

BLATANT #14, the 1st  
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tors. How come it was  
colder in summer than  
it is in September? Why  
is Spain? Member: fwa,  
cha cha cha. A publi-  
cation of the Chuch  
Harris Fan Club Inter-  
national and Arthur  
Thomson Appreciation  
Society. Tom Weber  
in '86! Joanna Russ  
for God! Gary Farber  
for New York! Victor  
Gonzalez uber alles!  
Gregory Pickersgill  
for TAFF! (No kidding.)  
Rob Holdstock for Silly

Putty! Vinç Clarke for Denmother of the Year! Patrick Nielsen Hayden dressed as Abe Lincoln! Chris Atkinson woefully in fashion! With a score written by Julie Brown and Randy Newman on the Piano! And now, for kids of all ages, on with the show!!!!!!

"Shock throttled a sob half spent in her throat." --J. Lichtenberg, FARFETCH

THE STATE OF THE UNION Since you keep asking, I'll tell you. Being married is not much different from not being married, except that you get mail addressed to people you've never heard of. And after I went through all that trouble last time to tell you how to pronounce my name, too. OK, once more with feeling: It's pronounced like Avadon Karol. It's spelled Avedon Carol. Please note the complete lack of aitches.

Being in Britain, on the other hand, is often quite dissimilar from being in the USA. No Keeblers, for one thing. I get the baseball scores from the International Herald Tribune (I fantasize a Yankees-Mets World Series) and Steve Brown sends me fun things from the Washington Post, thank god, or else I'd never know what's going on. Most of the newspapers here are embarrassingly bad, except for the Guardian (as anyone on the street can tell you), but the problem is that as much as everyone here is afraid of Ronald Reagan, they don't know which parts to be afraid of. So they talk about his speeches, but no one notices the Supreme Court. I lived in Washington long enough to know: keep an eye on the Supreme Court. Anyway, you watch



TV here to get the news, oddly enough. I can't get used to this. I want the Post on my doorstep every morning so I can sit down and read about it. TV is to have on in the background and watch Cagney & Lacey.

But leaving all that aside, I got some very nice locs on #13 and on Verge from all sorts of fannish well-wishers. Makes you feel warm all over—and even more sorry to be leaving so many people behind. And it's nice, you know, when Linda Blanchard, despite all the reasons she had at the time to feel negatively and almost as ambivalent as I was feeling, takes time to write—*There are lots of things I could say about you moving to England, as you might imagine. All of them well-intentioned—and meaningless, because life is so complicated & varied, my experience hardly relates to yours. The one thing worth saying is that I'm really happy for you (despite the red tape) and you have my positive input to your Karma (more traditionally "my prayers go with you"). Best of luck!*

Sure, it's so easy for things to fall apart after you've just picked up and left everything behind. Linda, of course, was speaking from very recent experience—but hey, I figure the worst that can happen is that you might live through it anyway, right? And we haven't killed each other yet, so it seems to be working out...

Alan Bostick sent a loc that was a good reflection of what I was feeling before I left. Alan is someone I've met a couple of times, but never really had a chance to sit down and talk to—we mostly knew of each other through other people, and just assumed that sooner or later we'd get to know each other better. I had been waiting for some years for the opportunity—a worldcon, say, or perhaps if I were travelling on the east coast or you on the west—where I could sit down with you in some bar or coffee shop and spend a couple of hours talking with you. Enough close friends of yours have been close friends of mine that I believe we could only part as friends afterwards. Now, however it seems that that opportunity might never come along. To learn this gives me a feeling of loss and regret. Regardless of whether or not it is really the right thing for you to do, neglecting whatever you or anyone else might desire, I really wish you weren't moving to Britain.

When Tara! heard I was moving to Britain, he sent a card saying, "What a rotten thing to do." Moshe Feder called me up and told me it was just "not fair." And at Disclave, Moshe, Lise Eisenberg, and Stu Shiffman threw me a going away party that blew me away. I just never expected that level of emotion. I think the thing that really erased my hold on the facade of calm I was maintaining was when Jack Henegan suddenly burst into tears and sobbed, "You've always been there..." In my bathroom, of all places.

It's worth being on that drafty limb that you might seem to be inhabiting, David Stever wrote. I know, I'm on a similar limb right now, and I feel pretty good about it, just as you feel pretty confident about your situation. While it seems that there is an underlying nervousness to your writing about your future, that would seem logical—after all, you are about to go away and live in a fucking foreign country. I don't care how much you like it, and like the people that you've met over there. It's something you can feel justifiably nervous about.

I'm curious about one thing though—what have your parents said to you about it? I'm guessing that they must have given up on you to some extent, given up on you ever presenting them with a hubby or a grandchild (my mother and father have both given up on my ever giving them a grandchild, while my stepmother thinks that I'll still pull it off, somehow), but suddenly, you've presented them with new possibilities. Have they met him? Have you pointed out that you're still the same daughter they had before, and that they'd better calm down?



God, do you ever know it, David. My parents got so looney that they actually forgot that I can't safely have children. They love Rob, of course, and naturally proceeded to act like idiots. On the one hand, they were pissed off at me because I was abandoning them, and on the other hand, my mom just drove me insane with all her mother-of-the-bride routines. And no matter how many times I tried to get across to them that I was still the same person, it made no difference at all, natch. Incurrigible. My mother waited until I was about to board the plane to burst into tears, of course. Ahhhrrrrggg!!!

The ever-thoughtful Peggy Pavlat surprised me by getting me a loc right away. How strange to write to you rather than pick up the telephone when I have something special to say to you. Just finished reading Verge and the range of emotion feels so familiar and so vast that a letter, even a brief one, with familiar handwriting and phraseology (and often misspellings!) in your mailbox, soon, seemed like a good idea.

I don't know if you have realized (with all the changes you are aware of and coping with daily) that each of our lives are also changing by your decision to move. Our lives will be the poorer for the richness which England will gain. Have a good time, make things you touch a little better, and go with our love.

And then when I got to Heathrow, Hazel started crying, too, which left me wondering what it was about me that made people burst into tears. But somehow I've been making the transition... For a while the country was so full of Americans anyway that it was almost like being home. It's only in the last couple of weeks that I've actually had the chance to realize how far I am from home, and to miss everyone. Still, most of these farewells have been temporary—I'll be seeing you again, sometime, because we'll be over for Corflu (knock formica), and you'll be over for the worldcon.

But one good-bye turned out to be permanent. In early July, Seattle fan David Clements was shot and killed, and thus we have all been deprived of the company of one very nice guy who was getting more and more active in fandom. I guess it's only wishful thinking, but I feel like printing his loc might keep him alive just a little longer...

I was glad to see some mention of the latest addition to the Seattle fan publishing empire, Victor Gonzales, and indeed, it is high time for some critical acclaim for him and the other fanzine editors you mentioned. If Victor is going to be the young fan phenomenon that he promises, some ego-boo along the way can't help but encourage him and keep his spirits high. If the ego-boo is deserved, of course (and one might also argue that Victor's spirits are already high enough, along with Victor himself—any more might be truly frightening).

But my favorite piece of writing was "How I spent My Xmas Vacation," with its deft intertwining of Ace Specials and real life. The Ace Specials were very important to me last year, but not because they reflected my life. I don't know how they sold exactly, but it was a blow for quality publishing that I hope sets off a trend. Who knows—maybe there is a little Ace Special in all of our lives, and I just need to open my eyes and let it drift in. Good ish—send more soon. Bye.

You hear that, Victor? You've already proven that you can—now you gotta do it. 'Cause David said you got what it takes, and I think he was right.

Trust Harry Warner to find a different way to comment on my relocation: I'm tempted to follow your lead and expatriate myself, even though I doubt if there is



any BNF in England whom I would want to live with, and vice versa. You underestimate my adaptability to new changes, however, when you think your marriage intentions surprise me. Ever since I saw a woman wearing a dress several weeks ago and then saw an advertisement by J.C. Penny which included a section on women's hats, I've realized that my what-won't-they-think-of-next syndrome is going to get a good workout as the world continues to change and the idea of two fans getting married to one another doesn't strike me as futuristic and novel as it once would have done. I hope you'll find the greatest happiness in both the prospective mate and the new homeland.

Art Widner moves into dangerous territory: I thought it odd that you didn't mention the name of your intended, especially if he is a fan. But perhaps that was done in the two pubs I missed. I notice that B13 is SDP 121 & Verge is 124. Were these women's apa or something?

"...women have a lower tolerance for cold..." I don't think that's a biological fact, since there is the well-known subcutaneous fat layer that men don't have. Take a naked male & a naked female at the same temperature, say 60°F, and the male will feel chilly first."

Ah, Art, you have not been privileged to hear my rap on the legendary subcutaneous fat-layer, no doubt because you missed out on all of those women's apa zines (yes, yes—you don't think I've put out 127 zines in general circ, do you? I could never have afforded the postage!). I've been thinking of killing the guy who came up with that subcutaneous fat-layer stuff. I heard all about it when I was a little kid, crying because I was in pain from the cold, and freeze-welts had risen on my calves where the tops of my boots touched the skin, demanding to know why I couldn't wear trousers to school like the boys did. And I was told that I was a girl and had this subcutaneous fat-layer that kept girls from getting cold. I am sure this flimsy piece of biology was invented by a leg-man. More recent studies have confirmed that males are more resistant to cold than females are, just as experience had told me all along. In the circles I've been travelling for the last couple of decades, the men tend to wear less, not more, than the women, yet it is more often the women who complain of being chilly while the men insist that the heat should be turned down.

And it's a damn good thing I didn't mention the name of my partner in my last couple of issues--judging from the mail I've been seeing around here from those who already knew it, I get the impression that I might not be getting any mail at all addressed to me from anyone outside of New York if you'd all known his name. Call it a quirk of nature, but I tend to assume that when an envelope is addressed to, say, Gary Farber, or Lucy Huntzinger, or Rob Hansen, it is not mail to me. And you should know better.

Fanzine publishing would be a lot less fun if I didn't get these wonky letters from Gary Deindorfer. Gary seems to have a mission: to write wonky locs. I think it's a great thing, myself—sometimes I can't figure out what the hell he means. But he seems to be getting more coherent lately. Maybe it's the postage rates.

I see what you mean, all those unconscious shared assumptions Americans have; you don't get that in the UK—they have their own unconscious shared assumptions and that will take some time to get used to. I still find it hard to believe that MICKEY MANTLE wet the bed.

The sentence beginning "If I could rest assured..." near the top of page two is awesome in its closely reasoned complexity. Hey, you must have a high iq or something.



I am concerned about a talent drain from the U.S. to Britain. You're there now. Patrick & Teresa Nielsen Hayden will be going there soon. Maybe they'll like it so much they won't come back. What if all of American fandom's best minds and talents go to Britain and stay there? The US will be left with Tony Renner, John Thiel, and Robert Whitaker. I shudder at the thought. And I am ashamed of myself for lumping Tony Renner and Robert Whitaker together with John Thiel.

Yes, when are those two wild and crazy wags in Seattle going to bring out another issue of Instant Gratification? I wrote a two paged stoned loc on the last issue which I hope to see at least part of in print. It was one of my funnier locs of recent times.

How I spent My Xmas Vacation" has some rich, evocative writing in it--with the emphasis on the evocative since I lived in NYC for a couple of years in the late 60s. I'm hesitant to ride the subways there for the moment. I'm afraid some vigilante is going to decide I'm looking at him the wrong way and shoot my head off. This New Vigilantism is definitely something that shows signs of getting out of hand.

Glad to hear that that good man Terry Hughes is planning to degafiate. From his column in Wing Window and certain locs I have seen in the last few years, he has taken great leaps forward in his writing ability. If he publishes a new fanzine soon or continues Mota I expect great things from the lad.

Denys Howard wonders, "Doesn't anybody ever stay in one place any more?" and a few people asked me to encourage other faneds (particularly Britons & the fabulous budding young west-coasters as well as budding young editor Stu Shiffman) to add them to their mailing lists. They are: Art Widner (231 Courtney Lane, Orinda, CA 94563 USA), Neil Rest (5309 N. Clark, Chicago, IL 60640 USA), and Gary Deindorfer if you thought he was gafiated (447 Bellevue Avenue #9-B, Trenton, NJ 08618 USA). I also recommend Daniel Farr (#1404, 581 Kamoku St., Honolulu, Hawaii 96826 USA), who gives pretty good loc, even though I didn't use his this time due to my head's in a weird place at the moment. WAHF: Michael Ashley, Brian Earl Brown (who liked Neuromancer), Terry Garey, Mike Glicksohn, Pascal Thomas, Terry Jeeves, Joyce Scrivner, Joan Hanke-Woods, Marc Ortlieb, Bruce Townley, Valma Brown, & Arthur Hlavaty.

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OUR POLICY: DNP—it's not just a good idea; it's the law.

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AND NOW FOR SOMETHING ALMOST ENTIRELY THE SAME Well, not really the same. OK, almost different. Other things I got in the mail. Or had handed to me at the Tun or a con or something. You know, fanzines. Like this one I got from Steve Bieler, which he says is the last On Company Time. Damn, that's a shame, 'Cause Bieler is good, and I'm going to miss getting his zines. OCT5 reprints Bieler's favorite piece by Dave Clements ("The Official Dave Clements Fall '83 Tour Trip Report, Volume One."), and has a nice bit from Pauline Palmer as well as Steve's own experiential field study of sisters. I can't stop myself from quoting the last bit from this issue:

One last note. Martyn Taylor, of the Isle of Man, in commenting on the list of "Worst Recording Acts of the Seventies" in issue number four, suggested David Soul and Bruce Springsteen as the very worst.

I pound my face into the stage at Springsteen concerts.

Martyn, you're off the mailing list.



Bieler, you better write to me or I'll never forgive you. I love reading your stuff and anyway my respect for Springsteen grows by leaps and bounds daily as he runs around the world letting people know exactly what he thinks of Reagan's economic policies. And "Rosalita" is still great driving music, even if I don't have a car anymore. (PO Box 1870, Seattle, WA 98111 USA)

Pam Wells ran Nutz 5 off here on Rob's duplicator, so I was one of the three very first people in the world to see it and can't help but notice. We're ready to put together a chorus to sing, "More editorial presence, Pam!" whenever she walks into a room, but other than that little problem she gets good stuff—I'm really amused by the fact that she has articles from her bosses at work. Well, one of them is of course that fabulous fanwriting talent, Anne Hamill (formerly Warren), but the other one isn't. (24A Beech Rd, Bowes Park, London N11 2DA UK)

The Metaphysical Review came in the mail, of course, and despite being from Australia, it's pretty good. #4 is composed entirely of Don Ashby's story of The Magic Pudding Club and is a nice, neat little piece about a slanshack and how it grew. (Bruce Gillespie, BPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001 AUSTRALIA)

Nigel E. Richardson. This guy kills me. The fanzine we got in the mail might be called Let's Get You Out of Those Wet Clothes...And Into These Wet Clothes, or not. I'm not even going to try to describe it. It's just loads of great fun to read, so... if I could find the colophon—I mean the part with the address in it, I'd tell you how to send for one or at least beg for one. But I can't. Maybe he don't want anyone to know.

Robert Lichtman's Trap Door has already reached its fourth issue and is shaping up nicely except for est. This latest has an amusing opener from G. Deindorfer called "Handkerchief Man" and contains Lucy Huntzinger's expose on the fannish brain drain and how she didn't get married and move to England. Don't kid yourself--she would love to move to England. (PO Box 30, Glen Ellen, CA 95442 USA)

Ashley Watkins in drag. God, I'm sorry I missed that—it's a legend now, and he's still milking it for all it's worth, especially in his loc to the last Prevert, currently appearing in Prevert 12 aka "Dear John," along with a nice alternate ending to THE NINE BILLION NAMES OF GOD from Bob Shaw, John's trip report, and a piece by John Harvey about SF (!) which would have been a great deal improved without those first paras. Rob kept reminding me that we were on the underground and I should hold this zine so that other passengers could not see Ashley's letter. (31 Dukes Way, West Wickham, Kent BR4 9AU UK unless he really takes off for New York and stays there)

And thanks to the arrival of Instant Gratification #3, my great love affaire with Victor Gonzalez continues as before. Jerry Kaufman and I are just good friends, of course. But you know, I love this fanzine, even if it doesn't come out quite as often as it really should (and it really should, you know). Oh, Victor, you say the sweetest things... (JK: 4326 Winslow Place N, Seattle, WA 98103; VG: 3185 Eastern Avenue N #3, Seattle, WA 98103 USA)

Ah! But wait! Yet another fanzine arrives from Seattle, bringing with it the long-awaited re-emergence of the one and only Tom Weber. And co-edited by none other than (!) Victor Gonzalez. How could I not like this fanzine? Two of the best new fanwriters in the last couple years, and going a little bit Langford on the verbs, too. "Better Living Through Chemistry" is hilarious. I wish someone had told me about that quote sooner, though. Anyway, as Chair of the Chuch Harris Fan Club International and First Elected Past President of fwa, I can only say I am pleased to see such a publication representing these fine organizations. Oh, yes, I do like this Parasite, and hope to see another soon. (TW: 4121 Interlake Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98103 USA; VG as above)



The former Anne Hamill Warren, who was previously Anne Warren, has become Anne Hamill—I think I have that right, now. Anyway, she's a good writer and I love her fanzine(s), Some Days, You Eat the Bear.../...Some Days the Bear Eats You. The first part is the articles, the second is the locs. My theory is that her staples aren't big enough. Great stuff. (62 North End Road, Golders Green, London NW11 7SY UK)

Steve Higgins is into criticism, and I guess that's what I paid most attention to in Stomach Pump #9, but there's also a pretty silly gossip column, and some Nigel Richardson and some Six-Year-Old-Twins. Steve says from now on Stomach Pump is going to be a fannish genzine, appearing regularly and trying to demonstrate fannishness. It says so right here. (200 Basingstoke Road, Reading, Berkshire RG2 0HH UK)

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"I'm a self-made man—and you know what British workmanship is like." --RCH

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SKIFFY Yes, I've been reading some skiffy. Mostly it's pretty terrible, except for The Wild Shore by Kim Stanley Robinson, which is the Ace Book I didn't have on hand when I wrote "How I spent my Xmas vacation." I must admit that it really wouldn't have fit in, and anyway it didn't sparkle much for me. Mind, I didn't hate it, but I wasn't that excited, either. My god! The Great American Novel as Sci-Fi!

I've been slogging through something which is generally referred to as "The Women's Press Anthology," which tells you how clumsy the actual title is. Most of the stories come across as having been notes for much longer pieces, and very few have any real flesh hanging over the bones. The first half of the book is almost entirely made up of stories in which the authors didn't feel the need to fill the reader in on what was going on or how the story actually ended. In some cases this is a real shame, since they looked like the beginnings of some interesting stories. But this book is a great underlining of why it's a bad idea to use clever, artsy, experimental styles when you don't have a good reason. One of the failures of the feminist movement, culturally, is the rejection of any traditional artistic or intellectual expertise—an understandable reaction to a culture which has always found "scientific" or "rational" excuses for excluding the reality of women's lives, but a real bummer when you're trying to tell a story that has a point to it. And the fact of the matter is that had I not spent the last 15 years reading lots and lots of feminist theory and feminist literature and feminist history and so on, I would have had a fuck of a lot of trouble figuring out what some of these stories had to say. Moreover, since most of the authors relied on the same tricks to get from start to finish without having to tell you what was happening, one gets a sensation of chronic intellectual blue-balls as one goes through the book. Thus, Lisa Tuttle and Joanna Russ sit like little islands of comprehensibility in a sea of confused and incomplete thoughts. There are two editors named on the cover, but I have a feeling neither one of them actually did any editing.

Which is not to say I couldn't make some similar complaints about fanzines on occasion, but it's that thing about "experimentalism" that bugs me--this time where format and layout are concerned. It has only recently begun to dawn on me just how general the assumption is that by "layout" and "format" we mean classy artwork, gorgeous titling and lettering, and so on. This isn't, of course, what we mean, but enough people take it that way that they actually believe that if they are fussy enough with their layout, it finally will be deemed "good." And sometimes this takes on silly, even insulting forms.



For example, I recently received an apazine from an apa member who habitually double-spaces the text of her zines. We had all kept polite silence on this matter, despite the fact that of course it costs the membership Real Money when members artificially inflate their page-count (most apas in the US are mailed, and the members pay the postage costs). But in this particular issue of her zine, the writer had single-spaced because she was running out of paper, and she apologized to the membership for having done so. Perhaps she had noticed that the rest of the membership already always single-spaced—if she did, maybe she assumed we did so because we were slothful, or cheap, or had no artistic sense. But clearly she thought she was above whatever laziness or meanness allowed us to single-space when only an extra tap of the return key would have given any of us the sheer loveliness of her double-spaced zines. I don't think it ever occurred to her that we might have had reasons for doing it the way we did. And of course, double-spacing certainly doesn't look any better than single-spacing—in fact, it tends to give a zine a somewhat disorganized look. I suppose she could have asked us if we were willing to join her in paying the extra costs of mailing this thing of beauty she was producing, but she didn't. She was happy to overlook our previous experience, our expenses, our knowledge, and so on so that she could carry out her artistic experiment. And so she apologized to us for having sunk to our, single-spaced level, because she knew we couldn't possibly know what we were doing.

Obviously, I'm not opposed to experimentalism, or to going out of one's way to make things look a little dressier than usual once in a while. But sometimes I get the idea people are experimenting all over the place and making things more difficult to deal with when they have no reason to, no particular purpose in mind, nothing to demonstrate. The faned mentioned above was making her material unattractive and expensive to no apparent purpose; the book I was discussing earlier is full of stories which were already discussing difficult ideas and only served to further obscure those ideas by making the stories difficult to read. True, there are times when it is necessary to break the rules, to go against convention, if you want to go beyond what is stale, or if you want to demonstrate a point. But on other occasions it is a good idea to pay attention to why those rules and traditions and conventions exist, or all you'll be doing is wasting your time.

Or so it seems to me... (And to be fair, the Sheldon story in that anthology was certainly no disappointment. My stomach still hurts...)

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Be properly  
addressed



I'm sure Harry Warner joins us in saying, "Happy 50th, Julie!"