
FILE 770



FILE 770: ISSUE NUMBER ONE -- January 6, 1978
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91342. First issue available for the asking.
File 770 -- a data source about fandom and
its opinions, including news and reviews.
(For recipients of Scientifriction, this
newzine replaces Major Arcana 9.5). All
facts verified by Ugandan Military Intelli-
gence. Art Credits: Jim McLeod (1), Simon
Agree (3), Taral(5), Waller(4), Bathurst(8).
Today's schedule is tomorrow's taunt, but
let's look forward to February 18 and
plan to do it again. Primarily available
for subs 4/\$1.50 (none longer accepted)

NO AGAIN? WORLDCON 40

The city of New Orleans, which hosted a World Science Fiction Con as recently as 1951 (chaired by Harry Moore, with Fritz Leiber as the honored guest, in the hotel St. Charles) has been the source of several worldcon bids in the past decade. Almost as many people have bid for the chance to bring the con back to the Crescent City as attended NoLaCon itself (325). Although the ninth worldcon provided the background for fandom's most famous room party, the party in Room 770, the town's bidders have not recently succeeded in associating themselves with that kind of fannish image. Having just finished throwing themselves under the wheels of the Brighton-bound juggernaut, the fans of New Orleans nevertheless have proclaimed another campaign, eyes on the 1982 con. Chairman John Guidry (write to him at 1 Finch St., New Orleans LA 70124) is assisted by Jeremy Barry, Lester Boutillier, Doris Butler, John Dilworth, Tom Longo and Bob Lupton. If not all are household names, the absence of past feud-ensnared bidders may help.

Whatever else New Orleans' fans must overcome, they have to bid in the central rotation zone, which encompasses Ohio, Michigan and Illinois, ie, the most fanpolitically active and close-knit unit around. They are also the areas which can lay claim to the most con-running experience. However, with so many small cons cropping up in the South, which already has its own fannish sense of community, eventually there may be a serious move to alter the rotation system (which now divides the South in unequal halves) to recognize their interests and give them a better shot at noncarpetbagger worldcons. In the meantime discussions of an Atlanta bid for the 80s continue.

WILDWEST

Meanwhile, back at the West Coast, where Phoenix is carrying the Worldcon ball this year, would-be and actual

secret masters are preparing for a shootout -- probably the first play-by-mail tag-team wrestling match in the history of fandom.

Longest in the running of the Western Division bidders for the 1981 worldcon is Denver. Originally chaired by Lois Newman who had moved to Boulder to open a bookshop, the bid now is in the hands of Don Thompson and local Denverites. Newman's return to LA (and so far unsuccessful effort to find financial backing for a Hollywood bookstore she wishes to open) locked out other local Hessians expected to take important roles once the con was actually won. Then the Denver group, intending to get the '79 Westercon for use as a showcase, suffered a major setback at Vancouver this July when its bid was resoundingly defeated by a 3 to 1 margin (San Francisco winning). By now, Denver's most salable commodity, Rocky Mountain fannishness, has been undermined by bad fan political planning.

Chuck Crayne is the name above the title in the LA in '81 bid, although the actual work in the field has been done by several others, especially B. G. Workman. The principal survivors of LA's losing '78 bid had chosen to sit out the '81 bidding period in favor of Denver, particularly because of the Newman connection. Others determined to field a bid without them; in response one sees uncredited advertising for a separate '84 bid. However both bids seem doomed, from a tactical standpoint, because LA's bicentennial world's fair is slated for the summer of '81 with the Olympics likely to follow in '84 right at Worldcon season. They would seem doomed anyway, from internal division. So much for the LA Groupmind.

Finally, at the top of the stretch, a dark horse emerged in the person of Greg Bennett. Touting Seattle in '81, Bennett not only has the resources of his Northwest SF Society (which he describes as a complementary group to the Nameless Ones), but some of the 'Columbus Cavalry' -- Ross Pavlac and Larry Smith acting in the capacity of Vice-chairman and chief of operations. This unusual combination at least gives Bennett's bid potentially heavier clout in the vote-laden midwest, not to mention the prestige of sharing the bid with people who just finished rescuing MAC and Suncon from their own folly. With the voting conducted in Brighton (UK), most votes will probably come in the mail, so this could count for much. Bennett named as the rest of his present crew FM Busby, Loren MacGregor, Steve Bard, Jeff Frane, Tom Veal (NY), Steve Davidson (NJ), Dave Bray, Bill Warren, Cliff Wind Jane Hawkins (Treas.) and Becky Bennett (Mrs.)

There is still much time for change; bids may yet emerge from San Francisco or Guadalajara, or rent yourself a post-office box and start your own -- none of the present ones look real strong.

((Other bidders for any year who want some consideration might send along a letter with their names and ideas.))

UP THE WALLS OF THE WORLD, James Tiptree Jr.'s first novel, has come out from Berkeley-Putnam. Reading the publicity handouts and jacket blurb is nearly as consciousness-expanding as the novel itself. "Tiptree," revealed in 1977 to be a pseudonym for Alice Sheldon, continues to be the worst-kept secret in publishing, when it might better have been treated as a semi-exciting breakthrough. All the publisher has

to say is "James Tiptree, Jr., is a pseudonym for a research psychologist and teacher in the Washington DC area who was also a government intelligence agent." The dustjacket, designed, incidentally, by Lynn Hollyn, features a black and white photo of the author exhaling cigarette smoke. One is free to guess whether this is an effeminate-looking fellow with close-cropped hair, or whatever else strikes one's imagination. Between this affair, and the handling of Farmer's saga-ending Riverworld novel (whose last half is still nowhere in sight), Putnam is becoming the most outrageous of the quality sf publishers. Maybe they like it that way.

NO MAN CLATURE

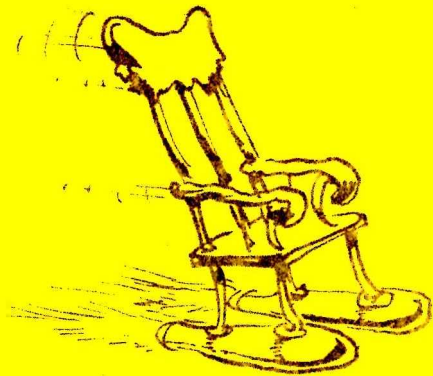
THE PIED TYPER

Fanzine reviewing belongs with those things everybody talks about but nobody does anything about. The art only thrives in England because they treat it as a tournament in insults, and it is moribund in America outside of Glicksohn's column in TITLE so far as any meaningful criticism goes. In America the fans best equipped to perform the job seem bored with it, nor have any of the leading fanzines (except SIMULACRUM and KARASS) consistently published fanzine reviews this past year. Not since YANDRO dropped its column has there been a quality columnist appearing in a widely-distributed genzine (TITLE's circulation is just 125).

Good fanzine reviews are written by fans with extensive publishing experience and some understanding of production values, who know the art of the possible (rath-



THIS DRAWING IS FOR BRUCE TOWNLEY AND GILBERT SHELTON



er than absurdly comparing everything to HYPHEN, ALGOL and ENERGUMEN). Good fanzine reviews interact with the contents, requiring the writer to express himself -- not just pass judgement. And it should go without saying that good fanzine reviews accurately inform one how to acquire a mentioned zine by repeating what the editor set down in his colophon. But I have to mention it, since that is precisely what Gary Farber does not do; neglecting my long-standing dollar charge for samples of STPR, he encouraged readers to send along a stamp with a sample request, I got six requests. Reviewers shouldn't put people in that position -- do I rip off the six, write them each a letter, or eat the 30¢ postage and

the cost of the issue itself? I hate to tell you, but you can't mail a 50-page genzine at any rate for 13¢, or even 26¢. (In case you wondered, I sent them all a copy and dropped Farber off my mailing list...But if I get a loc out of any of them he gets back on.)

Perhaps a forerunner to the revival of fmz reviews on this side of the Atlantic, Buck Coulson finally produced the long-threatened second issue of DEVLIN'S REVIEW, originally brought out to survey the genzine field without uselessly bloating the size of his and Juanita's genzine YANDRO (ten-time Hugo nominee!)

This forty-page fanzine log is everything fanzine reviews should ideally be, provided you filter out the personal abuse Coulson is prone to. Coulson savors his biases in an introductory page, which can be distilled down to: he comments according to his taste, and assigns number ratings according to how well he thinks the zine serves its intended audience. These are two measurements every reviewer ought to build into his criticism, whether or not numbers are used.

At least Coulson's way, with dozens of zines reviewed at once, his preferences can be rapidly defined. He grades 10 for the ultimate zine, and 0 for a totally worthless one.

- (9): SFR, ALGOL, NYCTALOPS, AMRA, STEFANTASY
- (8): UNICORN, STARLING, DYNATRON, AWRY, LOKI, SF FIVE YEARLY
- (7): OUTWORLDS, PERSONAL NOTES, NOTES FROM THE CHEMISTRY DEPT., GRANFALLOON, SCIENTIFRICTION, SPANISH INQUISITION, TITLE, PREHENSILE, LE ZOMBIE, PAN, ZYMURWORM, SIMULACRUM, SCOTTISHE, TRIODE, SCIENCE FICTION COMMENTARY

Forty-four zines received 6-point ratings. Countless others fared worse. Admittedly it helps one's appreciation of a reviewer if his opinions generally coincide with your own. While I would not regard Unicorn, Starling, Dynatron, Awry or Loki among the eleven best fanzines of the past two years, as Coulson evidently does, we do agree about Nyctalops' excellence -- a fanzine badly neglected outside the fantasy field. We also accord in placing OUTWORLDS among the thundering herd of better fanzines, than in the front rank -- "Contributors include some of the best writers in the field, but not usually their best work."

Coulson's major flaw is an inability to separate a zine from its editor, and often reviewing the fan instead of his zine. Sometimes these observations are acute: "Don-O-Saur has received a lot of fan-nish acclaim. I suspect that it's because the editor is fairly outspoken about his emotions, and fans are incurably nosy (and his emotions follow the current trend of acceptability.)" Usually they are just grim putdowns: "Taral in Delta-Psi seems to be deliberately trying to get his personality down on paper, for some reason of his own. (So he won't forget what it's supposed to be?). So this is a big fat personalzine, and not my type of fanzine at all because I don't think much of the personality." This is preceded by a similar shot at Patrick Hayden (I must have missed what Hayden did to get so many people irked). Another time the editor concludes "I didn't like it because I don't like the editor, but it's a good enough fanzine."

The main asset of Coulson's reviews, for me, was when he listed everything he got each issue of YANDRO. For whatever reason, YANDRO attracts spec copies of almost every neo or veteran's zine. Whenever he described something good, I could post off a trade copy; the rest of the crudzines he could worry about storing, instead of me. He announced plans to resume his Yandro fmz review column, though will no longer automatically mention everything. ((DEVLIN'S REVIEW -- Rt. 3, Hartford City IN 47348 -- 75¢ by mail, 50¢ in person))

ROUND FILE

Even without doing anything that could be called "crusading journalism" the act of reporting what happens in fandom is certain to offend a number of people. In Linda Bushyager's tenure editing KARASS she's taken flack for as little as that, and considerably more for her efforts at constructive criticism. Because what we call fanpolitics -- bidding for and operating conventions, administering fan funds and awards, organizing apas and clubs, promoting genzines and conducting huckstering -- tend in practice to be inseparable from mundane politics, with some operators skinning fans, such constructive criticism is a necessary supplement to the news (but not a suitable replacement).

A leading newszine like KARASS and LOCUS tends to become an important influence out of proportion to the editors' capacity for enforcing journalistic standards. KARASS has had its episodes of inaccuracy, but let's face it, a newszine must rely on sources generally no stronger than gossip. A fannish newszine is a one or two person organ plagued with an irregular schedule, covering the same geographic area as the



Washington Post with one five-hundredth the staff. And in no sense should anything I do with FILE 770 be interpreted to take away from my belief that Linda Bushyager deserves credit and thanks for getting KARASS out regularly, and persevering, despite creebing worldcon com people, to keep a strong editorial personality in her zine, letting in fresh air where a few would prefer the still and dark.

FILE 770 involves one mechanical change. Most issues will be sent bulk rate. First class delivery will be restricted to the post worldcon awards result issue, and any special issue instigated by a death or emergency item. Ironically a newszine devotes comparatively little space to actual news, much less timebound news, and a great deal to less transitory matters like con listings, sale items, and evolving fan opinions. The slower delivery will keep a lid on subscription prices without actually changing its efficiency as a newszine. (The permit costs \$60 in advance, plus per-piece postage, if you want to figure out the differential for yourself.)

As to FILE 770's manner of presenting information, an editor is no better than his/her source. News will be attributed to its source. If I blow it, bitch at me. If my source blows it, just send me the facts and save your bitching for him. Those who wish to comment to me on a DNQ/DNP basis, mark the material accordingly. I will tend to regard everything else as permissible to print, if newsworthy. Concerning the objectivity of FILE 770, when you are riled up by its presentation, or by any opinion published therein, I'll seldom refuse an interesting rebuttal. Boring rebuttals will be out of luck, but I feel that given the newszine's opinion-influencing nature, my opinion should be just one of several available to you. (As this zine develops, I hope to find a group of commentators to take turns discussing the matters in fandom that affect them, and give them free rein -- short of libel, of course...)

The other changes in F770 from the usual, here you'll find some pre-meditated effort to supply basic data. It won't always be of general interest, I suspect, but it will be something you can use to formulate your own ideas about how fandom interacts, and how it is changing. On the side of graphics, I am soliciting photos for publishing -- events at cons, close-ups of various fans. These will be reproduced by electrostencil. There are definite limitations to the medium, but my experiments so far have looked reasonable. The more contrast of dark on light background, the better. (Please let me know whether I can crop them, or whether you want them returned.)

An additional note on availability: SCIENTIFRICTION will continue to appear and I would like to preserve my trading arrangements based on it. Trades (for 770) by pre-arrangement only. Artists will receive F770 as long as they have art in my file: I use artwork up rather rapidly just in publishing STFR, so I doubt either artists or I will have to worry about this arrangement. An artist who specifically wants material used in STFR rather than F770 need only say so. Contributors of news, authors of letters of comment, etc., will be reciprocated with free copies. I've always wondered what is fair in this matter -- functionally, the question is how long should I keep supplying freebies in the expectation of additional news, and how much is a news item worth in free issues. Since the same people who supply your information are also the ones who are most

likely to pay for subscriptions, offsetting costs of production and postage, you can see this is a fundamental, if not especially profound, concern. I will probably be guided by present policies of KARASS and LOCUS.

Among other material in the next issue of FILE 770 will be a review of 1977, going through my deep ~~shopping bags~~ files of fanzines with an eye out for award nominees.

DEADLINE APPROACHES FOR INTERNATIONAL SF YEARBOOK

England's Colin Lester continues to make a last minute push for items to list in his first International Science Fiction Yearbook, as the copy deadline, February 15, 1978, nears. The broad spectrum of sf interests (sf, fantasy, pseudoscience, gaming, futurology, space, comics, horror) will be represented on the professional and fan levels. Individuals who know about bookshops, Book Fairs, prozines, editors of fiction or scholarship, agents, librarians, sf in the media, awards, polls, cons, clubs, fanzine publishers -- and any artist who wants to be listed, (with a small illustration of theirs keyed to their listing, if they like) need to get that data into the mail: Colin Lester, Pierrot Publishing Limited, 17 Oakley Road, London N1 United Kingdom. The yearbook shall be published in September, and be available through the normal trade channels.



MAJOR ARCANA (Fanzines received since STFR 8, through 11/77): APRIKOS 8, Beatty; MEEPER BLUE, Paczolt; KARASS 31-32-33, Bushyager; THE SPACE GAMER 12, Thompson; REQUIEM 16,17, Spehner; JABBERWOCKY 7/77,9/77, Hall; FUTURE RETROSPECTIVE, Biggers; LOCUS 202-203-204; SCINTILLATION 13, Bennett; PHANTASY PRESS 52, McPhail; ATARANTES 1, Biggers; SIDDHARTHA 8, Williams; T.E.E. 1, Angove; BARYON 7,8, Hunter; NYET CHEPUKAH 12, Pelz; BCSFAZINE 48; SF&F JOURNAL 88, Miller; DE PROF 93; TITLE 64,65, Brazier; CHECKPOINT 82-3-4, Roberts; THE HOLLYWOOD CLARION, 5, May; NABU, Maule; GUYING GYRE 7/8, Gaier; STARLING 36, Luttrells; YANDRO 240, Coulsons; PROTHALIUS 2, Prince; ASHWING 22, Denton; M.S.D., Brown; JOURNEYS 1, Kaplan&Michaelides; ALGOL 29, Porter; DELAP'S SF&FR;



SFR 22, Geis; SPANING 10, Kaufman & Tompkins; LAN'S LANTERN 4; SPICY IGUANA TALES 1, Brown; VANISHING POINT 2, Lankin; JANUS 2, Bogstad & Gomoll; MAYA 14, Jackson; MOTA 22, Hughes; SOITGOES 14, Marion; SAMIZ-DAT, Frane; DON-O-SAUR, Thompson; FIRST CLASS, Vereschagin; TAEBEUI-AN, Jenrettes; SFC 51, Gillespie; ASTRAL LEAFUE YEARBOOK '77; THE DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP, Hlavaty; WINDING NUMBERS 5, Reichardt; PELF 13, Locke & Hulan; ALVEGA STORIES 4, Abramowitz; MYTHOLOGIES 12, D'Am-massa; ROGUE RAVEN 25, Denton; IT COMES IN THE MAIL, Brooks; CYNICAL 10, Wagner; SIMULACRUM 7, Vayne

STANDARDS & PRACTICES

In FAN ART REVIEW/ALTAIR⁴ the dual zines coedited by Allen J. Desmaretz and Terry Whittier (send two stamps to 307 Tradewinds #3 San Jose CA 95123) raise some practical and ethical points in handling fan art. To condense what they said, faneds should pay postage on solicited artwork; return it in its original condition; acknowledge artwork; send sample copies of your zine to artists whose work you request; send the artist not

only the issue in which his work appears, but the following one to let him see the response; artists should send SASE with submissions; artists keep xeroxes of work, and even send xeroxes in lieu of originals ((if it is of reproduction quality, which most isn't)).

Fanartists, who number among the most interesting fans, are the most reliant on others for exposure of their work, and therefore most likely to be disappointed. I would go right along with everything Desmaretz and Whittier say, and add some more. Fanartists -- especially those who have picked out a good xerox shop and can get dark areas dark -- should hang onto their originals. In Taral's case, I have even received some pre-electrostenciled art. Because the simple fact is, for all the good intentions in the world, the working copy is going to get damaged. I have to crop it and send it via mail to Toronto for electrostenciling. Even if I were using off-set, I'd have to fit and glue it into the layout. Full-page work doesn't fare as poorly, the more so as fans become more aware of graphic techniques like overlays for superimposing titles on cover art. A few artists don't want their work returned, or give it

away, but one should never dispose of the material without being sure, and I usually return everything eventually (immediately if requested.)

I manage to violate my own rules a sight too often, admittedly. To judge from my contact with Joe Pearson, faneds generally perform all kinds of atrocities as a matter of course. The worst of all is receiving and holding material literally for years without acknowledgment or publication -- or in one case, having the artist's work laying unused in the file and cutting him off her mailing list because he did not provide additional material fast enough to suit her. Pearson, who wisely copies his illos before sending them out, and often sends out high-quality xeroxes in place of originals, displayed his files to me, pages of stuff unused by Bowers, illos delivered to a zine five years ago whose editor agreed to return them and hasn't acted for nearly a year, and a good many things he has quite outgrown -- and probably would embarrass him should they surface -- but were attractive and publishable when drawn three years ago.

Unfortunately fanartists are required to gamble for exposure, betting so many illos per zine on the chance they'll be competently published, someday. I think in return they're entitled to take a firm stand on certain matters. I don't know a single artist outside LA (and only two of many in it) who will illustrate specific material: I discovered this while trying to work up a portfolio of drawings based on Niven's fiction, with the special angle that he would approve the roughs for accuracy (something which concerns him particularly). But that's trivial. Something major they should take a firmer stand on is the acknowledgement of art. Any artist who doesn't hear from an editor should xerox off another copy, send it to a new editor (explaining the situation) and notify the first one it's been withdrawn for nonresponse. To heck with the ingrates.

Closing with another comment on FAN ART REVIEW, I think it's a fine idea: I just wish they would drop the digest size for full 8½ x 11 reproduction. They get some fine full-page material from Streff and Mantels, and by reducing it 50% practically destroy it. As long as they have the will and the way, F.A.R.'s editors might let out the stops and produce the art big enough to display the detail, line work and composition. No argument that the printing is very good, including a (halftoned?) pencil sketch by Mike Streff. Slightly heavier cover stock would also help make the zine more durable -- it's got the potential to become a collector's item.

POST SCRIPT

Norm Hollyn, who left Hollywood one step ahead of the Hillside Strangler, reports that he's at work on the film version of "Hair." He had just finished work on a picture called "Mafia on the Bounty" (hey! I don't have to make this stuff up) when hurriedly summoned to New York for the job. If "Mafia on the Bounty" defies Hollyn's opinion as "You Light Up My Life" did, instead of being the year's most gross film, it will be a top box office grosser. Hollyn may be contacted on his five-minute lunch break at 32 Cornelia St., #1C, NYC 10014.

COMMENTS IN CLOSING

The first issue of LOCUS, published in 1968, was two mimeoed pages sent bulk rate to everyone in sight. The lead feature excerpted Hugo nominees from the Baycon PR, and overall quite a few news items were crammed into the space. The first issue of

KARASS, published in January 1974 when the price of a first class stamp was 8¢, ran to 10 pages in mimeo. There was little news, and largely a personalzine air. Even science fiction was discussed! Considering how I only pulled these two zines out of the file in time to write this last stencil, the parallels between K and F770's first issue are a bit funny.

First issues understandably prime the pump, and begin a flow of news. But rereading the last nine pages I see a lot of room for improvement in my newswriting and commentary. An abrupt decrease in the frequency of the pronoun I would help. Editorialization is a basic part of this zine, but it should be more easily told where the facts leave off and the opinion begins. Thirdly, while the claims of bidding chairman are deservedly suspect, they deserve a certain benefit of the doubt -- so if it was not clear on the first page, John Guidy specified that the '82 New Orleans bid had no association with the recent N.O. bid. After writing that analysis, it occurred to me that such a distinction could be much more important to others than to me (since I ignored New Orleans' recent bid.) On that same story, the speculations on revising the bidding rotation are only mine -- if they actually are shared by Southern fans, I haven't personally heard it from them. Otherwise all comment on conventions is based on my eyewitness of the people involved, appropriate letters, or phone conversations. Your own information and speculations are welcome.

Linda Bushyager, who encouraged me, and no doubt several others, to take up newszine-publishing chores, responded to my request for advice with the remark, "After some 4 years of pubbing KARASS, my best advice on starting a newszine is don't." There was more to it, but I almost settled for that. The 30 members of the apa Myriad own the only surviving copies of a version I did in November and turned out to be a condensed version of every possible mistake I could make, from inferior repro and bad organization to reporting boring data. This issue corrects much of that, and I feel good about sending it out as an introduction. When I commence con listings and other traditional services next issue, you will discover it a full-fledged fannish-oriented newszine.

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FIRST CLASS