Brayman; Irvin Koch; Dick Lynch with a change of address: Box 1270, Germantown, MD 20874.

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# CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Catherine Mintz wrote to us saying, in part: "I got the 47th issue of ANVIL yesterday and was momentarily taken aback when I wondered how many years the party's been going on? Forty-seven issues! If I remember correctly ANVIL was a clubzine for a long time then went genzine. So how old is ANVIL? And is Charlotte the Old Original Founding Editor or did someone else help rack up all those issues?"

Funny you should ask, Catherine. It just so happens that issue #48 which you hold in your hands even now as we speak is our 10th anniversary. The first meeting of the first science fiction club in Birmingham -- the Birmingham Science Fiction Club, known familiarly as BisFic -- was held in October of 1978. Little was heard from Southern fandom in those days, and nothing from Birmingham. Oh, 6 or 8 of us went to conventions in Nashville or Atlanta, and we would laugh about never seeing one another in the town where we lived. Meade Frierson egged us on to form a club, but he has never attended a meeting. Besides Meade, other early B'ham fans were Adrian Washburn, Penny Frierson, Frank Love, Wade Gilbreath, my daughter Valerie and I. Jim Gilpatrick, Jim Phillips and Beth Pointer were in on the early times.

Wade Gilbreath was elected President and he felt that a club should do something and that 'something' should be to publish. Everyone thought that was a good idea and that Wade should do it. Wade is known for his fan art rather than his typing speed so the first issues, while graphically appealing, were painfully produced by Wade at his typer trying for error-free copy. Wade distributed the fledgling ANVIL to club members and mailed some out to other Southern fans. He solicited art and articles, and established ANVIL as the clubzine from Birmingham.

The second year of BSFC saw Jim Gilpatrick elected president. Wade turned over the editorship of ANVIL along with the gavel. I remember hearing them talk about the future of ANVIL, about how they both wanted to see ANVIL become a genzine with a wide circulation in fandom, with lots of good art and articles, "different from all other animals and much sought after by five in the afternoon." Jim is a real go-getter, a real ball of fire and he took what Wade had begun and ran with it. He also felt ANVIL should be a club project and, having access to the South Central Bell offices where he worked, he enlisted club members to type the zine. He looked over our shoulders and instructed us where to leave space for illos. Beth Pointer, Jim Cobb, Wade, Jim Gilpatrick... and who else... were there. I was known as "Chief Typist". We all went out for pizza afterwards... Ah, those were the days... (Catherine Mintz, you know not what you have done, to bring back all these memories. I will fall into nostalgia-land and never be heard from again!) I remember giving Jim a hard time about how "pretty" he was trying to make ANVIL; why, he was even establishing a format! I told him it was only a fanzine, for crying-out-loud! He took it good-naturedly (Jim's a good tease) and laughed, and continued with his efforts.

In the third year of BSFC... I forget who was prez but D.L. Burden and Jim Cobb undertook the editorship of ANVIL. By this time the mailing list had gotten pretty big, we had a postal permit and loccars were coming out of the woodwork. It had gotten to be a big job, and a gratifying one. ANVIL was being reviewed in the fannish press!

Jim Gilpatrick left Birmingham to follow his career and we no longer had access to his office typewriters. We were left to our own devices and it was pretty grim. I was working at Clow Corporation (they made cast iron pipe) and after D.L. and Jim had edited, typed and pasted up the originals, I copied it, using BSFC paper. I remember going to the front office after hours and zapping double-sided copies, 50 at a time. The Comptroller, the Sales Manager and the General Manager in turn spoke to me as they left the office: "Working late, eh? Goodnight, Charlotte."

Richard and D.L. moved, Jim Cobb had better things to do than spend his life, his fortune and his sacred honor on a fanzine, for crying-out-loud, and guess who was just dying for a chance to edit ANVIL, really, instead of just being a typist and copy-person. You're right, it was me. I didn't feel really capable though, of doing the whole job, and would only do it if Wade would promise to help me by editing the locs. In the meantime Clow closed down and I was "between jobs", drawing unemployment. ANVIL 22 (June, 1982) was my first issue, and it was done by mimeo. "ANVIL takes a giant step backward," my first editorial began. Actually, fanzines are dinosaurs, a dying breed at best, or perhaps the kind of fanzine we were trying for is hopelessly old-fashioned, but I always felt (and still do) that mimeo is the only true-fannish way to publish. Meade Frierson offered the top-of-the-line A.B. Dick mimeo he had inherited from his office and that he no longer used for copying fanzines, as he had access to top-of-the-line Xerox at the office. I immediately took him up on it and the club and I split the cost of refurbishing it. It had been sitting up for 5 or 6 years and was all crudded up. It lives at my house. I give it a good home.

About this time, egged on by Wade, I decided to tell the world that ANVIL was no longer a clubzine. There were other clubs in town by now... Magic City Fantasy for one, and McCaffrey clubs. After BSFC went private, Renaissance SF Club sprang into being. There are a couple of other clubzines, with listings of events, etc. and we had always wanted ANVIL to be a genzine. Unfortunately, this was taken by certain members of the fanzine scene to be a sign of snobbery. If your zine is born a genzine, that's all right, but you can never aspire to change your spots once you are born a clubzine! And then there was the whole thing about ANVIL being nominated for a Hugo in 1986. ANVIL's nomination provided more grist for the fannish mill: Was it a valid nomination? Was it worthy to be nominated?



On the brighter side, ANVIL continued to grow and to become known in the fanzine community. Harry Warner was our first Big-Name Loccer. We had correspondents and contributors in Australia (Marc Ortlieb), England (Bob Shaw), loccers from The Netherlands, Finland, Canada, and finally we heard from Walt Willis. Krsto Mazurnic resurfaced, followed by letters from Czechoslovakia. ANVIL had become internationally known, different from all other fanzines, and much sought after. It is now five in the afternoon, ANVIL is much sought after, and Charlotte needs some help.

To this end, the Mafiaettes are going to help produce ANVIL. Wade had long since given up editing the locs, but Penny Frierson has volunteered--not only to edit Locs, but to solicit material! The mailing list is a mess and badly needs updating. Linda Riley said "But that's just organizational work. I can do that!" ANVIL still needs to be typed, but I don't mind straight typing and I have a lovely wordprocessor at work, you see -- So, ANVIL marches on...

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Yes, I really do still live at 8325 7th Avenue South. And thereby hangs a tale. I had noticed I was not getting a lot of interesting mail lately. Sure, the bills still came, and Forrest got mail. "Resident" and "Occupant" were well supplied with reading material and Conus Fleming, my niece, even got the occasional missive. I even receive mail for 8325 7th Court and Terrace.

When Penny and I went to Atlanta a couple of weeks ago, Pat Gibbs told me my meeting notice had been returned marked "Moved - Left No Forwarding Address." I laughed... "No, I'm still there. The Post Office goofed." I thought no more of it until Dick Lynch called me at work from Maryland with the same story about the COA he had sent me. The next night Merlin Odom said mail to me had been returned to him. By now I had figured out that the bills came to Jerry, and what with everyone else's mails coming in, the only person not getting mail was "Charlotte Proctor"! Monday was a holiday but Tuesday morning first thing I called my branch P.O. and asked to speak to the manager. "This is the manager, Honey. What can I do for you?" Talk about adding insult to injury! In as business-like a manner as I could, I explained my problem to the manager. He consulted with the staff and then told me that mail had been returned from 8325 marked "Unknown, Not at This Address, Return to Sender", and that when the postman had tried to deliver it again, it had again been rejected.





Right away I knew. "Yes, that mail was addressed to 'Ronnie Holland' in care of me at my address. It is 'Ronnie Holland' who is unknown and who does not and never has lived here," I said through clenched teeth. (Ronnie is my niece's ex and for some reason I was receiving his bills--of course I was sending them back.) Why in the name of Ghod the postman thought I didn't live there when it was Ronnie Holland the mail was addressed to I don't know, but I was left feeling that I was the one who was stupid. You win some, you lose some. In any event, you may mail me stuff again, I might even get it.

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The Mafiaettes haven't been up to much lately. We went to New Orleans, but it rained. Penny bought a Lincoln Town Car. It doesn't have as large an engine as the Caddy, but it'll do. Linda and P.L. and I are happy she still has a car large enough for her friends and their luggage. I drove it home from Atlanta in the rain and it held the road real good... We pronounce it a car fit to carry the Mafiaettes. Penny, Linda and I went out one Friday night, messing around in honor of Penny's birthday. Andrea couldn't go, but then she never can go anywhere these days.

Well, the Mafiaettes did get together one night and get drunk and watch an "art" film, but you don't want to hear about that I

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Ya wanna hear the latest news and gossip? The news is that Charlotte is NOT standing for TAFF. The gossip is that though a lot of people wanted her to, her job kept her from leaving the country until after the income tax deadline which is April 15. That precluded her going to Eastercon the last weekend in March (Oh, she could have gone, but a TAFF representative -- if she were so lucky to be one -- should stay longer than a weekend, or even a week, which is as long as they would allow her to be gone.)

I had put out feelers early on, but did not hear anything back from the TAFF people. What I did hear though was rumors from England. Martin Tudor asked if I preferred "Mexicon or the Eastercon in Jersey?". British zines I receive in trade were mentioning the possibility that I would be standing for TAFF.

And I finally made up my mind to do so. I got my American nominators lined up, wrote up my platform, sent in my money and my pledge to attend, barring Acts of God, any convention after April 15, so that I could stay in the country for several weeks afterwards visiting various fan groups.

But my bubble was burst. I had a real nice phone call from Jeanne Comoli explaining why my plans just wouldn't do. After the initial disappointment, I cheered by the knowledge that I wouldn't have to be a TAFF administrator after all.

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Mike Glicksohn mentioned receiving mail from a fan in prison. Well, it's not unknown for fans to go to prison -- Ted White is our best-known example, while in the Southern reaches, Sam Castfriend from Atlanta was the "Con's con" one year. So when I received a letter from a John Spellman in the West Jefferson Correction Facility, saying he had gotten ANVIL's address from Factsheet Five, I thought he could be just another fan gone wrong. Or he could not. I replied cautiously, asking among other things, what he had done to be in West Jefferson.

The answer, when it came a few days before I left for New Orleans, was not reassuring. He told me that he was serving a life sentence for murder. His letter indicated that he was a student of creative writing. By this I mean that he wrote me a detailed biography, the details of which could not be checked.

Now I'm worried. He knows my home address, and his credentials are not sterling. I don't want to make him mad. I haven't yet replied, and I can only hope that he got tired of waiting for my reply and that he wrote to me again and the Post Office returned it marked "Moved -- Left No Forwarding Address" !!!

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I just had a letter from our Czech correspondent, Ladislav Peska. I had asked him to send me a brief report on Parcon, the Czech National Convention, but he sent me instead a report written by Eva Hauser, the top award-winning writer at that convention! ANVIL is honored.

Bruno Ogorelec's article is concluded in this issue, Richard Gilliam sent a well thought-out and well researched piece on Harlan Ellison's early works, and Mark Manning sent a delightful piece of faan fiction! The Old Ironmaster Dithers, and Charlotte's Web has rambled on longer than usual this time. The cover art is by Founding Father Wade Gilbreath. Hope you enjoy this 10th Anniversary issue! Keep those cards and letters coming...

By the way, Subscribers, your subscriptions just expired. Send Money. Members: your annual dues are due in January. Pay early and avoid the rush!



# PARCON REPORT

-- Eva Hauser

Parcon, the 7th meeting of Czechoslovak SF Fans, was held in Ostrava (a Moravian town which is approximately equally distant from both east and west ends of our republic). Ostrava is a miners' town, so the accommodations were provided at the campus of the College of Mining. The term of the meeting was untraditional, too: from the 16th to 18th July 1988, at the time of school holidays.

The program was rich, with many simultaneously held lectures, discussions, book auctions and exhibitions. I can hardly guess the number of fans present in the large auditorium during the official opening - perhaps 400-600 fans. During the first evening they met several editors from various publishing houses; the editors were exposed to a real cross-examination about editions of newly translated books, re-editions of famous foreign authors and publications of new Czech and Slovak SF. The same happened with the delegation of authors and editors the German Democratic Republic who explained (in a wonderful "German-Czech") the situation in SF publishing in their country.

A prominent personality of the meeting was our most popular SF writer Ondrej Neff, who got the Prize of European SF Union for his book of essays about SF shortly before the meeting. He gave an excellent lecture about creative writing and (in a smaller circle of listeners) a friendly, relaxed information, rather a chat, about Czechoslovak fandom, about perspectives of publishing an official SF journal and some comic books; our fans long for comics especially eagerly as comics are still considered by some officials "a second-rate, decayed entertainment".

Some other lectures were given on space flights, on methods of translations from foreign languages and even on "Scifilia" which is a fictional planet reflecting the whole history of our fandom: various continents, countries and islands represent different SF clubs.

A yearly competition of new short SF stories was held this time, too. The prize awarded to the winner is a small black ceramic figure - a newt, inspired by the novel "The War With The Newts" by our classic author Karel Capek. About 400 authors participated in this competition, but the number of jury-persons was perhaps still more respectable: 20 of our most active SF fans, editors and SF writers. Five or ten best short stories were all squared so that the differences between the sums of awarded points were small. Anyway, when I started to anticipate that I can possibly obtain the Newt, I became terrible excited, and when I really got it, I was simply overwhelmed! Some of my friends were astonished that a woman could win the competition, but there is obviously no reason for such astonishment, as there are a lot of women in Czechoslovak fandom by now.

Every year a second Newt is awarded for special credit for our SF movement. This time Kaja Saudek, the author of numerous ingenious comics, which unfortunately are not published as much as our fans would wish, was awarded this Newt.





# MOVIE TIME

-- Charlotte Proctor

For some time now I have noticed that the hard-core, old-time, science fiction fans who pride themselves on being able to read, have looked down their nose at \*gasp\* the Media fans! All the while, these self-same holier-than-thou fans who read are sneaking peeks at SF reruns while vehemently denying that they are "Trekkies"... Not to mention paying good money to see every new Star Trek Movie that comes out as well as "Predator", "Robocop" and "The Hidden".

Perhaps the above attitude is a bit overstated, but I am one of the guilty parties and I should know. However, as this decade advances, I have become more and more aware that we literate snobs have been denying, to our own detriment, the validity of Science Fiction in today's SF movies. Granted, back in the old days, SF movies were poor efforts, vastly underbudgeted, campily acted and properly consigned to the "B"-movie category. Even those "classic" old movies with original and/or viable plots and scripts could not rise above their origins, as those were the "bad old days" when Science Fiction was underdog... second-rate literature... bug-eyed monsters... lurid covers on pulps, etc., etc., etc.

But now, all of a sudden it seems, the market is flooded with SF films, some of which are valid, legitimate Science Fiction films. When did it happen? I'll bet it began when the public's imagination was captured by the Space Race... when those things that we had read about all our lives and almost took for granted would happen did happen, to the wonder and delight and pride of the general American public. When Science Fiction became Science Fact, when Technology caught up with Fantasy, when the American Public, the Yuppies, the Dinks, the Mundanes, accepted not only space flight, but space men (or E.T.s), and space travel far beyond the Moon. And Monsters, don't forget monsters! We began to see re-makes like "Invasion of the Body-Snatchers", silly movies like "Gremlins" and "Critters", and late-night reruns of "Day of the Triffids".

In much the same way that we have seen SF books go Mainstream, we have seen Mainstream movies go SF. The public, of course, demands to be entertained, to be titillated, to be shocked... movies these days, SF or otherwise, are not known for their subtlety. The public must be served, and a movie is a much bigger production, cost-wise, than a book-- though only one author's family depends on his income from a book, many families depend on the income from the production of a movie. So I will make exceptions for loud noise, nearly naked women (and men), gross visual effects and other ploys unnecessary to the advancement of the plot. I will look over these things, and look to the characterizations and story lines.

The first big budget SF films were the adventures, the Space Operas... Special Effects were the thing for a while. Well, that's all right... I loved to read space adventure stories, why not watch them? Television aided and abetted this acceptance by and ultimate enthusiasm of the viewing public for the previously-downgraded literary step-child: Science Fiction. Star Trek, Star Wars, Battle-Star Galactica... a far cry from "My Favorite Martian". And then my favorite Martian, Ray Bradbury, had his own show on Cable TV, not many years after the film version of his "Something Wicked This Way Comes" was released.

Not all the early efforts of serious SF film-makers were financial successes. They were not all critical successes either, but what do critics know? I ask you, was not "Something Wicked" faithful to the story, and did it not convey the Octoberish miasma of Bradbury, and did you not cringe and weep at the confrontation in the library? The only story that can be successfully transposed in its entirety to the Silver Screen, in my opinion, is a short story. "Something Wicked" made this transformation. Those who deny it are not paying proper attention, and by that I mean that to properly appreciate a Bradbury story in either medium, one must concentrate, give yourself over to the mood, the dream... but I digress.

Film-making is a chancy business at best, and the biggest gambles can produce the biggest box-office flops. One such was the DeLaurentiis production of "Dune", released in 1984. It is a beautiful movie, and illustrates the book as no set of still pictures possibly could. The music is heroic (Love that "Prophecy" theme); the sets are perfect for each planet; the costumes are ideally suited to each population and character. And the characters were Frank Herbert's creations -- the casting was impeccable. The script is vignettes lifted, word-for-word, from the book. There is no doubt when watching the movie that you are seeing illustrated scenes from the book. The one scene the movie changed (and that, for the better,) was Paul's water of life scene which in the book was hidden away in the furthestmost recesses of a steich. (Paul was in a coma for three weeks -- rather dull for a movie.) This scene was moved to the desert, his Fedaykin in attendance and Chani administering the poison potion, with film magic and the invisible orchestra adding drama to a pivotal scene. The fact that none of the story lines in Herbert's novel could be successfully followed in making the film left us, the viewers, with a movie that was less than the sum of its parts. It was generally agreed that if you had not read the book, you could not follow the movie. Well, I had read it, and I loved the movie.

Just yesterday I finally had the opportunity to view the television version released earlier this year, with 15 additional minutes! I really had mixed emotions about it. It was wonderful to see scenes of Gurney playing the baliset, and doing his "quotation for every occasion" bit, and hearing Stilgar preparing Paul for his first worm-ride. But it was awful to see Kynes and the Fremmen with brown eyes in those scenes. In retrospect, I liked the real movie better.



"Robocop" did better at the box office, I think. I don't really care, though, because I laughed with joy all the way through this movie. It was basic science fiction -- this was the sort of stuff I used to read. I didn't laugh because it was funny (until the last scene), but because it was right -- they did it right! Robocop: cyborg, part remains of Good Cop, part Peace-Keeping Robot, is haunted by flashes of memory - identity - selfawareness, that gives Robocop his humanity. How gratifying it is to see it done well, and how scary to think that we will only have SF movies done right for so long as the public interest is held -- that this, too, will pass away, and when Anti-grav and Time Travel and FTL Drive are Science Fact, Science Fiction as we know it will be long forgotten. Well, it won't happen in my lifetime, so let's live for today!

And that brings us to a recent release, "The Hidden". Set in a modern city, this story of an interstellar cop hunting down a galactic madman has all the elements that make a Science Fiction thriller/adventure story into a classic story of revenge, childhood innocence, love and sacrifice. This story had a lot in common with "Starman" -- both had protagonists who assumed the body or shape of a human in order to survive to do the job necessary, under a great deal of pressure, not to mention having to adapt to a strange culture, and getting humans to cooperate in their efforts, all before time runs out! "The Hidden" was more subtle in its messages and the subtleties, when they occurred, were the more effective for the fifteen bullets it took to slow down the bad guy in the zonedout stripper's body and his comic reincarnation in the body of a dog!

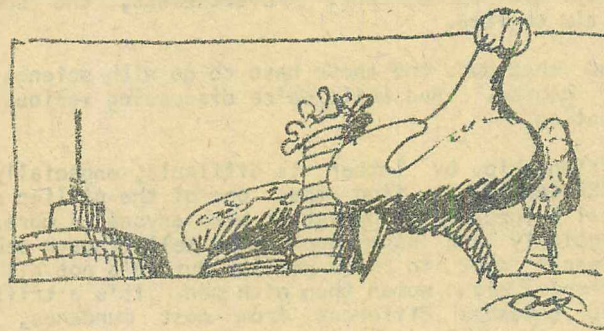
These excesses were essential to the plot... well, maybe the dog wasn't necessary, but it was funny... and close attention was paid to detail in every scene. Befriended by the City Police Detective Tom Beck (Michael Nouri), Pseudo FBI agent Gallagher (Kyle MacLachlan) displays a singleminded determination to get his man. The fact that his man keeps changing bodies as each is damaged too badly to use confuses the issue, as the Earthside cops aren't thinking "Spaceman". This is, as I said, a modern day setting, and only those of us who have read SF all our lives are going to readily accept the idea of a bodysnatcher. But no matter, the story advances when Beck takes Gallagher home to dinner. Gallagher looks at the house... he looks at the furnishings... he looks at things as if he had never seen such before. He holds his fork awkwardly, he is socially a little unsure. During this part of the film it is brought home to us how alone Gallagher is. He is stranded. Out of a sense of duty (revenge?) he has followed this mad entity to a strange and possibly hostile planet. And it surely will be hostile when and if it is discovered he is a body-snatcher, too. No matter that the body he took (found?) was not needed by its owner any more... just assuming the identity of an FBI agent is enough to get one (human or alien) into big trouble. Not only am I sympathetic, but so is Beck's wife and that's a good thing, as it turns out.

The Beck's pre-school daughter takes one look at Gallagher and knows. He returns her look... they have what is called "a moment" before breaking the visual link. This small and easily over-looked scene is critical to the understanding of the last scene in the movie. The little girl embodies and represents that elusive and easily-lost ability to see the truth which only the very young and innocent have. Sort of like the Sense of Wonder that we hate to lose when we become older and wiser...

The relationship between Beck and Gallagher is a love story... between alien species. It's First Contact, after all. Liking and respect come gradually, then a seeming betrayal splits them asunder. The film's crisis brings the truth of the matter home to Beck who stands by Gallagher in battle with their common enemy. "How does it feel to be Human?" the bad alien shouts. "...All right," Gallagher answers, cutting his eyes to Beck's face, which is a study in shock and sudden understanding as the penny drops. Soon thereafter, the bad alien gets away (temporarily) leaving the Detective mortally wounded. Gallagher kneels, holding Beck's hand, head bowed in grief.

All this time, I'm thinking: this is an Alien. This is an intelligent life form from God-knowswhere with the power to travel between stars, take on whatever form is available and who probably thinks we are incredibly ugly, not to mention low on the evolutionary scale. But there is love between these two representatives of alien species. This is the most positive movie I've seen in a long time. The last scene is natural, not contrived, and is a "happy ending" that makes me want to cry -- without a word being spoken, the posture and steady gaze of the child speaks volumes.

I said earlier that the market is flooded with Science Fiction films -- would that they were all as good as this one.





# IRONMASTER AT LARGE

THE OLD IRONMASTER DITHERS

by Buck Coulson

Since writing my last column, I've written down several subjects that I might comment on for someone (I'm also doing columns for MENTOR and OTHER WORLDS -- the latter is a new semi-prozine, not the one Ray Palmer edited -- and articles for LAN'S LANTERN). But none of them came out long enough for a column, so I'll try a variety of short subjects this time, beginning with a short history lesson. You may take notes if you wish.

How many Southern fans know that the greatest maritime disaster in western history occurred seven miles north of Memphis, Tennessee? (I'm restricting this to western history because China occasionally loses incredible numbers of people in riverboat, ferry, and coastal steamship disasters.) I was reminded of this when I borrowed a library copy of TRANSPORT TO DISASTER, by James W. Elliott. The Sultana was a Mississippi sidewheel steamboat, and in 1865 it was one of a number of such boats used to ship north the former occupants of Confederate military prisons. The war was over, and the quickest way to get the ex-soldiers back home, especially if they were from the western states, was to send them up the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, contracting with civilian carriers to move them.

The Sultana, with a rated capacity of 350 passengers and crew, was loaded with from 2200 to 2300 ex-prisoners, in addition to 100 cabin passengers and the crew of approximately 80, and headed north from Vicksburg. One wonders how that many people were put on board; a photo shows the decks crammed with standing men. The Mississippi was having its usual spring flood, so the boat stayed in the middle of the river instead of trying to hug a shoreline as usual; the shoreline wasn't there any longer. The river spread out for miles through the trees and brush that marked the usual shore. At 2:00 AM, April 27, north of Memphis and two miles from a town named Mound City, Arkansas (which the book's author said still exists, but which isn't included in our Rand-McNally atlas), the boilers burst and the boat caught fire. No other boats were in sight, so the passengers who hadn't been blown overboard in the initial explosion had to jump for it, and try to find the shore in the middle of the night, in a flood. One man who had gone quietly to sleep on the deck above the boilers woke up in mid-air, and lived to tell about it. People fought over floating debris, swam to treetops showing above the flood, and some drifted all the way back to Memphis, and farther.

There are three "official" estimates of the deaths. The army listed 1238, a figure the book's editor calls "little short of absurd". Of course, the army was engaged in a successful whitewash operation, to make sure that no officers were court-martialed for overloading the boat. The U.S. Customs Service at Memphis recorded 1547 deaths, while a contemporary history of river navigation listed 1647. Elliott believes the casualties "must have been at least 1585", and Juanita's disaster encyclopedia, DARKEST HOURS, accepts the 1547 figure. For comparison, the Titanic caused 1517 deaths. Figures vary because, once the army got through, there were no official figures on the number of people crammed onto the boat.

Part of the reason for lack of general knowledge of the Sultana is that Lincoln was assassinated on April 14, and the newspapers of the time were full of details of the funeral train, the trial of the assassins, and so on. Another reason is the area and people involved; the NEW YORK TIMES closed its brief account by commenting that "none of the victims are from states east of Ohio" -- and therefore they are unimportant. Nevertheless, the southern reaches of the Mississippi have a certain morbid claim to fame.

And what does the above have to do with science fiction, someone is sure to ask. Why, nothing at all, of course. And while we're discussing various other things, there are a couple of quotes I'd like to mention.

"Friendship by letter is difficult, especially between a man and a woman." (Desmond Bagley, WYATT'S HURRICANE). I find that one of the sillier statements that I've encountered lately. Friendship -- real friendship -- by letter with anyone is more difficult than it is between people who see each other regularly and know each other well (though occasionally there are people one sees regularly that one doesn't want to know well). But it's not all that hard, and I haven't found it any harder to become friends with women than with men. It's a trifle easier, if anything; of course, most women in fandom are somewhat different from most mundanes, in being more self-assured and with a wider variety of interests. (Or in having trashheap minds, if you prefer.)

"Very marked difference between the sexes is male tendency to procrastinate doing practically everything in the world except sitting down to meals and going up to bed." (E.M. Delafield, DIARY OF A PROVINCIAL LADY). I don't really think this is true, either, but I have a hard time refuting it, since it's definitely one of my own tendencies. Possible some men in the audience can come up with refutations.

"Society is commonly too cheap. We meet at very short intervals, not having had time to acquire any



new value for each other." (Henry David Thoreau). Maybe fandom is such a relatively friendly group because we don't see each other at short intervals? I certainly enjoy going to conventions and talking to people I don't see at any other time, as well as writing letters to people I don't see often -- sometimes to people I've never seen at all.

"Buck was a really terrible cook." (D.B. Newton, BEST WESTERN, May 1957). no. comment.

"Beyond drink, social climbing and fornication, the amusements of the upper class of New South Wales were not the same as they are today." (Robert Hughes, THE FATAL SHORE). Any upper-crust Australians care to refute this one?

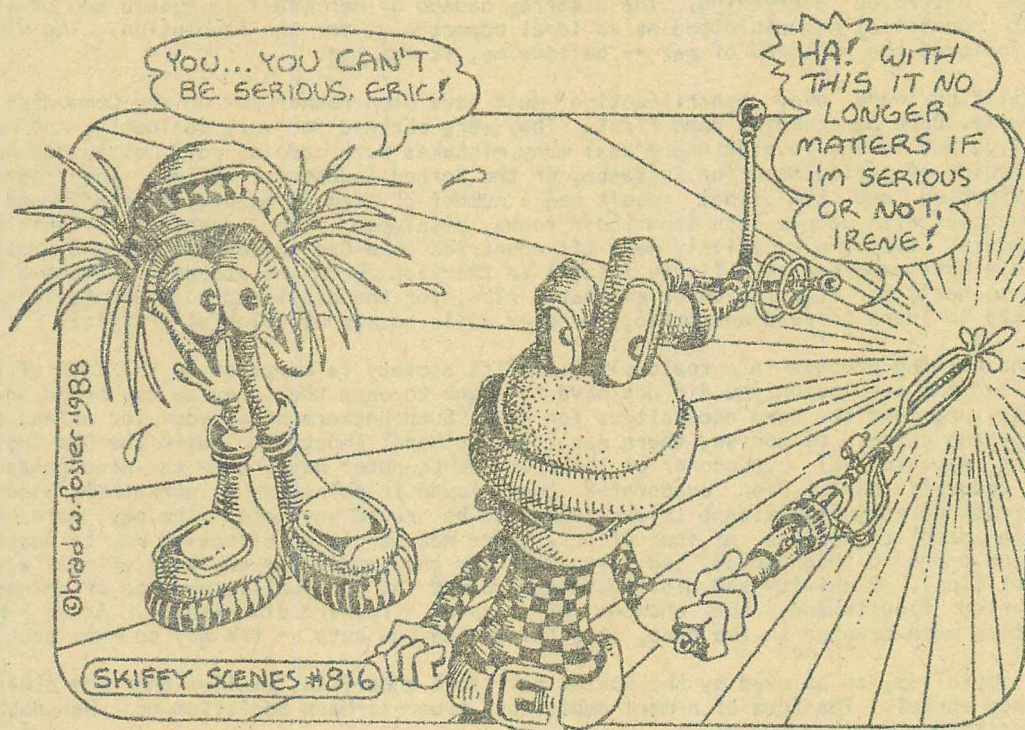
Harlan Ellison has been discussing in F&SF the evils of Hollywood, with emphasis on plagiarism. I've mentioned some episodes of plagiarism in science fiction in my CBC column, and noted that it's sometimes hard to draw the line between plagiarism and inspiration. How do you prove that A did indeed read B's story, for one thing? Independent invention has happened, as well. E. C. Tubb and Tom Godwin must have turned in almost identical stories to their respective publishers at very nearly the same time; they were published a month apart, if my memory is correct. On the other hand, when an almost word-for-word copy of Anthony Boucher's "Nine-Finger Jack" turned up in an issue of GALAXY by another author, there wasn't much doubt as to what had happened. A fan once sent us a plagiarized article for YANDRO; fortunately, Morris Scott Dollens had previously sent us the original because he thought we'd be interested in it. (We never published anything else by that fan.) A plagiarized poem did get by us. But fandom is a poor ground for plagiarizing, since fans read such an amount and variety of material, and keep a sharp eye out for items that can be parodied.

Here's a sample; what do you think?

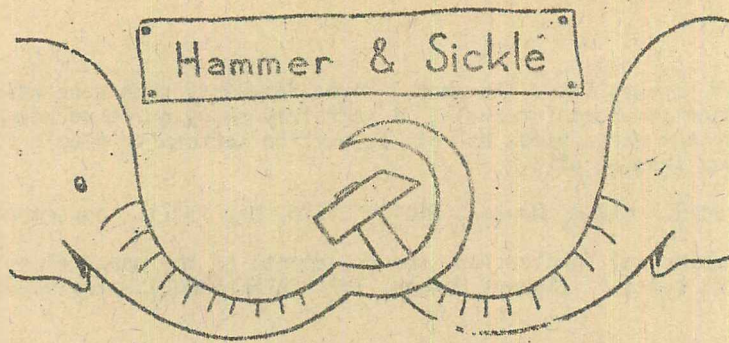
"He wasn't much older than the boy with the college sweater but he was a different kind of a man, early seasoned and clearly at home in this dusty land." (Some Were Brave", Ernest Haycox, 1940)

"He didn't seem much older than Y-sweater in years, but in experience he was aged ... His narrow legs and arms were held in the dignified assurance that comes from many emergencies met and conquered." ("Borderland", by George C. Appell, 1952)

Legally, of course, it's inspiration; the idea is identical but the words are much different. But the stories were quite similar..... Your monthly grade will be determined by your answer.







PART THREE: Elephant and the Boot

by Bruno Ogorelec

No, this is not the name of an English pub. It is Orwell's metaphorical boot that we are talking about. A thorny subject for anyone who would discuss Communism from a sympathetic viewpoint. In Part One of the series I castigated both fandom and Time magazine for superficial thinking about Marx, and for fondling the elephant the wrong way. In Part Two the propagandist approach of the media was exposed. I pointed out how beneficial the Soviet system is for the Culture of the Masses. With incisive logic I pierced the formerly firm image of Marxism and communism as abominations. Good.

Now for the hard part. The people are repressed there, I can hear you cry. Yes, I know. The fact has been rammed down our throats often enough for sure. So often, in fact, and so obsessively, that Communism and repression have become entwined in public perception in the West, forming an unavoidable syntagm. No one thinks about the other side of the coin any more, about the totality of life. No one asks why the majority of people in the Communist countries dismiss the problem with a shrug. Look, our elephant of a society surely cannot consist of nothing but millions of dissidents hemmed in by the millions of KGB agents, while in the meantime millions of Red Army soldiers wait impassively for World War III to start. Such a society would not last a year, much less seven turbulent decades.

Well, what is the elephant's lot then? Hm... perhaps it is time we looked at it from its darker side.

It is admittedly drab, for one thing. Getting less and less drab with each passing day but drab nevertheless. No wonder. With very few exceptions the Communist countries were poor countries before the Communists took over. Some of them -- my own country, Yugoslavia, among them -- were extremely poor. Moreover, as an ironic saying goes in these parts, before the war we had nothing and then came the Germans and destroyed everything. The disarray caused by war (WW I in Russia and WW II in most other Communist countries) was exploited as an ideal opportunity for the revolution. The violence of the revolution followed the violence of war -- believe me, it was bad.

Once the hostilities were over gentrification must have been rather low on any Communist regime's agenda, of course. Bare necessities came first. They were catered for very zealously, and most often very successfully, but in the revolutionary zeal many mistakes were made as well, misguided moves like the collectivization of agriculture for instance, or the forced industrialization. They aggravated an already bad situation and the final result was a number of dismal, hungry, hurriedly and forcibly restructured countries with people torn from their roots, displaced, often resentful, often with little if any urban culture. Even the relatively well off countries like Czechoslovakia faced a similar fate. They could hardly have remained calm little islands in the vast turbulent stream. It took a long time for the wounds to heal, for flesh to cover emaciated ribs, for the displaced to start feeling at home, for the illiterate to learn to read and write, for gray walls to sprout colorful graffiti.

Unfortunately the healing process in a zealously Socialist society is hampered by the lack of long term motivation. After the revolution you did not have to fight to earn the money to buy bread and pay the bills; the society provided the bare necessities for you. Such betterment of your lot as was available was provided by the state. Of course, there was a strong moral impetus to build the New Society (and it went a long way indeed) but sooner or later it had to peter out. Once the propaganda lost its freshness and people's early élan evaporated they found it pointless to work their asses off, as neither the carrots nor any significant sticks seemed to be around any more. The pay, more often than not, stayed the same regardless of your effort, there was hardly an effective way to punish a lazy worker or the one prone to absenteeism, and just about the only merit for any kind of real advancement seemed to be political. Passivity and disillusionment crept in. Gradually the pace of change slowed, bureaucracy started flourishing, the chances of leaping forward diminishing. After a while the Socialist societies were trapped in the deep, straight and narrow ruts -- the way to Real Socialism.

(The term Real Socialism, so beloved by the Soviet political theorists, implies that the other Socialisms are somehow unreal. The idea of a more ambitious, truer-to-Marx Socialism must be uncomfortably alien to the "realist" minds.)

And all the time, you remind me, there was that heavy boot above; the all-too-real, undeniable repression. There is nothing that anybody can say that would justify its existence; one can only try to explain it.



Again I must point towards Stalin, the man Lenin did his best to stop. His best, unfortunately, was not good enough in this case. Stalin's personal and peculiar style of government created a powerful precedent for his followers, offering neat, simple, macho answers to the complex problems of a society in turmoil. As is the case with most simple answers to complex questions, they were wrong -- but they sounded right at the time. In the beginning they were even popular. People yearn for simple macho answers, especially in troubled times, and it is very difficult for a leader to resist such a powerful siren call.

Not only were Stalin's answers alluring in their simplicity, they also imbued his followers with the righteousness of a moral crusade. All social reformist movements ostensibly guided by a system of morals seem to be prone to doctrinaire terror. To a moralist reformer the notion of the relativity of morals is extremely difficult to accept for it diminishes his own importance and lowers the value of his lofty goals. If he has shed blood and seen his comrades and brothers die in the pursuit of those goals he is apt to regard them sacrosanct. Conversely, the personal, individual goals and convictions are not.

Underlying the Socialist revolutionary thinking is the conviction that Man's "better" morally conscious nature is easily subverted by its "worse" side; that greed can easily subvert altruism and solidarity. Of course, that is difficult to deny. Such notions are well grounded. Western societies handle this problem by channelling greed into socially acceptable and productive ways. However, one of the central aims of the Communist movements is the change of Man himself into a better, morally and socially conscious creature. All Communist societies so far have sought to deny Man's "worse" side the chance to reassert itself. Not for Communists is the channelling and utilization of weaknesses. In the Soviet case the glitter and flash of Western Consumer society, contrasted to the ascetic outer drabness of communal Communist life, only served to underline the moralist purpose. They seek to remold Man morally and to that end try to mold his life according to the "proper" pattern. This molding, this regulation of life mandated from above is of course nothing but repression, pure and simple. If they cannot, as Lenin said, herd the people into Paradise with a stick, well then, they'll just remake them to fit.

Such repressive molding is to some extent inherent in all societies, not just Communist ones, and I certainly do not find it any more obnoxious in Communist surroundings than in any others. Besides, it need not always be brutal. Not all molders of character are Joe Stalin's replicas. Like in early Christianity, for instance, the molding can be done by example and through the pressure of moral beliefs alone. Of course, gentle persuasion is easier said than done; a factual stick is much simpler to apply than the moral equivalent of a carrot. It gives quicker results and imparts a splendid feeling of authority to the wielder.

There is, moreover, a strong tradition of marshalling the traffic of society by brute force. The Christian church, for instance, has been the very epitome of repression for half a millennium or so. It is rarely mentioned in the West that most of the countries now supposedly squished under the police state's iron heel had an even worse police state before the Communists took over. The repression was in most cases the very reason for the Communist backlash. Even today the repression is certainly not a Communist speciality; if you listed the modern rightist and leftist authoritarian regimes, would you like to bet which list would be longer?

The problem, I think, is in the repression itself, not in Communism. No society on Earth today is free from repression of one sort or another, however disguised by civilized trappings it may be. I have a theory that it matters little what ideology (if any) nominally governs a country. What matters most is the people. Particular, concrete individuals making a particular, concrete society. What matters is the average level of education, the economic welfare, the mentality of the people, the cultural and social traditions, etc. One can hardly expect to find the same tolerance / repression ratio in the urban East and the rural South of the U.S.A., can one? Any yet, both are nominally governed by the same libertarian "ideology"; both bow to the same vaunted freedom-upholding Constitution. Another example: I am certain that if Sweden were (for some unfathomable reason) to embrace the Communist creed, very little would happen. They already have a working version of Socialism without the ideology backing it through the gun barrel. They have a polite, more or less civil society and the wherewithal to back it up. If, on the other hand, the Russians were still saddled with the Romanoffs and their gaggle of boyars, I am inclined to doubt that the Sakharovs would enjoy a much friendlier dialogue with the Powers That Be. What is absolutely certain, however, is that the peasants in their hovels and the proletarians in their housing developments would be much worse off.

Democracy is a frail flower, neither easy nor simple to plant and maintain. It is easily hampered by hunger and tribal or nationalistic strife. It grows best where its gardeners are steeped in the humanistic values and appreciate the rights of others as much as (or more than) their own rights. And even in such a climate it flowers only passably well.

Even the most humane ideology cannot be more than just one of the many ingredients in the bubbling pot of society. It will have a beneficial effect only where people give it a chance, where they can afford it and where they appreciate its values. In a rich and cultured society people can afford the time and money spent on humanistic niceties, on the icing for the cake. In a poor and backward country riven by inner tensions, fear and hunger will reign regardless of the ideology. There just ain't no cake to put the icing on.

Originally Marx envisioned Socialism arising from the rich and advanced societies, through the revolution which would allow everyone to get his share of the riches. In practice, however, the revolution



occurred in the poor and backward milieu. Its leaders neglected to compensate for this basic difference, explaining it away with banal observations like "Bourgeois capitalism snapped at its weakest link" (Lenin). Later, when the bills for that miscalculation started coming in it was too late, for the new bureaucracy had already entrenched.

I still think it was not all in vain, though. For the people of many (most?) Communist countries the new regime meant a quick way out from under the feudal -- not bourgeois -- yoke. They didn't really have an enlightened working class that Marx considered essential for the socialist revolution, but neither did they feel like waiting another five hundred years to get into Socialism the Swedish way. They may have been right. It was probably worth it, even if the price included the gulags, thought control and Lavrentii Beria. To illustrate this contention, compare the poor citizen's lot in the leftist and rightist repressive societies. You'll see the leftists coming out far ahead. The rightist dictatorships are, as a rule, pure hell for the underprivileged. In contrast, while the Communist regimes do stifle the initiative, hobble change and treat dissidents harshly, it is also true that what little riches they do have they spread around more equitably.

With a few notable exceptions (all of which are the result of peculiar cultural circumstances, I think) Communist societies do provide the basic necessities to virtually everyone. There's usually a cradle-to-grave comprehensive medical insurance, a free or inexpensive education all the way up to the top universities (and the quality of education often surpasses US standards), the prices of staples are kept artificially low, unemployment is eased even at the price of over-employment, with several people hired to do one man's job (productivity never being a high priority) etc. Coupled with the emphasis on culture that I elaborated upon earlier, how does this compare with, say, the inner city black youth's lot in the US? Of course, economically speaking it is horrible inefficient, but do the poor and hungry care? Forget about efficiency and productivity for a moment. Who says Man's role in life is to be efficient? The only real reason economic efficiency is now becoming important in Communist countries is their need to deal and compete with the Capitalist economies, where efficiency is of paramount importance.

The life in Socialism is safe. Ordinary everyday people do not care much about politics. They are not dissidents and do not fear the knock on the door in the middle of the night. Street crime is virtually nonexistent. No one fears losing his job; such a thing is unheard of. It's a tranquil life, just as full of small pleasures as of small irritations that are so gleefully documented by the Western press. As I have shown before, the Western media are interested primarily in the negative aspect of life in the Soviet bloc and that kind of relentlessly negative coverage creates the impression that it is the only aspect, perhaps the only possible aspect.

My conceit is that nothing could be further from truth. For that reason it is with the greatest enthusiasm that I greet the recent signs that further improvements in the quality of life in the Communist countries are inevitable. It seems that the time is finally ripe for the Communist nations to achieve what the Capitalist nations gained with their bourgeois revolutions, namely a democratic way of political participation and economic self-determination. The people are obviously gaining the vaunted civil liberties even while retaining the Socialist system. It is a surprisingly simple process.

Once the country rises from abject poverty and tries to join the developed world economically and culturally, the bare necessities achieved to date cease to be sufficient. The appetites grow. New needs appear overnight and crave fulfillment. Crass everyday materialism rears its head. Once the Pavlovs want to keep up with the Joneses there's no looking back. Suddenly it's very difficult for the bureaucracy to hold on to the reins of a society that tried to gallop where it once crawled.

Of course, the conservatives always try to roll back the tide. Their grip tightens, choking the process of change, but that just worsens the creativity and productivity problems (never the strong points in welfare societies anyway). The economy gets battered on the open market by the much more efficient competition, which in turn leads to hurried measures to improve the productivity and competitiveness. All such measures inevitable bring with them an unwanted side effect -- liberalization. Thus the society slowly swings into a pattern of zigs and zags, trying to have its cake and eat it, too. And each zig and zag pushes it inexorably toward greater liberty, wider choice, more tolerance. Also more affluence and more information. The combination of the latter two factors forms a genie which is extremely difficult to push back into the bottle. I am keeping my fingers crossed for Mikhail Gorbachev, that great opener of bottled genies. He is currently trying to spur his bureaucracy into a trot, if not outright gallop, and to all appearances he has an unusually light hand with the reins. I hope he remembers he's riding an elephant, not an Arabian thoroughbred. Let's all hope for the best, for that matter. We're all in the same boat, in the final analysis.

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Perhaps a word of caution is in order here. Much as I welcome the liberal approach, nevertheless I fervently hope that the final result will not be a lot of second-rate Swedens in Eastern Europe. Vive la difference! I say. I think that the West needs the Communist East, and vice versa. Each is strong precisely where the other is weak. Obviously neither is The Answer to the people's prayers. In the absence of a completely new and different vision, they need each other as reminders of the possible failings and just as possible triumphs.

Now, if one could only crossbreed the two somehow... Jesus, what would that bastard be capable of?



# FANDOM: TNG

-- Mark Manning

The antique clock on the fireplace ledge clack-clacks four minutes till six as Fran Beebe knits a sky blue, and as yet amorphous, garment. She's just begun to sing Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," a tune which has filled her mind's ear all day, when her eight year old slams the kitchen door.

Mrs. Beebe lays the pre-sweater (or is it a pre-doinly?) on her lap and turns round in her overstuffed rocking chair. "Lee? Don't forget to wipe your feet before you come into the den!"

A scraping noise of Nikes-on-doormat rewards her warning. Then Lee, with a multicolored propeller attached to the button of his Houston Astros cap, gangles into the room. "Mom?"

"Yes, dear?"

"When I grow up, can I be Marc Ortlieb?"

Lee twists the loose threads on the bottom of his cutoff jeans as he waits for his mother's reply. "Obviously," she thinks, "he's asking for something he wants very much."

"Sit down, son," she says with that wistful smile that mothers are said to train for in a secret mom's school. "We need to have a little talk."

He scoots a naugahyde-green ottoman over to his mother, and sits across it, like a cowboy on a horse--or in his case, like a space patrol ranger on a warp-cycle.

"Lee, there can only be one Marc Ortlieb, and he's hard at work right now, writing fanfiction and LoCs for good little faneds and fen."

His little face goes a bit ashen. "You mean, I can't be him? Ever?"

"No, son. There are some things, I know, that are very hard to accept. And one of them is that you can't be Marc Ortlieb."

"I recall when I was a little younger, I wanted to become Leek. Or Bjo Trimble. But I couldn't be either of them, nor could I be Susan Wood or Jeanne Comoll or anybody but myself."

"You mean I can't ever be Skel or David Langford or Bob Tucker?"

"Lee, you can't be any of them. Each of them has his own workshop where he hammers on his prose all year long. And then each of them sends fanarticles all around the world, bringing joy to fanzine fen everywhere. If you want to be a BNF, you've got to get busy LoCcing your fmz backfiles and practice your sercon every day."

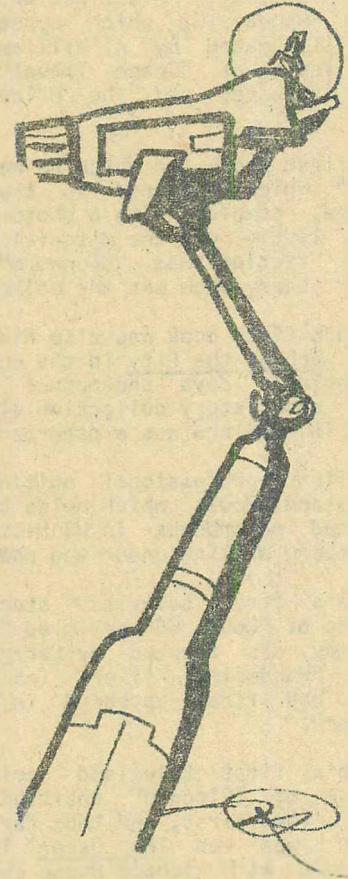
"But, Mom! I hate sercon!" His face screws up, Fran notes, the way it does when he has to eat beets, or when he gets a bad roll of the dice in D&D.

"I know you do, Lee. When I was your age, I hated it, too. But if you'd just do a little at a time, you'll soon feel your trufannish muscles start to grow."

"But how will I know when they're growing?"

"When you get the urge to stand in the corridors at Worldcon, chanting 'smoooooth.' "

"Hot jets, Mom!" he yells, and runs outside, slamming the kitchen door as he goes.





# EARLY ELLISON

by Richard Gilliam

Buck Coulson's statement "Harlan Ellison started out writing about juvenile gangs" ("The Old Iron-master Diversifies" in ANVIL #46) needs greater detail than the scope of Buck's article allowed. Buck did a good job of providing some general information about the crossover careers of some of SF's most prominent authors, however, Harlan's early career was much more than just juvenile gangs.

His first published writing came at age twelve and was a letter of comment in "Real Facts Comics" #6 (cover date January-February, 1947.) His first published writing for which he was compensated was also his first published fiction. In 1949 "The Sword of Parmagon" appeared in five installments in "The Cleveland News" in a column for youngsters. Harlan was paid in tickets to Cleveland Indians baseball games.

His first editing effort was the March 16, 1952 issue of "The Bulletin of the Cleveland Science Fiction Society." His first writing for which Harlan was paid money was for the uncredited comic book story "Upheaval", which appeared in "Weird Science-Fantasy" #24 (cover date June, 1954). The story was illustrated by Al Williamson. The prose version of this story later appeared in the September, 1958 issue of "Space Travel" as "A Case of Ptomaine" (aka "Mealtime"), while the TV version of the story appeared as "The Price of Doom," the October 12, 1964 episode of VOYAGE TO THE BOTTOM OF THE SEA.

The first prose for which he was paid was the juvenile gang article "Today, Young Hoods! Tomorrow -- What?" which appeared in the October, 1955 issue of "Lowdown" under the pseudonym Phil "Cheech" Beldone, complete with a photo of Harlan in his Cheech persona. The published version of the article bears little of the material submitted to the editor by Harlan. Harlan's first professionally published fiction was "Glowworm" which appeared in the February, 1956 issue of "Infinity Science Fiction." Larry Shaw was the editor who bought the story.

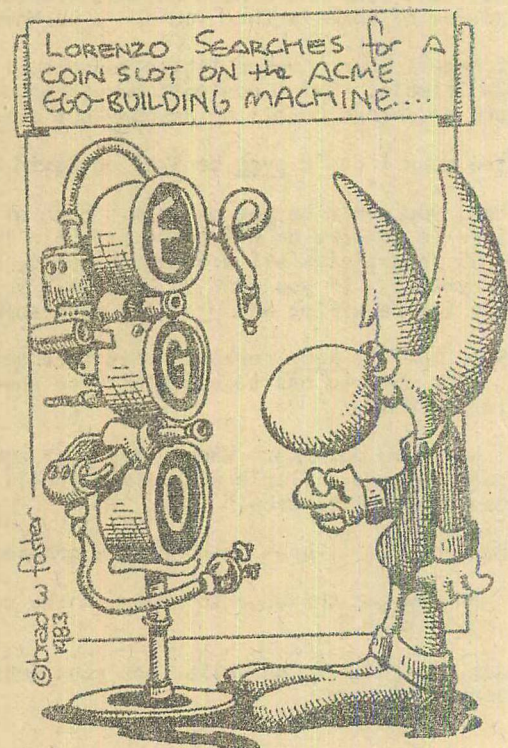
Harlan's first book was also his first novel. Rumble was published as a paperback by Pyramid Books in 1958. Web of the City is the current, preferred title of this book. This book is a fictional version of Harlan's days undercover (to gain writing material) with a New York City street gang. Harlan's first short story collection also deals with juvenile gangs. The Deadly Streets was published by Ace Books in 1958 and was a paperback.

His first professional editing (where Harlan was editor-in-chief) was as the founding editor of Nightstand Books which holds the distinction of having been the first mass-marketed line of sexually oriented paperbacks in US history. The first book published by Nightstand was Love Addict by Robert Silverberg writing under the pseudonym of Don Elliott. The book was published in 1959.

Harlan's first televised story was the January 18, 1963 episode of "Route 66" entitled "A Gift for a Warrior." The teleplay was adapted by Larry Marcus from Harlan's short story "Wandering Killer" (aka "No Fourth Commandment") which had first appeared in the December, 1956 issue of "Murder".

Harlan's first televised script was the January 29, 1963 episode of "Ripcord" entitled "Where Do Elephants Go to Die?" The first, and thus far only, feature film writing credit was for The Oscar in 1966. Harlan received co-credit with Richard Rouse and Clarence Green. Harlan's first book to appear in hardback was also the first short story anthology he edited. Dangerous Visions first appeared in 1967. In 1976 his first record album, "Harlan Ellison Reads Harlan Ellison" was issued by Alternate World Recordings.

Persons wanting more detail will be interested to hear that Leslie Kay Swigart's bibliography of Harlan Ellison is scheduled to be published in early 1990 by Nemo Press, the same folks who did such a spectacular job with The Essential Ellison in 1987. This word from Nemo Press publisher Ken Keller whom I ran into at St. Louis's Archon a few weeks ago. The book will cover all of HE's appearances, including secondary appearances such as fanzines. Much of Leslie's research has been published in segments over the years, but this will be the definitive appearance.





# AUTUMN'S BOOKS

-- Patrick J. Gibbs

It is Halloween night as I sit down to write this, already past my deadline. I am ashamed to admit that I have even fallen behind in my reading and I am still getting through the Fall, 1988 releases. So to make life easier on myself I am going to concentrate on five hardcovers that have come out in the past two months. I hope that word of their arrival will be news to you.

IVORY by Mike Resnick (TOR \$17.95) is the author's first hardcover since the Phantasia Press editions of the initial two volumes of the Tales of the Velvet Comet series. Resnick deserves a wider audience and this may contribute to that end. The man knows how to spin a yarn that grabs the interest of the reader and doesn't let go until the last page. What I love about Resnick's novels are the moral fable quality to them. IVORY is the story of the 6000 year odyssey of the ivory tusks of the Kilimanjaro Elephant, the largest elephant to have walked modern Africa. The tusks truly exist and reside in a storeroom of the British Museum. That can't be much of a story, you might say. But in Resnick's hands it is a survey of human foibles and frailties as we tour his future universe the same as that in SANTIAGO and Velvet Comet).

The protagonist is a researcher at the publishing house that maintains the big game trophy lists (a la Boone & Crockett) over 6000 years in our future, a future where mankind has spread all over the galaxy. The last Maasai warrior in the galaxy retains Duncan Rojas to locate the tusks of the Kilimanjaro Elephant so that he can perform his duty to his race. Bukoba Mandaka's story is interwoven with the vignettes of the tusks throughout history. The ending may not be surprising, but it is definitely satisfying. Collectors in the audience: don't believe the publisher's claim that this is Resnick's first hardcover.

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Alice Sheldon's life story would make all of those TV mini-series look like the unimaginative tripe that they usually are. She was the daughter of famous parents, a world traveler before she was old enough to vote, a member of the CIA at its beginnings and married to one of its top executives. After her second career as a psychologist slowed down, she began writing science fiction stories -- as James Tiptree, Jr. Until her tragic death in 1987, when she took her own life after ending that of her terminally ill husband, she was at the zenith of a dazzling production of award winning short stories and two novels.

CROWN OF STARS (TOR \$18.95) is a "must-have" for any lover of short fiction. I cannot think of any SF writer who has studied the ramifications of death with so much care and humanity. As the Bard wrote, "Nothing so became him in this life as his leaving it." Tiptree's works are usually variations of the existentialist philosophy that we define ourselves only in our living and dying. Just pick up CROWN OF STARS and start reading the first story, an alien contact tale, "Second Going", and you will be hooked (but park your religious prejudices at the door).

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Harlan Ellison has returned to us. No, LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS is not coming out yet. But the genre's master of the short story (I don't think he has ever written a novel) has his first new collection, ANGRY CANDY (Houghton Mifflin \$18.95) since 1982. Coincidentally, in view of the previous paragraph, the collection is about death. [Maybe there is an Autumn theme to this column that I did not consciously plan.] If you missed the Hugo award winning "Paladin of the Lost Hour", which became a Twilight Zone episode featuring Danny Kaye's last performance, here is your chance. Maybe you are like me and not able to keep up with the current SF magazines. Ellison's short stories have not been up for many awards in recent years, but he still is the most articulate proponent of the ideals of modern American liberalism in science fiction, or any other fiction. It is revitalizing to be shown how Man really matters in this cruel universe.

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Harry Harrison has brought his West of Eden saga to a conclusion with RETURN TO EDEN (Bantam \$18.95). This is technically an August book, but is too important to pass up. Harrison gives up an alternate world where the dinosaurs were not wiped out, along with 75% of the planet's species, when a meteorite hit Earth 65 million years ago. The trilogy takes place in the alternate present of that universe. The reptiles have evolved into an intelligent race and Homo Sapiens has survived in competition with them. Man is just surviving as a hunter, while the Yilane, as they call themselves, thrive with a technology based upon skillful manipulation of the life sciences. They cannot coexist and one race must destroy the other. RETURN TO EDEN is the story of the final conflict between two groups of the races. It is an involved book. Harrison has worked out the science for the Yilane with fine detail. Additionally, there are excellent appendices, with illustrations of the fauna of this strange and dangerous alternate Earth.



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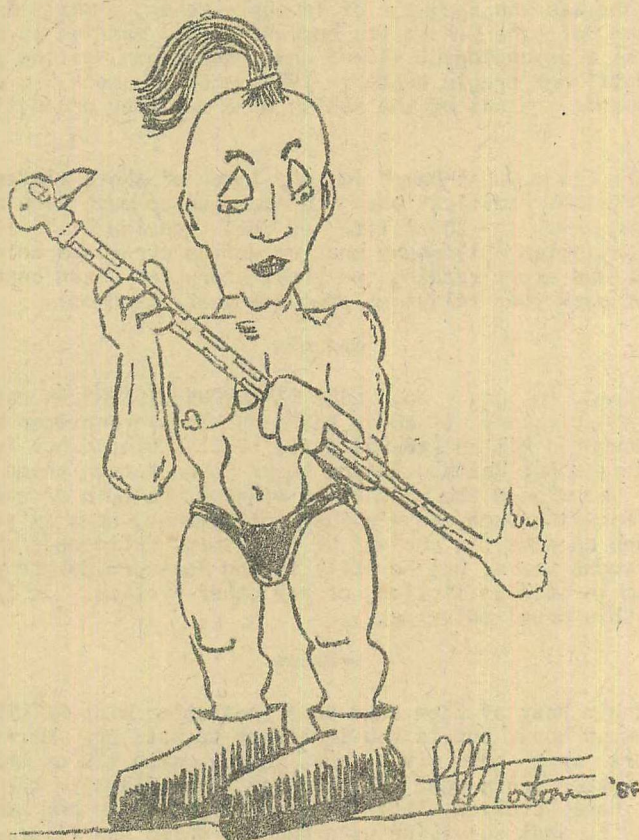
The last few years have seen a spate of post-holocaust novels. The most unpromising on its face is *THE GATE TO WOMEN'S COUNTRY* by Sheri S. Tepper (Doubleday \$17.95). Tepper unites the worldview of Greek tragedy with the bleak landscape of a post holocaust civilization where the primitive cities are controlled by women and men are kept in garrisons outside the cities' walls. Science and technology (except for the life sciences) have disappeared and the ruling matriarchy views heredity as dictating behavior. The challenge they perceive is to breed a new humanity which does not have warlike (which are always masculine) tendencies.

The review in *LOCUS* of this book spoke favorable of how it broke away from predictable direction of its premises. I cannot be so kind. Maybe it is a matter of worldview. I see forces in history besides the competitive spirit of males. Economics does not seem to exist in Women's Country. I saw no sign of any real religion. Therefore, I can only conclude that the story is intended to be a fable. Since the ideas proposed lacked any persuasive validity, I must call the book a failure. However, I would love to see a well-reasoned defense of this book. Maybe I am asking too much of it.

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That is about all the books I can cover tonight. My time has run out. Two books from last year are now out in paperback and deserve your attention. *GREAT SKY RIVER* by Gregory Benford (Bantam \$4.50) is the third book in his series and introduces the life and death conflict between humanity and machine intelligence at the core of the Milky Way Galaxy. I thought that it was one of the best three novels of 1987. *ENDGAME ENIGMA* by James P. Hogan (Bantam \$4.95) tells the story of a secret U.S. mission to send spies aboard a Soviet colony-size space station with the goal of uncovering its military purpose. It was one of the best SF thrillers in years.

Next time: The Year in Review with the best novels of 1988.





# THE ANVIL CHORUS

Brad W. Foster, P.O. Box 165246, Irving, TX 75038 (note new mailing address!!) Long time no write on my part, eh? Arrival of ANVIL 47 has galvanized (or, at the very least, oxidized) me into action! Looking back through my records, it seems I've been sending stuff to ANVIL, continuously, for longer than about any other zines (some came before, but none have continued to come out). Except for issues 38 and 41, I've had something in every issue since #22. ((Oddly enough, Brad, #22 was the first issue I edited -- that was six years ago this past June. The two issues in which your work did not appear were small "special issues" devoted to one subject: #38 was my Aussiecon report and #41 was about ConFederation.))

I missed out loccing #46, but might throw in a couple of words on the porn-shop escapade. The part that gave me the biggest laugh was the start of "Aside from P.L." about how "the first place we entered was surprisingly clean...". I think every article I've ever read in magazines, newsstand slicks, small press, etc., where someone talked about how they braved the seamy underside of society by actually going into a filthy den of depravity, always has a variation on the theme of how they were "surprised" by how "clean" it was. I think too many people take the term "dirty-books" a bit too literally! Most of the adult stores I've even been in have usually reminded me of nothing more than small independent book stores. That is, no fancy displays, but well lit with books and magazines on display for purchase, like any store.

I would agree with the comments on lack of style, but then, what's the point? It's like the erotica books I publish, where I work very hard at getting the best art, best printing, really doing up a quality publication. First sight of a bare boob and it immediately is "trash" -- so these stores probably figure half the battle was won just getting someone to walk in, why bother with fancy displays. It's a shame, but that how it goes.

On the comment of stuff being so bad it's not displayed, that's the other favorite of these articles. I'm amazed at the truly horrible publications that seem to be dredged up and brought before all the porn-buster committees and endlessly bantered out on TV talk shows. As far as I can make out, those are the underground of underground. Most adult material is exactly what you saw in that shop -- admittedly endless variations on a theme, but then so are superhero comics, romance novels, and other "genre" items.

You guys wanna do it again, take me along, I'll be happy to laugh at the funny displays too. The only folks who take it serious are the real pervos, and the crusading anti-porn groups. The rest of us can't take it that seriously, but mainly have fun.

((Well, gosh, Brad... this was the first time for us. How were we to know our reactions were universal?))

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Harry Bond, 6 Elizabeth Avenue, Bagshot, Surrey, U.K. -- Thanks for printing my letter (in ANVIL 46). I don't know about you, but whenever I get a loc printed I always turn to the WAHFs at once to see who I've beaten out. This I suppose speaks reams about my egotistical personality, but it does give me a bit of a thrill when I get six or seven lines into print and see that the WAHFs include Walt Willis or Mike Glicksohn. (Yes, I know that the fact that they're in the WAHFs probably means they only sent a two-line acknowledgement; don't spoil it.)

ANVIL was good again, though there were a couple of things I was dubious about; primarily, Andrea Gilbreath's fanzine reviews. "I'll ... opt to review zines I really like," she says. That is a cop out. If you're going to do fanzine reviews, you've got to be prepared at least to give a ticking off to a fanzine you don't think is showing its full potential; you don't have to rip it to shreds, but to ignore it is almost as bad. Here's Little Fred Fan, just put out his first fanzine, full of typos and incoherence, and after he's sent it out to everyone, he's going to be a bit disappointed if everyone ignores him totally; he might get disillusioned, and at the best he won't learn from his mistakes unless somebody tells him, hey, you really ought to use a dictionary, and so on. Having said all that, Andrea covered the fanzines she did review well, so we shouldn't complain too loudly.

((You are right, Harry, anyone who puts the kind of effort it takes into publishing deserves the egoboo of a review... even a bad review, because the only bad egoboo is no egoboo at all. Funny, though, ANVIL gets only occasional reviews (the September Westwind, for instance), and is mostly listed in the "zines we received" department. Sometimes we have a "zines we have received" department. If you look closely, you'll see there are more zines received than we could possibly review, not being a review-zine or one specially devoted to fanzine reviews like Brian Earl Brown's Whole Fanzine Catalog. So, what do you suppose I, the editor, said to Andrea? Right. "Since we can't review them all, let's pick the ones we like best." She picked "Mimosa", I recommended "YHOS", and we threw in two foreign zines to contrast with these two terribly fannish, American zines. I'm not going to defend Patrick, he's a lawyer, he can defend himself. But bear in mind that he, too, had editorial guidance. -- cp))



Patrick Gibbs: trying to cover a whole year full of books in two pages is a lose before the first word is typed. And even then, look! The books he does talk about, he says things like "I am ashamed to say that I have not yet read it," and "I have only been able to look over these books" -- Ghod! Doesn't the man realize that unless he's actually read the thing, it's utterly impossible for him to be able to say anything worthy of credence about it? Passing on what other reviewers or the dust jacket have said has no point at all, and he might as well have spoken some more about the books he has read. Goodness only knows how many books get published a year in the SF/fantasy field in the USA alone. And that brings us on to the comments on THE FALLING WOMAN; I know I haven't read it, so I won't comment on his verdict apart from saying that stratified thinking "Hey, this book isn't SF so nobody will like it" is the sort of thing that deserves crushing very flat indeed. Why is it that people are never comfortable unless the book they are reading is instantly definable into narrow and widely divided classes? Books such as I would guess THE FALLING WOMAN to be are sneaking SF into respectability through the back door -- and then we get people who try to bolt that door up. Hell. Patrick shows hope though -- he has the sense to hate that excrescence of a Heinlein.

Whoof! Having said all that I suppose an apology is in order to Patrick for tearing him up so. I hope he won't take too much offense, I don't like demolishing people, but the thing is, I'm sure that if he took more care and space he could be a good reviewer.

Enough. How about this sex shop frolicking now? You'll go blind, you know. // I've got to wind up here so I'll have to just say hurriedly that Marc Ortlieb's faan fiction was a real winner, and that your lettercol is one of the best in the business. And what's this I hear about your running for TAFF next year, eh?

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Meade Frierson, 3705 Woodvale Road, Birmingham, AL 35223 -- Perhaps it is the buff paper or the fantastic Taral cover, but I picked up ANVIL 47 with a strong sense of deja vu, a conviction that I was holding a classic 50s fanzine. Somehow through a time tunnel or dimensional gate it could be possible to LOC this and find oneself a part of the Golden Age of SF Fandom.../play your own mental xylophone for travel.../

Would that I could contribute to the Muppets listing!! I did so enjoy the under-rated Sat Nite Live and am convinced that a decade or more ago I knew more than the six named characters, but alas! in pre-VCR days and post-reel-to-reel mania those shows inhabit small grey cells whose deaths are tragically recorded every day... such details as names of more Muppets of Gorch are lost, lost, lost... Big Sigh.

Ogorelec's article is a piercing analysis of the propaganda machine, a feature of 20th century life which one striped as politically conservative as moi can nonetheless appreciate. It was always an aspect of SFdom to sponsor unpopular views like universal brotherhood, even before presidents like Johnson and Nixon gave American at large something to bitch about. It would take a fan historian like Buck to tell if a 50s fanzine ever went as far as publishing a Communist's article critical of America, but certainly I have a sense that faneds were not as scared of HUAC or the FBI as many average Americans. // Oops, I must inject an aside: I wanted to sponsor a 50s feeling today so asked Penny to try to find some puffed wheat with sweet coating, which in the 50s I loved as Post Sugar Crisp - oddly enough the closest is now Kellogg's Honey Smacks. I wolf them down as I read and write... end of aside, back to Bruno. // The comparison of media of which he writes HAS to be right; one reads and says: Yes, Bruno's made the right analysis here... there are questions which need to be answered about the daily pros and cons of Soviet life. Is the reason intelligent people have put up with the excesses he denies because they are awash with Slavic fatalism and vodka? Soviet Culture; can manipulate and appear to have no control over a Joey Ramone (here manufactured by Phil Spector) but do any USA rockers doubt there is no room there for Sid Vicious? Soviet rock music is as flat as U.S. Christian rock. The appearance is there, the instruments are the same, but neither are hustling for the #1 slot and the art comes after the greed. I fell for the Dire Straits sound before they made it - there was art. He didn't have any minister (either type) nodding and finding it acceptable to keep funding him. No, I think there are things behind a construction worker reading Dostoyevsky when not given the chance to have a copy of PLAYBOY.

Freedom from Choice is the way DEVO sees it and there is plenty of play for that concept in 80s America but if you want to publish ANVIL try to do that in a country where some nekulturny Yurt will not stick his Uzi in your face. I agree that the value judgments are difficult and concede the press's universal bias but Bruno's concept of Culture is not a shrine at which the human spirit must worship -- books were old news in the 17th century, novels were exhausted by the 19th, symphony orchestras by the early 20th, ballets and operas ditto - because a society continues those pursuits does not give it Culture; they are hackneyed anachronisms - no one has needed incense since deodorants or indoor plumbing but still the Church maintains - same thing. I give you culture of the 21st century, to wit: dirty dancing, jogging, rock, video, synthesizers. We are raising millions of children to find more beauty in a Pink Floyd album than in Tchaikovsky's entire output. Spend an hour on Soviet TV embarrassing a cheating teenager and having her confession? Please, just a couple of MTV clips instead. If you don't understand the reference, the recent Glastnost ploy of exporting a day of Soviet TV had a College Bowl contest and one kid's



coach whispered... big damn deal (yawn). The piano, orchestra and human voice are holdovers from the pre-electronic age and have no longer a place in our world anymore than powder and muskets, wooden shoes, etc.

Moving right along, to Harry's remarks on H.L. Gold, I must say HEAR, HEAR because MY love is Galaxy and it strikes me as absolutely on point that Gold's aloofness from fandom artificially reduced his stature. I don't have the evidence for Harry but more anthologized tales have come from Galaxy than Analog/Astounding - yes, gotta be. Where was it we got such a good view of Gold from the 1950s young authors? I remember learning that he was more interested in associating with other editors in NYC than those in the genre. I forgive him for his sins - Galaxy was a superb mag.

Penny said something about (not in) Esperanto. Your Yugoslav following seems so adept at English that I wouldn't want to do anything Esperantish to dissuade them. Besides, after finding out how easy it would be to make my computer speak Esperanto and that others had done the drills and such, I shelved... like about 15 other projects ... Esperanto. I definitely do not want smiling faces with little green starred cards underneath showing up on my doorstep during a tour of America on \$1.25 per day. Speaking of which, I have a tremendously important trivia question to pose to your vast international readership - although the US portion is most likely to be able to help: What is the source of a green starred tee-shirt worn by Zonker Harris in Doonesbury strips? I mean, the only green star in my sheltered life is the sign of Esperanto spoken here. If it has anything to do with rock, California or drug or counter-culture, I need edification.

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Mark Manning, 1400 East Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112 -- When I started to read ANVIL, I thought I'd been dropped into a time lock and boosted back to the days of Leeh's old Quandry. The mild Southern drawl (uh-huh), the scent of mimeo ink wafting up from that old twilltone look (that's right), letters from everywhere (yep).

If only your Mafiaette field trip had ended with the gang's meeting a shower-wet Rotsler, the ish would have smashed through the barrier of years! Your readers could have gone out to a newsstand, maybe one down by the crowded train station, for the latest Astounding and a pack of Black-Jack gum.

Come to think of it, your article on Marxism by Bruno Ogorelec couldn't have been printed in Quandry back in 1951. You'll probably get a certain amount of crank mail from otherwise tolerant fen, but that's not really important. What is important, is that the article was a fair and even wise effort at creating rational understanding about America's most taboo topic. Bruno's article is so useful for that, that I'm sorry I've got to return ANVIL #46 to the NSFS library: It would have been good reading for several of my friends, both fannish and mundane. The pinnacle of the ish, though, had to be Marc Ortlieb's "Rock of Pages."

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Tom Sadler, 422 W. Maple Avenue, Adrian, MI 49221 -- I'm a relative newcomer to fandom even though I've read and enjoyed science fiction and fantasy for at least thirty years. A combination of laziness, procrastination and fear kept me from getting into it much sooner. But now that I've been involved since late 1986, I've come to enjoy fandom thoroughly and wish I had gotten into it much sooner. My main interest in fandom -- after reading and writing -- is fanzines, and I'm trying to become as familiar with as many as I can. When I found out about ANVIL and that it originates in Alabama, well, I had to see what it was all about. I was born in a little place called Piedmont and most of my kinfolk live in and around there and Huntsville and Anniston. ((Welcome to the club, Tom -- cp.))

The portion of the Star Trek you mentioned was surprising and I, too, was reminded of the scene from Alien. At the time I saw it, I didn't stop to think of how clean and neat the man's destruction was. I suppose my imagination supplied the blood and guts when there actually was none. It would seem that even with phasers there should be some precious bodily fluids spread about. Interesting that you should reach back to Dr. Strangelove for the preceding mention of fluids. ((How gratifying it is, when someone recognizes your references! -- cp.))

Screwdrivers can also be used to pry open locked car trunks, unless you slip and watch it flip forty feet into the air and then duck or run for cover uncertain as to its exact trajectory and touchdown point. A good example of Heisenberg's uncertainty principle. It was dusk at the time and there were several people standing around.

I can think of better ways to have an interesting life without having police come knocking on my door. Especially after having had to go to the police station to pick up a son who had been doing something he knew better than to do. But that's teenage boys for you.

On Muppet-Mania. Admittedly many of those critters are interesting (Statler & Waldorf and Beaurgard and a couple of others) but other than Yoda, of what relevance are they to a fanzine? Or am I too dense to make the connection? ((Ah, ha! Thought you'd never ask! You see, fanzines, like groups of fans at a club meeting or a convention, can and do talk about almost everything but SF. In fact, when we do talk about SF, and realize what we are doing, we are (pretend that we are) amazed, and make special note of the occasion. Actually though, a Special on Public Television called "The Making of Dark Crystal" was the inspiration for Cindy Riley, local fan and costumer, to make "Cryphon's Aerie", her lovely costume with a bird's head, claws and feet. The Big Bird (Cindy's gonna kill me!) and two attendants made up the presentation. It won Best of Show at Rivercon in 1985 and Most Beautiful in the Journeyman Class at the '86 world con. The "hands", or claws, were articulated, as was the crest.

Fans will and do talk about anything -- and so do fanzines. It has been said, more than once when still more esoterica surfaces, that all knowledge is contained in fanzines!))

Buck Coulson mentioned how long it took for an issue of ANVIL to reach him. He should have seen the condition mine were in when they came. The envelope looked as if it had fallen off the mail truck and run over when the driver backed up to pick it up. The envelope was torn open along one side and partway down one end and one of the zines was wrinkled like a washboard. I'm assuming the package wasn't that way when you mailed it.

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Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740 -- Buck Coulson got me to wondering about the reverse side of his topic. How many of the most important science fiction and fantasy writers never published any other kind of fiction? I can't think of many. To the best of my knowledge, Heinlein, John W. Campbell, Jr., and Dr. E. E. Smith sold no fiction other than the type in which they specialized. But I think most of the other big names at least dabbled in mundane fiction. Of course, the two main pioneers in the science fiction field, H. G. Wells and Jules Verne, didn't confine themselves to science fiction. Wells wrote mostly mundane fiction in his latter years when he wasn't turning out non-fiction. Verne wrote some stories that are adventure fiction pure and simple, even though Amazing Stories serialized one of them, Measuring a Meridian. I don't believe John D. MacDonald started his fiction career with science fiction. He produced an enormous output of mundane fiction in his early years before hitting it big with the Travis McGee series, and JDM fandom is still trying to complete its listing of all his published fiction, because he didn't keep records or copies of such things as his many stories in sports pulps.

Bruno Ogorelec shouldn't mind too much when Time is cynical about the USSR. He isn't familiar enough with the American publishing industry to know that its books and magazines are cynical about everything, particularly the United States. And I wonder what he would think if he tuned in a speech by the President or some other top level government official on a United States television network and then heard someone at its conclusion give a lengthy explanation of all the things that were bad about the speech. However, I doubt Bruno's assertion that artists in Russia get "a good cultural climate and a lot of loving nurture". Shostakovitch was Russia's one great



20th century composer who didn't defect for part or all of his mature years. So: both of his operas, Lady Macbeth of the Mtensk District and The Nose, were never performed in Russia for several decades, his Fourth Symphony didn't get its premiere until a quarter-century after its composition, his Thirteenth Symphony received one sentence in Pravda upon its premier and it was virtually banned from further performances because it included a reminder that there is anti-Semitism in the USSR, and when Shostakovitch died, Pravda announced that fact in a half-dozen or so lines only after word of his death had spread by word of mouth throughout Europe and the United States. I don't doubt that there are good performing artists in Russia but there are also a lot of good Russian performing artists outside Russia as a result of defections and one of them, at least, Galina Vishnevskaya, has written an autobiography that gives a chilling picture of what it's like to be an artist in Russia.

Pavel Gregoric is just another demonstration of the truth that fans are basically the same everywhere, even in parts of the world which have little knowledge of the history of fandom in English-speaking lands. Moreover, some odd things are happening as further proofs of the axiom. No sooner do we hear from fans in nations where it's almost impossible for the average citizen to obtain and run a mimeograph than the mimeograph threatens to vanish as a publishing tool in nations where fandom has been a big thing for a half-century.

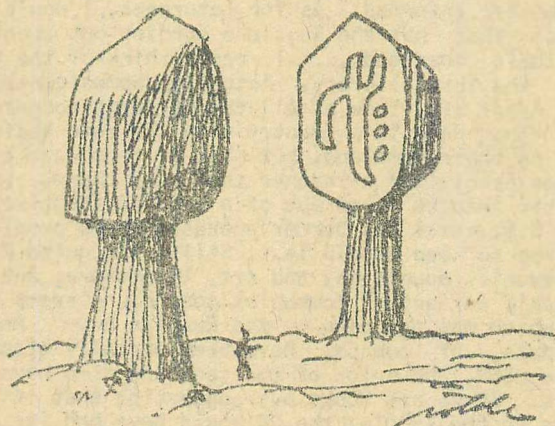
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Dave Gorecki, 9129 W. 167th Street, Orland Hills, IL 60477 -- Buck Coulson is certainly right about the anonymity of book editors; as a fan of Robert A. W. Lowndes magazines I was surprised to find later that he also edited the Avalon sf books published by Thomas Bouregy in the 50's and 60's. I suspect that with the magazine field dwindling so dramatically (and no longer being a prime source of material for readers-turned-fans) it's only natural that book editors are coming under closer scrutiny.

It would be interesting to see how influential Campbell would have been had he moved into hard cover publishing during the 50's boom. I suspect that without the high-profile editorials, BRASS TACKS rebuttals and other material his Hugo nominations and wins would have been even less.

Going back to early sf editors: Prior to his work on WORLDS BEYOND Knight had editorial duties on SUPER SCIENCE circa '49, which helped lift the quality of that magazine's stories considerably. No doubt Knight's influence and standing in the field would have reached even greater proportions had he been given a magazine with some staying power in the early '50s, instead of waiting for the cumulative impact that his criticism had on the field with the publication (and later expanded republication) of IN SEARCH OF WONDER. The same holds true with Lester del Rey's magazines. In del Rey's case the problem may have been finding worthwhile material, as well as his publisher's dubious payment policies; in one issue, editor del Rey apologizes that a serial he's been running turned out to be so good the author decided to expand it thus necessitating its running in a fourth issue. Of course the editor shares in the enthusiasm for the novel and loves the expansion--after all, it's by Philip St. John who's a del Rey pseudonym anyway!

Lastly, it's even more remarkable that Lowndes managed to turn out a number of pretty good magazines -- FUTURE, DYNAMIC, SF QUARTERLY, ORIGINAL SF -- in the 50's, along with a hardcover sf line... PLUS a whole line of other pulps covering mystery, westerns, sports and romance (and 2 sf novels, a collaboration novel with James Blish, and a number of short stories as well...)





Julie W. Ackermann, 608 Capitol Landing, Williamsburg, VA 23185 -- I was very sorry to hear about Captain Midnight. We recently lost a kitty, too. Our oldest kitty, Pippin, had 5 kittens right before we defected to Virginia three years ago. We ended up keeping two of them and the male, Pete (named after the cat in Door Into Summer), disappeared about two weeks ago. We really miss him; he was a whiner, but sweet. He had gone off before, but never for this long. Eric thinks he felt crowded, since our second oldest cat, Nephyr, had two kittens in March and we ended up keeping both of them. One of them, Yoda, technically belongs to our roommate, but along with his brother Rhett, there were still six cats in the house. I think Eric's theory is silly, because they all got along and there's plenty of room for everybody. I think he probably got hit by a car or eaten by a neighborhood dog. Unfortunately, we'll never know because Pete was always losing his collars, and didn't have any ID on him when he disappeared.

Rhett, by the way, is 'helping' me write this letter by alternately batting at my pen and sitting on the page in ANVIL that I'm referring to. His name was supposed to be Elvis because he had a sneer very similar to the King's, but Eric wouldn't let me keep him if his name was Elvis, so...

Buck Coulson's column was very interesting, particularly since I am in the process of doing extensive research on Science Fiction, its history and some criticism. This project came about when I was scanning subjects on the William & Mary library computer. They have quite a number of books about SF (more non-fiction than fiction titles, it seemed), including copies of most of the issues of Locus since 1976 -- donated by some guy in Silver Spring, MD. They won't let you check those out, of course, so I have to sit in the library (and freeze) while I read. After all these years of hearing about Locus, it's fascinating to finally read it. It's metamorphosis over the years has been fantastic. I'm only up to sometime in 1979, but I flipped through all the volumes before I started reading. I suppose I'll have to subscribe now.

Milton Stevens has a good point about the trend away from traditional SF themes. Expansion and experimentation is all very well and good, but give me some of that old time Science Fiction, too.

I can't decide if I'm glad there won't be any more Heinlein books to read. I mean, I'm definitely sorry that he's dead -- he was one of the Greats of SF -- but To Sail Beyond The Sunset was so bad, to my mind; and I can't help thinking things would've only gotten worse, had he tried to write more books -- despite Roy Tackett's hopes to the contrary. The books have been getting steadily worse ever since Stranger in a Strange Land.

Re: Garth Spencer's comment about Alabama -- we've got to do something about the Heart of Dixie's image. Birmingham is a bigger city than they have in all of Virginia, but everyone up here thinks we're all farmers!

I hope that we can have some sort of Mafiaette adventure at Worldcon -- surely we shouldn't have any trouble in New Orleans, of all places. I'm tired of being a Mafiaette in absentia.

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Buck Coulson, 2677W - 500N, Hartford City, IN 47348 -- I suppose, for a southern fanzine, I ought to say that meeting PLCM was the high point of Rivercon for me... It was pleasant, but the real high point was the completion of my collection of Phoebe Atwood Taylor mystery novels... At least, PLCM was easier to locate than you were last year. I walked into this party and a woman started peering at my name tag and leaned forward enough so that I could see the red hair, and I was pretty sure who it was before I got close enough to read her badge.

While TIME undoubtedly represents mainstream US thinking (which is an appalling idea), I trust that US fandom is a bit better informed. As for returnees, I don't suppose Bruno has read the international intrigue novel that has the Russians sending out agents to capture defectors and forcibly return them to their homeland... I can't think of the title or author, but it was something I borrowed from the local library. Actually, homesickness is a major reason for the returns, I should think. After all, look at all the US draft dodgers who went to Canada during the Vietnam unpleasantness. They were in a country with the same basic language and more or less the same form of government as their homeland, but most of them came home -- quite a few to go to jail, before the amnesty was proclaimed -- rather than stay there. (And on the other hand, just recently Cubans rioted rather than be taken out of a U.S. penitentiary and be sent back to their communist homeland...) The U.S. still has border guards to keep people out of the country, while East Germany has border guards to keep people in... Still, I'm quite willing to believe there are positive aspects to the communist countries, and art, literature, and so on are among them. But that bit about their not "meekly suffering" communist control -- seems to me I recall a revolution in Hungary awhile back, which was put down by the Russian army. And the Poles have been a bit restive lately... US leaders, of course, have been mortally afraid of communists since well before their success in the USSR, and a lot of the rank and file have -- before Stalin -- considered them possible saviors. There are books out suggesting that if it hadn't been for Franklin Roosevelt's socialist reforms in the 1930's, the US would have had its own revolution, which would probably have ended with Huey Long or someone less scrupulous becoming dictator in the name of socialism.



Harry Warner's comments about the adult bookstore reminds me of the time, years ago, when we visited George Barr and his sister Nettie Ott in Salt Lake City, and were taken around to see the sights, including the city's brand-new red light district. Everyone seemed very proud of it; Salt Lake was becoming a big city, finally.

Oh, yes, Groff Conklin was fairly well thought of back in the 1950s. He was simply mining the old magazines for reprintable stories, which was a lot easier than coaxing readable new stories out of authors, especially back then when not so much had already been reprinted. But in those days I hadn't read all the old stories in the magazines, so I ended up with 31 different Groff Conklin anthologies. He was running short of good stories by the end of his career, though, and as far as I know he was never an editor as the word is generally used; he was an anthologizer.

There once was a Yugoslav fan  
Whose limericks never would scan,  
So he sent them to ANViL(s)  
By buckets and handfuls,  
To undermine fans in this land.

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Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224 -- Concerning Bob Shaw's Ragged Astronauts trilogy, I see a progression in the title of the first two books. We start with Astronauts. The second book is named for what we find astronauts in -- spaceships. The third book in the trilogy ought to be named for what we find spaceships in -- i.e. the cosmos, so a title like The Philogestrum Cosmos. (I think I misspelled 'philogestrum' -- the inflammable substance of alchemists. (I can't find it in my dictionary. Anyone?)) Like you, I found the "Conspiracy" episode of STTNG a bit raw. These puppet masters are pretty gross entities, but STTNG seemed to be going out of their way to be gross. Part of my deeply held belief that the writers are terribly flawed and amateurish. None of the shows ever seemed focused. They always wandered about. (I presume you mean the scripts are terribly flawed etc. That much is obvious. Not knowing the writers except from their work, one can only guess at their adjustment to society. As for their professional status, if they are being paid at all, they are not amateurs. Judging from the scripts they produce, if they are paid at all, they are being paid too much.))

The question Buck raises in his column this time -- whether SF is harder to write than mainstream -- has long filled pages of fan and prozines, to no general conclusion. I suspect that to write SF well requires a different set of goals and orientations than it takes to write mainstream well, so that you won't see a, say, Gore Vidal SF novel the equal to, say, Arthur C. Clarke. Or a Clarke mainstream effort that is the equal of Vidal. (Vidal has written SF -- Kolki & Messiah (which I understand aren't that good) but his historical novels like Burr are excellent. A better case might be Gedge (Gealge?) who wrote a good historical romance and Stargate, poor SF; or Doris Lessing whose 5-book SF series was not at all well received within fandom. A lot of the writers Buck lists as having done well outside SF have done well in genre-fiction (mysteries, romance, westerns) which are usually consigned, along with SF, to the trashpile of literature -- all four are pulp survivals and emphasize strong plotting and conventional characters. The modern novel is more of a psychological study thing with less interest in doing things than feeling one's self's feelings.

Ron Coulart has written a lot of mysteries; at least one series, title unknown, and 12 "avenger" novels for Warner Paperback Library. Murray Leinster (Will F. Jenkins) was a successful pulp writer before Amazing Stories had its first issue.

"Car 54" may seem amusing to you but we just finished a summer long trial of a woman and her 3 sons (they're in their 30s-40s) who'd massacred three policemen trying to serve a bad check warrant. Walking into a room full of armed strangers is definitely disconcerting.

Bruno Ogorelec's article this time prompts more negative reaction than the first part did. When he says "the only redeeming quality of the American approach to propaganda..." he is seriously maligning the American news media. I don't deny that there is bias and slanting to some news articles but rarely is it to push some ideology -- the essence of propaganda -- and often results in self-criticism. Here in Detroit we have two newspapers losing money because of a cutthroat battle for dominance. One paper sued to organize a "joint operating agreement" -- an exception to the anti-monopoly laws allowed for failing newspapers. The two papers consolidate business and printing operations while maintaining separate editorial staffs. Ed Meese ended his corruption-laden term in public office by approving this J.O.A. Now what's interesting is that while the Detroit Free Press was pursuing this JOA it had ceased running editorial cartoons criticizing Meese, even tho its regular cartoonist, a very good man named Bill Day was drawing them and submitting them to syndication. The first we know about this in Detroit was when it Washington Post did a big article on the Free Press' self-censorship. The thing is, in America you can run critical cartoons of the Attorney General, which you couldn't in Russia. But more importantly the right to run critical cartoons is vigorously defended by the media.



In America censorship itself is a news-item because it goes against the grain of our culture. In Russia censorship is so habitual that people joke "There's no news in The Truth (Pravda) and no truth in The News (Izvestia)."

Bruno makes much of the state support of the arts. In the US the state often supports the arts, too, i.e. P.B.S. Looking at some of the controversy over PBS programming claimed by one group of another as subversive, un-American, or "communist crap," it is clear that state supported art must walk a narrow line between personal integrity, freedom of expression and governmental appeasement. The market economy supports an astonishing array of publications, some very small and marginally profitable, but profitable to survive and pursue their publishing goals - of literature or criticism or analysis.

And while it's nice that Moscow construction workers read serious literature on the subway, do they have any choice in the matter? If they had "Kremlin Wives" to read would they still prefer Tolstoy? If they had "Hollywood Wives" would they prefer Dostoyveski? Paperback thrillers are big in the US because for many people after a hard days work, they're not interesting in reading a hard book. They just want a simple diversion.

As for meekly standing in line to buy things, I think Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Poland show why Moscovites don't protest shortages, shoddy products and incompetent planning.

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Catherine Mintz, 1810 S. Rittenhouse Square, Philadelphia, PA 19103 -- Having read the article about communism (and the first part in the preceding issue) I wish that Bruno would address the one thing I really envy the USSR: they have a thriving space program. How come we can't aim some of our glitzy technology at the stars? Or the moon. Or even high orbit. And muttering "We're just not very good at organizing long-term projects" doesn't really strike me as a satisfactory answer. I mean we have, as a society, accomplished some pretty large goals in the past...

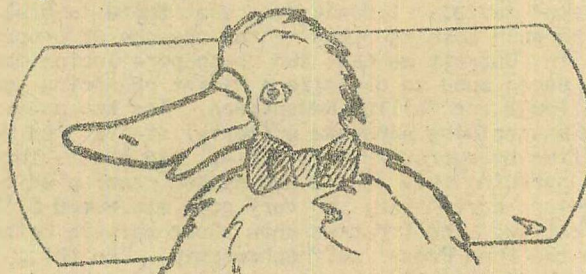
I enjoyed Buck Coulson's article on cross-genre writers. One book on writing I've looked at suggested that SF writers can move out of their area relatively easily because, if you're writing real SF, you're already operating with a lot of innovation and imagination and your prose is at least decent. What more do you need to write most fiction and nonfiction? Library research? A little life experience? Just a thought, and not even my own...

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Ladislav Peska, Na dolikach 503, 274 01 Slany, Czechoslovakia - Please excuse my late reply, I have been very busy in the past weeks. In July I was with my family in Roznov, which is about 250 miles from Slany, visiting my wife's parents. Then I spent ten days in the Soviet Union. I visited Baku and Leningrad. Originally, I was to fly to Jerevan, but the day before we were due to arrive the town was closed to foreigners. I don't know how much you are informed about the events in Karabach and about problems between the Armenians and Adzerbadgians nations. In the first half of 1988 fifty deaths were officially reported in these events. I think that there could be ten times more!

We waited ten hours in Prague and then we flew to Leningrad instead of Jerevan. It is as if you wanted to fly to New York and instead you went to Los Angeles. I was surprised by the many American tourists in Leningrad. Western tourists were the exception in the Soviet Union until recently. Times are changing. Let's hope for the better!

From Leningrad I flew to Baku. I like the town very much, I felt as if I were in Texas in the 19th century. (Of course, I think of the Texas which I know from "Western" movies; I never was in Texas in the 19th century.) Everywhere were only petroleum towers, thousands and thousands of them!





Craig Ledbetter, Box 5367, Kingwood, TX 77325 -- Jeez, having a newborn baby around the house sure does screw up my correspondence schedule. Thanks for sending the latest ANVIL. I very much appreciate it, even though I'm a bit tardy in responding. A nice cover gets things off to a good start.

Coulson's overview of SF writers who have worked outside the genre (or vice versa) contained his usual blend of information and entertainment. I most enjoy SF writers who cross over to the mystery field. It was how I got into mysteries.

Muppet Mania was great! I had no appreciation for the power of Sesame Street till my first daughter came along. If we had this when I was a kid,..... I'd probably still be a dumb-ass...

The review of Greenmantle was excellent. Really got me in the mood to seek it out, but the other two reviews were too short to be of any use.

The letter(s) from Pavel were entertaining and remind me of the more enthusiastic letter writers to my video review zine. I'm currently in deep shit because I said the current zine scene on Horror films sucks big time.

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Milt Stevens, 7234 Capps Avenue, Reseda, CA 91335 - Like yourself, I've wondered why the Groff Conklin anthologies haven't been reprinted. I suspect Conklin may have bought only limited rights to the stories involved, but I haven't come across a source to confirm it. Of course, Conklin isn't around anymore to promote his own product, and that seems to have a major influence on what stays in print.

Roy Tackett's comment on living fanzines reminded me of a strange example. The living fanzine in question was titled "Suppository" and was circulated through the Cult. It was actually a cactus plant with a tag attached for title info. Bruce Pelz had his "copy" around for years. Bruce also kept the fanzine that was printed on bologna for quite awhile. Being a completist fanzine collector can be a strange avocation.

Indeed, young Pavel shouldn't be too critical of people not being totally informed as to the languages of Eastern Europe. Unless things have changed drastically since I was in college, Romanian is a Latin-based language, and Hungarian isn't even an Indo-European Language. As I recall, Hungarian has some linguistic relatives in Central Asia.

If a persons reads much Russian Literature, it's easy to get the impression that Russians must live in a state of perpetual misery. There's quite a bit of truth to the statement that nobody can suffer like a Russian. However, this is more a matter of Russian national character than of economic systems. The most common theory seems to be that the Russians get their sense of gloom from their godawful weather.

Bruno Ogorelec seems to be arguing that if the Soviet System isn't totally terrible it must be fairly good. That doesn't necessarily follow. Taking media bias into consideration, the Soviet System still appears to be cumbersome and inefficient. It doesn't do a very good job even in terms of its stated objectives.

A Communist solution to a problem may or may not work in any given situation. Under Communism, you're stuck with that solution no matter how badly it works. (For instance, the Soviets spent years trying to apply Lysenkoism to agriculture, before even they had to admit it wouldn't work.) There doesn't seem to be any advantage to limiting your options that way.

Apparently, Gorbachev and his supporters have come to the conclusion that some changes are in order. It's possible that things will improve, although that is by no means certain.

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Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M6S 3L6, Taral's cover for #47 is excellent although I expect some readers will miss the various in-jokes it contains and appreciate it just for the quality of the drawing (and the printing, which was the high quality such a lovingly rendered piece of artwork deserves.)

Unfortunately I was a little disappointed in the last part of Bob's WOODEN SPACESHIPS which struck me verging on deus ex machina but it was still an enjoyable book. I'm hoping, though, that the concluding volume of the trilogy will regain the excellence shown in the first book.

I'm not a cat fancier and frequently like to tweak the noses of fandom's feline fanatics with derogatory comments about cats but even I was touched by your eulogy for your pet. I still think cat people get a little carried away in their claims for feline intelligence and virtues but there's no denying the love they create in and the joy they bring to a large part of the fannish population.



It strikes me exemplifying a fundamental difference between the US and Canada that a police officer could enter an ordinary suburban house and find herself surrounded by children with weapons. You probably believe (perhaps correctly) that this is a necessary part of growing up in Alabama but it tends to make me happy I live on the other side of the 48th parallel. ((Wait a minute, Mister... Read my article again... the part in the intro that said that the event in question "had nothing to do with teenagers..." In fact, most of my children are conservatives neither smoke, drink, wear funny clothes, go out shooting, bring home Aussies, or get mail from Canadians. If they want to be mundane, that's O.K. I married an eccentric, I didn't raise any.))

Interesting second installment by Bruno. One could hardly argue with his claim that we'd all be better off if we had a better-balanced picture of the Soviet people themselves (as they'd be if they had a better view of us) nor with his statement that such a view is difficult to obtain but perhaps that indicates the fannish view of things. As a counter-example, let me tell you of something that happened last year at the school I teach in. A delegation of Russians proposed a "twinning" of Toronto and Vladivostok. They sent a team of four people to discuss the idea with Toronto politicians and to address a Toronto highschool. For various reasons, they chose my school. Since my school is in the heart of a neighbourhood consisting primarily of Poles, Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians and Ukrainians the results were rather predictable: there were pickets, angry confrontations, near-riots and many vitriolic phonecalls. But that's not the strange point I was intending to make.

The second half of the program was for a large delegation of Torontonians to visit the USSR and one of the delegates chosen was a senior student from my school. Shortly after her return one of the morning announcements informed us that she would be giving a slide show and talk about her three weeks in Russia during the lunchtime break. "Great," I thought, "a chance to find out what a bright young girl thought about visiting the Soviets!" so I made sure to get to the announced room early so I'd have a good seat. Out of a school population of perhaps 1350, twelve people showed up. And eight of those were teachers! Only four students were interested enough in what it would be like to meet real Russian people to attend the presentation. Is it any wonder the world situation continues to spiral downward?

As exemplary as the Soviet success in attempting to impose culture may be would any intelligent person choose such a system over freedom of choice? I may not attend concerts and the ballet but at least that's my choice (I spend the time loccing fanzines instead) and while I may be a less well-rounded individual as a result I'm also a far happier one. If I wanted to attend concerts, I would. I prefer to read and respond to fanzines and in its own way that too is cultural. Perhaps the same way the Blob was cultural but.....

I thought Harry's comments about the Adult Book Store were decidedly unWarnerish. I can understand Harry not wanting to patronize such an establishment but actively wishing for its destruction isn't what I'd have expected from him. Unless, of course, it's all a subtle science fiction joke? Assuming those bollards were erected by the Junior Chamber of Commerce then Harry's hope for an automobile accident is just a clever reference to the SF novel CRASH which we all know was written by that famous British SF writer J.C. Bollard.

It was quite a coincidence to read Lawrence's comments on child pornography since I received in today's mail a letter written from prison by a well-known midwest convention fan who is just now starting his sentence for involvement (peripherally and, I believe, innocently) in that very matter. His fate made me aware that the matter is not as clear-cut as it might seem. The fan in question did indeed take nude pictures of an under-aged girl but there was no sex involved and he had the parent's permission. The chap he sent those picture to, however, was apparently part of a child pornography ring so the fan got caught in the investigation of the actual criminals and paid the price of a valid law inadequately applied. (It strikes me that the video-store proprietors Watt-Evans mentions were similar victims; they weren't breaking any laws prior to the announcement of the starlet's age so making them retroactively guilty seems to me to be another example of the hypocritical smugness of the Moral Minority.)

I've seen some porn videos with John Holmes in them and he seemed like a fairly young man. If he was in his thirties when he died he could have had sex with that many women at a rate of less than two a day. Admittedly this seems unlikely to most of us but considering his equipment and the fascination it creates in the women I've seen watching his videos I'd guess that it might be a valid claim. (The fact that he made his living as a porn star rather than as a teacher or a computer programmer would, one assumes, provide him with more opportunities for casual sex than Ben or I encounter!)

Reading Pavel's letters I got the impression that you were over-reacting to him. It seemed to me that his grasp of English was less than adequate to make the points he anted to make and consequently some of his phrasing seemed to be more insulting than he may have meant. What seemed to you to be condescension might have read as fannish sarcasm/humour if written by someone with a more subtle grasp of the language. ((Ah, Mike, I can always count on you to take up for the underdog. That's your role in life, as mine is to over-react! As GBS said, "You may be right at that."))



Lisa Jenkins, Room 302, Dahl Hall, Moorhead State, Moorhead, MN 56560 -- Man! You get all those fanzines? I've debated with myself on sending you my "Prophetess of Doom" newsletter for my Star Trek fan club. Because of the general lack of money and the fact I'm going to college, I thought I best not send a copy. You've got enough to read as it is.

Why chastise poor Pavel on that first letter of his? Did he secretly hide a Dirty Word? Perhaps because I'm close to his age and therefore just as naive about all this social adult stuff, I didn't understand. As a semi-neo, I'll write to him. I didn't know one had to have "special features" to write for fanzines. I better hurry up and get some! If I get stuck in the WAHF again, you may mention me as one who read two "Lan's Lantern"s and survived! ((I'm glad you are writing to Pavel. He'd rather hear from you than me, anyway. You remind me of Julie Wall, now Ackermann -- that's a compliment. I guess I was in a bitchy mood that week when I was typing those letters...at least that's the only excuse I can think of. I did notice when reading my other fanzines that Pavel had written to everybody and I was the only one who didn't just love him. I hardly think his ego is so fragile that my attitude will make any difference in his fanatic.))

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Don D'Amassa, 323 Dodge Street, East Providence, RI 02914 -- Let me agree most heartily with Buck Coulson and yourself that SF writers can generally do as well outside the genre, at least the competent to excellent ones. In fact, they probably would succeed even better outside the genre in most cases.

Richard Matheson's mysteries were hardly "romantic" as you characterized them, and you didn't mention his war novel, BEARLESS WARRIORS, but your point is otherwise valid. Just off the top of my head, the following SF writers wrote mysteries in their careers as well as those you mentioned: Poul Anderson, H. Beam Pipe, Henry Kuttner, Dean Koontz, Barry Malzberg, A.E. van Vogt, Keith Laumer, and Ray Bradbury (who also did a mainstream novel). Kornbluth did at least one historical, Pohl wrote some contemporary novels, two in collaboration with Kornbluth, Aldiss did some mainstream stuff as did Beaumont, Delany, Wells, Wolfe, Vonnegut, and others. Clarke wrote a novel set in World War II. Alan Nourse wrote bestsellers as Dr. X. Brunner, Moorcock, Herbert, and Lafferty all wrote historical novels, and Murray Leinster wrote westerns and, I think, a couple of mysteries. Manly Wade Wellman wrote historical novels and thrillers too. I think it's the rule rather than the exception.

Darrell Schweitzer's reaction to the discussion of communism seems to me to have missed one point. Communism as practiced in Russia, Cuba, China and Yugoslavia are four different systems, at least in detail. Most Americans do not know what everyday life is like under communist regimes; they probably have a comic book impression of people slinking around in fear of the secret police that is, at least, totally out of proportion to the reality. If the recent change in the Soviet Union accomplishes nothing else, it will have awakened some interest in this country in the details of life in the Communist Bloc nations, and that might well in the long run be of benefit to both sides. It is possibly of some significance that this week past, for the first time in all the years I have been active in SF, I received a postcard from a Soviet fan requesting an exchange of letters. ((So did I!))

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Lawrence Watt-Evans, 5 Solitaire Court, Gaithersburg, MD 20878-4119 -- Re: Bruno's article... I have a couple of people I correspond with in Russia--two in Volgograd and one in Moscow. In this cultural paradise of Bruno's, the two in Volgograd are literally desperate for books to read; I don't know about the one in Moscow. When I offered to send a couple of books, one man sent me a long list.

I balked, and he replied with resignation that he knew I probably couldn't get any of them; after all, all the stories about being able to walk into a bookstore and buy anything you want must just be American propaganda. I had to explain that I could get all of them, but I wasn't willing to spend \$120 on him. ((I recently sent a box of fanzines and paperback books to Czechoslovakia and the postage was nearly \$40 -- surface rate. Air would have been \$100, which was more than I was willing to spend.))

I also wonder just how much of Russian culture reaches most people, in a country of 280 million who aren't allowed to travel without permits. If you're in Moscow, I'm sure that there are plenty of wonderful cultural opportunities. But there are in Washington, too--we have opera and ballet and concerts and museums and all manner of live theatre. I could see a different play every week for the rest of my life without driving more than twenty miles from home. The government doesn't brag about them because they aren't run by the government. And Washington is not the big city here; New York and Chicago both do better, and quite possibly other cities as well.

I don't know how much Bruno's seen of either Russia or the U.S., but I am not at all certain that his picture of either one is correct. His version of the Soviet Union may well be more accurate than that in TIME; that wouldn't surprise me a bit. I know that the USSR isn't a drab wasteland. But I don't think he's getting a true picture of either the Soviets or the U.S. TIME doesn't do



cover stories on the Metropolitan Opera any more than they do on the Moscow Ballet. As for people who like living in Communist countries -- how can he be sure? For a lot of people, living in Russia is important, but they probably don't care whether it's under the CPSU or the Czar. Think how many patriotic Americans disapprove of our current government, but would never think of emigrating!

Regarding "Muppet-Mania," I've seen "The Frog Prince," starring Kermit, on videotape, and if this is the one Taral meant, then he's got it wrong; Kermit does not play the Frog Prince. Kermit's the narrator and the prince's sidekick. The prince himself is Brave Sir Robin. Other Muppet characters include about three dozen miscellaneous frogs as a chorus, a moronic king, an ugly old witch, and the witch's monstrous flunky. The princess and Brave Sir Robin in human form are played by humans, not Muppets. Oh, yes, some little frogs, to whom Kermit's telling the story, appear at the beginning. It's a fun production for kids. The beautiful princess is under a curse that makes her Spoonerize everything she says, and I love Spoonerisms. // The mad scientist was Dr. Bunsen Honeydew, not "Denson." And according to the Sesame Street Treasury, the hairy monster is Herry Monster, not Harry. There's a grouch named Grundgetta who's appeared several times. Don't know if this is "Grousetta" or not. ((These may be my transcription errors rather than Taral's -- cp)) "The Dark Crystal" had the evil Skekses, the good Ur-somethings, and the little Gelflings, not Delphins. Oh, yeah, and Pod People (not related to the ones in "Invasion of the Body Snatchers"). The "witch" was an oracle named Aughra. At the end the Urs and Skekses merge into Ur-Skeks.

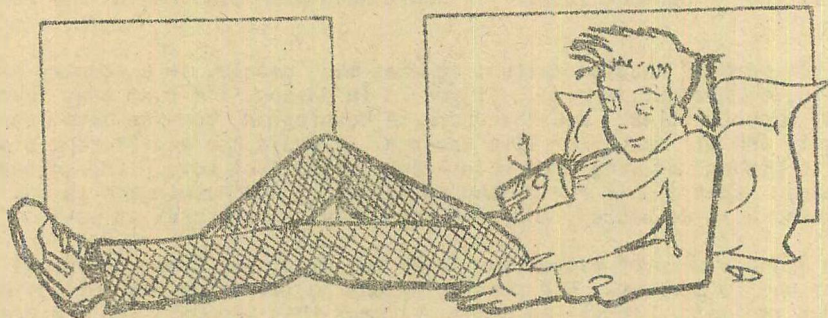
There are curious mistakes in Pavel Gregoric's letter. Hungarian is not a Slavic language--it's FinnoUgric. The Finno-Ugric group includes Hungarian, Finnish, Uighur and several obscure dialects. Rumanian isn't Slavic either; it's a Romance language, thanks to the Roman province of Dacia. It's much more closely related to Spanish, French and Romansh (a Swiss dialect) than to Russian or Bulgarian. At least it's Indo-European, unlike Hungarian! Incidentally, I'd heard that the three major dialects of SerboCroatian were Serbian, Croatian, and Slovenian; I never heard of Bosnian or Montenegrin or Macedonian as a dialect (although they're certainly distinct ethnic groups). I also had the impression that at one time, when Serbia and Croatia were separate countries (and Croatia was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire), it was a matter of patriotic pride to distinguish between the two dialects, so one was written with the Cyrillic alphabet, the other with the Latin alphabet. I forget which was which, though. Probably Serbia used Cyrillic.

And yes, Pavel is condescending -- I mean, I'm so glad he took the trouble to tell us all what "Homo sapiens" means, and what language it is!

Regarding Janet Fox's comments on short fiction, I think the dominance of the surrealist mode has come about because traditional readers now read novels, leaving short fiction other than ANALOG to the more literary and experimental types. Or possibly I have cause and effect backward. In any case, it seems worth pointing out that surrealism doesn't work very well at longer length, so if it's going to dominate anywhere, or even make a showing, it's got to be in short stories. The more traditional writers can make the transition to novels and thereby earn far more money; the surrealist writers are trapped in shorter forms. Also, of course, the short-fiction reviewers at LOCUS might just happen to like surrealist fiction.

All those limericks were truly dreadful, you know that?

Your samples of humorous verse  
Ranged from awful to six degrees worse!  
Bad scansion is galling,  
Such rhymes are appalling  
And I've seen better jokes in a hearsel





Sheila Strickland, Route 5, Box 386B, Baker, LA 70714 (I thought I'd go ahead and try to get this through again. Maybe you should have a word with your local P.O. or mail carrier. Paranoid fantasies aside, it is a bizarre feeling to get an envelope back with "Moved, Left no address" that's been sent to a fanzine editor.)

"Muppet Mania" brought to mind the time a group of us fans from Baton Rouge went down to New Orleans to see the travelling Muppet exhibit. We had just as good a time as any (other) children there, happily gaping at the exhibit cases and buying buttons of our favorite characters. The short film clip they ran of early Muppet appearances was geared for the area -- one bit was a commercial done for a local coffee back in the late 50's or early 60's. It was a very short piece in which a Muppet says: "Try Community Coffee," shoots off a cannon, then says, "It's a blast!" I saw a variation of it for another product on a Muppet special a few years ago. But, really "Ms." Piggy? It's "Miss" Piggy, as she'd have you know.

Bruno Ogorelec's article continues to be interesting. He brings up a particularly good point -- the fact that some people are happy to live in a Communist country and wouldn't leave if they had the option. At the very least, I hope the series influences some readers to think of the "Communist bloc" as made up of people instead of faceless masses. It's not a system I'd support or want to live under, but we should understand that some do. Anyone who wants an SF version might read The Dispossessed by Ursula K. LeGuin. It shows two planets, each with a distinct society. The one that seems so drab and bleak on the exterior has an inner richness of the people. The one that seems so luxurious and grand on the exterior has a dark underside with a miserable populous. And each has malcontents who want to know about the other planet, although that's just not done.

As an over 30-year old, Pavel Gregoric, Jr's letter did come across as condescending. Maybe we should give him the benefit of the doubt though -- him being young and a neo and writing in a foreign language. Also he may not be thinking of you as an elder, but a peer and just another fan. At any rate, let's not kick the kid too hard -- yet. If you want revenge, just hand onto his letter and re-print it in another 5-10 years.

Oh, I did write to Samet Nuhlu to let him know that there is fannish life in Louisiana. It's not real viable, but we are here.

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Irv Koch, 5465 N. Morgan St. #106\*, Alexandria, VA 22312 (real address), 835 Chattanooga Bank Building, Chattanooga, TN 37402 (permanent mailing address) My attempts at cutting down on fanzine fanatic since shutting down my own publications actually appear to have succeeded. For the first four months since about 1970, I haven't received an unsolicited fanzine. This is probably unfortunate but there is till ANVIL. Of course Dick & Nicki Lynch have just moved within about a 40 minute drive of me, so maybe the situation will deteriorate. In any case, it means I'd better write a LoC for you all read quick now or no more ANVILs.

Fortunately Buck Coulson gave in, in ANVIL 47, something to write about. Romances. His Juanita, Andre Norton, and Phyllis Karr were indirectly responsible for my short lived store and getting me kicked out of Romance Writers of America. I read some of their stuff, discovered they were romances and didn't bite, so I failed to ignore the stuff as most SF&F fen do. Whilst I had the Romance & Cookbook Bookstore (SF & Mystery were already taken in Atlanta so I had to do something else), I got to find out more about the genre. First "they" don't speak the same language. "They" call "category" what we call "genre." Second, just as there are different subsections of SF&F, such as Swords & Sorcery, hard SF, weird tales, etc., "they" have even more harshly defined subsections.

Phyllis Ann Karr, an SF writer and fan whom Buck missed in his crossover writer list, writes ONLY "Regencies" and "they" revel in having their little ghetto within a ghetto much more so than, say, the Lovecraftian horrorists. "They" also have historical romances, which in my opinion is slightly different from "historical novels" and there you get 90% of the small crossover in readers between the two genre/categories.

They also have "straight category" romances, better known as Harlequins, Loveswepts, etc. The publisher or line is a true "brand name" situation there and they work hard at delivering a definable product, unlike say Tor vs DAW vs Baen. But anyway, I think Buck missed a few SF writers who write "that," and I don't mean the new "subsection" of "SF&F romances" done by romance writers PURELY for romance readers in which they are reinventing SF&F within their own sphere.

First, Charles Grant won't admit it but, and I forget the pen name, he writes the stuff too. Second, there are a PACK of SF writers like Carole Nelson Douglas and Esther Friesner whose SF&F gets voted on and reviewed by the Romance publications along with their own "SF&F". Occasionally one of them will slip a pure blooded romance across to the SF readers, like PROBE.

What's the difference? you ask. Slant, viewpoint, peculiar word and plot use, and more. What's the difference between SF and a mainstream novel like SPHERE that "just happens to be SF"? Well, anyway, my main point is that Buck only scratched the tip of an iceberg most people don't even



realize is there. You might get some of the crossover types to write on this and have a lot of interesting bits no one else has.

And, oh yes, why I was kicked out of RWA. (SFWA wouldn't even let me in, but then that is their normal policy. RWA admits "unpublished" writers -- which are not what "we" would really call a "would be writer" but not a "fan" either.) Seems RWA has this silly, and I do mean "silly" pledge you have to sign to be a member. I wouldn't. It was silly. So they sent me a check for the remains of my membership and said "sign and return, or cash the check and leave." This is at least a classier way of kicking someone out than the standard gutless SF club method where some clique or maybe the treasurer who just doesn't like you, "loses" your check repeatedly as an excuse for cutting you off from the club's zine/meeting notices.

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Mark Manning 1400 East Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112 (And then, when I looked up, I held ANVIL 47 in my hands, strangely unable to remember anything else. Not that it was an inherently unpleasant state to inhabit: There were no memories of throwing rice at movie screens at midnight, no images remaining from the third season of the original Star Trek. I couldn't recall any foodless consuites nor any embarrassing typos which made it into print. All that remained was the cool blue background glow of interstellar hydrogen, and a cover by Taral.)

I apologize in advance for the relative brevity of this LoC. All day today, I composed a LoC to Fosfax, the Louisville clubzine, in which I responded to someone's earlier LoC equating Communism with Nazism. Louisville, the town where I went to high school, is apparently still the great place to escape from it was fifteen years ago. Ogorelec's second installment on Communism was far saner than the objectionable Fosfax LoC, and far calmer than my Fosfax reply. Thanks.

Last night at work, someone brought in a cake. The red icing on this one tasted like lip-stick, and made my partner's tongue bright red. My blue-iced slice turned my hands and mouth the color of the New Mexico sky. I lolled my tongue for the next half hour, repeatedly singing the Muppet song, "Fuzzy and Blue." Muppetmaniac Taral would have appreciated it, I bet.

Pavel Gregoric's LoC didn't offend me as much as it did you. But Krsto Mazuranic's limericks may force me to spend the next days re-reading Ginsberg and Herrick and Chaucer and Cummings, just to wash the old palate. Come to think of it, that's not such a bad idea at any time, is it?

(Then I finished ANVIL 47. Memories came flooding back like September leaves, showing me where the fish fit into the Cosmic Scheme of Things. So, thus prepared, I wrote the zine up for the Westwind fanzine review column, then wrote you a LoC.)

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Walt Willis, 32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, N. Ireland BT21 OPD Bruno's article (in A47) was interesting as far as it went, but that wasn't far enough. As you suggest, what we really want to know is what it's like to live out your life there, not about what people read on the subway when they have only what the state provides. Like, what sort of apartment or house he lives in, what choice did he have, what meals does he have, and what does he do in the evening.

Sometimes I wonder if the current controversy about Socialism v Capitalism will not in future centuries seem as absurd as medieval church disputations do to us now. People are inclined to think of them as mutually exclusive opposites, like good versus evil, greed versus envy, freedom versus tyranny, and so on: but in fact every economy is mixed to some extent. The question is not so much one of principle, as of getting the mix right. It is arguable that what really determines the efficiency of any economy is the effectiveness of the feedback circuit from consumer to producer.

I have the feeling that socialism is an idea whose time has come, and gone, but it is possible I suppose that someone like Gorbachov might be able, by decentralization, 'glasnost' etc. to introduce enough consumer feedback to invigorate the Russian economy. But sometimes I wish I was as sure of anything as I used to be about everything.

I'll look forward to Richard Hyde's article on Zero-Gravity Sex. The last one I remember on this theme was The Aphrodite Project in Slant, which seemed very daring at the time. But despite the sexual revolution, so far as I know no one has ever attempted anything like a Free Fall Kama Sutra. I suppose the nearest thing has been Brad Foster's Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind cover for Holier Than Thou.

((That was HTT's twentieth issue, or as the cover clearly stated -- "XX". We sold it at auction for \$20, I think, raising funds for ANVIL.))



Toni Jerroen, Vilhelijantie 4-6 D 103, 00410 Helsinki, Finland -- I am writing to tell what it means to be an officially registered society in Finland (see Roy Tackett's letter in ANVIL 47). Finland is the promised land of officially registered societies, I think there are more societies here than people. Every lace-making club wants their circle to be officially registered, it sounds so fine. And that's also one of the reasons that people join more eagerly officially registered (fan) clubs; they think it's more certain they will get the fanzines they are promised; they know they have some say in the matter because the rules of order have to be that kind, and so on. So with an officially registered society publishing your fanzine (or semi-prozine) you get more readers.

But that's not the only advantage. Officially registered societies get grants from the government and they don't have to pay any taxes. I can assure you there are no strings attached. For example, the Finnish SF fanzines get grants for opinion magazines (I don't know the right English word but I hope you understand) and that means that you are very well allowed to have opinions. About half of the magazines that get money from this grant are about culture (books, comics, movies, music and so on) and the other half about politics and then some others like one gayzine. All of those political magazines are against the government and our society, they uncover things that are hidden and speak for a different kind of lifestyle. The only things that aren't allowed are those against the law, but for example when one of those magazines made a special number about drugs, almost promoting drug use (which is illegal in Finland), they only get a warning not to do it again. So I can do what ever I like in Tahtivaeltaja, no one has anything to say about it.

Here is every now and then SF-fanzines published by an individual, but normally they are crudzines, or last only a few issues. And I'm not so sure that's not a bad thing; I think the best fanzines are like Tahtivaeltaja: there is some important serious stuff, some funny stuff, eg: about what has happened, some inside jokes, some short stories, some comics and so on. I'm also totally in control of what I want to publish. I am happy and the readers are happy.

If you didn't know it, Tahtivaeltaja (Star Rover) is one of the three biggest Finnish SF semi-prozines and I'm it's editor. It is published by Helsinki Science Fiction Society.

On to other matters. Buck Coulson's article was interesting, but why didn't he mention the two best SF-authors in America, Philip K. Dick and Alfred Bester. Dick has of course written many mainstream books, which mostly were published after his death (unfortunately he was so much ahead of his time). From Bester I know only one mainstream novel, The Rat Race (Who He?), which I have. Then there's of course a countless amount of European SF-writers who have done also mainstream, for example J. G. Ballard (everybody knows his Empire of the Sun), Stanislaw Lem (at least one has been translated into Finnish), Michael Moorcock (some very good ones), Brian Aldiss and so on.

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Teddy Harvia, 7209 DeVille Drive, NRH, TX 76180-8257 -- I was on the verge of mailing you three cartoons for ANVIL when my first missive to you was returned. P.L. swears that you have not moved, much less moved without leaving a forwarding address, as the P.O. seems to think, so I am trying again but I am no enclosing the cartoons as I subconsciously have a fear that this missive too will be returned to me. ((I've got the post office straightened out now, you can send the cartoons!))

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Bruno Ogorelec, Kopernikove 10, 41020 Zagreb, Yugoslavia -- How come my copy of A47 was so late? I was positively the last kid on the block to get mine. Throws my LoCcing schedule clear off the tracks, it does. I was so piqued I considered sending you another article but relented in the end. So what you get this time is just a LoC, but beware!

Ah, how the LoCcing urge courses through the veins! ANVIL is the most eminently Loccable fanzine of the two dozen or so I receive on a regular basis. No. 47 is the usual friendly package I have learned to expect from you. A good, interesting, yet uncomplicated friend. Thank you for the effort you put into it.

Old Ironmaster is interesting even when he tells of things I do not care much about, but this time his topic was as close to my heart as I could wish. It raised some fond memories. A long time ago I stumbled upon a Western short story by Theodore Sturgeon -- included in an SF anthology for some reason. A gem of a story; a first-person plaintive narrative of an impotent cowboy, tough and tender at the same time. I wonder what his Western novels are like. Westerns are generally not my cup of tea but if Sturgeon's are anything like that story... Try as I might, however, I can remember neither the title of the story nor the anthology. Mysteries also leave me cold and I would never have picked a book by John D. MacDonald if it weren't for the little bit of SF that he'd done. His "Planet of the Dreamers" was one of the reasons I fell in love with science fiction. It impressed the hell out of me in my teens. Much later I learned of another MacDonald SF novels, "Ballroom in the Skies", and managed to locate it after some effort. Glad to report I liked it. Too bad for SF that he let his talent graze on greener pastures.

It was good to see someone praise L.P. Davies. I thought I was his only fan around. Thanks for



his titles; a couple of them are new to me; I'll obviously have to hit the huckster trail again.

I was surprised at some of Buck's notable omissions. For instance, Phillip Jose Farmer wrote a couple of pornographic novels. Arthur C. Clarke made "Glide Path", an autobiographical account of his days in World War II (in my opinion a much better book than most of his SF). Brian Aldiss wrote quite a bit of mainstream lit, notably poetry, and a fine travel book, "Oh Cities and Stones". Joe Haldeman did "War Year", an autobiographical novel of the Vietnam war, Frank Herbert did a book on American Indians, etc. etc. I would have expected these to be mentioned first, but Buck obviously enjoyed the less notable examples more. Very enlightening; I have never even heard of seven of the writers he's listed.

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# HELP! I AM BEING FORCED TO READ FANZINES!!!

-- Valerie McKnight

AIRGLOW 3, T. L. Bohman, Box 14, East Thetford, Vermont 050043-0014.

ANIARA 6, Bud Webster, 8047 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23229. Lots of talk of music. I liked the comments on modern performances of older pieces.

ALPHA CENTAURI COMMUNICATOR 113, Jack F. Speer, 2416 Cutler NE, Albuquerque, NM 87106.

BCSFZINE 181-185, British Columbia SF Assn., Box 35577 Stn. E, Vancouver, BC V6M 4G9 Canada.

BRUMGROUP NEWS 198-205, Dave Hardy, 99 Southam Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 0AB, England. Issue 205 contains appeal from a Russian fan who needs a letter-writing campaign to help him leave the country! Doubtless invented by prejudiced American news magazines.

BRUZZFUZZEL NEWS 55, Clay Fourrier, P. O. Box 14238, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70898-4238.

CALTHORIAN MONTHLY JOURNAL, Tom Sadler, 422 W. Maple Avenue, Adrian, MI 49221. Beautiful computer typography.

CAPRICIAN 3, Lilian Edwards, 1 Braehead Road., Thorntonhall, Glasgow G74 5AQ U.K.

CRITICAL WAVE 4-7, Steve Green & Martin Tudor, 33 Scott Road, Olton, Solihull B92 7LQ U.K. Issue 6 has an account of the collapse of a Soviet SF club due to persecution by the local bureaucracy. "Members were quizzed and a series of non-sf lectures imposed in a bid to ensure the fans' socialist perspective". Here is another British fanzine infected by American anti-Soviet prejudices. Anything so unpleasant cannot possibly be true.

DE PROFUNDIS 197-201, Los Angeles SF Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601.

DILLINGER RELIC 58, 59, Arthur D. Hlavaty, P. O. Box 52028, Durham, NC 27717.

ELDRITCH SCIENCE 2, George Phillies, 87-E Park Avenue, Worcester, MA 01605. Publishes fiction, poems, art.

EMPTYIES 8, Martin Tudor, 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick, Warley, West Midlands, B66 4SH, England. Good article by Maureen Porter on adult education. Exceedingly bad article by the editor on how he was beaten up by four men on a bus while all the other passengers looked out the windows. Don't they have any police in England? Any human beings?

FANZINE FANTIQUE, Keith A. Walker, 6 Vine Street, Greaves, Lancaster, Lancs., LA1 4UF England.

FANNISH SURFER 1, Thomas R. Hanlon, 13833 N. Amiss Road., Baton Rouge, LA 70610-5044.

FILE 770 73-76, Mike Glycer, 4828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys, CA 91401.

FOSFAX 128-130, c/o FOSFA, P. O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281.

GEGENSCHEIN 54 & 55, Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge, NSW, 2776 Australia.

HOLIER THAN THOU 27, Marty Cantor, 11565 Archwood St., N. Hollywood, CA 91606-1703.

INFLUX 12 & 13, Richard Spann, P. O. Box 550366, Birmingham, AL 35255-0366.



J. G. TAFF (and TAFFILES), Jeanne Gomoil, Box 1443, Madison, Wisconsin 53701-1443. Sells items to benefit TAFF. People buy this stuff?

LAN'S LANTERN 26 & 27, George "Lan" Laskowski, 53 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013.

LARRIKIN 16 & 17, Perry Middlemass, GPO Box 2708X, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia.

LIFE WITH GALLAGHER 6, Kathleen Gallagher, POB 42, Worthington, OH 43085.

MAD 3 PARTY 26-28, Noreascon 3, Box 46, MIT Branch PO, Cambridge, MA 02139.

MIMOSA 5, Dick and Nicki Lynch, P.O.Box 1270, Germantown, MD 20874. How come I have to wait til next issue to find out how Sharon Farber got yelled at for finding a dead body?

NASFA SHUTTLE June-October, P. O. Box 4857, Huntsville, Alabama 35815.

NASHVILLE SCIENCE FICTION CLUB, 647 Devon Drive., Nashville, TN 37220. Clubzine with science news, including history of chocolate.

NEBULOUSFAN 10, David Thayer, 7207 DeVille Drive., NRH, TX 76180. "Science fiction humor magazine".

NEOLOGY, ESFACAS, Box 4071, PSSE, Edmonton, Alberta T6E 4S8, Canada.

NINE INNINGS 4, Andy Hooper, 315 Ingersoll N., Madison, Wisconsin 53703.

NOVA EXPRESS Summer & Spring, Michael Sumhera, 1115 Drava Lane, Houston, TX 77090. Reviews, interviews.

OTHER REALMS 22, Chuq Von Rospach, 35111-F Newark Blvd., Suite 255, Newark, CA 94560. Lots of reviews, interviews.

PENGUIN DIP 14-19, Stephen H. Dorneman, 94 Eastern Ave. #1, Malden, MA 02148.

PHOENIX QUILL 4 & 5, Brenda Sinclair Sutton, 201 Greencrest Court, Marietta, GA 30067-3312.

PIRATE JENNY 1, Pat Mueller, 618 Westridge, Duncansville, TX 75116.

PULP 8, Rob Hansen & Avedon Carol, 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB England.

PULSARI 10, P. O. Box 886, Evansville, IN 47706-0886. News, reviews, fiction, articles.

QUINTESSENTIAL SPACE DEBRIS 2, Michael Carroll, POB 645, Worthington, OH 43085.

RELUCTANT FAMULUS, Thomas Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian MI 49221. Does the new "Star Trek" make you want to toss your TV? Then read "The Wesley Affair" - you'll feel better. (Whoever wrote this, please write more. From what I hear of the next season, I'll need it.)

RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY 30, Leland Sapiro, Box 464, Waco, TX 76703. It's taking me all night to list these things because I keep stopping to read articles like the Connie Willis interview...

ROBOTS & ROADRUNNERS, Vol.3 #2, Alex Slate, 1847 Babcock, San Antonio, TX 78229.

RUNE 78, MN-Stf, POB 8297, Lake Street Station, Minneapolis, MN 55408.

SCIENCE FICTION RANDOMLY, P. O. Box 12705, Gainesville, FL 32604.

SECANT 4, Greg Hills, GPO 972 G, Melbourne 3001, Australia.

SLANFANZIN 1 & 2, Reviews, interviews, articles, in Czechoslovakian. I can't read the colophon.

SMART-ASH 41, Ruth Shields, 1410 McDowell Road, Jackson, MS 39204.

SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN 3, c/o PLCM, 2629 Norwood Ave., Anniston, AL 36201-2872.

STAR TRACT, Forrest Anson Avery, #8 Little River Village, Sterrett, AL 35147.

STE-PTE 1, Jerry Page, 193 Battery Place NE, Atlanta, GA 30307. Article on magicians' methods - I had just re-read a Martin Gardner book on bogus science. It's amazing how people will venerate "psychics" with their few shabby tricks and ignore great showmen like the ones Jerry describes. This zine is altogether the best so far in this VERY BIG pile. (I don't mean it looks the best - it's short and not attractive - it's just well-written.)



STEPHEKIN #8, Pat Williams, 647 Frasier St., Marietta, GA 30060.

STICKY QUARTERS 18, Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224. No, maybe this is the best in the pile. Another ugly zine with good articles. Several funny ones - British military training and such - and one long serious retrospective on AIDS, derived from And the Band Played On.

STONE HILL LAUNCH TIMES 7-9, P. O. Box 2076, Riverview, FL 33567.

SUITABLE FOR CHILDREN 1, GPO Box 1808, Sydney, 2001, Australia.

TEXAS SF INQUIRER 25, Scott Merritt, 5812 Woodsetter Lane, Arlington, TX 76017.

TIMBRE 5, Tim Jones, 20 Gillespie Street, Dunedin, New Zealand.

TRANSMISSIONS 257-268. Joe Ciccarelli, P. O. Box 1534, Panama City, FL 32402-1534. Small club newsletter recently distinguished for hilarious Star Trek cartoons. (As noted above, I need stuff like this - it's rough being a Trekkie with taste.)

VERGERIDER 7, Mark Manning, 1400 East Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112.

VOX 1, Richard Bergeron, Box 5989, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico 00905.

WARP 61-63, Carol Brandenburg, 119 Garlands Road., Christchurch 2, New Zealand.

WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE 7-8, Jean Weber, 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge NSW 2776, Australia

WESTWIND 130-134, NSFS, P. O. Box 24207, Seattle, WA 98124.

WORLDS OF WONDER 7 & 8, Robert Cooke, 414 5th Street W., Birmingham, AL 35204.

YHOS 43 & 44. Art Widner, 231 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563.

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THE LAST WORD: It's November 6, and I'm about to input the last article to arrive: the tradezine list. I had despaired of getting it in this time, but my daughter Valerie and her husband Jerry Wayne came home this weekend. So I evoked the Einsteinian theory of relativity and said "Ah Ha! a relative! You can list zines for me! Hence the title to the zine listing this ish.

Linda called me the other night to sort out some names and addresses, and we addressed the question of mailing label codes. As I told you, all you subscribers who haven't paid in a couple of years, your subscription has just run out! You know who you are. Look at your label. If there is the dreaded "X", send money. (This does NOT apply to overseas people unless you happen to have American \$\$\$). In your case, a loc will suffice.) Everybody knows what an "X" on your mailing label means, but I'd better run over the other letters in case you have a weird one:

- X = The Big EX: DO SOMETHING OR ELSE!!!
- M = Member in good standing of BSFC. Dues are payable in January.
- S = Subscriber. See above.
- T = Trade. Check to make sure you are listed correctly in the tradezine list. Harass the editor if she lists your zine and doesn't send you hers.
- W = Whim. The editor, for one reason or another, decided to send you her zine. This usually means she wants something, like a loc, or an article, but she'll take money.
- L = Loccer. The life's blood of any fanzine.
- C = Contributor. You have sent art, article, column, and we thank you. (organs?)
- R X = This is one Linda made up after I gave her all my notes, scraps of paper, etc. It means you Requested a copy of ANVIL, were added to the list and have been sent ANVILs before, but since we haven't heard from you, this will be your last ANVIL unless you DO something.