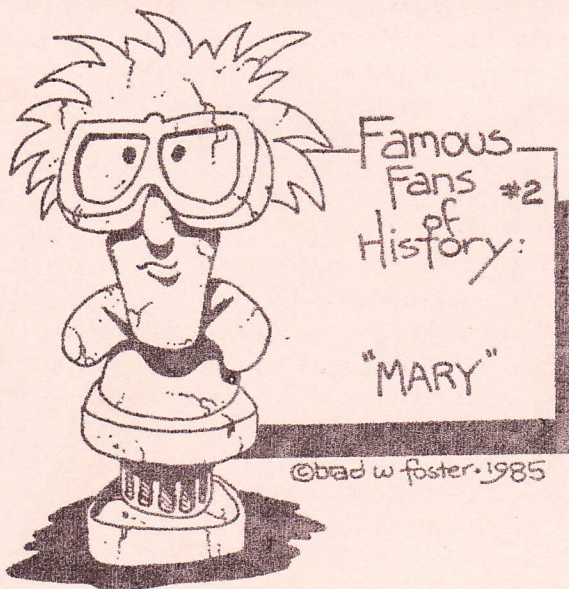


File 77



FILE 770:81, the "smell of WorldCon in the air" issue, is edited by Mike Glyer at 5828 Woodman Ave. #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. Available to fellow members of the Noreascon 3 committee, and everyone else (though "everyone else" is probably a smaller set than "N3 committee" at this point) for all those conversations that never happened (*wink*) but mainly 5 issues for \$5. Others may get it for arranged trades (primarily with other news or clubzines), hot gossip, and scandalous long-distance phone calls (over 137 miles is considered scandalous).



SCIFI FUNDS NOREASCON 3 MASQUERADE BROADCAST: Los Angeles fans voted to spend \$3,750.00 to subsidize the equipment and hotel closed-circuit television fee necessary to broadcast the WorldCon masquerade.

Noreascon 3 having prudently remained in the black, spending only its cash-in-hand, the SCIFI contribution will assure closed-circuit viewing of the masquerade while freeing resources to be used elsewhere by the committee.

SPEAKING OF FREEING UP FUNDS: TOM HANLON SAYS 'LET OUR REFUNDS GO!' Approaching NOLAcon's first anniversary membership reimbursement checks have started materializing in mailboxes of the con's far-flung staff.

Tom Hanlon takes credit for this development. Reminded that the New Orleans Science Fiction and Fantasy Festival would attract into town some of the NOLAcon staff who live

in Texas and Georgia, folks who were agitated by rumors the con had a surplus of perhaps \$20,000 and wondered why their membership refund checks hadn't been cut, Tom Hanlon had an inspiration.

Hanlon is not a person of small inspiration. He is an artist. Remember, this visionary fan wanted to give the Shaft in its coffin-shaped box back to Boston fans during a New Orleans jazz funeral at the closing ceremonies!

Hanlon conceived of buying a full-page ad in the Noreascon 3 program book that would say: "JOHN AND JUSTIN: LET OUR REFUNDS GO!" In fact he was willing to put the first \$100 in the pot. When he told the idea to Willis Siros, Rick Albertson and George Alex Effinger, they laughingly reached for their wallets and committed \$100 each. Hanlon organized the NOSFFF program and cunningly placed Willie Siros and NOLAcon chair John Guidry on the same item. A conspirator in the audience asked Willie about the ad, and sent a thrill of terror through Guidry who insisted the surplus was still on hand and the refund checks would be sent soon. (Which they were, with a very nice cover letter signed by Winston and Guidry.)

POSTSCRIPTS TO A DAVE LANGFORD LETTER: Langford will be in the US during November to be guest of honor at Orycon (on the same weekend I'm guest at Windycon -- know you'll understand, Dave). His LoC will appear next issue but there is a postscript full of British fan news:

"Some exceedingly cautious tendrils are being extended concerning a 1997 (I think) British Worldcon bid, whose proponents are naturally determined to Learn From Conspiracy etc. Contact is Vince Docherty, Flat 2, 276 Camberwell Rd., Camberwell, London SE5 0DR [U.K.]"

"Brian Aldiss has now made two public, printed appearances, in Critical Wave and Vector, saying how good his friend (and Trillion Year Spree co-author) David Wingrove's massive novel sequence Chung Kuo will be while rather conveying that he hasn't actually, er, well, um, read it."

Chris Priest and Leigh Kennedy are expecting twins in November.

British fans, principally Caroline Mullan, Bernie Peek and Abi Frost, have been co-opted by ConFiction to do its daily newzine. They are 'practicing' with a monthly single-sheeter to be distributed at pubs, sent to fanzines like F770, etc., first one due any week now...

"After many alarming rumors about the competence of the 1990 British Eastercon ('Eastcon') organization -- I was particularly unimpressed when the committee was announced as having 'got its act together' when he only decisive change had been the resignation of the Treasurer (Sylvia

Starshine) over budget arguments, she feeling the committee was budgeting money it didn't have... In a Washington-like coup the con lost its Birmingham conference center, which appears to have been its best move yet, since with hasty imported assistance from local con fandom, the whole event has been shifted to the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool, very popular as the 1988 Eastercon venue."

1989 HUGO AWARD WINNERS

BEST NOVEL: Cyteen by C. J. Cherryh
 BEST NOVELLA: "The Last of the Winnebagos" by Connie Willis
 BEST NOVELETTE: "Schrodinger's Kitten" by George Alec Effinger
 BEST SHORT STORY: "Kirinyaga" by Mike Resnick
 BEST NONFICTION BOOK: The Motion of Light in Water by Samuel R. Delany
 BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION: Who Framed Roger Rabbit?
 BEST PROFESSIONAL EDITOR: Gardner Dozois
 BEST PROFESSIONAL ARTIST: Michael Whelan
 BEST SEMIPROZINE: Locust, ed. by Charles N. Brown
 BEST FANZINE: Elle 220, ed. by Mike Glyer
 BEST FAN WRITER: Dave Langford
 BEST FAN ARTIST: (tie) Brad Foster and Diana Gallagher Wu
 JOHN W. CAMPBELL AWARD: Michaela Roessner

NOREASCON 3 SPECIAL AWARDS: (1) Alex Schomberg; (2) SF Lovers Digest, moderator Saul Jaffe

FIRST FANDOM AWARDS: (1) L. Sprague DeCamp; (2) Don Grant; (3) Frederik Pohl.

GRYPHON AWARD: (selected by Andre Norton) (1) Elizabeth Waters; (2) Lee Barwick (honor book)

1992 SITE SELECTION WINNER: Orlando. Full Noreascon 3 coverage next issue.

CARTOON FANTASY ORGANIZATION DISINTEGRATES: According to Fred Patten's APA-L 'zine Rabango Radioactivos, 12 years after Japanese animation fans formed the first C/FO chapter in Los Angeles, the group is about to lose all its officers and the once-extensive club's three remaining chapters may go their own way.

Last March, the founding Los Angeles chapter was suspended from the national organization now chaired by Texan Randall Stukey. In May, it was learned that Bay Area fans Owen and Eclaire Hannifen threatened to sue C/FO for \$1,500,000 on charges of libel and defamation of

character due to C/FO chairman Randall Stukey having namecalled them in C/FO publications. Stukey responded to this threat by announcing he would resign, or disband the club, in the naive hope such maneuvers in advance of a lawsuit would save him. (Hearing these announcements, Owen Hannifen told Patten "for all practical purposes their public vindication has already been accomplished.")

C/FO's three remaining chapters have taken their own fate in hand. Los Angeles has considered abandoning the C/FO before the national unit gets around to expelling them. The other two chapters, in Texas, decided to jointly secede and form the South Texas Animation Association. Patten concludes, "Rumors of the C/FO's impending demise have set off a more traumatic reaction among Japanimation fandom than I'd have expected, considering that most C/FO chapters dropped out of the club last year, and the club has come to be widely dismissed as having degenerated into a shrinking but increasingly pompous bureaucracy. I've been flooded with letters and phone calls during the past week, asking for my opinion of what is going on, what should be done, and whether I or the C/FO-L.A. will join in creating a new (inter)national Japanimation club.... One group of fans associated with the former C/FO-Hayward has started a new Japanimation national fan bulletin, the Ronin Network. Its first issue 'objectively' headlines the disintegration of C/FO under the maladministration of its Chairman Randall Stukey. The President of the Southern California Animation Network (SCAN), the former C/FO-San Diego, proposes joint talks during the San Diego Comic-Con to discuss merging SCAN and the C/FO-L.A. as the start of a new Japanimation fan confederation. The President of the Japanese Animation Fan Alliance (JAFA) suggests that our clubs unite, to combine the C/FO-L.A.'s expertise and tape resources with their 10,000 (sic) fans. Most intriguingly, a new group in Austin, apparently a rival of the South Texas Animation Association announced earlier this month, says that it will be perfectly happy to associate with Los Angeles' animation fans in starting a new international fan club. Where will this lead?"

MADELEINE FRANCIS VIRZI JOINS FANDOM: Born July 14 at 11:08 PM, the daughter of Pat Mueller and Dennis Virzi has already started her publishing career with a birth announcement that concludes, "I'm already cute and insufferable -- but what did you expect, with parents like that?" (Weight at birth: 9 lb., 11.4 oz., 21.5 inches long.)

<u>ART CREDITS:</u>		Taral: COVER
Craig Hilton: 19	Ray Capella: 7,9	
Brad Foster: 2	Teddy Harvia: 11	
Diana Stein: 5	Dany Frolich: 14	

August 1989



mistakes.

It's a point I have to make. What I have said here may well be read as criticism of the way my friends and compatriots ran NOLAcon, but they had the right to run NOLAcon. Bringing the World Science Fiction Convention to the City that Care Forgot had been a decades-long dream of John Guidry's. It was for John and for his dream that most of the rest of us campaigned for two years and worked on the con for two years more. That he may have made some mistakes in judgement in bringing NOLAcon II to life is quite unimportant to me. I worked on the bid and the con for the sake of a twenty-year friendship, and I would do it again. Twice -- once during the bid and once shortly before opening day -- attempts were made to wrest control away from Guidry. I opposed the attempts then and I would oppose them again knowing everything I know now. (Yes, the coup attempt during the bid resulted, when thwarted, in my being heaved against a wall and threatened by the twit who led it; yes, the pre-con takeover try was led by a pushy kid who grabbed the phone out of my hand when I was trying to sell an ad to the publisher of *Analog*; both beside the point.) John won the right to that con and it was his to run. I would have done some things differently. But there was no way I was going to deny this loyal and lovable guy his lifelong fannish dream. Funny how those people who tried to rip NOLAcon away from him just could not understand that.

((CONTINUED FROM PAGE 22: Guy H. Lillian on NOLAcon:))

which is: why? Why all the changes? Some of course could not be avoided -- the science programming -- but why the rest? I've been told it was because of last-minute conflicts in scheduling on the part of pro participants? Is this so? I hesitate to believe such an explanation especially since Foss and Glyer are trufans, and no doubt believe as I do that the WorldCon belongs to sf fans even more than it does to sf professionals, and that the paramount concern should be convenience to fandom, which should expect that a panel be where it is supposed to be, when it is supposed to be, and not rescheduled for God knows where God knows when because a pro who happens to be on it would rather be someplace else at the time, yes? End of aside.)

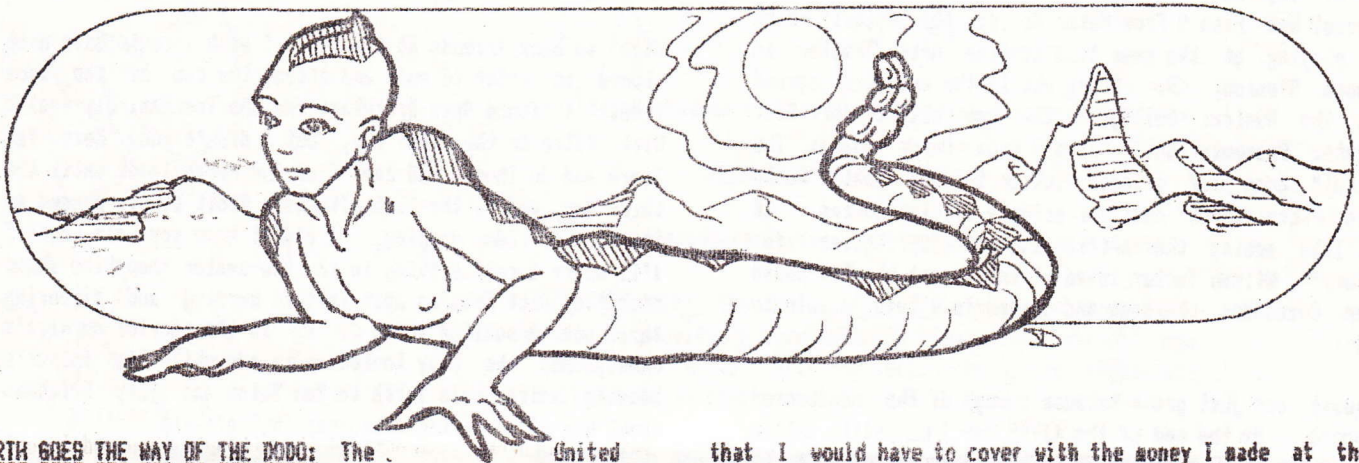
So there is my perspective of the most grievous problem with NOLAcon, a basic one: lack of organization and communication resulting from cloistered, rigid but indecisive leadership. What would I have changed? Much. I would have held the first NOLAcon committee meeting two weeks after Confederation, and help holding meetings every two weeks for the first year, and weekly thereafter. While fundamental decisions basic to the nature of the convention would still be left to the chairman or co-chairs. I would have had those decisions made after open discussion in meetings, and the de facto hierarchy would have been known to all. Other voices would have had their hearing and other opinions given consideration. Officers of the convention would have been required to show progress and continued interest, or been replaced quickly -- and hopefully, kindly. While panic at the last minute is inevitable, I would not have counted on it to provide the energy required for problem-solving. These things were flaws with NOLAcon II.

And the guys in charge had every right to make those

Besides -- bottom line -- people had fun. The weather could have been cooperative, but God refused to sign our contract and from all the reports I read, the daily drenching did little to keep fans away from the French Quarter and the other delights of this city. There is no town like it. I myself came away from the experience with a couple of astonishing but much appreciated Hugo nominations for Fan Writer -- and with a taste for WorldCon politics and bidding. The cynicism and stultified arrogance of the clowns who think of themselves as WorldCon smofs didn't drive me away, but rather sparked me with challenge -- I find to my dismay that I rather enjoy the give-and-take of the Big Time. To move with reluctance away from my ego, how delightful it was to see introduced to fandom the person and talents of Peggy Ranson, whose professional expertise and artistic ability made fine the publications that were mine to edit.

I'm going to turn away from NOLAcon now, and I hope everyone does the same. We have other business to see to in fandom and in life. This final word, though. I don't regret it. I don't regret a minute of it.

Hear tell a local youngster who goes by the fannish pseudonym of "Data" has reserved party space at Noreascon in the name of a WorldCon bid from his group of New Orleans fans. New Orleans in '97. He has my enthusiastic support.



PERTH GOES THE WAY OF THE DODO: The United states tour promoting the Perth in '94 WorldCon bid has turned out not to be a revival but a last hurrah. Ann Griffiths, Secretary of the bid, writes that Perth is withdrawing from the race, chiefly because the expense of bidding is prohibitive, particularly travel costs. She adds, "Our financial problems were exacerbated by an incident at Conspiracy when, through not fault of any fan's, approximately A\$2,000 worth of promotional merchandise failed to arrive...." Further mail for the bid should go to Unit 2/9 Culworth Place, BASSENDEAN WA 6054 Australia.

AND UNICON IS RIGHT BEHIND: Martin Morse Wooster reports the expiration of a Washington DC area convention, Unicon: this year's edition will be the last. Says Wooster, "While it was an enjoyable convention, the aging concon wants to do other things, and there are no fiery young con organizers in the wings to take the convention over. The first Unicon was in 1975; Unicon survived its original parent organization (the University of Maryland Science Fiction Society) by four years. Unicon memorial parties will be held at the next five local conventions (Darkovercon, Evecon, Disclave, Balticon and one other.)"

CONQUEST: The City and the Song, by Philip E. Kaveny

Going to Kansas City, Kansas City here I come
Going to Kansas City, Kansas City here I come

.....

I might take a plane, I might take
a train, but if I gotta walk
I'm gonna get there just
the same.

Rebekah Rogge and I got there just the same over Memorial Day weekend. She was the Fan Guest of Honor, and I was there to sell books, as I do at about 13 conventions a year. We rolled into Kansas City Thursday before the convention started. At that point I found that I had \$9 in my pocket and all of my credit cards were over the limit, and I had about a thousand dollars worth of checks

that I would have to cover with the money I made at the convention. This is a frequent state of affairs for any of us who are in the business professionally. I will get back to this a little later.

The guest of honor was Elizabeth Scarborough, the toastmaster was C.J. Cherryh and the artist guest was Angela Bostick, who did some really interesting broad-ranged hypermodern stuff. Also listed as guests, was we do with WisCon, were David Lee Anderson, Nancy Asire, Robin Bailey (who my wife Jan Bogstad has interviewed for a Starmont Guide), Pat Cadigan, L.E. Carroll, Rob Chilson, Glen Cook (prolific writer, and fellow huckster), Bradley Denton, James Elmore, Arnie Fenner, James Gunn (his new and very useful science fiction encyclopedia sits on my desk), Ken Keller (publisher of the now out-of-print Essential Ellison), Lee Killough, Pat Killough (who has recently published a work on copyright), Rick Lowry, Terry Matz, and Lynette Meserole.

I seem to like to put cities with science fiction conventions and songs about them together. Most of you would not remember this little known hit from the late 50s, if you do you were probably born before 1954, as a surprising number of us were.

Conquest takes place at a very distinctive Howard Johnson's which overlooks the industrial valley along the Missouri River.

Did I ever tell you Greg Rihn's theory about the 1976 WorldCon in Kansas City being the mother of a number of different midwest conventions? I suppose that those who attended from all over the midwest represent a First Fandom of sorts. Next year in '77 we had the first WisCon; X-Con and I-Con started soon after.

I tend to make people mad because I do not view this science fiction thing as a private party as some do. I tend to view it as kind of a floating opera that characters fly in and out of. I have stayed on the stage a little longer than most because it continues to be interesting.

One of the best things that came out of this year's Conquest was "Plan 9 From Outer Space: The Musical" which was playing at the same time at Fine Arts Theater in Shawnee Mission, KS. Every one in the audience agreed that the Musical belongs on the Hugo ballot for Best Dramatic Presentation. "Plan 9 From Outer Space: The Musical" does for science fiction theater what "Rocky Horror Picture Show" does for science fiction movies. It was like seeing the entire musical "Springtime for Hitler." Wilson Tucker loved it and I sent the 300-pound Alien Commander who sang and danced in a tutu a single rose.

Conquest was just great because enough of the unexpected happened. By the end of the first day I was still dollar zero as far as my huckster sales. As a matter of fact, in order for me and Rebekah to go to "Plan 9", Robin Bailey had to pay actual retail for a couple of my books, and someone else who sensed that I still needed \$9 for the second ticket got a great deal on a Lovecraft bibliography. How did I do for the rest of the convention? Someone came up to me and said he heard that this guy sold \$1000 worth of books by saying he needed to raise money for two tickets to "Plan 9 From Outer Space: The Musical."

Oh yeah, did you hear the joke about the science fiction bookseller that won the Illinois lottery? They asked him what he would do with the money, and he said, "Just keep selling books until it is gone."

Just this last thing. I am really serious about getting "Plan 9 From Outer Space: The Musical" on the Hugo ballot. Just watch us.

WESTERCON 42: (July 1-4, 1989) by Mike Oliver

Westercon drew 2400 attendees (out of 2551 members) to the Anaheim Marriott over the holiday weekend. But am I really qualified to write this con report? Let's be honest: I ran the Green Room, (uh, I mean Program Operations) and spent all my time there except for two panels I was on, or the last day of the con when it was my turn to have the Westercon flu. (John Hertz promises to have a notebook of interesting Westercon tidbits next issue.)

It's true that the Green Room was a lot of fun: we spoiled the pros for all time, including any con we run in the future, by serving fajitas and other fare at a daily hot lunch, and stocking all kinds of stuff on a budget of over \$1000 a day. Sue Potter came down from San Francisco and taught us the labor-intensive secrets of making a hospitality room a place people are glad to be: all credit to my assistant, Charles Lee Jackson 2 for that inspiration. Many thanks also go to Susan Rothman who walked in on the last day and found herself running the

place with me down sick and Sue having flown back home.

With so many friends at the con, I wish I could have been cloned in order to work and attend the con at the same time. I found Seth Dreibart and the increasingly-svelte Rick Katze on the first day, but I didn't know Kees Van Toorn and Jo Thomas had come from the Netherlands until the third day, and on the last afternoon Scott Dennis passed me in the corridor gasping, "I didn't know you were here!" I'll never forget sitting in the two-seater shoeshine stand next to Rick Foss as Jace (after nursing and diapering their son) deposited young C. W. in the carrier on Rick's chest, and the baby looked up in awe while his father's booming voice held forth to Ben Yalov and Gary Feldbaum about his ideal worldcon programming software.

Nor could I ignore a meeting between giants of fannish sartorial splendor, Marty Cantor and Joe Celko. Joe looked in surprise at what the barber had done to Marty's Prince Valiant hairstyle. Marty demurred: "I'm job hunting," but Celko only rubbed his own shaved head and laughed, "And I had two interviews the same day!"

Being on programs with them meant I was sure not to miss Arthur Hlavaty (fan 60H) and Bernadette Bosky. Janice Gelb, Alan Winston, Liz Schwarzin and I interviewed Uncle Arthur, and the audience was such a roll call of fannish names I made this list: Len & June Moffatt, Don Fitch, Art Widner, Larry Niven, David Schlosser, Kay McCutcheon, Milt Stevens, Bernadette Bosky, Forry Ackerman, John Andrews, John Hertz, David Bratman, Don Franson. Arthur explained the origin of his fanzine titles The Diagonal Relationship (from a Kornbluth story) and Dillinger Relic. Arthur is contemplating changing his fanzine title again before he gets deeper into his degree program and has to explain it: "...Well, you see, there was this gangster with an incredibly big..."

Vancouver won the site selection vote to hold the 1991 Westercon -- the day after I had dinner with bidder Fran Skene who was convinced by vocal Sacramento voters her bid was losing by a landslide. It was close, Vancouver winning 222-191. Their Fan Guests are Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins, with Artist Guest Warren Oddsson. The main guest is William Gibson, a fellow who used to write for the Vancouver clubzine: whatever happened to him?

FILE 770:80 ART CREDITS: Sorry about that!

Alan White: Cover
Diana Stein: 2, 17
Teddy Harvia: 3, 5

Brad Foster: 13
Alexis Gilliland: 7, 8, 9
Ray Capella: 6, 18

FILE 770 FAN MAIL

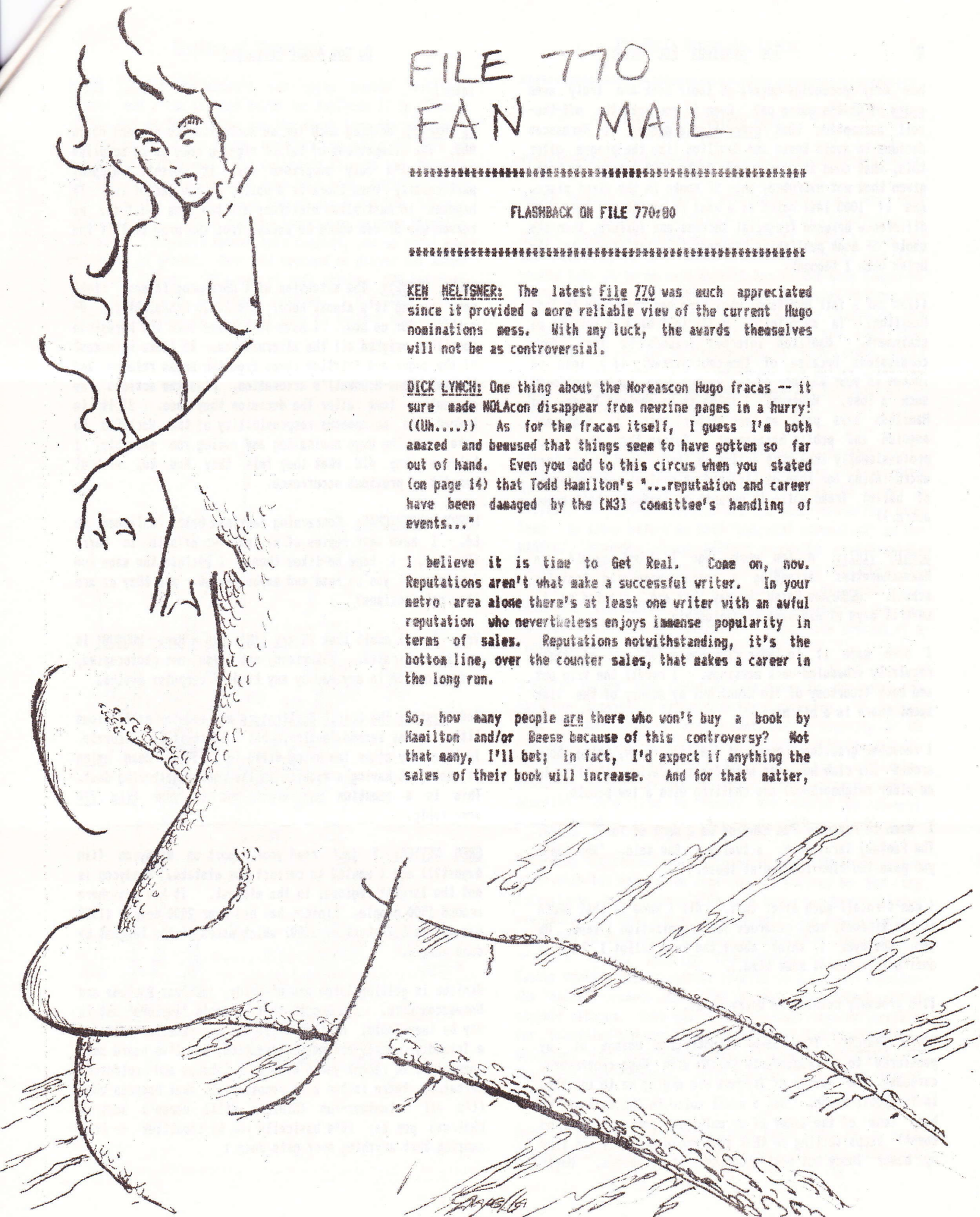
FLASHBACK ON FILE 770:80

KEN HELTSNER: The latest File 770 was much appreciated since it provided a more reliable view of the current Hugo nominations mess. With any luck, the awards themselves will not be as controversial.

DICK LYNCH: One thing about the Noreascon Hugo fracas -- it sure made NOLAcon disappear from newzine pages in a hurry! (Uh....) As for the fracas itself, I guess I'm both amazed and bemused that things seem to have gotten so far out of hand. Even you add to this circus when you stated (on page 14) that Todd Hamilton's "...reputation and career have been damaged by the (N3) committee's handling of events..."

I believe it is time to Get Real. Come on, now. Reputations aren't what make a successful writer. In your metro area alone there's at least one writer with an awful reputation who nevertheless enjoys immense popularity in terms of sales. Reputations notwithstanding, it's the bottom line, over the counter sales, that makes a career in the long run.

So, how many people are there who won't buy a book by Hamilton and/or Beene because of this controversy? Not that many, I'll bet; in fact, I'd expect if anything the sales of their book will increase. And for that matter,



how many potential buyers of their book are truly even aware of what's going on? Even if you make the off-the-wall assumption that every single member of Noreascon decides to avoid Beese and Hamilton like the plague after this, what does it amount to? Maybe 1000 copies per book, given that not everybody buys SF books in the first place. And if 1000 lost sales of a book is enough to mean the difference between financial success and failure, then the whole SF book publishing business is a lot closer to the brink than I thought.

((You ask a fair question: what harm has been done to Todd Hamilton? In my opinion, sufficient harm to warrant my statement. Hamilton informed friends he lost four commissions because of the controversy: if a loss of income is your measure of the damage done, he has suffered such a loss. However, I think it is obvious Beese and Hamilton have paid an even higher price in emotional anguish and public harassment. Before they ever sold professionally they were active in fandom, and it has been excruciating for them be attacked as cynical perpetrators of ballot fraud while in pursuit of fandom's best-known award.))

DENNIS VIRZII: A few weeks ago I found myself in Massachusetts attending a company-sponsored training school. NESAFans being the way they are, treated me to several days of pleasant companionship.

I even made it to their club house for one of their regularly scheduled work meetings. I recall the trip out and back (courtesy of Jim Mann) but my memory of the time spent there is a bit hazy.

I remember greeting a bunch of familiar faces, being shown around the club house (a storefront location actually in an older neighborhood) and chatting with a few people.

I seem to remember Pam handing me a deck of Tarot cards. The Fantasy Tarot Deck, actually. She said, "Why don't you pass the time looking at these."

I can't recall much after that. All I know is that NESFA is the kindest, most generous fan organization I know. Oh yes, whenever I think about the Hugo ballot I have a desire for stev of some kind...

It's probably nothing to worry about.

DAVID THAYER: I've been illustrating dozens of my postcards to correspondents lately with Hugo-controversy cartoons. A number of friends are urging me to ink them in for publication. But a small voice in the back of my head (one of the saner of my multiple personalities no doubt) keeps telling me that some would not only not find my humor funny but would consider it libelous. Maybe

later.

J. GREGOR: Nothing much for an Australian to comment on in #80. The allegations of ballot rigging come as no surprise to me, I'm only surprised when it doesn't happen, particularly when there is a dollar at the end of it. It happens in Australian elections all the time and I see no reason why SF-dom would be exempt from the urge to tilt the table.

LLOYD PENNEY: The situation with Noreascon is moot right now, seeing it's almost here, and 20/20 hindsight can do nothing for us now. I have to believe that the Noreascon committee weighed all the alternatives. It looks like most of the anger and friction comes from the press release and Michael Kube-McDowell's accusation, plus the actions the convention took after the decision they made. If it is indeed the autonomous responsibility of the WorldCon to make sure the Hugo nominating and voting run smoothly, I believe they did what they felt they had to, without benefit of previous occurrence.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK: Concerning fanzines being published in LA. I have sent copies of my last two efforts to Harry (Warner). I hope he likes them. I enclose the same two fanzines for you to read and maybe review. Are they or are they not fanzines?

Yes, I will admit that Merry BAH! and a Happy WUNDUG! is spirit-duplicated. Not mimeo, not offse, not photocopied, and untouched in any way by any kind of computer system.

And Last of the Spirit Duplicators may seem a pretentious title for my second fanzine, but I think it is accurate. Is there any other fan using ditto in 1989? I mean using it, not just having a machine in the corner gathering dust. This is a question you might put to your File 770 membership.

GREG KETTER: I just read your report on Windycon ((in August?)) and I wanted to correct one mistake. Windycon is not the largest regional in the midwest. It had somewhere around 1500 people. Minicon has had over 2000 people (1989 was just a bit short of 2500) which makes it the largest by some margin.

Minicon is getting large and unwieldy, just was Boskone and Norwescon were. I'm hoping that we don't "implode" but it may be inevitable. Minicon still has a reputation of being a friendly, party-oriented convention, but I've heard more complaints in recent years of clique-ishness and coldness. Certainly there is too much nepotism but that happens when it's all volunteer-run (Minicon still doesn't have a chairman per se; it's basically run by committee -- it's amazing that anything ever gets done.)

LLOYD PENNEY: Norwescon's con suite sounds familiar. Yvonne and I ran the con suite for Maplecon II in Ottawa at the end of July. This was the first time the con had a wet con suite in six years, and this con suite was part of a rebuilding program. The collected thirsts and hungers of 500 fans in attendance must have been building over that time for in the giving out of drink and the selling of hot foods, we often got the impression we were slopping the pigs. Requests turned into demands, and we never had enough to go around. Over the weekend we dished out about 20 cases of beer, 30 cases of soft drinks, 200 hot dogs and about 150 Jamaican patties. A good time, nevertheless, and we've put it down to further education.



MEMORIES OF THINGS PAST

HARRY WARNER JR. Forry's tribute to Heinlein was very fine. It provided me with a few bits of information I hadn't known and caused me to wonder if I have a copy of the Discovery of the Future transcript, and if so, if I should take it to my safe deposit box at the bank tomorrow. I'd assumed that Heinlein's veering into sexual matters in his later novels resulted from some sort of change in his ideas as he aged, but thanks to Forry I now know that Heinlein did a lot of photography of nude women while comparatively young. So I suppose he just waited until the literary climate was right before putting that particular topic into his stories prominently.

EVELYN C. LEEPER: I didn't get around to commenting on Donald Franson's original suggestion, but the LoCs prompted me to add my two cents. He says that the US needs a national convention because all the other countries have them. He later refers to this "national convention" as the NASFiC. However, since NASFiCs currently cover/include Canada, Mexico and all the Central American countries, the NASFiC is not a "US national convention." We cannot just commandeering the NASFiC as our national convention. Or are we willing to have a "continental" convention instead of a "national" one? (Not a bad idea, that.)

((Don't forget that Canadian fans annually designate an existing provincial convention the Convention. I expect that if there ever was enough sentiment to identify a US national convention the votes would materialize to divorce the NASFiC from WSFS and make the title available. Remember: every WorldCon business meeting already hosts a minority who'd like to revoke the NASFiC on general principles.))

Regarding the scheduling, nothing in the WSFS Constitution says when the convention must be. A bid can be for any date (even now European bids tend to be for Bank Holiday weekend rather than Labor Day weekend). In North America, Labor Day is more universal as a holiday than Thanksgiving -- don't forget, Canadian Thanksgiving is in October! Easter would almost eliminate Florida as a site -- consider the holiday crowds they get at that time which would compete with us. Both Easter and Thanksgiving are terrible for traveling and are often "obligatory" family holidays. Observant (or even semi-observant) Jews have difficulty traveling over Passover, which usually falls right around Easter.

But of course if a bid committee feels there is a real desire to move the date, they can just bid for a different

date. Simple, right?

SKEL: There's this little deli on the main road that sells delicious bread rolls and superb cuts of hame. Put the two together, add a little salt and some Dijon mustard with pepper, and you have a Sunday lunch that will stand comparison with anything that the traditionalists might wheel in. Plus of course, you can nosh it while LoCing the latest File 770. Why am I telling you all this? Well, Alan White's superb 'A Taste of Fandom' cover made me realize just how near to lunchtime it had gotten, and whilst I wouldn't go so far as to say I could eat a fan (half-a-neo on toast would've been more like it), I was definitely peckish.

It was interesting to read the facts and figures behind even the old news (that Robert Lichtman had won TAFF for instance), not to mention Dick Lynch's revealing that there'd been a fund afoot, even if only in Joni Stopa's imagination, to get me to next year's Midwestcon. Interested persons should contact Joni for more details, eh? Do you think I'd qualify as an interested party? Do you think if I wrote her she'd explain it to me?

That paragraph shouldn't be taken as carping at Joni, who is a terrific person, but rather at my total gobsackment at reading of this for the first time in your fine fanzine. Well, almost for the first time, I guess. Just a few days earlier I'd received a letter from Mike Glicksohn containing the erstwhile cryptic comment, "I was somewhat surprised recently to read a passing reference to the establishment of a fund to bring the Skeltons to Midwestcon or something. Since I'd never heard of such a fund and since the reference was a dated one, I assume the idea died in the gestation stage." Making due allowance for the speed of non-urgent transatlantic mail, I suspect that this issue of File 770 is, for both of us, the source of all our information on this matter.

I enjoyed, particularly, all the convention reports. To a perpetual nonattendee like me such reports are all I ever get to experience of Fabulous Convention Fandom (whereas to me lists of upcoming conventions are merely a total waste of paper.) Anyway, thanks again for this issue. Keep fighting the good fight.

BERISLAV PINJUH: I must apologize for the considerable delay of my letter. However, I do have an excuse: the school year was about to finish, and as I have twenty subjects per week, I think you'll understand my agony during May and the first two weeks of June.

I see Teddy Harvia sends you art also. You probably don't know that we had a kind of conflict in...I think it was the Smart Ash, but could have been...No, it WAS the Smart Ash. He suggested I'm a hoax, and said something like the

letter of my name are just crying out to be rearranged into a real name, or something like that, I can't remember. In my next letter to Tom Feller I asked Teddy to make a new name for me.

The problem is that I haven't received Smart Ash since, so I don't know whether he employed his "imagination" or did he just lay off. That I would really like to know, so I may hope that you, or Teddy himself inform me on the matter.

IS FANDOM ANTI-RELIGIOUS?

BRIAN BURLEY: I'd like to stick my 2 cents worth into the "fandom is anti-religious" debate in 770:79. Fandom is not in the slightest anti-religious, as any neopagan (and, I think, most jews) will tell you. Fandom, on the other hand is highly anti-christian. The tendency of the people upset about the matter to equate anti-christian with anti-religion is symptomatic of the underlying problem.

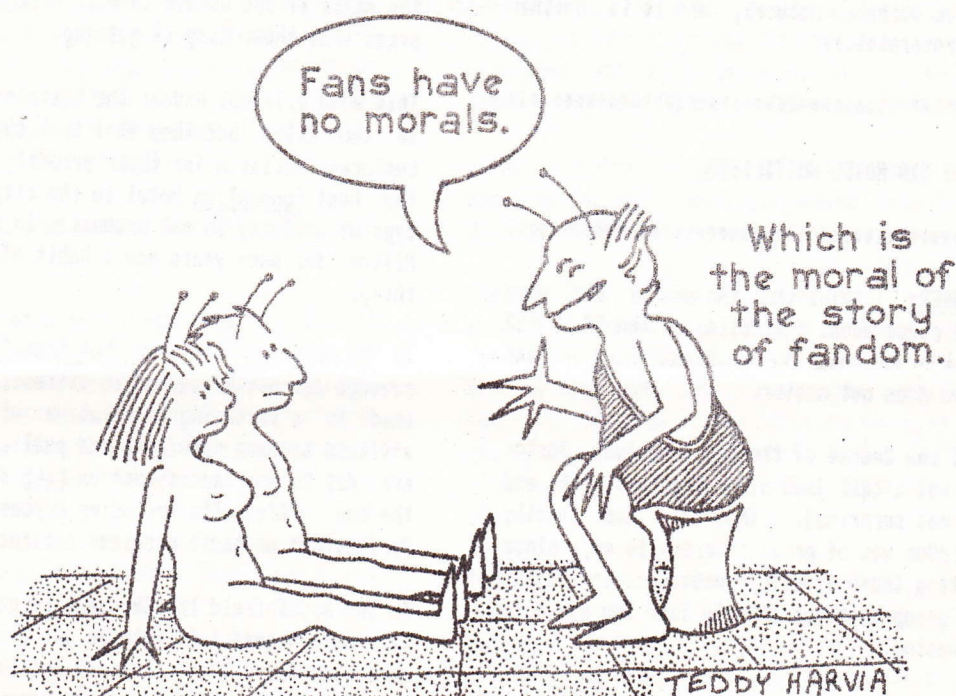
A great many fans were raised christian, and the rejection of christianity, with its inherent internal contradictions, was a major part of their rejection of the parental, authoritarian system. This system is the antithesis of the fannish outlook.

I once chaired a local convention, and was asked, in advance, to provide space for a pagan circle. We did so, and the circle drew 200 of the 350 attendees. Attending christians then asked for space, which was granted. Their function, on Sunday, drew five people.

The scientologists are upset that fandom does not embrace their cult. So are the christians. I see little difference. Nor do I see that rejection of a religion that claims all other religions to be manifestations of the Great Evil to be a rejection of all religions. Fans and fandom embrace appropriate religion.

FRANZ ZRILICH: Thanks for suggesting my name to Radio Free Thulcandra. I got issue 17 and found it absolutely amazing. I never knew there were intellectual Christians still alive who had a sense of humor. Also, I'm an Edwardian SF fan and found some neat titles mentioned.

HARRY WARNER JR. I was glad to find in this issue some fans describing themselves as religious. It's too bad nobody takes polls in fandom any more: if there were a modern day Jack Speer or Art Widner with us, we would know such things as what percentage of fandom is atheistic and agnostic, instead of trying to guess from the anti-religion material



that comes mostly from a few fans.

I think Darrell Schweitzer overestimates L. Ron Hubbard when he calls him "the first truly world figure to emerge from our little community." At a guess, I would say that either H.G. Wells or Arthur C. Clarke would prove to be better known to the world's residents if a comprehensive survey were made. And it isn't as if Hubbard had been a seminal figure in science fiction; he wrote in the field only for a few years, limited his output mostly to two prozines, and did little mingling on a personal basis with either fans or pros while active as a writer.

ALAN STEWART: Regarding the Writers of the Future -- the New Era agent in Australia, Julie Jones, has been attending cons and sponsoring panels, etc. Fans got a nice free lunch a Conviction last year when she launched WOTF Vol. III.

My local paper, the Wongoratta Chronicle in North East Victoria carried a letter from Julie (May 1, 1989) addressed to "amateur writers" extolling the WOTF competition. Some interesting direct quotes: "Each year the major winners' stories are published in the paperback anthology 'L. Ron Hubbard Presents Writers of the Future'. This has been recognized as the world's No. 1 bestselling SF anthology."

Has it? By whom? A pretty strong claim that I personally haven't seen vindicated yet, but she may be right.

"The last quarter boasted two finalists from Australia." Did it? So far I haven't seen them named or heard anything about this, or does "finalist" mean something like "in the best 500 entries received during the quarter"?

((Finalist means among the top few entries of the quarter. And while I couldn't name them, Algis Budrys has mentioned finalists from outside the US, so it seems likely there have been Australians as reported by Ms. Jones.))

This sounds like I am a bit skeptical and I suppose I am. Recently talking to Eileen Gunn at Swancon the WOTF matter came up and she seemed pretty dubious about it, citing Karen Joy Fowler as now distancing herself from it, particularly the workshopping. Maybe I'm getting it out of context being removed from the "Budrys central action", but the atmosphere at Conspiracy and lately about WOTF still seems to suggest "bad money" to me.

((At Norwescon this year, I saw WOTF workshoppers socializing with Seattle Clarion attendees, and the Moscow writer's group. There appears to be a strong social link between WOTF workshoppers other neo- and would-be-pros in the Washington/Idaho/Oregon/Montana area, people who all appreciate Algis Budrys' charismatic teaching skills. I

have no data about Karen Joy Fowler, but my observation is that because of Budrys WOTF is regarded as a significant player in an active workshop network, and it is neither exclusive nor controversial.))

DC IN '92 BID HOTEL HOSTILITY

STUART C. HELLINGER: I think that the use of the word "treachery" in the piece about the faling of the DC in '92 bid a bit much. Whether this is your terminology or that of the DC committee does not matter.

I first heard of the demise of the bid from Andy Porter after he had received a call just after the meeting to end the bid. I was not surprised. That this had finally happened to a WorldCon was of great interest to me, since I've been predicting these exact circumstances for years. The idea that the group that was able to take the space is B'nai B'rith is amusing.

Most fans don't know the first thing about dealing with a hotel for any kind of a meeting -- this includes the many fans that claim to be "experts" in this area. A "Letter of Intent" is just that and usually contains language that tells the group that they have an option on the space (first, second, etc.) All this means is that the group has the space as long as no other group wants the space on those dates! If a group has first option on the space and another group wants that space and they are willing to commit to that space immediately, the hotel will give the group with the first option the opportunity to commit to that space within a short period of time. If they cannot or will not the hotel is within its right to guarantee business for that weekend by accepting the definitive offer. This has been a standard practice of the hotel industry for a longer period of time than I've been in fandom (and dealing with hotels). It also happens to be a sound and good business practice.

The fact that we cannot commit to a WorldCon site in a major city or any city for that matter earlier than three years out will cause us trouble with groups that are able to do so and now want to meet on Labor Day Weekend to take advantage of the lower rates offered. Washington has become an immensely popular convention city (but with its current troubles, that might not last) and any group that wants to bid for such a location should have done its homework and figured such a possibility into their planning.

Also, if you realistically look at it from the hotel's point of view, they have no guarantee that the DC bid

Big City Bid Blues

would win and they had a bona fide offer for part of that weekend. There is no guarantee for them that they can book the space if the DC bid loses, especially with all the bad press that their city is getting.

This move will not endear the Sheraton to the other hotels in the city, but they feel that they have made the best business decision for their property which is considered the best convention hotel in the city. By the way, this type of activity is not unusual. In New York, the New York Hilton for many years had a habit of doing the exact same thing.

In my opinion, the view that Sheraton HQ wanted this as revenge against Noreascon is extremely myopic and will only lead to a worsening of relations with all hotels if this attitude becomes prevalent and public. Most hotel problems are due to poor management on both sides -- the hotel and the con. (Yes, I'm including Noreascon in this statement. My feelings on their problems are rather well known.)

In the hotel field the Sheraton is considered the lowest as far as managerial talents go and their inability to hold good people. This also is reflected in their overall operation. This was one of the many factors that led to my turning down a job as Convention Service Manager at the Sheraton Centre New York several years ago. In this case, however, what they did is reasonably correct, but with the pressures from the other major hotels in the city, they should have spent more time explaining the situation once it was cast in stone.

At the moment I'm using my resources to see if Sheraton HQ has anything to do with the decision. So far, the answer is no. Sheraton's corporate policy is rather strange, and in many cases they will let their hotels go on their own without pressure from HQ.

If we are to continue running conventions, whether regionals or WorldCons, we should spend a little time rethinking our dealings with the mundane world, be they hotels or anything else.

SUSAN COMEN, LANCE OSZKO, EVA WHITLEY, JACK CHALKER, JUL OWINGS: This is in response to the letter circulated by the Discon III Executive Board concerning the dissolution of the DC in 1992 WorldCon bid. We, the undersigned, wish to state to all interested parties that said letter, and the decision contained therein, were not unanimous.

The two main points of the letter were that the board felt it could no longer trust the Sheraton, and that our WorldCon was fatally damaged by the resulting "new" package.

On the first point, there were some of us who were more

than willing to trust Jim Harris, Convention Coordinator for the Hilton, to hold the Sheraton to its word under the terms of their corporate entity, the "Connecticut Collection". He had proven himself (to us at least), by turning down the very same group which had bought out the Sheraton! Had he known of what they were going to do, he would have prevented it. In the slim/fat chance of the Sheraton finding another group in the meager five months between the "disaster" and the voting, we are

certain he would have watched out for our interests like the proverbial hawk.

The second point is even more easily debunked. The real reason the Board didn't like any changes in the venue were (1) they were sure we'd look like buffoons who couldn't manage our business affairs (which makes it doubly strange that the Board wishes to hold what could appear to be a celebration of this at Moreascon!) and (2) it'd be a "logistical nightmare". Are we then given to understand that, under normal conditions (if any can be said to exist!) that WorldCons run themselves? That we did not rise to this challenge reduces our much-vaunted superiority to mere propaganda. As such a thing does not exist on Earth, any members of the Board wishing to hold a "perfect" WorldCon should move to another planet!

(Some of the (signers) agree with the sentiments of the foregoing letter, but voted for dissolution for reasons other than were stated by the Board. Some felt that the overwhelming pessimism and caution of the Board was too great an impediment to continuing. Others, having had time to pause and reflect, now realize that we have acted too hastily.)

BEN SCHILLING: "Serious, Nasty Action Against the Sheraton." I am planning on taking about \$20 in two dollar bills to the WorldCon. I'm suggesting that everyone who is going do the same thing. Spend them all at the Sheraton. Don't buy anything you wouldn't have otherwise purchased, just use the two dollar bills for such purchases. If we can get ten percent participation, that works out to about 5000 two dollar bills in the Sheraton's kitty. I think that it might manage to get their attention.

LLOYD PENNEY: We all received a letter of regret from the Washington in '92 committee explaining the decision to close their bid. That was terrible news: a great WorldCon could have been held there, and it takes one of the best competitions for a WorldCon in some time and blows it out of the water. I can only guess, and guess low, how much time, money, effort, sweat and heartbreak the DC people put into this effort, but I hope they will look into legal action against the Sheraton Washington. It may be their only consolation. I've heard some rumors that it connects

up with the trouble Moreascon had with their Sheraton. I would think the rumors to be false. I've also heard rumors about the stability of the Sheraton Winnipeg in the Winnipeg in '94 bid. I knew who to talk to about that rumor, and John Mansfield firmly states that the rumors are unfounded and that the Sheraton Winnipeg is eager to attract a plus like the WorldCon to Winnipeg.

((The Sheraton in Washington was just as eager, until somebody offered them guaranteed business on part of WorldCon weekend.))

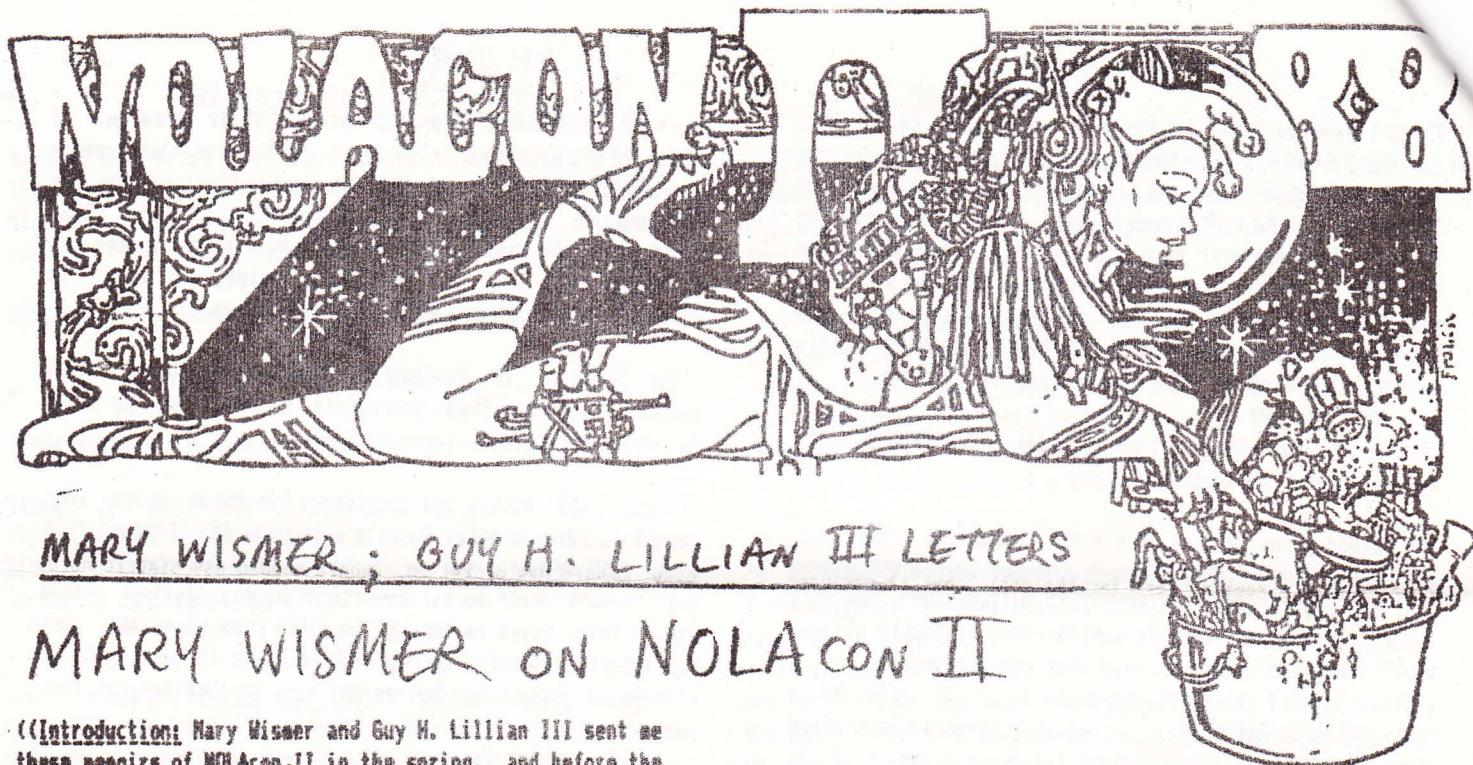
((Bruce Pelz states the question, "Is three years long enough?" Perhaps not. Toronto will host the Shriners this summer (OH MY GOD! say we all here), and Toronto Shriners bid to host their annual convention nearly fifteen years ago. They voted on the '89 location nine years ago, and the actual convention is nearly here. We'll never get to nine years' lead time, but we may have to look towards four years.

((More correctly, Bruce observed that four years is "no longer enough." The difficulty of holding together an all-volunteer WorldCon bid and convention committee for 4, 5 or 6 years virtually rules out greater Site Selection lead time.))

NO -- NOT THE "N" WORD!

LESTER BOUTILLIER: In a way I must say I don't quite understand J. R. Madden's letter in File 770 #79. In it he describes the New Orleans fan group known as the Sons of the Sand (sponsors of NOLAcon II) as if it were some kind of secret society. He says, "No new folks have been allowed into that circle for at least 10 years; I know, because I've tried." This comes as news to Dan Myer, Nancy Collins, Hazel and Larry Schlueter and others who have found acceptance in this group in the last ten years. It's no formal organization. There's no blackballing. If J. R. would like to stop by some Friday night he'd certainly be welcome. If so, he would find that we aren't as "closed" as he perceives us to be.

DAVID THAYER: I found the Wogu ballot interesting but not all that funny. It has too many variations on the same theme. It's overkill. I chuckled the first time I saw John Guidry III's name, but by the fourth I was bored. It's like doing an impersonation of a drunk at a drunken orgy. Who notices?



MARY WISMER; GUY H. LILLIAN III LETTERS

MARY WISMER ON NOLAcon II

((Introduction: Mary Wismer and Guy H. Lillian III sent me these memoirs of NOLAcon II in the spring, and before the next WorldCon takes center stage, I offer these appreciations.))

A Registered Protest: Thinking back on NOLAcon II brings up a very mixed set of emotions for me. On the one hand I set out to do what I said I would -- that is work on a WorldCon and pull off registration. On the other, it wasn't the experience I wished it had been. It caused great personal problems for me, broke a couple of friendships, and left me forever with a certain bad taste in my mouth and a definite feeling of being used.

I got involved with the committee early on, almost a year before the bid was won, and at the first meeting I attended I'm afraid I made a very bad impression on the then-board by proclaiming rather demonstrably that the committee was very badly organized. (This was almost two years before I had even met Tom, by the way.) Words and first impressions came back to haunt me later on with a vengeance. At the time I had no convention experience at all and my entire organizational experience came from serving as various position heads in community organizations. Coming to the committee with that sort of background I really thought that things like regular meetings, agendas, accurate financial records, minutes taken and motions passed were things that all serious organizations took for granted. At my first meeting I found out that impression was far from reality.

Nevertheless, I did return some six months before Confederation to take up the position of resident "data entry" expert, spending hours at John Dillworth's house typing in the names of those who presupposed the convention. John, whom you probably never met much less heard of, was another unsung hero of the bid and the convention lending his time, his incredible talent with

computers, and his house and system to the bid committee. His advice and help were invaluable to me, then and now. But later on he and Justin came to a parting of the ways, when Justin decided to follow his own intuition on the choosing of a computer system for NOLAcon rather than take John's input.

I never really had an official position with NOLAcon II until much later on, and instead simply did data entry for them, plus providing the seed money from my own pocket for the t-shirts sold before and during Confederation. I've since seen a number of people in letters and various minutes described as "Registration Director". But after Confederation I suppose I got the position by virtue of work and spent many days during the later part of 1986 going to the office and typing names into the computer.

The first real chunk of work began with inputting all the voting memberships from Confederation. There were some 2000 records to enter and it took me some time, not to mention trial and error, to accomplish that. It was here that the first batch of problems arose, unfortunately, due to my misunderstanding of Justin's program. My understanding of dBase III+ was at an elementary level and I didn't know that by deleting bad records and packing the membership file I put everyone's membership numbers off a position or two. This was cleared up fairly quickly and I came to the understanding when Justin wrote the entry program he had tied the record number and the membership number together so that you couldn't delete a file, then pack the membership roster. I apologize to those people who suddenly discovered that their membership numbers weren't what they thought it was and simply plead ignorance

of the system.

Please Wait A Minute, Mr. Postman: As time went by, answering mail became an increasingly difficult problem. First, we had no system to route mail to the various departments, no official organization to the office, and no office manager. Then it became clear to me that other people were taking it upon themselves to answer my mail for me without letting me know what they wrote. I would get many hostile letters from members saying that they had written four times and received no answer, or that they wrote and received two different replies, one from me and one from somebody else. Suffice it to say that the disorganization of the office caused me many headaches. I came up with a routing form for the mail, but it was used indifferently or not at all, and I finally had to abandon it myself.

Another problem that grew increasingly apparent to me derived from the system that John used to funnel membership information. No one in the office except John was allowed to open any mail -- that included stuff addressed to you personally. He seemed to feel that the only way to control the mail was to deal with it himself, but that policy only resulted in an ever-growing mountain of unanswered letters, then a filing problem of mammoth proportions.

John's system consisted of a ring-binder in which he wrote each member's name, address and money information, making it hard for me to compare his entries with the original checks and letters. It wasn't so much that the information wasn't there, but what there was rested in that mammoth pile of unfiled letters. (The worst screw-up with names came when a couple with the name Condon joined the convention and John put it down in his book as Condom. As embarrassing to me as it was amusing to others, I suppose it was fair when John argued that I had made data entry mistakes also -- something for which I plead forgiveness on the basis that I entered most of the 6700 records of the membership file myself and never had either the time or the help to proofread anything.)

Financial accountability was another problem, as I never saw the checks. After the old treasurer, Charlie Duval, resigned his position and moved to South Carolina, we never had a replacement. There was no system to double-check membership records with financial records.

My next problem was the higher-ups' reluctance to have organizational meetings. Although we did have regular meetings during the bid process, somehow this idea vanished in the wind once the bid was won. Finally, Guy Lillian and I pushed the issue and announced a Registration and Publications meeting to be held at my apartment in New Orleans. And that meeting was the first

post-Confederation meeting of the NOLAcon II organization. It took place in late 1987 and we began to put together a structure for future meetings.

At this point I began seeing Tom regularly and began to encourage him to get involved in the committee. Considering what the committee did to him later on, I had many occasions to bitterly regret that decision. His interest did lie in programming and we began a running conversation with Justin, John, Dolbear, et al, to try to find a place for him on the convention staff. I remember numerous conversations all surrounding the same topic -- what was Dennis doing for programming, how could Tom help, etc. etc. And I also recall the same answers -- Dennis was busy, Dennis was depressed, Dennis needed psychiatric help, etc. Never anything to the actual point, however. Just long, frustrating sessions and being put off again and again.

We began the weekly meeting set-up around the same time, at the insistence of Jim Mule. At the time I welcomed Jim's organizational expertise and applauded his desire to get things up and running. I also had reason to regret that impression later on, as Jim's role grew from occasional adviser into somewhat loftier ambitions.

During the months of 1987, my job got larger and larger and I found myself spending eight hours at a time doing data entry work. With few people working on the convention, save Justin and myself, that had any familiarity with computers, I found myself fielding an incredible number of late-night calls from people who wanted to know "how to get into Word Perfect", "how to find Joe Blow in the membership records", "why the computer didn't recognize its own disk drives", etc. This all took place while I (a) worked a rotating shift job, (b) did my own membership duties, and (c) served as Programming Director, Guest Liaison and Secretary for the New Orleans Science Fiction and Fantasy Festival (NOSF3).

In early 1988, only a day before NOSF3, my mother passed away very suddenly of leukemia and I had to return to Ohio for the funeral. At the time people on the committee of both conventions were very supportive and offered to pick up the slack for me while I was gone. This worked out very well with NOSF3 but not with NOLAcon. When I returned I found to my dismay that nothing had been done.

I also moved to Baton Rouge around the same time, thus had to deal with my grief over losing my mother, packing and moving, and getting up-to-date with NOLAcon work.

Things went from bad to worse in the office and I finally put it to John that if something wasn't done soon I would resign. I suggested that he hire Bebbie Hodgkinson (who was then unemployed) to work in the office part-time as the

office manager. Thankfully, John agreed, and Debbie began her invaluable service to NOLAcon. Within weeks of her arriving on the scene you could actually walk in the office again, without stepping on letters, and mail began to appear in the appropriate mail slots in a timely fashion. Her assistance to me, and to the convention in general, did the trick to make it possible for NOLAcon to actually get pulled off at all.

The Badge Question: Also around this time I began to ask the "badge question". First, in conversation, then in a series of letters, I asked John and Justin who actually was going to be given the task of making sure the badges for the convention were done, who was to be given the task of doing the artwork, and selecting the company. Since I was head of membership, I naturally assumed this would be my responsibility and wanted to assure that I had sufficient lead time to avoid problems.

Therein began a massive put-off program by John and Justin which finally resulted in that messy screw-up with the badges the day before NOLAcon. Later on, I finally found out that the whole thing had originally been given to somebody from the committee who simply didn't do the work. Without telling me, that same person had contacted a badgemaking company on the East Coast, made arrangements for the artwork to be submitted and then apparently sat on those arrangements until it was too late for the company to provide the product in time for the con. In a way, it was a blessing because the company's inability to provide resulted in saving the con a lot of money. The badges would have cost in excess of \$10,000, making them the most expensive tags ever worn by a WorldCon attendee.

But I didn't find this out until less than three weeks before NOLAcon II. Justin apparently knew that the company wasn't going to come across, but never told me about it. I heard secondhand from Debbie. When I heard I immediately called Justin (a bit frantically, I'm afraid, as the con was three weeks away and I did want to have time to proof and organize the badges). Justin told me "not to worry" as he would take care of it. Justin's definition of "taking care of it" differed greatly from mine as after three weeks of calling him almost daily to ask when the badges would be ready I finally got hold of them: Wednesday, the day before the con was scheduled to officially open and scant hours before I had scheduled registration to open.

He also had many problems with the printing: many of the badges were lost or garbled. When he turned them over to me it was as if he had played 52-pick-up with them. Now during the timeframe I was engaged in trying to move the office from the 8th floor of the Maison Blanche building to the Marriott, trying to set up registration, fighting with Jim Mule about when my registration space in the

Marriott was to be handed over to me, and dealing with a host of other problems. When the badges arrived and I found out what condition they were in, I had to hastily recruit four volunteers to hole up in my hotel room and spend the next 8 hours realphabetizing the 6000 badges. Even after I opened registration the "badge problem" continued to haunt me as John Guidry, in his infinite wisdom, had decided to remove several hundred badges from the box and keep them in his room (without telling me, naturally). I only found this out when we were actually doing registration and it became very clear that many, many badges were missing.

The "badge problem", not the least of my worries, certainly was the most visible to the con attendees.

Death Will Not Release You: Stepping backwards a bit, Tom was finally recruited into the convention committee as Dennis Dolbear's assistant, and later given the title of Convention Manager. Under this title, he, Dennis and I traveled to California to the American Booksellers' Association convention to do various things, most importantly meet with Mike Glyer and Rick Foss.

Shortly before this trip, the Catalytic Cracking unit at the Shell Norco Manufacturing Complex (where I work) suffered massive piping failure and blew up, killing seven people and causing almost a billion dollars of damage. Since I was on shift during the explosion, I can clearly recall during the first few minutes after being knocked off my feet by the blast and while covered with glass from shattered windows, thinking that here is finally an easy way to get out of doing registration for NOLAcon II -- after all, if I got killed they could hardly make me finish the job.

When we got to California I was still a bit shaky and can remember jumping up and looking for a safe exit when we heard the first Disneyland fireworks from our hotel. During our trip, we met with the Wollheims for lunch (which Dennis missed), met with Mike and Rick and scheduled another meeting (which Dennis again missed as he was too busy in an autograph line), and visited the LASFS clubhouse to attend a meeting. For my part I could do little save help out and provide the membership list information. Although the trip was fun, having you and Rick come to New Orleans would very likely have been much more useful.

When we returned it became increasingly clear that certain people on the convention committee were beginning to either get jealous of Tom's role or distrust what he was doing. (Never bothering to call him and ask questions, you understand.) He went out of his way to come to New Orleans from Baton Rouge and schedule a meeting with Justin to clear up problems concerning operations duties. After waiting four hours in the NOLAcon office for Justin to

arrive, Tom called him at home to find that he had either forgotten the meeting or decided to ignore it entirely. Frustrated at his inability to get things done, Tom told Justin that night he could no longer continue in the position of Convention manager. Justin refused over the phone to accept his resignation and assured him all problems would be resolved at the NOLAcon committee meeting the next day. Justin's version of "solving the problem" consisted of deleting Tom's position (simply leaving it out when he presented a version of the committee structure on the blackboard during the Saturday meeting.)

At that same Saturday meeting, Tom told the committee he would finish up his duties as Dennis' assistant, but then have no more to do with the convention. (This was after spending many, many hours assembling the gross programming schedule -- something that Dennis had little or no input to but I did, skimping myself on sleep to create, assemble, then type in the 500+ items.) But even that small role was denied to him as they not only removed Tom from his position as Programming Assistant, but Dennis as well, then put Jim Mule in charge of everything.

Since I had gotten Tom involved in the whole charade in the first place, I was understandably pissed off at the underhanded, dishonest way John and Justin were dealing with him. I also had a series of other gripes to air and wanted to ask some very hard questions. I scheduled a meeting with the two of them, which Debbie Hodgkinson also attended. I asked that I be allowed to tape record the meeting, a request they granted.

During the next five hours I fired away every question I could think of from why Tom was fired, to why I hadn't been allowed to do my job, to what the hell Jim Mule's position was anyway, to who the hell was in charge of finances. I got 90 minutes on tape, and listening to it afterward, realize now that there are some pretty amazing things on it.

One of the funniest exchanges came from the question about who was in charge of finances. John and Justin adamantly refused to name anybody at first, saying I had no business knowing that information (even though I would turn over some \$60,000 in registration monies to this nameless entity at the convention). In the background, you can hear Debbie saying something to the effect of "Why aren't we supposed to know? Is this person a felon or something?" I also asked, over and over again, who was in charge of Programming, first getting the answer that it was Dennis Dolbear, then that it was Glyer and Foss, then that it was Jim Mule. I also asked why Tom had been removed from his duties, and they refused to give me a direct answer, instead hinting that the reason was that Glyer and Foss didn't want to work with Tom.

Only after the convention did I get the truth of the matter that John and Justin were concerned over Tom booking a series of rooms in his own name -- something he did to insure that reservations were made and rooms set aside, since "pwers-that-be" told him that there would be no master account at the hotels, and that rooms could only be reserved at the last minute. It turned out very well for me that Tom did this as I used several of those rooms to house registration volunteers. If he hadn't made those reservations the rooms simply would not have been available.

After the meeting I told John and Justin I would think long and hard about resigning my position with NOLAcon. At the time I was really fed up with the lack of organization, dishonesty, and rumor-mongering that was going on and was very, very tired of defending NOLAcon, and trying to explain to fans around the country why the convention organization was so askew.

After thinking about it for awhile, and being encouraged by Debbie and George Alec Effinger not to throw in the towel, I finally informed John and Justin I would stay on and finish the job I had started. (I heard later that Jim Mule had called up Rick Albertson in Atlanta and told him hat "Wisner is out. I got her fired. I'm putting one of my own people in charge of registration." Apparently he didn't know that Rick is a friend of both Tom and mine, and promptly called me up inquiring what the hell was going on.)

Jim Mule apparently had his own agenda all along. He caused me no end of problems and screw-ups. I had delivered three different letters to him outlining my needs for technical equipment at registration. He never answered any of those letters or bothered to call me up. Wednesday, the day before the convention opened, the equipment was there, but I spent many anxious hours wondering if we would even have one typewriter. Also, despite several months of advance notice, printing my registration schedule in the Progress Report and including it in several letters, he managed not to tell me that my registration area wouldn't be available to move into until after 4 PM on Wednesday (I had scheduled registration setup from noon until 4 PM, then pre-registration to open at 4 PM). I also found out during Wednesday's madness that he refused to provide me with extension cords and power boxes. He told me that I should hunt down John for the money the hotel required in the way of deposit, or provide it out of my own pocket.

Lucky for me, Robbie Cantor was there to handle all my problems and managed to get the registration area open, clear up all the problems Jim was causing, and allow us to move into our space.

One of my other technical requirements that Jim didn't

provide was laminating machines. Justin took that off his hands, promising me ten machines to use. He ended up providing one (and late, too, making it impossible to do new memberships on Wednesday as the machine didn't arrive until Thursday morning). Doing an entire WorldCon on one laminating machine is a nightmare I don't want to repeat. I think the only time I really came close to losing it was when the machine broke down -- thankfully it was fixed before I had the chance to tear all my hair out by the roots.

Jim also was one of the chief gossip-mongers among the committee, earning the nickname "Wormtongue" (from Tolkien) from various fans in the New Orleans area due to his ability to spit poison into the ears of John and Justin.

All of this aside, registration did get done: not the best way, however, and certainly not the way I wanted it to be.

Despite all the bad feelings NOLAcon generated, there were very rewarding moments for me. I found help in places I never thought I would, made all kinds of friends from around the world, got fussed over by people from Coast to Coast, and my back rubbed by a fan from England.

A few people deserve mention as their assistance turned out to be invaluable. First on my list is Marian Drey, whose official position was the person in charge of mailing the PRs. She also served as my assistant and her tireless work during the very late hours and without a word of complain, amazes me to this day. (Marian, by the way, was in on the committee from the very beginning. When I found out that she didn't even rate a cramped room from the convention and took the bus home every night I spoke to John about it -- who did nothing, naturally.)

Also high up on my list is Genny Dazzo from California who I met during our trip to LA. (I can still remember asking her if she knew anything about dBase III+, and having her say something along the lines that she helped design it.) Her involvement with registration made it possible for us to use credit cards for the convention. I found out that the very best way to get something out of John and Justin was to call up her and Craig and complain to them -- then something would be done.

The Confederation registration people also did yeoman service. Mike and Nelda Kennedy gave me hours of their time and advice and worked hard for me at the con itself despite Mike being ill with a cold. Ron and Lin Butler worked "point" during the convention: that is, they took the early morning shift which was absolute hell on Thursday. I never want to do that to anyone I like again. Carol, with Handicapped Access, provided lots of aid and assistance with the several times registration and HA had

to move into increasingly vanishing space taken up by the art show crew.

Another important point I should add here, is the fact that 90% of the hardest working registration workers came from contacts Tom made during his various trips to conventions and as a result of phone calls. Thinking back on Tom's work for the convention, I believe that his most important and valuable role was as recruiter. It was he, after all, that called up half the fans in the country and actually convinced them to work for NOLAcon. He also did a good deal to repair the damage John and Justin had already done by their arrogance in refusing to reply to letters, and making people practically beg to be part of NOLAcon. Tom actively sought out the fans, told them they wouldn't be put off, they could be a recognized part of the con, and most importantly, that it wasn't too late to volunteer.)

For the most part, everyone I dealt with save the high-ups on the committee in New Orleans were hard-working and professional. From California to England people really pitched in to make NOLAcon II work.

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GUY H LILLIAN III

There's a memory jabbed to life by the NOLAcon issue of File 770, and here it is. One day, short months before the convention, I left my job at day's end and crossed the Huey P. Long Bridge, spanning the Mississippi River, to visit the printing and typesetting facility the NOLAcon II committee had been using. As I mounted the span a cloud, black, voluminous and intense, rose to dominate the Louisiana sky. We're used to such clouds in the Pelican State. They portend disaster.

I should have forgotten my errand and run for home at once. But I persevered. It had not yet begun to rain by the time I reached our printer, and the material I was fetching was vital: the last typesetting for Let The Good Times Roll, the NOLAcon II program/souvenir volume. Awaiting it at her office in the Maison Blanche Building was Peggy Ranson, my designer: that night we would finish laying out the pages to our book, a book the publisher was yammering to print. Of course, between the moment when I arrived at the printer's and that when I left, the fulgiant cloud above had cut loose...and a flood was beginning to flow.

Vile waters two to three feet deep greeted those traveling along our Jefferson Highway. The normally thick traffic slushed and stalled in an unnatural river, banked by the

neutral ground to the left and by buildings awash to the right. I should have stopped, found high ground, parked, and waited for the ebb that would come with morning. But Peggy was waiting. Our publisher was waiting. Fandom was waiting. I plunged into the torrent.

The drive that would have taken 10 minutes on a normal day became a 90-minute sluice around stalled cars, past glutted potholes, swamped by onrushing trucks. It was only by bumping up onto the now-literal islands in the middle of the highway that I -- and our typesetting -- made it through the inundation. On brakes squishy and uncertain I continued downtown, but even when the Maison Blanche Building was reached the adventure was not over. Leaving the typesetting for a moment to attend to personal matters, I found it missing on my return. I had to dive into a janitor's trashcan to retrieve it. The looming deadline made replacement impossible -- you can still see a spot or two we could not clean off the printed page.

Nevertheless! you can see the printed page. Peggy Ranson sacrificed weeks of valuable professional time to lay out and complete the tome to beat the publisher's unexpectedly early deadline. Matt Leger applied himself to the duties Peggy and I dumped on him, with selflessness and care. And when the chore of producing the pocket program fell to those self-same people at the last instant, they, and I, and the inutterably generous George Alec Effinger and Debbie Hodgkinson, took the raw and ragged and nigh-onto-unintelligible material we were served with and published -- more or less on time. We sacrificed time, professional and student commitments (I was trying to graduate from law school that summer; I did it, too), and we did what we promised to do.

Was the job done perfectly? No. Nothing is perfect except Al-lah. There are a few stains on a couple of our articles -- that janitor had emptied coffee grounds into his container just before filching my typesetting. A couple of the pages -- well, both Ranson and I would love to rearrange them now that it's impossible. The aforementioned pocket program's staff list is woeful, and the information on the programming given to us to print was dreadfully inaccurate. (For some reason this was held to be the fault of the publications department instead of the people supplying the information.) But we could, and we do, take pride in what we did, for we did all that any sane human being could ask of us: our level best, under the circumstances.

It is monumental foolishness to expect more in fandom. It is unfair. It is inappropriate. It is crazy.

What level of accomplishment do we want to hold a worldcon committee to? On what basis and by what standard do we judge? Another story. I recently took the Louisiana Bar

Exam. Most likely I bombed it like the Brits did Dresden. From the legal profession, which I sought -- and seek -- to join, I can expect and want no mercy. Either I gave the right answers and passed or I didn't. Being a lawyer means being responsible for other peoples' lives and fortunes -- it is important work that makes a lasting difference. From the profession I could expect to be held to a strict standard. From friends and family, though, I could expect something else -- credit for making the sincere attempt. Acknowledgement of a worthy effort.

So, questions. Is science fiction fandom -- even the sacred WorldCon -- so important that those who would attempt to scale its slopes be held to a standard equivalent to that of a real-world profession? What sort of body is the SF community? Does it aspire to professionalism only? Are performances less than perfect -- under the circumstances -- to be mocked, subjected to calumny, ripoff and rejection? Or...is this a community of like-minded fools, who will treat their brethren with generosity, humor and credit for good effort and honest intention?

Your 77th File:770 does not provide heartening answers to these questions. Two standards seem to be advocated in your multi-trophied pages: one for you and your experienced WorldCon hands, noble saviors of a shipwrecked convention: another for the calamitous goofs who dared -- dared! -- to try to join those august ranks. The first bunch is to be commended for producing anything, even mass confusion, in the face of NOLAcon's disastrous programming situation. The rest of New Orleans fandom joins me in heaping gratitude at your fee. But the second group is, by your lights, to be reviled -- in fact is reviled -- as a swathe of gross pretenders, their failings reprehensible, unforgivable; outcasts worthy only of scorn and ripoff (glad the room service food was so good, Mike; New Orleans is known for good eating). No matter that both groups tried and did their best under the circumstances -- the pretenders, you say, must succeed, must meet the professional standard, must meet a level of accomplishment suited to surgery. Less? Laughable.

Mike, you were rankly unfair in the pages of File 770:77, not only to me and my department at NOLAcon II, but to all the people here who did just the same as you did: their best, their flawed best, under the circumstances. Your whole article on the subject of NOLAcon II is one elongate plea not to be held responsible for the programming confusion at the 46th WorldCon. Could it not be that others deserve the same favor you demand? Whatever was wrong was not the fault of the people who tried?

Those people who tried, who worked like demons on NOLAcon II, numbered many, many more than the very few you (and Glen Boettcher, whoever he is) gave credit to. I will not

allow the efforts of my publications staff to be ignored. I can't allow your all-encompassing sneer to put down the hard work of a good lady like Marian Drey or the other volunteers, or for your forum to be used to heap contempt on good folks who gave the WorldCon a serious shot. Yes, your closing slap at me is true: I do believe that it is sufficient in fandom to do one's best. That's all I'd ever ask of anyone in the genre, at least the fannish end of it, because -- here comes the blasphemy, nvah -- fandom is not important enough for more.

That's basically all I have to say right now. I am definitely interested in providing for fandom an insider's perspective of NOLAcon II, explaining if you will some of our problems. But that can wait. Right now I simply have to make a declaration: your article was fundamentally unfair.

Most fair, however, was your permitting me space in #77 to tell the world "What We Did Right". You won't believe it, of course, but NOLAcon II has received its share of praise. New Orleans is a wonderful town and people enjoyed themselves immensely in it. One writer said that attendees of NOLAcon either paid attention to the doughnut of the good times or the hole of the organizational problems -- a nice metaphor, except that the beignet, our municipal pastry, is a doughnut without a hole.

((Well, Guy, I haven't heard anything but approbation for the NOLAcon Program Book, and after several thousand of your words readers of File 770 ought to know where to direct their thanks for a job well done. However, the principal officers of your convention aborted every attempt to render them timely assistance in such areas of the convention as operations and programing that would have made not just the city of New Orleans but NOLAcon II itself a well-remembered, without the level of personal burnout and hysteria we witnessed. I'm sorry, but I reject your entire thesis, that these are people who tried their best and are unappreciated for their sacrifices: if ignoring the help experienced conrunners offered two years in advance, then looking to them in the last three months (or five days in many cases) to bail out NOLAcon, is an example of somebody's "best effort", you're damned right it's not good enough. As for anyone else who ultimately helped pull off NOLAcon II and has yet to receive credit in these pages: I said in my con report "I have the feeling a bunch of people from New Orleans who helped makes this convention work are laboring in undeserved obscurity." I worked with about 50 out of probably 350 fans who made NOLAcon happen. I have to count on you and others to spotlight anyone that I have overlooked.

P.S. What's the big deal about John Guidry keeping the NOLAcon staff shirts in his room? He saw them as souvenirs -- you apparently saw them as badges. A misunderstanding. I repeat: "so what?"

((Actually, until the Gripe Session on Monday I didn't even know that they existed. Perhaps as you say Guidry was keeping 200 staff t-shirts in various sizes as a souvenir of the WorldCon. More likely, as was evident from the question posed at the Gripe Session, people who worked the convention had been told they were entitled to a staff t-shirt. When a committee promises something to its volunteers who are working long hours at no pay, the committee had better deliver. Or at least that's what I think, which may explain how I wound up handing out t-shirts after the Gripe Session! Many people who are entitled to those t-shirts will never get them, of course. Somebody, possibly Justin Winston, did not release the shirts for shipment so I was unable to complete my plan to mail them from LA to workers on the lists I obtained from department heads. Winston does have a printout of the database I assembled -- it's in the same letters as some of my unpaid bills.))

NOLACON RIGHT & WRONG

GUY H LILLIAN III

Now, if we are all finished with our rationalizations, perhaps we can look at NOLAcon with enough objectivity to discern its true faults and qualities. Whether or not any purpose will be served by this can be a matter for fandom as a whole to judge, but the discussion served forth so far in these pages -- by me as much as anybody -- has seemed aimed more at salvaging flustered egos than telling truth. We who worked on the 46th WorldCon owe ourselves -- and fandom -- that.

If there was a basic problem to NOLAcon, it became evident after the bid was won, for the bid and the convention it seemed were two entirely different projects. (Indeed, it's hard to fault the New Orleans in '88 endeavor, as it not only achieved its objective but did so in a remarkably positive and entertaining manner. Would that the con had been as much fun to put on as the bid was.)

Victory for the bid saw an almost immediate dissipation of

the coherent energy New Orleans had built up. People went at once to work of course -- Mary Wismer started assimilating our membership lists, Justin Winston and John Guidry began establishing our office, I got started on the first NOLAcon progress report -- but these were almost wholly independent projects. I had to get reports from our department heads for my first issue of Catch a Doubloon, but I had to seek them out to do so -- we weren't holding any meetings. We had no comprehensible structure. Though Jim Mule tried to establish one later, it was in vain -- for no coordinated structure ever really evolved.

There was our problem. There was never a sense with NOLAcon that anyone had any input into the convention as a whole. No meetings were held until the end of 1987 -- a full year-and-a-quarter after the bid was won -- when Mary Wismer and I called one on our own. It was the first time that there was any significant success at organizing communication among the NOLAcon departments. Prior attempts had run into a seemingly impenetrable barrier: the attitude at the top of the convention hierarchy.

NOLAcon had a hidden power structure, embodied in the relationship between to men, John Guidry, the convention chairman, and Justin Winston, president of the NOLAcon corporation and de facto co-chairman. All significant decisions made regarding NOLAcon were made in private discussions between them. Even for me -- a close friend of each since 1969 -- it was extremely difficult to penetrate their bond. For outsiders to NOLA it must have been especially perplexing, which was itself especially troublesome, as their relationship had to be known and understood in order for anything to be accomplished. Guidry reserved the last word on any matter -- his right, of course, as convention chair. But in truth it was Winston who had the real "last word", for John relied on him almost completely for any substantive decisions. He gave him complete, absolute and alas, exclusive trust.

If a NOLAcon staffer needed something done, or a decision made, or an error reversed, it did little good to tell the chairman. Charm and generosity and decency are John's strengths; decisiveness is not. You had to approach Justin, convince him of the value of your suit, and he would establish the policy. Decisions got decided in that way, but it was a frustrating process -- and for those who didn't know about it, impossible. That it took some time for enthusiasm for NOLAcon to work its way to the fore of Winston's priorities, he being a gentleman who values his private time, was an additional problem. But eventually Justin was as busy with the con as anyone.

Perhaps...too busy. Justin and John involved themselves overmuch with minutiae, I feel, and too little with the grand scheme of the convention, which is a chair's proper concern. John insisted on opening all of NOLAcon's mail, a

virtual paranoia on the subject of checks the reason -- for that same reason he also personally handled all the pre-con deposits. This was arguably wise, but there were other matters that needed his attention. Justin spent the week just prior to NOLAcon wrestling with the printing of our membership badges. This was all necessary work, but it was hardly the executive overseeing which NOLAcon needed. The powers that existed were jealous of their authority, but they seemed frightened of it, too. We went through the entirety of 1987 without a committee meeting. We also went through the entirety of 1987 without a dollop of work being done in our most essential department: programming.

Dennis Dolbear is one of the most valuable friends I have ever had. Since NOLAcon this intelligent and generous attorney has been subjected to vicious calumny by people with half his education and a third of his worth, and I would distance myself from it as greatly as possible. (The reckless, stupid and probably actionable quotations in J.R. Madden's SE Chronicle con report are outstanding in their foolishness and reprehensibility.) Nevertheless it must be said: Dennis should not have been placed in charge of programming and, more to the point, should not have been left in charge of programming as long as he was. I have no idea why he asked for the job -- but I do know that throughout '87 Dolbear was preoccupied with personal and professional business and even admitted that he hadn't time for even the thought of NOLAcon II. (It wasn't until Rick Foss' Christmas '87 visit to Nawlins that Dennis

switched into gear.) It should have been -- and it was -- clear that programming wasn't the job for Dolbear. At least one letter reached Guidry's eyes advising Dennis' reassignment to duties better suited to his legal expertise. (I'm convinced that we wouldn't have lost the Sheraton Hotel on Thursday had Dolbear been present to advise on the contract.) But he was left in place until given a tacky and tasteless public dismissal -- short weeks before NOLAcon.

The delay might well have had its roots in the long friendship we all shared. But it was certainly not a kindness to Dennis, and it certainly did not benefit NOLAcon. The confusion which dogged the convention's programming up until its very last moments had its genesis in that unfortunate reluctance.

(An important aside: while a great deal of the responsibility for NOLAcon's programming problems rests with pre-convention planning -- or lack of same -- I would advance a question to those handling the schedule at the convention itself. The schedule which was modemed to me via Jim Mule's computer and the dedicated transcription of George Alec Effinger and Debbie Hodgkinson was proclaimed when sent to be the Final Word. I took that to be a trustworthy statement, published the schedule you sent to me, and was mocked by a series of assholes for printing inaccurate info when you changed everything. Well, the minumental injustice to my own glorious self notwithstanding, I have some questions the most basic of ((PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 4))

File 770:81

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