
APPARATCHIK

The twenty-fourth issue of a bi-weekly fanzine, published by Andy Hooper, member fwa, supporter afal, at The Starliter Building, 4228 Francis Ave. N. # 103, Seattle, WA 98103. This is Drag Bunt Press Production # 206. "All mountainous countries have by night a perfectly interesting and romantic aspect; the dusky eminences seeming vaster as they rise in the distance...."

Issue # 24, December 30th, 1994

AS 1994 SHUDDERS TO A HALT, I feel a certain sense of satisfaction with the part which *Αππαρατχηρικ* played in it. Twenty-four issues of anything in a year is a nice piece of work, and APAK was occasionally worth reading, especially the parts written by my correspondents. I'll forge on into the new year, much as before, but you might want to take a look at the new subscription and availability information on the back of the zine.

I finally got a really large raft of APAKs away to the U.K. right after #23, on the 15th of December. I added the addresses of all the people who got the last bundle into the master APAK mailing list, so APAK now has nearly 40% of it's recipients in that country. I'm going to hit them monthly from here on out, so there should be some British fans involved in whatever we discuss in the future - see, I may complain, but I do try to give you what you want....

SOMETHING YOU DON'T SEE EVERY DAY:

Glenn Hackney, Jon Singer, Anita Rowland and yhos were about four frames into our first game (and we were all doing pretty well, I might add) when the guy at the counter opened the PA system and announced: "Don't bowl for a few minutes, please, folks, we have to re-boot the system." It took a moment or two to convince everyone in the alley that the instructions applied to them, at which point all the scoring consoles, lane-lights and overhead monitors went dark. A few seconds passed, then cursors appeared on all the screens. The lane-lights began to flicker on and off, while the pin-sweepers and sweepers balletically re-set themselves.

"Probably a UNIX system," snickered Glenn.

"Hard to tell from this," said Anita, indicating the scoring console. "It says 'Copyright 1987, Bowling Software Systems, Inc.'"

"And Lane 23 is also Node 23," I observed.

"That's convenient. I wonder what you do to make the system seize up so bad you have to reboot it. Maybe if all the active lanes strike at the same time, the beer-frame catastrophe subroutine begins, crashing the system and leaving it unclear who has to buy."

No one else thought this was very likely. But when the system came all the way back a few seconds later, the only score missing was Glenn's result in the fourth frame -

a strike.

JACKIE PAPER CAME NO MORE: I can only think of two or three other times when it has happened, but sometimes fanzines outlive the interest, or even the fannish careers, of their readers. This was on my mind as I listlessly opened the copy of *MIMOSA* 16 which awaited me on my return from Madison. When I read the first two or three issues of Nicki & Richard Lynch's (Note change of official couple-nomenclature) fanzine, they were like a drink of cool water, with a combination of trufannish and regional material that I hadn't seen before. But over the past decade, I read an awful lot of fan history, and became slightly more discerning (or snooty, as some would say) in my pursuit thereof. Certain elements of each issue of *MIMOSA* now inspire little more than ennui in me; the lives of Great Fen, like Ackerman, Kyle, and Tucker, recalled at great length and in considerable detail. By contrast, it never seems like Walt Willis' column is long enough; his selection of material for inclusion, as well as his grasp of the concept of brevity, leaves the reader wanting more of his "I Remember Me" columns. And the personal editorials have become a trifle tedious as well: Through sensible management and careful preparation, we journeyed to the city where Worldcon was to be held. We had some tasteful and not-too-touristy experiences, then accepted another Hugo award. Everyone was terribly kind.

All this was running through my head as I drew *MIMOSA* #16 out of the envelope and admired the saucy cover by Dan Steffan. The front features a rotund satyr that looked an awful lot like Terry Hughes when it first caught my eye. The mimeography was, as usual, as perfect as any zine I've seen in the past five years. A tasteful fannish handicraft.

I let my eyes glaze over a little as I scanned the TOC. Ackerman, Kyle and Tucker. More of Sharon Farber's increasingly similar medical stories, that do a great deal to reinforce my fear of medical procedures and facilities. And this issue has a long piece on a contemporary blight on fandom, the feuds and wrangles of Swedish fandom as related by the always engagingly unstable Ahrvid Engholm. Degler seems a little less manic now....

I was considering trying to read the latest *DE PROFUNDIS* while my eyes were still worthy to the task,

- you knew he was either a professional writer or Bruce Pelz

Bentley's was used to incidents - they had the American Legion in there at times

when the name of Vincent Clarke caught my eye. Here he weighs in with a cool little piece on "Nirvana - the Ultimate Fanzine", which I liked a great deal, and which gives way to the aforementioned Willis. A quick skip over the six pages offered by Enghoim leads to a touching and funny little memoir by Es Cole, about Les Cole, the first piece of writing I think I have ever seen by either of them in a contemporary fanzine. Here is the full benefit of being good and nice and well-planned, and winning awards and having hilarious misadventures with George Laskowski. A real flat-out scoop, a significant and engaging piece of fan-writing that no other fanzine could have gotten, or would have looked right to use even if they could. I could build a whole issue of one of my fanzines with a piece like this; as it is, MIMOSA quickly moves on to the memories of Roger Sims, leaving the Cole piece buried in the middle muck of its azure fibre-tone waters. To me, it lifted the whole 58 page structure out of the dark and made it do tricks in the afternoon sun.

One other thing I thought I might mention is that Nick & Dick sent me cut-out sections of letters which referred to my piece "I Fried A Thousand Times" in number 15. This is a truly righteous thing to do, something I've wanted to do for every lettercol I ever published, but never seemed to have the time...they have the spindizzy going at full bore at MIMOSA and the two are vigorously championing DUFF at the same time. Some people clearly think they are the best editors in fandom, and I think they hit the mark they set for themselves with every issue. It's only my deficient attention span and post-modern impatience with icons in general that has led me into the verge of the outer darkness of fringe-fandom and spastic pro-hood. But even in that dank and stygian recess, MIMOSA looms on the horizon, eight hundred feet tall and blazing trufannish vigor like a flaming oil well.

AND NOW, YOUR LETTERS

[After all the scrutiny to which we subjected him last issue, I was a little worried to see a letter from BILL DONAHO (626 58th St., Oakland, CA 94609) waiting when we got back from Madison. But Bill has the good sense to remember that there really is no such thing as "bad" press...]

"Thanks very much for the great review of HABAKKUKI

"We seem to have different ideas about just what a good fanzine editorial should be. I gather that you tend to look on one as a reasonably formal article. I think of them as a display case for the editor; he talks about his life and ideas, thereby presenting his personality to the readers.

"I think that I do that reasonably well, and I was much gratified by John Foyster's comment in HAB 3:3, 'Your rambling editorial was just like the old days thanks for doing it.... That kind of editorial guarantees response hooks, but I think only you do it really well.'

"Along similar lines both Greg Benford and Jeanne Bowman independently made the same point to

me, that reading my stuff was like talking to me and my material was absorbed easily and effectively.

"I think that most probably the feeling of fannishness you got from HABAKKUK was because of this."

[I would think that it would be clear from the meandering quality of my writing in APAK and other fuzzs that I am pretty comfortable with informal, wandering, and personal writing. I can natter away about the price of salt herring with the best of them. In the fannish lexicon, the noun "editorial" can refer to a lot of different things. Whatever you regard an "editorial" to be, it seems to me that a fanzine of HABAKKUK's caliber deserves some kind of introduction to its thematic content, a sign-post to the zeitgeist, if you'll endure such a hobnail-bound idea. That was something which I thought was missing from 3:4 - a petty criticism. One could simply read the articles, after all.

While I am happy to see that Greg Benford, Foyster and Bowman have high opinions of your style, my aesthetic impression of it remains the same. It is extremely fannish, the easy, familiar self-referentiality that characterizes most classic fan-writing. People like it, and find it easy to read. It invites personal comparison and the comradeship of shared human experience. Alas, in my jaded view, it is also very common in fandom these days, while the "reasonably formal article" has fallen into comparative disfavor. I hold apahacking to be the root of this impression. - aph]

"Re the rich brown letter in HAB 3:4. I am very grateful to Ted for making peace between rich and me. I like rich and was totally amazed at his reaction. (Until it was explained to me.) And that was pretty stupid on my part. Here rich was defending his style of writing, and I changed his style! I do see the error of my ways and I have apologized profusely to rich.

"But I wasn't the slightest bit interested in changing rich's style; I just wanted to shorten his letter. And it never occurred to me that style was of any importance in a letter or argument, as long as the gist of what anyone was saying was presented in a neutral context.

"If it had been only rich's qualifiers I wouldn't have bothered to cut them; as you point out, that didn't make much difference. But rich has a habit of saying the same thing over and over in somewhat different ways, embellishing a theme and making his points differently. Actually I like most of rich's stuff and hadn't even noticed it until I started entering it. But he had a very long letter and I started cutting, removing whole sentences - and quite probably paragraphs - but not changing his points at all. And as long as I was doing that, I thought I'd gain some more space by cutting out his qualifiers. It was a very long letter.

"My belief at the time was 100% different from yours. I wouldn't have dreamed of altering articles and material submitted for editorial consideration without consulting the writer - and I still wouldn't - but I thought letters were fair game, and so they are, for cutting topics.

"However, I have never edited any other letter that way, and I was just interested in cutting rich's, not changing his style. I did, but that was the result, not the object. I have no interest in changing anyone's style, and, even if I wanted to do this - which I don't - rewriting is CONSIDERABLY more work than just entering, and I'm not about to do that. Entering letters into the computer is quite enough work, thank you.

"But Ted certainly has a valid point that changing a letter like this is not a Good Thing to do, a definite misuse of editorial power. Fortunately I have not done it with anyone else. I might very well have if anyone else had written with a similar style, but no one else has written in such a manner that their points could be presented while pruning, and that's what I did before, except regrettably in rich's case.

As for the HABAKKUK letter column I mostly go by the principle that I print things I would like to read in someone else's letter column, and this does include a certain amount of non-meaty stuff, particularly material that - minor though it might be - reveals the personality of the writer. (And it never occurred to me that by condensing rich's letter I was altering the personality he was presenting, which makes it all the more stupid of me.) And material that would likely come up in conversations, like comparisons of books, movies, TV shows, etc. But I tend to look on letter columns as extended conversations.

"And I like wit. I wouldn't dream of editing that out - tired old jokes, yes, but not wit."

[I'm a little sorry to see you back-pedaling so furiously away from any endorsement of what you must have, at the time, wanted to see in your fanzine. I feel that a fan-editor has the right to employ the words sent to him in the way he or she sees fit, but part of the social contract of fanzine publishing and contribution is that you let the person know what could happen to their work once in your hands, either by the example of previous publication, or by some form of direct communication between the editor and potential contributor. The idea that you can present letters or indeed any contribution in a "neutral" fashion seems to run counter to the idea of "editing" a publication at all. The order in which you present letters, the illustrations you choose to place near them, the response which you make afterward, all have serious effect of the impression which the letter column, and by extension, the whole fmz conveys. The contributor gets the opportunity to express ideas and opinions of their own, of course, but I think most of us understand that the ability to use our words in defense of their arguments is simply one of the privileges which editors enjoy. What else do you get out of the process of publishing?

DAVID THAYER (701 Regency Dr., Hurst, TX 76054) weighs in on this as well:]

"I'm impressed with the wit that Ted White's comments add to your letter column trashing HABAKKUK's letter column's lack of it.

"Your editing out sentences, paragraphs and topics in my postcards makes me come across as even more brief and one dimensional than I really am. But without editing, you would lose control and focus and your reader's attention. Saving space is only a side issue."

[Gosh, David, you make me feel so editorially piratical and adventurous, like a dashing figure with the courage to rule a wild young fmz with an iron hand. But you clearly have some intuitive understanding of what I was just talking about with Donaho. I hope that the editing of your postcards to APAK contributes equally to the success of the zine and to your level of entertainment with that process.

GEORGE FLYNN (P.O. Box 1069, Kendall Sq. Stn., Cambridge, MA 02142) comes to the same issue: -aph]

"Apparatchik 23 received. I didn't even know there was a West Seattle. And I've probably exhausted anything I might have to say on the various TAFF issues.

"Your definition of apparatchik goes a bit beyond what the dictionary recognizes, in English, at least. All the dictionaries at hand say essentially the same as the Merriam-Webster definition: 1. A member of a Communist apparat [political organization]. 2. an official blindly devoted to superiors or to an organization. Nothing about 'intrigue and double-dealing,' etc., though you could take it as implicit, I suppose."

[Unfortunately, my dictionary does not have a definition at all, so I was relying on some form of usage I'd picked up from one book or another, and imperfectly translated through the lens of memory. Perhaps I simply make them up, as has been alleged in past. But I like the idea of characterizing APAK as "an official blindly devoted to....the organization." Minister for Agriculture to the Academy of Fannish Arts and Letters. Hetman of the fwa. -aph]

"Damn, now I'll have to look up the original of my letter to Habakkuk and compare texts. (But I don't have it here; and if I wait to check, *this* letter won't come out till after Christmas. . .) On the general question: Well, it's been a while since I edited a lettercol, so I don't know how closely my recommendations now would match my practice of fifteen years ago. Certainly I would clean up (unintentional) errors of spelling, punctuation, etc., to make the writer look better. But I don't *think* I'd omit any words (within a reasonably self-contained segment) without indicating it with an ellipsis or the like. [Pedantic digression: I just hate the way that computers have encouraged the substitution of the previously nonexistent single-character '...' for the true ellipsis '...'] On the other hand I sometimes proofread for other zines that make such edits, and I have seldom felt compelled to voice any outrage at the practice. Depends on the material, I suppose; If the

I know the dog pretty well and have studied its habits.

writer is merely conveying information (as is often the case in my own writing), editing for style shouldn't hurt much, but if the writer has a distinctive style, that's quite another matter. (The 'seldom' a couple of sentences back replaced a not" when I recalled some instances of the latter sort of editing that I *did* question, sometimes successfully.) And this paragraph could definitely use editing. . . "

[The simple fact is, most editors take a machete to correspondence at one time or another, sometimes to save

space, sometimes in an effort to bring the material into harmony with the editor's vision, or because they're too damn tired to possibly enter all seven pages of another letter. Few of them have the time or energy to manipulate the text of a letter so that a different or unnatural reflection of its intended content is communicated. Taking the time to dissect individual paragraphs and present their component parts in unexpected postures strikes me as a lot of work, and unlikely to be arrived at by accident. -aph]

Fanzines and things received since last issue:

Title/Issue	Author/Editor	Description/Notes
ANSIBLE #89	Dave Langford	Just another PONG-wannabe
DE PROFUNDIS #272	Tim Merrigan, for the LASFS	Smallest type I've seen this year
HILDISVIN #3	Holger Eliasson	Amusing fanzine with an entertaining pig fixation
INTERESTING! #1	Rich Sagall	First issue of an ugly, expensive & mundane DTP perzine
LEGAL LIMIT #1	Peter Larsen	A "zine-catalog" from Dreamhaven Books/Uptown. Cool!
MIMOSA #16	Nicki & Richard Lynch	See impressions on page 1
MOBIUS STRIP V.II, #9	Donna Aranda for the EPSFFA	Nice little clubzine
PEGA-REPORT #28	Scott Nickell for Pegasus Games	Neat reviews & Catalog. I used to work there.
PLUS: MANY, MANY, MANY CHRISTMAS & END-OF-YEAR CARDS.		

NEW CHANGES OF ADDRESS:

Johan Schimanski:	David Emerson & Barbara Jensen:	Michael Shannon:
AAL/Universitetet i Oslo	3435 Columbus Ave, S	1508 Southport #124
Pb. 1013 Blindern	Minneapolis, MN 55407	Austin, TX 78704
N-0135 OSLO	(I had the street # wrong)	
NORWAY		

It has been my custom to finish up the zine with a series of sardonic bon mots that obliquely address the issues of subscription and other ways to secure the receipt of your poppin' fresh APPARATCHIK every month. This time, I'm going to be more direct and simply state the way I see the contract between me and readers of APAK. APAK costs an average of 68 cents per issue, which includes first-class postage in the USA. Postal rates are rising in the next two days, so each copy will cost 71 cents in 1995. Every copy sent to England cost about \$2.00, making them by far the most expensive portion of the overall budget for me. I'm not out to make any profit on the exchange, but if I am going to expand the mailing list as so many people have suggested I do, I will probably need to sell a few more subscriptions. So, I'll continue to make subscriptions available at 4 copies/ \$3.00, 12 copies for \$6.00, and a life time subscription for \$1973. I am trading APAK with some fan editors, but obviously not all. If anyone out there has been frustrated with my failure to trade all-for-all with them as far as APAK goes, I'd accept being dropped off your mailing list, but even more eagerly I would welcome a request for a sample copy and a promise of a LoC in return. Letters are the lifeblood of a zine like APAK, without them I have to vamp for a full four pages. Contribution through correspondence, remuneration or relevant trade is a good way to get on the APAK list for as long as the ride lasts.

I'm less certain what to say to correspondents from the U.K. and other overseas locations. Funds would be accepted happily, but most people have better things to do with their money. The safest way to begin and then continue receiving APAK is to write me a letter. Anything current subscribers and correspondents can do to put these words in front of other fans would be greatly appreciated. Lifetime subscribers to date: Don Fitch, Lucy Huntzinger, Luke McGuff, Janice Murray, Alan Rosenthal, Karen Schaffer, Geri Sullivan and Art Widner. Thanks, you guys, it's been a hell of a year. And what lies ahead? Click and Clack or MacNeill-Lehrer?

...commander who trained his men to fire their smooth bore fire arms from the...