

Editorial



In this age of supposed non-discrimination and equality, I find it paradoxical that there still exists an object of such prejudicial suffering in fandom. No matter how it strives to prove itself, it remains an inferior in the eyes of a great many who prejudice it on the basis of what it is labelled, rather than looking at what it is.

Let's hear it for the clubzine.

I've been doing *Atarantes* since 1977--this is the fiftieth issue, as you noticed on the cover. From its humble (read: cheap) beginnings, *Atar* has moved up to become a widely-read, recognized clubzine, even if I do show sufficient egotism to say so myself. In our twelve monthly issues, I feel I can safely say we equal or exceed the pagecount and variety of material of a good many less frequent issues on a year-to-year comparison. In our first seven issues, we've offered 92 pages in 1981--and fewer than 16 of those pages have been *only* club-related material.

Alas, there are a great many people out there who feel the clubzine is about as desirable a product as a hair restorer sold by a flim-flam man from the back of his truck, or that all-purpose cleaner sold door to door by the fellow who wants \$20 for the first quart, but will give you the second quart free. Yea, we've heard it all...but there's a lot of good material in clubzines, and it's a shame that there's sufficient prejudice a-

gainst them that many people won't even give a clubzine a chance before they dismiss it offhand.

Case in point--and I won't even use an issue of *Atarantes*--recently, an issue of the Birmingham clubzine *Anvil* was reviewed in a fanzine I received. Now, *Anvil* isn't so much a general clubzine as it is a fanzine subsidised and supported by a club--yet the review of the issue (an issue which contained a number of well-done reviews, articles both humorous and serious, artwork, and nice layout and graphics) dismissed it offhand as "a clubzine," as if that disdainful phrase (said, I'm sure, with a sneer) proved that the zine could be no good. To make sure the reader got the point, they gave it another pan or two, then went on to another zine in the review. It wasn't a clubzine, so it got serious consideration. It was also probably an inferior zine, but that didn't matter.

Virtually the only monthly fanzines in fandom today are clubzines--it's the only way an editor can afford to get a zine out. A club is a patron, and for its patronage the zine offers the club minutes, its official business, and a notice to the members about meetings and other related club events.

In most cases, it also offers artwork, often superlative in quality; articles and columns of both a humorous and serious nature; reviews of films and books; up-to-date fannish and professional news; fresh commentary on matters fannish in the way of a monthly lettercol; a chance for new writers to enter into the fanzine field with an established zine put out and prepared by friends in the area; and a product with more regularity than a case of Ex-Lax.

Yes indeed, I react poorly to that sneering, disdainful use of the word "clubzine." I have seen many a fanzine that couldn't approach the variety, quality, or interest-provoking level of an issue of *Rune*, or *Anvil*, or *Chat*, or *CuSfUssing*, or an issue of *Atarantes* (editors aren't required to be modest on 50th or 100th issues). Artists whose work appears in clubzines deserve attention just as much as those who contribute to the ultra-fannish zines--more, perhaps, because their work often appears more regularly and is seen by a larger fannish audience than many fannish zines.

It'd be nice to see the prejudiced eliminated; I don't expect it to happen, although a few people have relaxed somewhat their contempt towards clubzines in recent months. In the meantime, I guess it's something all us clubzine editors will have to live with, until someone finally realizes that there's a lot of really good material appearing in these pages. But then, what other type of zine will they find to sneer at?...

C. BIGGERS

ATARANTES 50!

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ART CREDITS

Charlie Williams: 1, 2, 5
 Ward Batty: 9, 22, 23, 24 Ward Batty/
 Jerry Collins: 13 Glen Brock: 14, 15,
 28 Jerry Collins: 29 Jean Corbin:
 8, 27 Bob Cosgrove/Fred Hembeck: 34
 Steven Fox: 12 Wade Gilbreath: 33
 David Heath, Jr.: 6, 21, 25, 32 Fred
 Hembeck: 17, 18, 19 Kathleen Kaufman:
 16 Melissa Snowind: 7 Curt Swan/
 Fred Hembeck/Ward Batty: 17 Charlie
 Williams: 1, 2, 5

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CHOICE CUTS

ATLANTA WORLDCON BID ANNOUNCED MORE NEWS ON ASFICON 2

The Atlanta in '86 committee, with Randy Satterfield as its chairman and Jim Gilpatrick as its vice-chairman, has formally announced its intention to bid for the 1986 Worldcon. The bid is intended as a Southern bid, not a solely Atlanta bid, and chairman Satterfield is contacting as many interested people as possible. The bid was not to have been announced until DeepSouthCon, but an inadvertent premature announcement in *Science Fiction Chronicle* (no fault of Andy Porter's; by the time a letter arrived asking him to hold back on publication, the July issue of SFC was already printed) has led the committee to announce the bid earlier. There will be bid parties at this year's DeepSouthCon and at the Worldcon in Denver. Randy is also interested in assistance and support from Atlanta fans; if interested, write him at 515 Holt Road, Marietta GA 30067, or call 427-5265 (at his bookstore, A World of Words) or 973-7020 (home). The plans presently call for the Atlanta Hilton, with its huge exhibit hall and spacious facilities, to serve as the primary hotel for the bid. Atlanta in '86!

ASFiCon 2, being held from October 23 through October 25 in Atlanta's Northlake Hilton Inn, will feature a special telephone interview with Andre Norton as one of its program items. Ms. Norton, who rarely makes any convention appearances for personal reasons, has graciously consented to the live phone interview to be conducted as a convention program item by Brad Linaweaver.

Also, if there are sufficient entries, ASFiCon 2 plans to have a filk-song competition for original filk-songs performed at ASFiCon, with a prize being given to best original filk-song (humorous) and best original filk-song (serious). All people interested must provide their own instruments and special equipment needed.

Memberships are still \$10 until the end of September, when they go up to \$12. For additional information or to buy memberships, write to ASFiCon 2, 6045 Summit Wood Drive, Kennesaw GA 30144.

Two Halfacons Make a Wholecon: Shortly after Iris Brown and Randy Satterfield announced the early December date for their 1981 Halfacon, word came that Bowling Green KY was also planning on doing a Halfacon,

on the very same weekend. To avoid the conflict, Iris says that the Rome Halfa-con will be changed in date, with consideration being given to an early February, 1982 convention date. More to follow.

Well-known fan Ed Cagle died May 4th as a result of heart disease; Cagle had edited *Kwalhioqua*, and *Shambles* for a time, and received a FAAn nomination for his work.

The Atlanta Comics and Fantasy Fair, held over the July 24-26 weekend, was an overwhelming success on all fronts except for one: a vandalism problem left the convention with an unneeded expense at a time when hotel contract renegotiations were just coming up. Chairperson Marilyn White did a superb job of keeping the con running smoothly, seeing that programming offered a variety of items of interests for all fans (including a Sunday panel on Breaking into SF that featured Atlanta area writers Jerry Page and Brad Linaweaver). Mike Jittlov was a highlight of the convention; Friday, few people knew him and he could wander through the public areas of the con unnoticed, but by Saturday he travelled with a crowd wherever he went. The art show drew far more art than was expected, and the costume contest had an amazing number of high-quality entries, making it one of the best costume contests held at a Southern convention in recent years. Final tallies aren't in yet, but it appears that the final crowd was somewhere between 2500 and 3000 people.



RANDOM NOTES: More SF works have been optioned as films, including Thomas Disch's *On Wings of Song* (to Kinesis Productions) and Robert Sheckley's *Mindswap* (to David Lang). If the options are picked up, movies could result--but optioning is a more common procedure than you might expect, and there's no guarantee a movie deal will come about. 000 *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*, a novel by Philip K. Dick, is not exactly serving as the basis for the Ridley Scott *Blade Runner* starring Harrison Ford; the film is now said to be based on "a segment of the book." 000 Recent sf/fantasy related works on the *Publisher's Weekly* best-sellers list include *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (#9 on the mass market list 7/24), *God Emperor of Dune* (#5 on the hc fiction list) and *Miss Piggy's Guide to Life* (#4 on the hc nonfiction list). (All news from *Publisher's Weekly* compiled by ace reporter Binker Hughes, who will--we hope--make this a regular feature)

There were two issues of the Chattanooga clubzine *Strange Punch* in July--the legitimate official zine from A.J. Bridget, and an unofficial humorous "funzine" put out by Ward Batty & Cliff Biggers. If anyone who saw the Batty/Biggers issue actually believed it was the legitimate CSFA clubzine, ~~we have swampland in Florida to sell you~~ we wish to correct the misconception; CSFA did not know of the zine's existence until it came out. Both editors wish to point out that most of the material in the issue (with the exception of the bozo-news) was legitimate, however, and we fully expect to continue the proud tradition with our soon-to-be-released *Anvil*.

Meanwhile, the rush is on to see who can publish the first parody of *Atarantes*, with at least four groups rushing to get their zine into print. Yes, you too can parody the ASFiC clubzine if you work fast; write to this zine at the address given in the colophon for our special "how to parody *Atarantes* for fun and profit" kit--include \$10 for postage and handling (it doesn't cost us much to mail it, but we handle it a lot).

MEETING

AUGUST'S PROGRAM will be a discussion of the film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. Dann Littlejohn, program director, will moderate, and he hopes that everyone comes prepared to present his opinions in a lively discussion. **FOR ASFICON 2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS**, there will be a committee meeting at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, August 15. Please be prompt, chairman Rich Howell asks, and come prepared to present information on your section or duty for the committee's benefit.

The meeting, again, is August 15 at 8:00 p.m. preceded by a 6:30 committee meeting at the same site--4525 Chamblee-Dunwoody Rd., the Peachtree Bank Community Room.

SEPTEMBER'S PROGRAM will be a fanzine forum, discussing the various elements of preparing your own fanzine, presenting various fanzines, etc. The September meeting will be Saturday, September 19, at the same site.

To get to the meeting site, get on I-285 north of Atlanta, between I-75 and I-85. Coming from the west, take the Chamblee-Dunwoody exit, turn left, and proceed approximately 1/4 mile; the Peachtree Bank Building will be on the right, next to a Steak 'n Shake. Coming from the east, take the Chamblee-Dunwoody exit; this will put you on an access road that you will take for approximately a mile or a mile and a half; when this access road takes you to Chamblee-Dunwoody Road, turn right, proceed approximately a quarter of a mile, and the bank will be on your right. Parking is available in the rear of the building, and the entrance to the meeting room is also in the back.

Frappin' inflation! It's hitting everybody hard. Especially those of us who attend cons. Not that I'm gonna quit going. No way. Like in October I'll be at Rovacon, Skycon, and (blare of trumpets) ASFiCon. And I support Atlanta in '86, Asheville in '91, Sri Lanka in '01, and Blairsville in '08. But the old wallet is feeling the pinch so I figure it's time for a little relief in the cost of cons. Here's my solution: generic cons! Everybody still awake? Nobody confused yet, I hope.

"Whut the heck in interstellar blue blazes," y'all ask, "is this here 'generic con'?"

Ah, my friends, but 'tis quite a simple concept. It's already in use in your local supermarket. There's generic salt, generic bread, generic sugar, even (yea, verily) generic toilet paper. Generic means no brand name and no brand name means less money spent on artwork, packaging, and especially advertising. The salt, for example, is in a plain white box with only the word "salt" in simple black printing. The manufacturers save a bundle doing this and condescend to pass some of the savings along to customers in the form of lower prices for generic items.

A bit of this idea has already invaded the world of fandom. I recall the abundance of generic bheer at DeepSouthCon last year. Remember? The white cans with just "beer" on 'em. Heck. After six of them in a fifteen minute period, they started tasting mighty good. Mighty good. Real boost to conviviality they were. Hic.

What is this article about? Oh yeah. So now we understand that generic means no brand name and hence a savings and, to wit, lower prices. Something we're all in favor of. Ergo (that's Latin meaning it's pretty cottonpickin' obvious) that "no brand name" cons are the wave of the future. My contrivance here is going to make con-going pretty nigh cheap. (Let me have that blare of trumpets again--'preciate it) Thus, the time has come for the generic con.

Consider it. I have every confidence you'll see the generic con conquer the con-going habits of the con-loving fan connoisseur. Oh, there'll no doubt be a few name cons left. Worldcon might survive through general consent most cons will become generic. They'll simply be called cons. I feel confident that all fen will find them to be congenial affairs.

But let's conjure up some specifics for our generic con proposal. How can we use the concept to save money? First of all, via printing costs. If all cons everywhere are denoted just "con," then only one contract for con flyers need be let. It would help if all us pros would adopt the same name so that the pro guest's name could be printed

on instead of scribbled in, but even I could not concur to that extent.

However, modification of other present con-nish concepts could provide considerable savings, also. The art show, for example, could offer only blank canvas for sale, thus bringin original art within the means of all. Another conclusion would be for hucksters to sell comic books without pictures, books sans words, posters with nothing on them; all this to concede a tremendous savings to the inflation-concerned con-goer. Con suites would continue to serve generic bheer as DeepSouthCon in '80 did (little did that con committee conceive of the historical importance of that concoction). Those in the congested masquerades would all wear nothing but their confidence. And, as to the banquets--alas, generic food is already being served there, it seems, so no savings is possible.

I could go on (please, I'll finish now, concisely). Here, then, is my solution to inflation: the generic con. A few details remain to be worked out before full concordance is reached, but if we all work in concert, nothing can confine us. Oh, the remnants of the "name con" people will never condone this and will conspire against us, but the generic con is something whose time has come. Destiny confers victory on us. I can see the 1994 ex-Worldcon being held in Paris, known simply as Con-con.

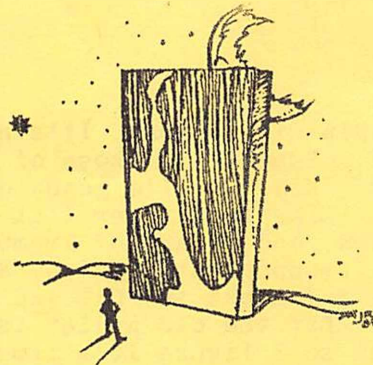
Con
This
Go
On
?

BY
RALPH
ROBERTS



* Mystical * Flapjack *

Lon Atkins



Last night I drove over to JoeBob's place cause I had a problem. Nothing big, but JoeBob Wirax (pronounced "wire-axe") has a way of looking at things that sometimes helps. And sometimes leaves me plumb confused.

JoeBob's place is out past Bessemer and to get there I got to drive down from Red Mountain. Most of the way is no sweat, but when you get out on the east side of Bessemer, on old asphalt roads, there's an area full of four-way stops. You know you're getting near JoeBob's place then. No sidewalks and the pines get thick. Those four-way stops are damn dangerous though. A man could get hisself killed at one of them as easy as playing noseguard against the Tide's offensive line.

Old JoeBob got through college on football, by the way. He was the rare Texan crazy enough to come to Alabama to play ball. Big, tough cowboy. But he had to grin and eat it when Texas edged the Tide in that '64 Orange Bowl. It was JoeBob's tackle stopped Texas from making it 28-14 early in the fourth quarter, but all anybody remembers is Jimmy Fuller's hotdog interception later in the game.

That, and Joe Willis on the goal line.

I guess I knew JoeBob better than anyone, but I still don't know why. He took it philosophical. A philosophy major ought to, and him being the only one on the Tide's team that year (or maybe any year) he must have had lots to think on.

Somehow he and I hit it off. I weren't no brain like JoeBob, and I weren't no starter either. The Business School was just right cause Daddy's chain of mortuaries would need a business trained man to take over, God forbid the day. And I was a slow third-string back. But JoeBob always said he liked to talk with me. Guess we had more in common than I thought. Nobody remembers me either.

But damn those four-way stop signs! Last night I eased up to the intersection and almost stopped. It was all mine by rights, but as I inched my Honda Civic forward, this red Chevy pickup came right on barreling down. Nothing but a long honk to warn me, and it came blasting through the intersection. Damn fool was lucky I didn't insist on the right-of-way. That pickup went right through the intersection at sixty-plus.

I made it on over to JoeBob's and parked tight to the mailbox. Beat on his door, too. "Jackson!" said JoeBob, "welcome again to my home." He don't talk right for a Texan. Folks put it down to his time at the University of Chicago, when he became Doctor of Philosophy Wirax. But I know that JoeBob has always talked like this.

I said I'd be proud to be welcomed with a bourbon, light on the water. "How's your father?" asked JoeBob

as he poured the amber beauty. "Healthy as Sin," I said, and meant it all the way. "And Jolene?" he asked. "In school tonight," I said, accepting the glass.

"You have time," said JoeBob. "Choose." He pushed two closed fists at me and I picked white for the third time running. Maybe tat was what really fascinated JoeBob back in Tuscaloosa. How could somebody as dumb as me beat a brain Philosophy major in chess? He'd want to know my strategy. "A good move just feels right," I'd say. And he'd hum a while and nod and answer that football was like that for him.

Last night he kept sticking pieces between his king and my queen, but it weren't no use. "So what brings you over here tonight, Jackson, my friend?" he asked me as he turned over his monarch.

"Mainly the bourbon," I said, meaning my glass was empty. JoeBob ain't no dummy. He had a bottle cached underneath the tabletop on the shelf that's supposed to hold textbooks. He pours quick, too.

So I told him about the damn stops near his place, being maybe embarrassed even with a friend like JoeBob to talk about what was on my mind. I let my imagination go far as it liked when I described the driver of that red Chevy pickup. I knew it couldn't be far wrong.

When I wanted an opinion, JoeBob just grinned. "Go on talking, Jackson," he said, and even that much irritated me. Nobody else but JoeBob calls me "Jackson" and gets off easy. I'm "Jack" to all else. But JoeBob likes to rub it in that his given name is nothing but "JoeBob." He told me once that he dreamed up all sorts of other names when he was a teenager, but after his freshman year he'd never wanted to change.

"When a man comes to age he knows what he wants," I said, and then I felt damn foolish.

"When a man becomes adult this is true," agreed JoeBob. He nodded at me like there weren't no difference in what I said and what he said, but I know JoeBob too well.

"Let's play another," I suggested. Dr. Wirax grinned and started setting up the White men on his side. He was courteous enough despite his hunger for the White side to remind me that I'd be home late. I told him that it didn't matter a damn.

"Everything matters," JoeBob said, moving his Queen Pawn out. I never did like things dull, so I played the Benoni. Countergambits suit my blood as well as gambits proper. A dozen moves later the patterns on the board were looking as thin as the shadow patterns made by a cusp moon in the pine woods. I knew it weren't another game I needed. JoeBob tells me that "Benoni" means "son of sorrows." That was me.

"JoeBob," I confessed. "I'm in a hell of a mess."

It was JoeBob's move and I'd done screwed up on my last one, but there was no visible hesitation when he changed the focus of his eyes. But he kept his mouth shut and left the ball with me. One of the Doctor's more irritating habits.

"I think I'm in love with Sharon, JoeBob. It ain't right. I ain't saying it is. But that woman loves me and I led her on."

"That must confuse you," said JoeBob.

"Well, no and yes," I replied. "No confusion about what a hell of a real woman Sharon is. But what I want and what's right, they ain't the same. But maybe what's right ain't really what's right. That's why I came here tonight, JoeBob. You see real deep into the nature of things."

He was quiet for what seemed an extra long time, but I suppose it weren't more than a couple of minutes. Long enough for me to realize I'd set JoeBob a sort of trap, cause he was the very font of unconventional wisdom in these parts and he had little love of social dogma. So I was using him now, asking for a rubberstamp OK.

"Tell me about Sharon," said JoeBob.

"Pretty blonde lady," I grinned. "Met her at the Blue Parrot one of Jolene's class nights. She dances like a fiend. Makes love the same way. Sort of made me a teenager again, if you know what I mean."

"Me?" asked JoeBob with wide blue eyes. He might be a bachelor, but he ain't no monk. The good Doctor had taught me, long ago, to call ahead before coming over. That Texas cowpat thought nothing of cracking the door just enough to tell me to go away. But we survived it.

"Yeah!" I cackled. "Sweet stuff, real nice. She needs a man to take care of her. A strong man, like maybe me. Jolene takes care of herself."

JoeBob picked up his King Pawn and slammed it up a square. "Who takes care of you, Jackson?"

I saw what he was trying to do: break the center. He must want this one bad, I thought, cause it weren't like JoeBob to play distraction chess. Damn his tactics, but the shadow patterns were sharper now, as if the moon were come full. I saw a way to hold all the tension in the position.

"I do," I said, making my countermove.

"You have to, Jackson." He was luminous, was JoeBob, like the full moon. It was his light making the patterns in this pine forest. I had a moment of panic about his Pawn thrust being a trap, but JoeBob knocked over his King. "You win another one, brother."

"Hey!" I squawked. "There's lots of play left!"

"Who was it talking about giving up a good thing for something he wanted?" asked JoeBob in that calm voice that means head-knocking. "I want to talk about stop signs."

"Stop signs," I echoed. Like I said, JoeBob sometimes confuses me.

"Four way stop signs, Jackson. Tell me about the law."

"JoeBob, you are crazy," I said, cause I was getting a little mad with this. The man had not given me an answer to my real question; and almost as bad, he'd quit a good game.

"Humor an old noseguard," he said. "That hasn't tied into a third-string back in years."

I remembered. "JoeBob, you're trying to intimidate me." I know some big words too. I also know how JoeBob hits in scrimmage. Over the years he's not gone soft. Wish I could say the same.

"My friend, I am trying to intimidate you. Isn't talking better?"

He was such a solemn noseguard I had to laugh. "Four-way stops," I managed, "are a poor man's red light. Stop and go."

"What kind of stop?" asked JoeBob, relaxing some.

"Dead Center," I tried. "No movement. Dumb law most of the time, but I guess it makes for easy tickets."

"People don't honor four-way stops," led JoeBob.

"Why try?" I asked. "Most of the time you're the only car there."

"And tonight," zinged JoeBob. "Was your friend in the red pickup of any meaning?"

Well, here was tension in the center again. If I drove like I argued I'd have been smashed up at that gloomy intersection. "He means that most of the time ain't all of the time. But ole Jackson drives careful, my friend. Slows down for four-way stops in this part of town."

That got most of a smile. "Tell me why the law exists, exists, Jackson. Is it to stop idiots from driving madly through intersections? Or does it give something extra to the non-idiots?"

That was a poser, playing into my weak suit, concentration. Just like that King Pawn trying to bust loose in the center, loose the center, it had lots of answers. The first one didn't feel right. "Laws don't really stop people from doing dumb things," I said slowly. "Laws threaten people if they get caught. That's twenty bucks or so if the pickup gets nailed. He don't care!"

"Not a whit," said JoeBob, looking pleased but not wanting to show it much. It was plain as day I was onto the right line, so I thought some more about what



the rest of the answer should be. Asking for another bourbon was a good way to stall, and I sent JoeBob back to the kitchen for more ice, too. All the pieces were feeling right now. I could see how it made sense in a way I'd never thought of before.

"When the law makes you stop, or maybe just slow down a bunch, it gives you a chance to take a long look at what's happening. What's coming and how fast. And when you're on dead center, you can't count on reacting quick. So you're careful. You look. You gotta."

Now I got the whole smile. "Some laws are like that. They protect by putting the observer into that position: observation."

"You think they knew that when they made the law JoeBob?" And I bet all the points I'd got by continuing, "I think maybe they just wanted an easy way to give traffic tickets..."

Doctor Wirax laughed. Hell, he hooted! "If we but knew, Jackson! If we but knew." And I was laughing too, the central tension burst like a ruptured levee. Cause I knew what JoeBob was going to say next. And knew he'd pause, just a bit, to let his pupil say it first if... If.

So when the roaring and kicking slowed down, I reached out and moved Knight to Knight Five on that forgotten chessboard. "You know, JoeBob," I said, "I don't think it matters whether they knew or not. That law

does its thing regardless of origin. Like that bodacious move of yours: it brings a pause and a seeing."

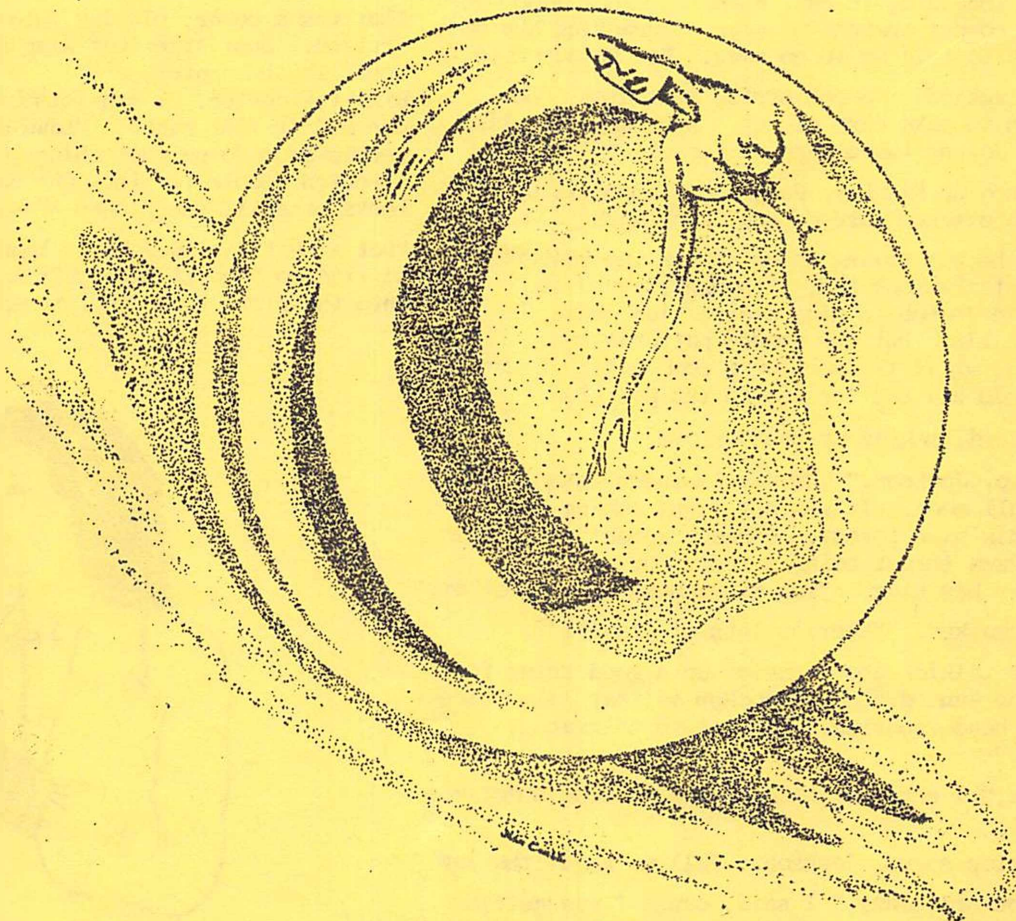
"An interesting position," answered JoeBob. "You've found a good move."

That was his last word on my question. Weren't no point in expecting more from JoeBob. Or less, for that matter. My amateur trap was getting tired and rusty out in the land of Self. And I had tension in the center again.

The drive back held precious little loneliness. All those new ideas wanted to talk. I came to a dead center stop at that familiar four-way halt. Weren't nobody but me on the road.

I looked right, left, and across. Bumpy asphalt roads leading off into shadows cast by the moon. From the left came a fantasy, an ash-blond pickup travelling without brakes.

But this time I was sitting on dead center. I could see a long ways up the roads before me. The route ahead I knew well enough, up to Red Mountain. But I'd never been through all those stops from dead center and suddenly I was curious what the roads looked like when I couldn't rely on momentum to make my decisions.



PIAWOL

BRAD LINAWEAVER

It's a strange life. The kid who never got over being the center of attention at the party grows up to be (choose one): an actor, a singer, a dancer, a writer, a politician, a director, a teacher, a priest, the town bore. I'm a ham actor behind the typewriter (and even more so in person). I know how important are the demands of audience. Got to give them something they want.

What should we call a beginning professional writer? If he's not making a full-time living from it, then he's a semi-pro, a necessary tag to distinguish him from rank amateur. (To think that amateur was once a complimentary term, but that was in the days before fandom!) In the early stages of a writing career, the scrivener needs to wear two hats: of course he writes, but he is also his own agent. Who else will do it? Promotion is important in any kind of show biz. You're only as good as your last whatsit. Don't let people forget. Keep the ball rolling.

I'm riding high now. I've sold my longest piece of fiction to date--a novella, "Moon of Ice," which good news appeared in *Atarantes* #49. Ultimate Publishing sent me the contract. The paperwork is out of the way... and my epic should run sometime next year. That is how matters stand in July of 1981.

Still, one can never guarantee anything. Perhaps *Amazing* will have a sister publication by this time next year for "Moon of Ice" to run in. Or there may be delays. Or the company can change hands. Or all copies of "Moon of Ice" extant could disappear down a rabbit hole in the space-time continuum. Who can say? Then again, the ms. might run in the early part of 1982 in the pages of *Amazing*.

In *Atarantes* #47, Cliff ran an installment of this column that was devoted to plugging the article Avery Davis and I did for *Amazing* concerning the launch of the space shuttle Columbia. We were assigned the story. We got the credentials. We saw the marvelous event. We wrote "Nostalgia for the future: NASA's bid for a Space Industry" and sent it in by the editor's deadline. I had been informed over the phone that the article was "go" for the September '81 issue, and that it was OK for me to promote it--which I proceeded to do in the pages of *Atarantes*. Later I learned of scheduling difficulties, and that the article had been moved to the November issue of *Amazing* (that would mean it would be out around the middle of September, shortly after the Wroldcon). This updated information also ran in *Atarantes*, in the 48th issue.

So here I am again, with yet another update on the status of "Nostalgia for the Future." I am holding the galleys in my hands (which makes it a bitch to type this at the same time). I received this memento the same week I received the contract for "Moon of Ice," and a letter expressing interest in one of my unpublished short stories. I am looking at the columns of fine print, all set to be pages in a bona fide SF magazine. And I am looking at the contract for my novella.

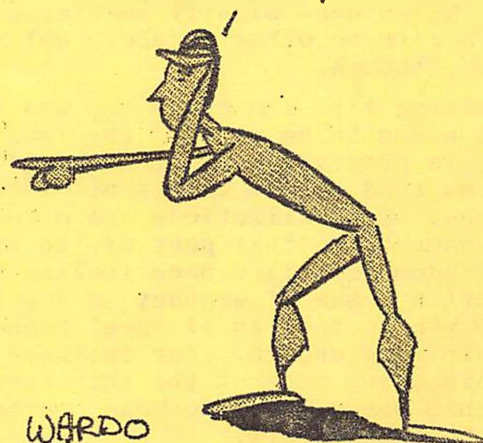
It's a strange life. What happened is that the publisher made a decision to decrease the number of feature-type articles by freelancers (as opposed to regular columns) so that more fiction could be purchased. This decision was made after "Nostalgia for the Future" was accepted and laid out for publication! But I had never had a contract with them for the Space Shuttle article. The last such piece of paper I'd seen from Ultimate Publishing was for "The Competitor" which ran in one of the last issues of *Fantastic*. Now with the increase in fiction purchases, a contract was being sent for "Moon of Ice," the publication of which was more important to my career than any article. Still, Avery and I had worked hard on the article, and met the deadline, and announced it widely with the full approval of *Amazing*.

The article was never rejected: it was cancelled. That's why the editor kindly sent the galleys, more than a memento, but proof that Avery and I had done what we said! We're free to sell the piece again although it's well past the point of being timely. We may find a place for it; if we don't, then we'll cannibalize the piece for use in a future article, perhaps coverage of another shuttle launch!

Whatever we do with the article, we feel we owe something to all the people to whom we have been promising the work. At the July meeting we passed out free xerox copies of

PIAWOL Continued on p. 23

I SPOT SERCON,
DUCK!



WARD
'81

CALABANS & THRANX

by Sue Phillips

I'm not much of a record keeper. I've gotten to the point where I can keep my check-book pretty much in shape and, if it's important, almost anything else. Otherwise, I don't bother. I'm lazy and prefer doing things with as little effort as possible. Lazarus Long called a man who did that a genius. Well...

Most fans, however, do keep track of things in their fannish lives. This seems to be very important to them. Things such as how long you've been in fandom(8 years), your first con (STrekcon in New York in '74), and your first zine (*Up the River* #1 for *Myriad*) are looked upon as some measure of weighing your standing in the fannish community. Heck, this issue of *Atar* is a milestone.

I confess I find it difficult to understand Oh, I very carefully counted cons until I knew which would be my fiftieth and had a special celebration there. And I suppose when I get to my fiftieth *Up the River*, I'll do something special for that. I think a lot of this on my part, as well as on the parts of others, is because it's expected of you to do something like that.

Milestones tend to make me feel obligated to put forth out-of-the-ordinary effort and do my best whether I feel like it or not. I don't like that feeling, but I'm prone to it. Milestones signify turning points in one's life to other people. Not necessarily to me, though.

Something else I'm prone to, and something that seems to be part of the fannish character, is procrastination. Most of the fans I know tend to put things off to an enormous degree. Generalizations are often wrong, but it seems to me that part of the atmosphere of fandom is a laid-back feeling that doesn't impart a sense of urgency to any kind and enable you to feel as if "Real Soon Now" is plenty soon enough. For instance, this column is being done at the thirteenth hour--and if this weren't a milestone, perhaps it would not be done at all.

The fannish character is changing. Change is constant and all that, but I'm not so sure I

like what it's changing to. The younger fans are much more visually oriented, going in for more costumes, etc. I'm not saying this is a bad thing, since I'm much that way, too. In fact, to a degree it's refreshing, and I like it--as I've indicated in an earlier column. However, it seems to be displacing the reading public among fans.

I'm sure a great many of these newer fans can read and do, but they seem to prefer letting someone else do their imagining for them and therefore are allowing a part of their brains to atrophy. I'm afraid I see this as one more step along the road to the Marching Morons. I've always considered fandom at least a half-step ahead of everyone else--this tendency is about to lose me, though.

I don't remember radio shows as the only entertainment, but I do know how it feels to see a favorite book brought to the screen, only to find yourself screaming, "No! No! He doesn't look like that. That isn't the way it is!" because your vision of what it is is different from that of a filmmaker. Frequently, I cannot even get used to the screen's versions of some of my favorites; my ideas are always the right ones, and I don't want someone doing my envisioning for me.

Too many people, though, are letting the filmmaker tell them what is right and wrong with their visions. Not just those who do not read, but some of those who do, are willing to compromise what they think. I think we have to change this or see all of fandom degenerate into what some are afraid it's already gone to: the worst sort of media fan.

Another change in the nature of the fannish character seems to be its tendency to politics. That has even hit me; more and more, it seems, you cannot just go to a con and have fun (although fun is always there for me). Part of the fun for a lot of people (and increasingly for me) now is smuffling. Going off together and deciding what is going to happen where, when, and by whom is like deciding the fate of the world, and the feeling of power you get is hard to shrug off.

It's addicting, that's what it is: addicting and scary. Scary because more and more bureaucracy is rearing its head among our hallowed poison-ivy covered walls, and more and more of us are answering its call. This is a case of carrying a trend too far, and it's distasteful to me.

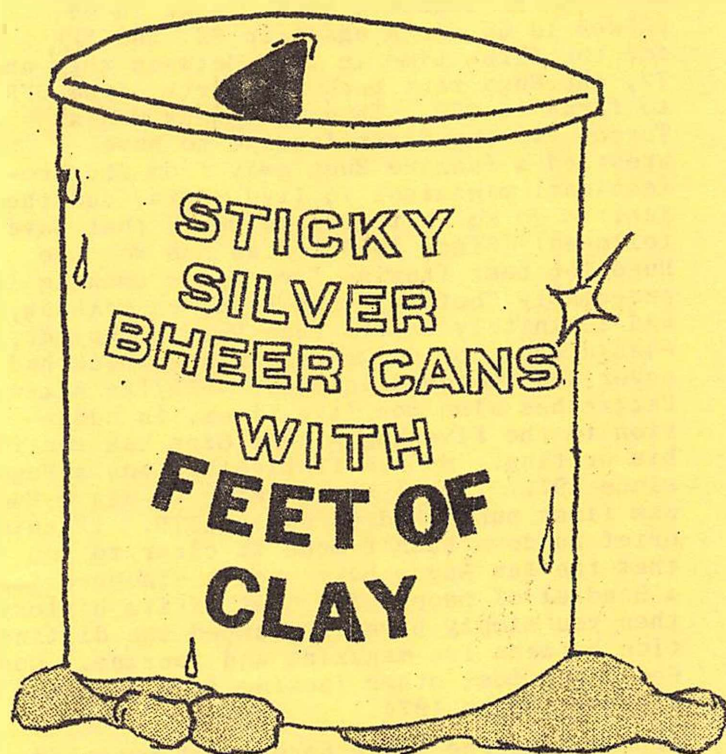
Back to the milestones for a moment (it'll all tie in): we're doing a worldcon bid here in Atlanta. That may sound a little incongruous due to what I said earlier, but I don't think so. I think we can manage to keep the bad things about bureaucracy (like back-stabbing) out, and the good things (like fun) in. Of course, those may be famous last words. I know I'll do my best in that respect, because fun is what I'm here for. Stay tuned for further developments.

BY TARAL!

Asking me to explain the FAAn awards at this time is somewhat like asking Lee to explain The Peculiar Institution, like asking Charles the First to justify capital punishment, or like having Charlie Brown rationalize his Hugos. Like these examples, I'm compromised in a number of ways, and anything I say can be attributed to a range of base motives starting with elitism and probably not ending with sour grapes. The diplomatic thing would be for me to decline Cliff's invitation to espouse my views on the subject. It would be in my best interests--I'd like to win a TAFF race in a couple of years, and antagonizing fans is not the best way to go about collecting votes. It would be in the best interests of the people who would like to see the FAAns overcome their difficulties and fulfill their promise. And it would be in the best interests of the people I'm likely to insult. But it seems to me that when there are that many interests at stake in a thing, it should be questioned automatically.

To begin with, let's retrace our steps back to 1974, when Moshe Feder got the ball rolling by publishing and circulating to key fanzine fans the first issue of *The Zinc Fan*. Actually, it wasn't called that; it was just headed "All of the Following Is Temporarily DNG". In it, Moshe explained how what was even then a longstanding problem of the fan Hugos had dissatisfied many fans, and how there was a need for a peer award to replace them. He included a first draft of the rules and the ballot, which changed surprisingly little in the FAAn's first years of operation. Briefly, there were the familiar six categories of Best Single Issue, Best Fanzine Editor, Best Fan Artists Humorous and Serious, Best Fan Writer, and Best Letter Writer. To nominate and vote, a fan had to show a minimal activity in the pertinent category. The award would be given at small fannish cons like MidWestCon and Autoclave rather than at the Worldcon. In the first proper issue of *The Zinc Fan* began a protracted controversy that lasted over three issues and didn't really add much to Moshe's original conception. A statuette designed and sculpted by Randy Bathurst was accepted as the official award, and nominations were opened to everyone. Little else. They couldn't even coin a better name than Moshe's temporary "FAAns."

Moshe's motives were noble. The fan Hugos had always been somewhat disappointing, and have become intolerable. Look over the records sometime to see what I mean. Of the 3 categories that the fan Hugos have settled into, the most satisfactory has probably been the fan writer's. No one can complain too much that Alexei Panshin, Ted White, Bob Tucker, Harry Warner, Terry Carr, Susan Wood, and Bob Shaw have won, even if Richard E. Geis has won five times. It is a disconcerting fact, though, that no one had won a fan writer's Hugo twice until 1975, when Geis was awarded his second. Then a third. Then Wood shared her second



Hugo with Geis in 1977. Then Geis for a fourth time. Bob Shaw's Hugo in 1979 looked like a break in the pattern, but no, he won for a second time the very next year. The pattern is even more clear in the artist's Hugo. The first was won by Jack Gaughan, followed by George Barr, Vaughn Bode, Tim Kirk, and Alicia Austin. Up until that point it had gone fine. But Kirk won again in '72, '73, and '74, and again in '76, giving him five Hugos, the last couple of which were awarded to him during years in which his only appearances were infrequent and exclusive to *Locus*. His winning streak was broken in '75 by Bill Rotsler's long-deserved victory, but it took an Australian Worldcon to do it, and he was right back in the winner's circle the year after. His non-appearances caught up with him, and he was vanquished by Phil Foglio. Foglio, however, has largely appeared in the pages of *trekzines* and program books, and with his second consecutive win, it looked as if he'd just step into Kirk's shoes as a semi-permanent figure. This view has been upset by Rotsler's second win in 1979, and Alexis Gilliland's last year. Who at Denvention and Chicon? Probably one of the commercial fantasy artists who dominate the artshows.

The most obviously fucked of the three fan Hugos is the fanzine category. The earliest winners tended to be sercon, but then there

was a run of more fannish zines that won Fanac, *Cry of the Nameless*, *Warhoon*, *Xero*, *Yandro*... From the very beginning, though, it was clear that fannish or sercon, the zines with the largest circulations--often newsletters--had the best chance at a Hugo. In the mid 60s, semi-prozines began to appear on the winner's list. *Amra* in 64, *ERBdom* in 66, *Amra* again in 68, and *SFR* for the first time in 69. Between then and 72, the Hugo went back and forth, from *SFR* to *Locus* to *SFR*. Then *Energumen* won at *Torcon II*, the first fanzine to have wrestled a fanzine Hugo away from the professional magazines in five years, and the last to do so in the seven years that have followed. Since 1969, *Locus* has won the Hugo for best fanzine five times (making it presumably "better" than *Fanac* or *Warhoon*, and infinitely better than *Void*, *Innuendo*, *Granfalloon*, or *Outworlds*, zines which had never won though eligible). *SFR/The Alien Critic* has also won five times, in addition to the five Hugos that Gies has won for his writing. No new fanzine has won a Hugo since 1973. The last new zine to win a Hugo was first published in early 1970. If this brief rundown hasn't made it clear to you that the fan Hugos have been a sinecure for a handful of people for most of its history, then you simply haven't grasped the distinction between fan magazine and fanzine. Moshe Feder and most other fanzine fans knew the distinction in 1974.

At the time the FAAns were first proposed, not only was it clear that the fan Hugos weren't serving the needs of the fanzine community, but fanzine fandom was a different world than it is now. The previous generation of editors were just beginning to burn out or mellow. There was another annual issue of two of *Granfalloon* to come, another few *Outworlds*, *Energumen*'s last issue was still fresh in mind, and the status of *Algol* as a fanzine or semi-pro was uncertain. Coexisting with the genzine tradition was a school of fannish zines like *Rats*, *Quip*, & *Focal Point* from the New York area that were more a continuation of earlier zines and less influenced than more lavish cousins by the Hippies and protest movements of the 60s. All of these were only two or three years gone when the first *Zine Fan* went its rounds. And while one generation of fanzine editors was winding up its business, another was emerging new sets of forms and ideas that persists today in the intimate apas and personalzines that are now commonplace.

Though there has been quite a variety of good zines since then, they are not linear developments out of the older body of experience. A number of parameters in fandom's equation of state changed drastically. Conventions multiplied, grown in importance to fans, and left little money or time for quarterly schedules, colour mimeo, or hundred page issues. SF has become a mass media success that has made it more of a waste of time than ever for fans with exceptional talent to spend it writing and drawing for dilettante audiences. Most of what talent was available gravitated to the semi-pros with larger circulations. Postage and in-



flation have soared. The new forms and ideas that fans adapted to are in themselves not as well suited for artistic expression as they are for communication for its own sake, and the result of changing emphasis, changing purposes, and changing priorities has been a demotion of the fanzine from an artistic act and lifeblood of fandom to a kind of circular for pen-pals and a specialized interest, irrelevant to most of fandom.

I don't wish to exaggerate the differences between fandom six or seven years ago and fandom today, since fandom is too small and anarchic to describe in terms of movements. But the individuals involved have grown older and their attitudes have changed. Many gaffiated or at least narrowed their activities to social events. Most only discovered fandom two or three years ago and have formed fan groups of their own, with their own ideals. Whereas the fandom that the FAAns were meant for had numerous high calibre zines that appeared on a regular basis that set standards for every other fanzine, fandom today has virtually nothing like them. We have only a handful of genzines that astound everyone if they appear more than once every 18 months. One of the best zines is nearly quarterly, but is at best average measured against pre-FAAns' standards. Others are better, but are annual events. Two or three small faanish zines exist as a kind of revivalist movement, but their distributions are 50-ish small. This is a far cry from a fandom in which there must have been more than a dozen major genzines and other dozens of fannish zines, each appearing two to four times a year. By the

same token that has slowed down fanzine activity, the absence of re-enforcing models has lowered the overall quality of other fanzines.

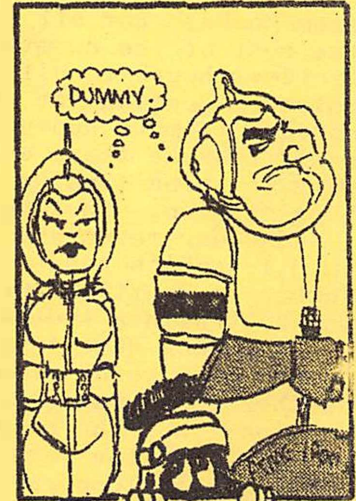
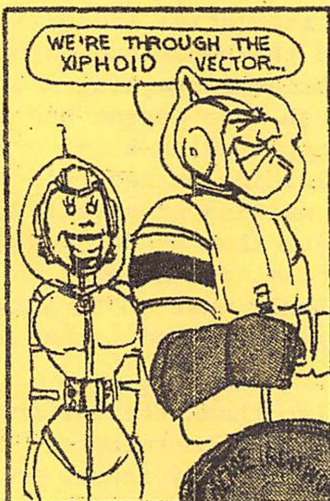
The fanzine itself is not the same vehicle it once was. A few anachronisms exist, but for most fans a zine is a letter substitute, a surrogate phone call. Virtually all fanzines today are personalzines in fact or in style and standards of quality for them are at least lax, maybe even irrelevant. Bonds between friends have always been the strongest force in fandom, but the late 70s and (so far) the beginning of the 80s has seen these affinities overwhelm every other consideration. Personality is the new standard and a totally subjective one, unsuited to objective awards.

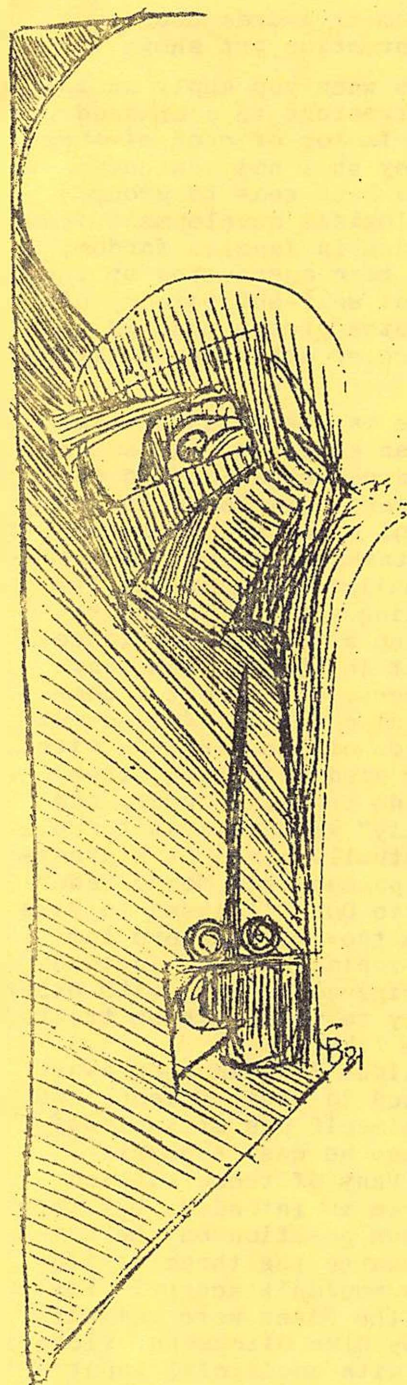
The first three years of the FAAns worked about as they were intended. *Outworlds*, possibly the best fanzine of the time, won Bill Bowers the award he never got from the Worldcon. Other outstanding zines, editors, artists, and writers who had been passed over by the Hugos also got their deserved egoboo. Once the loose ends had been tied up, though, objectivity became a problem. There were suspicions that feminist fans were voting as a block. The numerous staff writing and editing for *Janus* certainly voted predictably. Various fannish pros were conspicuously voting for BNF buddies (and leaving blank all the other categories). Obscure fan friends of one editor nominated a very mediocre zine last year, most likely because they saw few other zines and were only voting in the first place as a favor. There was Dotti Steff's zine, too--some fans believed that she did little of her own work, but that's a red herring. What's important is that it's morally certain that all Dotti's nominations were actually favors to her mother, who was prominently promoting her child's interests at various midwest conventions. A final instance of the FAAn's going awry was the first year that Joan H Hanke-Woods won as Best Serious artist. She had less than half-a-dozen fanzine appearances in the previous year and a half. One fan admitted he'd voted for her on the Fan-

zine Activity Achievement Awards because of art he'd seen in convention art shows...

This is what happens when you apply an inappropriate award structure to a changed fandom. The common factor of each of these examples is that they show how aesthetic judgments can take a back seat to group loyalties. It's a logical development from the changing attitudes in fanzine fandom, and the problem has been aggravated by the growth and subsequent self-sufficiency of fan groups. Each votes pretty much in uninterest or ignorance of other fan activity than its own.

The tendency to vote on the basis of personalities has had an effect on the administration of the awards as well as on the ballot. The FAAns were envisioned as being run by a committee of nine, who would perform the necessary tasks of promoting interest, distributing ballots, publishing *The Zine Fan*, and counting votes. In the beginning, Moshe set up a pro tem committee, which was phased out in threes each year by new elected members. The pro tem committee, which was quite active, filled out about a hundred pages of *The Zine Fan* with their debate. Cons vied with each other to present the awards the first year, and they were "officially" announced at three, though they were actually given at Midwest-Con. *The Zine Fan* passed from Moshe Feder to Linda Bushyager to Don D'Annunzio to Mike Glycer. But by then the original pro tem committee had been replaced. And instead of replacing the original workers with other fans who were likely to work, fandom treated the award positions like the committee positions like another award category. They voted in their friends and favorites. Moshe himself was at last off the committee because he wasn't popular enough to remain. Many of those elected may have been honored as intended, but they didn't serve. My own position on the committee came only because the three or four who placed above me wouldn't accept. For the last two years the FAAns were administered in Toronto, by Mike Glicksohn, Victoria Wayne, and myself, with unofficial input





from Moshe. For all practical purposes, the rest of the committee didn't exist. Problems began to pile up that couldn't be solved. Meetings at conventions barely managed to make quorums and they broke up early because there were more attractive ways to spend time at a con than at a business session. Last year both Victoria and I ended our terms and the FAAns were entirely in Glicksohn's hands, with input from Gary Farber in Seattle. Gary tried to stir up interest with a two-page one-shot entitled "Does Anyone Have Anything To Say". A few people did, which prompted him to publish another dozen pages called "Fan Awards Discussion," but the response was significantly smaller than the response to "All of the Following is Temporarily DNG" several years earlier. A number of changes were hastily pushed through at the year's Midwestcon that

14 would have abolished the Best Single Issue category and combined the two artist's categories into one. The Randy Bathurst statuettes were discarded. Randy was falling behind in the production of the sticky silver beer cans anyway, and was pensioned off with one of his own sculptures at Autoclave V. Less emphasis was placed on the winner and more emphasis put on the FAAns as a top-ten or top-five. Another hasty meeting at Autoclave then restored the original category structure, but confirmed other changes. The fact was, though, that these were only cosmetic surgery, and that the administration of the FAAns was on the verge of a breakdown. Glicksohn could not run the FAAns alone, and Farber was not in much of a position to help. Others who might have stabilized the award had been systematically eliminated from the committee.

This spring Glicksohn learned that he had to move. He also had a special one-shot of *Energumen* on his hands that took up his remaining time. Finally, he hadn't a very clear notion where the rapid changes and counter-changes had left the FAAns. He wrote to the committee members for advice and received only one response, from Farber, then decided the hell with it. He resigned.

The FAAns are currently in limbo, though maybe Gary Farber will start up the apparatus for next year. I think I'd rather he didn't. And that the FAAns remained in limbo until fandom is a more active and less partisan framework to hang an award on. Otherwise they will surely descend to little more than a comparative study of the relative sizes and influence of different cliques. I don't feel like opening the mail one day and finding that a clubzine like *Atarantes* is the year's best fanzine according to the demographics of the votership that year. Sour grapes are best left on the vine.

Special thanks for valuable assistance on recent issues of *Atarantes* cannot be forgotten. *Randy Satterfield* has been a valuable help in collating and preparing the zine for mailing; as assistant editor, *Ward Batty* has brought us a batch of clever and innovative ideas, a real talent for layout, and the humor and enthusiasm to make a monthly clubzine fun again. More than anyone else, though, one person has seen to it that *Atarantes* appeared on time, even if it meant late nights helping on reductions, paste-ups, collating, mailing preparation, or any other unpleasant job that needed doing. For her advice, criticism, and support as well as her aid, special thanks must go to *Susan Biggers*. She deserves more credit than I can give her here.

Belatedly, let me also thank the various officers of ASFic and the contributors to this zine over the past fifty issues as well. Thanks, all!

In all the time that I've known Bob Candler, I never knew that his first name was Bob; it had always been "Mr. Candler" as far as I was concerned, and the name can never be spoken without invoking memories of Candler's Drugs, a West Rome mainstay for as long as my parents lived in the area. I lived a blessedly lucky childhood, from 1963 on: my parents' house was located a short walk from Candler's Drugs. I must have made that walk a thousand times before I became old enough to waste gas by driving that quarter mile.

Candler's Drugs was, in my childhood eyes, a store built solely to house a soda fountain. As I grew up, those 5¢-for-a-pointed-cone, 10¢-for-a-square-bottom-cone-with-an-extra-scoop frosty, creamy treats were an integral part of summers. And falls. And springs. And even winters. A Candler's ice cream cone could highlight any season.

I developed a craving for coconut when I was young, and I've never lost it. You know, I cannot to this day recall a place that gave me a better-tasting coconut milkshake than Candler's. It wasn't natural flavor--the coconut came from a dropper bottle--not from a rough cocoa-brown shell filled with moist coconut meat--but it *was* good. Plus, if I asked at the right stage in the milkshake manufacture, I could always coerce whomever was working the fountain to add an extra drop or two. One day, I got them to add a good deal more than that, and quickly discovered the true meaning of "too much of a good thing"...

It was a ritual, almost; comics came in at Couch's Grocery next door on Wednesdays back then--Candler's had comics, but they only got them once a month, and I needed a more frequent superhero fix than that--and that required a Wednesday trip to Candler's, where I would plunk down a nickel or a dime for a vanilla fudge cone (the amount depended upon my relative wealth that week), then I'd trudge next door, dripping creamy sweetness off the cone and my fingers, and pick up whatever comics I could afford that week. The cone always came first--I knew that if I hit the comics first, I might not save enough money for the cone afterwards--and the trip back home became a difficult routine of walking down the oak-and-elm shaded Williamson Street, eating a slightly melting mass of vanilla fudge while the other hand balanced a comic or three, page opened as I urgently perused Spiderman's latest battle with Dr. Octopus or The Sandman (I bought Spiderman #s 3 & 4 under such circumstances, and remember it so well that I can't look at a Ditko Dr. Octopus without thinking of ice cream), or Superman's most recent attempt to keep all-too-inquisitive Lois Lane from recognizing him as schmucky Clark Kent. As you might have suspected, the comics occasionally showed battle scars after the trip--

KUDZU

CLIFF BIGGERS



I'm sure I still have a few comics with pages decorated with a slightly discolored smear where I drop of ice cream found a brief home.

I was also an enthusiast of the ice cream soda: carbonated water, chocolate syrup, ice cream, whipped cream, and a cherry. As far as I know, there was no other place in Rome that served them, in one of those gently curving glasses, for only a quarter. If there was, it would have made no difference--why search when you've found perfection?

When Susan and I were married in 1971, she had never tried Candler's; I introduced her, first via a cone, then a banana split, and finally a nut-fudge sundae. She quickly became a Candler's aficionado, and relished a stop there as much as I did after our trips to Rome.

I know I must have bought other things at Candler's: the occasional book or magazine, one or two model kits when they carried them, a card for various occasions, and quite a few school supplies when I needed them at the last minute. But I have to delve more deeply for those memories; the ice cream remains foremost in my thoughts.

Even now, I find myself making plans to stop at Candler's whenever I come back to Rome; it's an old habit, and it dies hard. I picture Mr. Candler, who never changed--like Dorian Gray, he must have a picture somewhere getting old and ugly while he remains youthful and convivial. And, as I walk in, I'm eleven again; the prices may have gone up, but it doesn't matter. It's the same counter, the same store, the same clean

smell in the air, the same somehow-friendly view of Shorter Avenue's busy traffic three long strides out from the front plate-glass window. There have been small changes--he moved the magazine and comic rack from the front of the store to the back in 1972 or so, and he added a few more flavors of ice cream to compete with the aloof, impersonal Baskin Robbins and the like, but it was still the same Candler's.

Unfortunately, it isn't there any more.

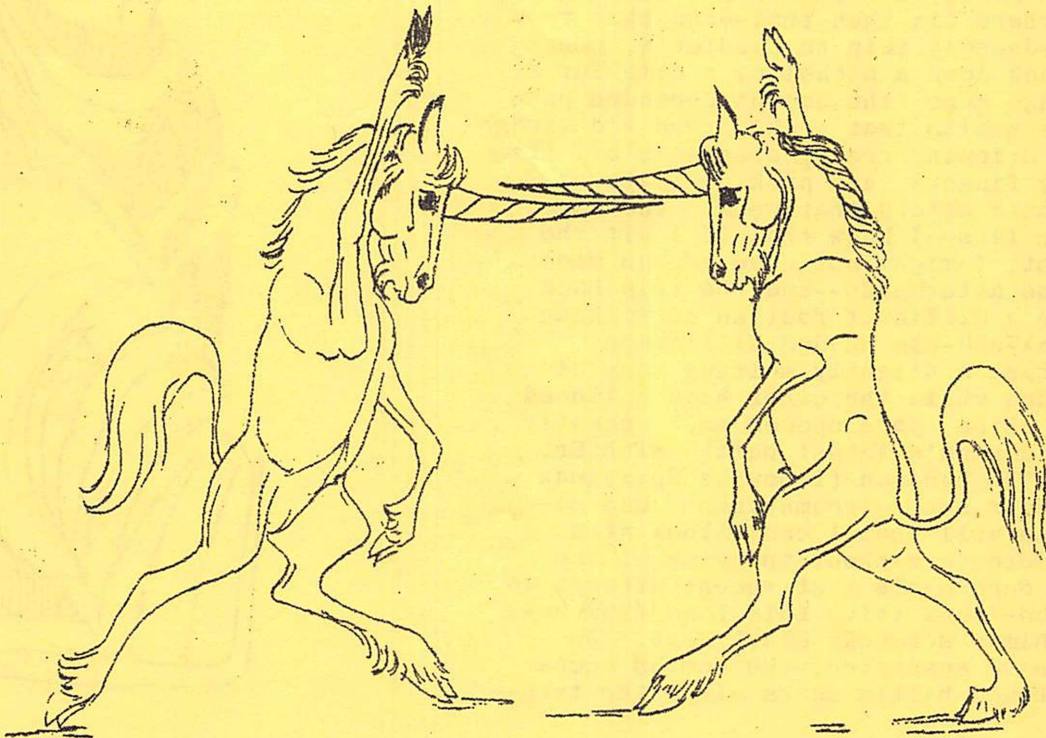
There's a lot of work in a privately owned drugstore, I guess, and there's a lot of competition. Whatever the reason, Bob Candler decided it was time to give up Candler's Drugs, and I was made briefly melancholy by a notice in the paper informing me that I could no find Mr. Candler in the employ of Arrington-Ingram Drugs.

It may be a fine store, but it isn't Candler's. No magazine and comic rack. No soda fountain. No neighborhood drugstore feel.

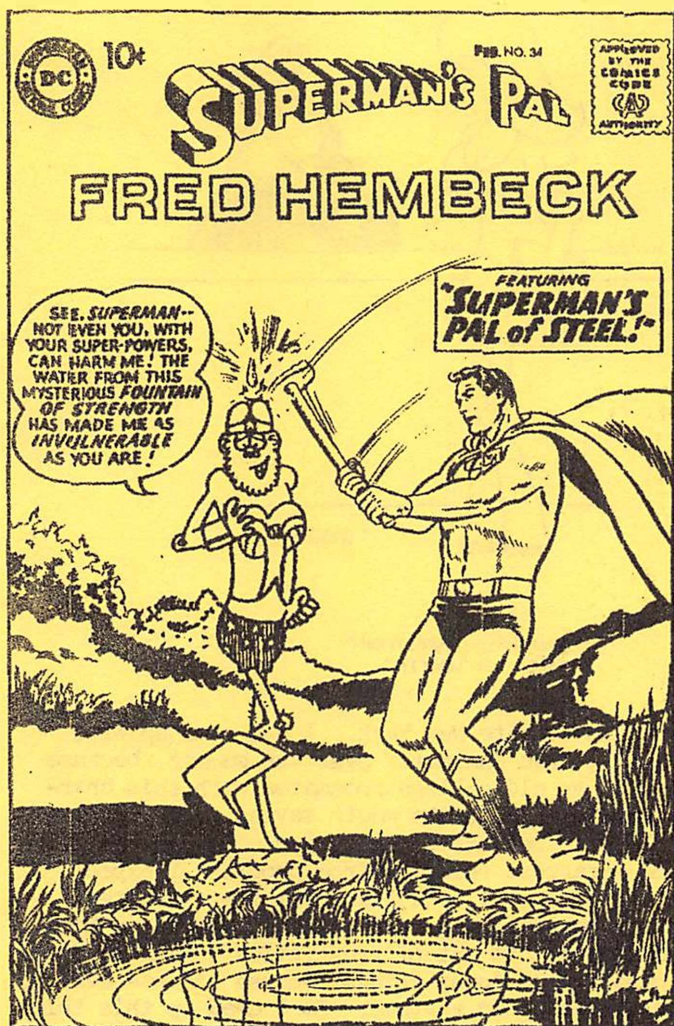
I always felt sorry for the people who never experienced gluttonous happiness at Candler's Drugs; who never had the chance to walk in, months or years later, and have Mr. Candler recognize you and say hello.

Meanwhile, there's an eleven year old living inside my mind who feels an urge to offer a very sincere and deepfelt thanks to Mr. Candler for a part of my life that, in retrospect, I would not be willing to give up.

Thanks, Mr. Candler. Let's get together over an ice cream cone sometime; I'll bring the comics...



John
2000



((Fred Hembeck, for those who don't know, is one of the most popular alternative-comics creators producing material today. He does not, however, produce comics so much as he produces material *about* comics and the effects they have/had on those of us who recall reading them. In his six books, available from Fantaco, Fred Hembeck captures at many points the sheer joy of comics; he also pays homage to many of the people who brought that joy. Hembeck has also done work for DC and Marvel comics—he has a piece coming up in Marvel's 20th anniversary issue of *Fantastic Four*—and is a contributing member of the apa CAPA-Alpha. The following is an excerpted portion of an interview done by Ward Batty for his own *Metropolis Gazette*, where it will later appear in its entirety.)

WB: Are you a good artist?

Fred Hembeck: Yea, I am. I never said I was a great artist, but a good artist is anyone who gets paid. I get paid so I must be good. Don Heck is good. Vince Colletta is good.

WB: So you compare yourself with Don Heck and Vinnie Colletta?

FB: No. They have more training than I do. In fact, I saw a comic book in 1953, it was called *DYNAMITE*. I remember it had one story in there by Don Heck—pencils and inks—and it was beautiful. Anyone who saw it today wouldn't recognize it. The only way you could tell is that it was signed so you knew it was Don Heck.

WB: His early Iron Man stuff wasn't bad.

FB: No, it's just that people tend to get worse as they get older. There are very few exceptions. I'm in my peak right now.

WB: Look at C.C. Beck. He's still able to do the same stuff he's been doing for a million years. He gets better at it.

FB: Well, yeah, he's good.

WB: And I think if there is anyone in pro comics that you could really compare yourself with in terms of simplicity—maybe difficulty—it would be C.C. Beck.

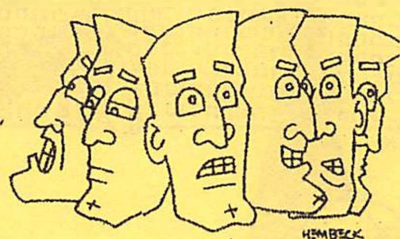
FB: Oh, it's not difficult, that's for sure.

WB: Well, it's harder than it looks. We're not all drawing Hembecks.

FB: It's easier than drawing like Frank Miller, though. He's really good. He's probably the best artist working regularly in comics today. I want that in bold face, big letters like in *THE COMICS JOURNAL*.

WB: How about an intelligent question. I was wondering about your collection. You seem to draw on a whole lot of very diversified stuff from, I assume, your own collection.

FB: Well, it is a large collection. It started in 1961 and it basically encompasses all the superhero comics from 1961 on. I go anything that came out to remotely looked like a superhero, except *FRUIT MAN*. I missed *FRUIT MAN* from Harvey. But anything else like *THE GEEK*, or *THUNDERBOLT*, or *DYNAMO*—I bought all these bizarre things and I never threw them out or I never sold them. So they're all in my parents' basement—looming there, waiting for the day when they have to be moved... I always just bought everything off the stands; I hardly missed anything. When I got into fandom in 1968 or so, I just filled in the gaps I had—you could buy back issues for 30¢ or 40¢... My parents were very reasonable about it. In fact, I remember in 1961 or so, I was in school, and a kid had this issue of *SUPERMAN* in class that features "The Great Boo Boo Contest," and I thought, "What the hell is this?" Superman was there with knee sock on, or he was wearing a dress in one panel, or some other weird thing. And there was a Bizarre sotry in it, also. And that's what attracted me to comic books... I read *SUPERMAN*, *FLASH*, *GREEN LANTERN*, and all the DC comics for about eight months before I ran across my first Marvel Comic... and it was really an accident. I was sick and my mother picked up a copy of *FANTASTIC FOUR* #4, which I wouldn't have bought otherwise. And I realized even then that this was really unusual material. In the story, Johnny Storm quit the *Fantastic Four*, went to live in a bowery with the dregs of civilization—and these men looked like the dregs of civilization! Whereas in your typical DC comic, the men who would hold up a bank would have a suit and tie on. In DC, everything was so clean. And this was



Gritty Realism compared to DC. I've been primarily a Marvel fan ever since then. Another thing about Marvel; a lot of people think that the peak years were Galactus and all that, but the peak years were until Chic Stone stopped inking Kirby. I loved the stories during that era. They weren't taking themselves too seriously—they were having fun, every issue.

WB: So in your mind, any comic is good as long as it's fun?

FH: Yeah, I'd say that. An underground can be fun.

WB: Is fun more important than "realism" or "drama" or "characterization"?

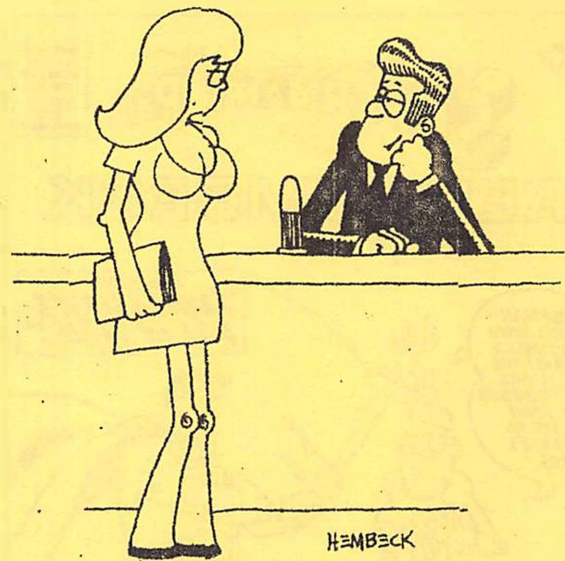
FH: I think if the characters are done well and it's realistic—if that's the way it was intended to be—it can be fun. A good comic character wise is PUDGE THE GIRL BLIMP. When I first saw it, the artwork put me off a bit, but it's so well-written. It's a fun comic book. Another is Lee and Ditko doing SPIDER-MAN. You had characters, drama, and action.

WB: What about your books. What do you like to call them? There have been so many labels placed on these type publications. Are they "alternative," or "underground," or "ground level," or--

FH: I like to call them "HEMBECK" in the biggest letters that I can possibly get on the cover.

WB: I've heard you complain that you are self-conscious about that.

FH: I am, I really am. But on the other hand, it tickles my fancy, so what can I tell you? Seeing my name there, whoever would have thought that would happen? Three years ago, I never knew this would happen. I was trying to break into comics as a regular guy. The way you were supposed to do it as a superhero artist...I was really into it at the time. I remember seeing some DC comic with art by Arvell Jones and some inker, and one panel looked very much like my artwork. And I figured, "Oh boy, My stuff is professional!" Then I remembered that I don't like Arvell Jones—that blew it for me right there. So I knew the stuff was mediocre—but that wouldn't keep me out of pro comics...I had no idea what else I was going to do. So I moved from Buffalo to

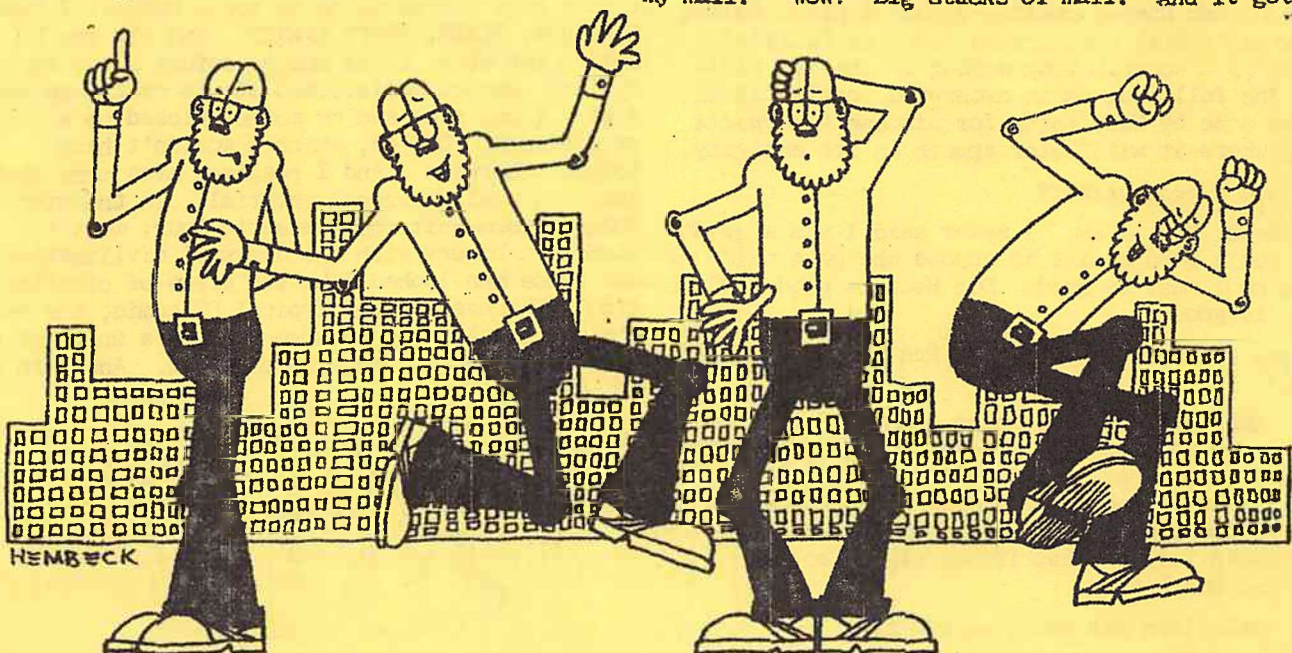


"HOW DO YOU TURN IT ON?
TELL IT YOU LOVE IT."

Kingston in upstate New York. I had come up with this little Fred character over the summer, because I wrote to my old college roommates with this character running off at the mouth saying what I'd been doing lately, because I can't type. The character got the strangest reaction from people. I expect them to know what I look like from the character, but they thought I was bald with a cleft in my head. Not so, folks! So out of frustration I started drawing these little funny things because it was easier, I didn't have to do anatomy. So I drew up this thing with my character interviewing Spiderman, and I thought it was pretty neat, so I sent it to Alan Light

WB: What was the first reaction, other than from Alan, that you got on the strip in THE BUYER'S GUIDE?

FH: I got one postcard from some guy. "I like the strip. That was neat. Keep up the good work." Then nothing. I figured, "Hey, I have a fan." But when people realized I was going to be there for a while, they started writing me...After about five columns, I foolishly said, "Write me; I answer all my mail." Wow! Big stacks of mail. And it got to



the point where I was getting letters like, "I really like your work. Thanks. We'll see ya." And they expected an answer to that.

WB: One interesting thing that I've noticed is that professionals come up to you and just gurggle over your work like some kid. They'd never act that way about their own, or each other's, stuff. Is your material so universal that it brings out the fan in everyone?

FH: Apparently so. I get a lot of good reaction, and that's very gratifying. And exciting. I sent Stan Lee a copy of HEMBECK 1980 and he liked it very much. He seemed excited about it

WB: What about your wife? She is not--

FH: --not a comic fan. She reads science fiction, though. The calls and letters drive her crazy from time to time. Luckily I have my overwhelmingly loveable personality to compensate for the strange basis for my mind. That gets me by with her. With other people--if I just talk to fans, I get by fine. If I talk with real people who don't know about Superman, I'm in real trouble...Actually, my wife is an artist in her own right. She draws a little bit, and I'm going to have her ink some stuff for me in the future...I made my wife a character--that has to be the ultimate of nepotism in the comics. I'm proud of that. Wives aren't just wives, wives are co-workers. Every creator's wife inevitably does something with him.

WB: I'm curious, When you were reading comic books, why do you think you didn't stop reading them when you were ten?

FH: I don't know. Part of it may be that as much as I like reading comics, I like even more to read about comics. Ever since I saw that issue of Superman, I have wanted to be a cartoonist. And because I wanted

WHAT IF JIMMY OLSEN WAS THE HULK'S PAL



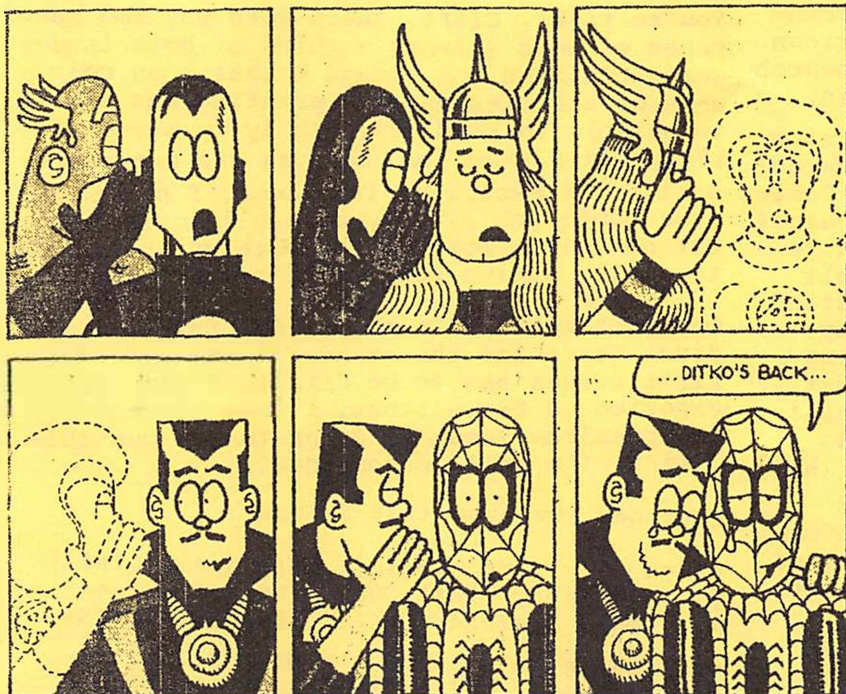
to be a cartoonist, it always fascinated me to find out about the people behind the scenes. I would eat up the stuff on the letter pages, especially those little bios. To this day, I can't tell you that so-and-so shot so-and-so in this issue, but I have a vivid memory of who inked what issue and all that. That's why I always like to see different artists doing different things.

WB: Do you want to do political humor?

FH: Possibly.

WB: A daily strip?

FH: I'm not crazy about doing a daily strip. They seem too repetitive for me. I get bored doing the same thing twice. That's why I do a lot of one-page strips. No, I want to do stories, maybe one page stories. Something that has sequential motion to it. Well, I could do funny stories...I don't see why funny stories shouldn't be selling. They used to sell many years ago, quite well. Kids aren't buying comics as much any more, and I guess the ones that do want superheroes....



FRED HEMBECK



THE OSCILLATING F N

WARD BATTY & CLIFF BIGGERS

Our idea of fanzines--at least, our idea of good fanzines--doesn't always correspond. I, Cliff, seem to prefer fannish and small and light more than Ward--but it isn't that simple to state qualitatively, since we're notoriously inconsistent about matters of taste. This issue is a perfectly good example; the fanzines we have to review are zines we don't particularly agree on. We'll start off with *Orion*, a zine a bit more comics-related than our usual review subject. Ward, what about it?

I think it was Steve Fox who mentioned that this column needed more disagreement between the reviewers, Cliff; well, this is our chance to let them see it. I was really encouraged by the attitude and spirit of *Orion* #1, and Cliff's initial response was much less positive. *Orion* is "The Canadian Magazine of Time and Space" and covers mostly comics and sf from a Canadian point of view. In "Quantum," editor Mark Shainblum explains that he wants to promote the growth and development of the Canadian comics and sf industry--not a bad idea. Living in a country which provides a good portion of the films, comics, and literature to most of the world, I find myself looking to other countries for something different in my entertainment. It must be frustrating to live in another country, but to be totally dominated by American entertainment. For the same variety I search for, the average Canadian can turn within.

Another very encouraging aspect of this zine is the generally positive attitude of the editor and writers toward comics and SF. Comics leading fanzine saleswise, *The Comics Journal*, is produced by people who basically dislike comics, and it shows. They've seen it all and read it all before, and can't understand why Spider-man doesn't captivate them any more. But these guys are just discovering the potential of the medium. They're just discovering alternative comics like *Cerebus* or *Elfquest*. Just stumbling across Will Eisner's *Spirit* is a refreshing change. As Shainblum so aptly puts it, "four colour (comics) may be a lot of fun, and more often than not a good read (and I challenge anyone to prove otherwise to my satisfaction), but they are not the entire comics field." I find this attitude most refreshing and encouraging.

These are but two small features in this first issue. There are more items, such as reviews and an interview with Captain Canuck creator Richard Comely, plus some *ulp* fan poetry about being a superhero. Not too successful, but the zine has a purpose and is full of energy and vitality plus the editorial skills needed to pull it off. For a first issue, I'm very pleased and recommend this.

I'm a bit less pleased, Ward, and the reason has nothing to do with intent, but with execution. As much as their ambitions show promise, and as much as I enjoy comics, this zine was, for me, a very dull read--and at the price it was selling for, I expect more than dull reading. The fiction and the poetry were particularly poor, and I think the zine could have done without them. Perhaps *Orion* will offer more in the future, but I can't really recommend what I saw in the first issue.

The zine we have to review this issue that does please me is *Cusfussing*. Perhaps I'm more impressed by smaller fannish zines, but this one has a much better feel for me and I was more satisfied when I finished. The zine has a more fannish feel--particularly in its views, reviews, and con information, and #31 has some very intriguing information about Hugo vote-spreads this past year. There's just enough controversy to keep the zine lively, although it has two drawbacks--too many letters for the size of the zine, and a very poor printing method: the zine is electrostencilled from a dot-matrix printer output, and the result is very, very hard-to-read (yes indeed, much harder than any issue of *Atarantes*). All in all, though, I like it's unpretentious feel and the personality the zine shows, and editor Charles Seelig has proven himself capable of regularly delivering a pleasing product.

You're right, Cliff, there were way too many pages of LoCs (almost a third of both issues were LoCs) and not enough emphasis on columns or articles and the printing was almost impossible to read, especially in issue #32. It's a shame too because the art reproduction is excellent in places. I see this as a comfortable, easy-enough 'zine to do but no real effort on the part of the editor to really strive for a variety of material.

One last note on *Orion*, Cliff. This was a first issue and the standards one sets for first issues has to be different than for experienced fan editors. I look beyond the premiere issue of *Orion* to its possibilities. I'm still encouraged.

Fanzines reviewed this issue:

Orion #1, 36 pp. offset. #1, summer 1981; \$1.50 a copy. Mark Shainblum, 5706 Henri-mac Road, Montreal Quebec, Canada H4W 1S6.

CuSFuSsing #s 31 & 32. Mimeo, 26 & 24 pp. respectively. \$3/12 issues ea The Usual from Charles Seelig, ed., Columbia Univ. New York City Science Fiction Society, 206 Ferris Booth Hall, NY NY 10027.

A HUGO TOUT SHEET

The Hugo ballot is out again as it is about this time every year. Up for grabs are prizes for a host of categories—best novel, short story, non-fiction work, film, and fanzine, among others. And as usual, or so it seems, the nominations are less than exciting.

Well, perhaps not in the fiction categories, where fans still are (despite appearances to the contrary) pretty well read. The several fannish Hugo awards, tho, are the pits. As they were last year...and the year before that...and the year before that...

It's been close to a decade since the Hugo ballots consisted of currently active and genuinely talented fans, amateur hobbyists in it for the pleasure of their hobby. The Hugo ballot today is a dreary list of has-beens and retreads and semi-professionals. A fact that should come as no surprise to anyone. Loot at this list:

For fan artist, we have Alexis Gilliland, Joan Hanke-Wood, Victoria Poyser, Bill Rotsler, and Stu Shiffman. Rotsler shouldn't even be on this list. The Hugos are, technically, for work done during the previous year. Rotsler didn't do any fan art during 1980. The one or two pieces that may have appeared are from backfiles. After a long career as a fan cartoonist, Rotsler has turned his energies to writing and his photography. What he is, is an example of "Hugo inertia." It takes fans years to realize that someone is good enough for the Hugos, long after they've demonstrated their talent, because people aren't keeping up with the field. They don't know who's active and who isn't. And once a person begins to make the Hugo ballot, they can remain on the ballot years after they drift out of the field for the same reason.

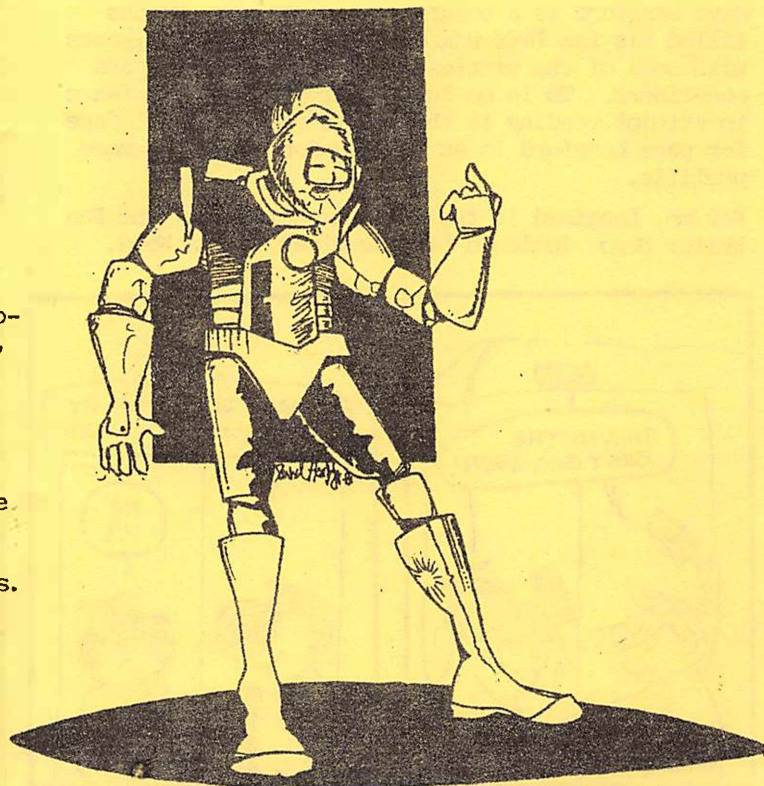
Rotsler did win a Hugo a few years back, when he was active, and Alexis Gilliland won the Hugo last year for fan artist. Alexis is a decent artist and a superb humorist; his Hugo was well-deserved. But I confess to a "share the wealth" philosophy about the Hugos. There are enough deserving people in fandom that I think it only fair to pass over someone who's already won a Hugo for someone equally deserving.

Victoria Poyser, to my mind, hasn't done all that much work. The Hugos are not award for the most prolific: quality, not quantity, is what counts. Still, I feel that weight should be given to one's entire output because these Hugos have tended towards being Lifetime Achievement Awards. All else being equal, a fan who has been very active contributing art to fanzines and such is more deserving of the award than someone who's done only a few pieces. The active fan brings more enjoyment to fandom than an inactive fan, and fandom is shared "good times." Poyser has not been that active, at least in fanzines. She, frankly, has lucked out by appearing on the covers of a couple of Noreascon II Progress Reports, a publication that is seen by more fans than any other. She has a nice "fine art" style, but I find her compositions a little static and sometimes weak in execution.

Joan Hanke-Woods is also something of a "fine-art artist." Hanke-Wood has been very prolific in fanzines and has certainly improved the level of art found there, but...(OK, so I'm a grump) she's never drawn a beautiful person. This might sound like an odd complaint but while she's very good at aliens and grotesques, the lack of normal looking people makes one wonder whether she can draw people that look like people. I find her art more flash than substance.

Finally there's Stu Shiffman. Stu's a fan's fan. He does art for fanzines, occasionally writes for fanzines, has even co-edited one or two. He's been active for several years and is one of the few fans trying to revive some of the old myths and legends of fandom. While he's a decent artist, I find myself hesitating to say that Stu deserves a Hugo. He's in the same boat as another prolific artist, Steven Fox: while a good artist, little of his stuff is truly memorable. His art is mostly fillos.

Finally, I find myself voting for Gilliland first, solely because he is the least disqualified of the lot, followed by Rotsler, Shiffman, Hanke-Wood, and Poyser. Many other people deserve to be on that list. There's Linda Michaels, a fan who's appeared mostly in artshows, making her fairly obscure outside the midwest; Marc Schirmeister, Charlie Williams, Liz Danforth, Dave Vereschagin, and Taral Wayne MacDonald come to mind. In England, there's Jim Barker, Rob Hansen, D. West, and the fairly inactive ATom.



Among the fanwriters, we have Richard E. Geis, Mike Glycer, Arthur Hlavaty, Dave Langford, and Susan Wood.

Geis has won so many Hugos already that he could start his own bowling alley. For that reason alone one should think of passing him by. As a writer, Geis is not exceptional. He writes with clarity and organization but rarely writes with wit or invention. His strength is his opinion and he has a lot of them. Geis is also editor and chief writer for SFR, a large circulation, regular semi-professional fanzine. As such, he is seen by more fans than just about anyone else. This wide exposure accounts for his continual Hugo nominations. He's the one person that most SF readers are likely to have heard of. This gives him an unfair advantage over the other nominees.

Another nominee one might say has an unfair advantage is the late Susan Wood, who was a regular contributor to *Starship*, another large-circulation, regularly-published, semi-professional fanzine. Wood's writing has been frequently praised, though, and has won her other nominations and a couple of actual wins without the help of *Starship*. I suspect Wood will win this year's Hugo on a sympathy vote. Posthumous awards do little for the person they honor and deprive the equally deserving people a chance at their deserved recognition.

Mike Glycer has over several years shown a talent for clever witty writing, trenchant insight, and a good ear for word-choice. He is an admirable choice for the Hugo. It's unfortunate that lately his writing has been mostly limited to *File 770*, as news is inherently dull reading.

Arthur Hlavaty is a man, like Dick Geis, whose talent lies not in the ability to write well, but for having opinions. There is a considerable circle of fans surrounding Hlavaty who consider him a great fan writer, but his recent writing has shown a growing lack of organization and wandering of topics. I consider him a far less capable writer than Geis.

Dave Langford is a bonafied near-genius. He has filled his *Twll Ddu* over the past several years with some of the wittiest sketches, concepts, and one-liners. TD is so funny that at times one fears to attempt reading it through in one sitting. Page for page Langford is as funny as Bob Shaw, and more prolific.

For me, Langford is the obvious choice for the Fan Writer Hugo, followed by Mike Glycer, Susan Wood,

Richard Geis, and Arthur Hlavaty. The writer's category is in much sadder shape because it is harder to think of that many active, prolific writers of outstanding material. Kevin Smith and Paul Skelton from England come to mind; Joseph Nicholas, while not a great writer, has displayed more energy and concern for fandom than just about anyone else and deserves recognition just for that. Some American writers who deserve a nomination include Eric Mayer, Dave Locke, and Ed Cagle.

The fanzine Hugo has been the most controversial. Fanzines have been the focal point for various fandoms over the years. Fans who may not even be active in some fanzine will support one title over another because it represents what they consider to be the essence of fandom. Some will support any SerCon fanzine, others any faaanish fanzine. Many people simply vote for whatever they have seen, unaware there are other fanzines or that these might be worthy of consideration.

This year we have *File 770* (Mike Glycer, ed), *Locus* (Charles Brown, ed), *Science Fiction Review* (Dick Geis, ed), and *Science Fiction Chronicle & Starship* (both edited by Andrew Porter); three newszines and two large circulation semi-pro fan-magazines.

Newszines do a necessary job—keeping fans informed of what is going on in fandom. This does not automatically make them interesting reading. *File 770*, *Locus*, and *SFC* all leave me lukewarm. While useful, widely circulated publications, they haven't made fandom more enjoyable for me, which is my primary consideration for deciding on the Hugos.

SFR has won tons of Hugos. Along with *Locus* & *Algol/Starship*, it has held a virtual deathlock on the fanzine Hugos (grounds for being kpassed over in itself). It's a readable fanzine, too heavy on shallow reviews in my opinion, and not nearly as exciting as it once was. *Starship* hasn't won as many Hugos as SFR, but is even less of a fanzine that excites my interests. It's overall too solemn and scholarly; enjoyable, but there are many fanzines that I look forward to more than I do *Starship*.

So what it comes down to is that this year there are no nominees I feel really deserve the Hugo. So it's "no award" for me, followed by *File 770*, *Starship*, SFR, SFC, & *Locus*. Where are the nominations like *Twll Ddu*, *The Wretch Takes to Writing*, *Genre Plat*, *SF Commentary*, or *Q36*?



This year's Worldcon business meeting will once again see various efforts to "reform" the fan Hugos, which is to say find some formula for banning SFR, Locus, & Starship from the Hugos without flat-out saying that these 3 editors aren't fans. None of the formulas will work. Restricting eligible fanzines to circulations under 1000 is clearly undemocratic. Claiming they are professional fanzines, while true, doesn't help either because it can't really be proved. A fan-ed may draw his principle source of income from a fanzine but unless he admits it, it could hardly be proven.

Another attempt to "redress" the Hugo imbalance was the formation of the FAAn Awards...the trouble is that as few people vote for the FAAns as vote for the fan Hugos.

Worst of all is the suspicion among many zine fans that the majority of people who vote SFR a Hugo every year actually consider this the best fanzine being done. They don't know the variety of zines that exist because most fanzines rarely publish as many copies as there are people voting on the Hugos.

There are 3 things that can be done about the fan Hugos. First, one could simply leave things alone. The award is, after all, a popularity contest, and one cannot deny that the results are the voice of the masses. The second option is to abolish the fan awards. They were established long after the professional awards, and with the size of fandom today, attempt to honor a variety of endeavors too obscure for most people to be aware of. The third option is to admit that the Hugos are popularity contests, sheer acts of political campaigning and go with the flow. Politic for one's favorite fans! What I'm talking about is something like a Hugo Tout Sheet. If the Average Worldcon voter doesn't know who are the deserving people for the fan awards, we should make an effort to let them know. Few fans today talk about who they would want on the Hugo ballots. I can only think of Buck Coulson who does this on a regular basis. If an uninformed mass is the worst problem of the Hugos, then we owe it to ourselves to educate them. If we don't do it, some other power bloc will—and maybe already has.

☆☆☆

PIAWOL, CONT'D. FROM P. 9

the Amazing galleys of the article. We will give free copies to anyone who asks. There is no limit! Regarding folks we don't see in person, who may read this in the pages of *Atarantes*, I make this once in a lifetime offer. If you send me 20¢ (for costs), I'll mail you a copy of the galleys. My address is: 3141 Buford Hwy, Apt 8, Atlanta GA 30329. Don't hesitate. The world hasn't heard the last from the space writer team of Davis and Linaweaver.

ooo

One upshot of my latest sale is an invitation to participate in programming at The Atlanta Comics and Fantasy Fair, July 24-26. By the time you read this, I will have been on a Sunday panel with Jerry Page, Michael Whelan, and Kerry O'Quinn. When Richard Matheson announced that he wouldn't be able to attend, the organizers had to do some last minute fill-ins. Mike Jittlov was scheduled to take up most of the slack, but I lucked into the panel spot that had been held for Matheson (who had become the Incredible Shrinking Guest).

The title of the panel is "Breaking into Science Fiction." The same week I learn of the shuttle piece being grounded, I have my most significant sf sale to date. The panel topic couldn't be more appropriate for me. It is a strange life.

NEXT PIAWOL: The SF Odyssey of Michael Shaar:
NEXT MONTH A NEW DER KRAPP: "Brain Leeches!"

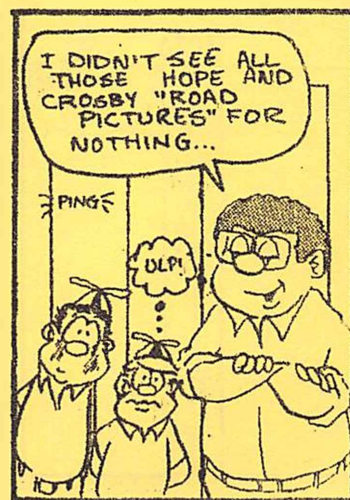
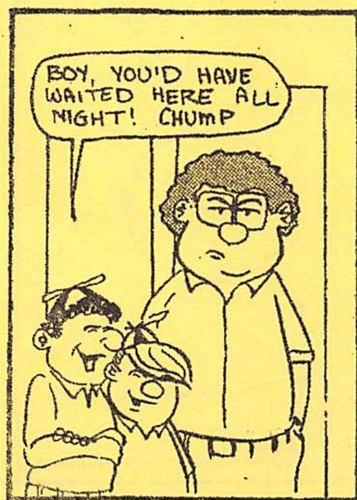
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DEADLINE FOR ATAR 51

The deadline for submissions for the 51st issue is September 6; to be sure you make the issue, get your material in by then!

Trufan Adventures

Ward Batty



AGACon '70

DEEP SOUTH CON RETROSPECTIVE (PART THREE) BY GLEN BROCK

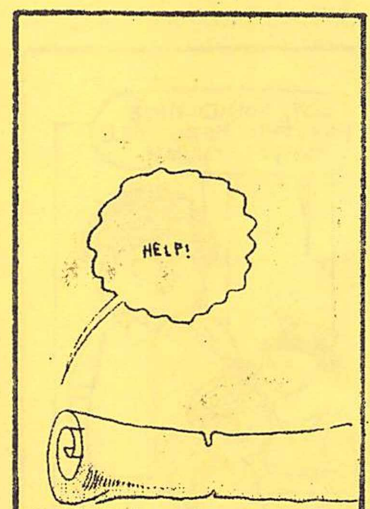
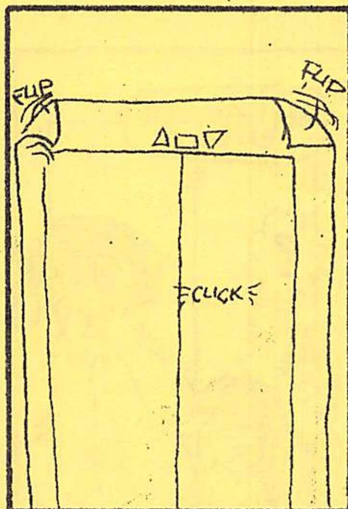
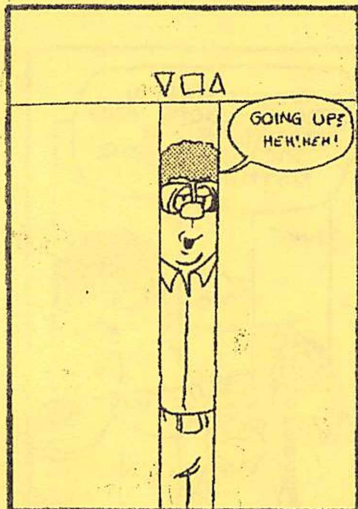
Agacon 70 was the first of the big DeepSouth Conventions. Before I made the bid in Knoxville in 1969 (representing ASFO 2), the traditional Deep South Convention was small in scale and had an insider's-party-like atmosphere. The New Orleans show in 1968 had attempted to present a professional convention with only limited success, and the Knoxville show slipped back into the old motif. The reason for the clannishness and small size of the conference was the dominance of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance (SFPA), a loosely organized amateur press alliance resembling more of a chain letter operation than a serious fanzine clinic. These guys preferred a small party-like conference and didn't go for a media event. Example: the Atlanta Deep-SouthCon in 1967 was hosted by Gerald W. Page and held at the Dinkler Plaza Hotel (site of the new library). Jerry considered the show a huge success with an attendance of 25. Of course, his expenditures were also practically nil, and the only announcement of the show was at the local ASFO 2 meeting and in SFPA. Don't misunderstand me: the conference sponsored by Page served its purposes well, and it was the largest DSC to date. It was exactly what it was intended to be: a nice fannish get-together, just like to ones preceding it. However, the step into the realm of a large-scale convention (to complement the world SF conventions) was a gigantic undertaking, full of very real risks and antagonism from the strangest areas.

Atlanta fandom in 1970 was as splintered as a shattered board. ASFO 2 was organized by myself, Dave Tribble, Don Karr, and Joe Celko. We were all late high school and early college youngsters with great expectations and little know-how. The surviving members of the original ASFO (Jerry Page

and Jerry Burge) wanted nothing whatsoever to do with the new organization. Furthermore, there was little love lost between comic fans and science fiction fans at that time. Comic fandom was really in its infancy and generally rejected any connection with science fiction. Comic fans of that time were really horrified at the suggestion that Superman could have any relation to *Gladiator* (Hugo Danner) by Phillip Wylie. This antagonism between the fandoms was aggravated by the generally snobbish attitude of the SF fans, who generally patronized the comics fans (who were usually the younger of the two). This led to a lot of bad blood; caught in the middle were the serious students of fantasy, interested in the craft of the comic artists and the style of the new science fiction writers.

The situation in local Atlanta fandom was by no means unique. These were desperate times for both the literary and the comic industry. New Wave speculative fiction was splintering the sf field, and the controversy was volatile and monolithic. The "silver age" of comics was only at this time (1968 to 1971) attaining momentum. Also, the political climate of the country was explosive. These were mean times of bizarre transfigurations. If you didn't live them, you couldn't conceive such widespread conflagrations. Therefore, discord among the militants in fandom was not really unusual—it was inevitable.

The Agacon project was the most grandiose ever attempted by the fledgling organization. The project was also a final reunification of the splintered fandoms as comic dealers and art shows highlighted the con. If I delete anyone's name from the con staff, it's because of my bad memory and I apolo-



gize, for I was personally extremely proud and grateful for the efforts of everybody involved. They were a hard-working and enthusiastic crew.

There were a few problems...

The convoy to Knoxville consisted of at least two cars: Joe Celko and myself in his pickup truck, and Steve Hughes, Mark Levettan, and several other fans in another car. Immediately, Celko wrecked the truck while making a U-turn on Peachtree St. I was knocked out of the vehicle, bouncing soundly on my backside into traffic (a most exhilarating experience!). We regrouped shortly and made an uneventful trek to Knoxville, where many misadventures awaited us.

In Knoxville, we outvoted Pensacola and won the DSC bid (much to our surprise). In celebrating, someone--either a fan or an international terrorist staying at the hotel, dyed the swimming pool the hue of a fine burgundy wine. The hotel saw no humor in it at all. I can still remember Janie Lamb (secretary of the N3F and the Knoxville chairperson) incensed at the hotel management's accusation of our participation in the misdeed, emphatically declaring, "SF fans are above vandalous behavior such as this! They just don't do things like that!" Later, she confided to me that she was greatly relieved that none of us confessed!

After Knoxville, we all escaped to Atlanta and began to scheme.

There was a great opportunity that year for a major event. The Worldcon was to be held in Heidelberg, Germany, stranding many congoers stateside with nowhere to go. We contacted Al Nourse, an sf writer who owned a travel agency on the west coast, and told him of our plans to hold a major sf con in Atlanta one week before the Worldcon in Germany. He was cooperative and we were able to get Canadians and West Coast fans into Atlanta who would not have come otherwise.

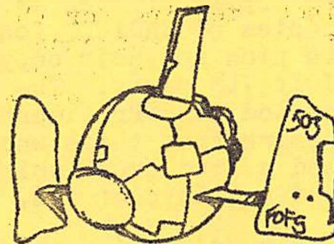
After making a commitment to having a large con, we had to have a good program. We chose Sam Moskowitz, probably the most knowledgeable of the SF historians, as the Guest of Honor. He had just published *Under The Moons of Mars*, a critique and anthology of Burroughs and his contemporaries. He was delighted to attend. The MC was Richard C. Meredith, a young sf writer who was at that time burning up the market with his first two novels, *The Sky is Full of Ships* & *We All Died at Breakaway Station*. Also among the guests were John J. Pierce, future editor of *Galaxy*; Andy Offutt, future president of the SFWA; Joe Green, author of *Loafers of Refuge*; and several others. Jeff Jones, who was unable to attend, sent an art exhibit. Some of the Agacon

Some of the Agacon 70 staff members were Joe Celko, John Ulrich, Mark Levettan, Al Greenfield, and Ruth Emory. We produced an off-set magazine of professional quality, a film program (featuring *Things to Come*, 1984, *The*

Time Machine, & *Forbidden Planet*), several panel discussions, two huckster rooms, and we filled the Howell House Hotel.

The attendance was somewhat difficult to estimate. We had a lot of gate crashers and last minute registrants, so the figures ranged from 200 to 400 guests, depending on when you looked--definitely over 200, though. That's not much by today's standards, but remember--the preceding Atlanta convention attendance was 25. I'm afraid I don't remember much of the program, because I spent most of my time rushing around, trying to coordinate everything.

There were other problems. Celko was late with the program book (our underground printer worked usin between the Lesbian Liberation Party and Hippies Against the War in Nam movement). Somebody almost shot Hank Reinhardt (one of the original ASFO members) in a stairwell by accident, when he came with all his knives, swords, bludgeons, and assorted armor. Then, when everything seemed to be running well, the lights went out...



It was a general power failure in the entire hotel and the hotel management came to us, the Agacon staff, requesting our aid to prevent a panic among the hotel guests (not all of whom were SF fans). We were highly complimented that a bunch of teenage reactionaries were given this serious responsibility by none other than the establishment itself!

Even with the incredible problems which flawed the actual convention, it was an overall success. The con reports of the time were favorable, if not enthusiastic, and as time goes on, it continues to fill a place among my happier memories of fandom.

But, in spite of my obviously prejudiced view of events, one thing remains undisputed: Agacon 70 proved that Atlanta could support large shows. It paved the way for future cons such as the Comics and Fantasy Fair (2000 to 300 attendees and the 78 DSC (730 attendees). Because of this beginning, Atlanta has become more of an important city in fandom, drawing guests such as Stan Lee, Robert Bloch, Jack Davis, Gil Kane, Michael Whelan, Jeff Jones, Bernie Wrightson, Jack Williamson, Jim Steranko, Gil Kane, etc.) Without detracting from the herculian efforts of my successors, I can pride myself and my associates at ASFO 2 in the knowledge that we paved the way. The small, smoke-filled room of the old deep South Conference is now a dinosaur--gone forever in favor of the major regional convention. A good change, I say!

MINUTES & MONEY

IRIS BROWN, SEC-TREAS

The July 18th meeting of the Atlanta Science Fiction club began with a pronouncement by Angela Howell, our prez, that the business meeting would start immediately, and that Hearts and D&D should not take place during the business meeting. It was pointed out that everyone's presence at the business meeting was a "good" thing, as it would save everyone the trouble of having to re-hash the business meeting for the benefit of those not in attendance. It was also said that games during the programming didn't really bother anyone.

Angela went on to point out that copies of "Strange Punch", a sort of hoax-zine by Ward Batty and Cliff Biggers were available, as well as extra copies of ATARANTES 49 for those who missed getting one, and copies of ATAR 49.5. Also, there were copies of RADIUS² for those who failed to pick up their copy at ABC Con or the July 4th party. The mention of ABC Con caused Vice-President Cliff Biggers to remark that those who missed the con missed a fine event which was well-organized and lots of fun.

The Co-ordinator of Programmin, Dann Littlejohn, announced that he had hopes of organizing a writers' workshop for next month or so, and also wanted some input on the idea of reviewing either SUPERMAN II or RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, or both. Members were urged to let him know what they thought.

Another announcement came from Ward Batty, who told the club that he and Cliff were organizing a "Fanzine Forum". Anyone interested should contact them.

Our next announcement came from Ron Butler and was concerned with the Space: 1999 Con to be held August 7-9, at the Atlanta Airport Inn. Ron said it was intended as a relaxicon, at least so far as the atmosphere goes, and said proceeds were to be donated to charity. Memberships are \$18 at the door for three days, and \$6 for one day. A dealers' room, a video room, a war-gaming room and movies were promised.

Brad Linaweaver had some good news and some bad news for us all. It seems that AMAZING has cancelled its free-lance department in order to put their time, and money into other areas. So Brad had 50 copies of the Space Shuttle article he and Avery had done. On the other hand, Brad has sold "Moon of Ice" to AMAZING, the contract has been signed, and presumably, that's where the money for the free-

lance department went. Brad did not seem to be very distressed over the way things had turned out. Avery Davis could not be reached for comments.

Cliff Biggers announced that RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK would be available through a store in Rome beginning August 15th.

Sec/Treas Iris Brown asked that any visitors present please help her out by giving her their names and addresses after the business meeting. This would ensure that they'd get a copy of the next ATAR and would have info on the next meeting. After being prompted by Randy Satterfield, she also announced tentative plans for a Half-a-con to be held in Rome, perhaps the first weekend in December, to be co-chaired by Randy. Iris and Randy will let everyone know when plans are firmed up, provided things work out and the creek don't rise.

In other convention news, Marilyn White of the Atlanta Comics and Fantasy Fair had bad news. Richard Matheson would not be attending, nor would Al Williamson. However, Mike Jittlov, the wizard of speed and time, would be in attendance, and would give a special presentation after the costume contest Saturday night. Also planned would be an SF writers' panel, to include Jerry Page, Michael Whelan, and Brad Linaweaver.

Sue Phillips announced that she and Mike had room for a rider to RIVERCON, and said they'd be leaving Friday at noon.

Our last announcement came from Randy Satterfield, who said there was indeed an Atlanta Worldcon Bid for '86 being organized. Anyone interested should ask questions of Randy after the business meeting or at the pizza place.

Bob Jarrell then moved to adjourn the meeting, since it was obvious everyone was eager to see THE BLOB. Ron Zukowski seconded the motion, and the meeting was over at 8:30.

Beginning balance: \$416.30

Expenses:

Atarantes 49	38.80	
Drinks & munchies	20.65	59.45
		<u>356.85</u>

Income:

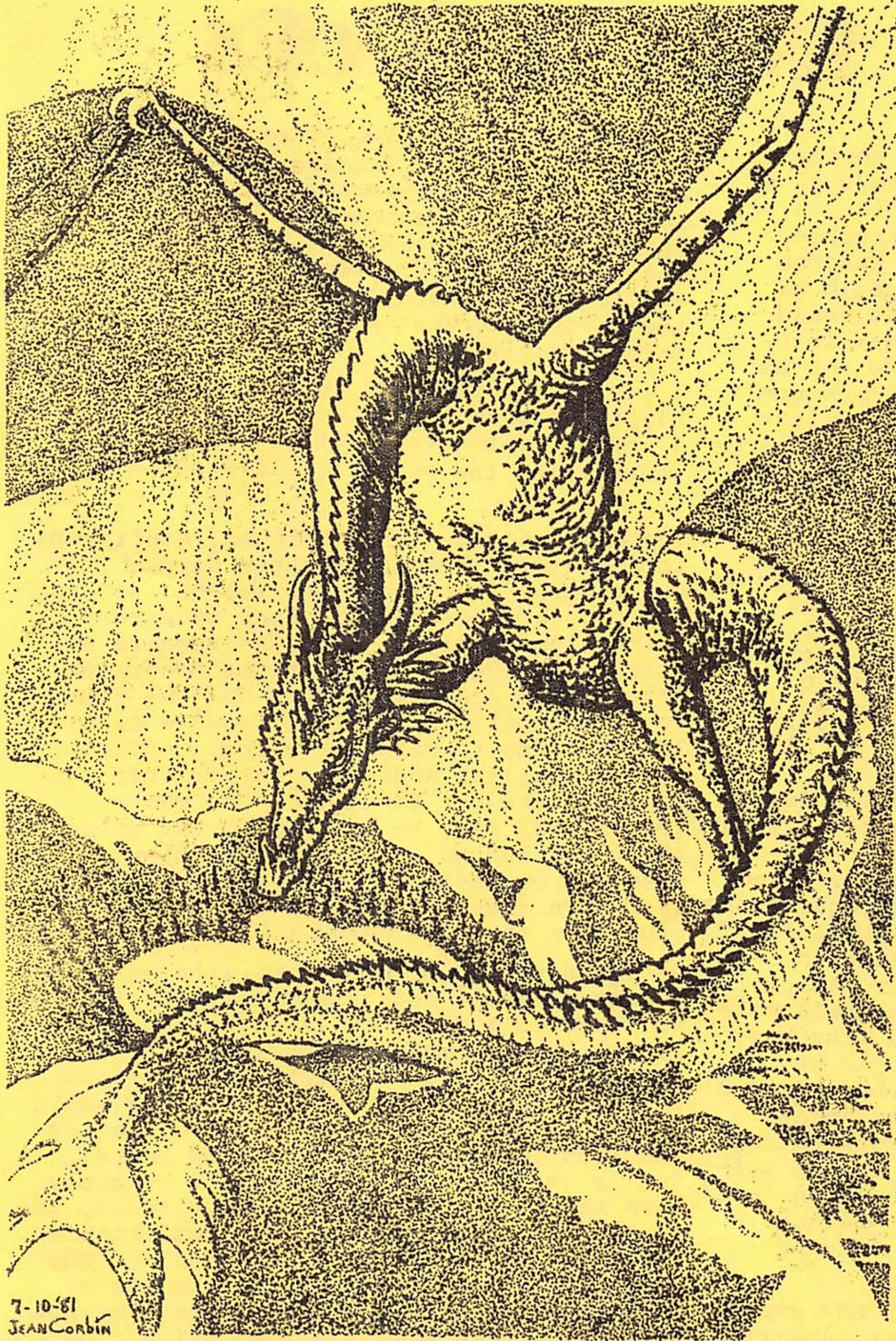
Dues	31.00	
Donations	.18	31.18

New balance: \$388.03

A warm welcome to these new members:

Lawrence Krone	Jeff Payne
Box 450067	Rt. 2, Box 156
Atlanta, GA 30345	Bowdon, GA 30108

THINKING ABOUT DRAGONS

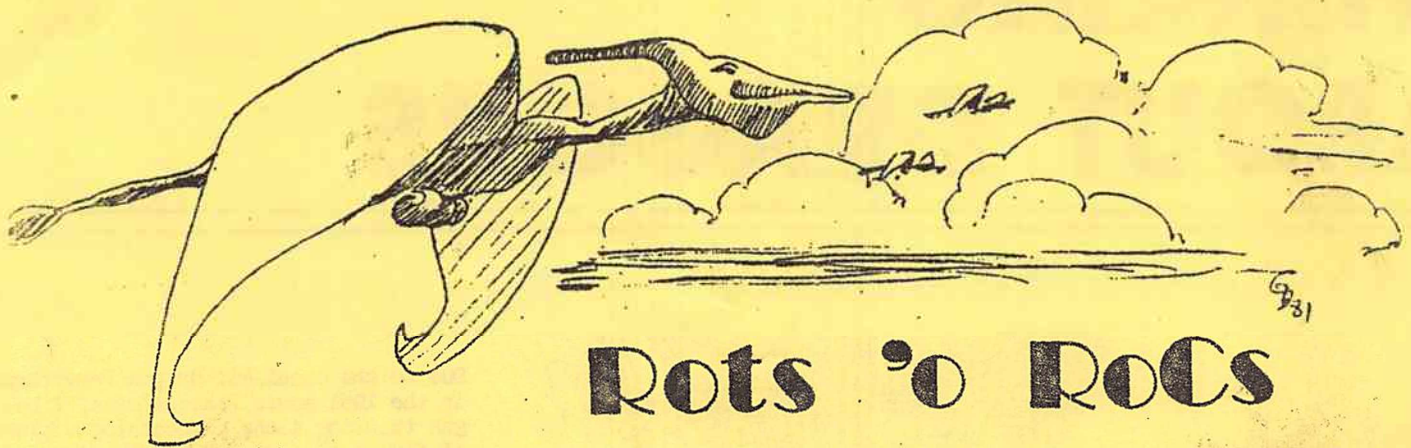


Due to the excellent dragon Vermithrax in the 1981 movie *Dragonslayer*, I began thinking along paleontologic lines of flying lizards. Following is a smatter concerning the real "winged dragons." Today we have only the poorer relatives.

The well known Monitor Lizard—Komodo Dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) easily reaches 11 feet in length. The E. Indies and S. Asian genus *Draco* has numerous small brightly colored arboreal lizards that have the hind ribs on each side prolonged and covered with a web of skin. But several eons ago...

The largest winged reptile to date weighed 168 kg., had a 20 m. wingspan with approximately 15 sq. meters air-space. Theoretically, it flew at 30 mph. In our recent past, it was popularly thought to be a glider; that is, it would climb a cliff or plateau and jump into a fair wind. The more modern view is to the impracticality of glider-flight problems—bushes, sharp rocks and other obstacles would make the climb difficult. The more likely lift-off resembled the large birds of today: running along the ground to eventually get off the ground with accompanying wing-flapping. Other scientists have speculated and experimented with models in wind-tunnels, and have concluded that the atmosphere then had to be 1½ to 2 times as thick as today's. With present conditions, these flying lizards could not fly, for the stress would be too great on its muscle tissue to get it airborne. Thus, a denser atmosphere is needed to give lift and less stress on wing muscles. It's generally agreed that the temperature was 14°C more than present daytime temperatures, resulting in a denser air mass. Theories are numerous and diverse concerning the disappearance of this excess air, but all agree that whatever caused it (meteor bombardments, normal millenium atmospheric evaporation, etc.) resulted in the extinction of these real relatives of the mythical dragons.

JEAN CORBIN



Rots 'o RoCs

Harry Warner
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, MD 21740

I've been wondering
in these days of a
postal strike threat
how much trouble a

lengthy postal strike would cause fandom. Fanzine fandom seems on the surface to be the most obvious type of fanac that would be destroyed for the duration. But if the strike should drag on for weeks and months, I suspect that the most serious damage would be done to cons. Getting necessary information to a thousand or so members of a large regional con during a mail strike would be almost impossible. Some limited fanzine fandom activity could continue with the use of UPS. But con preparations would become very difficult if the mail strike began just before reservation cards went out, or if some emergency forced a change in hotel or dates for an imminent con while the strike was in progress. All things considered, fandom probably needs to get started on that network of computer communications the fans have been speculating about.

I appreciate the kind words about the interview with me in *Harmonic Dissonance*. I think it's my first spoken contribution to a fanzine. Poor Irvin Koch looked sort of dazed at the brevity of my answers to his questions, but I'm not much of a talker. Maybe it's partly the result of all these years in journalism. Despite the way a few famous interviewers on network television talk more than the people being interviewed, the best way to get information out of people is to listen rather than talk, to get them started and then shut up until the flow of words dries up. One sentence in "The Oscillating Fan" should find its way into a lot of collections of startling extracts from fanzines: "The comparison between fans who masturbate and people who die in heat waves is especially weak."

Sue Phillips might feel better if she knew that some of us, like me, exhibit juvenility in their opinions late in life to a greater extent than when we were young. Long ago, I used to consider anything that merely entertained me as a proper topic for contempt, and I used up scandalous amounts of time reading and listening to things because they had a reputation for being learned or

significant. Now I've gotten over that. I love Laveane and Shirley, for instance, and watch it in preference to cultural and intellectual outpourings on PBS. (I also think Laveane and Shirley will experience the same rediscovery about forty years in the future that Charlie Chaplin and Laurel and Hardy underwent after they had stopped being creative.)

I feel much as you do, Cliff, about the way mimeographs and fans are so compatible. But I wonder if the trend of the times isn't ominous for the mimeo's future in fandom.

Too many people, fans included, don't want to do things themselves these days. They buy cameras that focus themselves, select the proper exposure, and even advance the film automatically. All VCRs require no attention to getting the right recording level, like audio recorders do--the VCRs do it automatically. Some fanzine publishers like to maintain a computerized list of mailing addresses rather than typing lists out manually. How much longer will fans be willing to cut stencils, throw ink around, smooth wrinkles out of stencils on the drum, and adjust the paper feed when they can press a button on a copiers or take the pages to an offset shop?

On the question of one's age when entering fandom: I would think that the individual who becomes a fan when 14 years old or younger would, more likely than not, be interested mainly in graphic rather than written forms of sf and fantasy, and would have a tendency to switch to more reading and less looking in the next few years. Such a switch in interests would probably have an unsettling effect on his fanac, the people in fandom he felt most comfortable with, the way older fans regard him. The person who is on the verge of his 20s or older when he discovers fandom is less apt to be forced to make the transition from *Star Trek*, *Star Wars*, and comic books to paperback novels and prozines during his first years in fandom. Yes, I know a lot of neofans not yet in their teens are wild about novels and some veteran fans approaching middle age are interested in nothing but Captain Marvel.

Again, I liked the cover without understanding it too well. I thought at first it was Venus and Cupid encountering a prozine character, but whatever the significance, it isn't far from the level of Virgil Finlay in quality.

George "Lan" Laskowski
47 Valley Way
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013

The cover that
Steven Fox did
for #48 was
nice. Now,

if someone would write a story to go with it.

Ralph Roberts' "Sci Fi or Not Sci Fi" was one of the more humorous pieces along those lines that I've seen. I still maintain that it doesn't matter which term is used to designate SF, so long as it is bought, and read, and discussed among people. True, I do cringe when someone says "sci-fi," but I think it's because I've been among fan who also do so for too long.

Robert Runte's mind boggles at Sue Phillips' claim to have attended 56 cons in 8 years? I did that in less than 4, if memory serves me correctly. I usually go to cons on the average of at least one a month, but it usually comes closer to 14-15 cons a year.

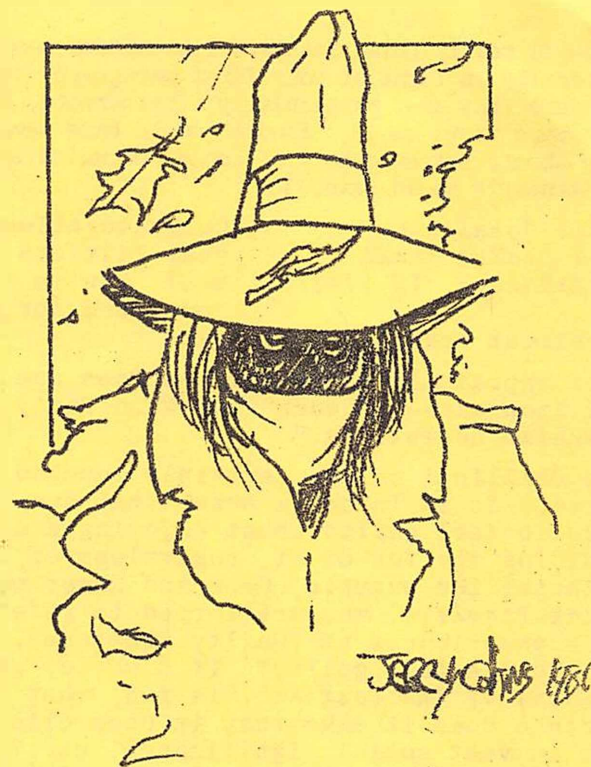
25% of the cons I attend are "relaxicons" --which means no programming, small huckster's room, usually no art show. "But what do you do for that weekend if there's no programming?" a neo once asked me. She found out, and has liked relaxicons (and the smaller regionals) ever since. The concom should at least have its act together enough so that the neo, or non-regular con-goer, has enough to keep him/her occupied. The tru-confan doesn't need anything more than a place to get together and a well-stocked con suite.

"Kudzu" was fun reading. Have you heard of the filksinging school? It was begun by Barry Manilow and Rod McKuen, and takes perfectly good classical guitar players and turns them into a three-chord strummer in a matter of weeks...

Like you, Cliff, I'm a teacher. I also use ditto, but am extremely competent with it; I rarely get the purple carbon on my hands any more. Some of my colleagues, though...my first three fanzines were ditto (or was that the first two?), but my copycount is too high for the masters to last. I worked with mimeo a little, and disliked it immensely. I'll stick with offset press; it may cost more, but I like the way it looks.

You and Jim Gilpatrick have the right idea on locs: edit the hell out of them.

I entered fandom when I was 27. I've been in for some time now, and have made some good friends in the interim. I have, at times, felt somewhat "cheated" at not having found fandom earlier, but I don't think I would want to change the way things have worked out for me. My stay in this



crazy real/unreal world of fans and zines and cons has been lots of fun. I'm taking up permanent residence here!

Mary Aileen Buss
1779 Ridgewood Dr.
Atlanta GA 30307

About fans who entered
fandom as adults vs.
fans who entered as
teens: I don't know

what kind of weirdo fan I'll be in ten or fifteen years, but I think that I--and many of my fellow teen-age fans--am already far more mature than some/many of the "adult" fans I know. Age is not an adequate measure of maturity. Neither is cynicism. As Sue points out in her last "Calabans and Thrax", a certain juvenility is not necessarily bad. Fans are primarily enthusiasts--"fanatics," if you will--and too much cynicism can/will destroy the attraction of fandom.

((I fear you're falling into the too-easy trap of stereotyping, Mary Aileen; I see no more enthusiasm in younger fans than I see in older fans, and I see cynicism as rife in teen-age fans as it is in those who've been around for years. As you say, age is not an adequate measure of maturity, but I'm curious: is there really that much age discrimination in fandom? I don't see it; instead, I see a greater tendency to discriminate on the basis of what type of fan you are--media, Star Trek, Star Wars, etc.--by those who have negative opinions of that subject.))

"Did SF give rise to fandom or did fandom give rise to fandom?" Both. SF is the excuse (and a very good one) for fandom in its present form, but if no more SF were ever written, fandom would still continue. Fandom, once started, hangs together because of the mutual attraction of like-minded people. Even if no SF had ever been written, something akin to fandom would exist anyway. Something would be needed to fill the gap.

((Do you really think fans are like-minded people, especially in light of your first paragraph? I'm not sure they are, particularly; furthermore, I think that were there no SF, "fandom" would have never come about, but some sort of social organization or structure would have.))

Janis Johnson
1017 Elaine Trail
Chattanooga, TN 37421

Congratulations on your fiftieth issue! You're to be commended for your excellent work over the years.

Your appraisals of recent fanzines are fair and accurate--an "ouch" for Ward Batty's "Fakefan Adventures."

Sue Phillips' column certainly touched a nerve. It is indeed a shame that one is made to feel guilty about enjoying a movie just for the fun of it, regardless of flaws. Witness, for example, Gene and Roger on PBS' *Sneak Previews*, who are forced to refer to such experiences as "Guilty Pleasures." Why should one feel guilty? If a movie, such as *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, is fun, what difference does it make that it uses cliches, has no vast social significance, etc.?

Speaking of having fun, I, too, tend to associate with fen who like to have fun, exchange ideas, and be friendly--I have had too many bad experiences with the power-hungry types. A sense of humor is vital to any good relationship. I wish more Chattanooga fen would realize this; although I found your issue of *Strange Punch* to be light-hearted and humorous, a large number of CSFA members felt otherwise. But then, I've never had any trouble being able to laugh at a friendly joke at myself...

I must take issue with David Martin's loc--there are only two elected "officers" of CSFA at this moment: treasurer (me) and director of programming (David). There is no "president" of CSFA. It would indeed be nice if David were the "power structure," but this is not the case.

And editor is defined as "one who edits," and you have a perfect right to edit any material whenever necessary. Keep up the good work!

Janice Gelb
13850 Victory Blvd #111
Van Nuys, CA 91401

Needless to say, I loved Alexis Gilliland's "kosher princess" cartoon

on page three last issue. I don't know that many other Kosher Fen, so I wonder who it was based on. "Fakefan Adventures" was cruel but very funny. I wonder who it was based on!

While I agree with Sue's opinion in "Calabans and Thrax" about the ingenuousness and nonpretentious quality of *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, I have to take issue with her statement that "a certain person's opinion is just as good as anyone else's, unless it can be proved that the opinion is based on inaccuracies or misunderstandings." While I concede what I think she says at the end,

that people should decide for themselves what they do or do not like or enjoy, the fact remains that a person more versed in a given field will be able to express a more considered and comprehensive opinion on same than would a person without as much experience or knowledge. This doesn't mean that the person with the quality of "juvility" should be ignored or ridiculed, but their naive, nongrounded opinion is inherently not as valuable as the critical judgment of a person who can use knowledge and experience to draw comparisons, indicate technical flaws or accomplishments, and so on. I might ask a friend with similar cinematic tastes to mine whether s/he liked a movie and listen carefully to the opinion, but if I wanted a critical assessment, I'd ask someone whom I knew to be knowledgeable in the field.

I have to agree with Jim Gilpatrick's assessment of written fanac and con going, with the former being more enduring, although he prefers the latter. One other advantage I've noticed (but not really experienced to any great degree since I started apahacking and congoing at about the same time and about the same level) is that written fanac precedes you at a convention: if you pub a genzine or an apazine in an apa with a lot of people you don't know, people will be curious and hunt you up to meet you when you do go to a con. The same holds true for the fan pubber's audience: s/he may be curious to meet the person from whom s/he's been receiving locs and/or artwork.

Randy Satterfield
515 Holt Road
Marietta GA 30067

Congratulations on #50! It's no small feat considering the amount of work that goes into each issue. If you keep it up until #100, I'll personally present you with a gold-colored watch.

About last month's meeting: a lot of people voted to rent *The Blob* for last month's meeting at a \$40 cost, but the attendance was far less than the number who voted to have a film initially. If so few people wanted to watch the film, wouldn't it be better to save the money and show a videotape?

I hope many *Atarantes* readers will offer help and advice on the 86 Worldcon bid!

Eva Chalker Whitley
4704 Warner
Manchester, MD 21102

Faans seem to have gone gaa-gaa over *Raiders*, which was enjoyable, but utterly predictable. Given a choice between a tape of *Raiders* or *Cousin, Cousine*, I'd choose the latter. (As a sidenote to movies, I find that as we accumulate tapes, it becomes increasingly difficult for me to watch movies in theatres with all the jerks who talk incessantly, don't laugh at the funny parts, etc. Not to mention having to pee in the middle and not being able to shut the damn movie off.) I think part of my dissatisfaction arises from the realization that Lucasfilm may have screwed us out of selling the film rights to the Mid-

night series. ((My curiosity is duely aroused—how did this come about? Details, details!))

Last year, Jack and I went to 17 conventions and when we totalled up the bill at the end of the year, we realized we could have bought a lot of nice things (like a T-bill) at the end of the year. And going to cons killed my fanzine. We're cutting way back--having a baby due Dec. 20 helps a lot.

Jim's comment on con-fans being less well-known is true. It's shocking that it took so long for Bruce Pelz to be a Worldcon GoH, and if Iggy wanted an Ohio fan to be GoH, they really should have asked Lou Tabakow instead of Bill Bowers.

Marty Cantor's belief that a permanent Worldcon committee would present screw-ups like Denver is sadly misinformed. What if that permanent committee decided to follow a bad policy for all Worldcons? To my mind, the way to prevent another Denver is to eliminate the idiot Worldcon site rotation so the Worldcon isn't automatically given to the west every three years. We let non-North Americans bid any year they want--why not the rest of us?

((Unlike Cliff, I'm civilized and wait 'til the end of the LoC to respond. I think that by watching the bulk of your film at home (via videotape) you are missing out on some of the better aspects of films. Films are an experience, preferably a shared group one. When I'm in a dark theatre, with my popcorn and coke, before a large screen I'm mentally ready for film-viewing. Many movies, especially comedies which demand a large audience lose their vitality on tee vee. It's no fun to laugh alone. Video tapes are a fine substitute for network television, not real movies in the proper environment. You're missing a lot, staying home, Eva. As for the audiences, you are right. Because of tee vee many people do not know how to behave at movies. But I can't be convinced that one can get the same thrills from a small screen in a living room. --WB))

David Palter
1811 Tamarind Av #22
Hollywood CA 90028

I have a few remarks
in reply to your own
reply to my last loc.
I imagine that it must

be true, as you say, that there are some people in fandom who never read SF, although this is an incongruous situation as I see it. And absolutely, there is no doubt that if no more SF were published for ten years, fandom would still exist. That does not really suggest that SF is not essential to fandom, as much as that fandom can derive its impetus as easily from old SF as from current SF. Considerable nostalgia would undoubtedly exist about the "good old days" when SF was still being published, and the SF novels and stories of old would be treasured. Actually, the hiatus in publishing would be a golden opportunity for everybody to catch up on their reading. We could all devote our spare time to reading those great old SF books we've intended to read but couldn't get around to because of new releases. If SF were to cease publication tomorrow (because,

let us hypothesize, the Federal government has decided to give everyone a complete set of all federal laws and regulation so we can all become more law-abiding citizens, and this requires so much paper that none is left over for non-essential publication), there would be enough SF already in existence that I haven't already read to last me for a few years. Others, who haven't read as much as I, would have ten years worth of reading without even approaching the end of the SF output.

We might find, also, that even if SF wasn't published, some devoted authors would write and could read their new output at conventions. This could become a very big thing at cons. And, of course, records could be issued, and cassettes. Fans might accumulate huge cassette libraries...everything considered, there can be no doubt that a ten year cessation--or even a permanent halt--in SF publishing would mean neither the end of fandom nor of SF itself. I'm also reminded at this time of Fahrenheit 451...

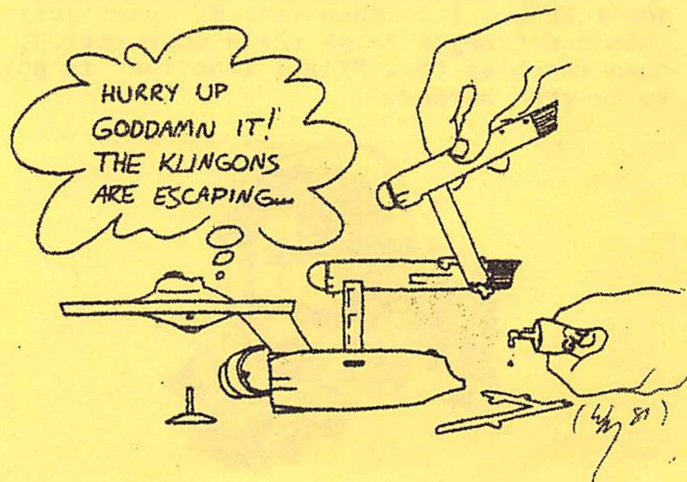
I think Harry Warner is right in his implication, in humorous terms, that something you don't want quoted is better--or safer--not said at all. An interesting thought for fandom...and you can quote me...

John Ulrich
1907 Clairmont Terr NE
Atlanta GA 30345

For months I have wanted
to write; only now have I
managed to find the time.

I was not able to attend the last meeting, and from what I have heard I missed an interesting discussion/presentation on space colonies, space travel, etc. I've also heard that some bad personal vibes went down between some of the attendees, unfortunately.

Before I address that, let me congratulate Iris Brown on the enormous success of her recent ABCcon. It was one of the most enjoyable relaxicons I've ever attended--and I've been attending cons, off and on, since 1967. I only hope that Iris turns her considerable organizational abilities to bigger projects; either working on someone else's committee, or going whole hog and throwing her own full-sized con. She certainly has the ability. (By the way, contrary to Ward's



rumor, I did *not* wear my tie while swimming. It's true that I frequently wear a tie--a bright red one--while sleeping, but never while swimming!)

Now, back to the space colony/exploration topic. To my way of thinking, any organization which actively seeks further utilization of space--an expedition to Mars, self-sustaining colonies at the L5 points, manned exploration of the planets, *anything*--is *probably* a good thing. I have been enraptured with the idea of travel to the stars since I was a child. I think virtually all sf readers share this common enthusiasm. But notice I emphasize the word "probably." I see storm clouds on the horizon, friends. Those clouds are gathering. Why?

The problem is that a plethora of space oriented groups have arisen in the past decade. Many of them cooperate with one another, putting aside any differences they may have in order to work for the common goal of seeing mankind reach for those stars. But it seems that there is, increasingly, a rivalry among many of these various groups. Very often they get the majority of their members from the young--and generally the young (I refer to under 30) do not have a tremendous amount of money to spread around. Most of the space groups I am aware of charge \$10 to \$30 a shot for a year's membership; that's big money to a high school or college student. But there are other problems as well. Many of these groups seem to have distinct philosophical attitudes toward how space should be utilized. Some want the government out of space; others want the government to take an even more expanded role in space. And so it goes.

My real fear is that the growing tendency of space groups to polarize around one particular attitude will, in the long run, result in the death of any space movement in the US. The US public seems more interested in space exploration now than at any point since the moon landing of 1969; but this interest really exists more in the form of an inchoate yearning, rather than any clear cut, easily recognizable goal toward which US space policy is heading. Perhaps the upcoming space shuttle flights will help to crystallize public opinion around such a goal--I don't know. I do know that if space activists don't begin large scale cooperation, then reaching that "final frontier" is going to be even harder.



Chris Estey
600 S. Kent St. G#45
Kennewick, WA 99336

The reviews in "The Oscillating Fan" were well-done; I thought "Fakefan Adventures"

was particularly neat. Keep it up!

"Calabans and Thranx" (love the title) made a valid point that childlikeness has nothing to do with childishness, and I'm glad to see it brought out. The difference between the two attitudes is like that of sexism and sexuality.

Harry Warner's loc, with his fannish ideas, was delightful. So was your "Kudzu," Cliff. The two made nice, gentle, upbeat fannish reading.

Steven Fox
5646 Pemberton Phila, PA 19143
Last issue's cover, by Jean Corbin, was great. I like the way the dotted stipple and the finer details showed up.

"The Oscillating Fan" was well-done; it's different to see 2 people doing a fanzine review section together--hit a few zines you disagree on. I hope to see more of these things in upcoming issues.

Barney Neufeld
1025 2nd St. NE #211
Hopkins, MN 55343
Sue Phillips is entitled to her likes and dislikes, but I fail to see why she is so surprised by fannish regionalism. That force has been a major one in American history and culture, and I for one would be surprised if it were not reflected in fandom. We should be glad that what regionalism does exist among us is not of a particularly destructive nature. It exists as just one more way of pointing out differences among fans.

Mike Rogers reminds me of something I could have pointed out to Sue also; while this is no hard and fast division, it seems true that in general fans of one region seem to have a different focus than other regions when they attend a con. Midwestern fans, for instance, are widely known for their desire to party. Eastern fans take fan politics very seriously. Southern fans are becoming known for an interest in programming and media.

((That's the first time I've ever heard of programming and media being associated with Southern fans in particular--I'm too close to know if it's really a true characteristic, but I haven't noticed it any more here than anywhere else.))

Don D'Amassa
323 Dodge St.
East Providence, RI 02914

I enjoyed the space shuttle discussion conducted by a num-

ber of people in Atarantes. A few years ago I became enmeshed in a storm of controversy because I deigned to criticize the space program in a fanzine letter column. Since it was naturally assumed that any criticism indicated I was opposed to space exploration wholesale, according to a number of people who should know better, I actually received hate mail and one physically threatening letter. So it is with some trepidation that I approach the subject at all.

The shuttle is, in my opinion, a definite improvement in the marketing of space travel. Among other things, they allowed the crew to be more human than in the past. From a PR viewpoint, this--and the fact that the shuttle represent possible clear benefits in the foreseeable future--is a positive step forward. Clearly the fact that things went so well was a big boost. But I still don't think that space efforts will continue for very long. The standard of living in this country is no longer rising. Reagan wants to spend more and more of the budget on the military, cutting back social programs.

In some areas I agree with him and on others I don't, but the point is that there is a shift now toward pulling in our borders, strengthening fortress America, reducing welfare.

Eventually there will be a counterswing of course, but that's likely to be just as bad from a space exploration point of view. Social welfarists will eventually plow money back into the liberal programs that Reagan is dismembering, or something very much like them. Like it or not, space travel is not popular either with conservatives or liberals, and I really don't expect to see more than token efforts for the rest of my lifetime.

((As I've said before, as much of a space program advocate as I am, I cannot rationally defend public subsidy of it any more than I can public subsidy of many other things that I want defeated, eliminated, or altered. There's no one who says I have to be consistent, so I can have the space program as my token exception to my general desire to have government uninvolve itself in any activity in which government involvement is not necessary or essential. I do agree with you that the program will probably hit a barebones minimum--unless the Department of Defense decides to make use of space, in which case the budget will skyrocket--no pun intended.))

I enjoyed Arthur Hlavaty's comments on the cult panel at Noreascon, particularly since I was the moderator. But I disagree strongly with you, Cliff, that the cults are personality centered. On the contrary, those we were discussing were centered on a fantasy world, be it Zeor, Amber, Darkover, or whatever. The personality of the authors is secondary, at best, to people who want to dress up in berets and uniforms and call themselves Dorsai. I'm not saying that there aren't personality cults in fandom, but that wasn't what we were talking about, and it certainly doesn't include the cos-

((I think we've hit on a case where we're each talking to one another about slightly different things, Don; the initial topic that spurred Arthur's reply was Sue's column about personality cults, so that's where I pulled the subject from in my reply. I wasn't at Noreascon, so I didn't hear the panel--sorry if I assumed it was on something slightly different than what it actually concerned.))

Gary Deindorfer
447 Bellevue Ave #98
Trenton, NJ 08618

The fanzine reviews in "The Oscillating Fan" seem competent enough, but not really

critically penetrating. Perhaps they are too enumerative--comments on one thing after another without too much of an overview. They are pretty well done, but lacking deep insights. You may ask, "What do you call a deep insight?" You have me there--I don't know.

((In retrospect, I can see what you refer to, and I tend to agree with you--we'll try a little more overview in the future. A fanzine has a "feel" that needs to be reviewed as much--if not more--than the individual contents of the one issue.))

I think I read in Mike Glycer's newszine, File 770, that Harlot has folded. I'm not sure; it may have been another Avedon Carol fanzine. It may have been a fanzine by someone else. It may not have been a fanzine, but a magazine. It may not have been a magazine, but a newspaper. It may not have been a newspaper, but a television show. I'm not doing a very accurate job of reporting this. For that matter, I have never received a fanzine from Avedon Carol... ((I can see it now: a headline reading "Glycer reports Avedon Carol folds television show!"))

I entered fandom at the age of 13 and dropped out at the age of 15. My fanac was very neoish and immature. I reentered fanzine fandom at the age of 18. My fanac was on a somewhat more sophisticated, fannish level. I made more of a mark in the pond, because I was a slightly bigger frog. Off and on, I have gaffiated from and reentered fanzine fandom a few times, each time operating at a more adult level.

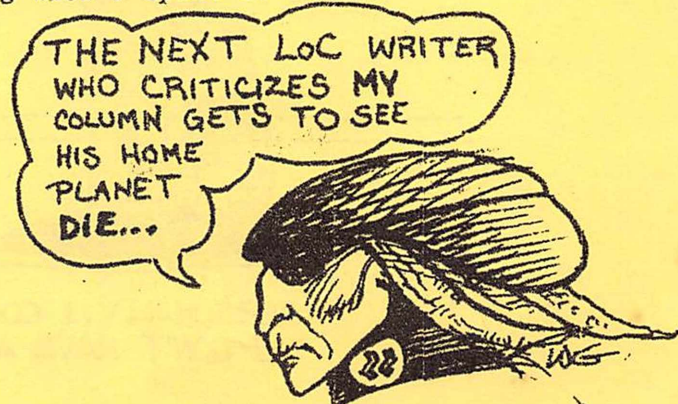
I'm sorry to hear of Janie Lamb's passing; and now we must add Ed Cagle to the list of fans who have died recently...

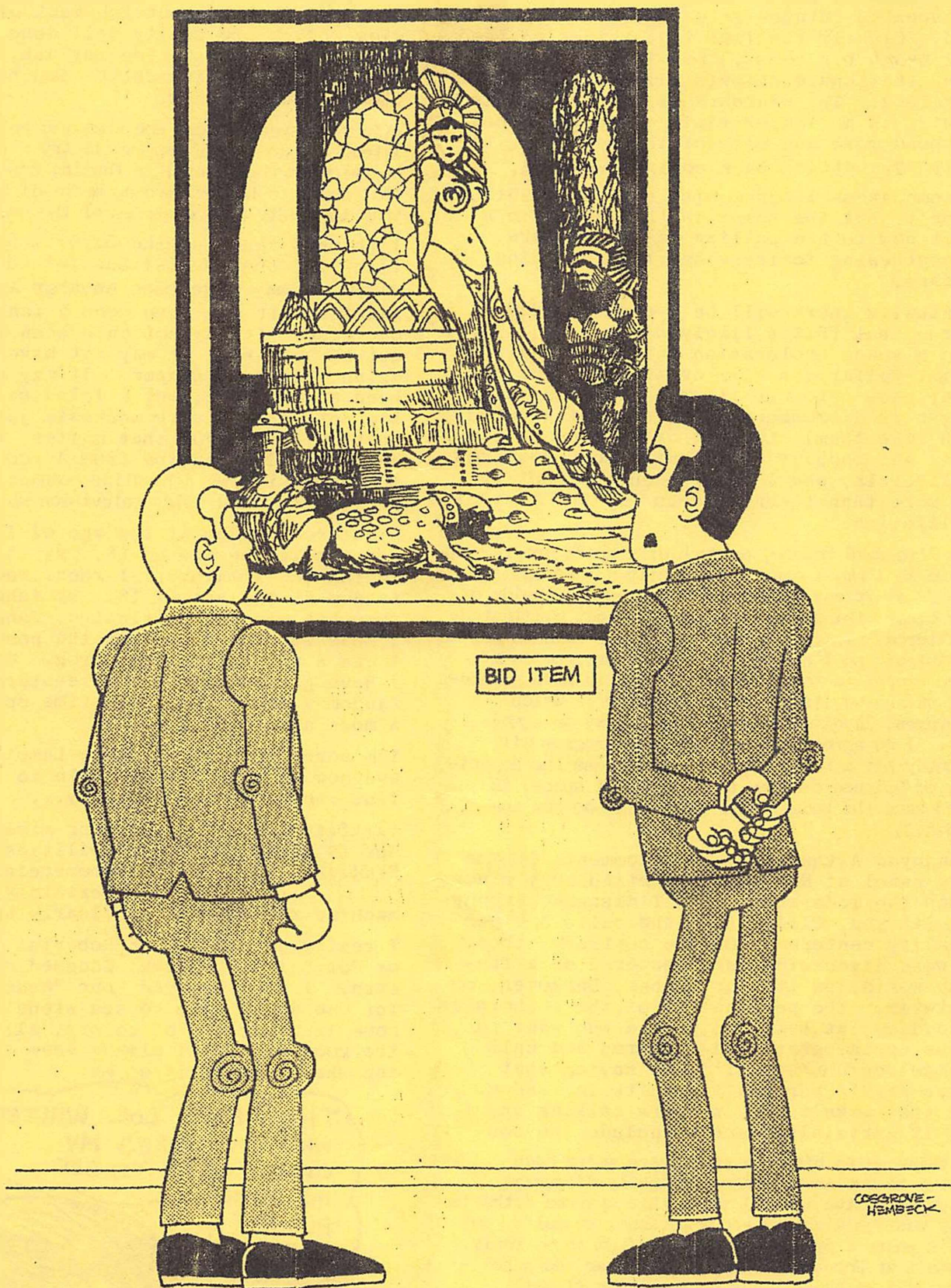
Kathleen Taylor
Box 19 SharWinn Est.
Redfield, SD 57469

Your mimeographing abilities stir my crass commercial soul. I certainly wish my machine would print so clearly and sharply.

I really enjoyed Ralph Roberts' "Sci Fi or Not Sci Fi" column; laughed out loud, even. I also enjoyed your "Kudzu," and I for one would like to see stencil cement come in a variety of colors, all to match the good blouses I always seem to be wearing when I spill it on me.

THE NEXT LOC WRITER
WHO CRITICIZES MY
COLUMN GETS TO SEE
HIS HOME
PLANET
DIE...





"PERSONALLY, I COULD NEVER OWN A FRAZETTA...
I DON'T HAVE AN ALTAR IN MY HOUSE."