

WARNING

THIS IS AN AMATEUR
PUBLICATION AND
MAY CONTAIN
UNEXPECTED
HAZARDS

(1) There is no editor or publisher in the usual sense. That is, there is no one to whom huge mail sacks full of material are submitted, and who then need only pick the best, or that which best conforms with the publication's policy of what sells publications. Instead, anyone at all, in particular anyone whose writing would be summarily tossed into the ash can, with at best a brief hint of admiration for the perpetrator's *chutzpah*, by any editor worth the name -- can have his inane gibberings "published" (if we may so degrade the worth of the term) in this

bizarre collection of differently colored and differently textured sheets of paper which you hold in your hands.

(2) There is no copy editor or proofreader. Therefore any unorthodox spelling or grammatical construction, whether due to gross ignorance (as is nearly always the case) or due to the so-called writer's egregious arrogance in thinking he owns the English language and can use it as he wants will simply appear -- in actual ink, as if such abominations were merely symbols on paper rather than unthinkable, anathema, bad news and the pits.

(3) The various pages of this publication are produced not in hygienic industrial facilities, but, for the most part, in residences, or in the

strangely painted back rooms of half-remodeled clubhouses, where the sheets of paper on which this noisome baloney is to appear sit around in half-opened packages likely to be dripped on by mad dogs.

(4) There is no art director (and few who were even good at cutting things out of construction paper in kindergarten) to oversee such elementary matters as margins, page layout, typography and so on. This leads to a grave risk that the appearance of some or all of the pages in this silly thing will present such an annoying pattern to the eye that they will go unread and will thus be useless (which at least provides condign vengeance upon the perpetrator), or so downright disturbing to the human nervous system that the hapless reader is

compelled to fling the entire publication across the room with the consequent risk of hitting someone in the eye or knocking some fragile item from its perch.

(5) Since the people responsible for the physical assembly and distribution of this publication do not do it for legitimate reasons (such as fear of being fired, going broke, and having their children starve if they don't), but rather for such fleeting and unreliable motives as pleasure, camaraderie, and service to their fellow man, there is no reason to believe that they will continue to do it or that they will do it on time, or that they will get the staples in straight.

[Adapted from APA-L #672 (1978), Greg Chalfin, "Such a lot of guns around town, and so few brains."]

File 770:102 is edited by Mike Glycer at 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. *File 770* is available for news, artwork, arranged trades (primarily with other newzines and clubzines), or by subscription. Subscriptions cost \$8.00 for 5 issues mailed first class in North America or surface mail rates overseas. Air printed matter service is available for \$2.50 per issue. Telephone (818) 787-5061.

ART CREDITS:

Taral: Cover
Diana Harlan Stein: 3
Bill Rotsler 6, 10, 11, 12, 15
Merle Insinga: 13

L.A. CONCLUDES
EARTH SURFING
TOURNAMENT

Four thousand aftershocks later, Los Angeles fandom is steadily recovering from the January 17th quake. Relays of fans helped the Pelzes dig out their tumbled possessions, then the contractors came in to work on their home. The household of Shaun Lyon, Christian McGuire and Michael Mason stayed together long enough to throw their scheduled late-January party, then went three different directions. Mary Jane Jewell and Charles Matheny were dispossessed by the quake. David Gerrold thought Harlan Ellison was "in great spirits for a man who just lost half his collection. I expect that he's going

to be writing like a demon very shortly."

Within two miles of where I live are over two dozen abandoned apartment buildings that look like smashed eggshells, some on Woodman itself. Every day I marvel at coming through the experience with so little breakage.

PORTLAND GROUP ASSISTS LIBRARY QUAKE RECOVERY

One out-of-town fan group with a big heart did more than sympathize. Oregon Science Fiction Conventions, Inc. (OSFCI), the group that runs OryCon and the occasional Westercon, voted to donate \$500 in earthquake relief to a library damaged in the Northridge quake.

John Lorentz asked for my help to identify a worthy recipient. LA Public Library regional librarian Nina Wilson was very pleased that any group would be interested in helping. She selected the Granada Hills branch of the LAPL, out of all the San Fernando Valley's damaged branches, because it had been particularly hit by water damage and its children's section alone had to discard 500 books.

If any other readers want to follow the Portland group's example, make out the check to LA Public Library - Granada Hills Branch, and in your cover letter designate it for the Materials Fund. (This is library jargon.) Send it c/o Nina Wilson, Regional Librarian, Encino-Tarzana Branch, 18231 Ventura Bl., Tarzana, CA 91356.

File 770 [] Issue 102 [] April 1994

BICKERING BIOGRAPHERS

Gene Roddenberry: The Myth & The Man Behind Star Trek by Joel Engel will reach bookstores soon after you read this, hot on the heels of a press release that Bjo Trimble condemned for "bragging about the sensationalist 'super-market tabloid' quality" of the book.

The publicist wrote: "After *Star Trek* went off the air, Roddenberry positioned himself as the wronged genius of the imagination, misunderstood by the cretins who run network television. He promptly proceeded to fail at every



subsequent endeavor -- until *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, which he had even less to do with than the original *Star Trek*."

Bjo warned her *Space-Time Continuum* readers in a special mailing, "Don't mistake [Engel's book] with the truly authorized biography being written by David Alexander, to be published by Penguin.... Gene was indeed a flawed human being, but a remarkably creative man who gave us something worth admiring."

Roddenberry biographer Joel Engel called Bjo and John Trimble several times, trying to maneuver them into condemning

caused us to leave Lincoln....

"Now if I'd been willing to share [our Lincoln Enterprises experience] with the world, I'd have long ago done it myself. Business dealings are private. Engel said he had memos that he was going to publish, anyway. I said the Trimbles did not want to be in his book, so he quoted the First Amendment to me.... He said he could say anything he wanted to about GR, since GR was dead and he would prove to fans that GR was not a saint. I said fans were pretty sure GR wasn't one, but Engel insisted he would prove what scum GR really was. After that phone call, he tried

several other times to get an interview from me. I later gave all my information to David Alexander, but it was a very small and unimportant incident in a very large life."



Gene for ousting them from the original Trek merchandising business.

The Trimbles refused: "Engel probed our business dealing with GR, when we set up Lincoln Enterprises for him. Engel tried to get John to say that the entire mail order business had been the Trimbles' idea and that GR had stolen it from us. John said no -- that Lincoln was GR's idea, but he needed our mail order expertise. Engel had found some letters and memos in GR's files at UCLA and kept harping on what

David Alexander, Roddenberry's hand-picked biographer, flew Bjo to Los Angeles for an interview last December. The visit coincided with a big Star Trek prop and costume auction ("Court Martial" dress tunics going for \$9,000-\$10,000). Alexander followed up one of the anecdotes about a Trek-oriented panel at the 1988 Loscon by calling me to ask if there was a tape or transcript. He even topped my own published version of the story!

I reported in *File 770:78* "The

Star Trek-oriented 'Solving the Wesley Problem' filled every seat and had fans lining the walls. They got a bonus in that the actor who plays Wesley [Crusher] unexpectedly dropped in....

"The Loscon version [of a program run at NOLAcon] promised to be more interesting, with D.C. Fontana, Joe Straczynski (story editor for the new *Twilight Zone*, Sonni Cooper (a Trek novelist), Mel Gilden and Jane Mailander - and a hoped-for surprise guest.

"As the program began, Bjo Trimble was stationed at the front of the Pasadena Hilton, and John Trimble at the back door, waiting for the arrival of Patrick Stewart, whom a contact at Paramount supposedly sent our way seeking some word-of-mouth publicity for his Charles Dickens reading scheduled in December.

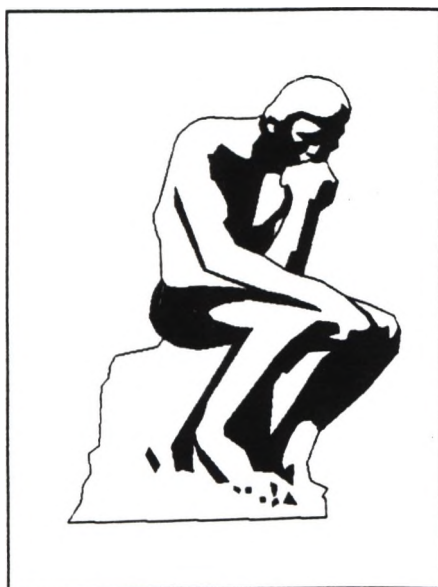
"While I was shuttling between John and Bjo for news of Patrick Stewart, there came an **unexpected** surprise. None other than Wil Wheaton, who plays Wesley, materialized in the 'Solving the Wesley Problem' audience and virtually took over the panel. As I learned from him the next day, he simply came to Loscon because he liked sf conventions. But Guy Vardeman, his stand-in, looked in the pocket program and told him, 'Hey, there's an "I hate Wesley" panel: I think you should check it out.'

"Wheaton's gesture to explain the panelists' change in tone when he arrived was one of extracting foot from mouth! (Actually, the panelists had criticized the series, rather than Wheaton's acting....) Patrick Stewart never did show

up, but I liked to think of the alternate world where he walked into the panel after Wesley had already joined it. What pandemonium!"

I got my version first-hand from Bjo and Wheaton at the time. Alexander, however, dismissed it in favor of the version Bjo recently gave him: that once Patrick Stewart learned of the panel he called Wil and instigated his appearance. Alexander left me to wonder whether Bjo bamboozled me so thoroughly at the time that five years later I still have faith in her cover story, or that she and Alexander are simply capable of their own revisionism.

I also wondered if Alexander's real purpose in pursuing the (nonexistent) tape of that panel was to uncover a trove of embarrassing Straczynski quotes, for Alexander turned the conversation to *Babylon 5* and pointedly bad-mouthed its scriptwriting. But that, to quote the sage, is only "a very small and unimportant incident in a very large life." Straczynski's, that is.



BOOK REVIEW

GENE RODDENBERRY: The Myth and The Man Behind Star Trek, by Joel Engel

Hyperion, \$22.95

Review by Mike Glyer

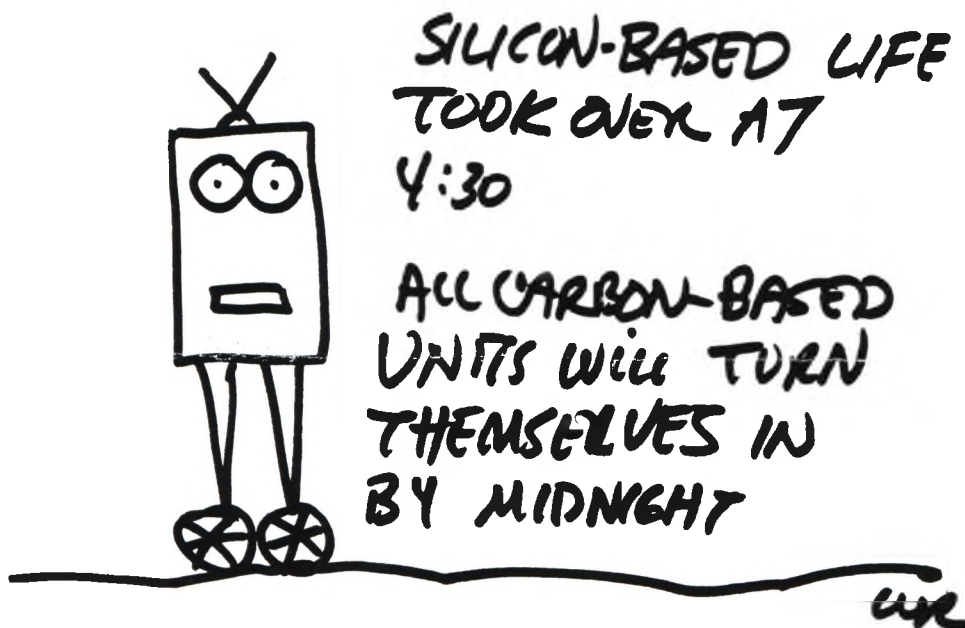
Joel Engel warns in his preface that "*Gene Roddenberry: The Myth and the Man Behind Star Trek* is not, per se, a comprehensive biography of Gene Roddenberry's every waking moment, from birth to death. It is a study in character that relies on events and incidents to illuminate its subject." Readers wouldn't have it otherwise: the flashback style of Engel's "novelistic plot-line" frees his material from chronological order and lets him start close as possible to the inception of *Star Trek*.

The problem is not with his journalistic preference for beginning with the most interesting material, which is clearly the right choice, but that the overall effort to dramatize the material interferes with Engel's duty as a biographer to frame the issues in his subject's life and systematically explore them to a point of understanding. Engel's predilection for seeding material out of context for dramatic effect accidentally creates false associations between facts in the reader's mind, while obscuring real connections.

For example, Roddenberry's *Dragnet* scripts are mentioned on page 15 in a way that makes them appear closely related to his 1962 effort to launch his first tv series, *The Lieutenant*. Not before page 146 do readers learn that Roddenberry's *Dragnet* sale, under the pseudonym Robert Wesley, occurred in 1953. At the time he had been an officer with the LAPD for four years and worked in the public affairs unit, where his duties included writing speeches for Chief Parker.

Dragnet's unusually intimate relationship with the LAPD being common knowledge, Engel should have posed such obvious questions as: Why did Roddenberry use a pseudonym? Did the LAPD know of the sale (remembering how Joe Wambaugh was pressured out of the force in the 1960s for his literary efforts)? If the LAPD knew, then had aspiring tv-writer Roddenberry manipulated his connection with Chief Parker to sell a script to Jack Webb? Whatever the answer, it would tell something about how Roddenberry advanced his ambitions -- the very conduct that Engel, a muckraker wannabe, purports to investigate and presumes we will be shocked to discover. Engel's delight in convicting Roddenberry of self-aggrandizement -- asking the challenging questions past interviewers like David Alexander avoided (Engel slugs his rival on page 48) -- pushes many other legitimate questions into the background.

Really, it's like accusing P.T. Barnum of exaggeration. Blarney was Roddenberry's stock-in-trade, his genius. Yet Engel assumes



stickers that he asked Desilu Studios to reimburse! Far from being shocked, fans will applaud evidence of his audacity in a cause they approved.

Roddenberry's streak of blarney was recognized by fans at the time, and beloved by most of them. The fans I've heard talk about his presence at the 1966 Worldcon, just before the series premiered, make it sound like one of the highlights of fanhistory. A vocal exception was Ted

that revelations about Roddenberry's self-invention and unethical dealings will surprise and outrage the book's intended audience, *Star Trek* fans. Otherwise, whose expectations would be disappointed? We're not talking about the Pope, or even Bill Clinton here. Television executive skins employees? Hollywood writer cheats on wife? Yawn at eleven....

Should fans be shocked to learn that Roddenberry secretly took a hand in the campaigns to keep *Star Trek* on the air? Engel writes, "To be successful, the 'Save *Star Trek*' campaign had to maintain an aura of legitimacy. The network could not suspect that Roddenberry or any member of the *Star Trek* staff -- or anyone connected to the studio -- had been involved with what appeared to be a spontaneous outpouring of public devotion... But Roddenberry *had* been involved in the campaign."

During the first season, Howard DeVore let Roddenberry use the 1966 Worldcon membership list for an appeal to fans to send NBC letters. The next year, while the Trimble launched their famous campaign, Roddenberry arranged student demonstrations at NBC's Burbank and New York offices, paying one Cal Tech organizer's way to New York, and buying 5,000 "Mr. Spock for President" bumper

White, the 1967 NyCon 3 chairman, quoted accusing Roddenberry of "shamefully" exploiting the 1966 Cleveland Worldcon: "The dignity of the convention was compromised last year. It will not be this year."

Fans realized that Roddenberry specialized in telling them what they wanted to hear, especially on the college lecture circuit in the 1970s, (including Bowling Green, while I was there, in 1975). Bearing in mind the space program seemed on its deathbed and "lowered expectations" was a watchword of the era, fans had few enough opportunities to hear anyone preach the fondly-remembered message that their children would have a future in space.

Roddenberry not only personified "the way the future was" in the 1970s (as did fellow Irishman Ray Bradbury, another optimistic humanist living in Los Angeles), he was one of the few public personalities aware there was still strong public support for American space exploration. More widespread than science fiction fandom, this constituency was the one Ronald Reagan had in mind when he publicly embraced the "Star Wars" defense policy, which budget-cutting ironically rendered more a myth than a technical achievement.

Another reason it's too late to tell the faithful their idol's feet are made of clay is that so many of the fans who flocked to hear him were apprised of his sins and failings by other *Trek* veterans on the same convention circuit. By the time Engel collected their stories David Gerrold *et al* had been complaining (justifiably) for over 25 years. Engel's only disappointment is that some writers aren't as mad as he thinks they should be. Sam Peeples second *Trek* pilot sold the show to NBC: "Though his contributions to the show have gone largely unrecognized, Peeples is content to remain a footnote in *Star Trek* history. 'When you're working in Hollywood, creating a television series,' he says, 'you can't really afford to bend over backwards giving everyone credit. You stand center stage in the spotlight and take your bows.'" At least the writers' stories are interesting, and Engel does a fine job of melding them with quotes from production memos (from Roddenberry's archive at UCLA) to reveal the way the show's most famous traits were created and which writers deserved the credit.

If Joel Engel fails to become the A.N. Wilson for the media generation, he exhibits compelling brilliance at explaining the methods and motives of the studio executives who ruled *Trek's* fate in motion pictures. Precisely because fans had no alternative but to rely on Roddenberry for details of decisions that otherwise would have remained secret, they may be surprised to discover what risks Diller, Eisner, Katzenberg and Bludhorn ran in tying their fates to the out-of-control financial hemorrhage that became *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*, and how they hurdled legal and financial obstacles to return Nimoy to the film series.

Engel skillfully explains the business side of the entertainment industry in layman's terms. He points out that pride, lust and revenge sometimes outweigh moeny as a person's motive force. "If, in financial scandals, a reporter is told to 'follow the money,' with Roddenberry one follows the ambition."

When Engel contrasts Deep Throat's advice to Watergate reporters Woodward and Bernstein with his own opinion that men can be motivated by the need for love or fame even more than they desire money, he speaks with the authority of an experienced entertainment journalist and contributor to the *New York Times*. Yet he never fully exploits Roddenberry's business dealings which are them-

selves evidence of Roddenberry's emotional life. Financial choices are typically so important to a person that they are reliable signposts to personal and social values. The advice to "follow the money" is equally valid when probing a person's credibility. Not that Engel utterly fails to recognize the evidence, he simply abdicates the responsibility to explore it systematically.

Engel vacillates between a view of Roddenberry as someone who chronically deceived people (like the Trimble) for money's sake, and the incompatible view that with the advent of *Star Trek* Roddenberry enjoyed such affluence that his unethical financial dealings, like underpaying the talent helping him create the show, must be symptomatic of another character flaw than greed.

Worse, Engel refuses to accept evidence that points one way when he wants to go the other. After *Star Trek* went off the air and -- as Roddenberry later claimed -- he was living on lecture income, an aspiring writer ingratiated himself with the producer by helping repair his dilapidated house. The writer's testimony supports Roddenberry's self-portrait as a man between paychecks, a claim Engel refutes by stating neither the house nor another vacation condo were ever 'on the block', and Gene's green Mercedes was in the driveway. This pedestrian observation disregards Hollywood's almost Dickensian tendency to live well on borrowed money. (Engel elsewhere reports later in the 1970's Roddenberry was using cocaine, another well-known cause of financial distress.)

Then, did Gene really stiff his first wife, as her suit claimed, or did he pay over the full share of *Trek* profits due under their community property settlement immediately and fully, as he claimed? One learns that a judge required the estate to pay Eileen Roddenberry fifty percent of the millions in profits fraudulently hidden by Gene Roddenberry's Norway Corporation, but the evidence and arguments are not reviewed for the reader's benefit.

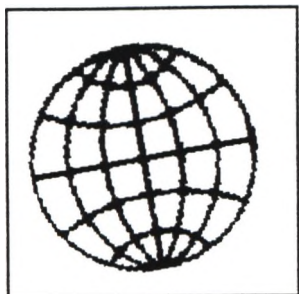
Greed certainly seems like the front-running explanation for his personally revealing decision to accept \$75,000 of compensation and travel expenses from the wealthy patron of a commune of psychics and channelers for writing a script based on messages they purportedly received from nonhuman entities referred to as "The Nine." Engel does a relatively

good job of analyzing this little-known part of the producer's career, though some of the author's opinions are at odds with interpretations he makes elsewhere.

For example, Engel gives complete credence to Roddenberry's claimed sexual escapades and marital infidelity, including affairs with Majel Barrett and Nichelle Nicole. Therefore, it is simply bizarre for Engel to gratuitously assume that, in the teleplay based on "The Nine", the fictional scriptwriter's impotence was also true of Roddenberry. To assume that all of a protagonist's traits are autobiographical because some elements are demonstrably so is a rather fannish mistake. Engel finds it useful to believe that all of the protagonist's dialogue revealed something Roddenberry believed about himself. No doubt some of it did, but when a dramatist draws from within himself, fiction gives unlimited permission to idealize, stylize, adulterate and fabricate.

If Engel uncovers anything liable to scandalize *Star Trek* fans, it's that whenever Roddenberry received the degree of creative control he demanded, as in *ST:TNG*, he inevitably assigned the pilot to another writer and positioned himself as the reviser of other writers' scripts, exercising veto power over contributions to the *Star Trek* vision while originating surprisingly little of its content.

Too much else is simply airing dirty laundry -- glorifying trivial slights as though they were genuine psychological insights. For instance, one learns about *ST:TNG* writers that: "[Fontana], like Gerrold, never received an assigned parking space, the only staff members not to." The cumulative effect of airing these minor injustices is to convey a sense that these *Trek* writers grabbed the chance to repay Roddenberry's slights, even if though it meant collaborating in an unrelentingly negative portrait of a man who was only of interest in the first place because he found a way to please so many people



ENTERTAINING, IN A TABLOID SORT OF WAY

No kidding, send me a few more news items like this and you'll be able to buy *File 770* in the check-out line:

Was that mob of reporters gathered at the Portland airport to greet costume maven Julie Zetterberg, *en route* from Seattle to the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer? Well, apparently not. They missed the story of genuinely fannish interest in their wild rush to photograph Tonya Harding

NEWS OF FANDOM

and Connie Chung connecting with Julie's plane... *[[Source: Drew Sanders]]*

ALL HANDS ON DECK

The Baltimore in '98 Worldcon bid has big plans to steal the initiative, along with anything else not nailed down in the harbor. Reports BSFS clubzine *Mark of the Beast*: "On Friday, April 1, in the Inner Harbor, barring anything major to keep this from occurring.... There will be a ship of some size coming into the harbor with pirates aboard that will be debarking to receive from... Mayor Schmoke or someone in his office... a letter of Marque to go out and capture a

Worldcon, and bring it back to Baltimore. The ship is reputed to be a Viking Longship. The Amphitheater is already scheduled: *USA Today* will have a reporter there to cover the event." *File 770* will not, having unfortunately already spent its budget covering U.S. women's ice skating...

The same issue of *Mark of the Beast* reported that at the January 8 meeting, "Joe Mayhew [had] a piece of information from Avery Davis who used to be from this area... that the Atlanta in 1998 bid for the Worldcon is virtually dead and there was a very noisy moment of silence to mourn the passing."

BOW WOW, ER, WOOF!

WOOF, the annual one-shot of the Worldcon Order of Faneditors, will be collated at ConAdian. Contact Victoria Smith at 12627 Harbor Dr., Woodbridge, VA 22192 for specifications.

ALL OUR YESTERDISTIES

Minneapa is preparing a "best of" collection to mark its 300th collation at Easter. Karen Cooper is coordinating the project. Whew, it seems like just yesterday I was filling idle moments at my college job writing mailing comments to John Kusske about the theology of the Great Spider...

EYE YI YI!

Rick Foss's editor at the *L.A. Reader*, a popular culture tabloid (there's that word again), let him review a fantasy classic at Christmastime. Says Rick, "I decided on an enduring favorite: *Eye of Argon*. To research it, I called all over the country collecting stories, and [ran the result]. So far as I know, it's the first appearance of this literary disaster area in the non-fannish media, and a space for this anonymous masterpiece on the *New York Times* bestseller list is now much more likely."

Fans well know the game of taking turns reading aloud from *Eye of Argon* until they break up, then passing the book to the next competitor.

Just a few days after the review came out, a musician called asking Rick to give a five-minute reading from *Eye of Argon* while his band improvised in the background -- a band consisting of

guitar, cello, darbuka, and two hurdy-gurdies. "Someone asked me if the hurdy-gurdy player's monkey died, and was this my tryout to replace it. Obviously this philistine didn't know the difference between a hurdy-gurdy and a barrel organ, since it is practitioners of the latter torture instrument who traditionally use a monkey to distract music lovers who would otherwise pummel them to revenge themselves for the damage to their eardrums. But I digress."

HISTORY IN THE REMAKING

The Philadelphia SF Society seems to have misappropriated the legend of The Shaft as the basis for a new mock award. The *PSFS News* quoted a report that "the award was gorgeous. The 'Shaft' was painted gold and covered with rhinestones, mounted on a base made of cherry wood. The plaque read 'The Philadelphia Science Fiction Society Traveling Golden Shaft Award.' The committee decided to award it to Boston since they deserved it. The instructions that were sent with the award said to award the shaft to someone else, but to make sure that Philadelphia got it back in time for Philcon 1994. The plaque includes room to engrave the name of your society and the date you received it. The award was made completely of recycled materials.

"For those of you who don't remember, this is actually 'Golden Shaft 2'. The original shaft came from Boston. It was a huge industrial crankshaft weighing **many** hundreds of pounds, inherited by NESFA when it bought their clubhouse. The original 'award', to LASFS, was their way

of getting rid of it. LASFS reacted by awarding it to PSFS, and it miraculously disappeared during shipment when we sent it back to NESFA. To date, no one has filed a claim. Someone asked what happened to the original shaft. ...[The] original mysteriously disappeared. The original shaft was 15 feet long. [It] was not a pretty sight."

Yes, fanhistory has sunk to new depths in Philadelphia, when it comes to the legend of The Shaft. Many hundreds of pounds? Fifteen feet long? Try about eight feet long and 75 pounds. I ought to know, because I helped lift it into the van that night the "Vandroids" stole and shipped it to the Adams-Mark loading dock as LASFS' contribution to PSFS' 50th anniversary time capsule!

TAMING OF THE SHRILL

Ansible began it all by erroneously reporting: "...Harry Andruschak claims that unfriends at the Los Angeles SF Society have changed the rules of 'the LASFS Annual Nigger of the Year Contest' [sic] to nominate him. Can such tacky things be?" The answer being no, such a story needed to be rushed into print before it could be overtaken by reality.

When *Ansible* reached mailboxes in the Los Angeles area several LASFSians sent corrections, and others quoted Andruschak's claim to the club. LASFS Secretary Ed Green took personal offense at the misrepresentation. For one thing, he was the person responsible for reviving as the "Most Memorable Fan/Fanac of the Year Contest" a dormant club fundraiser formerly known as the "Fugghead of the Year Contest."



For another, Ed claimed accusations of racist behavior threatened his job in the National Guard, therefore he "was considering seeking legal counsel."

The contest, under either name, is a fundraiser: members pay to support mock nominees ranging from in-group references like "The Unmentionable Scottish Delicacy" (haggis) to club officers like last year's contest winner, then-President Ed Green. The old version, "Fugghead of the Year", was retired in the 1970s amid acrimony when perennial nominee Craig Miller threatened to quit the club, which seemed a bad thing to let happen since he was one of the club's most talented leaders. (On the other hand, I was the last Fugghead Contest "winner" -- but that's another story...)

Once Ed Green was dissuaded

from suing Andruschak, because what lawyer besides John Hertz was "capable of standing before a jury and explaining concepts like Merkins and Busted Dupers" (Andruschak's main competition in the contest), club President Matthew Tepper revealed Harry Andruschak had written a letter to LASFS offering to resign if the club would refund his lifetime dues and past donations, and in any event, requesting to be removed from the list of Patron Saints (Building Fund donors).

There followed the awesome spectacle of dozens of grown men and women foaming at the mouth and falling over themselves in a frenzy to find a way of seizing Harry's offer to quit the club without being stung by the nettle of having to repay his dues. Larry Niven declared, "We have an opportunity we must not pass up! A lapsed Saint becomes

a demon!" Members were nearly unanimous that none of Harry's dues should be refunded, but in passionate conflict about disposing of him as a Patron Saint (an honorific which includes an annual three-cheer salute at a chosen meeting.) Finally, the members voted 20-5 in favor of dropping him from the list. I recommend they continue to remember Andruschak on his anniversary night as the first Patron Ain't.

If Andruschak failed to get his Lifetime Dues back, he handsomely succeeded in a purpose nearer to his heart, occupying the focus of the club's attention for as long as possible.

FIREHORSE ANSWERS THE WEDDING BELL

Richard Lawrence congratulated Nancy Cobb and Kurt Siegel, on CompuServe: "Now married a few days, their reception was a big success. Loved the Cthulu balloon sculptures. And the 'Nancy & Kurt' printed slinkies were a great wedding favor."

NEW ADDITIONS

Timothy Lincoln Hisle was born to Debra and Matt Hisle on March 11, 1994, at 4:17 p.m. He weighed 7 pounds and measured 19 inches at birth.

FUNERAL FOR A FRIEND

I spent quite a bit of the last three weeks in February visiting Anne Pascal (formerly Hansen) in Good Samaritan Hospital as

she progressed through the final stages of cancer and passed away on March 8. Despite the end, we both got a lot out of the end time. In contrast to when my father died (in 1991, also of cancer) I felt so much more able to bring something to her situation.

Certainly, Anne was a much more stubborn and assertive patient than my father, and even on what proved to be her last day she seemed to follow what I said part of the time, passing in and out of delirium induced by morphine and her own body toxins. Only three days before I'd visited her before leaving for Con-Dor in San Diego, and she was still able to converse at times though she was in severe pain. By the time I returned Sunday, she was unable to talk.

I knew Anne for about 14 years, and for five of them we were constantly in each other's company, including her only other hospital stay while I knew her, for digestive problems, spent at St. John's in Santa Monica, near her parents' and sisters' homes. During her last illness she was hospitalized at Good Samaritan, in downtown L.A., because the January 17 quake had so thoroughly drubbed St. John's it looked like the battered shell of a boiled egg; some patients escaped rooms that had separated from the outer wall, leaving a two-foot chasm.

Anne fought cancer for almost two years. Right after last Thanksgiving she called to tell me about the "gamma-knife" surgery that had been done on her brain tumor. By the time I checked again, I discovered she'd already entered the hospital and I promptly visited her. But by the week-

end she decided to stop the chemotherapy and go home. I spent a Saturday afternoon visiting her at home. Then for a couple of weeks afterwards couldn't bear to go see her. I've heard accounts of cancer patient who feel their friends that shy away, as if it was contagious. Now I knew from experience: we're not shying away from cancer, but dying. When cancer's involved it feels like witnessing a prolonged, slow-motion, inevitably fatal accident.

At least that had been the prognosis. Once I got hold of myself and called her home her husband told me she'd been back in the hospital since a few days after my visit, for her blood pressure had bottomed out. From then on I was a regular visitor in the hospital, basically grateful not to have totally squandered the gift of whatever time remained. Part of that gift was meeting her family again, people I hadn't seen since Anne's wedding.

Anne's relationship with her parents always seemed strained, and she didn't see much of her sisters, even the ones who lived in L.A.. Their visits to the hospital meant so much to Anne, who was scared, and their conversations recalled many emotion-filled moments from the past. Anne's sister Patricia stayed over several nights in the last two weeks (despite having five kids at home) to be a soothing presence. I cannot get over the paradox that the illness which carried Anne away was the motive force to heal these family breaches -- so that she had less reason than ever to let life go.

OBITUARIES

Doug Lott, a rather colorful Denver-area fan, died February 25 after his car ran off Interstate 225 near the Cherry Creek Reservoir, according to *DASFAX's* March issue. The State Patrol said Lott lost control of his rental



car, crashed through a fence and landed in the Cherry Creek Dam spillway. The accident occurred around 9 p.m., but wasn't discovered until morning. Lott, 34, had been a member of DASFA for years, and served as its Secretary in 1993. The Denver club held a well-attended wake at Margaret Denny's home on March 4. They are collecting a memorial fund to pay for Lott's cremation/funeral and estate expenses, with any surplus to be donated the Colorado AIDS project.

Pat Mueller's father died Thursday night, March 24. According to Dennis Virzi, she flew down that morning and was there at the end. She spent a week in Harlingen with her mother and brother sorting things out.

Merle Insinga's mother passed away in March, the NESFA Business Meeting.

Well-known British fan Ella Parker died in early 1993, Len and June Moffatt recently learned from Ethel Lindsay. Wrote Ethel, "I am sorry to tell you that I have just found out that Ella Parker died in early 1993. Ella stopped answering letters but I always got a Xmas card. When one did not arrive this past year I wrote to her neighbor Helen. She phoned me to tell me that Ella had become very reclusive, hardly left the house. Then she started to have falls and was taken to a hospice where she died. Helen said it was a small funeral, only a few neighbors attended. Ella never really got over the shock of Fred's sudden death. Even before I left London her interest in fandom had waned... Ella was a very generous hostess when she was in fandom."

Who Let These Fanzine Reviews In Here!



GREAT METROPOLITAN NEWSPAPER?

Thus, Bjo Trimble's amusing disclaimer in a year-end letter to *Space-Time Continuum's* readers:

"The STC publishing office is not filled with an editorial staff and reporters rushing about shouting 'Stop the presses!' The STC 'office' is a 10-foot-square bedroom sitting area, which holds my computer desk and computer, dot-matrix and laser printers on Salvation Army end tables. This well-packed 'office' contains my light table, a big 1895 oak filing cabinet with a garage-sale tv on it bin boxes on a coffee table, reference books and *Star Trek Concordance* material. Creature comforts include a cassette player for music while typing and audio tapes while pasting up STC, a hot pad for my decaf coffee, a bag of my secret passion, yogurt-covered raisins and bed for our little old basenji-corgi dog, Princess."

Despite all the obstacles she has to overcome, Bjo's zine is really hitting its stride, covering the entire spectrum of science fiction/fantasy television, features and B-movies. Every issue is an avalanche of short news items about actors and others in the business, plus a column by Forry Ackerman, and letters from the readers. By definition, such a zine needs to please many disparate tastes not only to accomplish its mission of reporting on a busy field but to survive economically. Bjo provides the key ingredient that balances these demands: a strong editorial personality giving a unified point-of-view that cuts across the different interest areas.

[[Subscriptions, if sent by bulk-rate mail, cost \$10 for six issues. First-class delivery is \$15 in the USA. Inquire to Bjo for international rates: *Space-Time Continuum*, P.O. Box 6858, Kingwood, TX 77325.]]

TWIST TO REMOVE

Andy Hooper listed 21 "indispensable fanzines" in *Spent Brass* 25. **Twenty-one?** What'd he leave off? Running **Andy Hooper's List of Superfluous Fanzines** would have saved space -- and provided more scope to rip people, a common denominator of so many fanzines he admires, yet paradoxically, a trait missing from *Spent Brass* itself.

Unlike Ted White or Langford, who boldly carve their victims with scorn and satire, Hooper anesthetizes his subjects by telling them they publish "indispensable fanzines" before delivering the blow. Nobody exceeds Hooper's skill at withdrawing a proffered compliment. Rob Hansen and Joe Maraglino must think he came not to praise, but to bury....

"Rob Hansen is not the best fanwriter in Britain, and may not be, in fact, the best fan-writer in his own home. His series on the history of British fandom, *Then*, may not stand up as explosive reading, and as far as I know, may turn out to be not particularly accurate or encompassing as a work of history...."

"*Astromancer Quarterly* made an enormous splash when it first appeared, both for its impeccable physical presentation, and for the unexpected nature of its debut. Who knew there was that kind of fandom in Niagara Falls? But over the course of two years, some of the lustre has worn off. Niagara Falls doesn't seem to have the kind of vibrant club interaction that a great clubzine requires..."

My zine emerges practically unscathed by comparison, Hooper's compliment only blunted by the complaint that *File 770's* infrequency "impairs its value as a newzine" and the faint praise of being "entertaining in a tabloid sort of way."

It's too bad that Hooper's impulse to give critical acclaim to fanzines he enjoys is smothered by his greater need to appear the fannish sophisticate. If he simply wanted to foster greater numbers of quality fanzines, by spotlighting good models and

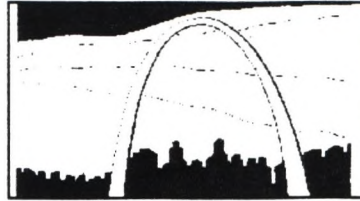
explaining what they do well he would motivate and equip people to make good fanzines. Trashing the ones that fall short only intimidates them from trying while it teaches them nothing. Unfortunately, fannish sophisticates can't risk liking something too much, never defend a personal preference in the face of attack by other "critiques", and must sustain the market value of their opinion with flashes of cynicism and condemnation.

In any field of endeavor some believe the best way to encourage participation is by fostering an exclusive group that others will strive to join. Nowhere has this experiment been tried more relentlessly than among faanish fanzine fans. No other field has been more vocal in its dissatisfaction about the fruits of failure -- their shrinking numbers, the rarity of good, new fanzines.

Decide what your values really are, Andy. Seeing you take the trouble to defend Ted White in *Apparatchik* #2, maybe you really do want to follow his example -- then do it with a whole heart, attack openly and boldly as he does. However, if what you believe is that fanzine publishing could be an enjoyable pastime for a wider group of people, then use your forum to teach them what works in the fanzines you admire, and how to improve on their example. Not many people have your facility for the work, and hardly any are willing to pay the price of appearing less than on the cutting-edge.

[[*Spent Brass*, Available for letters of comment, submissions of art or prose, or fanzines in trade. Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave. N. #103, Seattle, WA 98103.]]





CONVENTIONAL REPORTAGE

WISCON

Report by Joyce Scrivner

A small convention, Wiscon had 450 full members on Saturday with an unknown number of one day memberships. The hotel was shared with parents and youthful (hooligans) teens in town for the State Hockey Tournament. I don't think the local school was a winner as they didn't appear to be cheerful and spent Saturday evening in the swimming pool area with an ice chest of pepsi and liquor and a stack of cheap pizzas. The huckster room was full. Half the people were selling books (and these people complained at not selling well.) The rest were selling video and audio tapes, jewelry, and imported 'stuff' (chinese carvings, tarot cards....) One woman had two tables full of carved dragons and cats. Some of them were designed as jigsaw puzzles, some of them designed as decorations. One gentleman was selling what appeared to be someone's art collection: several David Egge pieces, one by Joe Bergeron, one by Eddy Jones, etc. His prices were better than those in the art show.

The programming was, as usual, oriented towards Women's ideas and visions. I was disappointed in the 'Books by Women You've Never Heard About' which recommended such unknown women as Eleanor Arnason. The video program was run by 'Mad Media Con' (which will hold a convention later this year.) Melissa Snodgrass and Karen Joy Fowler gave excellent speeches during the banquet about women and how the change that appeared so positive isn't integrated yet into society.

Several of the committee appeared tired of running their areas, so I expect the convention will change again next year. I hope it moves back into

one of the major hotels near the capitol. There are few places except the hotel to eat in the Holiday Inn, and in the dreary remains of winter there is no place to walk to either. The weekend was almost warm enough (in the mid 40F range) for shirt sleeve walking for the locals and those from Minnesota. I even saw some people wearing sandals.

PIRATES OF FENZANCE

Right after the last *File 770* mentioned that I have more confidence in bids that list their members, there appeared the latest Baltimore in 98 Committee List.

Brian Alexander, Shirley B. Avery, Covert Beach, Roberta Bross, Jack L. Chalker, Pat Ciuffreda, Ellen (Rhi) Dennison, Richard Dennison, Martin Deutsch, Joseph Fleischmann, Bobbie Gear, Martin Gear, Lee Gilliland, "Grinner" Hal Haag, Thomas Horman, Marian Horseman, Kitty Jensen, Quinn Jones, Pat Kelly, Judith Kindell, Irv Koch, Perianne Lurie, Robert MacIntosh, Mike Mannes, Keith Marshall, Thomas McMullan, Rick Mulligan, Michael Nelson, Jeff Olhoeff, Lance Oszko, Julianne Owings, Mark Owings, Eva Whitley,

BAD NUMBERS

Former Worldcon chairman Mark Olson (N3; 1989) recent asked, "How does one measure the attendance at a Worldcon?" -- meaning, what rule should be applied to boil all the available membership data down to one historic figure?

I hope Mark's question won't go undiscussed,

although if the aftermath of ConFrancisco is any guide few fans realize hard data exists or share Mark's passion for accuracy.

For example, *Science Fiction Chronicle's* October 1993 issue (page 4) contained the startlingly inaccurate headline: "**8,365 Members: ConFrancisco Is Second Largest Worldcon Ever.**" Later the headline's 8,365 number reappears as the record "total membership" figure *SFC* attributes to L.A.con II (1984) -- which is also wrong: 8,365 was only the **attending** membership of L.A.con II, its total membership of all classes was 9,282. In the body of the *SFC* article it gives 8,122 as ConFrancisco's total membership figure -- though never distinguishing between **total attendance** and **total memberships**.

Another numbers game that bedeviled fans writing about ConFrancisco was the seat count for the Masquerade. Two ordinarily quite reliable worldcon reporters, Mike Kennedy and Evelyn Leeper, wrote that the people in the masquerade line were told only 2000 could be seated, contradicting the committee's statement that 2900 were seated.

Evelyn Leeper's version was: "We waited in line from 7:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. to get in, and were

somewhere around [number] 1500. One good thing was that they were counting the line so that once it reached 2000 people they could tell latecomers not to waste time standing in line."

Melanie Herz' conreport in *SFSFS Shuttle 103* recognized the conflicting numbers: "[The] room was capable of handling 2,900 seats theater style. However, for whatever reason (I never found out what) convention officials reduced the amount to around 2,000."

Is it true that the Masquerade line was counted off? Is it true that people in line were quoted the 2000 number? How many seats were there, really?

Janet Wilson Anderson, ConFrancisco's Masquerade Director, replied on CompuServe: "There's been a lot of inaccurate reporting regarding the seating capacity for the ConFrancisco masquerade. After some tracking down, I've found the source of most of the misinformation. Anyway, here is the correct and accurate info for those to whom it matters:

"Saturday afternoon the seating capacity of the main floor seating was reported to me at 2914 seats. This was less than we had



COMPARATIVE WORLDCON MEMBERSHIP TABLE

| | 1989 N3 | 1992 Magicon | 1993 SF |
|---------------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| Advance attending | 5758 | 4783 | 5373 |
| Advance supporting | 315 | 387 | 410 |
| Advance children's | 133 | 177 | 71 |
| At-door attending | 745 | 474 | 658 |
| At-door supporting | 10* | 19 | 8 |
| At-door children's | 20* | 15 | 36 |
| At-door 1-day | 800* | 508 | 1164 |
| Biggest day's 1-day | 300* | 200* | 564 |
| Free passes | 50* | 20* | 391 |
| Advance no-shows | 400* | 400* | 482 |
| Duplicate people | 150* | 125* | 91 |
| (*) = Estimate | | | |

Combining these together, we get:

| | N3 | Magicon | SF |
|---------------------------|------|---------|------|
| Highest possible count | 7831 | 6383 | 8111 |
| Members of all kinds | 7781 | 6363 | 7720 |
| Unique members, all kinds | 7631 | 6238 | 7629 |
| Warm bodies on site | 6956 | 5452 | 7120 |
| Full members | 6981 | 5855 | 6556 |
| Peak warm bodies on site | 6606 | 5269 | 6611 |
| FTE warm bodies on site | 6573 | 5238 | 6435 |
| Attending members | 6656 | 5449 | 6138 |
| Attending members onsite | 6256 | 5049 | 5656 |

Notes: (a) 1-days are counted as 'admissions', not as members. (b) Free passes are for vendors, guards and the like. They are neither members nor admissions. (c) FTE = Full-time equivalent. It takes three 1-day members to make one FTE member. This is based on both income and a feeling that it takes about 3 days to 'attend' a Worldcon. (d) 'Duplicate people' is an estimate of the number of 1-days who returned a and bought a second 1-day. (e) 'Advance no-shows' are the number of advance members who didn't attend or transfer their memberships. (f) Children are counted as full attending members. (g) Kids-in-tow are not counted as members or as warm bodies. (Mostly because no one has any reliable count.) (h) Supporting members are full members. *[[Author: Mark Olson]]*

When the costumers, tech crew, staff and fans in the photo area are added in, another 275 people, more than 3100 were on hand.

Jeff Berry, another ConFrancisco committee member, said the Esplanade Ballroom's seating for the four major events was: Opening Ceremonies, 3006; Masquerade, 2954; Hugo Awards, 2918; Closing Ceremonies, 2918.

Returning to Mark Olson's question of how to count Worldcon members, he reminds us the figure is not merely relegated to the long list at the back of each year's Souvenir Book, but is used by later Worldcons to project budgets and assign staff.

originally planned for (3200), due to requirements for additional aisles inserted by the Moscone when reviewing our floor plans.

"We advised the line control staff to allow relatively free access to the hall up to 2000, at which point they were to slow the line down, since seating would be scattered by that point and people would have to hunt for seats. This obviously got translated into 'There's only 2000 seats!', which was not correct."

There are more categories to consider than simply those who came and those who stayed home. There are several membership classes: the attending and supporting member classes defined in the WSFS rules; kids-in-tow; one-days; complementary memberships for press, other kinds of mundanes on site.

Olson drew up the table comparing the membership of three recent Worldcons: "I'm not advocating putting **two** numbers in the Long List; I realize that that's impractical," Olson reassures smofs. "But this leads to my second

objection: While we have a fighting chance to get reliable numbers for a few recent Worldcons, a list of numbers whose definition changes randomly from year to year is kind of useless. I think we're better off retaining consistency (if, of course, the list as it now exists is consistent!) than switching."

TREASURE OF THE BOCA RATON

About ten years ago, in the eyeblink between two Worldcons, convention fans spun dizzily between extremes: from the 1983 con's \$45,000 loss to the 1984 con's \$75,000 surplus (*after* membership and staff reimbursements).

The first disastrous event rallied Worldcon-runners from different areas to cooperate in practical, financial ways they'd never seriously considered before. The second event, a windfall, motivated some of those same fans to search for an equally practical way to assure that the proceeds of volunteer-run worldcons would be used for the benefit of fandom. The Noreascon 3 leadership spearheaded a plan to distribute one-half their surplus among any of the next three Worldcons that promised to carry out a similar plan. ConFiction and MagiCon participated in Boston's plan, and Con-Francisco with Magicon's similar plan. (L.A.con III will also one-half its profit to the worldcon committees for 1997-1999 that adopt a comparable policy.)

Years after Robert Taylor helped run the 1985 NASFiC in Austin, he suggested tongue-in-cheek that one of the first things a chairman should do is sit his committee down to watch *Treasure of the Sierra Madre* as motivation for setting the profits policy long before any money was in hand and minds were unclouded by greed. The latest proof of the wisdom of his suggestion is at hand.

MagiCon discovered it still had a few thousand dollars available to pass along, after delays in closing their books which lasted past ConFrancisco. Now the CF committee is aggravated because Magicon, seeing ConFrancisco was over and made money, concluded it didn't need more pass-on funds and planned to distribute the money to other committees. (To the extent L.A.con III would theoretically receive part of the money as a pass-on from CF, we gave permission for it to be given instead to the 1994 and 1995 committees.)

A ConFrancisco committee member recently wrote to several other Worldcons that, "The continued delay in the distribution of pass-along funds from MagiCon to their three successors is causing unnecessary ill-will, and if the problems continue, I suggest that it will become very difficult to persuade future Worldcons to participate in the game."

A specific obstacle was the type of legal advice given to Magicon, that it could not donate funds to non-US organizations and organizations without IRS tax-exemptions under 501(c)(3) without imperiling its own status. MagiCon is unwilling to make a direct donation (write a check) to Con-Adian and Intersection. MagiCon offered to pay for some US-based expenses of the Winnipeg and Glasgow Worldcons.

However, I researched the IRS regulations and revenue procedures governing the donation of funds from 501(c)(3) organizations to non-US organizations of substantially the same character, and confirmed my findings with an attorney at the National Office specializing in that area, which were that cash can be paid directly to non-US worldcons that are organized in their own country along the same lines as US nonprofit groups are.

ConFrancisco plans to make direct payments under these procedures. They lately estimated having about \$30,000 left after paying reimbursements and CF's remaining expenses. Half of this, \$15,000, is available for pass-along funds. Apparently ConAdian will be able to qualify for direct payments; Martin Easterbrook, of Intersection, reported that 'Worldcon (Scotland) Limited' is registered under the companies act 1985 in Scotland under Scottish law, which differs from English law in some respects. He said, "I think this makes our situation more difficult than that of ConAdian."

If Glasgow is organized as the equivalent of a C-corporation or an S-corporation (IRS shorthand for two typical kinds of profit-motivated business-operating corporations) that would render doubtful whether 501(c)(3)'s could expend any funds on their behalf, either directly or by paying US expenses. From both theory and practice (the St. Louis court case), we know it violates the principle of tax exempt corporations when 501(c)(3) groups benefit profit-oriented organizations.

FAN MAIL

Letters of Comment

SYMPATHETIC VIBRATIONS

Harry Warner Jr. Bless you for reporting as promptly and comprehensively about how California fandom came through the earthquake. I had been quite concerned whenever I read or heard in earthquake news the mention of a town that I associated with a fan. My knowledge of geography in the Los Angeles area has always been quite primitive, consisting mainly of the fact that I think all the prominent fans out there live to the east of the Pacific Ocean.

But until the new issue of *File 770* came today, I had heard only one reassuring word, a letter from Harry Andruschak telling me he had escaped serious consequences. I trust that your issues to come will not need to relate any personal injuries involving fans and that monetary losses from property damage will not be excessive.

I've been having a spot of trouble myself from natural causes, although so far nothing worse than hovering on a nervous breakdown has been caused by this month's severe weather around Hagerstown. One morning, the temperature here hit -21 at almost the same moment that my furnace broke down. I thought sure I would get sick from shivering in the frigid house waiting for the service man to arrive hours later, but I didn't.

Spike Parsons: Congratulations on pubbing your ish during an earthquake, my friend. If anyone had a doubt before, THIS certainly qualifies you to chair a worldcon. Take care.

David Bratman: I will be interested to see how many people besides Genny Dazzo and Harlan Ellison were awake at the time the quake hit. The tendency of fans to carry on late-night hours even at home has always interested me. I've noticed that I usually receive phone calls from east-coast friends when it is 10 or 11 p.m. out here. The mind recoils from the simple task of calculating the time over there.

Joyce Scrivner: I was in Winnipeg at the volunteer/committee meeting when the earthquake took place. (Along with Robbie Cantor, Kevin Standlee, etc.) The cold outside, -26C and windchill of -55C, was not as thrilling or of as much concern to me on my drive back to the twin cities as the people in your area. I knew the phone would have problems, and just 'expected' the information to show up on the net. I really appreciated the speed and amount of information you put together.

Ted White: Thanks for *F:770 #101* which arrived last week while I was flat on my back in bed, fighting off a case of bronchial pneumonia and losing weight through involuntary fasting. I scanned the quake and fire coverage immediately -- glad to hear that no one I know (no fan) was killed or seriously injured. (But I wonder about that little zoo outside Sydney, where we got to pet the Qantas koalas: I bet it was directly in the path of those fires.)

A day ago, finally up and about a bit, gradually getting my strength back, I read the rest of the issue, cover to cover. Things were going along smoothly until I hit page 19,

and your comments on the award-voting at the Portland worldcon "which had no ties." Mighod, Mike! I should hope not. Wasn't that in 1950? -- long before the institution of either the Hugo Awards or their predecessor, the SF Awards (or whatever), which were not picked by popular vote? Or am I missing something here?

[[Nope, my mistake. Portland was the site of the 1950 Worldcon, and preceded the Hugos by three years. I have misremembered which ancient Worldcon's vote tallies Fred Patten gave me, and don't recall when I published them. Perhaps Fred will refresh my memory?]]

Dave Langford: Thanks for F770:-101, a literally earth-shattering issue.... A few updates about the *Ansible* Bits you quoted. I was more amused than anything by the UPS delivery charge for the Hugo parts; after all, it gave me the chance to explain that the going rate for a fanzine Hugo is only 15 pounds. However, the kindly and generous hearts of ConFrancisco reacted in horror to my little squib and insisted on refunding the charge -- as mentioned in a subsequent issue. Nice people.

About Genie censorship of the rude bits of *Ansible*: what actually happens is that kindly Elizabeth Willey copies the thing to Genie and edits the text with strategic hyphens, as in 'Abigail Frost's f-cking colourful f-cking language'. She does this because unbowdlerized versions will be deleted by sysops -- who, Patrick Nielsen Hayden told me, are deeply embarrassed by having to do this, but such are the

rules of many commercial nets. (Otherwise known as the First Amendment.) Naturally, there is a temptation to have Elizabeth insert such a paragraph as:

'GENIE B-STIALITY SCANDAL!

-----! It couldn't happen in Britain, we hope.'

HOW FREE ARE FREE MEMBERSHIPS FOR PROS?

Kevin Standlee: Congratulations on getting out an issue of *File 770* while dealing with the calamity of a major earthquake. I hope everyone affected by the quake is able to recover.

Darrell Schweitzer's letter in *F770:101* caught my attention, if only because he recently trashed Con-Francisco for apparently committing the same crime that Disclave did, namely of not inviting the oft-programmed Darrell Schweitzer to be on programming and not wanting to put him on any programming when he pointed out the omission. That aside, I believe that Schweitzer does not truly realize the cost of giving away free memberships for program participants. He says "that a professional's presence costs no more than the cost of manufacturing a badge, and that the more pros you get, the more room nights you sell, thus helping the convention get its function space cheap (or free)." This is a common misperception, but it isn't true, as my personal experience has shown.

In 1991, I was head of programming for Eclecticon 5, Sacramento's local general science fiction convention. During the planning phases, the matter of how many people to invite and what to offer them came up, and all the arguments Darrell uses were thrown at me. "Programming participants don't cost us anything," people said. "They'll all stay in the hotel and we'll get our space comped," said

others. I allowed myself to be talked into inviting everyone in sight in Northern California, and many of them accepted the invitation, taking advantage of the free membership for themselves and a companion. Some complained about the \$10 membership we asked for up to two additional companions, insisting on their right to bring anyone else they wanted with them as further complementary members. We ended up with over a hundred program participants and perhaps fifty or seventy-five "hangers-on", and this was for a convention that ended up with just short of 500 members total. *More than a third of the cons' membership hadn't paid anything to attend.* Because of this huge oversupply of programming participants, we had 3 1/2 tracks of programming (the "half-track" was the hotel's atrium, where we ended up putting some panels because we ran out of other space). Nearly every panel had six, seven, or even more participants, and most panels had more panelists than attendees.

Besides the cost of making the membership badge, which was admittedly small, each one of these programming participants and their guests got a program book (publications are not free, despite what some people think), and each of them expected to be provided plenty of free food in the green room. Of course, we made multiple mailings to the participants as well. Far from being "free," I believe that perhaps a third of the overall cost of running that convention could be directly attributable to program participants.

As to all those room nights that were supposed to make our convention space cheap or free, they never materialized. Our peak-night booking was a pitiable thirty rooms or so, not even enough to earn a single room-night from the hotel, let alone pay for our function space. Function space rental repre-

sented half of the con's total expenses, so you can see that there wasn't much left to spend on the paying members.

For a variety of reasons, there never was another Eclecticon. Were I to do it again, I'd certainly cut back on the amount of programming and the number of people invited to attend for free. There would be fewer people attending and fewer panels, but more than likely those panels would have been better-attended, and the convention could have supported the total membership load by having a higher percentage of paying members to spread the cost of the freebies over.

The *marginal* cost of a single free membership is difficult to calculate, and appears to be close to zero most of the time. However, taken a group, free memberships are *not* free to the convention providing them. The cost is simply hidden, and if it grows too much can end up sinking the convention.

I invite Darrell to try put himself on the hook for the costs of running a modern science fiction convention, as I and the other members of the Eclecticon 5 committee were, and then come back and tell us how little those "free" memberships cost.

Ted White: Why do I feel a strange sense of deja-vu all over again when I try to read Darrell Schweitzer's letter? Didn't you run this letter once before? Is this from an Old Disc? I thought you handled Darrell's whining very well. You know, I think I've been to every Disclave since they were revived in 1958, and this was the first year in a long time in which I was not asked to be on a panel or something. But so what? I hung out in the bar (with Gardner and a lot of other people), and enjoyed the part of the con I always enjoy best, seeing old friends like Jay Halde-

man, Avedon carol and like that. Times change, and unlike Darrell I'm not a wannabe pro; I don't need to strut before an audience that has probably never heard of me (and probably never read a pro-zine), just to preen my ego. Darrell should grow up. He's been seventeen for an awful long time now.

MORE CONFRANCISCO

Elizabeth Ann Osborne: One of the unhappy pros [[after ConFrancisco]] wrote that in the future cons should pay speaking fees to writers, instead of the free memberships, etc., that are given now. I wondered if one bad Worldcon experience should color all of fandom like that. I was at Magicon in Orlando and don't remember hearing many complaints from the pros or the fans. One year later, some writers are talking about boycotting all future Worldcons until they get their way.

[[These days a Worldcon may have 350 or more program participants. Currently, none of them are paid a speaker's fee. Worldcon profits have varied wildly over the past ten years, from ConFiction's breakeven to L.A.-con II's large surplus. Pick a number you like and divide it by 350: the result will be significantly less than what a typical writer would quote as his speaking fee, and a far less than a Big Name charges. The program would have to be drastically trimmed if fees had to be paid. That also might alienate volunteers. Not all of them, by any means -- even Creation cons still get volunteers. But attempting to put the worldcon on that kind of economic footing would transform it into another, and so far as I am concerned, lesser, event.]]

What really worries me about this problem is the future for the small local cons who can't afford huge speaking fees for a Big Name Author. I have been out of con running for nearly eight years now and

things may be different from when free travel expenses, room, meals and the bar bill was enough to get most pro writers anywhere. I'm not talking about Worldcons or even the large regional cons but the small local events which still draw less than 500 people. If writers start charging, I guess SF cons will go the way of fan-run Star Trek conventions and disappear to be replaced by professional trade shows run by non-fans.

[[As long as volunteer-run sf conventions exist, I believe there will be plenty of writers who will accept guest-of-honor invitations on those terms, either because they feel genuinely honored, or they regard conventions as an effective means of self-promotion.]]

I liked the stories about the 1968 Worldcon [[by Mike Resnick]]. I was glad I wasn't there! What a mess it sounds like, although I guess that I'll have to wait until Harry Warner writes his next book on fan history to find out more.

Marty Helgesen: The reports of criminal attacks on fans confirms my major objection to having the filking in a hotel some distance from the main party hotel.... I think that if filking is not in the main party hotel it should be in an adjacent one. (The film program, which I never bothered to visit, was in a hotel across the street from the main party hotel.)

My other objection is that putting the filking in a remote location ghettoizes filking. Many fans include visits to the filk areas in their party hopping. When the filking is so far away, alternating between room parties and filking is a problem no matter how safe the streets are.

HUGO VOTING

Ross Pavlac: No, I really wasn't

accusing anyone in my discussion of past Worldcon handling of Hugo administration. My comments were a mulling over of the notion that while most departments and divisions of Worldcons have been disasters from time to time during the modern Worldcon era (i.e., since 1974), the Hugo admin is one area that has avoided disaster.

Not that there haven't been problems. Part of my view is that when the critics start slinging rocks every year and warning of impending disaster, most fans give little thought to just what would constitute a **real** disaster for a particular department or convention. Gaffes like the nominee announcement glitch in 1991 or the ceremony glitch in 1992 were no fun for those involved, but hardly constitute disasters. Let's talk about \$50,000 in the hole, or a hotel nearly cancelling the function space and room block -- **then** we're talking disaster!

By the way, I am agape in astonishment at the miracles that John Sapienza and Richard Ney's performed in saving the ConFrancisco film program. When the Tucker Hotel's wing with the Smof Hall of Fame is built, Mr. Sapienza will get an alcove all to himself in honor of that. Wow.

Teddy Harvia: I carry Kevin Standlee's comment further. Amid constant fan controversies, you remain neutral in your coverage, fair and balanced. For that alone, you should have won the fan writer Hugo. Just keep my name out of it if you intend to raise a fuss over it. Ha, ha, ha....

[[Contributors addresses cut this time so I can save a sheet and mail the DUFF ballot!]]

1994 DUFF Candidates' Platforms

Alan Stewart

Northern ~~Exposure~~ America beckons, a chance to put faces to names I've corresponded with, exchanged fanzines and read about. Catch up with friends and see the Worldcon in its (almost) home environment. In Australian fandom I've been involved with running the Melbourne Science Fiction Club and edited their newsletter *Ethel the Aardvark*. Currently I'm the Official Bloody Editor of ANZAPA as well as publishing *Thyme*. Local and national convention committees have taken up too much of my time, and I was the Australian Administrator of FFANZ for two years. I think I know a bit of what I'm in for, and that's the chance to become a DUFF.

Previous North American travel: One-week working holiday 29 Sept.-8 Oct. 1987. Attended DragonCon '87. Stayed with/met Moshe Feder, Alan & Donya White and other fans in New York and San Francisco.

Nominators: Eric Lindsay, LynC, Marc Ortlieb, Sheryl Birkhead, Dick & Nicki Lynch

Ron Clarke

I was introduced to fandom in 1964 by John Foyster and John Baxter. My first con was the Sixth Australian Convention in 1966. I started publishing a genzine, *The Mentor*, in 1964 and am now up to issue #82. I've been involved in starting the new series of Sydney conventions (Syncons) and was one of the founding members of the Sydney Science Fiction Foundation. I've also helped organise three of the current Sydney SF clubs. I've travelled overland to England with SF fans, and was invited to represent Australian fandom in Volgograd in 1991. I've published trip reports on both.

Previous North American travel: Passed through (by ship) in 1970 on return from Europe. No fan contacts.

Nominators: Bill Congreve, John Foyster, Cath Ortlieb, Mike Glyer, Tom Sadler

Lucy Sussex and Julian Warner

As a writer and editor, Lucy is a popular guest and panelist at conventions. As a fan, she is a contributor to fanzines, a James Tiptree Jr. Award Cakestall organiser and an enthusiastic participant in fannish mischief. She also makes Chilli Beer. Julian co-edited the West Australian fanzine *The Space Wastrel* and played Rail Baron. Now in Melbourne, he pubs his ish occasionally, is a member of ANZAPA, a CD-collector, a wine buff and a devotee of fannish dinners. We promise to party hard, write our trip report RSN and not gossip any more than is fannishly necessary.

Previous North American travel: None.

Nominators: Justin Ackroyd, Carey Handfield, Nick Stathopoulos, Pat Murphy, Joyce Scrivner

Donna Heenan

For 17 years I have been a fan, enjoying myself thoroughly by going to conventions, espousing my latest theories on books, and meeting with my friends. I have recently felt the need to repay my fun-times in fandom by organising and participating in a few of the Great Events happening here. Like running Constantinople -- the 1994 NatCon, and convening the Australian bid for the Worldcon in 1999.

There perhaps lies my reason for entering the DUFF race! As convenor of the Australia in '99 bid, a tour of fannish America would enable me to meet most of the people I will be dealing with over the course of our bid.

As well as that I'm humorous (my puns even make me groan) and entertaining to be around. Find out for yourself -- "VOTE DONNA FOR DUFF"!

Previous North American travel: Holidays in 1986 and 1988; in 1992, fannish activity included attending Magicon and ditto/Octocon.

Nominators: Ian Gunn, Greg Hills, Clive Newall, Jan Howard Finder, Gay Haldeman

Send this complete ballot and US\$4 or A\$5 (or more) voting donation to an administrator by April 30, 1994.

DUFF Administrators

North America: Dick & Leah Smith, 410 W. Willow Road, Prospect Heights IL 60070-1250, USA

Phone: +1 (708) 394-1950 *Internet:* dick@smith.chi.il.us

Australasia: Phil Ware, 77 Railway Place W., Flemington VIC 3031, AUSTRALIA

Phone: +61 (3) 376-8391 *Internet:* plw@mtiame.mtia.oz.au

Reproduction and distribution of this ballot is encouraged, as long as it is done verbatim.

Anyone doing so should substitute his or her name here:

Dick & Leah Smith

THE DUFF BALLOT

1994
Australasia to North America

Since 1972, the Down Under Fan Fund, a fan-supported fellowship, has encouraged closer ties between science fiction fans in Australasia and North America through the annual exchange of representatives. Host countries alternate each year. DUFF is supported by voluntary contributions from fans all over the world.

DUFF delegates attend Worldcon or a national convention in the host country and visit with fans they might otherwise never meet in person. Delegates are responsible for administering DUFF and raising funds until a new delegate from their continent is elected, and are expected to publish trip reports.

Donations: DUFF exists solely on the donations and contributions of fans and fan organizations. Please give generously. Anyone may contribute, and any donations in excess of the voting donation are gratefully accepted. Checks should be made out to **Richard Smith** (in North America) or **Phil Ware** (in Australasia). Money should always be sent in the administrator's home currency. We are also pleased to get donations of items for auction at various conventions -- autographed books and other SF-related materials are especially welcome.

Voting: Ballots must be signed and accompanied by a donation of at least \$4 in United States currency or \$5 in Australian currency. ~~You must return the entire ballot.~~ You may vote only once. Anyone active in fandom before January 1993 may vote. Voting is limited to natural persons. If, at the time of voting, you think your name may not be known to the administrators, please include the name of a fan (other than a candidate) or fan group who can vouch that you meet these criteria. We will not count unverifiable votes.

DUFF uses the preferential system of balloting to guarantee an automatic runoff and a majority win. You rank the candidates in order of preference (1, 2, 3...). If there is no absolute majority for one candidate after the first count of votes, first-place votes for the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped and the second-place votes on those ballots are assigned to the candidates named. This goes on until one candidate has a majority. It is therefore important to vote for second, third, etc., places, especially if you choose to write in a candidate. (You are not required to fill in more than your name, address and first choice.)

Candidates: Three Australasian and two North American fans have stood as nominators for each of the candidates. Each candidate has provided a \$30 bond, a brief written platform and a description of previous North American travel, and promised (barring Acts of God) to travel to Conadian, the 52nd World Science Fiction Convention, in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, Sept. 1-5, 1994.

Deadline: *Ballots must be postmarked by April 30 and reach an administrator by May 5, 1994.*

+++++ DUFF 1994 -- VOTING BALLOT +++++

List in order of preference (1, 2, 3, etc.):

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alan Stewart | <input type="checkbox"/> Write-in_ _ _ _ _ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ron Clarke | <input type="checkbox"/> Hold Over Funds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lucy Sussex & Julian Warner | <input type="checkbox"/> No preference |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donna Heenan | |

Please print clearly and legibly.

NAME

STREET

CITY

STATE/PROVINCE

POSTAL CODE

COUNTRY

PHONE

E-MAIL

SIGNATURE

Voters must be natural persons who have been active in fandom since before January 1993. If you think you may be unknown to the administrators, please give the name of a fan or fan group who can vouch that you meet these criteria:

REFERENCE