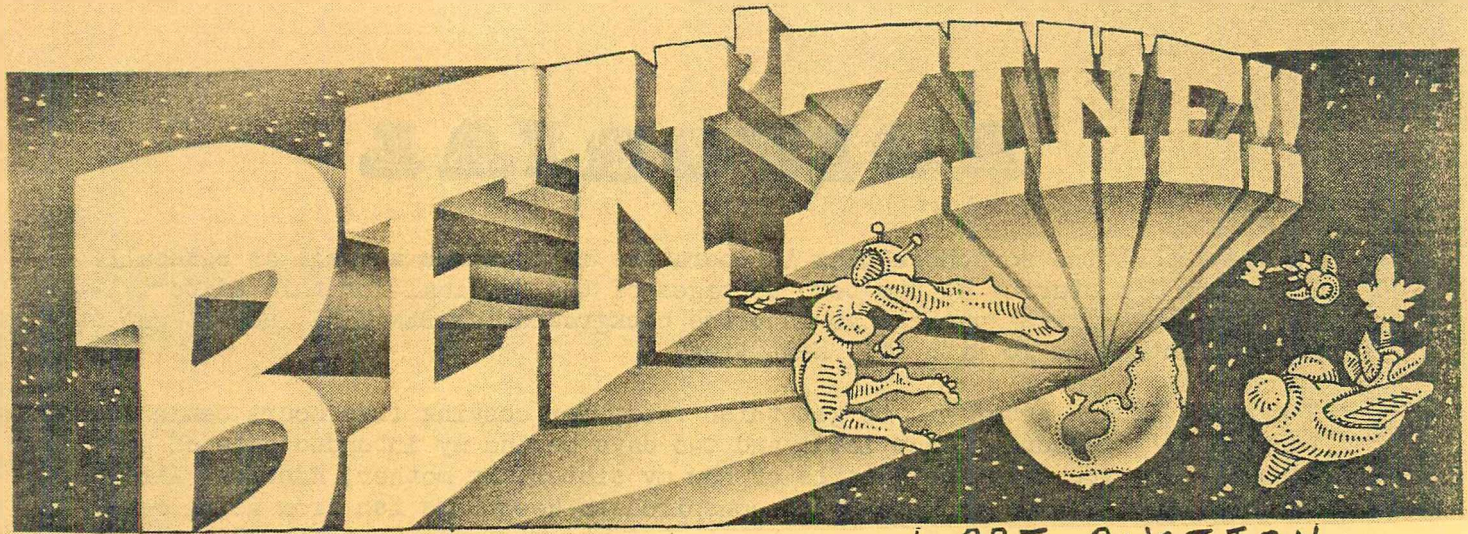


# BEN'ZINE

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of art or articles, letters of comment or trade and whim.  
Lay-out, typing, coalating, stapling by Ben Zuhl's bumbling fingers.  
Copying and Lettering by Suzy Tiffany.



# EDITORIAL

It seems that the sophomore jinx is operative in fanzines as well as baseball. Right now I'm staring at the torn up pages of the original for this editorial-- it is outdated. I was going to go into the background for BEN'ZINE, how it got started, where I intend to go with it. Next time.

I arrived in Ann Arbor Mi. to get this ready for copying five hours behind schedule (Greyhound's schedule, that is.) and two days behind my intended date of arrival. I won't bore you with the details of how my sister, my mother, American Airlines, The U.S. Post Office and Greyhound conspired to keep this ish from being ready for Midwestcon, and how I rose to heroic heights to overcome these obstacles and make my deadline. Besides I don't have enough paper to go into details. Suffice it to say that this was much more difficult to get out than #1.

Now, on to the Con. This is Part 1 of a convention on paper. In this issuse I have two panels (or two more than I usually attend at a con), a Fan Guest of Honor speech (the Pro GOH will be in next ish), an artshow, and PARTIES. Unfortunately I can't afford to give out a bottle of Beam's Choice with every issue but each ish has been specially treated so that by licking the bottom of this page you can release a swallow of Tucker's favorite onto your tongue. So when you finish reading this, lick the bottom of the page, hold your right arm up and await Tucker's signal to SMOOOOTH!! I am afraid that those of you who receive this in the mail rather than in person at Midwestcon are just going to have to fake it.

Now I'm going to make a plea ~~hllll~~ and two plugs. Are you ready? Maybe you should lick the bottom of the page a few times before I make this plea. Are you feeling good? In a generous mood? (If not please put this fanzine down and return to it at a better time.) O.K. Here Goes.

FANED DESPERATELY WANTS FANNISH FANZINES FROM THE PAST!

You can help a poor naive faned who picked up a copy of HYPHEN and read it before he found out about the addictive qualities of old fanzines. Uncut zines such as HYPHEN, CRY, VOID, A BAS, RETRIBUTION, LIGHTHOUSE, WRR wanted especially but faned IS willing to experiment. I have a limited amount of money and zines at present but I will be willing to trade either (Or a longtime sub to BEN'ZINE) for zines that will feed my habbit. HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*HELP\*

I want to go to England in 1979 so I want all of you reading this (take another lick) to VOTE FOR BRITAIN IN 1979 THIS YEAR!!!!!!!!!!!!

SUPPORT THE TUCKER TRANSFER Lets deport Tucker and do it right this time. I can think of no better present for the British than Bob Tucker (Maybe they'll like him so much they'll want to keep him. So help send Tucker abroad (not that he needs any more from what I've seen at conventions.).

LICK HERE

( ? )





OH, THE IRISH  
JOHN BERRY



©1977 BY JOHN BERRY

In June 1974, my wife and I went on a holiday to the Southern French Alps on a trip organised by French Railways. We met the other passengers at Victoria Station, London, and traveled down to Folkestone for the cross-channel boat to Calais. This was a very smooth trip, which pleased me, being an extremely poor sailor, who was not only sea-sick one day in a pond in a park in Birmingham, but I actually became ill at the sight of the opening credits of The Cruel

Sea. It was on this trip that I became convinced that the dreaded Mal de Mer is in many cases psychologically based. I have pointed out that this particular crossing of the English Channel was so smooth that even I strutted about the deck, not even having to keep in close proximity of the rails in case of having to suddenly 'throw everything up'. Yet a woman was doing just that, lying straddled across the rails, adding her precious protein to the muddy waters of the channel. I went across to speak to her husband, who was holding on to her coat tail in case she decided she'd had enough, and opined that his wife must be the world's worst sailor, having to succumb to vomiting on a journey more stable than the London Underground. He agreed, stating that she had intimated she was going to be sea-sick months previously, when the trip had been planned. However, the sight of her stomach contents dribbling away did have a salutary effect on my confidence, and I sat down in a corner for a few moments gritting my teeth and pondering on the wisdom of having eaten three bacon sandwiches before leaving the buffet at Victoria. However, the feeling of nausea did apss, and I continued my stroll across the deck realising that it was obviously all in the mind, after all.

Our train, the famous Blue Sky Express, was snorting steam impatiently at Calais railway station, which was a few yards from the jetty. Our seats had been reserved when we had booked the holiday in Belfast, and we had paid an extra fee for the privilege of having a couchette each. My wife and I were ignorant of what a couchette actually was, and didn't wish to advertise this lapse in our knowledge by making an inquiry, preferring in our modest way to await developments and intimate that we knew what it was all the time.

A stout railway porter, who, we soon found out, was assigned to the Blue Sky Express for the entire several-hundred-mile trip, showed us to our seats. The compartment was wide, with strange metal contraptions at head height, and we shared the compartment



with two Girl Guide leaders around twenty-five years old, and two young virginal guiders who were considered to be too young to be placed with other girls who were presumably too knowledgeable about things the young guiders were too innocent to be conversant with, or something like that. What made my blood pound was that, presumably, I would be sharing this compartment and the mysterious couchettes with these young blossoms of English girlhood...and it did transpire to be the nearest thing to a mobile harem, making the cost of the holiday well worth it even before the first few hours of the holiday were over.

The train let out a terrible scream of warning that it was going to infringe a lot of territory that night, and lurched forward. My wife quickly sized up the potentialities of this fifteen hour trip, and pushing my tongue back into my mouth, exchanged places with me, so that I was seated next to the window, and she intervened modestly to place herself between me and a young guider. This didn't worry me, because I had three guiders facing me, but my wife kept on pointing out the wonders of the French countryside to divert my attention from three pairs of bare limbs.

Of course, we eventually struck up a conversation with the girls, talking about holidays and things, and we had long talks about music, they were all keen on serious music, and could play instruments, and gradually, knowing that my wife was keeping an eye on me, became quite uninhibited.

We were still a considerable distance from Paris when the porter served dinner...this was an unpretentious meal, a bag of bread, cheese, butter, a tomato, a cake, and a small bottle of wine..but quite palatable. It gradually got darker, lights came on, and I could hear a lot of grunting and mumbling approaching us, and eventually the porter and his assistant burst into the compartment and muttered 'couchettes', and then proceeded to perform mystic rites by pushing in bars and levers and things and pulling them out again and rapidly transforming a roomy compartment into a crowded inferno of six couchettes, three to each wall, with eight people fighting for breath. The porter and his pop-eyed assistant, by dint of rubbing against various bodies (not mine), reached the door to the corridor and eased themselves out. We sat down again, the seats being the two bottom couchettes, bent our heads forward so as not to knock our heads against the two metal framed couchettes above, and looked at each other. The senior guider said it was ten-thirty and the two young girls should be in bed, and I said it was a good idea, that we had always sent our children to bed early, and it was a Good Thing. But no one moved. I was waiting impatiently for the girls to prepare themselves for slumber, when my wife said she would like a drink. This necessitated a long walk along the corridors to the notorious bar, which I heard people speak about in awe. I guessed we were near it when I saw two teenage English youths lying on the floor, eyes glazed, rather yellow of visage, with friends rubbing their wrists. This was taking place in a corridor about two feet wide. The odor of stale drink was terrible to smell...we stepped over the inert bodies as best we could, and reached the bar.

I mean, after all, how wide is a train carriage? The Blue Bar seemed to have developed a space-timewarp continuum...it seemed incredibly wide...with sweating but smiling couriers pouring drinks, and passing them to passengers sweating even more profusely. I ordered two coffees, and after negotiating my way through the throng to my wife, holding the cups above my head, discovered that half the contents had gone. I tried not to associate this loss of steaming black coffee with shouts and insults emanating from the pulsating mass of bodies.

We wended our way to our compartment. My wife went in first, after knocking the door loudly. I saw at once that I had been out-manoeuvred. I had anticipated occupying the bottom couchette, figuring that this would be a shrewd strategic ploy, because of course I would be underneath when the gals got out of their couchettes, or clambered up into them again. I mean, I'm only human. The erotic possibilities were boundless.

Unhappily for me, the two senior guiders were on the bottom couchettes, the two young girls in the middle ones. This left vacant the two couchettes constructed at

the summit of the carriage, necessitating a climb which I had hoped they would have presumed was too difficult for a man of my years.

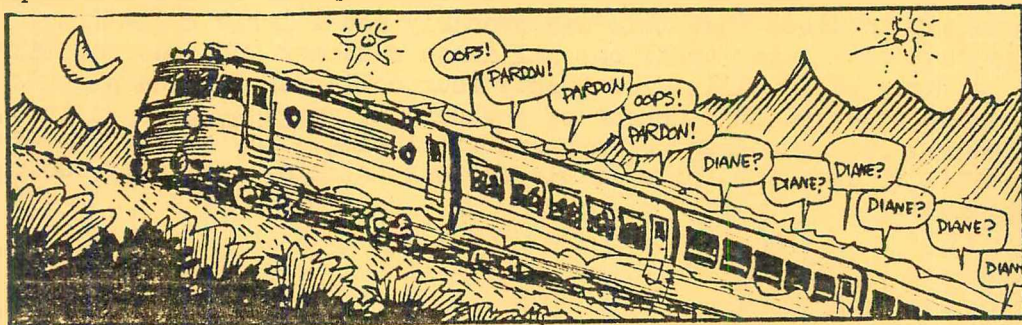
Four pairs of bewildered eyes followed our ascent of the upper couchettes. Steel ladders were affixed at the ends, near the windows. I pushed my wife on to her couchette, and saw the girls below, with the sheets clutched tightly round their throats, looking upwards. It was hot in there...and I had to carefully think out how I was going to spend the night...for example, although my feet were sweating, for that very reason I couldn't take my shoes off. I had to take my trousers off, and thought it prudent to be under the sheets whilst doing so. By the time I'd finished I realised how Houdini must have felt when he finally struggled out of the sack. I looked across at my wife, her bed covers looked as though she had a couple of ferrets in there with her. I lay in the bed and listened to the train pounding along, the lights were switched off, I could hear careful breathing all round me. I pondered over the fantastic permutations of couchette travel...who you could actually find yourself sharing a compartment with...and then I realised too late that I hadn't visited the toilet before I had retired for the night. I felt it prudent to go immediately, whilst the girls were awake...I shuddered to think what would happen if I climbed out of my couchette in the middle of the night on a urinary mission and the train rattled over a set of points and I was thrust unavoidably onto one of the inert sleepers...I'd probably get about ten years for attempted rape. So I got my trousers on again, coughed loudly, and lumbered down the ladder. I groped my way in the darkness to the door, slipped out. There was a queue outside the single toilet at the end of the corridor, and I travelled some way to find another, and, as was bound to happen, I couldn't find my compartment. I opened what I thought was my door, and whispered a seductive 'Diane?' and a rough Scots voice told me to...well, even if I'd got the strength it would have been physically impossible. It took me four tries until I got an answering 'yes' from my 'Diane?' query...my wife's name is fairly unusual, I think...I mean, I haven't met many girls named Diane, and would you believe it, there was another one next door to my own compartment. I was just about to climb up the ladder when I saw a man with a big moustache snoring on the bottom couchette. I tiptoed out, and discovered I was home next door.

They held their breathes as I climbed back into my couchette...it was still, like a monastery, and then they all breathed out again, like the hiss of compressed air. I fell asleep quickly, lulled by the motion of the express, which, true to its name, roared southwards during the long night, with nary a stop.

\* \* \* \*

I woke up and noticed a flurry of action below me. The girls were talking in whispers, but they were all dressed and were taking it in turns to wash. I looked across to my wife, and she too was awake. I asked one of the girls to pull the blind up, it was half past six in the morning, and a grey light covered the countryside. I don't look particularly good first thing in the morning, and I lurched down the ladder and to the toilet for a wash. The whole train load of passengers worked on the theory that if they got up early they would obtain unrestricted use of the washing facilities in the toilets, which were cramped, anyway. Somewhere, some lucky devil slept in that morning until fairly late, and staggered along to an empty toilet. Unfortunately, I had to wait my turn in the queue, and when I returned to the compartment the couchettes had been replaced into the walls, and breakfast was served, coffee, rolls of bread and marmalade.

The guiders got out at St. Aygulf. It was a beautiful morning, they were happy until I said I hoped we'd share a compartment on the return journey in two weeks time.





# THE SINGULAR AFFAIR of the GIANT SPAYED GERBIL OF CHAMPAIGN



by  
**MIKE GLICKSOHN**

Like bread cast upon the water or pebbles thrown into a pond the effects of the creation of contemporary legends are not always uni-valued. Ben Zuhl has reported on the genesis of the Spayed Gerbil as a part of the modern American mythology (badly, of course, but what else would one expect when someone with Ben's physical attributes gets involved in the Myth America pageant?) but the ramifications of that innocent incident of fannish foolery were wider than Ben knew. Sex, intrigue, high finance, coercion and deceit were all involved in the follow-up to Joe Haldeman's invention of the Spayed Gerbil. The whole affair almost defies campari, son.

I've always wanted to go to Chambanacon but Champaign-Urbana isn't the easiest place to fly into, November isn't the easiest time to fly anywhere, and so circumstances had kept me from what was rumored to be a Damn Fine Convention for several consecutive years. When the 1976 version of Hairy Hansen's Happy Holiday loomed on the fannish horizon, therefore, I made a solemn promise to myself that this year I'd attend, and to commit myself to such a decision, I even joined the con in advance and sent off a reservation card to the hotel. Broad mental horizons, you understand.

As well-known scottish convention fan Robbie Burns was wont to say, "the best planned lays of mice and fen gang aft agley", but, on this particular occasion they didn't. By way of a three hour, six martini sojourn a O'Hare awaiting the arrival of Peter 'Dependable' Edick I actually managed to reach Chambanacon. Impoverished, broke, impecunious, poverty-stricken, not-flush, indigent and needy, not to mention destitute, but I was finally there. The first order of business was to arrange to crash with Eric Lindsay who'd only had to come from Australia and so had more money than I did, and the remaining orders consisted mostly of Heinekens, martinis and, of course, Spayed Gerbils. Thus was passed yet another pleasantly hazy weekend in the company of some damn fine friends, good drinkers and reliable fannish historians. Ben Zuhl was also present.

About a week later, with Chambanacon and Spayed Gerbils already ensconced in the folklore of contemporary fandom, I received a letter from the Chambanacon hotel. I immediately intuited that this was probably not a large check from the President of the chain for being their one millionth customer and I was not mistaken. What it was, in fact, was a bill. For twenty four dollars. For one night's lodging I had apparently reserved in a moment of enthusiasm, guaranteed in an instant of insanity, and ignored over a weekend of drunken frolicking. And now my excess had come home to roost: it was time for a little serious thinking and fancy footwork, that much was obvious.



I could, of course, have ignored the matter entirely but such a path of action never crossed my mind. It would have been dishonest, unethical and reprehensible. Besides, they had my name and address and I just might want to stay there again some time.

I could have pretended I'd been the victim of some cruel hoax, that someone else had sent in the reservation card in my name, and indignantly refused to pay. But then they might have held Jim Hansen and the committee responsible and no trufan would deliberately get another fan into trouble. Not unless it could be done anonymously, that is. No, some clever ploy was needed to get the hotel off my back without getting any fans in trouble or having to pay the bill. The old pass-back-the-buck schtick sprang immediately to mind; I'm not Fandom's Number One Letterhack for nothing after all!

The letter I sent the manager of the hotel was a masterpiece of understanding, understatement and not-too-subtle misdirection. I wish I would have seen the expressions on the faces of those who received it! It was true, I started out by admitting, that I'd reserved and guaranteed one night at their fine hostelry but what I couldn't understand was their impression that I hadn't enjoyed their hospitality that weekend! I had spent nearly three delightful days under their roof!

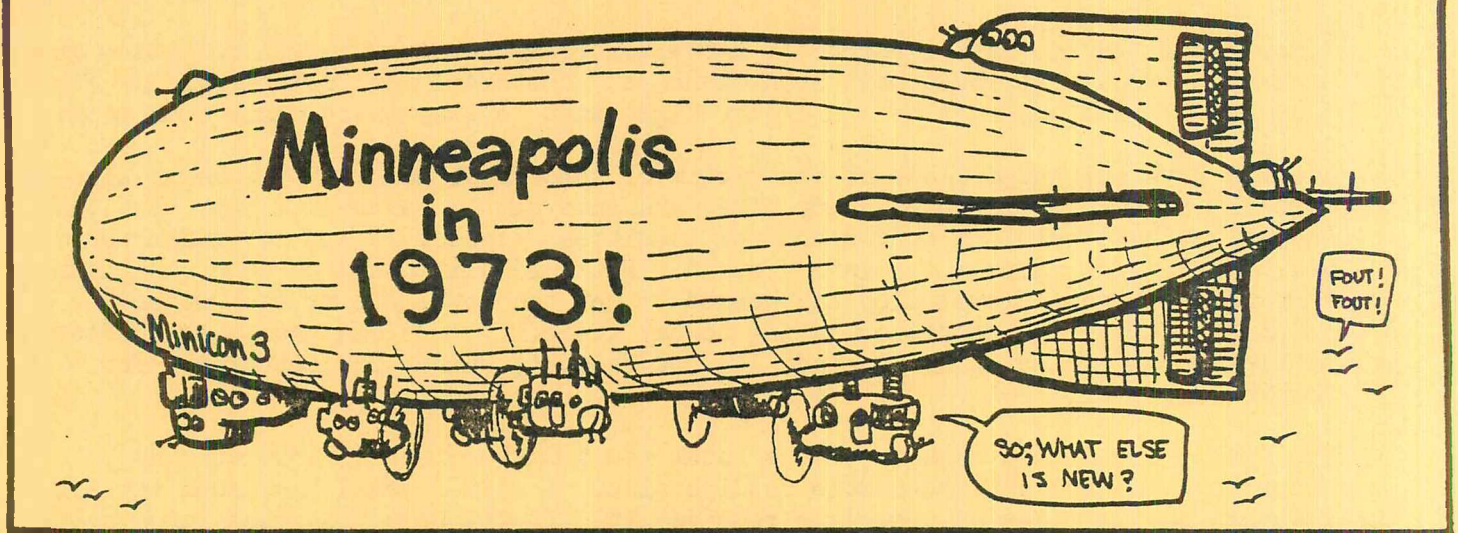
I went on to "remind" them of how I'd met a friend when I was checking in whose roommate for her double had been unable to attend the convention so we had agreed to pool our rooms for financial reasons. I was Most suprised, I continued, that the receptionist at the hotel desk had apparently failed to note the cancellation of my single as I had specifically requested be done! However, I added with ben-  
evolent condescension, I knew how hectic things could get when masses of people were checking in to a convention, how easily such errors on the part of the hotel staff could occur, and I reassured the manager that no apology on his part was necessary. I thought that was remarkably big-hearted of me under the circumstances...

I probably should have left it right there, but such delightful tiltings with the windmills of bureaucracy occur so infrequently that I simply couldn't resist one last parting shot. After reiterating that this one small mistake on the part of the hotel was already forgiven and forgotten as far as I was concerned, I went on to praise the hotel in general and suggest that I looked forward to enjoying its services and amenities for many years to come. And one thing in particular stood out in my mind and made future visits much anticipated.

The bartender in the sixth floor bar, I complimented, made the best damn Spayed Gerbil I'd found anywhere in the Midwest!







## A BIDDING PARTY

1973: A MINNEAPOLIS ODYSSEY Edited by Denny Lien

(A reprint from the June, 2073 issue of EXPOSTULATION, the journal of the combined SF Seminar of the Moderately Languid Association; Science Fiction Rerun Association; and Fourteenth Foundation)

. . . The 1970's saw, in science fiction, a plethora of theme anthologies organized around increasingly improbable postulates: science fiction stories set in 2020, stories dealing with religion or sex or business or Judaism; stories written by sf authors living in Australia or in Texas. One of the most interesting of these, heretofor inexplicably overlooked by the previous scores of writers on this very topic in this very journal, was an anthology (including contributions from a number of well-known authors, living and/or dead) containing stories featuring the well-known archetype Jerry Cornyne and set at the BozoCon--the Minneapolis in 1973 WorldCon.

This collection, 1973: A MINNEAPOLIS ODYSSEY, has a checkered publishing history and the attempt to sort out the true first edition may be forever doomed. The earliest definite reference to it occurs in the second and last issue of Ben Zuhl's 1977 fanzine, BEN'ZINE, published just before Zuhl succumbed to terminal con-lag and split himself into five parts under the delusion that he was a panel. On this occasion, it is reported as having been published in 1973 (or possibly, in keeping with the generally paradoxical nature of the bid, even earlier, with most of the stories having been written even latter). Later references to the collection occur in such unimpeachable sources as RUNE, MINNEAPA, VOOTIE, NOCRES, a Sam Moskowitz footnote, and a Lin Carter introduction. The actual book seems, unfortunately, to have vanished, and we are left only with the story excerpts as originally published in BEN'ZINE. These are reprinted below:

### THE LURKER AT THE REGISTRATION DESK

A wan and gibbous florescent light cast hellish shadows over the visages looming in front of me. Perhaps the faces had once been Aryan, but unspeakable rites and charnal delvings had clearly left their stamp upon the shattered countenances: sick pallors, unkempt hair, eyes of an abhuman tinge of reddishness...

Between me and the abominations in the strange aeroplanelike headgear there was only a long wooden table laden with strange and eldritch plastique rectangles, embedded in which were pins of a dull metal hue at whose function I could only shudderingly guess; untidy stacks of papers from which foul odors wafted their way toward me; and colorful overgarments whose surfaces depicted beasts and birds performing acts--and speaking human speech--such as no sane mind could long contemplate. With



a sickening shock, I realized that said overgarments lacked buttons!!! What this said about the bodily configurations--or dimensional travels--of the beings expected to wear them could not be gainsaid.

The creatures behind the desk spoke constantly in a language which, mercifully, I could not comprehend, though I had the uncanny feeling that they were discussing the blasphemous rites that had made them what they were:

"Aiii! Mah hed hurtz!"

"Sonly t'be eck-spek-tad; atwas wan helluva pre'con par-tee las nite..."

Gathering all my courage, I stepped directly in front of the nearest creature, proffering the green slips of paper that the adept who had survived the previous year's sabbath had assured me would vouchsafe my entrance. This ploy succeeded: the creature--speaking a human tongue only with obvious effort--took my sigil, performed arcane numerological operations upon my name, and, leeringly holding out to me a foul tome and one of the eldritch rectangles, lapsed back into its own speech: "Alwaze gladda C-ah nu fan; ho'pya enjoi th'con."

I attempted to respond in kind, but unluckily the title of the vile monograph defiling my hands at this moment impinged upon my perception, and I retreated in confusion, sickened to the quick of my being, my mind tottering, my vocal apparatus emitting involuntary shrieks.

For it was none other than that notorious opus of the Mad Minnesotans, the program book of the MINNEAPOLICON!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

\* \* \* \*

#### CORNYNEO THE CONQUEROR

The room shimmered before the gaze of Cornyneo. The long corridors, barren of all sustenance--their soda pop machines long since cleaned out by wandering tribes of con attendees: SCAfilk in their colorful attire; Burroughs Bibliophiles in their loin-cloths with acorn motif; the TrekFen with their malformed ears bespeaking a pre-human origin; the occasional despised and feared Mundane Reporter--all lay behind him. The coffee oasis, upon which he had at last stumbled, had revived his spirits, given him the strength needed to go on to the Forbidden Room of Hucksta.

A pale, sickly-skinned room dweller appeared at the door, mouthing words: "See your I.D. badge, please..." Cornyneo, instead of pointing to the I.D. badge pinned to his left bicep, swept the feeble slug aside with the swing of his mighty right arm: his victim described an arc into the midst of the room and collided with the bazaar of a dealer in four-color comic artwork, spilling Big Little Books in a polychromatic fountain as his body twitched, then lay still.

All action ceased. The Hucksta-dwellers, interrupted in the middle of their vile transactions, seemed to shrink from the brawny-muscled neo who strode into the room, dominating the weak merchants with his steely glint. A chill wind of mortality blew over them. One, braver than most, or perhaps only made more foolhearted by the flagon of blog by his side, spoke up:

"Looking for anything in particular?" Then, as if it were a signal, they were on him, and Cornyneo, swinging his great two-handed wallet from side to side, knew that his quest for the December, 1955, Galaxy would not be an easy one.



NOW WAIT FOR THE YEAR BEFORE THE YEAR PREVIOUS TO LAST YEAR'S LAST YEAR

"But it doesn't make any sense," Cornyneo insisted. "I know that Toronto put on the convention that year. Besides, it's 1977 already, so not only does this bid alter the entire framework of reality, but it does it backwards..."

And upside down and sideways. On the other hand, what is reality, and where have we heard that before?" responded Bob Ferris. "Still, The Oracle"--he gestured at the book in front of him--"says it is definitely on, and since The Oracle has never been known to be wrong, we must investigate. I know I don't have to tell you what this means"

"What does this all mean?" Cornyneo asked himself. There was no answer. Briefly, the scene in front of him flickered, and for a second he realized the illusion: he was not a Philip K. Dick character good for another 180 pages of meaningless but interesting action; he was instead only a character in a piece of lousy fan fiction who would wink out of existence within a few lines. A chill wind of mortality blew over him. "Just what does the I CHING say?"

"I CHING? That was the old oracle," scoffed Ferris as he threw the traditional Village Wok dim sum chopsticks.. "Nowadays we use bound volumes of RUNE." The sticks indicated the usual message: THIS ISSUE IS A LITTLE LATE. NO PRAISE, NO BLAME. MINNEAPOLIS IN '73!

"I'll leave at once," said Cornyneo, wondering if God was still dead.

\* \* \* \* \*



"THIS ISSUE IS A LITTLE LATE.  
NO PRAISE, NO BLAME. MINNE-  
APOLIS IN '73!"

THE BOZOCON ZEPPELIN RACE CONSIDERED  
AS A DOWNHILL ASSASSINATION OF PAR-  
ANOID FALLING ZEPPELIN PILOTS, OR,  
WHY I DON'T WANT TO FUCK J.G. MALZBERG

((Editor's note: this segment deleted  
in the interest of good taste, and  
in the firm assurance that nobody  
ever attends the program items any-  
way.))

\* \* \* \* \*

WHAT'S BECOME OF ENTREE?

or

AFTER THE RUBBER CHICKEN FELL APART

You're probably thinking we're a little inefficient here at the Andrews Hotel," said the robot cat-man as he swept the butterscotch pudding off the floor and into Cornyneo's finger bowl.

"Not at all. By the way, what happened to my previous waiter, the robot lizard-man."

He's out basking in the sun," the banquet waiter explained. "Whoops! Sorry about that; I just dropped my robot amoeba-man assistant into your Spam Casserole.

Gosh, I'm sorry, there goes your blog glass. I guess maybe we are a little inefficient, but then we've never had a real WorldCon banquet to run here before. Whoops! Gee, that's a shame; I hope the stain comes out--it looks like you're wearing Real Semi-Pseudo Imitation Fake Near-Dacron."

"That's all right, I'm on an expense account," replied Cornyneo, flicking away the bug that the robot bug-man hiding in the pudding was trying to plant on him. "By the way, when do the guest of honor speeches start?"

"Claude Degler's should be starting any minute now, and Zagat's will be right after that. Oops; goshwowoboyoboy; gee whiz; I'm sorry."

"You're overacting," said Cornyneo, brushing aside the clumsily proffered poison dart, nerve-squeezing the robot-agent into submission, and vaulting the banquet table while drawing his gun on the Zagat-clone. Unfortunately his trajectory intersected that of a robot bird-man bringing in dessert, and as the three thousand custard pies hit him full in the face, Cornyneo...

\* \* \* \*

BOZO 12404 73: A SCIENTIFICTIONAL ROMANCE OF THE YEARS TO HAVE ALREADY PASSED

"Yes," said the Wise Con Chairperson, "it is only to be expected that you, after remaining in reverse suspended animation for four years, should be awe-struck by the regress we have made in that short time."

"This may be true," responded the puzzled Cornyneo, "but this exceeds all rational expectations. Such technological innovations argue a skill little short of wizardry! For instance, these revelry rooms which are capable of moving from level to level, thus bringing the revels to the participants instead of requiring the reverse!"

"Why, there is no wizardry here," laughed the jovial Chairperson. "This is merely a sociological advance; you had such devices in your own time, though you generally made use of them only for the transport of gross matter. You called them elevators.\*"

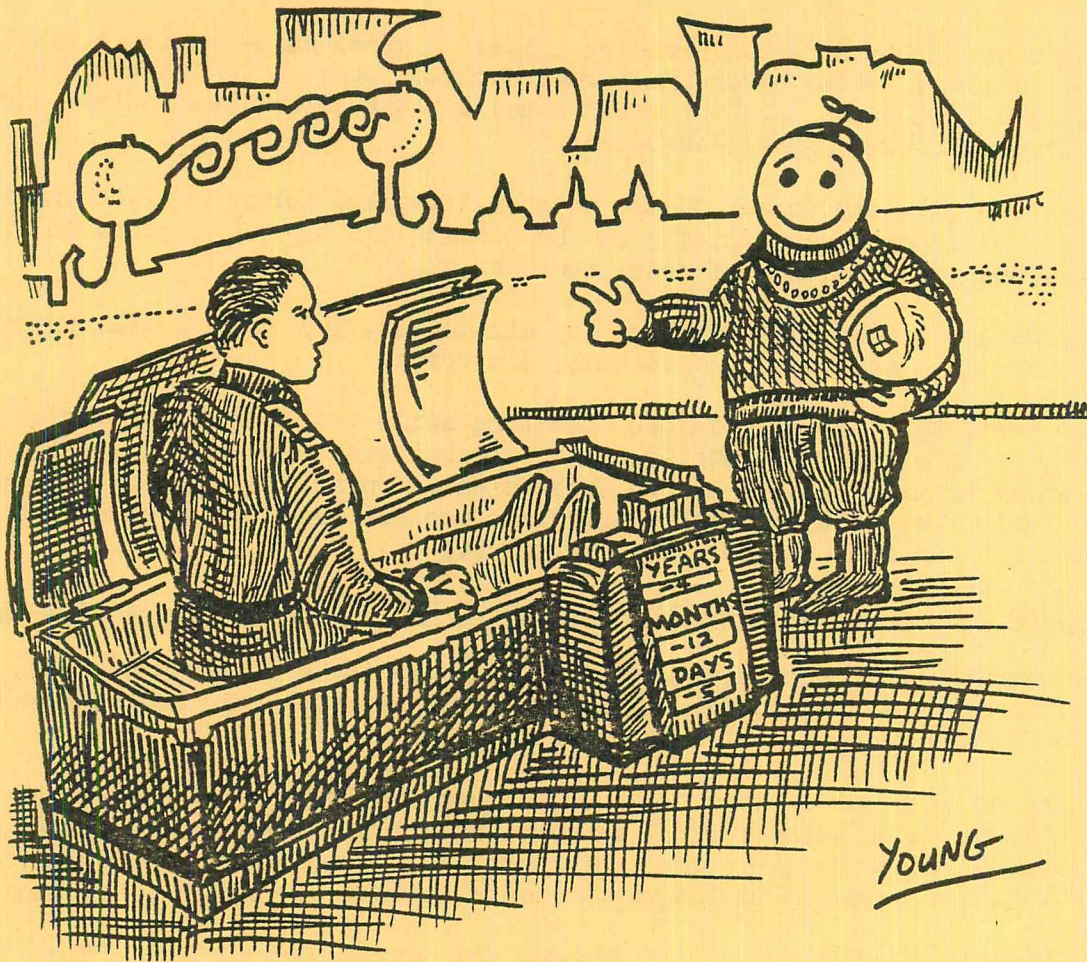
"But did not the very winning of the selection election require a massive advance?" persisted the visitor from the primitive future. "In my time, the wisest heads professed this to be but a hoax\*\*not worthy of serious attention."

"Surely that says more about the nature of your savants than about that of our conclave," came the reply. "A brief examination of our logic would have shown the most pernicious of doubters that reverse progress would bring about this utopia. And, consider our logic: our experience in bidding for the 1973 world conclaves was undoubtedly greater than that of other groups in bidding for any other single year. Sending agents to Australia secured the all-important International Date Line vote, while encouraging some of our members to pretend to move to California enabled us at the proper moment to retrospectively take over the 1971 conclave and deliver a resounding vote in favor of the Minneapolis-Winnipeg-Denver-St.Louis metropolitan area in spite of the dissident St.Paul-Toronto-Cleveland-Chicago metropolitan area bid mounted against us."

"Still," persisted Cornyneo, "you will not attempt the claim that these are not innovations of a high order." So saying, he indicated the plastic nametag pinned to his t-shirt\*\*\* "At the last conclave I attended before this, identification was provided by a primitive system requiring the immobilization of the wrist, productive of sundry allergies and outbreaks. In just four short years, you have discovered a form of identification which not only obviates these inconveniences, but provides space for the drawing thereon of funny animals!"

"Perhaps, perhaps," nodded the Chairperson. "However, we must now cease this illuminating discussion and resume a plot of sorts. It is time for the Zeppelin race videotapes to be displayed."





#### FOOTNOTES:

\* Elevators: from the fannish "to elevate," i.e., to get high.

\*\* Hoax: a fraud dismissable by laughter; a portmanteau word formed from the amalgamation of "ho-ho" and "give'em the ax".

\*\*\* T-shirt: so called because they "fit to a t," coming as they do in a variety of sizes as well as colors, and at very reasonable prices too. For further details contact... ((suppressed as unpaid-for advertising matter)).

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#### MINNEAPOLIS ALIVE: THE APOPLECTIC LIFE OF THE UNKNOWN BEAST

A chill wind of mortality blew over the Minneapolis party suite. Jerry Cornyneo stepped in, his grey eyes sweeping over the scene in front of him. It was as he had long suspected: everyone in the room was his long-lost relative. He had found his roots, and now only the nagging question remained: could he squeeze another book out of it? He stepped over a pair of snogging second cousins coppulating noisily in front of the party suite door and pushed his glass at Falstaff, who was staffing the Blog Room, with Giles Habibula and Calloway Gallagher as assistants. Refreshed, he stepped around the sercon discussion that Richard Seaton, Arcot, Wade, and Morey were having with Werner Von Braun and Willy Leym and headed for the filksinging room where Rhysling and Fred Haskell were trading off choruses of "Marsupeal Fandom." SHE was there: Black Margot, Jirel of Joiry, Helen of Troy, Cleopatra, and Sheena Queen of the Jungle trying to amuse her and failing. Her grey eyes lit up as HE entered.

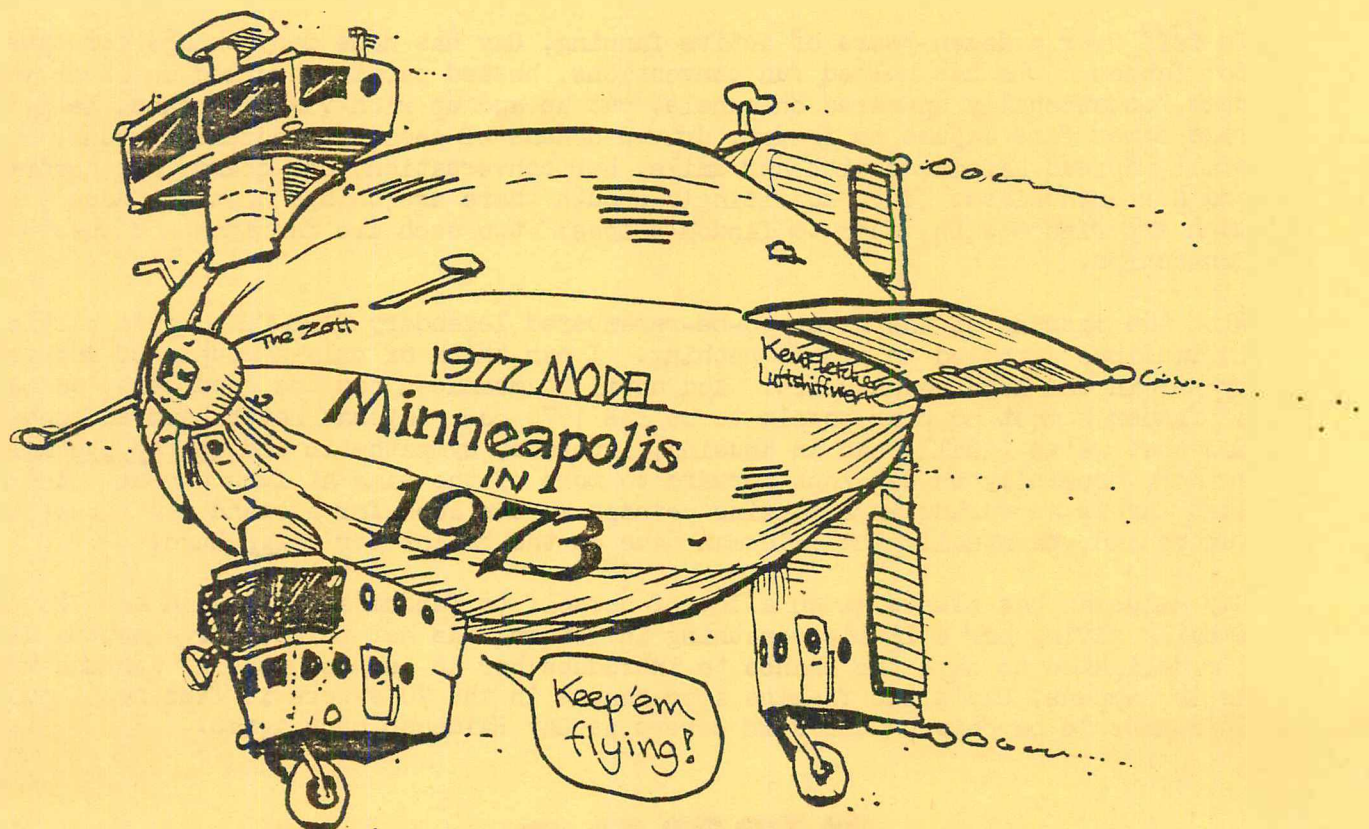


Unfortunately, at that moment, IT appeared, its un-grey eyes flashing hatred as its assistants, Coeurl, the Creature from the Black Lagoon, the Id Monster, Blacky DuQuesne, and Richard Nixon, teleported into sight and began drinking up all the Grain Belt Premium in the bathtubs, leaving only the offbrands for the party attendees. Jerry's third cousins, Hawk Carse, John Carter, Tros of Samothrace, Perry Rhodan, Captain Future, and Doc Savage, attempted to stop them and were battered into insensibility.

HE turned to HIS faithful pets, Krypto, Cecil the Sea-Serpent, Za-Bu the Saber-Tooth, Atta the Giant Ant, and the Hounds of Skaith, and commanded THEM to attack THOSE which THEY did to no avail. Meanwhile, HE attacked IT with every weapon at HIS disposal: the atomic bomb (c 1944 by Cleve Cartmill); Cat's Claw and Scalpel, a Martian fighting tripod, Dianetic Auditing, and the Cosmic Cube. At this point, IT, THEY, THEM, and THOSE making no progress against each other, HE and SHE decided to drop the archetypal family tree and turn to their other standby of sex. A chill wind of mortality blew him, and...

((At this point the manuscript breaks off; leaving unanswered several questions of extreme interest to the scholar attempting to research the otherwise scantily recorded Minneapolis in '73 world convention. For instance:

Why the Andrews Hotel (rather than, say, the Greyhound Bus Station)?  
Aren't Zagat and Degler supposed to be dead?  
And, if so, how can you tell?  
Did Toronto really exist, or is it merely legendary?  
What makes one zeppelin better than another one?  
Is God really dead, and if not, did he/she/it get a BozoCon membership?  
Why is there air?  
And what of Naomi?  
Why is the sun out during the banquet?  
Could Ben Zuhl have been saved by modern techniques of applied gafia?  
Why isn't there air?  
What is reality?





# MIKE GLICKSOHN

I first saw the Haldeman clan almost eleven years ago, at a worldcon and I first met them almost ten years ago, also at a worldcon. In the decade since then we've grown together, become older, wiser, richer and better known, to each other and to our peers, and shared a great many of life's experiences. The Haldeman family has become my family, seen more often and loved as much if not more than my biological one. You'd think, then, that after having introduced Joe as many times as Freas has Hugos, I'd find it easy to make the switch and introduce Gay for the first time. Not so. I can introduce Joe at the drop of an empty Old Milwaukee can, but finding the right words for Gay is harder than I expected. What can one say about one of fandom's most prolific and beloved mothers? About the last of the Ms Nice-Guys? About the founder of the Gay Haldeman Charm School? Without being sued, I mean?

Gay is many things to many people, and she's long overdue for a reward for most of them. It's unfortunate indeed that recognition of her multiple talents comes only in the form of an appearance in BEN'ZINE but her husband once wrote a loc to ENERGUMEN and last year he won a Hugo and a Nebula, so there's no telling what this honour might bring her!

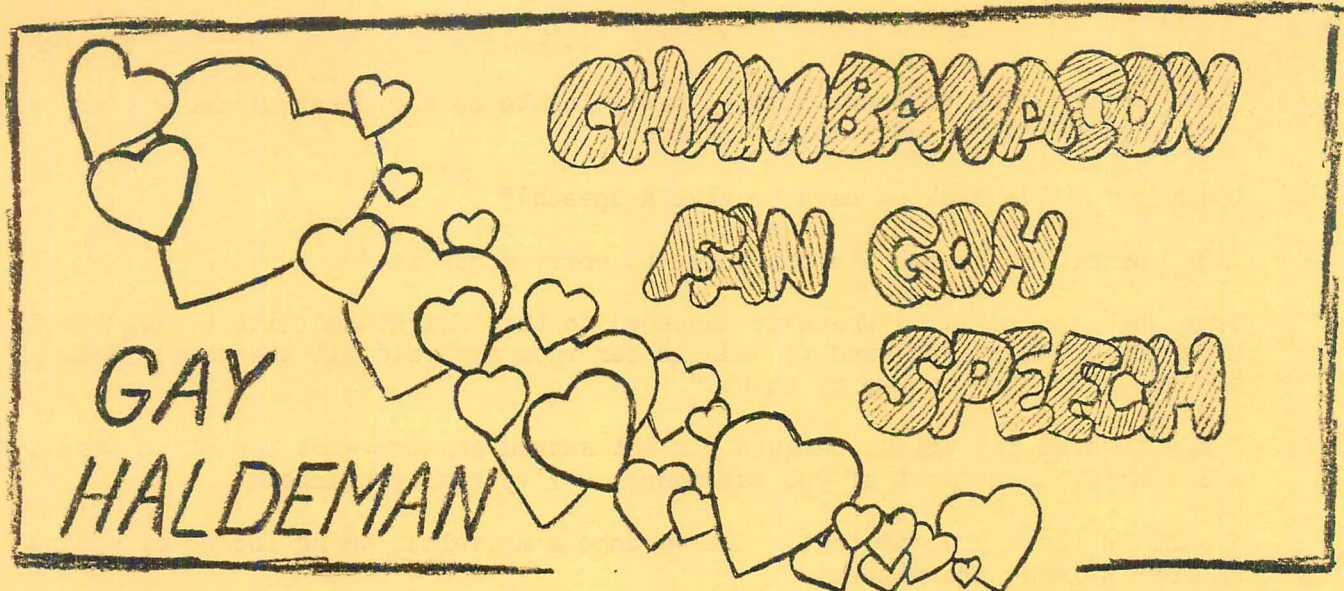
Gay, of course, is wife to Joe. And many people would argue that that alone deserves a Nobel Prize! She is a master-full individual in her own write, with MAs in Spanish and linguistics. She is Official Mother to one of the largest, oddest, most convoluted families in the history of fandom, involved in relationships that would make "I'm My Own Grandpa" seem logical, tame and boring! She is famous for never having a bad word to say about anyone, being constantly surrounded by legions of male admirers while retaining the friendship of most fannish females, and generally being so consistently nice there are serious rumours about her being an android. (I could easily dispell these illusions, of course, but if Zuhl wants an expose' he'll have to come up with a hell of a lot better offer than not sending me BEN'ZINE for a year!) Gay Haldeman, in the popular fannish vernacular, is one of "the Good 'Uns"!

In ~~the~~ over a dozen years of active fanning, Gay has done many things for fans and for fandom. She has helped run conventions, hosted parties, worked on other peoples' cons, occasionally appeared on panels, put up and up with visiting fans, helped countless newer fans adjust to fandom, driven dozens of people to dozens of cons, and generally spread happiness with her smile, her conversation, her charm, her understanding and her enthusiasm. But, suprisingly enough there are things that she hasn't had much experience with, much to fandom's loss: two such are fanzines and Guest-of-Honorships.

With the passing of the never-to-be-remembered legendary TAPEWORM, Gay's participation in fanzines dwindled to almost nothing. I can think of only a couple of appearances by her in the last seven years. And until Chambanacon had the good sense to ask one of fandom's most popular people to be its 1976 GoH, Gay had never been so honoured. Now that we've finally had an amusing, literate, sympathetic and attractive Haldeman as GoH, hopefully we can look forward to more of the same at future cons! And now that Gay is appearing in a fanzine perhaps we can look for a brand new career in her future and, eventually the Haldeman name on the ballot for a fan Hugo!

Gay Haldeman has always given a lot of herself to fandom and I'm glad that fandom is finally giving her a little something in return. As her friend for almost a decade, I'm delighted to have the chance to introduce her in her new role as fanzine writer. As it happens, Gay's two fanzine appearances in the 70's were in fanzines I published. It's nice to be between the same covers as Gay Haldeman once again.

## INTRO



Fandom has given me an awful lot. Joe and I started in 1963 at the Discon, which he had read about in ANALOG. He had been reading science fiction for years and had me reading it a few months before the con.

So, a whole crowd of us went down on Saturday and walked into the Shoreham Hotel. I'd never even been in one of the big hotels downtown in Washington, so I was kind of nervous.

We walked in and here were these two nice-looking gentlemen in business suits and ties, fencing in the lobby of the Shoreham. They were yelling and screaming and waving swords at each other—it was Isaac Asimov and L. Sprague DeCamp. It was wonderful!

We ran home that afternoon and improvised costumes for the Discon masquerade, which sounded like a marvelous idea. In fact when I walked across the stage I was called back a second time, probably because I was wearing a button that said "ANTI-SEX LEAGUE" from 1984. Isaac Asimov must have been one of the judges.

We didn't realize that there was such a thing as fandom, though. We didn't find out for almost another year that there was a Washington Science Fiction Association, which had actually put on the worldcon. I don't know where we thought it came from.

Joe was in a class with a young woman who had a dirty old man sitting on her left. She had an ANALOG on her books on the floor, and Joe fell over it. So they got to talking because she was afraid to talk to the other guy. She was a member of WSFA, and invited Joe to a meeting. Eventually, she married Joe's brother and we became very active members of WSFA. I think we've worked on 7 Disclaves—and this year Joe is going to be Quest of Honor there. It's nice to come home.

Fandom has become so much a part of my life...I was riding to Minneapolis last year with a group of linguists, going to a professional convention. (I wasn't very excited about it—I know conventions and those aren't conventions, they're not fun.) Twice I said things that people didn't understand because they were fannish ingroup things. I was speaking another language and I realized that I really wasn't at home there. I'm much more at home in this group.

This really came home to me when I was talking to my mother a little while ago. I was babbling along talking about my friends, about going to a convention next week, how we were going to windycon, then there was Icon, then Chambanaccon; Joe was



going to be Guest of Honor here, I was going to be fan Guest of Honor there, and what a good time we were going to have.

My mother said, "Do you have to give a speech?"

And I said, "Yeah, but I'm not going to worry about it."

Then she stopped me. "Whatever happened to that frightened little girl who didn't have any friends, who used to hide in her room and read all the time? What happened to that kid I used to worry about?"

I had to stop and think, because I'm not scared anymore--not ver often--and I have a lot of friends (most of you out there). I've really changed.

I want to thank you for that. You've done a marvelous thing for me by making me feel welcome and wanted.

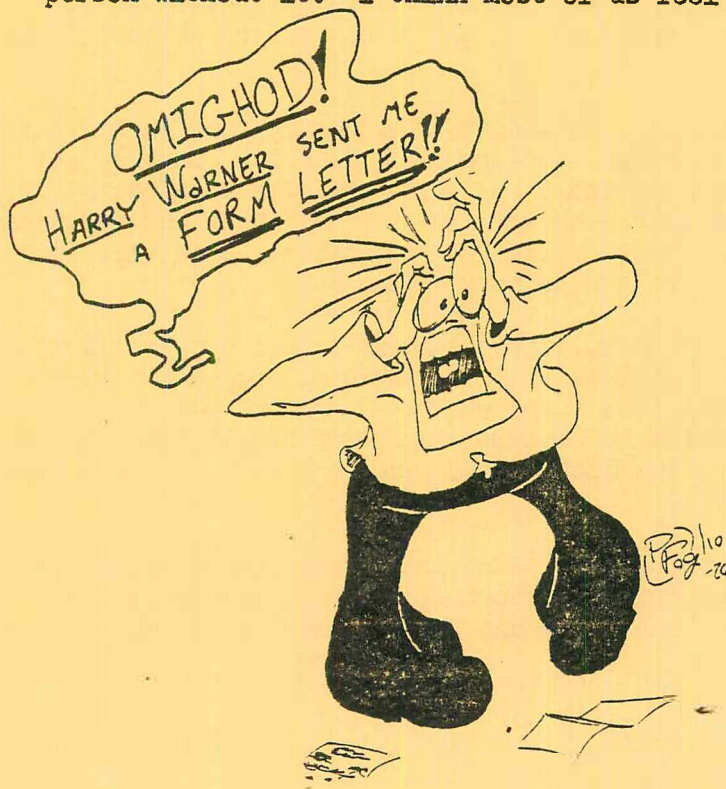
In the same way, you've done a lot for joe. When I met him I could get him to play guitar, but not to an audience, and it wasn't until years after we were married that I could get him to sing a note. If you heard him last night, he was singing. Now we can't shut him up. We couldn't get him in front of an audience. It never would have occurred to him to give a speech. Now he gets up on a panel, like he did today, and has a good time. So we've both gotten a lot out of fandom.

Just to close, I want to tell you that you can give each other self confidence. I know it's happened to other people. I've watched it over the last few years with certain people I'm close to, how much they've changed just by being part of this group.

If we keep on making people feel welcome and wanted and part of the group; if we watch that guy standing over in the corner who doesn't know what's going on; if we invite him in and make him feel a part of the group, then we can all be the happiest bunch of people there is.

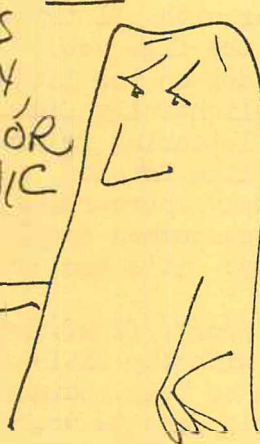
I want to thank you for making me happy, for making me the person that I am, because I'm really the product of science fiction fandom. I would be an entirely different person without it. I think most of us feel this way. Thank You.

Gay Haldeman  
Chambanacon Fan CoH Speech, 1976



# CON SUITE

AHA! A BUSBY LETTER  
 THAT NOT ONCE  
 MENTIONS  
 ENTROPY,  
 MUSTARD OR  
 NECROGENIC  
 MATTER



F.M. Busby  
 2852 14th Ave. W.  
 Seattle, Wa. 98119

In the first place no trufan  
 pronounces the obscene term  
 "sci-fi" in any way whatso-  
 ever, and tries to ignore it

insofar as possible. (There is one exception.  
 When walking through a cow pasture, it is per-  
 missible to caution one's companions: "Don't  
 step in the sci-fi".) (Pronounced however you  
 may choose.)

When it comes to the cornflakes-box school of  
 architecture for large buildings, I side with  
 Brian and against Madperson (Hi, Jodie!) Riley.  
 Here in Seattle we have the FirstBank Building.  
 It is known as "the box the Space Needle came in",  
 and unfortunately it's not alone in its feature-  
 less lack of splendor.

Jodie Offutt is right on (Onnutt? Oh, Well). But  
 what comes to mind is a side-quirky thought--that  
 "Nixon" is short for Nickson, and we all know  
 that means Ol' Nick rather than St. Nick; right?  
 Son of Santa, he ain't. ((You might be on the right  
 track Buz, just switch a few letters around on  
 Santa and...)) But back to Jodie--"chairperchild"  
 and the like give a spurious indication of tod-  
 dlerhood. I suggest "Chairperspawn"--and hope  
 to hell that nobody picks up on that suggestion!

Roy Tackett  
 915 Green Valley Road NW  
 Albuquerque, N.M. 87107

I find myself both agreeing and disagreeing with Mike  
 Glicksohn. He says that one English fan is worth three  
 Americans or half a Canadian. As you well know, if you  
 checked with your bank lately, the Canadian Buck is worth

.97 American these days (and that is, of course, the standard by which anything is  
 judged) therefore it stands to reason that if one English is worth three Americans  
 (actually it is 1.67 American) then he must be worth 3.09 Canadians. Unless, of course,  
 we are dealing with French-Canadians in which case nobody understands them anyway.

I do have to agree with Mike in regards to the superiority of English Beer.  
 This "Madman Riley", must be writing fiction. 775 feet tall building in Minneapolis?  
 When did they build it? Redd Boggs, an old fan and true, carried the mail in  
 Minneapolis for nigh ontâ thutty yars and he always said that there were three seasons:  
 July, August, and Winter.

((As I said in B<sup>1</sup>Z #1 I will give ~~small~~ short people the last word here. So, I sent  
 your refutation to Mike and here is his reply.))

Mike Glicksohn  
 141 High Park Ave.  
 Toronto, Ont. M6P 2S3

Tackett, like all corrupt and debased Americans, puts a dollar  
 value on things and manages to convince himself that this is  
 in some way a true measuer of their worth. Poppycock! Bal-  
 derdash! Centsless, even! The true worth of people (or even

fans) lies in their appreciation of and consumptive powers in re alcohol moderated  
 by a measure of their essential fannishness. On this scale, my original observation  
 is self-evidently true. If anything, out of deference to you and a few other half-



decent Americans who really can't help the albatross of their unfortunate cultural background, I may have erred in your favour. Someday I'll do a proper examination of this interesting sociological phenomenon but in the meantime, **take heart**. Being worth a sixth of a Canadian is pretty damn good and you might be lucky enough to get a really good bit!

Mike Glicksohn (again) I was going to phone you with my comments on your first issue A LoC this time. (sort of a Benzine ring, I guess) but not only do I lack your number I also find myself, unlike you fanzine, not quite solvent. So you'll have to do with a letter.

I like first issues of people's fanzines. They're usually nice and thin, and nice and thin fanzines are easy to read and easy to respond to. I particularly like first issue fanzines in which I'm responsible for about 29.4% of the material, since that means even less I have to bother reading and replying to! In fact, this letter is already longer than BEN'ZINE #1 deserves...

Really fine cover by someone I'm not at all familiar with. (I try not to get familiar before the second date and I haven't even finished the figs yet.) There are slight defects, but the texture on the creature (is it Maddog on the last day of a con?) is really fine. All the artwork on the interior is delightfully fannish, with the logo by Don Ellwood being a ~~real~~ standout as far as the lettering is concerned. And what can one say about a quartet of fannish cartoonists like Rotsler, Carter, Bathurst and Fletcher? "More, more, more, more!" is about the only appropriate reaction.

Your editorial suffers from what is probably the most common complaint concerning such maiden voyages into the fannish fields of creativity: it's too damn sparse! Lets get a little more Ben in BEN'ZINE

The piece by Glicksohn leaves a lot to be desired (~~Money, fame, glory, a fanwriter's ego, / / / / /~~) but the most serious complaint has to do with the title illustration. As anyone who's read the article should have been able to tell, Guinness is spelt with two 'n's, not one. Any editor who really cared about his fanzine would not have overlooked such a glaring and significant error. (It isn't fair to blame the artist: we all know about the mentality of artists, and the mentality of artists who don't drink is almost too small to consider. Unlike the artists themselves. No, the editor must shoulder the blame: I ask you, is this a ben-efficient way of doing things?)

I find myself in the unusual position of reading a Jodie Offutt article which outlines a stand I'd held for a long time and having to almost reluctantly bring up the other side. For ages I agreed fully with Jodie; the true meaning of 'man' is indeed non-sexist. And, yet I've recently started to see some of their arguments: I think it's true that, whether they are technically correct or not, a lot of commonly used words are used in a sexist fashion by many people, and hence to some people they are offensive and should the rest of us do anything about it. I don't think it's as simple as saying "Well, I don't find them offensive so why should I bother changing?" To toss out a simple counter-example, the great majority of people find nothing annoying about the term "sci-fi" and yet think back to how often a fan will try to get others to avoid the word because to us it isn't appropriate. Don't we owe the same consideration to other majority groups as we'd like for ourselves.

I don't think feminist language will catch on, because I don't think it is important enough to enough people. (Just as "sci-fi" is here to stay because we aren't a big enough pressure group and it isn't an important enough issue for it to be changed.) But if I know someone is bothered by such words as Jodie mentions, I'll at least try to avoid them when talking to that person, whether I try to adopt them into my own vocabulary or not. (I don't.) I think that's a reasonable degree of simple courtesy. Maddog handles tongue-in-cheek pigheadedness so well one might almost believe it wasn't a joke...And he has a nice touch with dialogue as well. Of course, such pieces are damnably hard to comment on, which is probably just as well. If too many people said too many nice things about it, Maddog might actually start believe he has a future in writing!

Look for the next issue, and good luck with your new career! Hmm...Ben Zuhl, Faned... it does have a certain ring to it!

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

I enjoyed Ben'Zine very much. The only real fault is the disorientation that it caused me inadvertently. I date back to the era when every fanzine's first issue was illegible, illiterate, and incoherent. It is very hard to be sure I

I haven't split off completely from the real world when I get first issues of fanzines which meet none of those old standards. It just doesn't seem natural to find a first issue looking and reading better than many a tenth issue in the old days.

You also cause me to blur and fade slightly when you mention casually that you attended forty-five cons in less than three years after discovering fandom. And here I've been wondering if I should stop going to cons so frequently, because I've attended a worldcon every third year during the past decade, whenever they've been on the East Coast.

Mike Glicksohn's summary of English fandom is so comprehensive that it's hard to find omissions or misjudgments. All the way through it, I kept thinking that I would be able to point to a matter he'd overlooked, the tradition of outspokenness which someone else in the UK recently wrote about at some length. Then he went and got around to it on the last page of his article. The only other difference between fandom over here and over there that occurs to me is the tendency for UK fans to be better educated for the amount of schooling they've had than those in the US. Even the ones that write in a rough and ready manner betray regularly the fact that their schools do a better job in drilling students into an awareness of what constitutes writing style and implant in their memories a lot of matters that every educated person knew a century ago and hardly any educated person knows in the US today.

Madman's article is amusing. It reads as if he'd been studying the fanzine articles of Charles Burbee and adopting a writing style influenced by them. Hagerstown had a controversy over its own skyscraper not long ago. The city decided to build a bunch of living units for low-income elderly persons, and the architect drew up plans for a high rise unit eight or nine stories high. Everyone connected with the construction kept pointing with pride to the fact that it was the tallest building in Hagerstown, eight or ten feet higher than a downtown hotel which had claimed the honor for a half-century. Then just before it was to be dedicated, a couple of preachers spoiled everything. They pointed out that the steeples on their churches went quite a few feet higher than the new public housing structure. Nobody had remembered to check the churches when looking up the official height of local buildings.

Your history of spayed gerbil fandom should be useful to future historians of fandom, and it's aided immensely by the wonderful illustrations. One thing that worries me is the difficulty that will arise if anyone wants to write filk songs about this new form of fandom. The English language isn't very well supplied with words that rhyme smoothly with gerbil, you know.





Bob Tucker      The cover poses a serious question: is the lady faunching for the 34 Greenbriar Dr. smoooth benzine, or does she covet the Bem's bod? It's a per-Jacksonville, IL. plexing question because of her dress, but I suspect she wants the benzine because that liquid is certainly smoother than the Bem when taken internally. John Swanson is a sly devil.

The table of contents on page 3 is magnificent! It has verve, excitement, viable profundities, and promises of juicy treats to come. I certainly hope you continue this feature and have another in the next issue.

I liked Glicksohn's explanation of the differences between Britons and Americans, and easily find it the most amusing and informative article in the issue. I hope to meet Glicksohn some day and discover for myself if he is as fabulous as most accounts picture him. Is he really a drunken Hairy Canadian, as portrayed, is that accurate or merely a fanzine pseudo-personality? Is the hair on his head, his chin, his chest, or the palms of his hands? ((All of the Above))

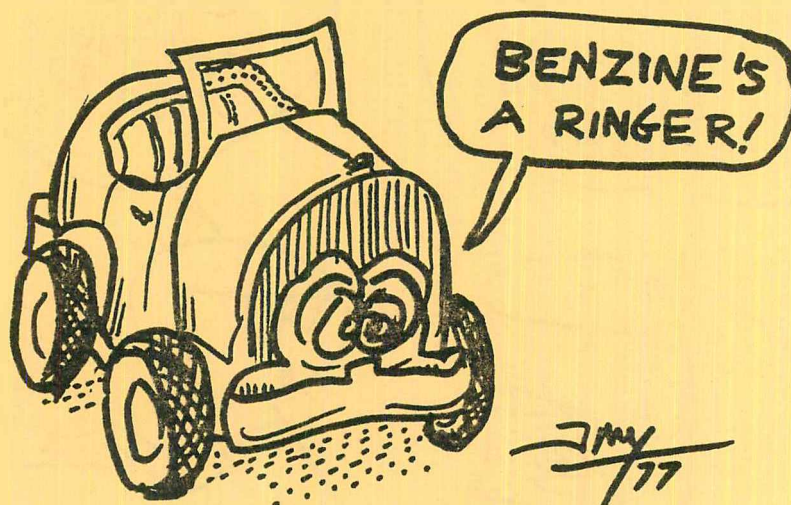
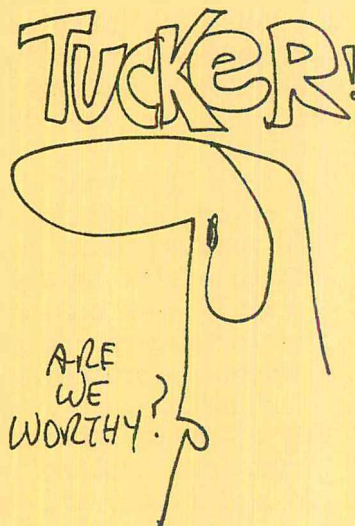
It was good of you to reprint Jodie's BYOBcon speech. I was there, but I missed that because something-or-other called me away and I returned to the hall in time only to hear most of C.L. Moore's address. (A city in California.) Jodie has a personality that can charm the most loathesome monster, or melt the icicles in anyones beard.

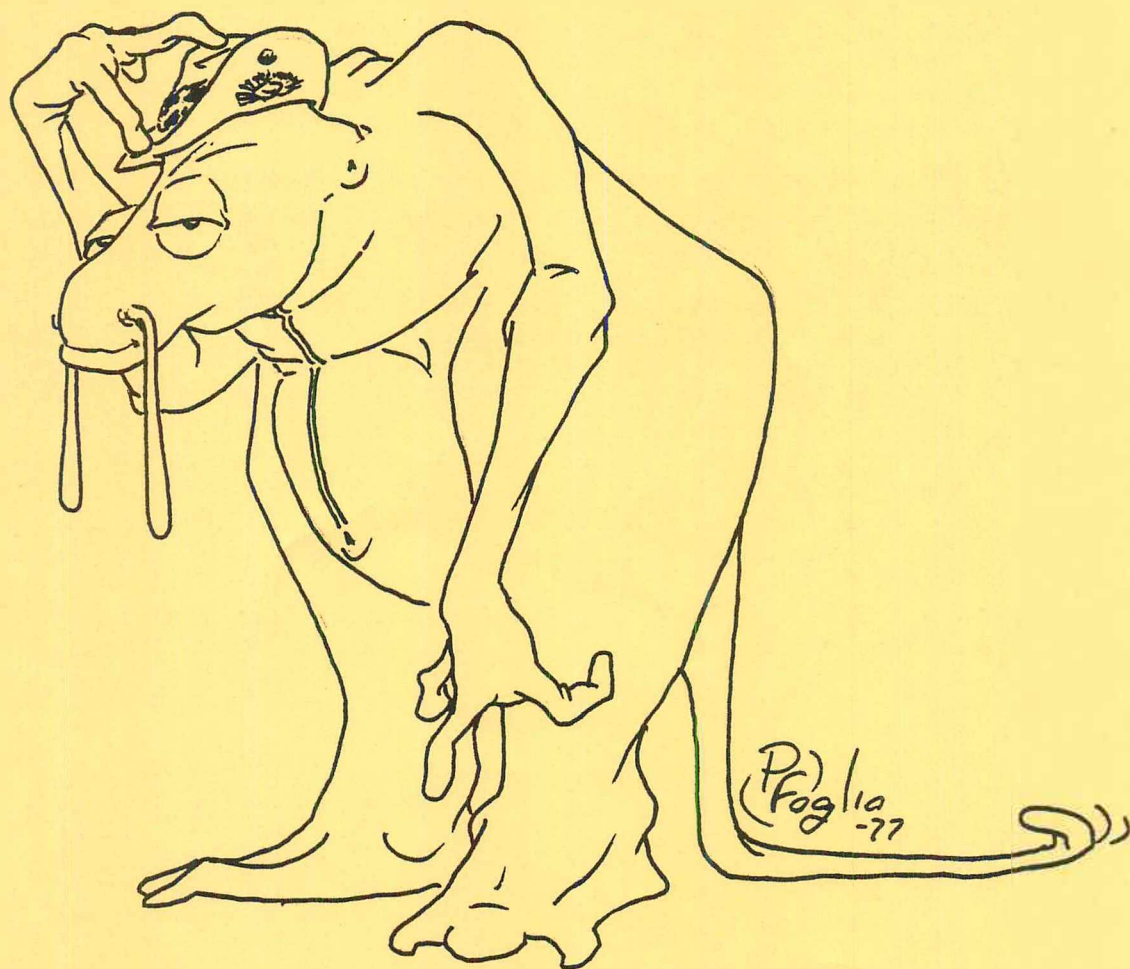
((Bob, I'll be glad to introduce you to Glicksohn at Midwestcon. He'll be the one by the booze in the con suite or should I be more specific--he'll be the one UNDER the table with the booze on it.))

UNFORTUNATELY thats all the space I have room for in this ish. THANX to everyone who took the time to write--the response to B'Z has been just great. You are all appreciated.

I also heard from: Bob Bloch, Terry Hughes (thanx for the info Terry), Eric Lindsay, Lloyd Biggle, Jr., Jan Howard Finder, Chuck Holst, Ben Indick, Alan Bostick, Gary Deindorfer, Jodie Offutt, Sue-Rae Rosenfeld, Jim Fuerstenberg, Lee Carson, Loren MacGregor, Peter Edick, Barbara Jones, Parris, and Rick Gellman. Please forgive me if I've left anyone out but I have been sitting at this furshlugenah typer for far too many hours today and yesterday (to paraphrase a Beatles Title).

Next ish will be a GIANT Worldcon Ish and I will have room for all of your cards and letters so keep em coming.





"OH, THE LITTLE FELLER TASTED  
TERRIBLE. BUT THE HAT FITS."



