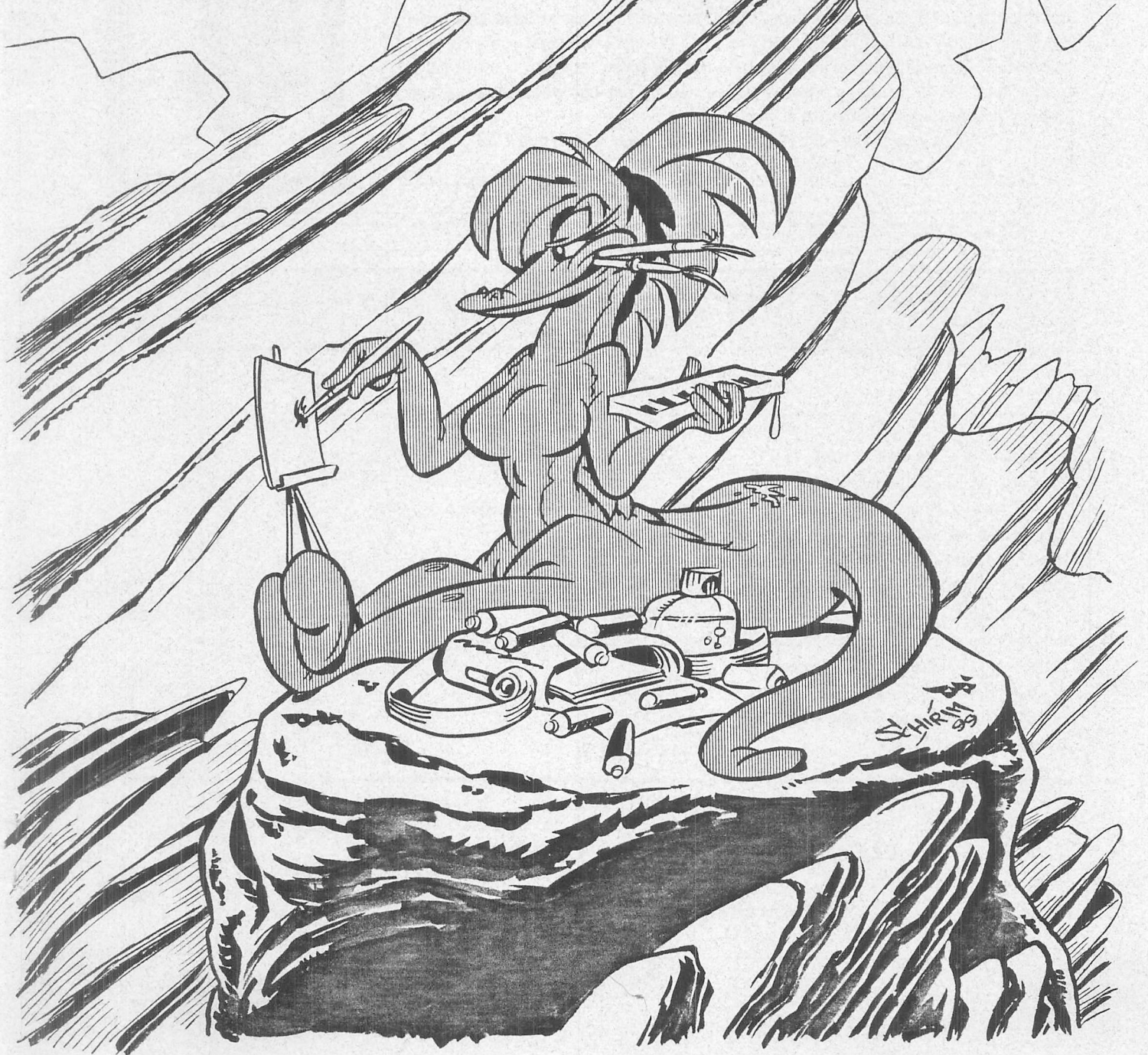


NO AWARD



SHIRLEY

THE FANZINE FOR WHICH YOU VOTED BEFORE IT EXISTED

# NO AWARD

NUMBER FIVE

HOO HAH PUBLICATION  
NUMBER 431

MARCH, 1999

This fanzine is available for the faanish 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 pubbed on any regular schedule (even though I want to get it out at least twice a year). Mostly, issues will be put out when material and money decide to get together in a meaningful way.

11825 Gilmore Street #105, North Hollywood, CA 91606 USA  
telephone (818) 761-9401



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## A FANZINE BY MARTY CANTOR

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**PLEASE REMEMBER HUGO NOMINATIONS**

**NO AWARD!**

What you always knew was most deserving!

John Hertz



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## ARTISTS

- Marc Schirmer - 1
- Mel White - 2
- Bill Rastler - 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, 28, 33, 38, 40, 43, 46
- Brad W. Foster - 34, 50
- Alexis Gilliland - 20

## LOCS

- Robbie Bourget - 38
- Eric Lindsay - 38
- Gary Deindorfer - 38
- Harry Warner, Jr. - 39
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- John Berry - 40
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# EDITORIAL

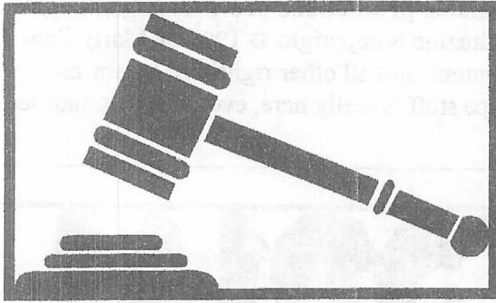
by  
Marty Cantor

Like my editorial lastish, I am going to be touching briefly on several topics rather than dwelling on a single topic (or, even a few of them). Starting with a reminder that all of you should be voting *No Award* in all Hugo categories, the better that this zine can claim undeserved honours. Especially, vote *No Award* for Best Fanzine - that way the zine can be listed twice. I applaud any other faanish mischief anybody wants to perpetrate.

And then there is the subject of my job. I still have one. The upshot of this is that I am upsizing both the number of pages in this zine and the type size. As a possessor of less than ideal eyesight I understand that the 10 pt. size of my previous zines was a bit small for some eyes. In this issue I have reduced the use of type sizes smaller than 12 point to only a few parts of the zine. As a bit of a test I have put the legalese on page two in 4 pt. (the smallest available) and reproduced the text at the top of this page in larger type. The test: how many people can read the 4 pt. type and do not need to read the 10 pt. version above? Anyway, the number of pages of this zine is probably about as many as I will use in future. Or thereabouts, anyway. I do not intend that this zine will grow into a monster sized zine like *Holier Than Thou*. Despite the use of computer technology and the reinvented mimeography which I use, I am still in no mood to be putting out zines in the regular neighbourhood of 70 - 120 pages.

One of the nice things about working for Pacific Bell, my new employer, is that they are paying me more money than I was earning in my previous jobs, and I will be getting twice-yearly raises for a period that is longer than I plan on working there. If I

(Continued on page 6)



## LASFS AUCTION BIDS

Brought to you by **The Committee To Gouge Money Out  
Of The LASFS**

### HISTORY

Years ago, when the thought of a clubhouse was merely a dream, the Society instituted a weekly auction. The purpose was to get the money for the building fund. Being The LASFS, we decided to call a spade a spade and term the auction a "Money Gouge." Thus was formed *The Committee to Gouge Money Out Of The LASFS*. One of the other things the LASFS did was to turn the whole idea of an auction on its head, so the members who weren't bidding enjoyed themselves. This developed into the madness you're seeing (and reading about) at this time. Here are some things you need to know about the gouge. Herewith, a list of some of the most common bidding terms, meanings, and conventions. This way, if you are a newcomer to the club, you will have the advantage of being as confused as are the regular attendees.

**OFFICIALLY BLANK ITEMS.** This started out when Bill Rotsler started bringing in for auction review copies of multi-X rated video tapes. (Bill made a part of his living by writing reviews of these things.) All things considered, we auctioned these "Officially Blank" tapes only to those over the age of 18. (Years, not days.) Nowadays, other things at LASFS are often considered "Officially Blank" and the term is not limited to the minds of those who run for LASFS office.

**MONEY AUCTIONS.** A member will often donate some type of currency (Foreign or Domestic) and the members bid on it. This includes anything declared money by the audience (usually by bidding for it as a separate auction starting at the present bid). The REAL excitement is that the person who is second in the bidding contest also pays their bid. This type of auction is the only type where you can under bid (by at least 5 cents) the current bid. Just to spell it out, if someone donates a US two dollar bill, and one person bids .75 and another bids \$1.00 and no one else bids, the \$1.00 bidder pays and gets the \$2.00 bill, but the fan bidding .75 also pays, but gets nothing for his bid except the satisfaction of supporting his club. Often, in order to protect their "investment" in their bids, bidders wind up at amounts higher than the value of that upon which they are bidding. Example: bidder 1 is at \$1.95 and bidder 2 is at \$1.75. Bidder 2 then bids \$2.00 and bidder 1, wanting to at least get the bill and not "waste" his \$1.75, bids \$2.05. Bidder 2, with similar logic, then bids \$2.25. Sometime this "logic" gets carried to ridiculous extremes. Fun stuff, huh?

**SIDE AUCTIONS.** If a member chooses, they may bid to open or close the bidding. All this means is that if the bid is "closed" no further bidding may take place (unless a new auction is



started to reopen the bidding). In effect, the last bid is the winner. The LASFS, being LASFS, sometimes there are secondary (and even tertiary) side bids – "I bid to open the closed bid to open the bid" – the auctioneer often needs the memory of an elephant (which is why Bruce Pelz used to be our auctioneer). If the bid is "open," bidding on the original item may continue. As was just pointed out, opening and closing the bidding may also take place on the first series of bids to open or close the bid. This may continue until it loses its humour value, stops making serious money, or has all the bidders so convulsed with laughter that they are not able to continue, whichever comes first.

**"A DOLLAR TO GIVE IT TO... ."** Sometimes, a bid will be conditional, which means, if something is done with the object being bid, then the bidder will pay for it. A conditional bid is usually to give "it" to someone or something, or fulfilling a condition (i.e., the next person through the door). The auctioneer will normally play along with this as long as the conditional isn't illegal, immoral, or will result in lawsuits. Even those conditions may be open to auction.

**SCRATCH BID.** If this bid is called for, and the BIDDER agrees, the auctioneer may bid the bidder up to a dollar over the previous bidder, usually in increments of 5 cents. A case of bidders bidding "against" themselves. This bid was named after a member who would often knowingly bid against himself! (Years previous to this particular bidder, there was another bidder who, every week, bid against himself in this manner. He left before the escalating procedure was developed.) **Beware,** in a money auction you could end up with both ends of the stick. Welcome to the Wonderful World of LASFS Auctions!!!

**CANTOR BID.** This bid was named for one of the previous treasurers who always bid \$20.00 for a parking space. She did not own a car to park in it. She sometimes bid on a space even though she already had one or more of them.

## A COMPENDIUM OF SOME BIDDING AMOUNTS

**1 BIT = .125**  
**2 BITS = .25**  
**3 BITS = 1 NIBBLE = .375**  
**3 NIBBLES = 1 BYTE = 1.125**  
**3 BYTES = 1 WORD = \$3.375**  
**3 WORDS = 1 CORE = \$10.125**  
**3 CORES = 1 TAPE = \$30.375**  
**3 TAPES = 1 DRUM = \$91.125**  
**3 DRUMS = 1 DUMP = \$273.375**  
**3 DUMPS = 1 DOMAIN = \$820.125**  
**3 DOMAINS = 1 NETWORK = \$2,460.375**  
  
**OOK = .50**  
**SLOBBER = .75**  
**DROOL = \$1.00**  
**BURP = .05**

**THORSON = .09**  
**PIANO = .88**  
**BAKER'S DOZEN = .13**  
**DOUBLE NICKLE = .55**  
**THE ANSWER = .42**  
**TROMBONES = .76**  
**SPIRIT = .76**  
**GROSS = \$1.44**  
**TOO GROSS = \$2.88**  
**THREE GROSS = \$4.32**  
**NO QUARTER = .30**  
**NULL QUARTER = .30**  
**DALMATIANS = \$1.01**  
**ENTERPRISE = \$17.01**  
**LOST MOON = \$19.99**  
**CANTOR = \$20.00**

**SPEED LIMIT = .65**  
**SEBALIS = \$5.00**  
**PAVAROTTI = \$10.00 (TENER)**  
**SCRATCH = .05 RAISES IN SEQUENCE**  
**UP TO \$1.00 ABOVE PREVIOUS BID**  
**TOTAL**

**ODYSSEY 1 = \$20.01**  
**ODYSSEY 2 = \$20.10**  
**ODYSSEY 3 = \$20.61**  
**THROW HIM OUT = .86**  
**TOSS THE BUM OUT = .86**  
**OH,MAX = .86**  
**FELDON = .99**

**ANCIENT COMPUTER = \$80.88**  
**COMMODORE = .64**  
**OLDER COMPUTER = \$2.86**  
**OLD COMPUTER = \$3.86**  
**MODERN COMPUTER = \$4.86**  
**PENTIUM = \$5.87**  
**(UPGRADE SENDS BID TO NEXT**  
**HIGHER COMPUTER BID)**

**VICTORIOUS BEAST = \$1.11**  
**RAILROAD BEAST = \$2.22**  
**BALLET BEAST = \$2.22**  
**LOCOMOTIVE BEAST = \$2.22**  
**HALF-A-BEAST = \$3.33**  
**GOLFER'S BEAST = \$4.44**  
**POLISH BEAST = \$5.55**  
**WHOLESALE BEAST = \$6.66**  
**THE BEAST (OR BEAST) = \$6.66**  
**CONVENIENCE BEAST = \$7.11**  
**GAMBLER'S BEAST = \$7.77**  
**LUCKY BEAST = \$7.77**  
**GOURMAND BEAST = \$8.88**  
**3 GERMAN VIRGINS = \$9.99**  
**HERGE'S BEAST = \$10.10**  
**MUNSTERS BEAST = \$13.13**

**FREEWAY BIDS (FREEWAY NAME**  
**EQUALS BID)**  
**PASADENA = \$2.10**  
**HARBOR = \$1.10**  
**VENTURA = \$1.34**

**HOLLYWOOD = \$1.01**  
**NO. HOLLYWOOD = \$1.70**  
**GOLDEN STATE = \$5.00**  
**GLENDALE = \$2.00**  
**SANTA MONICA = \$10.00**  
**SAN DIEGO = \$4.05**  
**SIMI = \$1.18**  
**SAN GABRIEL = \$7.10**  
**RIVERSIDE = \$6.05**

*All bidding must be in minimum increments  
of at least 5 cents.*

**Important Final Note.** For all the jokes we make about them, auctions do have an important function around the society. They help with the costs of keeping the clubhouse open and available to you, the member or guest. We encourage you to have fun (within legal reason, or course). And, of course, to **spend money. Lots and lots of money!** If you don't know what we are talking about, Wait! Neither do the regular members.

**ML**

*Editorial: (Continued from page 3)*

stay at this job until when I was originally planning on retiring (my 65th birthday comes up in a year) I will have to work part time to supplement my various retirement plans. However, putting aside the maximum amount in my new retirement plan (401k) and working for another year or two after I turn 65 I should be able to then retire with enough income to not have to work part time. Of course, I still will not be able to travel on this income, but I will be comfortable in my usual stay-at-home lifestyle.

Now, all that I have to do is to keep this job. As I see it, the only obstacle to keeping the job (aside from my attitude) is the incredible amount of information which I must learn. Well, I am ending my working career with an interesting job. I hope. **ML**

MILT STEVENS

# **ZEN**

## **and the art of letterhacking**

by Milt Stevens

All of you have heard of Zen. Many of you may have the impression that it is theology as if it had been written for the Marx Brothers. There is something to that notion. This impression frequently comes from encountering Zen parables. In a typical Zen parable, a student approaches a Zen Master and asks, "What is the nature of Enlightenment?" The Zen Master then hits the student over the head with a fish. This is the first lesson of Zen Never Ask About Enlightenment. (Or, at least, not unless you want to go two out of three falls.) However, you don't need no stinking enlightenment to write locs. It's probably easier without it. If you were enlightened, you probably wouldn't be dealing with this nonsense in the first place. I will proceed under the assumption that you are not enlightened but do have the problem of what to do with a whole bunch of fanzines which seem to be demanding a response of some sort.

The most important thing is not to leave fanzines lying all over the place. This creates the feeling that they have you surrounded. You must get them all in one stack. This contains the problem, and containment is an important aspect of problem solving. In any problem solving situation, it is important not to be rash. Initially, just look at the stack of fanzines every couple of days. If that seems to be too impetuous, then make it every couple of weeks. Form a solid resolve that something must be done Real Soon Now.

Real Soon Now must occur before the stack of fanzines reaches the ceiling. If you have to create two stacks of fanzines, they are well on the way of having you surrounded again. When the fanzine stack must be eventually approached, picking out one of the thinner fanzines always seems to be an attractive option. However, those fat fanzines can glare at you much better than the thin ones can. This may be the major reason for Fat American Fanzines. Not giving any response for a whole bunch of work does seem philosophically worse than not giving any response for a little work. No matter how large the fanzine, a loc should be between one and two pages. Less than one page is insufficient and more than two is blithering.

*As I wrote last time, Milt Stevens is one of my favourite fan writers. I wrote that he has a source of material and ideas from his career as a civilian employee of the Los Angeles Police Department. This, however, is not his sole source of inspiration in writing about fannish (and faan-ish) matters. Milt has been co-chair of a Worldcon (LACON in 1984); more importantly, though, he has been a fanzine fan of long-standing. Here is a piece solidly based on his experience in loc writing.*



You have cultivated your nomind by watching lots of *I Love Lucy* reruns. You are prepared to focus your chi and calculate your chi-squared. A little downhome martial arts noise making may not hurt either. As with many things, the secret of martial arts noise making isn't in what you say but how you say it. A simple shriek like "faaaaaaaaaaAK" works about as well as anything else. Before going too far into the martial arts noise making, it might be well to consider how much your landlord would really love to have you evicted. If you own your own place (as I do), then let go with every decibel you've got. Who cares if the neighbours think you're a complete weirdo and possibly a psycho killer? It sure keeps them from coming over and trying to borrow anything.

But what if after the last shriek has reverberated throughout your entire neighbourhood, you find that the computer screen is still blank? Bummer. It may become necessary to actually look at the fanzine. First, study the envelope in which the fanzine arrived. Is there anything unusual about it? I recall the time I received a rolled fanzine from England. While most fanzines are printed on paper that is less than great, that fanzine seemed to have been printed on spring steel. I sweated and strained to unbend it to my will. I finally stacked an entire 1940 edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica on top of it and left it that way for a week. (As I recall, Hercules resorted to a similar method to defeat the Hydra.) A struggle like that was certainly worth a loc comment.

Don't overlook the postage stamp. There are all sorts of strange postage stamps. Readers in the UK or Australia may experience some discomfort at questioning why Ezekial K. Boonfark was commemorated on a US postage stamp. Have no fear, most Americans have no idea who these people are either. And if you ask why our government issued a Lizzie Borden commemorative, we get questions when your government issues a stamp commemorating the War of Jenkins Ear or the celebration of Giant Wambo Month. There is one serious exception when it comes to philatelic commentary in locs. Never comment on the stamps Joseph Nicholas uses. That's very important to remember.



There are a few other opportunities for comments before you actually eyetrack the fanzine. Heft the fanzine in your hands. Roll it up and try to swat flying insects with it. Balance is very important in fanzines. Riffle the pages and smell the aroma. Bite the corners off a couple pages. Does the bouquet or taste suggest anything to you? If it doesn't, can you bullshit about it for a couple of paragraphs anyway?

The time has come to do some in depth eyetracking. Note, I did not say reading. Reading fanzines is the last resort of the incompetent. Claude Degler used to read fanzines all the time. You wouldn't want to end up like Claude Degler. First, look at the cover. Then forget about

the cover, because nobody ever comments on covers. Flip through and see if the fanzine has a photo section as in *Challenger*. Photo sections are a good source of cheap comments and possibly cheap shots as well. "Gee, I never realized Ned Brooks bore such a striking resemblance to John Dillinger." "You mean that normal looking fellow is really Joseph T. Majors. He doesn't really have a hundred eyes mounted on stalks and 30 or 40 tentacles? Who could have guessed it?"

While flipping through the fanzine, you might notice some other commentable details. For instance, you might notice the fanzine isn't in English and you don't read anything other than English. I remember the time I received a fanzine from Cesar Erkin Ergin in Ankara, Turkey. Strangely enough, it was entirely in Turkish. What's a faan to do? Fortunately, I recalled that English titles usually appear in English. A quick scan revealed what I believed to be a review of the animated film *The Fantastic Planet*. I'd seen the film, so I could blither for a page of my own opinions without having the slightest notion what the Turkish review may have said. From this experience, I did learn that "bilim kurgu" means science fiction in Turkish. That may be useful in a crossword puzzle someday.

On another occasion, I received an Italian publication called *Roman*. It was a rather nice looking publication. On looking through it, I discovered it contained an interview with our own Harlan Ellison. The photo accompanying the interview made Harlan look a great deal more Italian looking than he normally looks, but what the heck. I scanned the interview for a sign of a familiar outlook or opinion. I came across the words "terribilmente et stupido." Ah ha, the interviewer must have asked him something about fandom or fans. The words might be different, but the tune sounded familiar.

Having noted a few commentable items, it is now time to start putting words on the computer screen. How do you begin. Explaining why it has taken you so long to write this loc is a common beginning. However, you don't want to use the L word (lethargy) or the I word (inertia) or especially the S word (sloth). You wouldn't write words like that on a bathroom wall, so you wouldn't want to include them in a loc either. It's better to start with a traditional "At This Moment Around The Galaxy" number. "My great aunt has been in the hospital with a double hernia she suffered while training for a body building competition, my cats have developed the elm tree blight, and I'm recovering from having slit my wrists rather than write an article for Bill Bowers." Just everyday believable stuff that portrays how hard you've struggled to write this letter at all.

But what if you have done all your preliminary work, and you still don't have enough words. This is the unpleasant part. You may actually have to read something. With luck, you may encounter an anecdotal fannish piece. Now the most important phrase is "That Reminds Me Of." Everything reminds you of something. If that wasn't the case, then Rorschach Tests wouldn't work. (Come to think of it, I'm not really sure Rorschach Tests do work. Oh well, you get the point anyway.) Try something like, "Your account of having your appendix removed reminded me of the time I ate a kosher burrito in downtown Los Angeles." The association between these two events is obvious. Both are entirely unpleasant. However, having your appendix removed is an event that can happen only once in your lifetime. Eating a kosher burrito in

downtown Los Angeles is an event that should happen only once in your lifetime. It's sort of like the old Compare And Contrast number in school.

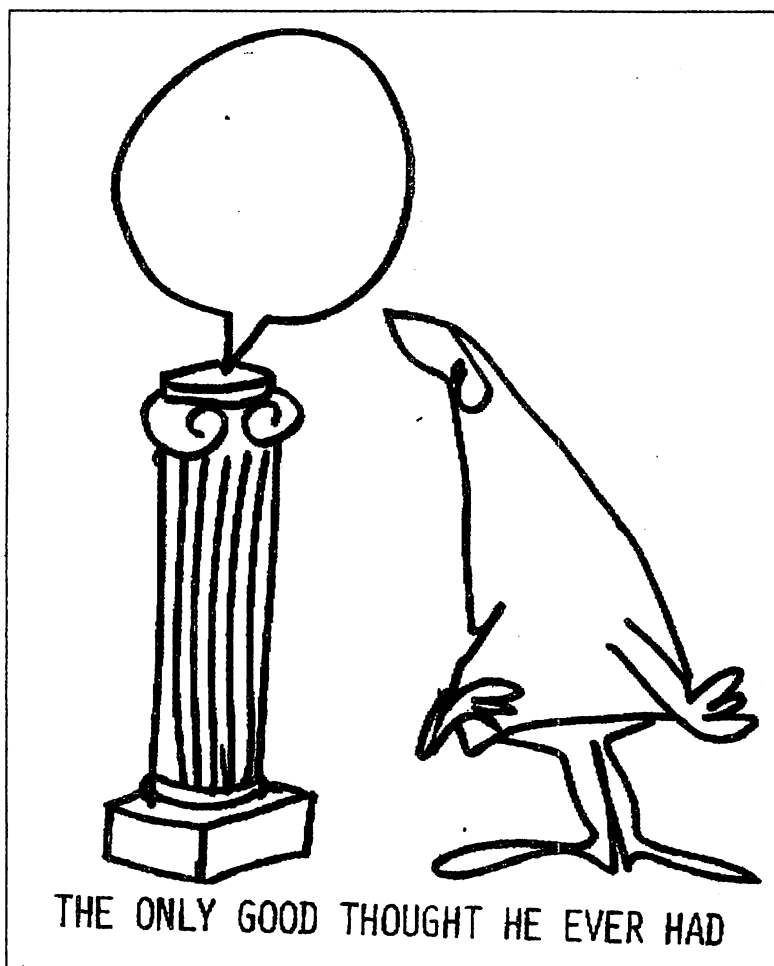
You may not be so lucky as to encounter anecdotal fannish writing. What if you find yourself in the middle of a discussion of media and even Star Trek. *Gone With The Wind* was the last movie you've seen, and you haven't owned a television set since 1975. What's a faan to do? Discussing media SF is much like making martial arts noise. It doesn't matter what you say as long as you mention Jeri Ryan. You must know who Jeri Ryan is. After all, she was the centerfold in *Popular Mechanics*. If you are a male of the majority persuasion, you may express whatever sentiments Jeri Ryan inspires in you. If you are a female of the majority persuasion, you may express your disgust and revulsion at women who dress in skintight cat suits and go around looking like that. If you are of either gender of the minority persuasion, reverse the polarity of my previous comments and continue. If you are of neither gender, forget I ever mentioned it and move on to the next topic.

Of course, there can be even worse things than discussing media. What if you find yourself in the middle of a sercon fanzine, and they are doing litcrit. The last time you tried doing litcrit you were thrown out of sixth grade for making improper remarks about Dick and Jane. What's a faan to do? Doing litcrit is much like making martial arts noise. It doesn't matter what

you say as long as you use a great many words to say it. It is better if you use words that are more than twelve letters long. You can find lots of these in any good crossword puzzle dictionary. However, be careful not to use any Welsh place names. They know you're a rube if you start throwing in Welsh place names. If all else fails, do a Compare And Contrast with *The Will To Believe* by William James, *Theory of the Leisure Class* by Thorstein Veblen, and the *Kama Sutra*. That should hold the varmints.

At last, you are finished. After straining your synapses to the maximum, the letter is stamped, sealed, and consigned to the USPOD. It's time for the Zen T ceremony. This consists of flopping on a bed, assuming the configuration of the letter "T," and taking a nap. It's very restful.

m.





# R OTSLER

# R EPRINTS

contributed by Bruce Pelz

*And now, as I promised in the last issue, a 1963 entry titled, I INVITE GREGG CALKINS TO AN ORGY. Lastish I reprinted two locs from Laney. This time we have some writing by Bill Rotsler, himself.*

---

**From the Rotsler Archives:**

From *KTEIC MAGAZINE* #116, December 1963

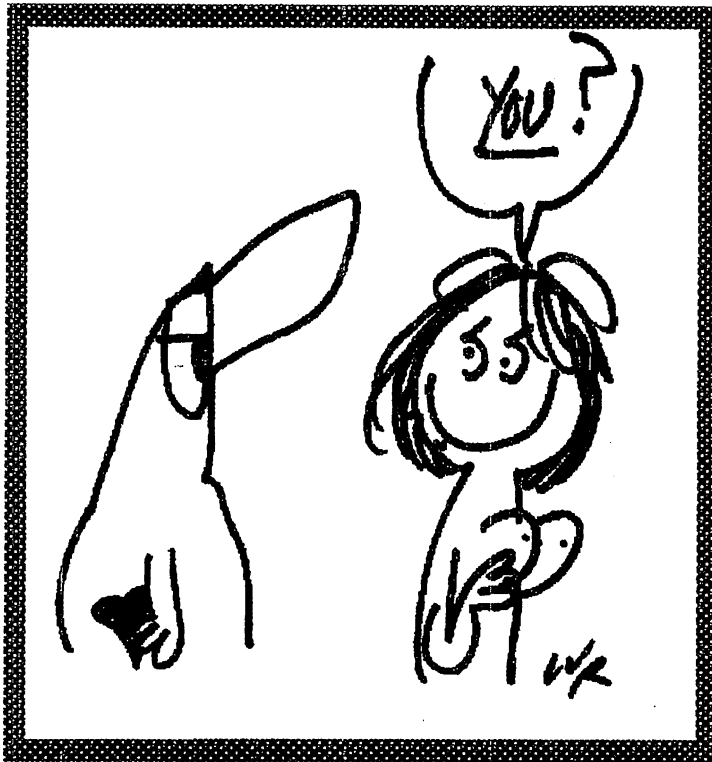
**I INVITE GREGG CALKINS TO AN ORGY**

by Bill Rotsler

**B**oyd Raeburn was due in town so I call up Burbee to see where and when I might get together with our New Zealand transplant. Gregg Calkins, in town for a few days before going back to his job in Seattle, was also on the line. I say to Burbee et al, "I don't know what they are doing but there is a beautiful nude blonde across a king-size bed from me ... and a brunette on her knees in front of her." Burbee offers several theories, none being the correct one, that of a 39-24-37 big-busted beauty that I am trying for *PLAYBOY* and the pretty brunette (wearing only pants) is her roommate putting body makeup on her. I don't think Burb/Gregg believe me so I have the girls speak into the phone. This was a mistake. They were both very horny and start being sexy. They eventually corner me against a wall and rub all over me while being sexy into the phone to our invisible audience.

A couple of weeks previously the blonde and I had made a "dirty tape" on her battery-powered recorder. I tell Burbee & Calkins that we did it on the living room floor on a Sunday morning while the brunette was still in bed. The blonde got quite carried away and became quite realistic in this ad-lib and (I assure you) fake tape. The best line was a very realistic "Move up a little, will you, honey?" So I turned it on and listened to the whole thing on an extension phone.

This whole affair agitated Mr. Calkins so I invited him over, since it was not too far away. Soon after I was to regret this invitation as I had been feeding them both strong Scotches to relax them – a necessary device in the case of these girls – because I was going to use the well-built but unprofessional brunette as a foreground "set-piece," nude but with no face showing, and she was nervous about it. But the relaxing liquor also got them all sexy and we almost gave up the photography, except that we had a guest on the way. Just as well, for that is not the way to do business, and certainly not the way I usually conduct my sessions unless there had been prior liaisons with all concerned before.



In any case Gregg arrived with more Scotch and we planted him in the living room with the brunette, now wearing a bathrobe. The blonde wandered about holding her robe in front of her rather inadequately and walking away forgetting she had no postern cover. All in all Mr. C had a preview of a possible Playmate. Every time he went to get more water for his Scotch he discovered that the bedroom had no door. (The floors had just been carpeted and the doors, not yet planed to fit, were sitting against walls.) Gregg took the bathrobed brunette out for food.

At last the session was over, and while the blonde was washing off the body makeup I am afraid the brunette and I rather disturbed the restless Gregg by a display of affection on the living room couch. When the blonde came out of the shower all pink and white, the brunette and I disappeared. Gregg and the blonde were doing something in the kitchen when I walked out of the bedroom to slide a loose door across the doorway to give the brunette more privacy.

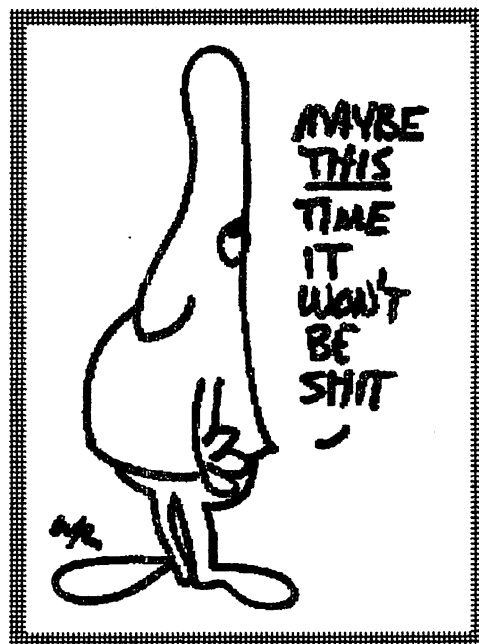
The last time I saw Gregg Calkins was with a blank expression and a glass of warm Scotch, standing in the kitchen door. I have never asked whether geological engineer Calkins ever struck oil or not.

III

## 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.

Herewith, Len's second installment, quite a bit longer than the first. In this series, Len is writing about Los Angeles fandom; therefore, he has skipped over his "adventures" in his military service during World War II. Herewith, after having been demobbed, Len starts part two with some personal matter about his decision to move west from Pennsylvania.



## CALIFANIA TALES

### Part Two: THE NEO-CALIFANIAN'S TALE

by Len Moffatt

**W**hen I returned to western Pennsylvania in December of 1945 I was reminded of how much I had hated the cold winters as a child. Not that it was always that warm in the parts of the Pacific where I had been – and winter was coming to Nagasaki during my brief stay there as part of the occupation force. So I couldn't wait to travel westward again, but only as far as Arizona or California, thank you.

Arizona was briefly considered, as I had been born in Phoenix. My parents and my sister had moved to Arizona for my father's health. I don't remember him, as he died a couple of years after I was born and my family moved back to Pennsylvania where I was raised. I have always considered myself a Westerner because I was born in Arizona, raised in *western* Pennsylvania, and have lived most of my life in California.

My family had no contacts left in Arizona but did have friends living in the Los Angeles area. My mother and I moved out here early in 1946, soon to be followed by my sister, brother-in-law, niece, nephew and our dog, Rascal.



We found homes in Bell Gardens, a little town southeast of downtown Los Angeles. I didn't seek out my fellow-fans immediately as I needed to find a job and, to complicate matters, my mother had to go into the hospital. We didn't exactly find sunny California weather either. It was a wet winter with poor street drainage in our area. But by March I finally found my way back to Bixel Street in a roundabout way.

I traveled to Somewhere in Hollywood by bus and trolley. Not being a driver I was to use public transportation a lot in the years to come and back then it was a lot more efficient than it is now, especially the street cars. You could travel all over the local map on trolleys, including down to Orange County on the old red car line.

Having arrived at my destination I sat in a hole-in-the wall office Somewhere in Hollywood and listened to the white-haired old man sitting on the other side of a battered desk asking me (in the Well-Rounded Tones of a Shakespearean Actor) for a "down payment" of one hundred dollars. I managed to not laugh in his face. He sort of reminded me of John Carradine and I liked Carradine. But he also reminded me of the scam artists I had known when I worked summers in carnivals.

What he was offering was a course in how to write for television, "the upcoming thing," as he put it. I didn't doubt that television was the upcoming thing but I doubted that a really good teaching course could come out of such a sleazy office. He would have been more believable had he been offering a course in how to speak iambic pentameter. I told him that I could not afford the hundred bucks and went away from there.

I decided to pay my second visit to Slan Shack on Bixel Street. Al Ashley was the only one home that afternoon. I had heard that he worked as a painter but apparently he had no jobs that day. The first thing that he told me was that he drank forty cups of coffee a day. After I was there awhile I was inclined to believe him and made no effort to match him cup for cup. I love coffee but there are limits.

When Al began to tell me about all the queers and oddballs in LASFS I couldn't help thinking that this was my afternoon for meeting bullshit artists. Then I realized that he was trying to shock me because I was "the Christian fan," as Forry had dubbed me in *VOM* some time before. I'm afraid I disappointed him as I didn't react in a shocked manner and stuck around until the rest of the Slan Shackers came home from wherever they worked. Al had not taken into consideration the fact that I was just back from the war and was no longer the naïve kid that used to write letters to *VOM*.

Abby Lu, Al's wife, prepared dinner for all of us. I forget what it was but I was impressed by the fact that she did all this work to feed a bunch of boarders including an unexpected visitor like me and didn't seem to mind at all.

I think Myrtle Douglas a.k.a. Morajo was still living there too, perhaps the only denizen of the Slan Shack who was a native Californian. She may have helped prepare the dinner but I got the impression that Abby Lu was the one in charge of the kitchen.

That evening I also met Walt Liebscher and admired his piano playing and Dale Hart, he of the Texas-Harvard accent, who let me read his copy of the current issue of Liebscher's *CHANTICLEER*. I was familiar with the fanzine as my sister had copied out items from it to send me when I was overseas. Jack Weidenbeck, the artist, the quietest of the lot, dwelt there too and I'm sure there were one or two others but memory fails.

Much of the talk among the Slan Shackers was over my head, new to the scene as I was, but I enjoyed perusing the fanzines and listening to the music, and promised to show up at a club meeting as soon as possible. Having survived World War II, I wasn't about to be scared away from joining the world's oldest science fiction club by the possible threat of being molested by a member of my own gender.

Unlike Cy Condra, I don't have a funny story to tell about my first LASFS meeting. Apparently he joined around the same time that I did but I wasn't there the night that Elmer Perdue stood up during the meeting to ask if anyone knew where he could obtain a copy of the Halde-man-Julius Little Blue Book entitled "How To Test Your Urine At Home." Russ Hodgkins, the club's dignified director, banged his gavel and said, "Elmer, you are Out of Order" "I know," said Elmer. "That is why I want the book!" Cy decided that this was his kind of club.

I would meet Cy some time later at the home of Charles Edward Burbee, Jr. In the meantime I do remember meeting Forry Ackerman and Tigrina at the first meeting I attended. Al Ashley had told me that Forry and Morojo had split up. I was sorry to hear that the couple that published *VOM*, one of my favourite zines, was no longer together. I remembered Tigrina from the pages of *VOM* too as she, as well as forry and Myrtle, argued with me on the merits of Christianity. So I didn't know what to expect when I met Forry and Tigrina and was pleasantly surprised when they greeted me cordially and welcomed me to the club.

I think Tigrina may have been the secretary then as I remember her punny minutes from that era, the Ackerman influence, no doubt. Apparently Gus Wilmoth had only recently grown a beard as she referred to him as Gus Woolmouth in the minutes of one of the Thursday night meetings. Gus didn't seem to mind.

A.E. van Vogt and his wife and co-author, Edna Mayne Hull, attended meetings then as did an actor named Theodore Gottlieb, of which more later.

The LASFS club room on Bixel Street, next door to the Slan Shack, was a storefront room on the bottom floor of a building that might have been an office building or yet another apartment building. Some of the LASFS members lived across the street in a rooming house similar to Slan Shack but with more floors. It was called Tendril Towers. Others, like me, came from other parts of the LA area.

I remember Charles Burbee, Francis T. Laney, Bill Rotsler, E. Everett Evans, Alva Rogers, Rusty Hevelin, Arthur Jean Cox and his brother Bill, Ray Bradbury, Jim Kepner, Louise Leipiar, Sam Umbrage, Phil Bronson, and Walt Daugherty as regular attendees, as well as the Slan Shackers. As I recall, Walt rented the club room and sublet it to LASFS as he was to do with its subsequent meeting place on Witmer, the Prince Rupert Arms.

I finally got a job at the Armstrong Cork Factory in South Gate, a town hard by Bell Gardens. (South Gate also had the trolley depot at the end of the "J" line that one took into Los Angeles. It was also where one could catch the Red Car to Santa Ana and other stops in Orange County.) The job entailed a great deal of hard labour but I was in good physical shape and it paid well enough. But it kept me from going to club meetings every Thursday night because of shift changes and even when I did have a Thursday night free I didn't always feel like taking the bus and trolley trip (plus a short walk) to get to the club.

Weekends were different. The people I had met and liked at LASFS seemed to be living what I thought of as a Bohemian life. There was usually a party to go to and to add to the excitement there were the plans being made for the Fourth World Science Fiction Convention. Although I was not on the committee I happened to be around when committee meetings were being held at Tendril Towers or wherever and I couldn't wait for July to come so I could attend my first Worldcon. (I knew about the first three before the war but was too poor to attend them.)

I was especially impressed by the enthusiasm that was being engendered for the Surprise Announcement at the Convention – the creation of the Fantasy Foundation. Forry had written a will, leaving his collection of books, magazines, movie artifacts, etc. to the Foundation to get it started. The goal was to have three duplicate libraries, one for use in the distant future, one for reference use on site, and one as a lending library. There would also be an official publication, edited by Fran Laney, of *ACOLYTE* fame. Fans would be asked to will their collections to the foundation and memberships would be sold to support the project. What a wonderful dream it was.

A few weeks before the convention I was attending a LASFS meeting when a tall, lanky gentleman came into the club room and marched over to me. "Lemuel J. Moffatt?" he asked. I told him I was Len and was about to tell him that it was short for Leonard, not Lemuel, when I recognized his grinning face from a photograph I had seen on the cover of *VOM*. His identity was further confirmed by the fanzine he handed me. He was none other than Arthur Wilson Tucker a.k.a. Bob Tucker a.k.a. Hoy Ping Pong ("The Chinese Buck Rogers"), editor and publisher of *LE ZOMBIE*. I was delighted and honoured to have my copy delivered in person by the man who had been my first contact in fandom back before the war. I was a little embarrassed too, as I had written to Tucker to complain that I had seen someone with a copy of the current issue of *LEZ* and mine had not arrived. He had interrupted the meeting to deliver my copy in person but nobody told him that he was out of order.

Bob had come out to California to visit fellow-fans before the Worldcon. I think he stayed at Slan Shack while he was out here. I remember seeing him there clowning it up with Mary Beth Wheeler and Walt Liebscher during one of my weekend visits. I think it was also a business trip for him as he had his fictional private eye visit the Los Angeles and Hollywood area in one of his mystery novels that was published some time later. Tucker obviously knew the territory.





Other fans from around the country would attend the Pacificon which was the nickname given to that Fourth Worldcon. I don't remember anyone from overseas. The Guests of Honour, A.E. van Vogt and E. Mayne Hull, were originally from Canada but they had moved to Los Angeles some time before the convention.

Bob Tucker was from Illinois, Charles Lucas and Milt Rothman were from Pennsylvania, Don Day was from Oregon, Art Widner was from Massachusetts, Jack Speer was from Oklahoma and Bob Bloch came from Weyauwega, Wisconsin. (Weyauwega, Bloch told us, was an Indian word meaning "Clean Rest Rooms.") Those are the names and faces that immediately come to mind but I know there were other out-of-state fans there.

When I was first introduced to the van Vogts I addressed him as "Mr. van Vogt" but wasn't sure how to address his wife. I suppose calling her "Mrs. van Vogt" would have been proper but knowing that she used "E. Mayne Hull" as her byline, it occurred to me that she might prefer to be addressed as "Miss Hull." The "Ms" term wasn't in common usage back then and I doubt that Mayne would have used it if it had been. I noticed that everyone at the club meetings called them "Van" and "Mayne" but I didn't feel that a newcomer like myself should have that privilege. However, by the time the convention was over, I too found myself speaking of them and to them as "Van" and "Mayne." I think they had somehow made it clear to me that I was being entirely too formal. Although I never got hooked by Dianetics or Scientology, Van and both of his wives, Mayne (who died too young) and Lydia (who has loved and cared for Van for many years) were and are among my favourite people.

I was to meet other favourite persons at Pacificon I, including two who would become my lifelong best friends, Rick Sneary and Stan Woolston.

The convention was not without unhappy events. On the first day Forry collapsed and was too ill to attend the rest of the convention. Out of town fans were able to visit him at his home but the presentation of the Fantasy Foundation needed him there for the whole con to keep selling it to the attendees, or at least that is one reason why I think it never really got going. Forry had worked so hard on it and on the convention itself, to the detriment to his health.

Sandy Kadet was a young fan from Minnesota, a teenager so full of enthusiasm that we all felt he would be a real asset to fandom. Unfortunately, another out-of-state attendee turned out to be a child molester. Sandy apparently didn't know what the molester was trying to do but Dale Hart happened to be on the scene when the attempt was made and showed the molester his fist. Sandy went back home and was never heard from again, to the best of my knowledge.

Laney would have loved to use this incident as an illustration of the evils of homosexuality in Los Angeles fandom but the would-be molester did not live in California, let alone in the LArea. Of the local fans who were supposed to be homosexuals (according to Ashley or Laney) I only knew of two who were because they said they were and were proud of it. Neither of them (nor the others alleged to be "queer") were child molesters, nor did any of them make passes at anybody (or each other) in public places like club meetings, parties, etc. And of course what they did in the privacy of their homes was their own business. Laney's homophobia became so bad that there were those who suspect he protested too much...

Getting back to Pacificon I, someone sent a telegram to Walt Dunkleburger, the President of the National Fantasy Fan Federation, who lived in Fargo, North Dakota, advising him that the convention had voted to disband the NFFF. I think the wire was signed "E. Everett Evans" and of course it was a hoax.

Although I had been in fandom since the Thirties, the interruption of my fanac by the war, and being new on the scene in Los Angeles made me feel pretty much like a neo in some respects. I did not get involved in fan politics, not even to the extent of running for office in LASFS. That would come later. I sort of sat back and observed but since I wasn't trying to get involved I wasn't privy to everything going on behind the scenes, so to speak. The convention planning meetings I happened to attend seemed full of enthusiasm and those involved *seemed* to like working with each other. Later I would learn that there were differences of opinions and some major disagreements among the participants. Some of it was due to personality clashes, I'm sure. I have seen that so much in fannish feuding.

In *ALL OUR YESTERDAYS*, Harry Warner quotes me (as an impartial critic) as saying, "There may have been background hassles and the beginnings or continuations or bitter feuds among some of the fans present. But on the surface it was a happy, joyful con." Here are some happy and joyful highlights:

Russ Hodgkins passing the gavel to Chairman Walt Dougherty at the opening and Forry with microphone in hand introducing people in the audience. A little more than one hundred persons attended the con and not all of them were there that first day so it was not impossible to have the attendees each say something into the microphone, even if it was only, "Glad to be here." Having recently returned from the war, I was glad to be anywhere but I was especially glad to be with my fellow fans.

The morning a bunch of us piled into two or three cars and went to Union Station to meet Bob Bloch's train. After picking him up we adjourned to the nearby Taix Restaurant for lunch and much to our surprise (and delight) Bloch picked up the tab. He told us that he had made two sales the previous week: his typewriter and his phonograph. He was the most popular speaker during the convention and at the banquet.

The convention hall was in Park View Manor near Westlake Park, later to be renamed MacArthur Park for the egotistical general. At some time during the convention some of us wandered over to the Park to relax on the grass, feed the ducks that lived on the little lake, and exchange gossip and jokes. None of the latter were as funny as Bloch's material. I don't remember the gossip either.

I commuted to the convention, which means that I missed some sessions but the discussions on the civilian control of atomic energy inspired me to bring along the two photos I had of the Nagasaki "atom bomb area" (as it was called by the armed services brass) on the last day of the con. Showing the photos and telling about what I had seen in Nagasaki was not an official part of the programme but several fans were interested enough to ask questions as well as jokingly wonder if I glowed in the dark.

I also attracted a little attention at the Masquerade Ball and might have attracted more if I had not been too shy to ask any of the few ladies present to dance. I was afraid that my free-wheeling style of jitterbugging would be too much for them. Actually, not much dancing was done, save for Walt Daugherty (who had won trophies for his ballroom dancing) and his wife and I forget who else.

The main event at the Masquerade was the viewing of the costumes. There weren't many but most of them were quite well done both in appearance and presentation. I was most impressed by Morojo, who, recovering from recent surgery, came as Merritt's Snake Mother in a beautiful costume that encased her legs so that walking was impossible even if she had been up to it. She was carried into the hall and that inspired me to do a takeoff, not on the Snake Mother, but on vampires.

I happened to be at Slan Shack when Myrtle was putting on her green makeup and she let me borrow some to put around my mouth and eyes. I parted my hair in the middle so it hung down almost over my ears and turned up my jacket collar. Stan Woolston, who was with us at the time, did something similar but he didn't ham it up the way I did.

We rode to the hall in somebody's car and when we arrived I lay down flat on my back on the sidewalk, making my body as stiff as a corpse. I think Gus Wilmoth, Rusty Hevelin and Alva Rogers were among those who carried this sleeping vampire into the hall and deposited him on a row of folding chairs against one wall. People came by and made various remarks but I managed to keep a dead pan as well as a stiff body. Perhaps standing at disciplinary attention when I was with the Marines prepared me for this performance.

Eventually I got up and walked around, leering at the women, including "The Girl We Would Most Like To Be Stranded On The Moon With," a publicity-seeking starlet, whose reaction to my hideous grin was, I'm sure, one of genuine horror and not just play-acting.

Someone led me over to Laney who was sitting in his favourite position, his chair leaning back against the wall, his long skinny legs drawn up so that his knees were chest high. I dutifully grinned at him and he cried, "Oh, my God!" and brought his chair and legs down to normal level. Perhaps he thought I was one of the ten "fairies" he later claimed to have seen at the Pacificon but some time later he and Burbee would invite me to join the Insurgent Element, so perhaps he determined later that I was just as "normal" as he was, God help me.

Getting back to the really good costumes, there was Art Joquel and Tigrina in outfits appropriate to doing a Black Mass and Dale Hart looking like he had just stepped out of a Rogers *ASTOUNDING* cover as the Gray Lensman in a costume so tight that he dared not bend over and could not sit down. Bob Hoffman was professionally made up as the Frankenstein monster (he also scared the hell out of the starlet) and Ev Evans as a birdman from Rhea.

The Pacificon Programme Book had a cover illustration by Lou Goldstone, the San Francisco artist. A woman's head, half skull, half flesh, it would be reprinted some time later to illustrate a story of mine in *LOS CUENTOS FANTASTICOS!*

During the convention a young man looked at my name badge and said, "Hah! You live across the river from me!" – and stomped off. I did get a glimpse of his name badge which read, "Rick Sneary, South Gate." The name didn't ring a bell right away but I saw it later in an issue of *SHANGRI L'AFFAIRES* that was part of the combozine distributed at Pacificon I. I would also remember the letter from Rick that my mother had forwarded to me I was on Saipan. He wanted permission to reprint a Lew Martin story from *STELLAR TALES* which I had published before entering the service. I told him how to get in touch with Lew but I did not tell him that I didn't think he would get very far in fandom if he didn't learn how to spell...

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(To be continued)



CACTUS-1-SUSULT

#### IN RESPONSE TO MANY REQUESTS

I have found the original paste-up copy of Brad Foster's cover for *Holier Than Thou XX* and a small supply of 11 X 17 paper. Brad has granted me permission to reprint this cover. This zine cover is titled *FIRST CONTACT WITH AN ALIEN RACE \*2842 AD.*

I have reprinted the original (dated 1984) and I am making these copies available on a first come, first served basis – only 25 copies will be printed. Copies will be mailed folded. The original was a fold-out cover for the zine so folding it to fit a mailing envelope will not violate the spirit of the original conception as Brad knew that it would be folded. The price I am charging for this (US\$2.00) will just reflect my costs. For those who have just heard about this item I should say that XX is both the number of the zine and is also the "rating" of the cover. Enjoy.

To be perfectly clear about this, this cover is, \*ahem\*, sexually explicit. As this drawing was the cover for what was essentially a "free" zine, there were no problems in sending it out as such. However, to forstall any problems with selling it (even though I intend to sell it at cost), anybody wanting a copy of this cover will have to send me a signed age statement – and must be at least 18 years old.

Enjoy.





## THE RELUCTANT FAMULUS

A review by Joseph T. Major

*The Reluctant Famulus*, 422 West Maple Avenue, Adrian, MI 49221-1627, USA  
tomfamulus@dmci.net

"TRF can be obtained for The Usual but especially *written material* and *artwork*, \$2.00 cash,  
The Meaning of Life, and Editorial Whim."

Older fans are, particularly of late, common. New faneds are less common. But the two together . . . For about the past ten years, an older fan has been putting out a fanzine in the old tradition. The events in his life have not been the first date, the last zit, the latest all-nighter, but rather the first grandchild, the last wedding, the latest ailment. Working quietly, unrecognized by the flashier areas of fanzine fandom, Thomas D. Sadler of Adrian, Michigan has built a solid body of fanac.

The issue at hand, #53, weighs in at a hefty seventy-two pages. A variety of personal issues have forced Tom to go to an announced quarterly schedule, but he keeps current on that, so the letter column does not contain a high proportion of locs whose loccers should be receiving their copies c/o Afterlife. This particular cover is a study in green and yellow (with reddish tints) of a peculiar arachnid; among the many exotic features of this octopod are the markings on its back, which say "tRF". The recorder of this strange being is **Sheryl Birkhead**, one of the many fine artists who grace this publication.

This is all a matter of quality control. Tom has gone so far as to purchase his own copier, in order to be able to control his copy quality. The vast effort this entails in collating and quality control is not sufficiently recognized. Moreover, he has of late gone to color copying, which can be seen not only in this cover (a clip of which is repeated as the back cover, conveniently labeled "The Back Cover" □ a long-time TRF tradition) but also in the colored pictures of various contributors contained herein.

Opening the cover immediately displays one of said pictures, as Tom himself stares out at the reader, a rising-Moon backdrop setting off his unsparing slannish gaze. This is the race that shall rule the sevagram, this confident unswerving visage declares. Or maybe not, since the editorial is entitled "**How The Mighty Have Fallen**".

Though in this case the mighty are primarily others. Tom has been being treated for depression, and in the opening chapter of the editorial he discussed the external cause of said depression. The head of the Adrian Department of Public Works has quit, leaving many the hap-

pier by his going. Tom is exceedingly forthcoming in discussing the strain of working under an abusive boss and how it has affected his life.

As he is forthcoming in discussing the strains of his treatment. The medication he was taking for depression had not surprisingly also impaired his creativity and energy level. (I recall the column by John Brunner in *Science Fiction Review* on how taking Stelazine had left him unable to write; and incidentally treatment with that medication in youth has left me with poor coordination and overweight, which last has contributed to other problems . . .) And not surprisingly, having come to an end of the meds, Tom has found that his writing skills and interest in fandom and the other worthwhile parts of life have returned.

This segues to a discussion of the Clinton Affair, or affairs, which is less intemperate than some writings on the matter, and more effective in presenting its conclusions, I conclude. But this is not the last word we shall have from the editor . . .

Tom has succeeded in attracting a number of interesting columnists to his zine. Leading off this issue is long-time APAhack **Robert Sabella**, looking away from his *Visions of Paradise* to present his column "**The Caustic Eye**." This latest contribution discusses Gardner Dozois's annual anthology *The Best Science Fiction of the Year #14*. Sabella admits to a certain freshness of perspective on this year's stories, since this marks the first year after his decision to cut back on reading new science fiction. (He had discussed this matter at length in earlier issues of TRF.) His findings are mixed but he finds the book to contain "enough good stories to make it worthwhile reading." [His conclusion about Mike Resnick's "Kirinyaga" series makes the point while missing it; it is not that "tradition is always good ; modern technology is always bad." That is what Koriba, the protagonist of the series believes, and the whole point of the series is that he slowly and painfully finds out how inadequate his vision is.] Sabella ends up here discussing the problems of latter-day SF in general through his choice of its microcosm.

Another long-time contributor goes by the cryptic cognomen of "**Chaotic Commentator**", making of course "**Chaotic Comments**." In spite of this, his comments have been well organized and much to the point. (It was only fairly recently revealed that his name is in fact Thomas Doubtrley.) Often the "chaotic comments" are about incidents in the life and time of CC, and this time is no exception, being words of wisdom □ and quite appropos and well-thought □ to a newly-married couple. "Living is growing, growing sometimes hurts. But it is no one's fault that to live, we must grow. It isn't a bad thing, or a good thing. It is only a thing." [*The Reluctant Famulus* #53, p. 7] While CC rarely discusses SF, his insights into the problems of life and the paradoxes of history are presented in a straightforward, warm style.

From adulthood we go to an article that seems nigh childish. What else is one to think of "**Brother Butch's Rat Stew: Archeology, SF & Calmer Chats**"? In spite of this promising title (the wrong kind of promise, but it does promise something) **Gene Stewart** proceeds to write a lively introduction to the real-life mysteries of archaeology, like for example the question of whether or not the Sphinx shows signs of water damage. [Which if so would point to a pre-Dynastic origin □ a couple of relatives of mine used that to bolster their arguments in a book.] Stewart goes on to discuss the general methodology of fanzine argumentation. However, when he urges fans to "Avoid carping, divisive sneers, and other infantile egoboolean [*sic.*] time-wasters," [*The Reluctant Famulus* #53, p. 9] he betrays his brevity of acquaintance with the field. Such things do pass.

Unusually for this issue, there is an art portfolio, showing off a selection of work from the Hugo-winning and multitalented, if unfortunate, **Joe Mayhew** [don't talk about fire sprin-

klers to him]. Who else would realize what kind of fauna would indeed be a cold-blooded killer, or find a different twist to what happens when the dog eats homework?

The past few issues have been enlivened by long-time fanned (the fanzine review column lists *Erg* #142 and it is now a quarterly) **Terry Jeeves** of his "Wartime Daze" as a fitter in the Royal Air Force, seeing exotic India. (The one bit about stealing electricity was interesting.) But late Aircraftman Jeeves, T. has been demobbed, but not undaunted he continues the story of his life on "**Civvy Street**". He gives a sardonic twist to the ins and outs of getting by in still-rationed post-war Britain, including the great time when the delivery van he was driving finally ran out of petrol at a dip in the road. His partner seems to have been a dip, too.

When not driving Jeeves was taking education classes. (This still sounds like my cousin who started teaching with a two-year degree □ but that was 1926.) Somehow the instructor who urged teachers to er, avoid forming, um, distracting habits, ah, sounds like, um, an example, er, of, ah, "Those who can't . . ."

With some extra space on the page, the editor pauses the program [programme?] to insert an announcement, namely that his daughter is getting married. It's his zine and it shows that he does have a life. Family ties are not to be dismissed.

Incidentally, Terry Jeeves did in many ways fulfill the Gernsbackian dream of a Fan, as he mentions making radio sets and an oscilloscope during his demob leave, and taking science-teaching courses in his education school. Continuing this scientific trend (Eek! Eek! They actually mention science in a science fiction fanzine! Eek! Eek!) **Alfred D. Byrd** (A daring man, withal, in the appended picture wearing a University of Louisville t-shirt while working for the University of Kentucky □ the UK-U of L sports feud is a feature of Kentucky sports mania) discusses what he does for a living, or maybe not, with "**That Fiend, The Atom**". This is a selection of fine urban legends by and for radioisotope technologists about how people slop around the hot stuff. He illustrates his points by examples from science fiction (Eek! Eek!) including a very pointed example from *Mad Max* about comparative life spans.

*The Reluctant Famulus* is very big on cross-pollinating artists. The Wartime Daze were made less dazed by Jeeves's own illos, and I have mentioned the Mayhew portfolio. Another regular contributor, recounting tales of her misfortunes in treating others, has been **Sheryl Birkhead**. (Such is the unfairness of life that Dr. Birkhead, with not only these articles but illos and locs all over, has been passed over for the Hugo, while Sharon Farber, with only articles in *Mimosa*, is a regular short-listee. I guess people think better of physicians than veterinarians.) But this time she has to deal with, not a sick pet or a sick house, but a bizarre car problem. "**Who'd A Thought**", she wonders, that someone who never drives in Washington would get a parking ticket in Washington. It seems that Washington police have discovered an innovative way to get unregulated leave time and augment the city's budget. Birkhead's patience in unsnarling this mess is matched only by her retrospective calm in recounting a clearly frustrating experience.

Alien abductions have been all the rage in Flying Saucer circles this decade. **David A. Henninger** has deduced "**The Real and Truthful Reason for the Behavior of Flying Saucers**" and once you see it you too will suddenly understand *everything*. It is such a brilliant idea, so wittily expounded, that I may have to . . . well, better not say. This article alone makes the issue worth reading.

But don't stop there, as the local oldphart has a contribution. Yes, **Howard de Vore**, chronicler of awards, grand master of Midwestcon attendance, and survivor from the days when Fans were Fans (if not Slans) and proud (and lonely) of it, tells an old anecdote of when "**We Were Just Having a Little Drink, Officer**". At the Worldcon in 1955, in Cleveland, things

were small enough that everybody knew everybody and everything was in the same place, and you could be partying with friends. Of course, when your good-time supplies turn up several program items later . . .

Another new older outsider who has barged in and seems to be everywhere is **Rodney Leighton** and he is given a section in which to say "**I Understand . . . I Don't Understand**" the paradoxes of fiction, technology, life, striptease, and fandom. Yes, anyone near Rodney will have to endure comments about women's bodies. Well, Fandom has had Richard E. Geis for close on fifty years . . .

Leighton complains about being unable to understand why he doesn't get some fanzines. Well, people have been complaining about that for some time. Maybe being fannish about it hasn't been doing the trick and Leighton's more obnoxious forceful approach may inspire some people to take action. (I presume he realizes that the "action" may include dropping him, but . . .)

Not quite fannish, except in the broader sense, but family-oriented withal, is the tale of "**A Christmas Pageant**" or rather the little boy who thought he was doing one of those modern, audience-interaction, plays. As Tom says, it's self-indulgent, but such is a part of life with children. And in this era where like as not, the female fanned who pubs her ish has a different sort of issue involved, such matters now fall well within the purview of fandom.

Short book reviews and a fanzines-received listing follow (No *No Award* this but it does appear in its proper place) and then there follows the letter column. Which, it turns out, contains a high proportion of double-dippers, led off by Terry Jeeves. Also repeating themselves are Rodney Leighton, Gene Stewart, and Al Byrd, not to mention other lochacking stalwarts such as Harry Warner himself (Twice!), Lloyd Penney, and Murray Moore. Sadly missed is Walt Willis, whose revived locking career had been a prime feature of earlier issues, but whose stroke may have ended this revival. Less unfortunate news is communicated by Lan Laskowski, who recounts the current state of his battle with cancer.

Finally, the editor returns for a "**Conclusion**". Jeeves may have built an oscilloscope, Byrd dealt with radioisotopes, but Sadler finds scanner technology baffling. It creates the most exotic typos. Having just been unable to scan in a letter from Gene Stewart, I can appreciate this. (I admit that Guy Lillian did a flat-out funny article on some things his scanner did to an article by Dennis Dolbear, so the author of the proposed solution to the Langford Problem might want to dig up some old issues of *Challenger*.)

As a corresponding parallelism, this column is headed up with yet another picture of the editor, this time in the glasses he now admits to requiring. Yet another voice in the listing of old fans, and tired.

While others issue verbal pyrotechnics regarding matters thirty years dead and gone, or lay down the rules about who they will allow to be Fannish (Tom got caught in the backlash of one such incident, where he had to disavow a supporter of his TAFF bid), Tom Sadler has labored unrewarded in the vineyard of fandom, producing this quality brew.

For the lexicographically minded, a "famulus" is a sorcerer's apprentice. Issue #52 had a front cover with Donald Duck as the Sorcerer's Apprentice in *Fantasia* and an aide informing "Walt" that the duck just wasn't working out. The back cover showed Goofy in the role, being walked over by the brooms, and an off-panel voice crying out "Get me those idiots in casting!"

Further news on the topic of the last review: Financial problems, both in Minnesota Science Fiction Services and in the *MSFire* editorial gang, have forced the suspension of *MSFire*. This is unfortunate.

III

# FANAC BY THE FIRE LIGHT

by Ed Green

A sense of wonder is supposed to be something that sets you a part from the mundane world. It's supposed to help you during your life, to give you insights and inspiration. Well, okay, maybe it's just supposed to be a good excuse to be silly. It's not suppose to make you stop in the middle of the street, look at the buildings burning all around you and make you freeze.

Summer, 1975, San Antonio Texas. It's hot, as nature's punishment to people willing to live there. I'm standing at the head of a row of 25 US Air Force Security Police. I'm 20 years old, a one stripe Airman, and acting Squad leader. We're all dressed in the standard OD Green fatigues, bulky flak vests made of layered ballistic cloth, blue plastic helmets with face shields, gas masks on our left hips and each carrying a three foot wooden baton across our chests. My group is one fourth of the full class at the United States Air Force Security Police Academy, and we're all putting into practice this week's classes; the basic tactics for quelling rioters. Our instructors are playing the protesters and it's a steady series of shouted commands, troops running into positions and facing down the rioters. Turns are missed, feet are tripped over, masks slip off the hip and people drop the batons. Every mistake stops the exercise and we all march back to the start point.

As a squad leader, I keep getting reminded that my commands must be shouted in a loud, clear and calm voice. These reminders involve numerous laps around the training

*Ssgt Ed Green is a long time LASFSian. Bright and articulate, Ed is well respected by local fans and has been President of LASFS. He often runs LASFS auctions (see the earlier article about LASFS auctions to get some sort of idea about the kind of person needed to run that madness). His sense of humour is appreciated by the members – he has done stand-up and many things he has written show that he has a fine turn of phrase. He contributed a nicely understated article to an earlier issue of this zine.*

*In this article Ed gives us part one of something which is usually not the kind of article I want to pub in this zine (where I usually prefer lighter fare). But we see it here because it is real history as lived by a fan, a first-hand account of something which most fans just read about in the newspapers several years ago.*

*It is a first-hand account of history from a viewpoint which I do not believe has before seen print.*

*This is personal, this is up-close, and this is history from the heart of a participant.*

*Ed was deeply moved by the events he describe – and he feels that he is finally able to put it into words. He is finding that it is taking more words than he first thought he might need.*

*Ed feel that he just had to put this into words and I am glad that he chose to place the article here.*

*Even though this article is more serious that I usually want here I feel that this is an important document and I am glad that I have the opportunity to present it to my readers.*

*So, from one of the National Guardsmen who participated in this historic agony of our city, here is part one of Ed Greens description of his participation in the Los Angeles Riot of 1992.*



field in full gear. Sweating and swearing softly, I return to my place in the formation. My job is to lead the squad to a position, get them lined up and then control the movement of them all. I get my direction from the commander in the center of the formation. Picture a unit of Roman soldiers, creating the famous "phalanx". Armed with three foot hardwood batons instead of spears we use the minimum amount of force and if it all goes right, we can put a lid back on a situation that's gone horribly wrong with causing the least amount of injury to anyone.

Spring, 1992, Los Angeles. It's cool and comfortable, just like nature's movie script calls for. I'm still in the military, 37 years old. Now I work as an active duty member of the California Army National Guard. A full time weekend warrior. I'm back in line, this time standing in front of about 50 soldiers. I'm wearing four stripes on my collar. Instead of a leading a squad, I'm a Staff Sergeant, and the NCO in charge of all admin in the Field Artillery unit I work for. The uniform is three tone camouflage (called Battle Dress, Utilities) this time. The flak vests are now made of Kevlar. Instead of just slowing down the incoming bullet, it has an even chance of stopping it. The helmets look like expensive knock offs of the WWII German Army. These are also made of Kevlar and we've added plexi-glass face shields. Our gas masks are still on our hips, but we're also wearing pistol belts and harness rigs to hold the ammo pouches, first aid kits, canteens, bayonets and all the new crap. What was 40 pounds is now up to 65. There's one other new wrinkle. Instead of a three foot wooden baton, I've just gotten an M16A1 automatic rifle and 40 rounds of ammunition. I do a quick check of the chambering bolt of the weapon, insuring the weapon can fire if required. A passage from a Travis McGee novel, by John D. McDonald comes to mind.

"I can never carry it around... without the feeling of theatrical jackassery. Carrying a gun, especially a very utilitarian one, has the bully boy flavor of the ersatz male, the fellow with such a hollow sense of inadequacy he has to bolster his sexual ego with a more specific symbol... having to use a gun is the end product of a stupid procedure."

A 5.56mm bullet cannot under any circumstance be considered minimum force. But it's what we're going to use to control the city. I have another chance in my career to actually kill a fellow human. There are some around here who have done it and like it. They scare me, and scare most of the soldiers around. It's ugly and brutal. This is the time, before walking into it, that you really think about it. Most of the older troops don't talk about it. We have, each in our own lonely thoughts, made what peace we could with the notion we'll end someone's life someday. We find those rationalizations, the cliches that will help us pull the trigger if need be.

Why real ammo? The situation's gone horribly wrong for real this time. It's not a riot. It's a war. And we can watch it on TV right up until we march into it all. The uprising is in full swing, and both sides are fighting for what they call justice.

The night the LA riots broke out, I watched, along with so many others, the beating of truck driver Reginald Denny. My wife kept asking me, "why aren't the cops doing anything?"

It was to be a night of great humility for me. Almost everything I said would be wrong.

Switching into "expert mode", I began to lecture to her. I'd gone through this type of training. Not just riot control, but SWAT training. I knew that the cops were assembling at a nearby command post, getting ready to move in. I told her that. She kept asking when. I said when they had enough cops to slam down on the area and not get ripped apart by the population. And, they were probably getting tear gas, masks and the rest of the equipment ready.

But, they weren't getting ready. They were running away. They were fleeing the scene of the crime. Ought to be a law against that. Not that we could have found someone to enforce it that day.

After a while, her question changed to "Shouldn't you call the armory?"

"No, they'll call me if they need me. The news hasn't announced the Governor has called us out, so there's no need to call."

About the time I was saying that, the senior officer and sergeant who worked at my Armory were getting calls from higher headquarters, telling them to get to the unit and start calling in the folks who are the combat types. I've had that kind of training, and more, but my current job is administration. There weren't any emergency forms to type so I didn't get a call.

On and off during the evening, several of my fannish friends called. There's a belief in the local area that I know info that the reporters aren't telling people. It's not true. But it doesn't stop the calls.

About 1:00 am I told my wife I was going to bed. Tomorrow would be a long day regardless of what happened, since we were getting ready for our two week summer camp. I'd already packed my bags for it, and they both sat waiting by the front door.

We talked a bit about things, including the odds that the rioting would spread into the area we lived in. I couldn't guess at that. If I heard anything or if she felt in danger, she could duck out to her mother's. I figured I'd be okay, even assuming this thing continued or if I got a call.

"Aren't they going to continue rioting? Won't you get called out?" She said.

"Well, they'll continue to riot and burn through the night, but by dawn they'll get tired and it'll slow down. It's fairly standard MO. It happened all the time during the 60s and 70s. They've probably been looting the local liquor stores too, so the boozing is going to slow them down."

As I climbed into bed, I smiled at her and told her not to worry.

"Look, all I do is admin these days. Even if we all get called out, I'll spend my time sitting behind a desk."

When I arrived at my armory, I found almost 100 of the Guardsmen there. Hunting the senior NCO, Bob Ludowitz, I asked what happened. He told me about the limited call out, and gave me some marching orders to get the troops ready for the streets. At the same time, I have to keep trying to do some of the projects we need to accomplish to move the unit to its summer camp.

I had a small TV at my desk and I turned it on. All the offices had a set on with news as background. Around ten in the morning, I picked up the phone and used the intercom to talk to Major Chris Hood, the executive officer of the battalion, officer in charge of the full time force and the acting commander. I'd known Chris for about six months at that point, and the two of us had developed a fairly good relationship. And I considered him a damn good friend. It happens in the military. There was no doubt who was the boss, and who was the NCO. There was give and take, but when the decision was to be made, it was "Yes sir" and move out.

"Hey, boss. You watching the tube?"

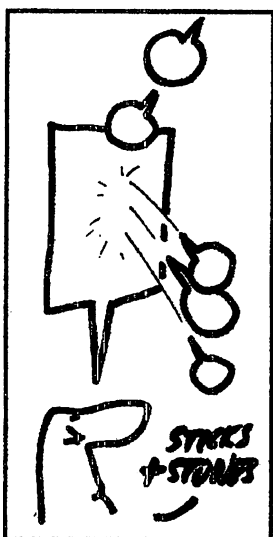
"Yeah. Why, Ed, something new?" There aren't many secrets in this kind of a unit. Everyone knew I had both military police and intelligence assignments. It didn't mean much, but now and then someone would listen when I spoke up.

"Not new, but... weird."

"What's wrong?"

"They aren't slowing down out there. In the 70s, they calmed down after sunrise and picked back up during the night. These folks aren't slowing down. Hell, if anything, it's spreading."

"I know. Division called about half an hour ago. We're trying to keep this low key, but it's less like a riot and more like a war-zone out there. Look, most of us are busy trying to get these guys ready to hit the streets. The Division Commander isn't going to let anyone out until we've gotten all the briefings and refresher training done."



"Amazing. Nice to know the General has the guts to do that. The cops must be screaming like hell for the troops."

"Well, it helps we still don't have any ammunition..."

"What the fuck? No ammo? Where is it?"

"Don't know."

And we wouldn't know for weeks what the problem was. The

story, simply told, is that there was a decision to send the ammo to the Division HQ in Los Alamitos for issue there. The supply types were worried that unless tight control was kept over the ammo, some units would come up short, and a lot would come up missing. While part of me cringes at the thought of the supply types running the war, it really did make sense. This thing wasn't going to last forever, and unaccounted for ammo is a bad thing.

So, a single CH47, a long, thin, dark green mother of a helicopter with two sets of blades became a key player in this drama. The plan was simple. Land at the training base the Guard has in Paso Robles, California (north of the affected area) and pick up ammo and tear gas. Take it to Los Alamitos, 25 miles south of LA. From Los Alamitos, issue it to the troops.

In the movies, the crack team of pilots rush from the ready bunker as the ground crew finishes the last few pre-flight bits. The soldier with the glowing wands waves the copter into the air, and the grim faced crew is off, to save Los Angeles.

In real life, there are no helicopter ready crews. Never has been. So, the phone calls start. The decision to commit the troops happens late at night. While the troopers in Southern California are gearing up on their own (thanks in part to the news coverage), the folks in Northern California aren't quite as ready. Phone calls are made after midnight. People snap out of a deep sleep and need to pack. Wives need to be reassured. Flight plans have to be made. The helicopter has to be inspected. The crew has to walk around and physically check things.

It's called safety, but it's really making sure that damn thing isn't going to fall from the sky with you on board. There are lots of things to check. Some ground you right then, no questions asked. Some, the commander of the copter can sign off on and fly it. And some can be busted for years and never fixed. With people pressuring you to get into the air, you check the critical items. You make damn sure you can fly your mission. The little bits slide to one side. Broken cables. Long steel runners, tweaked out of true.

While the crew is scrambling, the support personnel are dancing to their own tune.

They're taking tear gas. Flight Safety Regulations require all crew members have gas masks. They're going to a riot zone. They should have their firearms too. Keys are needed to unlock the padlocks that secure the aircraft hatches.

While we're at it, we have to get someone here to fuel the thing. Another call to make. Another lock to open.

The Supply Sergeant lives two hours away. The officer who's responsible for the fuel is a bit closer. His refueling crew is spread out too. It's within the rules of the Guard, and normal in a State the size of California.

Oh, and all that ammo? Well, you don't just leave tens of thousands of rounds of bullets laying around. It's all locked away in a secure area, with fences and bunkers and lights. Along with getting it, you have to count it. For all the bad press, the military does do a fairly impres-

sive job of accounting for the stuff that can kill you. That much ammo weighs a lot. Even with forklifts and cranes, you need hands to help. More calls.

Four hours after the decision is made, the blades of the helicopter turn and the mission is airborne.

The trip to Camp Roberts is fairly short. The pallets of ammo and tear gas are waiting. The bird touches down, drops the ramp and...

In the CH47, there's a cable that you drag from the front of the cargo area that stretches out the back. You hook it on the pallets and it pulls them in. There are rollers on the cargo deck that make things move smoothly. It's designed to make loading and unloading fairly quick. A helicopter doesn't need a cargo cable to fly, so its place on the checklist is fairly low.

That cable can be broken and rusted, and you can still fly the aircraft.

Broken and rusted and incapable of dragging the 1,000 pound plus pallets of ammo.

Did I mention that while the CH47 is long, it isn't too wide? Barely enough room for the pallet to fit in. A very snug fit. So when you make that horrible discovery that the runners aren't going to work, you have to line up everyone you can, and shove the pallet into the helicopter. And the next and the next. Meanwhile, you can hear the radio reporting about how the fires in LA are continuing...

The bird is half full, and the mission changes. Take off with what you've got, and fly south another 40 miles. At Camp San Luis Obispo, there's other equipment to pick up. Flak jackets, face shields and the like. We'll issue more ammo later.

In mid-flight, someone reads a document that should have been read hours ago. Several cases of tear gas grenades are so old, they should have been pulled out of the inventory. They aren't reliable. They could fail to go off, or go off too soon.

Those cases are near the front of the aircraft.

Landing at San Luis Obispo, the unloading beings . It starts to look like the building of a Pyramid. Huge blocks shove this way and that. But, finally, thirteen hours after the word was given, one lone helicopter flies south to the City of Angels.

We heard all this later. At that moment, we were worried about other things.

"Look, get ahold of the Lieutenant in charge out there. Tell him to give you a squad of troops. Let's increase our security measures. You've got enough background in tactical stuff. Let's protect ourselves."

"Without ammo?"

"Think of it as a challenge."

"With respect, Major, I think of it as a crock."

"Noted. Report back to me in an hour."

"Got it."

An hour later we've got the security set up. The armory is beginning to look more like a fort from the 1880s than a meeting hall of the 1960s. The windows are covered, the lights are dimmed, we've set up barricades all around. Towards the south, the sky is black with smoke. Black smoke. The buck sergeant in charge of the security troops asks me if I've heard anything about the ammo.

Asking him what he's heard, he says the rumors are no one has any yet. I tell him that's probably the best answer he'll get for now. I remind him the security force is just supposed to give us early warning, so we can react and protect ourselves. When he asks what we'll do if this team gives us the warning, I shrug my shoulders. He shakes his head and moves out to check on his team. You get used to that sort of mission. No real info, no hard orders, not enough people or equipment. But, you make do and push on. The one thing left unstated was that at least half of the troops there were likely carrying their own personal weapons. Unstated because by law we weren't allowed to carry them into a combat environment. Had I become aware of such a violation of regulations, I would have had to take action.

Let's see, take action for someone carrying an unauthorized weapon who was protecting me, or put my blinders on. Making sure the harness was tight, I returned to the my office.

LA may burn, ammo is somewhere, but paperwork waits for no one, friend or foe.

My biggest concerns are medical care and insurance documents. I could picture someone getting shot up in a drive-by shooting. I called the nearest three hospitals to see if they were shut down. Thankfully, all were open.

Insurance was harder. We ended up doing a manual search of all the pay records. Is every one signed up? Are they all current? If anything happens, I just want to make sure that the next of kin are covered. Cold? Not at all. Part of my job is to help take of family members if someone gets hurt or killed.

Hurt or killed during riots in Los Angeles. Wow...

About 3:00 pm, Hood calls me. We still are scheduled to go to summer camp. But with the riots going on, we're going to have to scale back our plans to send forward a group of folks to help set up all the equipment.



He wants me to lead the advance set-up crew up to the training base tonight. We kick around the possibility that we're actually going, but after all the doubts we agree if we don't plan, we'll get caught short. I ask for permission to head home and grab my bags. My original plan was that I'd get a few hours off tonight, and would hit the LASFS meeting. Then, go home and get my bags and return to the office for an uncomfortable night's sleep on a cot.

As I'm dragging one of my duffle bags out of my apartment, the upstairs neighbor calls over to me, asking if I've been called out. I tell her no, just packing for summer training. I tell her the Guard is only sending 2,000 troops and they are all there. She says the Governor was on the radio, ordering 10,000 troops. Four minutes later, I've tossed the rest of my gear into the back of the car and I peel out of the apartment at top speed.

10,000 soldiers is just about the total number of troops the 40th Infantry Division has.

Sure enough, pulling into the parking lot the controlled chaos that was our armory has now devolved into total panic. Troops pulling into the parking lot, leaving cars parked in all haphazard manner. Running. Everyone is running. Walking may be just as fast, but it's not in style today.

A quick meeting between the officers there and the senior NCOs shakes out a plan. Right now I'm totally responsible for counting noses and making sure that number gets submitted to the next level of command. My unit is the intermediate level of command for five smaller units, and I have to collect reports from all of them.

The flaws in the system really begin to show. For instance, the smaller units have all of one phone in their buildings. With that one phone, they have to call all their soldiers, call higher HQ, call local merchants to arrange food and other items. Now, assuming that the poor troop manages to hang up the phone, it rings immediately, since everyone is trying to call in. Officers and Sergeants, common soldiers, loved ones, higher headquarters (remember us?) and the media too...

The work arounds end up being pay phones, calling cards and cell phones. In theory, we paid everyone who fought the riots. But, try matching the checks they got with the bills they paid out.

Most of the troops are smart enough to figure if the lines to the armory are busy, it's time to head in. And they do.

We've got troops everywhere. People are getting equipment and checking it with a fervor that isn't seen often. This isn't the slow build-up of Desert Shield. It's a come as you are war, and now is the last chance you get to make sure the stuff works.

More meetings, more planning. This one is the big one. All the subordinate commanders have arrived, with their Executive Officers and First Sergeants in tow. This is the meeting where we find out our missions for at least the next twelve hours.

The intelligence folks start to brief as much as they can, but for once we all know the same thing. The intel is coming in real time from TV sets. The emergency services are overwhelmed with phone calls and reports. The few times we've tried to call the Division Command Post for an update, we can't get anything of current value, because they are buried in messages.

The Operations section, the folks who actually do the planning, report that we've received dozens of requests for assistance. But three of them have been approved by higher headquarters and we'll move troops out as soon as we get ammo. One's simple and the others are... ugly. The easy one is we're going to pull security at a mall close to the riot zone.

Ugly #1 is we're sending over 100 troops to the police station that was where the cops who beat Rodney King worked out of. Seems LA's finest are worried about the crowds of people surrounding the building, and the odd sniper shot fired at them.

But number two is the true winner. Another 100 troops with a simple mission. Bring order to the intersection where Reginald Denny got his head caved in. Normally, no one would bother. But it's one of those "psychological" missions. A public statement we're taking the city back.

It will be a great comfort to any of us who get hurt there that we're calming the minds of the citizens of LA.

Each planning section is supposed to have one officer and one senior NCO assigned to it. In the admin field, it is not unusual for there to not be an officer. So, I have to brief the assembled soldiers on our current strength and medical evacuation plans. The big thing I stress is keeping track of the soldiers. Rumors are floating around that the cops are planning on breaking the troops down into two or four man teams. If it's true, it's going to be a nightmare to count noses. And it's going to be pure shit if one of our guys gets hurt and we don't know about it before the news media reports it.

"And what about the news media?" Asks one of the Captains. "What do we do if they show up?"

I look through the 20 pages of notes I've collected over the hours, mostly from phone calls and faxes. I glance over to Major Hood. I can tell them what the higher ups have said, but it's his command. He makes the final call. He could, for instance, order us to shoot any reporter who shows up.

He nods at me. The party line will be followed.

"Simple, really. Full access as long as it doesn't hamper operations. Be careful what you consider hampering. And no escorts for them. We don't have the troops to spare."

"And if they start to interfere with operations, and won't back off?"

I turn my head to Major Hood. "Sir?"

"We're supposed to have cops with us. Let them handle it."

"But if they break us down into small groups, there may not be cops. Then what?" The Captain refuses to let it go.

Hood chuckles and smiles. "John, we're going to issue these kids live ammo. If we can trust them with that, we can trust them with the press. Listen folks, we all have to stay as relaxed as we can. Let's try using common sense. Besides which, Sergeant Green has been trained to deal with the press, right Green?"

"Of course, Sir. A whole eight hours worth."

"Okay, we'll give you extra ammo then."

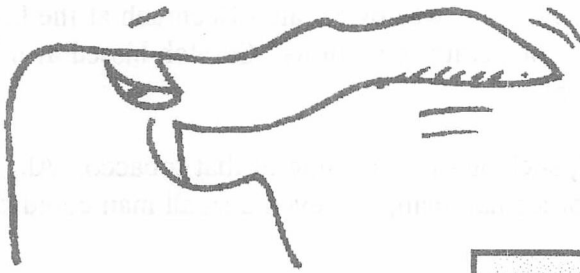
Everyone laughs, and secretly I'm grateful Hood's cracking jokes. It's tense enough right now, and we need to calm down. Hell, I need to calm down.

Finally, ammo arrives.

*(To be continued)*

*m*





## COMMON SCENTS

by  
Mike  
Glyer

Never waste a perfectly good free association by failing to turn it into a fanzine article. That's my advice.

The recent passing of Buck Coulson naturally brought *Yandro* to mind, and also Dave Locke, the zine's star columnist. Dave had an enviable talent for turning dreadful experiences in doctors' offices into hilarious stories. I always wondered what effect it would have on Dave's writing if all his maladies were cured. Maybe that's the real reason *Yandro* folded? Never mind, my point is this: Dave wasn't merely funny, he wove enough sensory detail into his prose to make it come uncomfortably alive. And that's a secret of good narrative, not only of good fanwriting.

That's why fans point to Poul Anderson as one of the better prose stylists in science fiction. Poul makes readers feel they are living inside his adventures because he constantly appeals to all five senses.

You could hardly tell any story without mentioning sight and sound — what characters see and say — but stories feel richer when writers also tell us about taste and touch and smell.

Now if it was easy, everybody would be doing it. Fanwriting is often fixated on sight and sound and unlikely to refer to the other three senses except in clichés about sniffing newly-dittoed fanzine pages.

Yet there's lots of fannish lore to appeal to the oft-neglected fannish nose. Some amazing smells have come out of fandom. Many of them directly from Marty Cantor's pipe.

I remember the time that Marty told me he was smoking Burleigh. "Burley?" I asked,

incredulous. The last time I'd seen Brian Burley smoked it was by Scratch Bachrach at the L.A. Con I business meeting after Burley seconded one of Scratch's motions. Scratch hissed at him, "You couldn't pass the Crucifixion with that speech!"

But Marty explained that I misunderstood, spelling out the name of that tobacco. Ah, no further explanation required. Besides, Brian is not a small man, and even a small man could not have fit in the bowl of Marty's pipe.

Fans tend to exaggerate about Marty and his pipe. (I may do it some more before the end of this article.) Marty truly has standards. He has never, ever smoked that brand of tobacco made with cocoa leaves that was on the market (for about five minutes) in 1979. An accountant came to my office with a pipeful of that stuff and smelled like he was smoking brownies.

I'm glad they banned indoor smoking at our workplace. Marty may disagree (in fact, stay tuned to this paragraph for an immediate editorial interruption), but possibly the only good thing there is to say about tobacco smokers is they generate an olfactory screen that makes it impossible to smell anything else that might be amiss.

In fact, I encourage most fans with cats to start smoking heavily. It's not that cats smell bad, it's their food. Specifically, it's that deteriorating residue of wet cat food in empty cans in the kitchen trash bag.

A cat-owning fan who shall remain nameless wanted to show off her Persian blues, or whatever they were, and invited me to visit. She said their rare colouring made them valuable, and she planned to breed them for big money. As a tax professional, I'm still waiting to see my first return that reports a profit from breeding any animal that cannot be sold for meat. Anyway, she opened the door and I walked into a stunning miasma. She had about eight cats and several came over to investigate me. I petted them reluctantly until I realized the reek wasn't from them. Nor even from their litter box. I followed my nose to the source — the kitchen and its midden heap of gourmet cat food cans.

And the trouble is she didn't notice the smell herself. Any of us rapidly become inured to a bad smell that is constantly present. Probably because the receptors of our olfactory nerves become overloaded and quite firing.

That is also Diana's theory why I never minded the stench of mimeo ink she claims permeated my old apartment in Van Nuys. If she's right, perhaps cat owners unwilling to take up smoking can become fanzine publishers instead.

The worst smell I ever experienced was not encountered, surprisingly, in someone's home, at LASFS, or at a con, and I will save that to close with — but the *second* worst thing I've smelled was the room assigned to the Conspiracy (1987) business meeting, the morning after the beer tasting.

The odour of stale spilled beer still rising through the vapours of the ammonia cleaning

fluid used to mop the floor made SMOFs swoon. It was unbelievable. Had any of the beer actually gone into the mouths of the tasters? And it clearly hadn't been any of that sissy American beer: only strong British ale could have penetrated the ammonia stink six hours after spilling on the floor.

I was almost too numbed to notice L.A. had just lost its 1990 Worldcon bid to the Dutch. funny thing, it was the Dutch Worldcon that put three writers on a Perry Rhodan panel named Frick, Gaag, and Barg, whose names were just about a perfect onomatopoeic description of how this all must have happened . . . .

Even after my experience in Brighton, I have no doubt that the world record for stench was set by the oil refinery in Marcus Hook.

When I was seven years old and flew back with my mother to visit her family in Delaware, my grandparents set out with us in the car one morning to see the historic sights of Philadelphia. We got caught in rush hour traffic behind a bus, and the adults weren't appreciating the rich aroma of diesel exhaust nearly as much as I was. Traffic ground along quite slowly along the main road as we approached Marcus Hook, heralded by its 50-foot-tall fiery towers blazing with wasted methane.

Suddenly the scent of the bus disappeared under a hydrogen-sulfide drenched stink so most amazingly noxious it surpasses the descriptive power of the English language. It's as though mankind invented a way for the 400-million-year-old plants and dinosaurs of which oil is composed to decay all over again outside Wilmington on an August morning in 1960. If movies needed a smell track to go along with their sound track, Marcus Hook could have supplied *Jurassic Park* with all its special effects.

Fandom has never equaled Marcus Hook. And with luck it will stop trying!

III

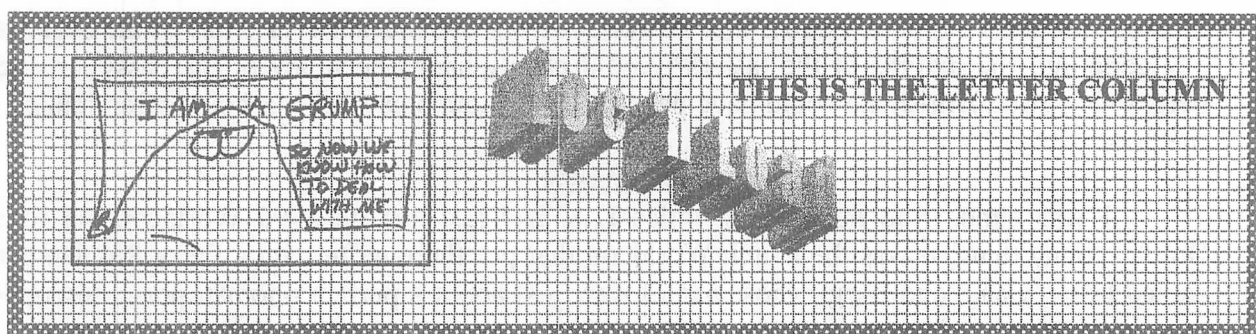
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*I was tempted to interrupt Mike back there in the paragraph where he thought I might do so. Only, though, to just tell him that I would not interrupt him. I resisted the temptation.*

*But I will correct him. Except when I was in the process of developing custom tobacco blends when I was in the retail tobacco business, I never smoked Burley tobacco as my flavour of choice since sometime in the 1960s. After that time period I chose a full-bodied English Mixture type tobacco (composed of Virginia, Latakia, Turkish, and Perique tobaccos). This was a mixture developed by me for sale in my shop. After I left the trade I switched to the closest available tobacco I could find in the commercial market, Dunhill's Nightcap from England, the tobacco I smoke to this day.*

*Mike's misremembering comes from a visit to my shop in Studio City. At that time I had some Burley tobaccos I was disposing cheaply. I had named them Bargain Basement Burley and Cheapskate Aromatic. Mike misread one of the names as Chesapeake Aromatic and I guess that he made a mis-connexion from that visit to what he has been thinking that I smoke. Most people have more negative reactions to the aroma of English Mixtures than they do to Burley. But then, there is no fan named Brian English Mixture, is there.*





Comments by Ye Ed in 10 pt. italic

**ROBBIE BOURGET:** I appreciated Milt's article the most. It's always interesting to find neat new web sites without having to hunt that hard for them. Even though I don't do a great deal of web-surfing, I do like to browse around every once in a while. Mostly I use my Internet access to send e-mail and look up things I need at official websites. And occasionally I will check up on Canadian news at Canadian websites. It's cheaper than trying to buy Canadian magazines or newspapers out of country.

I'll see you in February and hand you this Loc.

*I really do appreciate the efforts some locers go to get me their locs – but it really is cheaper to airmail a letter than a person.*

**ERIC LINDSAY:** I loved Milt Stevens' description of the LA Coroner's web site.

I suspect that the most recent issue of *Gegenshein* will be the last printed one, so I guess I'll have to learn how to do locs.

*Well, Eric, to do locs, you sit down at a keyboard, turn off your brain, and then start pressing these little keys in random order. And then you put the result into a bagel.*

**GARY DEINDORFER:** Good to make contact with you again after all these years. I was thinking about our history. I wrote three installments of a fanzine review column for

*Holier Than Thou* then I wimped out and folded it. I guess the main reason is that I just didn't feel I had the right to pass judgement on other fans' paper creations. It seemed to me that my evaluations were too arbitrary. After that, you continued to send *HTT* to me for a while, but eventually they stopped coming to my address because I didn't bother to loc any of these issues. *HTT* continued, but I didn't see it.

(In a later issue) there was Eric Meyer's article about Café Society Fandom. I never read it, but I read about it. It has got to be one of the most famous and/or notorious articles ever published in a fanzine. To judge by the jaundiced reactions of Café Society Fandom to it, I would say that Eric had hit a nerve of truth.

*That, and Topic A. I never claimed to have much sense. But I do like fine writing.*

Anyway, it is good to get *No Award* from you. I'm glad you're pubbing again.

Harvia is one of our best humorous fan artists, and this cover is one of the finest pieces of art I have seen by him.

Your editorial about *No Award* getting lots of votes for the Best Fanzine Hugo (as it has for years in the past) reminds me of a jazz solo. You take the basic theme of the coincidence of names and ring variations and changes on it like a great jazz musician wailing high and wild. This is funny stuff, Marty.

*One thing no loccer has mentioned is how*

*Teddy's cover (with its illusionary rocket) connected to my editorial. Yeah, knowing Teddy's sense of humour, I sent him a draught copy of my editorial to see if he could match his cover to that topic. I guess that he was too subtle for some.*

Milt Stevens is drolly, even gruesomely funny. This is fine putridity in the grand old *HTT* tradition. It goes to show that fanzines are compendiums of arcane information; for where else could we read about the LA Morgue? And find that they even have a gift shop?

Good to see a contribution from the truly legendary Len Moffatt. His *Solacon* 1958 fanzine was the first one I ever got, back in 1957 when I was 13. It has been a long, enjoyable fannish experience since then.

*You got the fanzine the year before it was pubbed? Amazing!*

Laney's writing style was truly inimitable: so incisive and witty! Truly he was one of the greats; as was, of course, William Rotsler.

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**HARRY WARNER, JR.:** The latest *No Award* made very pleasant reading. You threw a scare into me with the Warner loc cartoons in the letter section, because I took them as proof that once again I'd remembered something that never happened, writing a loc on the previous issue. The denouement relieved my mind considerably.

*Smartassery will probably be the death of me – I am glad that it was not the death of you. When I was looking through my Rotsler cartoons and saw all of those "Harry Warner" illos, I just could not resist that piece of silliness.*

You don't say if you answered Nola's question about other fanzines like *No Award*. If I had been on the receiving end of this question, I would nominate *Outworlds*. It

does run a lot of the lists which you dislike. But the editorial enthusiasm, the editorial personality that permeates most pages, and the general emphasis on faanish maters are quite similar. In thickness of each issue, you and Bill Bowers do differ considerably.

Congratulations on confirmation of the fact that you have a heart. Arturo Toscanini, late in life, wasn't feeling well and went to a doctor who told him his heart was acting up. The conductor was indignant and is supposed to have retorted, "That can't be. I've never used it."

*To quote Gary Deindorfer, "I always suspected that you had a heart....of a small boy in a jar on your desk." That joke is probably almost as old as both Harry and me. Besides, there is too much kipple on my desk (and every other former flat surface) for there to be room for such a jar.*

I'm not sure I believe everything Milt Stevens tells us about the coroner's website. But I also am skeptical about the frequently repeated claims that there is such a preposterous thing as a web or Internet or websites. I know there is such a thing as a dragnet, but I haven't seen any reason to believe it's a computer activity that specializes in an eccentric kind of dressing.

It is mindblowing to find two lengthy letters from Fran Laney coming into print in a generally available fanzine for the first time in more than four decades.

*There is a longtime LASFS motto, "Death Shall Not Release You" so Laney, a LASFS member, can contribute locs to this fanzine as long as he likes.*

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**LLOYD PENNEY:** I remember hearing about the LA Coroner's Office Gift Shop some years ago. When Yvonne and I were contemplating going to LACon III, we sent the information about the gift shop to Mike Glycer, and an opinion that if the Coroner's Office bought a dealer's table, and stocked with

some of the gruesome goodies the gift shop sells, the attendees would snap up everything in sight. We didn't get to LACon III, and I don't think anything happened with this suggestion, but given the way fans think, the combination of the Worldcon and the Corner's Office Gift Shop seemed like a natural to me.

Those of us who live a good distance away from Los Angeles tend to see LA fandom and LASFS as an organized den of fanatic, with projects going on at all times such as LASFAPA, Loscon, Instant Message, regular meetings, and very often, a Worldcon bid on the go. To hear that LA fandom is relatively disorganized and diffuse sounds strange, from what little experience I have with LA fandom. Do they miss Robbie's organizational skills? Have things picked up with the return of the Trimbles?

*I think that LA fandom is as disorganized as your mind. For one thing, if LA fandom were organized, we would be running NESFA. As we do not run NESFA, Instant Message remains one of their things. The two area APAs (APA-L and LASFAPA) are put out at LASFS but are not part of it. The Worldcon bids are put out by SCIFI, not LASFS, I have yet to see the Trimbles at a LASFS meeting since they returned to the Los Angeles area; and, difficult as it may be to imagine, others have stepped in to take over the LASFS jobs done by Robbie. Of course, she is in town as of this typing, helping to run GALLIFREY ONE.*

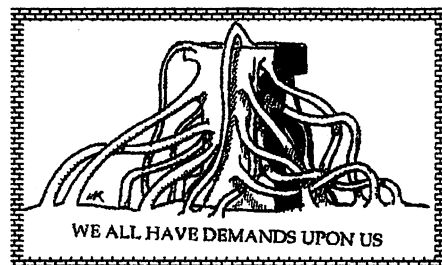
**BUCK COULSON:** I don't know; Derek's Ministry of Fools job doesn't sound too bad. The stamping could be done by putting the body on auto-pilot and the mind could be working up fanzine material or filk songs or plots for stf stories. My best job was definitely being the tech writing department – all of it – for a Honeywell factory. Nobody else in the place knew what I was doing. All I had to do was satisfy Minneapolis headquarters, and if I didn't satisfy them, one of their

people would have had to come to Wabash, Indiana, to do the work and they all hated the idea. So they were easy to satisfy, and along with tech sheets I wrote fanzine material, thought up filk songs, etc. And got regular pay increases for doing such a good job...

Unlike Lloyd, my jobs never bored me; I just disliked the time they took up, when I could be doing something that was more fun. But then I had a goodly variety; I've performed for money gravedigging, bookbinding, tech writing, garage door designing, and drafting. And selling books at conventions.

*Had you ever taken up selling shoes you would have been a very successful author.*

**JOHN BERRY:** I'm obviously missing something being computer-blind. What the heck is a website? More and more fanzines feature commuter jargon; but then, as you have done, catering for the non-www is also continued.



*I have long maintained that the only jargon which should be used in faanish zines is that jargon which is a part of our hobby. Many fans are on the Internet; however, as that is merely fans doing what is still tangential to our paperzine hobby I feel that most jargon from that area of interest does not belong in our paper zines. Also, even though computers and the computer generation of fanzines has become important to our hobby, spending much time talking about them (and using computer jargon) is a waste of paper space. I mean, the computer is just a tool, no matter how important a tool it might be. I would not be back in zine production without having the computer upon which this zine is created – but writing about what I*

*am doing with this machine would bore me to tears as I would assume it would to many of my readers. Instead of boring you to tears writing about this computer I prefer to bore you to tears about other things.*

You are obviously relieved after your physical exam. Were you worried?

*Never having before had a complete physical examination I took the opportunity afforded by new medical insurance to get this exam for a minimal co-pay. But, yes, I was a bit worried about a few things. The doctor told me that both of these conditions would be cleared up with some over-the-counter vitamin-mineral supplements. He was correct.*

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**LEIGH HUSBAND KIMMEL:** Sorry it's taken me so long to get anything written for *No Award* – somehow it seems easier to put things off when I have to actually print my letter up, address an envelope and find a stamp, then take it to the Post Office. The Information Age seems to making me lazy.

*I beat you there – I have been lazy most of my life.*

I especially liked Milt Stevens' "Really, Really Cool Website." I'm going to have to look up all those different death-related websites.

*Lloyd Penney is correct – something about the idea of the Los Angeles County Coroner Gift Shop resonates with fans.*

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**GEORGE FLYNN:** Why would contemplating the Hugo chances of your zine give me a hemorrhoid? After all, I am retired from Hugo administration. (This does not, of course, preclude my quibbling about the rules whenever it might seem conducive to appropriate annoyance in the right quarters. Or possibly the wrong ones.)

*Well, Mike Glycer thinks that you should have another hemorrhoid. And, as you yourself write, the*

*fact that you are "retired" from Hugo administration does not preclude you from rules quibbling. Remember, you quibbled about my zine title in a previous issue of it, insisting that I would have to put quotation marks at each end of it for it to be considered for short-listing. Anyway, instead of the traditional "A Pox On You" being sent in your direction from me I felt that wishing you a hemorrhoid might be a slightly more interesting remark.*

Joseph Major notes that "the injection of editorial notes *into* a letter ... breaks up the loccer's argument." Didn't pay attention to him, did you?

*This comes up every few years so I guess that I should address it again. As those of you who remember Holier Than Thou know, I have always considered the letter column to be a sort of dialogue 'twixt me and the individual loccers – and I will probably always do so. I always try to give the loccers their fair commentary.*

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**JOSEPH MAJOR:** Splendid idea, nominating this zine for the Best Fanzine Hugo. Not only did we vote for it before it existed, in all categories no less, but ten years ago a group of prominent fans lobbied for it in a famous advertising campaign. Also a good idea to help add to George Flynn's hemorrhoid collection. He has piles of them already.

*See how generous are fans, George? There are many fans who want you to expand (and enjoy) your collection of hemorrhoids.*

Of course Milt Stevens knows the joke about the lawyer who kept on nagging the medical examiner during cross-examination about whether or not the autopsied patient was really dead, until the doctor replied, "His brain is in a jar on my desk, so I suppose he could be practicing law somewhere."

*See, Gary? That is where that jar went. And it was not a heart! All things considered, I think that I need that brain back.*

Gene Stewart and the editor discuss U-Haul. You know, maybe that book I read about the Schoens was not so out of it. One of the criticisms was that the brothers who took over were arbitrarily firing the people who knew how things were run, and apparently taking sadistic pleasure in doing so.

*From what I know of how U-Haul is run (having worked both at rental centres and one step up from there on local support staff) I can say that the book to which you refer is probably incorrect. I have never been to the Phoenix headquarters so I cannot say without any exactitude what goes on there; however, knowing what I know of how the brothers are trying to run the company, their modus operandi is to increase profits by ruthless downsizing. I know that whole departments have been eliminated at headquarters with the work previously done by those departments being farmed out to other departments (who are still expected to do their previous work in addition to their new work – in the same period of time – and anybody not agreeing that this is a reasonable expectation is not considered to be a team player and is considered to be expendable). This attitude reflected down the line and I finally decided that I would no longer put up with the bullshit, bullshit that came with a raise freeze during most of my time there. I met two of the brothers and feel that they just do not understand how people function. I think that they honestly think that what they are doing is best for the company and that they do not understand how their policies are driving away their best people – and many of their customers. Also, from observation at the local level, it is not so much that they are firing people who know how things are done so much as they do not seem to be aware that there is such a thing as institutional memory. They make no attempt to keep knowledgeable people as they feel that they can always hire others (who, of course, no matter how good they might be, will rarely know all of the ins and outs of their positions because the people with the knowledge have left the company).*

Yes, I remember Dick Geis's professional commentary on that famous Foster cover for *HTT* #20. You two should be proud. You shocked even "Peggy Swenson," writer of many novels available at those elite

little shops downtown...

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**SALLY A. SYRJALA:** *Loved the article on cool web sites. I visited the LA Coroner's site. What a delightful place. I'm thinking of getting a mug I can bring to a local restaurant as being the one that is mine. Regulars have their own cups and mugs that help to make things unique. One from the LA County Coroner's Office seems perfect for the place!*

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**F. M. BUSBY:** I cherish your various Hugo voting scenarios.. Unfortunately, some sercon-minded Con functionary will doubtless re-label the option and spoil the fun. Well, you tried.

*Nah – George Flynn has retired.*

Re. the ephemeral value of topical hooks in fiction, Mike Glyer makes a good point; there is no more effective way to ensure that a work will date fast. Chip Delany let us in on that secret at Clarion West '71, when some fella "described" a character as looking like "a younger (then-current rock idol)." I forget which one, which also goes to prove Mike's point.

Nice to see the fanhistorical material, by Len and by courtesy of Bruce. I see that Joseph Major disapproves of editorial comments sandwiched into a letter rather than appearing at the end, and to some extent I agree. Which is to say, my opinion on the matter is unfannishly mild.

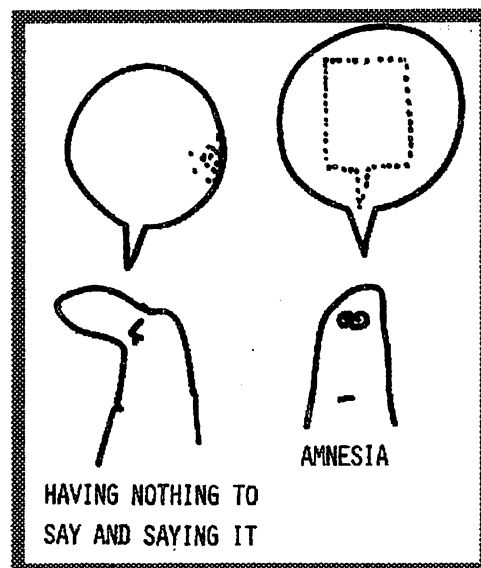
Regarding feuds, I'm with you. One really nasty pisser was enough to last me. The normal fannish spat can be fun (sort of); they come and go with little or no damage. One good way to avoid escalation into a feud is to take the hassle *private*. Most folks' egos can accept defeat or compromise in private correspondence, but tend to go all stubborn in the limelight of the fan press. Though now and then some sumbidge will blow it public anyway.

SF in recent years seems to be trying to out-downbeat mainstream. A couple of years ago, right after my coronary caper, I read all but one of the novels on the final Nebula ballot. I mean, if those couldn't finish me off, nothing could. Set in futures I want no part of, inhabited by characters I would cross the street to avoid, and even if they win in terms of the story, they face highly uninviting prospects. The trend is partly due to the fact that downbeat is easier to write, especially early in the game. At any rate, these jokers make the (once) New Wave look positively Pollyannish – and my own nickname for the New Wave was "Futilitarian."

*My own nickname for New Wave stuff varied, depending upon what was my current negative adjective of choice. And, to point out the idiocy of calling such crap "New" it should be pointed out that mainstream writers in the twenties misused the same techniques with the same failed results. Most fiction writers who are read for many, many years never stray far from the realization that their main goal is to tell a story that will resonate with the public. Stylistic gimmicks just detract from the flow of a story – except where such gimmicks keep the story from being fully understood.*

**WILLIAM BREIDING:** *No Award #4 be lookin' good! The first thing you notice is the rise in your graphic sense, which was much enjoyed.*

*The more I use this computer, the more I learn of the capabilities of its installed software and the more I find myself able to do with what is there. The manuals are mostly useless – most of what I know has been the result of experimentation (mostly in my LASFAPAZine, with what I like being used in this zine). You put in another paragraph about how a 10 point font seems OK for you and that how a 12 point font seems wasteful. I used a 10 point font because I could not afford the paper and printing and postage costs to use a 12 point font. I like the layout possibilities of 10 point font better than I do 12 point – and I agree with you that 12 point is "wasteful." But, my eyes, as well as those of some of my readers, find 12 point more readable. So, with my finances gradually*



*growing, I have switched to the 12 point font size.*

As you have been known to utter in locs: I must have been in a rank mood when I read *No Award #3*. My meager response was dictated by that feeling – that you had descended into the depths of boredom from the heights of #2. #4, on the other hand, must have come at the right mood level. I appreciated its breezy content though much of it was just a trifle. Most enjoyable was Milt Steven's piece on the Coroner's Website. If I were Spiderman I'd go climb the web, but alas, I'm just a pale shadow of the Daredevil, sensing my way around in real time. Milt's piece is something that I will be making at least a half-dozen copies of and sending it to non-fannish friends with a ghoulish sense of humor.

I find Joseph Major's "in-depth" fanzine reviews utterly boring. I think the idea of a one-fanzine-a-column review is a good idea, but not in the way Major is executing it. To tell you the truth I don't think his reviews have enough insight or good writing to really have much meaning for me as a reader. I think Andy Hooper's review column



in the Forman & Katz tri-weekly *CRIFANAC* a good example of what can be done without falling into the foibles of pedestrian structure.

*If they would ever send me a copy of that zine I would be glad to do a comparison. I have been sending copies of my zine and am receiving zilch from Vegas. \*grump\**

I did laugh when I got to the end of Lloyd Penney's letter with his comment about fans drinking from their finger bowls and your response.

*Yeah, that was rather strawful of me I guess.*

It occurred to me that you might want to make *No Award* an L.A. area showcase. The primary source of these last three issues has been L.A. Why not make it a conscious thing? Certainly the talent is there. It would make nagging for contributions just a phone call away. "So, have you written anything yet?" A wealth of material lying in wait to the expertly wheedling fanned.

*Er, ah – well, no. I know that my material has been mostly from L.A. area fans. And I know that there are good writers here. But most fans in this area are club fans and not all that many of them are interested in fanzines. But I do try to mine the local "lodes" as well as I can. Still, No Award is a zine I want to be more of a connexion 'twixt all of English-speaking fandom and I do not want to limit its articles to just those who happen to live in my area. I continue to reach out for contributions to fans far and wide (and some of these fans are very wide).*

**TERRY JEEVES:** Liked the idea of *No Award* being the only fanzine mentioned in all the categories – heck, you might even win!

*In all categories? Gee – that would be an interesting instant collection of rocket ships. OK everybody, vote for No Award in every category. But who will volunteer to bring all of that hardware back from Australia?*

Stevens on websites (which are a closed book to me). Amusing – but whoever thought of a morgue having a website? Surely a dead loss?

**BUZZ DIXON:** Reading the issue brought back a wealth of memories. I had to sell/give away 70-80% of my books and magazines when we moved a year ago, but I did keep a smattering that meant a lot to me, particularly those from the late 60s/early 70s. I was surprised how many had Locs from your own contributors.

*Yeah, just a buncha old pharts. Shoving myself up from the depths of smartassery, I want to mention that Buzz writes of recently being in an automobile accident which injured his wife and his automobile more than it did him. The auto is still driveable and Soon-ok was only resting in bed for several days. Basically, "not-bad" news. I do not feel that I want to reprint all of what he said about this but I did want to mention that Soon-ok is not seriously injured.*

**GENE STEWART:** Thanks for another interesting, well-published issue. Harvia's cover art has me envious and smiling at the contrast between the dying fan crawling toward the evaporating possible mirage even as the thriving solar-powered rover rolls blithely away from it, the two ironically separated by a Georgia O'Keefe-like skull. I also appreciated Moe, Larry, and Curly riding the updrafts like all critics everywhere...

*No Award* surely as hell has my vote for No Award in the no awards category. Probably.

Anyway, I cheer your declaration of a zine with an avowed, as opposed to an inadvertent, sense of humour. Beware, though – no doubt the laugh police will be hot on your case in an attempt to stamp out this fun stuff at once.

Glad to hear you're sufficiently heartened to stagger on a few more paces. That'll show the buggers. As for me, I had a heart

attack on 7 June 1998 and flew from Germany stateside on 10 July 1998. (Boy, were my arms tired, right? Settle down, folks.) When asked how I felt by various concerned relatives, or their proxies, I answered, "I may have had a heart attack, but at least I have my health." This ought to be a bumper sticker, preferably the kind worn on foreheads at conventions.

Mike Glyer makes good points about the short shelf-life of topical satire, but I disagree with him about technology coming in second to imagination, at least all the time. Seems to me that much of the time, sf's imaginers are *following* the double-time march of science – it's just that some sf writers are astute enough to read ahead in the erudite journals, and smart enough to translate cutting-edge work into foregone fiction. William Gibson and Bruce Sterling are prime examples.

Yes, moving from Germany to Nebraska could well be heart-attack inducing. Worse, most of the folks here are of German extraction (and we all know how extractions hurt), so it's sort of like the more things changed, the more they stayed the same. I need one of those Twilight Zone pills, I think.

Being a Pennsylvanian myself, I'm eager to see how Len Moffatt's fannish life on the left coast continues as his memoirs unfold. Good stuff, well done.

Major's review of *MSFire* had me both smiling and nodding. He's insightful, a touch ironic at times, and always a reliable analyst. More.

Also, I'd like to chime in with the opinion that an in-depth look at a single zine is a useful venture that sets *No Award* apart in a good way. This is much better than a scattershot summary of zines received. Hooray for both the idea and the execution.

*I think that Bill Breiding says "less." I have*

*heard both pro and con about having an in-depth review of a single fanzine rather than the usual scatter-shot approach of most zines. As long as Joseph wants to continue his column I will continue printing it.*

Quite a globe-spanning list of loccers, some familiar even to me, as, for example, Terry Jeeves, whose excellent *ERG* has delighted me for some time now, and whose correspondence is always gentlemanly and kind.

I'd love to see the X-rated Brad Foster fold-out cover from *Holier Than Thou XX*. Is there anyone who can help me?

*I did a hefty overrun of those covers when they were first printed – and I ran out of them years ago. The original is probably around here, somewhere. If I can find it and can find a small quantity of 11 x 17 paper, I will reprint it and make it available.*

**JOSEPH NICHOLAS:** "Many people perceive much of what you write to be intemperate," you remark in response to my card in *No Award 4* – repeating this a few lines later in a slightly different form: "Many readers... (and their written responses to you show this) appear to feel that at least some of what you write is considered intemperate." Yet less than a dozen lines later, you admit that you were gafia from 1991 to 1997 and receiving few fanzines – the corollary to which is obvious: that you have no first-hand knowledge of what you're talking about. In the real world, any attempt to construct a halfway serious argument on the basis of no familiarity with the texts (mine and others') under critique would see you laughed off the stage.

Perhaps I should set you a challenge: to read through the stuff I've written since 1998 (or as much of it as you can lay your hands on – lots of articles, not many letters) and make a list of all the material you consider "intemperate." You'd have a bloody hard time – although, even so, I suspect that the exercise wouldn't change your mind much,

if at all, since long acquaintance with fannish practices has taught me that, when confronted with a choice between clinging to their cherished stereotypes or abandoning them for a dose of cold reality, the average fan prefers the comforting warmth of the stereotype over the reality is most prevalent amongst those fans (a group which includes you) who have derived most of their knowledge of other fans and fandom wholly if not solely from what they've read in a fanzine.

Doubtless you'll take this response as evidence of intemperance, and decide therefore that you need seek no further evidence. If so, this would be a gross misreading on your part (and the part of the "many readers" to whom you refer above): it's not temperance that's at issue, but *accuracy*. Get something wrong, and I will let you know. Fail to acknowledge your error, and I'll let you know that, too. Defend your error, and I shall commence to crush you. And defending your error is what you're doing here.

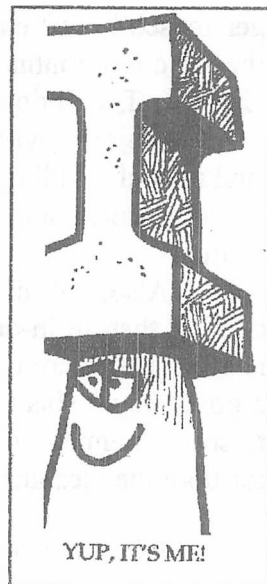
*I got as far as typing the above when House of Parliament Question Time came on the telly. C-SPAN broadcasts it live but also rebroadcasts it on Sunday evening. Anyway, I thought that I would take a break before answering your loc (so that I could at least see something interesting from England) – but Joseph Major called. I mentioned a bit of what you had written and he verified my impression that many FOSFAXians considered what you wrote (your locs) to be intemperate. Indeed many of the loccers in Holier Than Thou considered your locs intemperate, but I do not intend to dig out all of those issues to prove this point – I remember that your locs in that zine were often intemperate (although Robbie often got more upset with them than I did). The reason I do not want to get into looking through my file copies of that zine is that there are over a thousand pages of it; and, every time I dig through copies of that zine looking for a specific item, I am invariably sidetracked by the many interesting things in it. (This is the same reason I do not use encyclopedias – I am easily sidetracked by interesting stuff.) Needless to say, I am talking about your locs which I am saying that fans have considered intemperate. Hell, not only can this particular loc of yours be considered intemperate ("I shall*

*commence to crush you"), but it contains inaccuracies, to boot.*

*Your imputation of me having derived most of my knowledge of fandom from fanzines is silly – and wrong. Wrong because I have attended most LASFS weekly meetings during the last 24 years, meetings of usually between 50 to 150 people. I have attended many cons in addition to going to LASFS meetings and it is possible (although not provable) that I have personally met more fans than have you. Also, your position that knowledge of other fans and fandom coming about "wholly if not solely from what they've read in a fanzine" is denigrating to what can be learned about fandom and fans from reading fanzines.*

*Anyway, despite being semi-gafiated from fanzine fandom 1991 to 1997, the responses of many loccers in both FOSFAX and HOLIER THAN THOU that you are intemperate in your locs is a good enough sample to show my point. Granted, I am not familiar with the non-loc material which you have written in recent years; but, you should remember that I was first taken with your fine writing style when you were writing KILL THE FUCKER (usually known as KTF) reviews in the 1970s/1980s or thereabouts. **THOSE** were intemperate –and brilliantly written. I do not use the word "intemperate" in the pejorative sense. I am merely pointing out that your writings often annoy people. I am rarely one of them. So crush me, already. As a smartass, I am prepared for brickbats.*

"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," says Mike Glycer, adding: "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." I can think of one reason straight away: because the imagined future of



Moonbases and asteroid-mining which agenda SF was directed to realising has evaporated with no likelihood of recovery; and if SF writers are not to fall silent or turn to fantasy then they must seek to reconstruct the past in order to produce a more tractable present, from which a version (distanced, ironic, knowing) of the future envisaged by agenda SF can be brought into being.

"Agenda SF" is a term coined by critic John Clute for a particular strand of Campbellian or so-called "classic" SF which, although it did not set out to predict the future in exact detail, stuck closely to the model of solar and stellar conquest elaborated by the Campbellian school – short hops into Earth orbit, first ventures to the Moon and Mars, functioning colonies in the inner solar system, exploratory missions to the gas giants and the short-period comets, the first generation starships, the discovery of the hyperdrive or some other means of FTL travel. It's a cliché, of course, but many people were inspired to work in rocketry and astronautics during the fifties and sixties because of the SF they read during their youth; and, viewed within this context, it was inevitable that the Apollo Moon landings would be mistaken (including, at the time, by myself) for the first halting steps on the road to the stars rather than the last gasps of Kennedyesque Cold War propaganda they actually were.

The seventies should have laid most of these dreams to rest, but as late as 1976 it was still possible to read absurdist tracts from the likes of Gerard K. O'Neil promoting the idea of living and working in space – which sparked off another round of propagandist novels from those still labouring beneath the delusion that to write SF was to construct a blueprint for the future. But by the mid-eighties reality could no longer be denied: it was apparent that the space programme was effectively dead, killed off by its own huge costs and, even more crucially, a flat lack of

political will to meet them. And without a resurgence of political will – which I do not detect anywhere – there is no likelihood of the space dream being resurrected. The suggestion that private corporations might step into the gap to fund what governments will not can be ruled out on the grounds that because private corporations are driven by the need for short-term profits they cannot invest across the time horizons required to realise any part of the dream, and that such necessarily small parts of it which they do adopt will be tailored to further their agendas in particular rather than the human species as whole. (For a longer explication of this point, see my letter in the latest *Proper Boskonian*.)

Agenda SF, Clute suggests, is therefore in crisis as the writers who signed up to it now find themselves thrashing around in a present which has no place for them, and in which the future is no longer laid out like a road of continuous upward progress. The post-agenda writers, more ironically distanced from their subject-matter and less in thrall to the genre concepts which underlie it, have responded by a turn into alternative history – sometimes alternative pasts, in which the Roman Empire never fell or the Confederacy won the US Civil War (neither at all likely, for reasons too complex to adumbrate here), but often alternative presents, in which the post-Apollo space programme was continued at its mid-sixties pitch and, in such as Stephen Baxter's *Voyage* (practically the exemplar for the sub-genre of which I speak), a manned Mars landing is effected in the mid-eighties.

None of which, for the reasons outlined, is response to the allegedly difficult task of "keeping up with the future." Post Agenda SF writers have no trouble at all keeping up with the future; they just happen to have internalised the fact that it has no room for an agenda-derived space programme.

*All well and good if that was Mike Glycer's*

*subject matter. But all of that misses one important point. I am but one of many fans who enjoy reading this "Old Wave" SF (and that is a better term than Agenda SF insofar as any type of SF can be defined as Agenda SF if it is part of any kind of Agenda – and there are all kinds of agendas in SF). With a market for this type of SF there are writers and publishers who will supply this market. And many of the readers of this kind of SF may or may not have a pro-spaceflight agenda. More likely, we just like this kind of SF as a literature to read and any pro-space proclivities we may have has nothing at all to do with the kind of SF we enjoy reading.*

But will (the first part of this loc) fail to see print in your next issue, censored on the grounds that you cannot acknowledge error, and (the second part of this loc) be similarly suppressed on the ground that the argument is too intellectual?

*No. I have printed 99%+ of your loc. The second part is more serious than I normally like to be in No Award but I put it in because I wanted to reply to what I consider a gap in Clute's thinking, a gap which does not explain why many people like the SF of Poul Anderson, Larry Niven, and such-like authors. The first part of your loc was put in because I mentioned something about your loc-writing and I always give a right of fair reply (given space considerations). By the time this sees print I will have the finances to slightly increase the size of this zine so I am printing all of your loc. Anyway, what makes you think that all of my knowledge of fandom comes from zines?*

**RODNEY LEIGHTON:** I was a tad confused on your comments about smoking and your exotic ex. She has quit smoking? Or was your use of past tense due to commenting on the past, your married life?

*I do not know whether or not Robbie quit smoking. When she went to England she took with her the pipes and tobacco she had been storing at my place.*

Even though I entered, sort of, fandom around the time you sorta gafiated, I still

do not understand the fan mindset. For instance, Joseph Nicholas and I engaged in a long distance debate of the merits of *FOSFAX* and the editorial policies thereof. Sometime in August, he stated that he had written a long dissertation on the ills and faults of Tim and Elizabeth and *FOSFAX*, to be published in *IRG* #2, "...not long to be denied you." I promised a rebuttal, probably a verbose one. I had a postcard shortly after and noting since. What the hell? Have they published the thing and dumped me off the mailing list? Haven't gotten around to putting it out yet?

Locs from everyone and everywhere. None from the White Mafia. Ain't you on good terms with that clan of fans?

**MURRAY MOORE:** What is Teddy Harvia trying to say about *NO AWARD* with the cover he contributed to *NA* #4? Does Teddy mean to imply that *NA* is dry, deathly, and lifeless? And what is that box on wheels in the lower right corner? A skateboard? A remote-control Mars explorer? The cover would have been even more striking if the paper was brown or yellow?

*Teddy asked that the cover be printed on either yellow or blue paper.*

Certainly no other zine editor in 1998 legitimately can boast of pubbing letters of comment by Francis Towner Laney. I like this material. I like everything I read in *NA* 4. I like the in-depth attention to a single issue of a single fanzine.

**DEREK PICKLES:** Milt Stevens on the amazing Website of the LA Coroners Office Gift Shop. Pity the Jacobins never thought of it, they could have done roaring trade from La Place de la Concorde, and they'd have had a head start (!)

My ego has never been so boosted – heading Loc 'n Load in such a sterling (silver) fanmag.

*I hope that is not negoboo that you are now bringing up the, er, rear this time.*

## W A H F

Sally A. Syrjala (again), John Hertz ( who wrote, "You are surely worthy of No Award, and No Award is worthy of you."), Sheryl Birkhead (who writes, "Yes – I still want to see some publications about ATom" so please send her ATom material), Marc Ortlieb (who \*boo\*hiss\* states, "At present any fanac time I can gather between work and family commitments is going into stuff wholly Australian centred, *The Bullsheets*, ANAZAPA, the Web Page and Aussicon Three. I don't have time for foreign fandom at present."), Mr. Knarley, hisself, who writes anent the MSFire editors, "You do realize, don't you, that Lloyd, Oino, and Lucinda of MSFire are all the same person [Lloyd]." No, I did not.), Brad Foster (who appreciated *No Award*), and a late loc on *No Award* #3 from Kim Huett (who found most of the contributors to my zine to be boring old pharts). Or, to quote him, "...way too dull to read." Tsk.

There were fewer locs this time around. Well, it happens. Still, there were some cherce items in the slush pile and I hope that the larger typeface makes these enjoyable letters easier to read.

## ADDRESSES

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

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

WM. BREIDING: P.O. Box 2322, Tucson, AZ 85702, USA

F.M. BUSBY: 2852 14<sup>th</sup> Ave. West, Seattle, WA 98119, USA

BUCK COULSON: 2677 W. 500 N., Hartford City, IN 47348-9575, USA

GARY DEINDORFER: Trent Center West, 465 Greenwood Ave. #1104, Trenton, NJ 08609, USA

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

GEORGE FLYNN: P.O. Box 426069, Kendall Sq. Sta., Cambridge, MA 02142, USA

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

ALEXIS GILLILAND: 4030 8<sup>th</sup> Street South, Arlington, VA 22204, USA

MIKE GLYER: 705 Valley View, Monrovia, CA 91016, USA

ED GREEN: P.O. Box 56, Los Alamitos, CA 90720, USA

TERRY JEEVES: 56 Red Scar Dr., Scarborough, N. Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, UK

LEIGH KIMMEL: 821 S. Park Ave. Apt 8, Herrin, IL 62948, USA

RODNEY LEIGHTON: R.R. #3 Tatamagouche, NS, CANADA B0K 1V0

ERIC LINDSAY: P.O. Box 640, Airlie Beach, QLD 4802, AUSTRALIA

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

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

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

BRUCE PELZ: 15931 Kalisher St., Granada Hills, CA 91314-3951, USA

LLOYD PENNEY: 1706-24 Eva Rd., Etobicoke, ON M9C 2B2, CANADA

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

MARC SCHIRMEISTER: 1555 Vista Ln, Pasadena, CA 91103, USA

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

GENE "OLD 815" STEWART: 1710 Dianne Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005, USA

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

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

MEL WHITE: 5338 Heather Glen, Garland, TX, USA



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