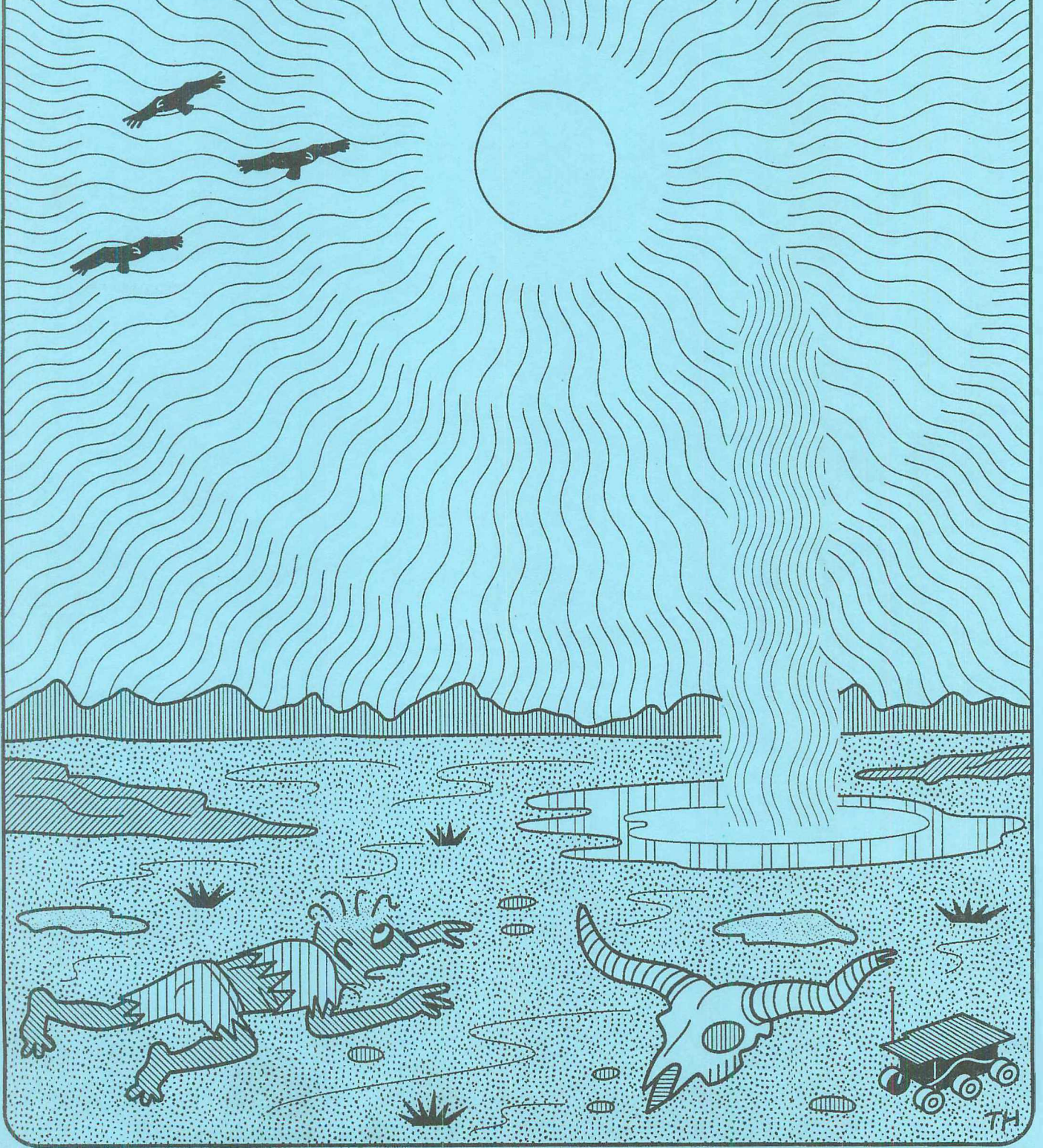


NO AWARD



NO AWARD #4

A Fanzine by Marty Cantor

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Hoo Hah Publication No. 419

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Rotsler artwork lives

I wrote last ish that there is quite a lot of artwork available to faneds. The only caveat for using this artwork is that the first publication of this artwork be in a paper zine – you can use it on-line after it appears on paper. To get a quantity of illos contact Bill Warren at:

BILLYBOND@AOL.COM

Yesterday I suddenly remembered something that Robbie mentioned to me before she moved to England. As I do not want to put off this already too-late fanzine (which only comes out twice a year, anyway) I do not have any time to research this. Sheryl Birkhead (23729 Woodfield Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20882, USA) is putting out a zine honouring ATOM and needs copies of his artwork, locs, and other written materials. Contact Sheryl to verify this. I just tried to telephone her to get information, but Information apparently does not have her telephone number. I do hope that I am remembering this correctly.

This fanzine is available for the fannish usual (which I tend to translate as my own whim, but I do honour trades, locs, artwork, written articles and other contributions). If all else fails, send me US\$5.00 and I will send you a copy.

No Award is not published on any regular schedule (even though I want to get it out at least twice a year). Mostly, copies will be put out when material and money decide to get together in a meaningful way.

IN THIS ISSUE:

My editorial, this time, is more in the form of various bits and pieces rather than just many words on only one or two topics. Some serious stuff here; mostly, though, it contains smartassery. Especially the lead-off bit. Enjoy.

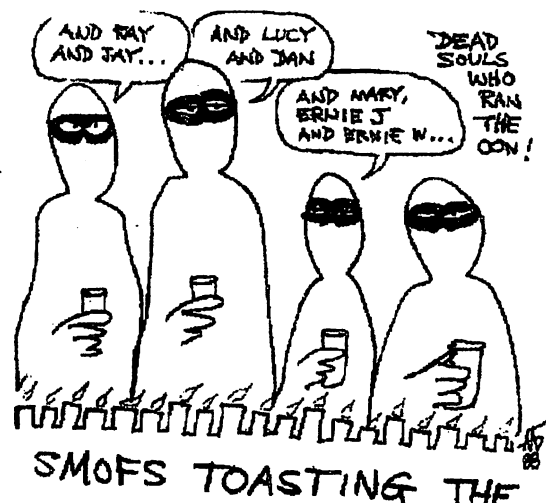
And enjoy, also, Milt Steven's contribution. Milt not only has a writing style which I thoroughly enjoy, but he has a decidedly mordant (and offbeat) sense of humour. As a retired civilian employee of the Los Angeles Police Department, he also has sources for humour not accessible to the average person. Um, would you believe that the L.A. County Coroner's office has a Gift Shop? And that the Gift Shop has a web site?

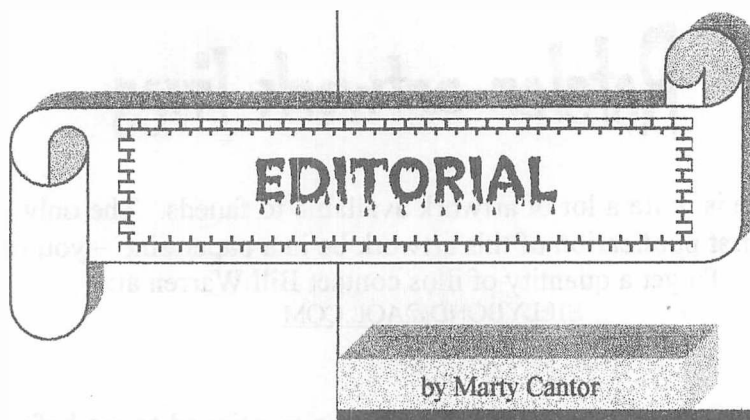
Mike Glycer does not review a book this time; rather, he reviews a concept from a book.

Len Moffatt combines L.A. fanhistory and his autobiography in this first installment of what I hope is a continuing contribution, and Bruce Pelz contributes some Laney locs from Rotsler zines.

Joseph Major writes his usual insightful review of one fanzine, this time *MSFire Magazine*.

And there are pages of locs, a part of any zine of any type which I consider its heart. Keep those locs coming – they are appreciated. I can use both written and illo contributions, too.





NO AWARD

THE FANZINE FOR WHICH YOU VOTED BEFORE IT EXISTED

NO AWARD, THE ONLY FANZINE TITLE NOMINATED IN ALL 13 CATEGORIES AND
THE ONLY FANZINE TITLE THAT HAS WON THE BEST DRAMATIC PRESENTATION
HUGO – TWICE!

AND THE NEBULA ONCE!

AND HOW MANY FANZINES CAN MAKE THAT STATEMENT? (OR WOULD WANT TO?)

VOTE FOR *NO AWARD* IN EVERY CATEGORY!!!

Did somebody once say that I was a troublemaker? Hell – this has probably been an accusation that has been made more than once. Actually, this "Vote for No Award" is really a tongue-in-cheek (but I am not saying which one) campaign. Seriously (and I do have the capability to be serious – really!), it is possible that *No Award* (the fanzine which I produce) may someday be considered good enough to be nominated by enough people so that it will be on the shortlist. Or maybe not. Whatever happens in this matter, I intend to exercise my warped sense of humour in pushing my fanzine over the edge for the Best Fanzine Hugo. Naturally, there is the problem that, if *No Award* is ever considered good enough for a nomination, is it getting the nomination on its merits or is it getting the nomination because of the "campaign." Time to worry about that if and when it happens. In the meantime, I intend to have fun with the category, whatever happens. The last time I looked, humourectomies have never had a permanent affect on fandom.

With this issue, *No Award* qualifies for nomination in the Best Fanzine category – let us all go forward and have phun!

JUST THINK – IF ENOUGH FANS NOMINATE *NO AWARD* IN THE BEST FANZINE
CATEGORY IT WILL BE LISTED TWICE! (THINK ABOUT IT)

HM. MAYBE IT WILL COME IN FIRST AND SECOND (BOTH WINNING AND LOSING
SIMULTANEOUSLY) – OR MAYBE FIFTH AND SIXTH. WHEN I SHOWED THIS
EDITORIAL TO MIKE GLYER HE SAID, " SORTING OUT THIS WILL GIVE GEORGE
FLYNN A HEMORRHOID." GOOD – LET'S DO IT! ~~GEORGE~~ NEEDS TO ADD TO HIS
HEMORRHOID COLLECTION

TOPIC NEXT

The week after Nola Frame-Gray got her copy of *No Award* #3, she came up to me at LASFS and asked me if I knew of any current fanzines which were like my zine. I told her that I had only recently gotten back into general fanzine fandom and I knew of no others because I was not getting very many zines. I later received her loc (which I will print here rather than in Loc 'n Load) – I am using this as a springboard for a small commentary which I want to make in this editorial.

NOLA FRAME-GRAY: P.O. Box 465, Inglewood, CA 90307-0465, USA.

I expected a lot of reactions on my part when I opened up and read the pages of *No Award* but not what I did get:
homecoming!

In a single issue, I ran across that oh so elusive quality that had been lacking in the science fiction zines for some time: Sense of wonder. It was such a fine experience to find after a long absence a zine which had:

The ability to laugh at one's self.

The pure loveableness of fun.

But, mainly, the ability to be able to think in a "science fictional manner" – that's the quality I treasure most. The So What If? Too often a zine ed's idea of a fanzine is pubbing endless book reviews or endless lists of The Best Of. But for all their hard work, they have lost or forgotten that the essential element of what makes an excellent fanzine: A Sense of wonder.

Gawrsh – thanks. The preceding two words were all of my initial reaction to your loc, but I really want to expand on them a bit (even though I will not retract those two words as they stand for my thanks for your thanks). Of course, my zine is nothing if I do not receive good contributions, but I think that what I want to say is more than that triteness – it goes to the heart of the kinds of contributions I would like to receive.

Those of you who were on the Holier Than Thou mailing list know that I pubbed all kinds of material. Naturally, I felt that all of the material I received was well-written or I would not have pubbed it. Still, most of the material I pubbed fell into one of two categories: I felt that the material was of fanish importance or was material which appealed to my sense of humour. It is unfortunate that some of the former was feud material (and that is all that I am going to say about that matter at this time); more important to me, personally, in the long run, is the material which either was humorous in itself or, in the case of many of the locs, allowed me to express smartassery. I recently spent some time rereading many of my loc responses in HTT and I quite liked much of what I wrote. Indeed, that type of writing of mine is something that I like; not only in my own writing, but in that of others. The sometimes tendentiousness to which I am prone (as typified by the editorial in the last issue and this topic in this editorial) is something which I hope to mostly eschew in No Award – except for here, where I think it is appropriate in explaining to prospective contributors just what it is I want for this zine. Now that I have explained things, watch me get dreadfully sereneish stuff. Now you all know. Anyway, let me end this by finishing Nola's loc (which is on another topic).

But I still wonder how Ed Green knew the truth about our car? That a Barney the Dinosaur dwells in the back seat...

Nola, just one look through the windows of your automobile would tell any fan who knew the contents of the automobiles of all too many fans just what could be expected to be found in your vehicle. Personally, when I drive my automobile, I prefer to leave the contents of my apartment strewn around the apartment rather than shoveling it into my vehicle.

The following item appeared in LASFAPA #263 in honour of my first complete physical exam since the 1950s.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

DOCTOR DISCOVERS MARTY CANTOR HAS A HEART!

(AP – Associated Pupicks) From Ekg (deep in the heart of Tuehas Glendale) comes a report from a doctor who reports an Astounding, er, Analog, er, amazing find – beating in three quarter time the savage breast of that old curmudgeon, Marty Cantor, some sort of magik pump is pushing vile red stuff through his decrepit carcass. Early reports do not say if this anti-entropic property is doing Mr. Cantor (or anybody else) any good. After being poked

and prodded in assorted private and other parts of his anatomy, Mr. Cantor has been quoted as saying, "When do I eat?" Further reports are expected in the next issue of the LASFAPA medical journal. Early indications are that the paper which the doctor will publish in this medical journal will be titled, *The Walking Dead*.

BACK TO THE BEGINNING

In a late loc, Irwin Hirsh writes, "Thanks for *No Award 3*, which arrived here in mid-to-late June. I meant to drop you a line about *No Award 2* – mainly to tell you that we named the Eastercon 87 oneshot *The Real Official No Award* because a) it is so obvious a title, we felt *No Award* had been used before, and b) we wanted ours to be the fanzine with the Official claim to the title."

OK, Irwin, I cede to you the official claim to the title The Real Official No Award. Please note your complete title. The complete title of my zine is No Award and it does not have the words The Real Official as part of it. Or do you really want to add to George Flynn's collection of hemorrhoids?

TRAVELLING THROUGH MY PERSONAL TIME – AGAIN

Here we go again! After seven months working for a company which contracted with BellSouth to be their Product Support (Help Desk), I resigned on a point of principal. I will not expatiate on all of my problems with this job; suffice it to say, after five shift changes in seven months, I rebelled at being told that I would have to work during some of my sleep time on a one-day-only shift change (going back to work at my then regular work time on the next day). The company had done this to me once before for some special up-training and it took me over a month to recover my physical equilibrium. As an insomniac, I have enough difficulties getting enough sleep. If I get to bed at approximately the same time every night, I sleep better than if I have to stay up later than usual, even for just one night. I am going to be getting up at my regular time, anyway, regardless of when I went to bed the night before – so I would be very tired for a long time if I acquiesced to this idiocy from the company. In my attempt to get enough sleep, I do not even sleep in during days off as I get up at the same time every day of the week. I am too old to have the body resiliency to work on a constantly changing schedule. So I asked the company to allow me to go to work at least near my normal hours on Labour Day (5:30am – 2pm) rather than coming in at 2pm. They would not change my shift for that day. I know that I was being picky, but this was the same point over which I resigned at U-Haul – and, as when I resigned at U-Haul, it was the final straw after many other indignities.

Two months (almost to the day) after my resignation I will be beginning a new job at Pacific Bell. This job has many similarities to what I was doing in my previous job but I have found out that that most of that to which I objected in the previous job is absent here. And the pay is much better. I will be working about five miles from home, but the major drawback is the eight weeks of training about 35 miles south of where I live, driving during rush-hour (in the direction of the traffic) over some of the most congested freeways in the world. I can miss much of the early traffic by getting to the class an hour early. Coming home, though, will be a bitch. Well, there is the job (and getting a new job so soon after leaving my old one makes me feel good, considering my age and that the newspapers are not showing many help wanted ads) – but I have not stopped looking. I will start that job on Nov. 2 unless I find something better in the next few weeks.

One of the good things about making more money is that I hope to be able to expend more money on zineac. The initial result will be increasing the size of the typeface I use here. And more use of white space. And allowing the zine to expand its number of pages if necessary. No, I will resist re-creating the size of *Holier Than Thou*; however, considering the paucity of contributions, I do not have too many worries on that score.

WY

They're all mad, sad, fat bastards with beards, and that's just the women.

So many cats, so few recipes.

REALLY, REALLY COOL WEBSITE

by
Milt Stevens

has been one of my favourite fanwriters ever since I have been in fandom - his sense of humour closely parallels mine. I have been after him for a contribution ever since I brought back this zine. His excuse has more or less been, "After I get through a backlog of about two years of fanzines to loc." I guess that he has finally caught up. Many of Milt's writings stem from the job from which he recently retired as a civilian worker for the Los Angeles Police Department. Now, if you think that the title of this contribution is all about net-surfing and all of that crap, you have another think coming. Neither does the subject matter come directly from his former police connexions. It does, however, showcase his, er, "grave" sense of humour (which, like mine, can find interesting things upon which to comment in the most unlikely places and situations). Well, as this is a bare-bones introduction to a fan who has been too-long away from fan-writing, let me not prolong this autopsy of his career and proceed directly to the meat of the matter. Oh - I do not know the truth of what he has written as, with much of what Milt writes, one never knows in which cheek he has his tongue.

Websites are frequently promoted as "Cool Websites." Some are hyped as "Hot Websites." This leaves the majority as "Luke Warm Websites." The websites designated as "Cool" are usually filled with pictures of sexy stars, movie hype, and lots of offers for things the promoters think you are dumb enough to buy.

However, I recently came upon a website that is Really, Really Cool. In fact, it is so Cool that it's Down-right Cold. I refer you to the website of the Los Angeles Coroner's Office Gift shop (www.lacoroner.com/coroner.html). Upon reaching this site, the first thing you see is a picture of the bottom of a human foot with a morgue tag attached to the big toe. Text scrolls by "Part of you thinks this is in bad taste... ." "Part of you wants an XL... ."

Past the intro, we reach the homepage "Skeletons in the Closet." This page gives access to many other putrid delights. It also offers to see you the authorized history of the coroner's office, "Death in Paradise." The blurb for this history is as follows: "Currently registering about 200 deaths a day, the L.A. County Coroner's Office has solved some of the most lurid crimes in America. Many of their investigations are now legend (the Black Dahlia, Bugsy Siegel, Marilyn Monroe, Robert Kennedy, Nicole Brown Simpson). Dramatic black-and-white photos - many never published - paint a sordid landscape of murder, mutilation, and madness from the frontier to the front page. Features a section on Dr. Thomas Noguchi, often referred to as the "Coroner to the Stars."

From the homepage, you come to the product catalog. Most of these coroner products feature one of two logos. The Body Outline Logo is the outline of a body as it would be drawn on the sidewalk. The Sherlock Logo is a skeleton with a magnifying glass. Products include: T-shirts, sweat shirts, ball caps, ball point pens, beach towels, stadium towels, wrist watches, clocks, flashlights, coffee mugs, paper weights, toe-tag key chains, and much, much more.

Some of my favourites include a miniature skull (4" tall, plastic with fine anatomical detail, spring mounted jaw, snap-off top of skull). Just the thing for keeping jelly beans on your desk at work, if you don't want other people taking your jelly beans. Then there are a couple of signs that could be quite useful in business: "Checks Accepted With Two Forms Of I.D. Or Dental Record," and, "Shoplifters' Next Of Kin Will Be Notified." I also sort of like the welcome mat with the Body Outline Logo. It might give solicitors a hint that I really don't want to talk to them. Then there is the Body Outline mouse pad with the motto, "We're Dying To Get Your Business." Finally, there is the "Stay Cool" lapel pin with the Body Outline Logo.

A segment of the website deals with questions which the Coroner's Office is frequently asked, such as:

Q: Is it a problem distinguishing dead people from the people who just look that way?

A: That can be a puzzling problem. It is our office policy to perform an autopsy to make sure. We invariably find that they are really dead.

Q: Do you encounter much prejudice against dead people?

A: Unfortunately, vitalism is still very common in the United States. The film industry has produced some very prejudicial material about dead people. This has caused a large segment of the public to believe that dead people look bad, smell bad, and wander around engaging in antisocial behavior like eating people's brains. Nothing could be further from the truth. No dead person will ever move into your neighbourhood and lower the property values. None of them will ever want to marry your daughter. The most important thing to remember about dead people is, "Dead People Don't Do Nuthin."

Q: Can I afford being dead?

A: Of course. What else would you be doing with the money.

Like most good websites, this one offers you links to all sorts of other fun sites. First on the list is The Social Security Death Index (www.ancestry.com/ssdi/advanced.htm). Remember all those people you've always despised? Wouldn't it be fun to discover that guy who bullied you in eighth grade has already been entered into The Database Eternal? It could make your whole day.

Next on the list is Dead People Server (www.city-net.com/~lmann/dps/). This one claims "414,000 curious surfers (and future dead people) since 9/11/97." The site offers a listing of interesting celebrities who are, or might plausibly be dead. It also promises a future "Quash Those Death Rumours" page. You can also send e-mail to the curator, who happens to be fandom's own Laurie Mann. You certainly run into fans in the strangest places.

You're Outta Here (www.cjnetworks.com/~roryb/outta.html) presents a very extensive selection of celebrity obituaries with pictures back to the beginning of this year. It also has a feature, "Stoopid Death Of The Month." If you like, you can continue to the "More Stoopid Deaths" section. You have to have the right sort of sense of humour for this stuff. I have it. (harharhar).

The next site begins, "Welcome to City of the Silent," a page devoted to understanding and appreciating cemeteries. Call us not necrophiliacs, but taphophiles – lovers of cemeteries as cultural artifacts." City of the Silent (www.best.com/~gazissax/city.html) offers features like "Post-Mortem Search Engine," and "Postcards from the Grave." The Crypt Keeper concludes by saying, "At this site, you will find depth and content beyond your imaginings. And it is still growing."

The website of The Los Angeles GRIM Society (<http://desperado.scvnet.com/~grim/grimfaq.html>) offers "Gruesome Recreation And Intentional Morbidity." "The Los Angeles Grim Society is a nonprofit association of otherwise normal individuals who share the same morbid curiosity about the less savoury aspects of the history of the city of Los Angeles." Among other things, these people like visiting the homes of famous (or infamous) people, murder scenes, cemeteries, and disaster sites. These guys sound like a lot of fun. I may well look them up.

Last and probably least is a usenet group for obituaries. (alt.obituaries). You can, of course, not only read obituaries but also discuss them. I'm now trying to imagine exactly how slow things would have to be to sit around discussing obituaries. It must be even slower than a worldcon business meeting.

It's amazing the things you can find from visiting just one website. All of this stuff brought together by those laugh-a-minute guys at the Los Angeles County Coroner's Office.

YYY

You can't collect websites the way you collect fanzines.

MIKE
GLYER



THE "NOSE-FOR-NEWS" WRITER

SO MUCH HISTORY, SO LITTLE TIME

Websites and toe-tags – both mentioned by Milt Stevens and Mike Glycer. Nah – these are not the common denominators of Los Angeles Fandom except, perhaps, to the Ted White Groupmind.

Bruce Bethke's novel *Headcrash* won the Philip K. Dick Award as 1995's Best Original SF Paperback. Bethke's story is full of scathing topical humour about the Net's users and abusers, and well-written enough to deserve whatever award comes its way. Viewed from another perspective, it's surprising but true that this winner of a major science fiction award might become absolutely unreadable within 10 years.

Headcrash satirizes the way the Net's worst abusers indulge their fantasies of revenge, sex and power. Bethke knows what wishes they're trying to fulfill, not just in anonymous online chat rooms, but also in the halls of computer software companies. He extrapolates and exaggerates Net technology to create a humorous vision of that inner world – chat rooms become virtual holographic speakeasies, and the vaunted Information Superhighway includes literal onramps where the protagonist zooms past those using obsolete hardware. Yet no matter how cool our hero looks prowling the Net, his computer company job is on the edge of extinction and so is his social life: he still lives at home with Mother. This is a very funny book and I recommend you read it while that can still be said.

The trouble in store for *Headcrash* is the same problem that stalks all topical satire: it dates very rapidly. Bethke cannot move too far beyond what we know if he is to successfully mock the contemporary computer culture. He cannot really extrapolate, only exaggerate, its technology and mores. He has an advantage in that his mass audience has learned from *Sharper Image* catalogs and straight-to-video sci-fi movies the look of the equipment it takes to experience virtual reality. We're no longer at such a primitive level that people really believe the government or aliens can peek back at them through the television set, nor even that the fusion of human minds with computer powers will resemble anything like the Disney movie *Tron*. That's also his handicap: when those capabilities are fully available, *Headcrash* is unlikely to have predicted the future any more accurately than Fritz Lang's *Metropolis*. Those solitary bug-eyed goggles...

There's also Greg Benford's sobering advice from "alt.fans" in the January 1996 issue of *Reason*: "Wired's Kevin Kelly thinks that the Net will become the dominant force in our culture. I rather doubt it' who in the 19th Century would have described the Post Office that way? Yet it seemed equally wondrous at the time." The Net will soon become trapped in the amber of mundane daily living. When that happens, *Headcrash* is going to wind up on the shelf next to Murray Leinster's story about battleships with radar-directed artillery and Verne's story about the Baltimore Gun Club shooting a man to the Moon. There are worse fates, of course, because at least a few readers still take these stories down from the shelf.

Though satire like *Headcrash* is a special case, I'm sure these are tough times for any kind of hard science fiction writer to work with ideas grounded in science. Engineers are no longer years behind hard science fiction writers in their capacity to really make the stuff of dreams. Technological reality is galloping in second place behind anything people can imagine.

Opinions are like turds: Any asshole can produce lots of them.

Science fiction thrives on poetic images of technologies so far in advance of engineering that a writer can suspend disbelief with a few impressionistic brushstrokes (so long as he does it outside the pages of *Analog*). Most of the genre's classics that remain readable do so because whatever technologies they involve cannot be compared to anything in the interim. Or else, as in Bradbury's Mars stories, if the obsolete science doesn't really mar the psychological impact of the stories the readers cope by mentally blurring every reference to Mars as "someplace else."

It's interesting to note that while *Headcrash* will become obsolete at the same time as the technology it satirizes, the fact that the culture has outpace the future of Bradbury's *The Veldt* has not deprived this classic story of either its humour or its horror. The unplumbed evil of children still gives the story its horrific tang. Its timeless warning to parents against abandoning children to technological playmates is actually rendered more emphatic now that the playground has expanded to the limits of the Net. If *The Veldt* never quite justifies the murderous effect of its virtual Serengeti (forerunner of the equally unaccountable Holodeck), it's still a convincing metaphor for the lethal effect of neglect on family relationships.

I'm tempted to wonder if the difficulty of keeping up with the future explains why so many gifted sf writers have turned their genius to predicting the past. There's got to be some reason for the present explosion of alternate history novels, the best of which are dominating the attention of sf readers.

Science fiction has always included these "looking backward" kind of stories, but they were one-trick ponies, like Dean McLaughlin's *Hawk Among the Sparrows*. McLaughlin showed what would really happen if a modern jet fighter got transported back in time to World War I: not much. Anyway, not until the pilot jerry-rigs barrels and cloth to filter enough kerosene of a quality the jet can burn without wrecking its engines. Even when he gets airborne what happens is: not much. Enemy biplanes are an insufficient target for heat-seeking missiles. The pilot finally figures out the best he can do is blow enemy planes out of the sky, literally, by flying past them at top speed.

There were also instances, such as L. Sprague deCamp's *Lest Darkness Fall*, that explored myth and history using a modern-minded, military science fiction approach. It may have been written decades ago, but it embodies the qualities common to the alternate histories so popular today: contemporary characters thrust into historical combat situations, whose survival depends on their ability to bridge homeworld technology into their present circumstances.

Some of the things I lump into alternate history are actually alternate timeline stories. It's not that I don't notice the distinction, but they all feel alike to me.

Consider William Fortschen's books in the *Rally Cry* series, where another Civil War regiment from Maine, rather than Joshua Chamberlain's 20th, disappears in a storm at sea. They land across space-time on a planet already populated by humans who suffered the same mysterious fate over the millennia – and the nomadic horde of aliens who treat them as edible cattle. The whole premise exists to allow Fortschen to write about 19th Century military experiences on a number of levels – mixing abstract discussions of strategy and logistics, with gritty descriptions of epic, brutal battles.

Like mystery, alternate history/alternate timeline stories also have rules. In mystery, if a gun appears on the first page of a story, it must go off before the end of the story. In alternate history, if a gun appears anywhere in the story, the writer must explain how it could be manufactured, the reasons for picking that kind of gun to make, how it's kept supplied with ammunition, and how the military tactics required for effective use of firearms are imported to a culture that's never seen guns before.

Guns of the South is Harry Turtledove's famous "what-if?" novel that shows how a Confederacy armed with AK-47's before 1864 could have turned the tables on the North. Of course, when the Army of Northern Virginia gets these advanced guns they don't magically suddenly revert to partisan ambush tactics ala *Red Dawn*. In fact, to the delight of Civil War buffs, the new guns alter the Battle of the Wilderness relatively little – Turtledove allows the knowledgeable reader to identify the moment his timeline separates from ours.

Sf readers know what it means to see the future change. The past also changes, just more slowly. We have no omniscient access to an immutable historical record. We have only the remains, and no one left to explain them. So what we know can be changed by new evidence or new scholarly interpretations. For example, consider the European scholars who insist that the majestic reigns of David and Solomon are the romantic exaggerations of exiles. They liked to point out that archaeologists had never discovered any physical evidence of these kings' existence. Then, a few years ago, someone discovered the well-known "House of David" inscription. Now the traditional interpretation has regained momentum.

A very ambitious, and successful, effort to mold our knowledge of the ancient world into an adventure novel is S.M. Stirling's *Island in the Sea of Time*. Stirling casts a batch of modern-day Yankees – the entire island of

As one who prefers low-maintenance possessions and body parts, I'm glad I was circumcised.

Nantucket – into their own past. Though he tells a very different story from *Rally Cry*, the formula is much the same -- modern castaways in primitive surrounding save their lives and their culture by solving the problems necessary for them to live in the technological style to which they've become accustomed. Stirling's characters find themselves in 1200 BC, and he sets up fascinating interactions and rivalries between the moderns and ancients.

I share the current fascination with these sf books and read a lot of them. It's particularly interesting to watch someone like Stirling attempt to reconstruct the psychology of ancient peoples. It's all in fun and there are no Stonehenge builders around to scoff at his results. But I remember from watching Ken Burns' *The Civil War* that I was struck by how alien the people of the 1860s were in some respect. He told about the behaviour of Civil War casualties at a Washington hospital, including the ones who tied the ID tag on their own toe before quietly expiring. I thought: these are strangers to me, even though I have in common with them language, nationality and culture. And if they are aliens, how much more so are the people of 1200 BC! Which is a reassuring thought, that if science fiction is looking more to the past than the future, at least it's still telling stories about aliens...

Will a stealth fighter make any noise if it falls into a forest?

LATE LOCS ON NO AWARD #3

IRWIN HIRSH: 26 Jessamine Ave., Prahan East, Victoria 3181, Australia. A few months ago I was responding to a fanzine in which Robert Lichtman reprinted some of his writing from the sixties. One article I appreciated because it gave me a picture of LA fandom of the time. I then added in parenthesis that these days I have no picture of LA fandom. I'm hoping that through *No Award* this will be somewhat corrected.

A picture of LA fandom through the pages of No Award you will not get. LA fandom is diffuse, dispersed, and disorganised. Even that part of LA fandom with which I interact, LASFS, is more or less like the three "d's", above. LASFSians are so disinterested in written fanac that the weekly APA put out at LASFS meetings has little input from club members. What is strange is that No Award has attracted to itself most of the LASFS fans who are interested in zineac (although I admit to some, er, arm-twisting). As such, good writers though these people be, they are not representative of LASFS. Indeed, they do not even write much about LA fandom – except for Len Moffatt, and that is in a fanhistorical context. This is not to presume that non-LASFS writers are not welcome in these pages – indeed, I welcome to No Award fanwriters from everywhere. At present, though, No Award has a strong LASFS presence.

I ALSO HEARD FROM -

In *No Award* #3 the loccol included the following from Bob Lee, "Stop WAHFing me." My response was, "O.K., anything to keep the troops happy. Er, considering the troops in question, let me modify that. Anything 'reasonable' to keep the troops happy. And I get to define 'reasonable'." I hereby define what Bob sent me this time as "unreasonable" and, therefore, list him in this section. I assume that he will write his next loc on asbestos paper.

Gene "Old 815" Stewart wrote about having a heart attack and moving from Germany to Nebraska. If I were to move from Germany to Nebraska, I, too, would have a heart attack.

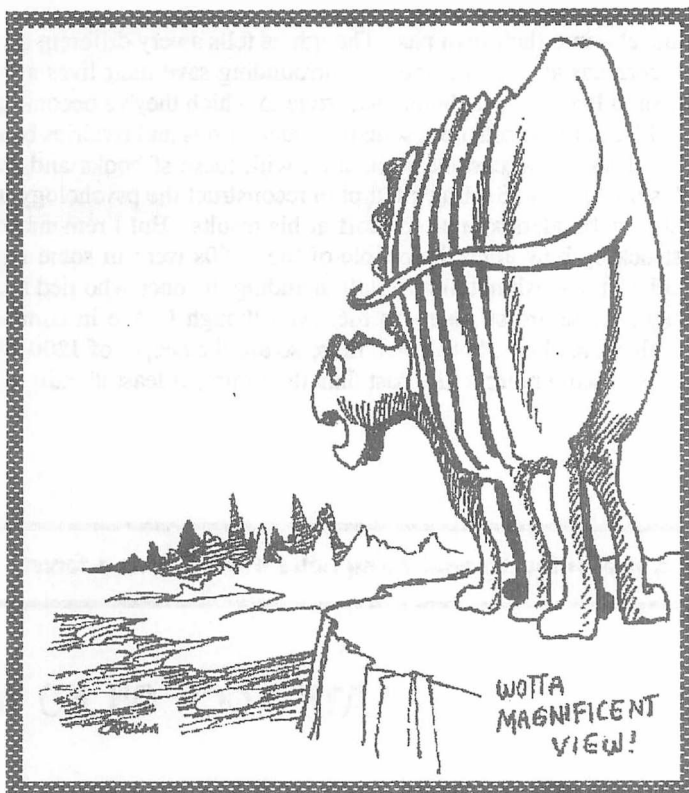
Dave Langford wrote, "Liked the review of *The Leaky Establishment*. Good review, that. Perceptive man, Mr. Glyer. Well commissioned, Marty. Oh, and I liked it." Maybe the Mike and Dave can share a Hugo over this?

It is rather amazing to hear people discuss what you've written without realizing that at least 50 percent of the author was in the room.

A FAN HISTORY COLUMN

Len Moffatt has been around Los Angeles since World War II. He has seen and commented about local (and other) happenings almost since he moved here from the Eastern part of our country. Len has been writing his fannish autobiography off and on in FAPA. Len is now re-writing this work for the larger audience of this fanzine.

I am presenting the first, short, installment. You will notice that, as a matter of concentrating on California Fan History, he is beginning his "tale" from when he arrived in Los Angeles. Len promises to continue producing this work in future issues. Huzzah!



CALIFANIA TALES

by Len Moffatt

Prologue

*When first I heard of California fans
I lived in Pennsylvania
And I had no travel plans.
For I was a poor teenager
Supporting habits low—
Like buying science fiction mags
Or going to a picture show.*

*I had a science fiction club of fans,
The Western Pennsylvania
Science Fictioneers. Our plans
To write and publish fanzines
Slowly began to grow
As we read of LASFS in VOM
And in SHANGRI-LA, you know*

*But I first heard of LASFS in Pong's zine—
His Almanac in LE ZOMBIE
Described the silly scene:
Their search for a meeting place;
It really was no lark
When Walter D. found them a cave
(it was for bears!) in Griffith Park.*

*Now though I was quite young and quite naive
In the Sticks of Pennsylvania,
Pong's tale I could not believe.
I understood it was just a jibe.
(Tucker's satire was so droll)
Soon a pilgrimage to Bixel Street
Became my sercon goal!*

The W.P.S.F. became no more

*When some of its key members
Went off to war.
My poetic license I have enough abused, Foo
knows,*

*And so I shall continue these tales
In fannish prose:*

THE SERVICEMAN'S TALE

When the Greyhound bus stopped somewhere between San Diego and Los Angeles and the cops, both military and civilian, came aboard to inspect the passengers, I assumed that I was going to wind up in the brig for thirty days of "piss and punk." That was thirty days behind bars with bread and water and an alleged "square meal" every third day.

The reason for my fearful assumption was because my liberty pass was good only for the immediate environs of San Diego and the Marine tent camp where I was temporarily stationed on my way overseas. All too soon I would see service on Saipan and then Okinawa and – after the war ended – occupation duty in Nagasaki. In the meantime I wanted to visit Slan Shack and the LASFS clubroom, both on Bixel Street in Los Angeles, the Mecca of Fandom during World War II.

I was sitting next to a nice little old lady. We had been talking and I quickly resumed our conversation pretending that the presence of the SPs and MPs and state cops bothered me not in the least. As it turned out, they bothered me not in the least. Perhaps they assumed the lady was my mother and I did have an innocent-looking young face in those days.

They were checking out civilian as well as uniformed passengers and the presence of the state police indicated that they may have been looking for illegal immigrants from Mexico as well as for servicemen who might be AWOL.

I phoned Slan Shack from the LA bus station and got Myrtle R. Douglas a.k.a. Morojo. She told me which streetcars to catch to get within walking distance of Bixel Street.

Myrtle and Forry Ackerman published *VOICE OF THE IMAGI-NATION* a.k.a. *VOM*, a letterzine that I wrote for. I was quite religious in my youth and my letters in *VOM* reflected this. I found myself "feuding" with Forry, Myrtle and others who espoused atheism and I couldn't help being a little worried at meeting them in person.

As it was, I met only two fans that day, Myrtle – and Jimmy Kepner who happened to be visiting Slan Shack that Sunday afternoon. The other residents of the rooming house, the ones who had brought the name "Slan Shack" with them when they moved from Battle Creek, Michigan, to Los Angeles, were off elsewhere that day. Being wartime, some of them might have been working even though it was Sunday.

It was a pleasant visit and all too brief as I had to catch a bus back to San Diego in order to be in camp before bed check that night. We did discuss religion and I remember Jim commenting to Morojo that my ideas of Christianity were "quite reasonable." Many years later I would write a filk song entitled, "The Old Fannish Trail," in which the following verse appeared:

*Young Len Moffatt preached sermons on sinning –
He was a Christian when the lions were winning!
But thanks to fandom and world War II
He became an agnostic – AND SO SHOULD YOU!*

Had I made the trip the day before I would have met more Califanians, including Ackerman who had been

The nicest thing about your publishers giving you a 50th birthday party is that you then get to become 45, 10% having been withheld against returns.

in town from Fort MacArthur, where he was stationed and had the enviable job of editing the army camp's newspaper. I remember him sending me a copy of an issue wherein "Private Elmer Perdue" had done something or other. Forry was "Tuckerizing" his friends in the newspaper before Tucker did it in books.

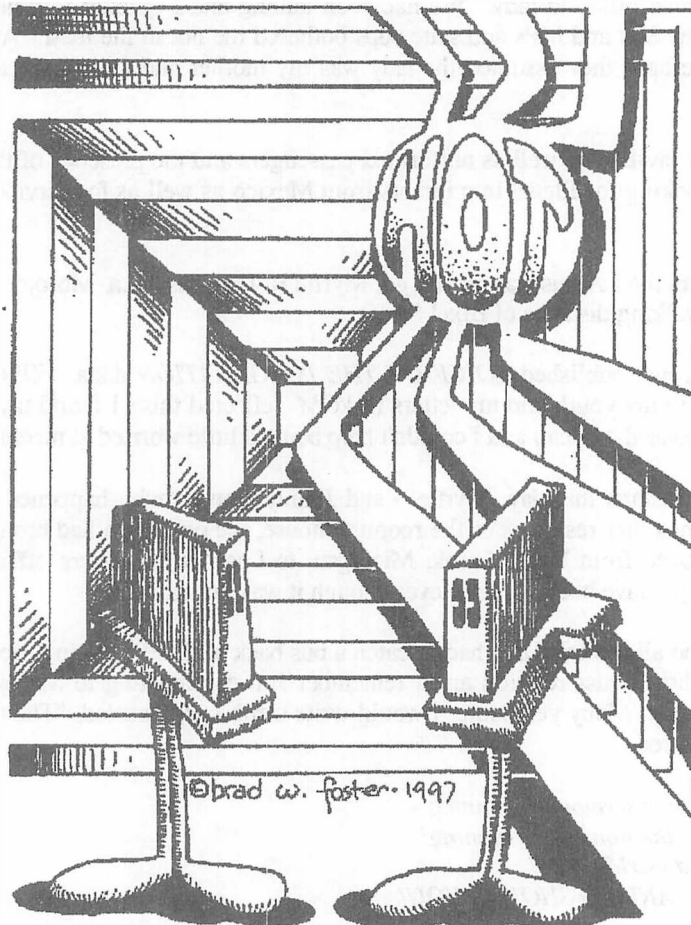
I would return to Slan Shack and attend my first LASFS meeting at the Bixel club room after the war. Morojo was still at the Shack but no longer Forry's girl friend, or so I was told. The person who told me this as well as other gossip about LASFS members was Al Ashley, one of the original Slan Shackers from Michigan.

Al also told of the "queers" in LASFS. I don't think the term "gay" was in use in 1946. One of those named was Jimmy Kepner. I'm not sure when he came out of the closet but in years to come he would become one of the leaders in the Gay Movement in Los Angeles and its honored official archivist until his recent death.

I think Jim lived in the rooming house across the street from Slan Shack. It was called Tendril Towers. How amusing these house names must have been to Alfred E. van Vogt, who – with his wife Edna Mayne Hull – attended LASFS meetings regularly in those days.

Watch this space for THE NEO-CALIFANIAN'S TALE...

¥¥¥



FANZINE

REVIEW

by Joseph Major

MSFire

MSFire Magazine, Post Office 1637, Milwaukee, WI 53201-1637, USA
Available for membership (\$5/year) or The Usual (submissions and/or trades)

Harry Warner discusses in his epochal fan histories *All Our Yesterdays* and *A Wealth of Fable* the brief efflorescences of isolated fan groups; how some critical mass of fans would spring up in some isolated community, publish a fanzine that would attract favorable attention, and then, driven by some tragic fate, would disintegrate, never more to contribute severally or jointly. Never even to be tracked down, the way someone tracked Joel Nydahl down many years after his cataclysmic annish and found that he just was not interested any more.

The issue at hand (sorry, Blish) is Volume Four, Number One, January/February 1998, so one may intimate that this is not a *transitory* thing. I rather think that the group is new to fandom. One has but to see editor Lloyd Daub's enthusiastic adaptation of fanspeak to realize that these people, while they have reached out and touched fandom, are not old fen and tired. For the record, the others of this core group are Lisa Mason, the publisher (and former editor), Lucinda Borkenhagen, that now indispensable part of a fanzine circle the Internet and email contact, and Sakai Oino, the "intrepid reporter, house poet and pain in the neck" as they put it. (Better be careful with those serial commas; Arthur Hlavaty once recounted one that left me choking with laughter: "This book is dedicated to my parents, Ayn Rand and God") talk about the Odd Couple!)

That Internet connection brings up another feature of contemporary fandom; how isolation is becoming a thing of the past. The same names appear in letter columns, the same artists adorn covers and inside pages, all because it is now easier to communicate. This encourages a certain level of quality; this also might hinder the development of new stylists. This is not a theoretical consideration, in light of the tragic death of Rotsler. There are Rotslers throughout fandom; as long as you mean his illos, and not fan artists willing to do his sort of thing in their style.

The price of this, though, is giving up the legendary crudzine with unreadable print, smeary images purported to be illos, and so on. Harry Warner has often noted how as he advances in years, he finds it harder to read that legendary print, and I find it hard to blame him. Those who decry the demise of the crudzine "because it means that independent ideas won't flourish" pass over the consideration that that unreadable style came from a lack of means, and now better means exist.

But on to the content. The zine itself is a handy folded sheet, 8 ½ x 5 ½ inches. It is wrapped for mailing, sparing the cover. In a waste-not want-not mode, the wrapper contains an open letter from Milwaukee fan Rob Golub) though one immediately has concerns about someone who professes being "a huge sci fi and comic fan". The real concerns, however, are not of that sort but quite another. Rob is concerned about the decline of fandom, as well we all should be. His answer, though, is constrained by the circumstances of his mundane life. He is an editor for a local magazine, and his solution for shrinking fandom is that fans use such press outlets as, well, his. Rob bemoans how he has "never once had a press release come across my desk relating to fandom" and urges fans to provide him and his sort with such press releases. What comes to mind immediately is the Joe Mayhew cartoon on "The first one the press interviews. . ." who is a socially non-functional worst case who, nevertheless, fits the press's preconception of a, ah, "huge sci fi and comics fan". Rob means well, but forty-seven times burned, forty-eight and up times shy.

The next layer of wrapping) thish (Lloyd *loves* fanspeak!) is wrapped like an onion, it seems) shows that increased communication. It is the 1998 TAFF ballot, courtesy of Ulrika O'Brien. The third layer (this is getting preposterous) is a double-sided item, the Deepsouthcon 36 flier (that is rather out of area) on one side and Mike

Glyer's 20th anniversary *File 770* poll on the other.

Finally, one gets to the fanzine itself. The cover is by David Edward Martin, a name I am not familiar with, and is adequate if not attention-drawing. Inside artists (facetiously, but not that much, listed as "Our Hugo-worthy Artists") are Sheryl Birkhead, Lloyd himself, Teddy Harvia, Margaret B. Simon, Steve Stiles, and Wendy Zupan. I note with dismay that Sheryl and Steve have *again* been unworthily passed over for honor and public notice. There is also a fair amount of Corel Draw clipart, beginning with the Beatnik Mutant Hipster Turtle, I guess, next to the listing of artists.

MSFire is very much a writing-oriented fanzine; it has always published fiction, and not fan fiction either. It also contains various writing tips, including a rather odd one. Contributor Sue Burke has a random plot generator. For several issues, these snippets of description have been included as hints to the would-be writer. The colophon page has one, for example: "This is a romance/betrayal story set on Plutino about a diplomatic envoy from Andromeda who is misidentified by an explorer with arachnophobia." It is not difficult to identify similar ideas in SF, from tossed-off comments by Heinlein to apparently about half of Robert Sheckley's work; but the value is in the expression. And above this item Sue gives a pithy, sagacious paragraph of advice to the aspiring writer about how "Rewriting isn't evil, although it can feel that way." Heinlein advised otherwise, but the decline in his later works, which were essentially unedited first drafts, should be good example to the contrary.

Next comes Lloyd's editorial, "A Parenthetical Man". An editor whose sagacious editorial aphorism is "Editor: A person with the ability to be both pontifical and wrong") Walter Cronkite" is to be commended for being aware of the pitfalls of editing, and being disinclined to take himself too seriously. Having set himself up for a realistic examination, Lloyd proceeds to mention a variety of topics; differing calendars, the invention of the alphabet, the insidious Doctor Fu Manchu, and the problems of astrologers in trying to adapt to reality.

This is followed by a story, "The Nose Knows" by E. J. Frami, and as always with such material, the reader is left wondering about the marketing thereof.

Next is Oino's column, "It's News to Me!" He covers various items of exotic science news) the sort of information that is interesting to Fans, but not necessarily covered in the general press. One would wish that *Analog* would feature these more than it does, and less of the crank science stuff that so often appears there. Oino is not one to avoid judging the news, as one might tell from the column beginning with a bold "First, the Bad News:" All of which this time is space-program news, on Mars Observer's problems in aerobraking, two inept spacewalking astronauts, and John Glenn's return to space (which Oino sees as a stunt). More space news is categorized as "some I-don't-know News") Eugene Shoemaker's burial and the risk-averse society and potential deaths in space. Finally, the good news covered ranges from private launches to moons of Uranus. This is a heartening aspect for those fans who still think that there should be some connection between science fiction and science.

This is followed by an unusual sort of ramble, Lucinda's "Adventures of a Web Crawler". Her methodology is to simply go from one World Wide Web site to another, recording her route and making various comments, some of them even relevant. She makes enough funny comments to make the column not a total lost for those lacking Net access, but really this is worth more for those with the time and means to go on a similar quest. Even then, one is likely to be drawn off on another trend of one's own interests.

The group seems to be lacking a regular book reviewer. Three brief book reviews follow, written by fellow zine editors under the collective head "Don't Blame *MSFire*) They're Only Our Opinions". The mysterious E. B. Frohvet reviews the anthology *Northern Stars: The Anthology of Canadian SF* edited by David Hartwell and Glenn Grant and two nonfiction works pitched as introductions to the field, *Science Fiction in the Twentieth Century* by Edward James and *Science Fiction After 1900* by Brooks Landon. Frohvet turns out to be harsh and unsparing, rendering such judgments as "Spider Robinson's 'User Friendly' is a typical example of the throwaway trash for which he receives Hugos." And is even more dismissive of the two nonfiction books, laying down the law in the beginning: "I'm not sure there's a need for a book to explain SF to the mundanes, and if there were, David Hartwell already did it in *Age of Wonders*," and going on in like manner to an equally stern conclusion.

Joy V. Smith contrasts this with a review of *Pacific Empire: An Alternative History* by G. Mikki Hayden which in a brief compass is detailed enough to persuade me that the book is not worth reading, though Joy herself enthuses "This is a good read". This is a criticism of the original book, and paradoxically, an endorsement of Joy for her conciseness and clarity of understanding.

MSFire is in touch with the great community of fandom, though one might have concerns when realizing that the first zine reviewed in their prosaically-titled zine review column "Also Received: Zines in Trade" is the *communicator: The Official Newsletter of Star Fleet Academy* [sic. on capitalization]. It does help to learn that the *communicator* does have insider news about media SF (which helps make it clear that the *MSFire* group does make the distinction). Other zines reviewed include standbys like *File 770*, *The Geis Letter*, and *Mimosa*. REG will be pleased to read that there is "meat for debate in every sentence." The stress on becoming a published writer is

reinforced by reference to Janet Fox's valuable guide to small-press markets, *Scavenger's Scrapbook* (formerly *Scavenger's Newsletter*). And the review of *FOSFAX* is just a bit flippant about my article on H. Beam Piper's neglected classic *Space Viking*) it only *seemed* to be as long as the book.

The letter column "Loc . . . and Key" seems a little odd. No Harry Warner letter. *No Warner?!*

The collective comments on letters, sometimes on each others' comments. I have my doubts about this methodology. While not quite as bad as breaking up a letter into "topics", the interjection of editorial notes *into* a letter, to my view, breaks up the flow of the loccer's argument. The worst example I ever saw of this was a letter by L. Sprague de Camp to *Mythlore* where he advanced his theory that fantasy writers are influenced by strong maternal figures. Now one would think that they would have at least been respectful to this thesis; of the components of their archetypal composite Inklew TolkienLewisWilliams, two had such figures in their lives. Tolkien was *raised* by his mother, and Lewis went to some effort to keep a surrogate mother figure. But for some reason the *Mythlore* editor did not take to the theory, and put in a number of disruptive editorial notes. He might even have been able to express his counter-theory better if he had put it in a single response. Similarly, the wit of Lloyd's, Lucinda's, and Oino's responses is vitiated by its being studded in the locs; they come across as rather inane if not outright juvenile.

The archetype of *MSFire*, or so it seems to me, is the archetypal fan of the thirties and forties. He (now this embraces "She") was interested in science, and wanted to be a writer. *MSFire* encourages both these bents. This is something that has been, if not forgotten, at least downgraded, to SF's loss. This seriousness does not prevent them from being unserious:

[You know, you really frost me sometimes) LGD] [No, that's "Frost Me, the Snowman") OS]
[No, no, that's "Frosty, the Plutino!") LB] [Excuse me for a moment; I'm going to wash these
two right out of my hair) LGD]

I wonder how they do the editing?

YYY

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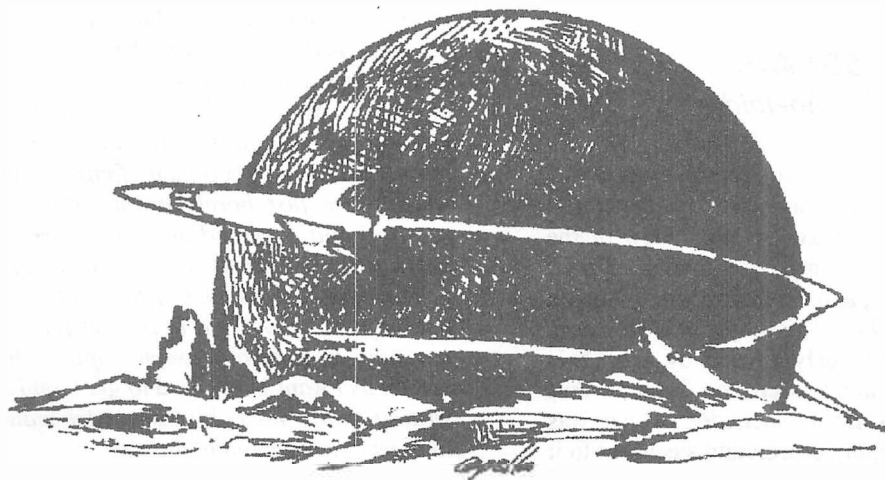
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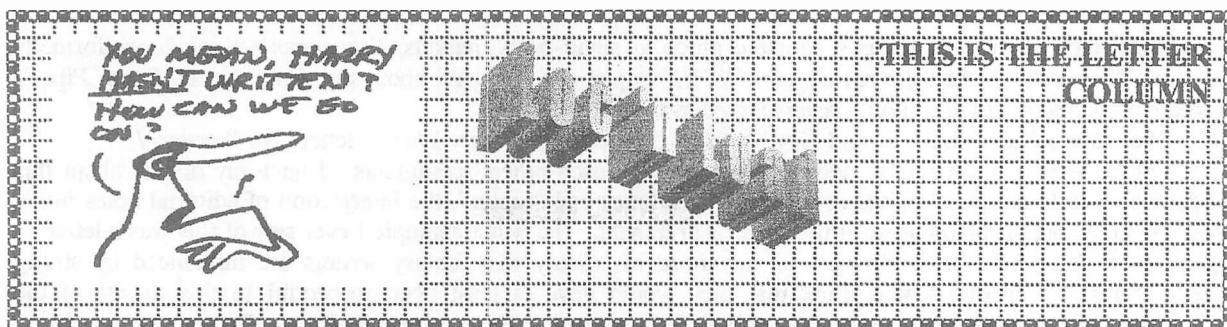
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Commentary by ye ed in 10 pt italics

DEREK PICKLES: 44 Rooley Ln,
Bankfoot, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5
8LX, UK

I sympathise with your work problems. I worked for forty years and only really loved two jobs – one when I taught 9 year-olds in a primary school (2 years) and most of the sixteen years I had my own business (I liked the boss) – I survived the dozen or so other jobs I had. The worst post-school job I had was working for the Ministry of Food in 1946 for a few months where all I did was use a tiny rubber stamp to stamp the Bradford Food Office Number in a small rectangle on tens of thousands of sheets of bread coupons. (Bread was rationed here, not during the war but after the war when flour was needed to feed the starving millions in immediate post-war Europe.)

Your mentioning of working for the Ministry of Food reminds me of the cover of *Holier Than Thou* #18. The cover was a reduction of a Health Education Council poster designed by Dave Langford's brother. To give you an idea of this delightful cover, consider that it starts out with the sentence, "This is what happens when a fly lands on your food."

What a letter column, names from all the Ages of Fandom, so good that this epistle will be WAHF'd.

Not as long as I can find some chance to be a smartass.

YVONNE ROUSSEAU: P.O. Box
3086, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, SA 5000,
Australia

I was interested in your remarks about the poor distribution of Dave Langford's *The Leaky Establishment* (and also in mike Glycer's review of the book). I bought my own copy (a 1984 first edition) secondhand in Adelaide, at a Community Aid Abroad booksale in April, 1993. This copy of *The Leaky Establishment* was previously owned by the Civic Public Library of Whyalla – a city on Spencer Gulf (about 400 kilometres from Adelaide), which was established for the shipping of iron and steel sent to it

by rail from Iron Knob. No doubt the Army Cadets stationed at Whyalla borrowed *The Leaky Establishment* while they could, and derived many useful hints from it – something to ruminate upon during sleepless nights.

I notice that you do not say that it was the book which was making their nights sleepless; but then, we can not blame Dave for all of this world's ills, can we? Oh, well, sure we can. After all, everything worth doing is worth overdoing, is it not? Is that not the faanish tradition?

Shall we be seeing you again at Aussiecon Three?

Alas, no smartassery here. If you read my DUFF trip report you would know that my visit to Oz (which included Aussiecon Two) was one of the most wonderful times of my life. I only wish that I could afford to visit there again some day; however, my finances are too slim for a trip Down Under ever again. My finances are such that when I retire in a few years I will need to work part time to be able to live a modest lifestyle. At least I have my memories.

TERRY JEEVES: 56 Red Scar Drive,
Scarborough, N. Yorkshire UO12 5RQ, UK

Probe fanzine review. An interesting item, but jumped around quite a bit. Personally, I'd prefer more fanzines covered in lesser detail. After all, at one fanzine per issue – per x months, one issue doesn't even touch the vast field out there.

Well, maybe I have been out of touch for too many years, but I do not see all that many fanzines anymore. More to the point, Joseph Major is reviewing just one fanzine in each column at my request. I have seen too many fanzine review columns which were just barely expanded lists of fanzines received and I wanted Joseph to turn his considerable analytical talents to an in-depth examination of just one zine per column. I feel that this is a service, not only to fandom, but to the fanzine (and faned) in question. In general, Joseph's approach is about as sercon as I want No Award to get – and Joseph's fine writing ability makes his serconnish material fit right in to what I am about in the zine.

GENE "OLD 815" STEWART: 1004
Tigerville Road, Traveler's Rest, SC 29690

Ray Capella's cover was haughty and wise and self-assured.

Despite that, that owl does not resemble me in the least.

Your U-Haul woes are the sort that seem too common these days. You'll be years working all that crap out of your system, but try to shake it off to whatever extent possible.

I still keep up with what goes on at U-Haul as I remain friends with several of those still working there (as does my bother-in-law). Earlier today I dropped by a small rental centre where I sometimes filled in as a temporary General Manager before I demoted myself from my staff position. The current GM is the person I trained as my successor in my staff job – he has just been demoted to GM and his Storage Manager position eliminated. He told me the latest – our main office (in Phoenix) just cut Marketing Company budgets by 30%. I was told that one of the Marketing Company Presidents I know, upon hearing of this, called Phoenix and told them to restore the cut immediately or they should have a replacement for him the next morning. He wound up quitting. The Marketing Company President for whom I worked immediately put in a thirty day notice – and he had been a gung-ho, follow-policy-to-the-letter leader for the company (and one of its most successful MCPs) for over 20 years. When the company starts alienating dedicated employees such as these two, all that I can say is that ownership is totally out of touch with how to make a company successful. I had my problems with my MCP when I worked with him but I always considered him a prime asset for the company.

Under The Hood went, yes, over my head. I drive a Volvo station wagon, though. Is that fannish? Also, I've never encountered a Saturn Moonie yet. Just lucky.

Your luck has just run out – I consider the Saturn as about as good a value for the money which you can get in this country, and I will proselytize on behalf of this fine automobile on the slightest excuse. My 1991 Saturn SL1 is a wonderful automobile.

Joe Major's in-depth review of *Probe* was his typical extensive, even exhausting, stuff, full of great points, elliptical references, and good writing. South Africa, as glimpsed through this lens, sounds just like home doesn't it?

Gene Stewart, meet Terry Jeeves.

Brad Foster's art is always a delight, and an enhancement to any zine.

No smartass here – but I would ask you to see if you can find somebody with a copy of Holier Than Thou XX (#20) with its X-rated fold-out Brad Foster cover. Even for a zine noted for its excellent

covers, this Brad Foster cover was a stand-out. I wish that I had the money to enable me to treat fanartists as well as I used to treat them – dozens of fillos in each issue, well-reproed, and special treatment on the covers. A project for a faned with some money would be to do a retrospective of HTT artwork.

JOHN BERRY: 4, Chilterns, S. hatfield,
Herts., AL10 8JU, UK

Re. references to fandom & retirement: What I have done since my retirement in 1991 is to collate all my 1000 fannish articles into categories, get them nicely bound professionally (i.e.: IF stories, over 200 pages; army experiences; etc., and have POT POURRI (my SAPzine), 54 copies, bound into 2 volumes, and have also numerous bound copies of all my sercon fingerprint articles. Etc. I have 40 bound volumes, looks great.

Now that is an accomplishment which has me so croggled that even I have no smartass to add here.

VINCE CLARKE: 16 Wendover Way,
Welling, Kent DA16 2BN, UK

I could have sworn on a stack of Enchanted Duplicators that I locced No. 2; but, apparently, not. It's probably still sitting in my PC – I was hauled into hospital suddenly on march 10th, and have been a patient ever since.

Did you survive?

I found the editorial slightly boring, but it probably helps to get it all down in writing and if you can't be a little tedious in your own fanzine, I don't know where else.

Well, it does get boring being tedious only at work, but I assure you that the experiences I was reporting and through which I was going was not boring to me at the time. Anyway, considering that part of what I was reporting (the divorce) was enough out of the ordinary (it being amicable instead of bitter) that I thought that mentioning it might give hope to others considering the same move – divorce does not have to be a bitter experience.

I think *The Leaky Establishment* sold well amongst British fans, but there's not enough of us to make a significant difference. Certainly I reckon D.L. is the best fan writer ever after Walt Willis. The Mike Glycer review was excellent.

Some of us (such as Mike Glycer) might consider Mike's review proves Mike to be Langford's equal as a fan writer. (Mike, is that good enough to get you to continue writing for me?)

Peanut butter – I was an early Brit convert to the stuff, which was only available as far as I know during the war at one particular rail station buffet. I

was told they kept it for Canadian troops passing through.

So, see what eating all of that peanut butter did to you – you wound up in hospital. In my case (and I almost live on the stuff), it has just led to sticky fingers a life as boring as, er, peanut butter.

You did a very good job editing the letters – it's so difficult to pick what would be interesting to other readers as well as to yourself.

Thanks, Vince. I do not usually print such comments (and I do get a few of them, now and then); however, I do like to put in comments like this every once in a while to counterbalance those who denigrate my lettercolumns. Well, I have not had any of that here; but, when I was putting out Holier Than Thou (which often had 50+ page lettercolumns), I was sometimes attacked for these long columns. I guess that I am still remembering those comments.

I could quibble about your use of a comparatively small font (8 point?) on pages which aren't split into 2 columns (too many words to a line, gets confusing) but on the whole a nice editing job. Illos are good, especially the inside back cover.

No, this is 8 point type. This is 10 point type. I prefer 12 point type but my finances dictate that I use 10 point type to keep down my costs (more words per page). For some reason I find that I currently like to put the lettercol into a double-column format, and I find that strange as I usually detest that format. Remember, I am primarily a book reader, and I am used to the single column format.

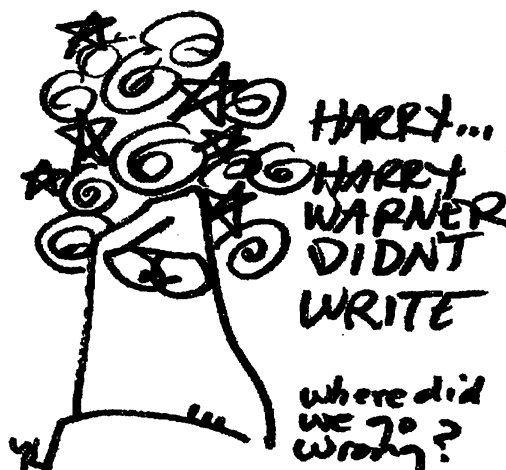
WALT WILLIS: 9 Alexandra Rd,
Donaghadee, Co. Down, N. Ireland BT21
0QD, UK

Your editorial demonstrates your good nature (in the matter of your divorce) and your determination (in the matter of your job). Full marks in both cases.

As long as the marks do not show on my face.

Mike Glyer's review of Dave Langford's book was excellent. The only cavil I would make is to defend the authority for treating blank paper marked confidential as itself confidential. Surely it is obvious that giving staff free access to paper marked officially as Confidential would encourage jokes or worse.

Is that something like writing me locs which encourage me to write smartass or worse? Anyway, you really should not cavil in public as it is unseemly for a gentleman such as you to be doing this in the full light of day.



SHERYL BIRKHEAD: 23629 Wood-
field Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20882 USA

Umph – the computer bits I sent didn't fare too well – hopefully I'll remember that in the future.

The fault is not only your own. Some of the problem is that I have yet to figure out the optimum scanner settings for and part of the problem is that I have yet to figure out the optimum settings on the copier so that illos come out better.

Life is merely a series of changes and changing – some nicer to live with than others. No matter how well versed one is in the working of a company, it only takes one confrontational individual (usually in a supervisory capacity, but not necessarily) to make sticking it out on the job simply not worth the aggravation at some point. You were lucky that things have moved so smoothly – it rarely does.

From my perspective, four months of unemployment 'twixt jobs can not be described as smooth. I admit to denseness. When the confrontations with the General Manager at the Glendale facility started escalating last Summer I should have started looking for a new job instead of waiting until my principles forced me to quit. One piece of good news that I just heard is that the General Manager Trainee about whom I was complaining was eventually let go – he would have been a disaster as a General Manager.

ROBERT WHITAKER SIRIGNANO:
P.O. Box 11246, Wilmington, DE 19850 USA

I went to see *THE TITANIC*, but I guessed the ending.

I will not spoil anybody's fun by revealing the ending. Of course, not having seen the movie, any comments on my part concerning the ending is just mere guesswork.

I don't know if the only material I read and enjoy is sfnal in nature, but I certainly find I don't enjoy a lot of realistic stories. I sample Samuel Beckett and left his work feeling disgusted. Hemingway was an odd wonder. I liked his style and disliked his material. A lot of highly regarded writers are just boring and depressing...certainly don't care for Thomas Disch either...most "literary mainstream" is filled with existential despair and I regard it as defeatist in tone and nature.

I guess that one has to be a Britfan to appreciate crap like that. I enjoy reading essays and other non-fiction work; however, most fiction except some sf leaves me cold. And I hate being cold.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS: 15 Jansons Rd., S. Tottenham, London N15 4JU, UK

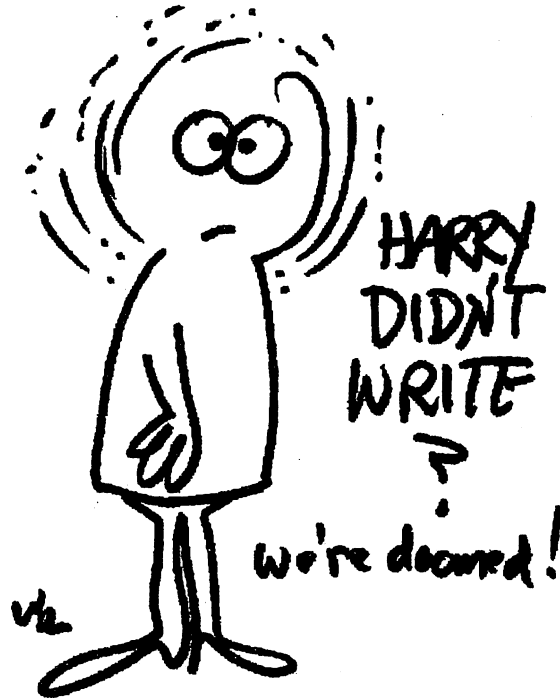
Received No Award #3, and am intrigued by your reference to my letter as "mostly temperate." Why – were you expecting something intemperate? And if so, why (again)?

Two points, here. Firstly, I was being my normal smartass, and that works because of the second reason – many people perceive much of what you write to be intemperate. You may well deny that you write things which are intemperate; and, from your viewpoint, you may very well be correct. Many readers, though, (and their written responses to you show this) appear to feel that at least some of what you write is considered intemperate. Whatever your position on this mater, please note that I like much of what you write even though I do not always agree with all of what you write – and I like what you write well enough to ask you to contribute to my zines. Do you remember the articles you wrote for Holier Than Thou? It made no nevermind that I did not always agree with that which you wrote, the fact that you wrote well was enough for this faned.

In a non-printed part of his loc, Joseph wonders why I mentioned I would be prepared to publish accounts of his travels because he says that he pubbed them in FTT. Joseph must have forgotten that my gafiation from about 1991 through 1997 got me dropped from many mailing lists – I was not receiving his zine during much of that period of time.

LLOYD PENNEY: 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ONT M9C 2B2, Canada

Up here, we'd been under the impression that Robbie was going to be moving back to Montréal. I suspect that she will have a difficult time fitting into British fannish society. They've got a strict hierarchy there, and certain ways of doing things, and Robbie's take-charge attitude may not be appreciated. They might not be sure how to treat here, as a colonial, or a bloody Yank.



Let me put it this way – it would be decidedly unhealthy for anybody to call her a bloody Yank to her face (or even in print). Robbie is a proud Canadian and nobody should forget that. Anyway, as much as I am tempted to say that Robbie will soon be showing the Brits how to run their cons, it should be pointed out that Robbie has worked on British cons before her recent move there and Britfandom has survived. I think.

There's some strange consolation to be had out of the fact others' jobs drive them up the wall, too.

'tis funny in a way (or should I say, ironic) – back when I was making almost nothing when I was in the retail tobacco business, I was so satisfied with what I was doing (except for not making much money) that I thought it strange that there were so many people who worked at jobs which they hated. If I could assure myself of some sort of retirement, I would trade all of the work I have done since I left the retail tobacco business (even though I was able to put aside some money since I left that trade) to be back at that trade as there is a lot to be said for a serene job environment.

As a former cigar store manager, you'd probably be interested in the current news in the cigar world...Cuba is finally exporting its best Trinidads to Canada and most of the world, and the quality of Jamaican cigars is starting to rival that of Cuba's best.

It seems that you are talking about two different subjects in that sentence. However, let me, er, clear the air a bit over the main topic of Cuban cigars and the mystique of same. Not that most people

will pay attention to this, especially cigar smokers. There have always been cigars from other countries that were the equal of the best from Cuba – just as there have always been poor Cuban cigars. Once one is at the top level of cigar quality, those cigars which an individual considers the "best" is only a matter of personal taste. Prior to World War II, there was very little mystique to Cuban cigars in the USA. In the first part of this century, we got most of our imported cigars from The Philippines. When the Japanese took over that country, importers in this country turned to Cuba as a nearby source of product; and, as only the best of the Philippine product was as good as what was coming into country from Cuba, the legend of the Cuban cigar grew. As further proof that Cuban cigars, whilst quite good, are not the absolute best, I point out two facts which are either forgotten or not known by those who were considering Cuban cigars the best and were smoking illegal imports during the time of these things I will point out. One. During the early years of the Cuban Revolution, the Cuban government did several things which drastically lowered the quality of cigars. The government drove many of the best and most knowledgeable cigar makers out of the country. To be fair, many of them left of their own accord. At the same time, the Cuban government, out of ideological purity, insisted that that the only cigars which should be produced would be those for "the proletariat," none of this bourgeois concentration on quality. The second thing which should be mentioned was an infestation of blue mold in the best fields, making –only lesser quality tobacco available for making into cigars. Those brainwashed into the belief that Cuban tobacco was the best did not change their tune during any of this.

Personally, I wish that I could afford good cigars. Hell! I wish that I could afford even mid-quality cigars! (I refuse to waste my time on poor quality anything.) Fortunately, my smoke of choice is still a pipe (using Dunhill's Nightcap from England), something which I am barely able to afford, and that only because I can get it at a price just a bit above wholesale. It helps to have a few connexions left in the field.

Fannish faux pas in restaurants...that could be the theme of the next *Mimosa*. No less than three times have I been at a fannish feast where someone at the table drank from the fingerbowl...

Do you mean that they did not use straws?

ROBBIE BOURGET: 8, Warren Close, Langley, Slough SL3 7UA, England

It might be an idea for you to mention at some point that Sheryl Birkhead is endeavouring to put a collection of Atom work together – not just artwork, but also writings. The difficult part is get-

ting ahold of the written stuff. People in the U.S. ought to photocopy whatever they might have and send it to her and those in the UK can forward stuff to me if they like.

Consider it mentioned. You sent the ATom illos I had (which had illo'ed a John Berry arkle) and I checked my file copies of Holier Than Thou to see if Arthur had contributed anything in writing – there was nothing there.

As to Ed's rants about fannish car owners, he probably needs to decide which he hates worse: owners whose cars resemble junk heaps of those who have Saturns. I remember one fan pre-Saturn-ownership whose car was a definite junk heap, without even room for a passenger's feet. Post-Saturn-ownership, this fan's car is immaculate. Perhaps Saturn ownership is the first step into learning to keep one's car clean and neat?

I know not about that last, but I must point out that every service call at a Saturn dealership, for whatever service is needed, results in one's automobile being cleaned, inside and out.

MILT STEVENS: 6325 Keystone St., Simi Valley, CA 93063 USA

In the letter column of *No Award* #3, the peculiar issue of your title is mentioned. If I had to deal with the problem of the Hugo ballot, I don't think I'd resolve it the way George Flynn suggests. I think I'd distinguish **NO AWARD** (the fanzine) from **NO AWARD** (the lack of award). Of course, a perverse conglom could always allow **NO AWARD** (the fanzine) to win and then issue no award. I don't think the opportunities for contentious titles is nearly exhausted. Nobody has yet tried publishing fanzines with titles like "The Other Nominees Are Trekkie Dweebs" or "The Only Heterosexually Oriented Fanzine On The Ballot."

Once some fans read what you have just written I think that issue number one of both of these titles will soon be seeing print.

The idea of Mike Glyer reviewing Dave Langford summons up the image of one of those grudge wrestling matches that have to be held in cages so the participants won't injure the audience. However, the actual review was quite moderate and well balanced. Mike mentions the vile allegation that all the science we know comes from Heinlein stories. Untrue, I read a couple of Asimov columns too. I know what it takes to build a nuclear warhead. It takes a lot of money to build a nuclear warhead. The idea of dipping nuclear warheads in chocolate is totally ridiculous. That would make them bad for children's teeth.

Hah! What makes you think that my rotten teeth would let any of that chocolate get to any children?

Ed Green wonders why most fans own old cars. Ed must not have been watching all those commercials that begin, "For only \$18,000, you can buy a new..." For \$18,000, I can do a great many things, and just about all of them are more fun than buying a new car. Besides, I like big old Detroit iron. Take a car like my 1981 Cadillac Seville, add one of the optional accessories (like a 20 mm canon), and you can drive anywhere with complete confidence.

MURRAY MOORE: 2118 Russett Rd.,
Mississagua, ONT L4Y 1C1, Canada

Mike Glyer's review of Dave Langford's *The Leaky Establishment* reminds me of my golden opportunity to buy a copy at a remainder price. Dave might get a grim satisfaction to know that, years ago, The World's Biggest Bookstore, in downtown Toronto, had so many copies of *TLE* that they were piled in a pyramid, adjacent to the sf section. I recognized the author's name, but I wasn't wise enough at the time to know what I was not buying.

Gee - you missed a golden opportunity. Had you been able to buy all of the copies and then convinced the World's Sixth Nuclear Power (and how many fans, nowadays, recognize that fannish reference) to send off the entire pile back to Dave... Ah, ferget it.

Dave named one of his characters Tappen, I see. Yesterday I read Ned Brooks *It Goes On The Shelf 19*, wherein I learned, among other things, that tappen is the word describing "a butt plug used by hibernating bears." Ned was skeptical, noting, "I find it a little hard to imagine how a bear, with its rather clumsy claws, could make or insert such a device." I wonder why a bear would need a butt plug. All together, now: All knowledge is contained in fanzines!

Britfan Malcolm Edwards used to put out a fanzine titled Tappen.

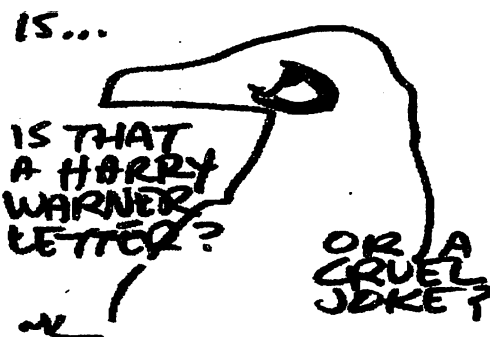
You edit locs. No way Joe Major only wrote a four paragraph loc on NA#2!

I always have edited my loc column, even when I was putting out monster lettercols in HTT. Nobody ever believed me, but I did.

SALLY SYRJALA: P.O. Box 149,
Centerville, MA 02632, USA

The back cover is great. Every restaurant should have it posted at their counter.

But only if they give Brad Foster a free cup and me a free pot of coffee. Actually, I prepare a pot of coffee every day before I leave for work, pour it all into at thermos bottle, and wish I had more when I finish the pot.



MIKE DECKINGER: 649 16th Ave.,
San Francisco, CA 94118-3510, USA

I can sympathize with your dilemma at U-Haul. You did the right thing in leaving. Once it became clear that the Status Quo was not going to change, it was really in your best interests to depart. Find out the name of the highest officer in the company. Send him a registered letter documenting your charges against the local office. Remember that with any large corporation, upper management has no clue as to how the lower echelons are operating.

Unfortunately, the way that the various Marketing Companies are operating is exactly the way that upper management wants. The Company Vice-President (brother to the President) visits all of the centres each years; and, the Area District Vice President in charge of each district (each of which having 6 - 10 Marketing Companies) is always on top of how things are going. I have met both of those worthies (and have talked to them on a first name basis) and I know that most of what goes on is exactly what the company wants. The Company always operates on the principal that if the employees do not like the way things are done, they can always be replaced with somebody else.

Your marital break-up tale was refreshingly free of invective and mean-spiritedness, which is a revelation in itself. Every similar situation I've been associated with has become a "he said/she said" combat zone. Of course, you're not going to make any friends in the legal community with this course of action.

JOSEPH MAJOR: 1409 Christy Ave.,
Louisville, KY 40204-2040, USA

"If there is a mark in this space, not only will you not get the next disty mailed to you but I will send nasty people (or Robbie) in the middle of the night to deafen you with rock and roll music and then demand money from you." Thanks for the explanation of my shattered sleepless weekend nights on Taylor Boulevard. I wish someone had told me that I had joined LASFAPA so I could have sent in my contribution in the first place.

But look at all of the typing you did not do.

Stalin demanded to see the core of the first Soviet atom bomb. Comrade Academician Kurchatov brought it himself, and allowed Great Stalin to touch it. The Soviet bomb core was covered with nickel.

I wonder if the core of the Israeli bomb is covered with pumpernickel.

BUZZ DIXON: 11502 N. Poema Pl.
#201, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Re. your comment about feuds in the classic days of fanzine fandom: Yes, there were some real humdingers, Lovecraft vs. Ackerman, Ellison vs. the entire known universe, etc., but again the time lag was what made them more entertaining. One had a chance to fully savor the vituperative, to allow oneself time to compose a devastating retort, to gleefully anticipate the mayhem one's answer would create in the enemy camp. Now the Internet causes flame wars to flare to life with all the literary style, grace, and build-up of two drag queens fighting over the same man on Jerry Springer.

End smartass here. As an all-too intimate participant in one of the more bitter feuds, all that I want to say about them is that I hope that I never am involved in one again. I have been re-reading some of the feud material in HTT; and, despite interesting (and even inspired) wordplay on both sides, the fascinating invective which sometimes was pubbed did not make the fractured friendships worth it. What was done cannot be undone – it need not be repeated.

RAY CAPELLA: 217 W. Grand Ave.,
Alhambra, CA 91801, USA

Rotsler's cartoon, "What? You Call This a Lettercol?" didn't quite apply; you've got a fine stellar one there. Having gotten rid of my zine collection, I rediscover that one learns more about fans (through their writing than through meeting them in person...further proof that we, at one remove, interact better.

Traveling Through My Personal Time demonstrates you know how to work out the anger built up in jobs that devolve around you. (Some Applause here.) Not everybody can do that. You may recall that, during 30 years in advertising (without shooting myself or someone else) I wrote sword & sorcery and an amount of the shorter work sold. Same syndrome, different outlet. Wonder how I can work up some frustration or tension/anger/etc. now that I'm retired...

Here is a suggestion on how you can work up some frustration etc. – start a company and hire me.

RICHARD E. GEIS: P.O. Box 11408,
Portland, OR 97211-0408, USA

THANKS for sending *No Award* #3. Your name rings bells, but I get confused with all the other noises in my head...

Well, we all know that you are dingy. Actually, we traded (probably through most of the entire run of Holier Than Thou). In case you do not remember that zine, it was the mimeographed zine of dinosaurian proportions and viewpoints. It lived during the late 70s and most of the 80s (with the first issue being pubbed in January, 1979 and the last issue, #27, seeing the light of day in the Summer of 1988). It was an interesting zine in an interesting decade. Will I ever produce another one? Not too likely; however, if I ever put forth #28, I still have the letters on #27, so at least I will have a lettercol. The thought, though, of producing another monsterzine is too daunting to contemplate at this time. The size (and lightheartedness, mostly) of No Award is much more to my current taste in what I want to be doing, zinewise.

BRAD W. FOSTER: P.O. Box 165246,
Irving, TX 75016, USA

Hey, congratulations! You only just started pubbing your new zine, and I see it's already listed on the final Hugo ballot. Wow!

Er, ah – how soon we forget. We? How about you! No Award #1 was pubbed in the early 90s. Also, it is to be remembered that No Award has been a Hugo nominee for far longer than it has been in existence.

Issue 3 looks great and was quite a kick to see you run my two illos in two different colors there in the back. Way cool!

At this point I will write a pre-comment to what Brad will soon say. Brad probably remembers that HTT was always very good to its artists; so, when he sent me some artwork (after seeing #2), he requested that I not put his artwork through my scanner, complaining about the distortion which usually results when illos are scanned. I wrote back several comments, agreeing to do as he wished and mentioning that I had yet to master using my flatbed scanner. Here is Brad's response:

I appreciate your taking my comments on scanning art so well. Some fan editors seem a bit overly sensitive about dealing with an overly sensitive fan artist on the subject, so glad you were cool. And yeah, isn't a pain that the "100%" images on so many computer screens really don't measure the same as the actual "100%" original that is printed out? Got to wonder just what they mean by the percentage if it doesn't have anything to do with the reality of the final print. Computers is the doofiest peoples!



HARRY WARNER: 423 Summit Ave.,
Hagerstown, MD 21740, USA

The third *No Award* shows a very courageous approach to the two major changes in your life. I hope you're bearing up under these matters as well as you appear to be from the evidence of your published words. At least, your health seems to be good, and this is a big difference from what I read in so many other fanzines about the editors or someone close to them.

Well, I passed my recent physical - I just hope that I can financially last until I retire in less than two years - and that I can have a few enjoyable years in retirement before I am claimed by entropy.

The long review of *The Leaky Establishment* makes me realize I definitely want to read the novel someday. I try to get hold of novels written by fans whenever I can within my retirement budget. Unfortunately, I gather that this one isn't very likely to show up in the Hamilton remainders catalog and I assume that comparatively few copies circulated in the United States, reducing the chance that I'll happen upon it at Goodwill Industries. But miracles happen.

I guess that all of the remaindered copies went to build a pyramid in Toronto.

The Rotsler Reprints pages make it plain to any fans out there who didn't realize it, that Bill could write almost as well as he drew. There must be material available for hundreds of pages of reprints like these two, and I hope Bruce Pelz will make it possible for a lot more Rotslerana to circulate from time to time to a larger audience than the select few who received his personal writings.

Buck Coulson is nicely rounded at 130 pounds on a six foot frame, compared to the way I used to be. I weighed only about 110 pounds when I was in my early twenties and was within an inch or two of six feet. It wasn't too bad, because it helped to

keep that 4-F status for me, along with tachycardia. I managed to pick up some weight as the years went on but now I've begun to slim down again in extreme old age and I think I'm also losing a little height. The only bad thing about this change is the fact that my head is shrinking and I can't keep my hat on in a strong wind.

It is beyond me how your head can shrink considering all of the good things people are saying about you. Or do you not like the artistic set-up I have given your loc?

I like the idea of detailed fanzine reviews like the one Joseph Major writes in this issue about *Probe*. Both you and Joseph in this issue use the same adjective, "inconceivable," about the concept of fanzines without locs from me, so I should point out that I'm not capable of immaculate conceptions of such letters.

Where is Marc Ortlieb when we need him? We should get him to re-create your basement loc factory.

One of the roles of a faned is to get good writers to create material which will be appreciated by his readers. I felt that the concept of a single zine being reviewed in a fanzine review column would fly if there was a proper writer for the column and I approached Joseph as a person who could do a proper job with the concept. I think that he has fulfilled all of my expectations. The Rotsler Reprints column was my idea and I feel that Bruce Pelz will continue to do a fine job with this. And, for various reasons I think that my assigning Mike Glyer to review The Leaky Establishment also worked quite well. My other badgering of other fanwriters has not yet panned out. Of yet.

I ALSO HEARD FROM

Steve Stiles, Janice Murray, John Hertz, Bill Bridget, Ben Schilling, E.B. Frohvet, Guy Lillian, Henry Welch, Wm. Breiding, and Teddy Harvia. All in all, with 36 letters on such a small zine (and letters from a fine cross-section of fandom), not at all a bad response to a 28 page fanzine, especially, considering that I only sent out a bit over 150 copies (with 4 copies returned as undeliverable). There are a few people who have not responded in any of the usual ways to the past two issues and will be cut from the mailing list (you know who you are) and there are a few more who will be cut from the list if they do not respond to this issue. Be warned. There are also some who will not be cut from the list no matter what they do or do not do. Just who these last may be is left to the imagination of everybody. If you are not contributing the usual, do not gamble you are in this category. ~~YYY~~

ROTSLER

REPRINTS

contributed by Bruce Pelz

And now for something completely different. No, not a Monty Python skit. Rather, instead of Rotsler's writing from his own fanzines, Bruce has excerpted from KTEIC a few locs from F.T. Laney.

From the Rotsler Archives:

Letter from Laney (excerpted, and with comments (*in italic*)), by Rotsler),
KTEIC v.2 #5, whole #15, May 1955

Thanks vastly for the stamps. I only had one of them. You are without question one of the finest and most worthwhile men this decadent culture of ours will ever see. This of course is true of anyone who sends anyone stamps whatever, but it particularly applies to you since you sent 'em to me.

Yes, I knew about Burbee. Haven't been to see him yet, since I've got a cold – the last thing in the world he should be exposed to at this time... I used to know a man who had and promulgated a System of Immortality. If Burbee had followed this system, his lung would never have collapsed; since the essence of immortality consisted in having all vital organs constantly pumped by a savage yet gentle piston-like action from behind and below. I can't call this man's name to mind at the moment, since he never sent me any stamps. ((*Well... I should have known fl would make a typical entrance – backwards – into these austere pages. WR*))

Just before he was stricken, Burb sent me #11KTEIC, which I very much enjoyed. ((*Awww...*)) This is the one in which Warner took off on Jazz. ...except to remark... I agreed in the main with Warner. I still enjoy jazz as much as I ever did, but do not consider that it is anything immortal or anything like that. He seemed to differentiate between "jazz" and "folk music"; whereas the real, original jazz was/is folk music. I have been considerably soured by jazz's trends in the past 5 years, and can offhand think of nothing recorded at all recently that I even want to list to once, let alone own the recording. I'm also soured by the phonograph record situation in general. I don't like LP's ((*I do.*)) They're too goddamn long for my child-like attention span of about five minutes; they cost too goddamn much; and I have trouble playing them with my outfit because the slightest joggle make the needle jump the track. I habitually step up my tone arm weight to an amount that you wouldn't believe (by fastening a weight right over the stylus) and even so the bloody thing slips now and then. ...I figure 25¢ is the absolute top any record is worth. No one will sell jazz for this, so the hell with it. I've been having a jolly time collecting military and concert bands,

grand opera, and brass solos and small groups. This stuff you can get for 25¢ each and under. If I ever spend any real money, like a dollar, I'll put it in stamps. Who the hell ever saw a record with perforations?

Letter from Laney (excerpted, and with comments in *((in italics))*), by Rotsler),
KTEIC v.2 #6, whole #16, June 1955

...How would I pronounce *KTEIC*? Well, until you asked the bald question, I had been passing the word soundlessly (and reverently) through my mind. A word of this nature should never be spoken aloud, particularly when one considers the connotations of it and its creator. Hell, if people go around saying it aloud, the first thing you know it will have become vulgarized and debased from its pristinity. *((Such a word?))* However, if you are going to permit people to roll *KTEIC* across their tongues, instead of allowing a pregnant and moving silence to blossom from time to time in their conversations, I feel it should be pronounced "teak," like the Indian wood. The "k" of course should be silent, like the "p" in urine.

Where do I read my mail? All sorts of places. Most of it read standing up, wherever I happen to be when I open it. If it is of any length, I glance at it and set it aside until I have some time. If it is of any length, I glance at it and set it aside until I have some time. If it is a stamp auction catalog I put it in my pocket so I can study it on the can at work. If it is a lot of stamps I usually set it aside until the weekend. Mail-getting is no rite for me. Except for mail the receipt of which I have initiated deliberately, like sending for a lot of stamps, or getting put on your mailing list, or something else significant I don't care if the mailman stops or not. *((I do. We love mail around here. Towner, unless I forget, there should be a couple of Mexican stamps in ere someplace, for you. Friend wrote from Mexico. Where else?))*

How much do I help my wife? I cannot answer this flatly without knowing why the question was asked. If this is some dire female artifice to get Our Willie into the kitchen (for other than gastronomical purposes) then I'm agin it at all. If this is the case, I would have to say that all the wives in the world could fall down dead and I wouldn't lift a finger to do nothin'! On the contrary, if this is for some significant purpose, like filling space in *KTEIC* *((Suh, there are never fillers in KTEIC!))* I might as well tell the truth. If I'm working only one job, and IF the wife is working too, I then I feel obligated to help with any domestic work that may be required which I am capable of doing. If, as at present, I'm working two jobs *((!))* I help only in an emergency. If I'm working one job and the wife is working none, I don't see why I should do anything at all. Put it this way. There is so much income required to be brought in to maintain whatever standards one has set his sights on; There is also so much domestic work required to maintain this standard. If the man follows the traditional role of bringing in all the dough, then the wife can bloody well keep the house without outside help. If on the other hand the wife is helping to bring in the money, then the husband is a pretty sorry specimen if he can't help with the housework. *((I agree. WR))*



How do I weight my tonearm? I use a pencil fastened to the arm with rubber bands and lying lengthwise of the arm. The amount of weight can be increased or decreased by sliding the pencil back and forth. I do not recommend this weighting, though, because it is hard on the stylus and crystal, and in all probability wears the record pretty fast. If you like your long plays you'd better figure out something else. I don't give a damn whether mine last or not. At the rate I don't play them, they'll probably outlast me anyway.

A further word on what I am collecting record-wise these days: I always used to like band music – when I was a kid I must have had 200 band records, maybe more. And I used to spend hours playing them. The Sousa movie, released a couple or three years ago, sent me good. I picked up a longplay of band stuff shortly

thereafter, but it sounded too thin and repelled me. At the same time I picked up a couple of old acoustic march records, and believe it or not they had more fullness of tone than the modern LP. ...then we heard an in-person concert of the U.S. Navy band... and I realized why the modern LP band record wasn't any good. The damn thing ad no brass section to speak of. It was clogged with reeds, fiddles, and even – god save me – a harp.

What a decadent goddam time we live in! ((Doesn't this sound like the old Laney, taking off with a full throttle? I love it.)) A band supposedly the flower of modern bands, sponsored and manned by the US Navy, impeccably directed, and playing with superb technical ability – and it had about as much guts as the fiddle and piano background music in a second-rate restaurant.

In my book, a band is supposed to have some power and fire. A good concert band should be able to play rings around a symphony orchestra because it isn't all clogged up with a bunch of squalling strings...

...I'm accustomed to the depth and range of electric recordings, so the old acoustics are thin, flat, tubby, and a few other things. Though with my outfit I can bring a damns sight more of them than you would casually expect, even so you can't follow an electric with an acoustic without a definite jolt.

So my dilemma is that I can play impeccably recorded, wide-range recordings whose fidelity also brings out the gutlessness of modern playing and arranging, or I can titillate myself with a whisper of the real thing. The way it is working out in actual practice, the LP's get played less and less...

fil

WV

Next Ish, From the Rotsler Archives, Bruce has given me a 1963 entry titled, / INVITE GREGG CALKINS TO AN ORGY.

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