

*Proper Boskonian 29*  
*Spring 1992*



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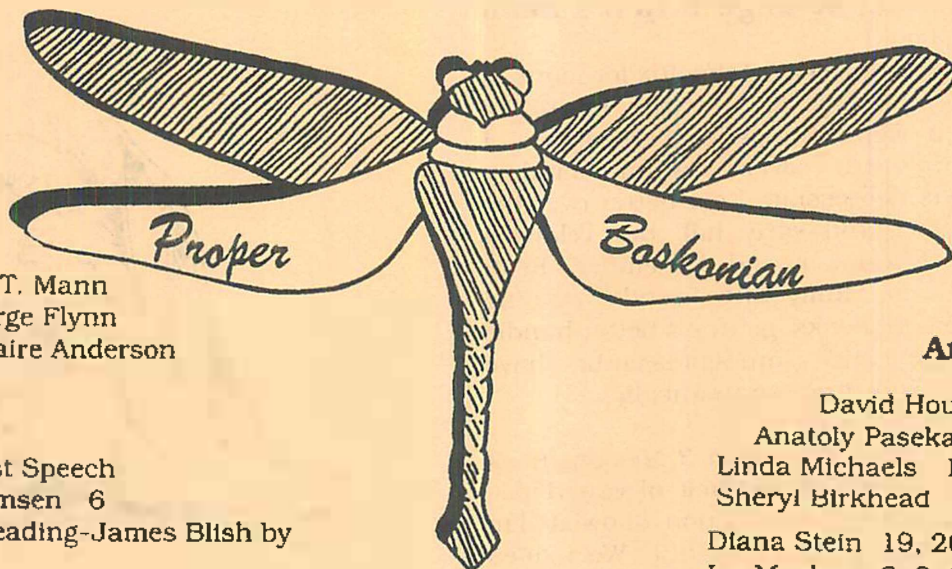
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# Proper Boskonian 29

## Spring 1992

**Proper Boskonian is the semi-annual genzine of the New England Science Fiction Association**  
**Send contributions (Writing art, LoCs) to Proper Boskonian, NESFA, Box G, MIT Branch PO,**



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Contributions may be E-mailed to:  
lmann@vineland.pubs.stratus.com  
Laurie.Mann GENie  
LaurieMann AOL  
IBM or Mac disks are also acceptable.

I'm going to **really try** to make PB semi-annual this year—please contribute by September 15, 1992, for a fall pub date!

In Memoriam: Isaac Asimov, 1920-1992.  
Writer, futurologist, fan, all-around-good-guy, and a Fellow of NESFA.

### Artists

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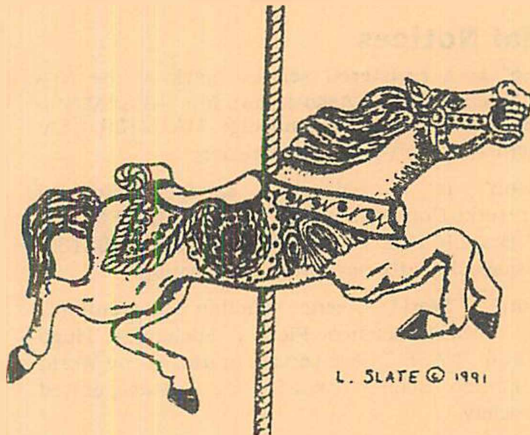
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## Editorial

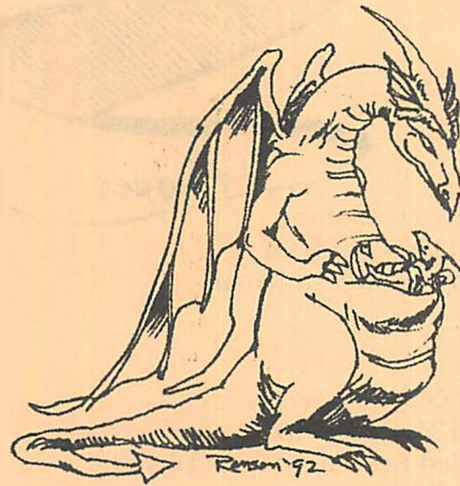
### What a Long Strange Trip it's Been

Last year was the year of the flux for many in fandom, including me. In the spring, a number a weird things converged, and I wound up with severe asthma, and a precipitous depression. I got better over the late summer and early fall, but relapsed badly in November and December. Rest, support from family and friends, reading some excellent books, getting a better handle on things, and antidepressants have improved my attitude dramatically.

I completed the *Noreascon 3 Memory Book* last summer. While my lack of experience with photographic production showed, I'm happy with how it turned out. We mailed several hundred out to N3 members who were recent Boskone attendees, and passed out over a thousand books at Chicon, Armadillocon and Boskone.



This issue is full of neat stuff, including information on Russian fandom by Anatoly Paseka, an essay on the Hawaii in '93 bid by Pam Fremon, a look at a new Bible by Mark R. Leeper, Brian Thomsen's GoH speech from Boskone 28, an essay called "The Myth of the 20th Century" by Alan Lustiger, a look at Boskone by Evelyn Leeper, and plenty more.



Many thanks to the collators of *Proper Boskonian* 28:

Marion and Beth Haas at Boskone 28.  
Tony Lewis, Ken Knabbe, 'Zanne Labonville, Pam Fremon, Kelly Persons, Mark Olson, Charles Seelig, Howard Shubs, Elisabeth Carey, Beth MacLellan, Joe Rico, Tim Szczesuil, Mark Hertel, and LuAnn Vitalis after Boskone 28.

### Errata and Apologies

Harold and Virginia Zitzow had five children (two fannish daughters and three mundane sons). My apologies to Virginia for forgetting her other children.

At one point last spring, Taral sent me some art. I returned some of it, but asked him for permission to publish the remainder. I managed to lose the art. My apologies to Taral. I am not normally that careless with material I hope to publish.

## Get Out the Vote

Chicon only got 352 Hugo nomination ballots; only a small percentage of those eligible bothered to nominate. The MagiCon committee received about 500 nominating ballots, so people are starting to pay attention to the nominating procedure. As I said in my last editorial, the fewer people that vote, the easier it is for a few people to manipulate the voting, and the less reflective the Hugo results are of the tastes (or lack thereof) of fandom.

Despite the extremely low nomination turnout in '91, I'm compelled to observe that I thought the fan, non-fiction, and film nominations were all right on the money. The fan nominations were quite reflective of the best that fandom produced in 1990.

Now whether that's good or bad...that's an editorial for another time.

## Travelogue

I love to travel. So last summer when I found myself in the middle of some health problems, I decided to do the traditional thing: Take me, my asthma, and my daughter Leslie to Arizona, for a week of dry heat. Hey, wait...two females...a car...the desert...hmmm.....

On second thought...We didn't shoot anyone, we didn't have wild sex with anyone, and we hardly saw one police car during the whole trip. The main law we broke was the speed limit.

Arizona was a neat place to visit. I don't think I'd want to live there, but it was great for a vacation.

We arrived in Phoenix just after lunch on Tuesday, July 30. We rented a car from American International, a company that provided us with the most hassle-free car rental ever. This was good—this trip was for rest, and not for hassle. I met some people at the Stratus Phoenix office for lunch.

Since July is the off season in Phoenix, I'd rented a suite at the Pointe at Taplato Cliffs, a golf resort that's normally quite expensive. The resort overlooks the city, and it offered a panoramic look at Phoenix. We spent most of our day by the pool. We had a great breakfast of huevos rancheros and potatoes the next morning, about the best meal of the trip.

Wednesday, we drove north. We stayed on the interstate for the first half of the trip, stopping briefly at Arcosanti, a bizarre artists' colony, about an hour north of Phoenix.

It's hard getting used to the scope of things in Arizona. Throughout New England, if you see four or five miles in front of you, you are seeing a lot. In Arizona, much of the state is a huge mesa, with little hills here and there, but mostly open plains and sky. As you drive north, you are gradually going uphill. By the time you reach the Grand Canyon rim, you're 7,000 feet up.

We got off the highway and drove through Sedona and Oak Creek Canyon. Sedona is known as "red rock country," made famous by many westerns and those old Marlboro commercials. Sedona is probably most familiar to people who read *Arizona Highways*, because it's quite picturesque. The town itself is a little artists' colony. My favorite spot was Robert Shields' gallery. Formerly a mime (remember Shields and Yarnell?), Shields now does quirky art, with influences as wide-ranging as local Indian art, robots, and Gary Larsen's *The Far Side*.

We stopped at Sliding Rock, a little state park north of Sedona. It's a traditional place for kids to go sliding on a natural water slide.

Wanting to avoid the tourist crush of Flagstaff, we stayed further to the west in Williams. This turned out to be the only hotel mistake I made that week. I selected a somewhat overpriced room in a decaying motel, right on the highway. So much for peace and quiet.

The next day, we took the train from Williams up to the Grand Canyon. The Grand Canyon Steam Railway is a cross between an outrageous tourist trap and a neat idea. It is an expensive trip to the canyon—\$30-something for adults, less for kids. And the trip is incredibly boring. The train travels across vast yellowing pastures where the only "wild life" is quite domesticated. (Williams is a major hunting area during the fall, but I didn't see an elk, a deer, or even a squirrel!). However, it is a quiet trip to the canyon. No worries about finding a rental car in the largest parking lot between Disneyland and Disney World.

The Grand Canyon is about ten miles across at the Visitors' Center, and about 5,000 feet deep. The ribboned walls of the canyon extend all around, each color another type of rock, each hundred feet another eon recorded. It was a partly cloudy day, and the shadows further varied the coloring of the walls.

The next day, we drove from Williams due east to Second Mesa, then south to Holbrook. This trip featured even more geographic variety than the trip to the Grand Canyon. The rolling hills around Williams gave way to a towering pine forest around Flagstaff, which abruptly vanished into a broad, flat scrubby area with a few small mesas in the distance. The further east we traveled, the fewer cars we saw.

Second Mesa is Hopi Indian land, and it is one of the most alien places on earth—it almost gives Mt. St. Helens competition for the most barren spot in North America. The mesa juts up from yellowing territory, a gray monolith surrounded by boulders. The road up the mesa is steep, and must be miserable in winter. A few rusty shacks surrounded by ragged children are atop the barren mesa. The Hopi (and other Indians in this region) forbid photography, and the few post cards you see of the area look like something from a Hollywood movie. But the poverty of this area was more frightening than the landscape, and the people seem abandoned.

A few miles from the Mesa we found a little Hopi museum/gift shop/restaurant, so we stopped and had some lunch. I had a stringy corn and lamb stew, with delicious puffy bread reminiscent of the Asian Indian pakouri, and Leslie had a sandwich. The gift shop had some beautiful handicrafts, so I splurged on a pair of silver earrings.

We hardly saw a car the rest of the afternoon. Eventually, we beat a thunderstorm to our hotel in Holbrook, and rested through Oprah. Somewhat revived, we drove to the Painted Desert, an area that lost its impact due to the clouds and rain. The nearby Petrified Forest looked more like the ruins of an old civilization than the ruins of a forest. Leslie was a little more interested in the crows than in the rock logs around us. Before going for a "western style" steak dinner, we stopped at a large rock store, with a large dinosaur in front as its main distinguishing feature.

The drive down to Tucson wasn't quite as quiet as the previous drives had been. I opted for the scenic route through Salt Creek Canyon. But even before we got to the canyon area, we kept finding all the crazy drivers we thought we'd left back in Massachusetts. Eventually, we made it down the circuitous road into the canyon and back up the other side.

Once out of the canyon area, we drove through an area of pine trees that gave way to scrubby bushes and dust. We decided to stop at the Biosphere, a combination science experiment/marketing extravaganza that's about an hour north of Tucson. The Biosphereans had not yet been "sealed in." We mundanes had to be satisfied with some looks in from the outside, and tours through the prototypes and some greenhouse areas. It is a very impressive sight, and, someday, it might be fun to have a little relaxacon at the adjacent conference center.

Tucson was a little harder to drive around, mostly because the hotel I'd chosen was on the far side of town, way out on Tanque

Verde Rd. After spending most of Sunday resting, we took the tram into Sabino Canyon. Monday, we went to the Sonora Desert Museum. This was a particularly neat stop, because it wasn't the traditional "everything in a building" museum I was used to. Much of the museum is out-of-doors, and some of it is built into little man-made caves. We saw many animals that day, many more than we actually saw while driving through the desert. (Despite all the "Caution, animals" signs in Arizona, all we saw were a few rabbits, gophers, little lizards, big bugs, and a lone coyote by the side of the road just outside of Tucson.)

We drove out to Kitt Peak, some two hours away from Tucson. I think Tucson is about 2,000 ft. above sea level, but Kitt Peak is 7,000 ft. straight up. As we approached the mountain, we couldn't see much, other than something silvery at the summit. We trusted the signs and drove on. Eventually, we saw several large observing stations and found the visitors' center.

Leslie pronounced the tour boring (and, as 10-year-olds do, reminded me of this fact frequently).



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ТМ СЪБИТИЯ НА СЪБИТИЯ ДО НАРМСМАР НАКМАРЪС IS YAPMPMA

Нѣтъ лагеръ или плавильнѣ отъ конь и гудокъ ломать отъ позволѣтъ

ΟΡΡΑΤΟΚΕΒΟΝ Η ΤΡΕΦΩ ΙΠΠΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΗΡΙΟΝ ΕΣΤΙ

È proibito il campeggio o pastura per cavalli

o unicorni

and was disappointed that we couldn't actually look into the telescopes.

There was something of a surprise on the way back to Tucson—a genuine downpour. During the previous week, it had threatened rain often, but failed to do so. It poured as heavily as some of the afternoon monsoons in New Orleans. The wind also picked up, and a small tornado touched down nearby.

We had the worst meal of the trip that night. We made the mistake of trying a Mongolian BBQ in Tucson. This restaurant's idea of a Mongolian BBQ was to offer three meats, four vegetables, and soy sauce. Leslie, a true Mongolian BBQ fanatic, gave the restaurant thumbs down.

The return to Phoenix the next morning was pretty uneventful, other than getting a little lost on the way back to the car rental place and then racing for our plane. We flew on USAir, a very pleasant flight indeed! (The next month, flying United to Chicago, was almost unpleasant in comparison. Wretched food and Chicago.)

## Boskone 28 Special Guest Speech

### Brian Thomsen

You honor me greatly by choosing me as your guest speaker for this year's Boskone. You've treated me like a king and I am grateful, even though in accepting this honor, I had to make a few sacrifices, like missing *Saturday Night Live* tonight. Since I know I am not alone in this regard I thought I would do my Dana Carvey impersonation.

"I'm a grumpy old man and I can say anything I want to. You call what you have today science fiction publishing? Why, when I was a kid things were different. We didn't have those shared worlds-cyberpunk-robot cities with Mr. Hooty-tooty big-name-author's new book written by someone else who I never heard of. We had books with spaceships on the cover or women in brass bikinis. It was actually possible to read every new SF novel and you were expected to. It was hard and that's the way we liked it."

But I'm not a grumpy old man...I'm a grumpy **young** man...grumpy because we are becoming disenfranchised from our heritage. One has to look extremely hard to find copies of some of the field's classics. Names like Kornbluth, Hamilton, Bester, Kuttner, Moore, and Stapledon are vanishing from the racks. Backlists are shrinking, shelf life is shortening, and a moment of fame will pass in just a moment.

Books like Fred Pohl's *Man Plus* and Alexei Panshin's *Rite of Passage* are out of print, and these authors are **still alive**. Those authors who have died may soon only exist in our memories.

Some measures are being taken to keep our past alive. Easton Press's classic editions make some of the books available but at a price that is out of most people's range. Tom Doherty's doubles program has helped to resurrect some of the shorter works of the

golden age, and Macmillan's Nucleus program is trying to keep some of the works of Dick, Sturgeon, and Leiber out there, but their resources are limited. Likewise Bridge's conscientious re-promotion of such works as *Final Blackout* and *Fear* keep these books alive but unfortunately can only profitably focus on one author.

But publishers cannot do it alone. We must prove to the booksellers that there is life for a book beyond its first six weeks, and inform our new readers that there is something worth reading beyond the current best-seller list.

Good books were meant to become history in print not washed away by the residue of some flash in the pan. Works like *JEM*, *The Stars My Destination*, and *Slsn* should be allowed to reach their audiences today.

Tom Doherty once said that our goal as publishers should be to get the books into the hands of the people who want them. I see that it is our duty as writers, readers, and editor to keep our past alive, and keep future generations eager for those classic works.

We must put the old with the new and let the new generation know that we have a past worth preserving, made up of classics worth reading.

Because in the future, I don't want to be a grumpy old man talking to a much younger audience of the good old days of Greg Bear, Carolyn Cherryh, Roger MacBride Allen, and Allen Steele only to be met with vacant and unknowing stares because they've never heard those names before.

Thank you.

Given 2/16/91 at the Boskone 28 Banquet.

## Recommended Reading by James Blish

### Jim Mann

#### *Earthman, Come Home*

The best of the *Cities in Flight* series. Probably the best space opera ever written, primarily because, it is more than just space opera. Every book in the series is worth reading.

#### *A Case of Conscience*

The first half of this novel is one of the most honest attempts to deal with a theological problem that has ever appeared in SF. The second half, while good, is not up to the first half.

#### "A Work of Art"

The best piece of SF ever written about music. It is a probing look at the nature of art in general and music in particular. It does a good job of predicting (and satirizing) trends in modern music. The story involves the "resurrection" of Richard Strauss in the 2100s. As such, it also prefigures a recent plot element in SF—the revival of historic personalities (see Silverberg's "Enter a Soldier. Later, Enter Another").

#### "Beep" (expanded as *The Quincunx of Time*)

This is truly a story of ideas since there is very little action in it. An interesting look at "predicting" the future and the nature of free will.

#### "Surface Tension" (incorporated in *The Seedling Stars*)

This is perhaps Blish's most famous short work, which appears in the SF Hall of Fame anthology. Miniaturized humans living in a water environment.

#### *Doctor Mirabilis*

A historical, biographical novel about Roger Bacon.

#### "There Shall Be No Darkness"

A werewolf story. The short version of this is

science fiction; the novella version is fantasy.

#### *Black Easter*

A fantasy novel about the war between heaven and hell

#### *The Issue at Hand*

#### *More Issues at Hand*

Blish was probably SF's most perceptive, intelligent critic. His essays set the standard by which others are to be judged (and all still seem to fall short).

Note: all of the short stories described here are included in *The Best of James Blish*.



## World War II: The Myth of the 20th Century

### Alan Lustiger

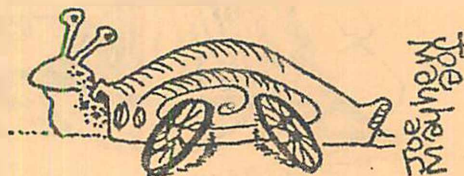
*From time to time, you read essays based on little glimmers of "the truth." The author hits you over the head with a barrage of "facts" to convince you that a larger truth is a lie. One common raving is "The Holocaust Never Happened." Alan Lustiger debunks this type of historical raving with his own "modest proposal."*

We have all heard the stories about World War II. How the Germans invaded Poland. How the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. How the "Allied forces" landed in Normandy. How the US exploded an "atomic bomb."

One might think that World War II is as factual as possible. Didn't thousands fight in the war and millions die? Wasn't the war documented in newspaper and radio reports of the day? Hasn't there been copious amounts of literature written about this "War to End All Wars"?

Recent evidence, however, shows a much different story. Most reputable historians now discount the myth of World War Two, but this information is not getting out to the public.

Italian sports  
snail with  
wire wheels  
(slightly rusty)



### Pearl Harbor

For most Americans, World War II really started with the supposed Japanese "bombing" of Pearl Harbor. However, noted professor Dr. Ploktin Qwerty, an expert on Japanese aviation, has written extensively on the capabilities of 1940's-vintage Japanese Zero bombers.

"They couldn't reach Tokyo from Osaka, let alone Hawaii!" he wrote in his 1984 article for the *Journal of Historical Fact*. "Given their wingspans, method of propulsion, and payload, the only way they could have reached any U.S. territories is as submarines!"<sup>1</sup>

### First-Hand Accounts

Serious historians now agree that the supposed "first-hand accounts" of soldiers who are alleged to have actually fought against the German and Japanese forces are notoriously inaccurate. In one celebrated instance, one soldier claimed to have heard three bombs in ten seconds, and another soldier in his same unit claimed to hear only two!<sup>2</sup>

University of Chattanooga Professor Ernest W. Wykol has gone back and examined the barracks where American soldiers stayed in Europe. He found such items as pin-up calendars, paperback books, and pinochle decks.<sup>3</sup> Hardly what one would expect soldiers fighting for freedom and democracy would be occupying themselves with.

In fact, evidence is mounting that American "soldiers" actually spent their entire stay in Europe and the Pacific **playing cards**. As noted historian Odioun Fletcher has discovered, card playing was extremely popular in the forties, to the point of entire newspaper columns devoted to the subject!<sup>4</sup>

## The Tragic Accident

As Fletcher has reconstructed events, the British, French, US and Germans all sent thousands of "soldiers" to play cards at various sites in Europe. In one tournament in Lyons, a tragic explosion occurred at a nearby fireworks factory, killing and injuring hundreds of players. **These were the only casualties of "World War II."** The media showed the injured and dead soldiers in photographs many, many times to give the impression of a "war" with continuous casualties. That this is a myth can be seen clearly; Fletcher documented one case where the *New York Times* showed a picture of an injured soldier on a Tuesday and the *Philadelphia Bulletin* showed the exact same picture on a Thursday.

## The Kamikaze Lie

It was certainly in the evil media's interest to make the war up, and to make the "enemies" as ruthless and evil as possible. One notorious example is the lie that Japanese aviators were actually encouraged to destroy their valuable aircraft (and themselves) by crashing them into the sides of US ships.

Dr. Rubert Faurr, a French professor of basket-weaving, has quoted no less an authority than General Douglas MacArthur on his reaction when he heard the first rumor about these supposed suicide missions. "That's ridiculous!" MacArthur exclaimed.

Honest Japanese people will also admit how absurd this claim is. The word "kamikaze" actually means "he who herds the sheep" in certain Japanese dialects, according to Japan expert Mort Clondyke.<sup>5</sup> And Atoyot Adnoh, currently Japanese minister of history in the Diet, has stated publicly that "that whole episode was really crazy."<sup>6</sup>

## The Myth Makers

As more of these inconsistencies get exposed, it truly becomes more difficult to believe what we have learned in history books (from companies with names like

Simon and Schuster). It is outside the scope of this article to speculate on who could have started and perpetuated the major myth of this century, but one only has to look at the preposterous battle cry as the Japanese are said to have flown over to attack the most powerful nation on the planet: "Tora[h], Tora[h], Tora[h]!" It isn't difficult to come up with the answers.

<sup>1</sup> *Give Me a Laser Printer and I Can Publish Anything*, Adolph Publishers, Frenzy, MD, 1973.

<sup>2</sup> "The Great War: It Was Fantastic," *Revised History R Us*, Izan Publishing House, Stuttgart, OK, 1984.

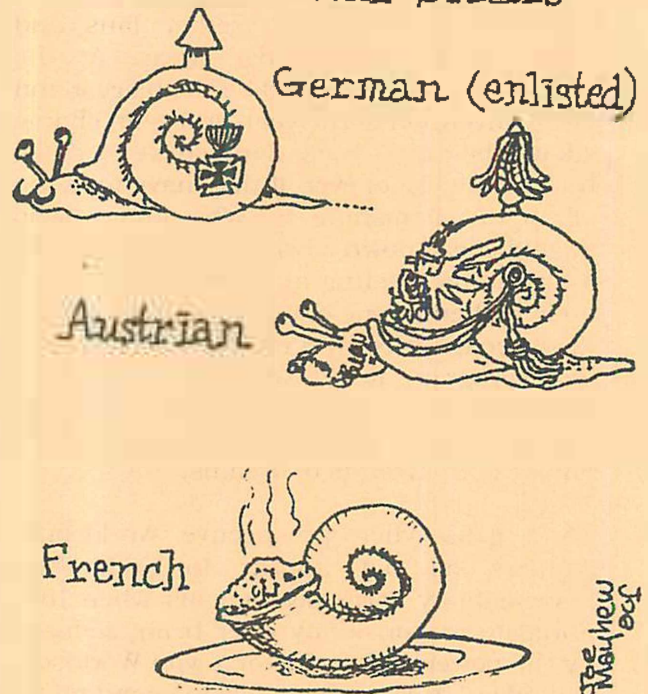
<sup>3</sup> Wykol, Ernest, "The Most Fun a War Could Be," *The Journal of Historical Fiction* Impress Press, Erie, MO, 1982.

<sup>4</sup> Fletcher, Odioun, and others, "War Games: The Pinchle Championship of 1944," Izan Publishers, Stuttgart, MI, 1985.

<sup>5</sup> Klondyke, Mort, *Japanese for People Who Don't Care*, Surabi Press, Dayton, OH, 1864.

<sup>6</sup> Adnoh, Atoyot, "A Really Crazy Episode in Japanese History."

## First World War Snails



## **Visions: The Hawaii in '93 Bid**

**Pam Fremon**

I am not a mystic nor a seer, and a science text weighs more heavily in my hand than any feathery number of books of superstition or pseudo-science would, but sometimes things cause me to act. Feelings. Principles. Dreams. Poetically, a union of such strong views might be called a vision. You might scoff and call it something else, I grant, but modern day Life is not poetic enough, so allow me to call this dream my vision.

I'm one of those idealists; maybe one of the last ones. There is so much in everyday Life that is low, lax and lamentable that in my hobbies I actively look for the kindness and grace, the betterment and beauty. In science fiction fandom, bursting with people who enjoy the literature of ideas and the view of Tomorrow, there should be many other dreamers. Now at our small and regional conventions we bring together fans and professionals to exchange ideas. At the Worldcon—which should be the biggest and best convention of the year—those in charge should be doing their damndest to make that vision shine, even if they have to be up all night burnishing it. Who knows who might be lead down a brighter career path by a fortuitous meeting at a convention? Who knows whether one of our next great writers might be inspired by a chance phrase heard at a program item? We con-runners are duty-bound to provide the setting for such encounters and more, to add kindling to the flames of thousands of dreams.

So it galls when prospective Worldcon-runners do not appear to take their responsibility seriously. It galls when they abrogate responsibility after being seduced by the power and status of a won Worldcon. Attendees' dreams may have to be put off for yet another year. Idealists and untitled—aching-hearted others must lean back and sigh. Somewhere, inside, there's a dream—

inspired Worldcon struggling to burst free....

At that Smofcon in 1989, at the routine "Fannish Inquisition" session, where representatives of Worldcon bids made presentations and the savvy smoffish audience was prepared to heave verbal rotten tomatoes, a fourth bidder for '93 arose. Midwest-based fan Scott Dennis read from his notes of a phone conversation with the father of a new bid, LA fan Lex Nakashima, who had taken a full-page ad for his new baby in the MagiCon PR #1: Hawaii in '93. Hawaii. Here we were in the bone-biting cold of Canada, with winter officially still two weeks away. Many of us had travel delays due to snowstorms. The kindly, golden sun and hot sparkly sands and refreshing ocean waters of Hawaii sounded ever so nice....

And the bids from San Francisco and Phoenix were so lackluster. No innovation, no input solicited, no vision, no heroic efforts. Having suffered from Worldcons hindered by inept, unwilling or uncaring committees before, it pained me that the Worldcon would go to a group that might likewise falter. If only Hawaii was a "real" bid (Lex is known for his hoaxes); oh, what we could do with that—!

In the Con Suite afterwards, Ruth Sachter, Mark Olson, Ben Yalow and I cast wistful coins in that tropical fountain. If only.... What had happened to the Worldcon? Were there no dreamers left? Who still thought of putting on a big party of ideas for all of fandom, not just the committee? Was there no one who cared more about the fans than personal glory or making money? Where was the honor, the hope, the nobility, the courage to do new and brave things? Who would guard the trust the fans put in the committee to carry on the Worldcon's high

standards, because whether or not the standards are there, the fans see them....?

Well, sometimes when the only alternative is screaming, smols turn pranksters. We could at least carry on the bid as a hoax; a symbolic protest. Deep in the Northeast winter, when the sun is nothing more than a reflective ball of ice, visions of Hawaii seem like fantasies. Maybe Ruth and I persevered because we believed this bid was only a hoax. Though we spent a lot of time working on Boskone (coming in February), we were able to devote some time toward the t-shirt notion. Then we had nothing to do but wait for Boskone, where we would hold Hawaii's maiden bid party, and there see how fandom would react. By a little judicious news-leaking before Boskone, some out-of-townners were made aware of our bid. If only we had stopped winking long enough to keep our eyes open, we might have seen their interest and realized how serious this fledgling amorphous hoax could become.

The debutante Hawaii appeared by kind courtesy of the Louisville in '94 committee, who offered us space in their party room. In a corner we set up our t-shirt sales operation (begun earlier in the day out of the Boskone Services offices (where I was working), a sure smol stopover, where an informal aesthetics panel told people what color they should buy, and sales were brisk). Though it took fans (following hastily-Mac'd-up party flyers created by Jim Mann and Gay Ellen Dennett) a little while to find us, since we didn't have any party decorations other than brochures, we quickly received eager inquiries and delighted smiles. Jane Dennis sold hand-colored buttons she had created that afternoon that read I'm Voting For Hawaii in '93/Ask Me How! But it didn't stop there, to my amaze. I should have seen it from the start in the fans' faces. You know how it is: sometimes someone offers you a balloon dream, and you have to snatch the string before it floats away. Sometimes you want your dreams to come true so much that you can't bear it, and you'll do anything, even give money, to make it happen.

They were giving me money. "How much is a presupporting membership—five dollars? C'mon, take it! I want in on this!" They were thrusting money at me, people lined up three or four deep, wanting not just to buy warm-colored t-shirts but also warm-colored dreams.

This was insane. It went against all logic. Hawaii was not on the site selection ballot (Lex having just missed the deadline). It could only be voted as a write-in candidate, and everyone knows that write-ins sputter and die quickly. We didn't have a chance. We'd gone into this as a hoax. Now we were looking like a real bid

Maybe I've always had a tender spot in my head heart for lost causes.

The after-image of the vision stayed with me, and next morning I was giddy, restless, and headachy. We had almost 50 presupporters! In the Boskone Services office Mark ran a meeting of interested people to determine where we should go from here. Clearly, there was no going back. Excited, dazed and yet cautious friends of ours, smols we'd worked with for years, wanted to be part of this—provided we could do it right. If we didn't hold to high standards, then it shouldn't be done. Was there enough space for a Worldcon in the Sheratons along Waikiki Beach that Lex had his eye on? Could we

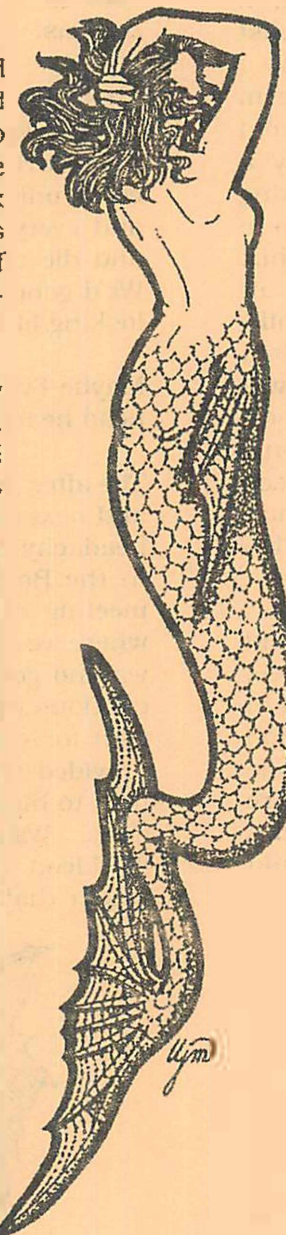


create a budget for a quality Worldcon that was still affordable? Mark and Ben had been busy with respective budget estimates and space requirements and gave their tentative nods of approval.

We decided to make it official: we had a real bid. Oh, and someone should tell Lex that his toddling bid was up and walking out the door. One of the Californians at Boskone saw Lex shortly thereafter and broke the news to him. And after helping him up off the floor, they gave him a yellow bid t-shirt.

If there is one thing that nearly every convention-going fan loves, it's a good party. Ours were visual standouts. With the decorations Ruth found at a Polynesian restaurant decorator wholesaler in the Bronx (see *Proper Boskonian* 27), from Lunacon on each party we held exploded with wild-colored glitz. There was no decorating standard, just the guidelines of use lots and let them never forget they're in the Hawaii party. Mike DiGenio and LuAnn Vitalis, took some of the two-dimensional cardboard fish (as opposed to the honeycombed models) and put them on the mirrored closet doors, adding depth to the scene with the drawing of seaweed and air bubbles in soap. For the Disclave party, Kelly Persons hung a number of items from the ceiling and attached others to the window, making our party room a colorful beacon. At Westercon Lex added a huge inflatable shark to a bathtub, and we crowded the room with helium-filled balloons that advertised the bid. Lex also secured ballpoint pens with the legend Write in Hawaii in '93.

But the ribbons, done in gold ink on a bias-cut rainbow print (the pattern conveniently a little shorter than our



ribbons so the ribbon tips were of different colors on different ribbons), were our biggest hits. A small flash of color, different from any other ribbon used (Boskone had just discovered it that year but used it only for the Art Show awards), they appealed to everyone. They were easily transportable and we were stunned at the number of fans who took them to con after con—their loyalty and support was touching. If it weren't for the fans, after all, the bid would not have gone beyond a hoax.

Lex came East for Lunacon, and there we put together our committee, which deliberately had a cross-country flavor. On the board of directors, called the conveners, was Lex as chairman; Elayne Pelz (also from California) as treasurer; Patty Wells and John Lorenz, both from Oregon (and co-chairs of the very fine '90 Westercon); well-known New York fan Ben Yalow; and Mark, who was chairman of Noreascon Three. Many other people were added as parliamentarians. Ruth and I were appointed bid strategists. The response to our announced bid was immediate, tremendous, and almost tearful. Some East coast fans, fearing that the West coast bidders had given up on them, told us they were delighted that someone was paying enough attention to them to solicit their vote.

But we fired up interest all around the country. Some was sparked by tireless people like Sue Francis who threw parties. We underestimated the appeal the philosophical points of the bid would have for the voters. While a certain number of people we talked to at our parties (or anywhere else they buttonholed us)

just wanted to go to Hawaii, no matter who was running the convention, we were gratified by the number of people who wanted to know who was on the committee, and who thanked us for our interest in the common fan.

Of course, not everyone favored us. We were accused of being usurpers, having a lot of nerve to enter the bidding race so late. Was it not part of fanish etiquette, in fact, that one does not step on long-established bids? No, I said. Not if you feel you have a better bid, not if you have something more to offer fans.

And sometimes exhaustion caught up with us and the black side of con-running would surface, jeering at us: were we opinionated, righteous, public spectacles, burning untold hours that could have been spent more leisurely, all for something that we might not win?

August approached, heralding trips to Holland for ConFiction, the 1990 Worldcon. Pretty much by mid-July things were out of our hands, with only the parties at ConFiction left to sway undecided voters. There the final votes would be cast, the mailed-in ballots counted, the decision reached. The odds against us were galactic: we were a write-in vote, a fresh upstart against old, established bids. No write-in vote had ever done very well. The grim economy kept a lot of us from going to Holland. I packed some of our Boston-area supporters who were going to Holland with party supplies and fighting words and battle armor.

We knew we had the best bid, and we went into Worldcon weekend still believing in what it stood for. There was time now to look backwards at the eight months gone before, back to the other side of winter. I wonder how many of us really supported Hawaii in '93 at the beginning just as a hoax, and how many were secretly hoping it would turn into a real bid? Sometimes wishes do come true.

\* \* \*

I am walking along a deserted tropical beach, the gulls clamoring, the damp white sand storming over my feet and diving between my toes, the warm and soothing tide lashing against my ankles, trying to get my attention with a gifted shell or piece of seaweed. It is late August 1993. I wonder where the crowds are, where the thousands of fans that should be celebrating our visions and ideas in an earthly paradise are. In my mind's eye I wander this beach over and over again, locked in this weekend that is yet to come. Time is not linear. If there were a way to alter that which has already happened, might it yet affect that which is still to come? Even as I walk, someone—some kind friend—comes up to me and reminds me, gently, that no one else is coming. That they will no more be in Hawaii in 1993 than I will.

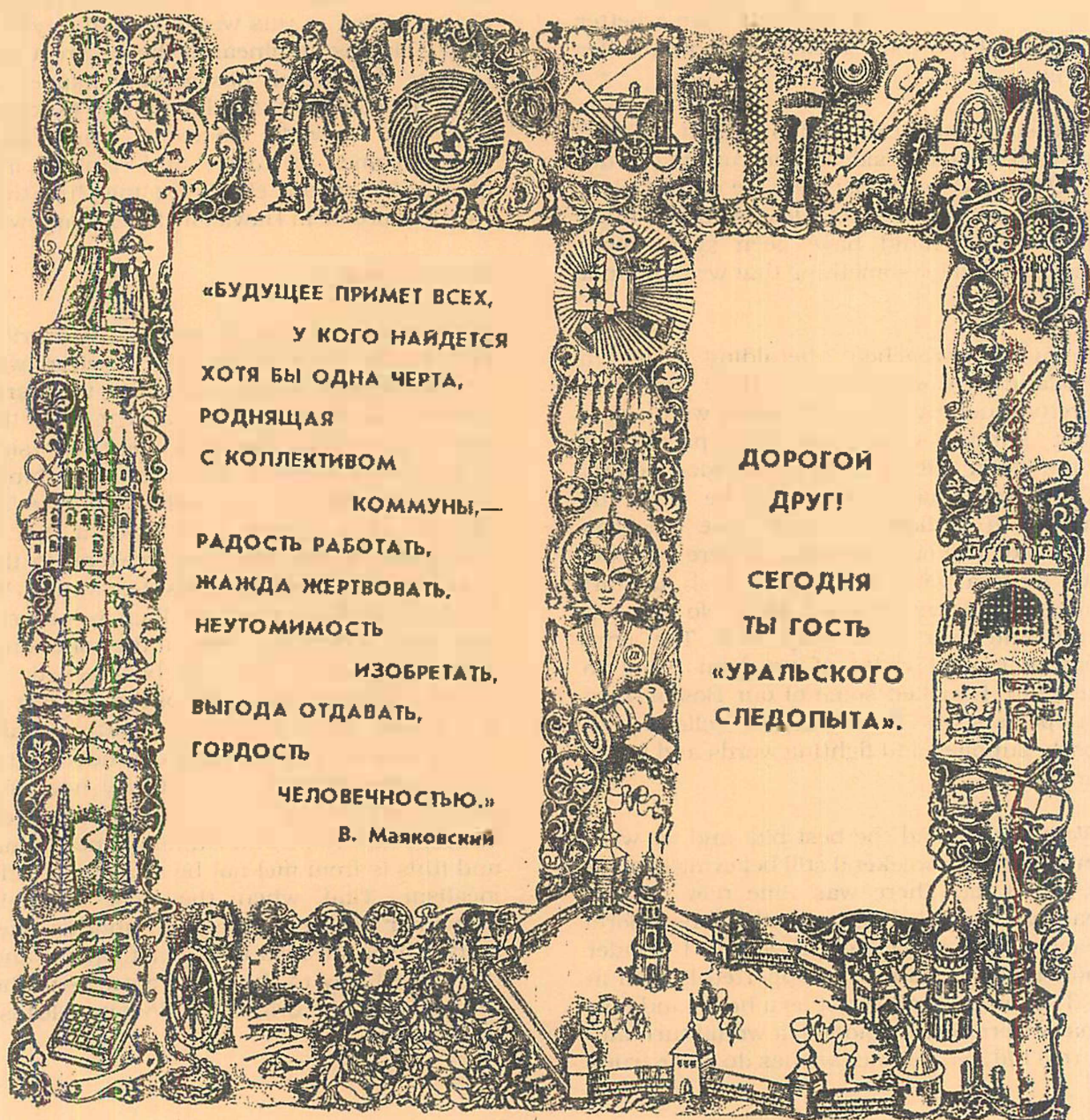
We didn't win.

But dammit, we came in second. As a write-in bid. The support we had received was unprecedented. And the messages we heard, and still hear, more than a year after the voting, were clear. That fans share our vision of a Worldcon of Glory. That they want things to be done well and be beautiful, to enjoy this picture of a better Life and a better Tomorrow in just one brief weekend in the year. That to accomplish this they want to be involved—if their physical help is offered, they want it to be accepted; if they offer only ideas, they want these to be listened to, gravely; for we're all a part of the journey to the future. That they are a part of that vision, and not just a source of funds. That a committee can be inspired to try new and outrageous things. That they should seek Courage and Hope and Humility and Honor, and (this is from me) not be afraid of a little idealism. That when the door on this particular Worldcon is closed, another one, made a little stronger by the last, opens, and the lighted way to the next century—to the future—is a little brighter. It does my idealist heart good.

***Glimpses of Russian Fandom***  
***Anatoly Paseka & Victor Brilliantov***

Anatoly and I have been writing to each other occasionally since I started editing Proper Boskonian. Anatoly is a well-known artist in Russia, and he has shared some of his material with me. Victor Brilliantov is a fan, and he also sent me some mementoes of life in Russia.

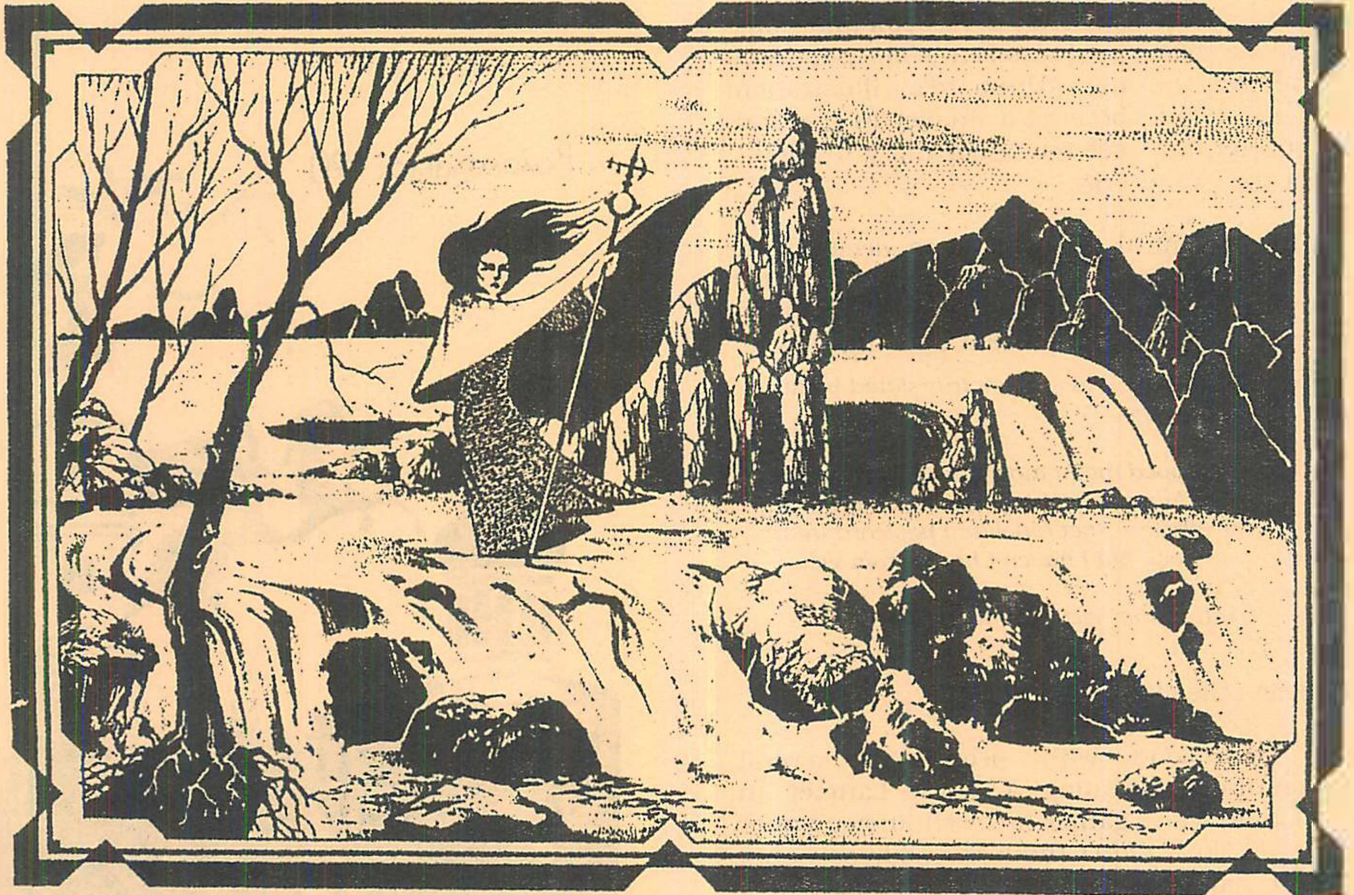
Both Jen sent me a copy of the invitation to the Aelita prize, an annual fiction award given out by The Ural Stalker. The Aelita convention has sprung up around the award, and has grown from 15 attendees in 1981, to over 1,000 now.



Here is a sample of Anatoly's black and white art entitled Spirit of the Mountain's Rill (1988).

January 7, 1991

All the members of leader group of "Aelita" convention are looking for the addresses of



Letter from Anatoly, June 9, 1990.

It was a 9th "Aelita" convention this year, and many fans attend the con, came from the 86 cities of the S. U. The delegation of SF writers, editor and journalists came from Bulgaria to attend....During our trip to the U.S. we had severe financial difficulties, because our government permitted very little money exchange (roubles to dollars). I had to sell my art works and I was lucky to sell about 30 of them, thanks to this we could travel...SF art is only the part of my creation. I also can do "general" art (oil paintings) which had much more success than my SF art works.

the different conventions to make contacts....Yesterday and today all Russians are celebrating our Christmas (Orthodox church). We have a nice new year tree and decorated our apartment....I work very much, doing some covers for the local professional magazine and some illustrations. I made two oil paintings remembering the impressions of some Dragon's landscape.

August 19, 1991

During this summer I had only one week trip to my parents in Sibirla all the rest time I work, doing color graphic art works and oil paintings. We have a very strange summer

this year, there were a terribly hot June & July, I could hardly work, but now we have a cold raining weather as we usually have in late September.

This month I'm busy with the selling of my pictures to the galleries in Moscow and some private collectors. I also sent some photos of my art to the "Hubbard's Illustration Contest" and became a finalist in the 2nd Quarter. So I got the opportunity to "fight" for the Grand Prize.

An economical crisis became deeper and deeper in our country, but I hope that after the meeting of our presidents USA will help us to overcome our present difficulties.

*(Anatoly's letters were translated by his wife, Olga.)*

*I dropped the Anatoly and Victor postcards last August, wishing them well after the revolution. I got a holiday postcard from Anatoly, but I haven't heard from Victor.*

*Letter from Victor, June 18, 1990*

Hello colleagues from NESFA!

I correspond with people in several countries, including a Keith Laumer in Florida, who I gather is a well-known writer of SF. But I didn't think my address would ever have made it that far...I'm part of a union SF club...This club is a private undertaking and not organized or financed by the government or the community.... There is a lot of young man among them and are the people with a university diploma... For long I'm interested in the SF painting. Among our artists, working in the style I like best of all--Robert Avotsa, Eugenia Steilogova, and A. Isacher. And I know your SF artists: Frank Frazetta, Boris Vallejo, Tim White....I'm going to go to...Aelita...about 28 hours away. I'm also going to Volgocon 90 in September in Volgograd. So this should be a fine summer if my finances survive.

*Victor sent a photograph of himself and some New Year's cards his club published. Here*

is one of FAVOL's New Year's cards:



## Alex on Art

### Alexander R. Slate

I am a non-artist married to an artist. In the course of working with my wife I have come to understand why I do or don't like certain works of art. My art column has been a fairly regular feature in *The Texas SF Inquirer* for over a year.

These reviews are based on artwork shown at the Chicon art show. The show itself was large and spacious with most of the major artists in the field represented. Many not-so-well-known artists were also there. Deciding who to review at this show was not an easy decision. The purpose of this column is not to gush about the art, but to provide a serious discussion of the art's merits (and problems, if any).

James Gurney was a relatively easy choice, even though critiquing work you like is so not easy. Gurney showed seven pieces from the Dinotopia collection. The concept of Dinotopia (a world of sentient dinosaurs co-existing with humans) is tremendous fun and the execution of the art justifies the concept.

Gurney's work gives the impression that he is a well-studied artist, or at least a well-practiced one. The figures are life-like, realistic. He has a combination of large-scale landscapes and close-up pictures, though the larger-scale works dominated this showing. The close-ups were character pieces, rather than scene works like the large-scale pieces.

These works are real "art." Not only are the people and dinosaurs realistic, so are the cities. The influences I see are the city painting of Venice and Paris from the late 1700's to the late 1800's that one can easily find in museums.

Gurney combines a mixture of dreamlike quality with elements of almost photographic realism in his work. He uses more vivid shades on the living characters and softer pastels for the cities and buildings. When I say "photographic realism," I don't mean he copies every little mark or blemish that you would find on a photograph; that isn't practical given the scale that Gurney is working on.

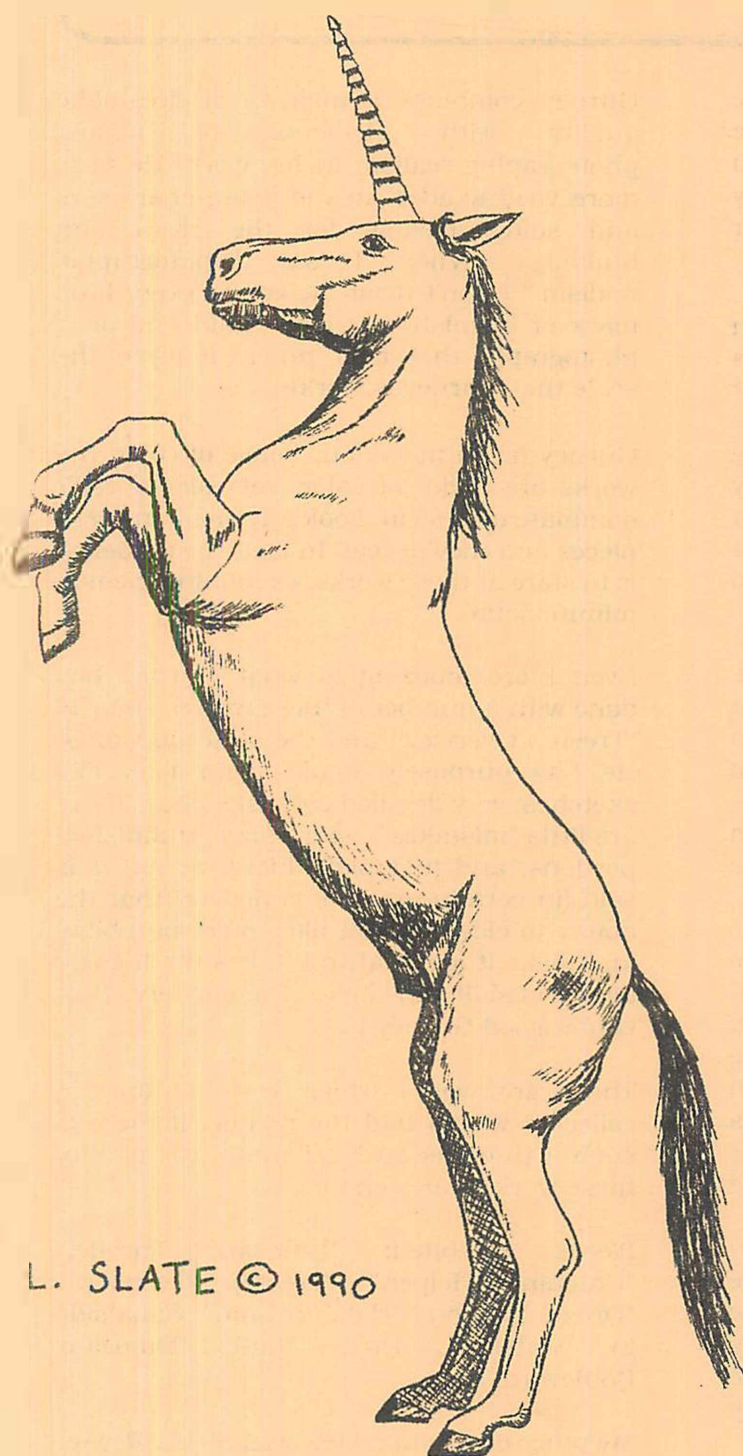
Gurney has a marvelous sense of color, the works are a riot of color. Yet color doesn't dominate over form. Look anywhere in these pieces and they're real. In fact, the tendency is to stare at these works, examining them in minute detail.

Even more amazing is what Gurney has done with a number of these works, such as "Treetop Overview" and the close-up works. He has purposely made them look like sketches; very detailed color sketches. There are little "mistakes"—extra lines, unfinished portions, and just plain blank areas. It is said (in certain areas of endeavor) that the ability to clown, to act like you're bumbling and make it look natural, takes the highest degree of skill and shows true mastery. That is how good Gurney is.

These are works which I would love to collect. I wish I had the money. If there is such a thing as an SF/Fantasy art ghetto, these works transcend it.

Pieces exhibited: "Dinosaur Parade," "Hatching Helper," "Treetop Overview," "Dream Canyon," "Nalab & Enit," "Canalside in Waterfall City," and "Dinosaur Boulevard."

My other choice to review was Sheila Regan, an amateur. She had ten pieces in Chicago, mostly pencil (all B&W). With three



exceptions, all these works are done in a style reminiscent of the Victorian English book illustrations such as Lewis Carroll's Alice books. It's a lot of line work, much of it displaying an attitude of the grotesque or of grotesque humor, particularly in pieces like "The John Dory" and "The Dancing Lesson."

The pieces that are exceptions to this style are "Tiny Purple Fishes," "Sea of Roses," and "The Dryads." These works are less "realistic," more stylized.

Regan makes a number of mistakes common to beginning artists working in pen and pencil. For instance, "The Dancing Lesson" is a very flat piece; there isn't the sense of depth that the picture tries to portray. I would have attributed this to working with pen and ink, except that "The Dryads," which is a pencil work, shows the same lack of depth. There is no line weighting. This last piece also suffers from being too complicated, too busy.

Yet Regan is improving. All of these works dated from 1990 and 1991, and the later works show great improvement. Particular examples are "Bighorn Badger" and "A Dragonfly." Particularly in "A Dragonfly," we see line weighting to give the subject depth. "A Dragonfly" also shows that Regan can do detailed realism when she wants to, though I have a feeling she chooses not to for most of her works (which is all right).

She matted her own works, and the matting is OK if not spectacular (practice will take care of this). Prices were in the \$10-\$50 range for prints and the \$125-\$250 range for originals. The works are simple in that they are all foreground work (no background settings), but not simple. She's making definite progress as an artist and I look forward to her future works.

Pieces exhibited: "The John Dory," "Bighorn Badger," "Ode to Georgia," "A Dragonfly," "The Dancing Lesson," "Tiny Purple Fishes," "Sea of Roses," "The Dryads," "Ice Cream for Crow," and "Horsefeathers!"

# **The Electronic Bible**

## **Mark R. Leeper**

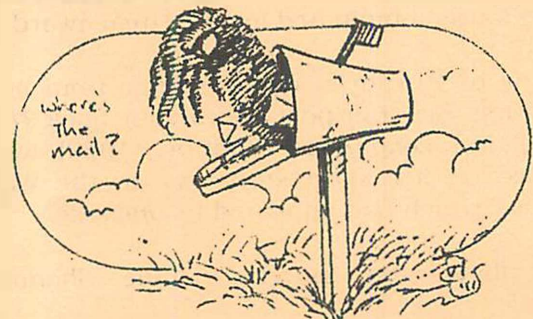
Years ago bookstores sold pretty much only books. That was back in those dark days when people used to still think that books were a viable form of communication. Not that the book wasn't a clever invention in its time. A paperback is an object that you can easily hold in one hand and has about 60 square feet of surface area. A book was a remarkable advance over writing on walls and on pots. But optimizing surface area over volume is an old trick and doesn't really impress people much any more. Now people realize how silly an excess having all that surface area really was. Who really can use 60 square feet of words all at once? It is a much better idea to have only four or five square inches of just the information you want right at your finger tips. You can store the rest on a chip or a tape or something and have the wonderful world of electronics bring you just the information you want.

In this spirit I was most impressed to see that the more reverent among us no longer have to turn to The Good Book for inspiration, now that technology has made it possible to access The Good Electronic Calculator. Yes, for just about 200 smackers you can get yourself the Bible in handy pocket calculator format. This little baby has the entire Bible in its little chips. You can call up any verse you have a need for and scroll down it to your heart's content. Now you may have thought that technology had done great things for religion before. You, yourself, may have found your faith strengthened by a vacuum-formed polyethylene inspirational statue on your dashboard or may have gone to sleep with your eyes fixed on a cross made from glow-in-the-dark, luminescent plastic. But take it from me, you ain't never had your faith goosed up the way it is going to be when you actually have the honest-to-god Bible right there in silicon and batteries and plastic, the way it really was intended all

along. (Oh, incidentally, they really ought to change that name "Bible." It comes from the Latin word "biblia" for book. With Latin dead and books dying, they really **have** to come up with a name that is more in tune with the times and isn't inadvertently pushing competitors' products.)

But, hey, if you are going to go to look for this baby don't expect to find the Bible on any sort of a standard-looking calculator. I mean this is not just your standard Holy-Trinity-on-a-four-banger. But this gizmo shouldn't look like other calculators, just like the Bible isn't like any other book. It is in a smart-looking casing that not only reminds people of a scroll, but it stands up a little better on a desk. It comes in a very reverent deep-red color. I kind of thought that there should be a discount for Jews, who would need less of the memory. It would have been a clever design to be able to snap out a New Testament chip and either give a discount or be able to snap in an Apocrypha chip. Hey, speaking of that, I hope it has an interface where you can snap in a bunch of Talmud modules. That could be really useful.

And all this runs on four size-AA batteries. They didn't say but I suspect that they don't even have to be long-life batteries. Someone Else will take care of the long life. But I am sure that after the first night of playing with this new electronic Bible it can sit on a shelf and collect dust like the best standard Bible you have ever owned.



## Pat Murphy Sheila Williams & Laurie Mann

By day, Pat Murphy is a "mild-mannered" reporter (and editor) for the *Exploratorium Quarterly*, a magazine put out by the Exploratorium in San Francisco. But, by night, Pat Murphy dons her cloak of imagination and becomes an award-winning fiction writer, one of the finest in the SF field today.

Like many other professional writers, Pat grew up reading Andre Norton, Edward Eager, and Edwin Culp. When she got a little older, she discovered Ursula K. LeGuin and Theodore Sturgeon. She survived a session of Clarion, a graduate of the class of '78. She started selling fiction in the late '70s.

Throughout the '80s, her fiction appeared in many magazines, but particularly in *IASFM*. Her first published story appeared there—"Touch of the Bear" in the October 1980 issue. Asimov's also published "On a Hot Summer Night in a Planet Far Away" (May 1985), and the award-winning "Rachel in Love" (April 1987).

"Rachel in Love" is a deceptively simple story on the surface. The intelligence of a chimp is enhanced, so she thinks on the level of a child. But Rachel isn't a girl, she's a chimp, so she's caught between two worlds. The story contains both adolescent angst and genuine tragedy. Murphy forces the reader to get inside Rachel's head and heart and stay there. This fine story won the *IASFM* Reader's Award, the SFWA Nebula Award, and it was nominated for the Hugo award.

Many of Murphy's novels emerge from her short stories. Her post-apocalyptic book *The City, Not Long After* (Bantam, 1989) was based on her short story "Art in the War Zone," which had appeared in *Universe*.

Murphy's other novels include *Shadow*

*Hunter*, published by Popular Library in 1982, and *The Falling Woman*, published by Tor in 1986. *The Falling Woman* won the Nebula Award for the best novel of the year.

Many of Murphy's short stories were collected in *Points of Departure*. Published by Bantam Spectra in 1990, this book is an excellent introduction to the scope of Pat Murphy's work, and to her talents as a short fiction writer.

In addition to her popularity in this country, Murphy's work is becoming well-known in England, Italy, France, Japan, and Spain.

Pat is one of the co-founders of the James Tiptree Awards, a grass-roots effort to promote speculative fiction exploring gender roles. The Tiptree Award is being funded by bake sales, contributions, and the publication of an excellent goodie cookbook called *The Bakery Men Don't See*. The First Annual James Tiptree, Jr. Memorial Awards were given out last March, at Wiscon 16. The winners were Eleanor Arnason's *A Woman Of The Iron People* and Gwyneth Jones' *The White Queen*.

Nominations for the next Tiptree Award (for works published in 1992) may be submitted to: the James Tiptree, Jr. Memorial Award c/o 2238 23rd St. San Francisco, CA 94107.



## Boskone 29 Report

### Evelyn C. Leeper

*Evelyn writes very detailed con reports. If you're interested in getting a complete one, send her E-mail at [ecl@mtgzy.att.com](mailto:ecl@mtgzy.att.com)*

#### Art Show

It seems to consist mostly of 1) well-executed pieces in which I have no interest in the subject matter of, and 2) poorly-executed pieces in which I have no interest in the subject matter. There is far too much fantasy, "cat art," and media art (e.g., pencil sketches of Star Trek actors) to suit me. There were some good etchings (a form one doesn't see often in art shows) and a few good pieces. The print shop had a good selection reasonably priced, but again, much of it didn't do anything for me.

#### The First Night

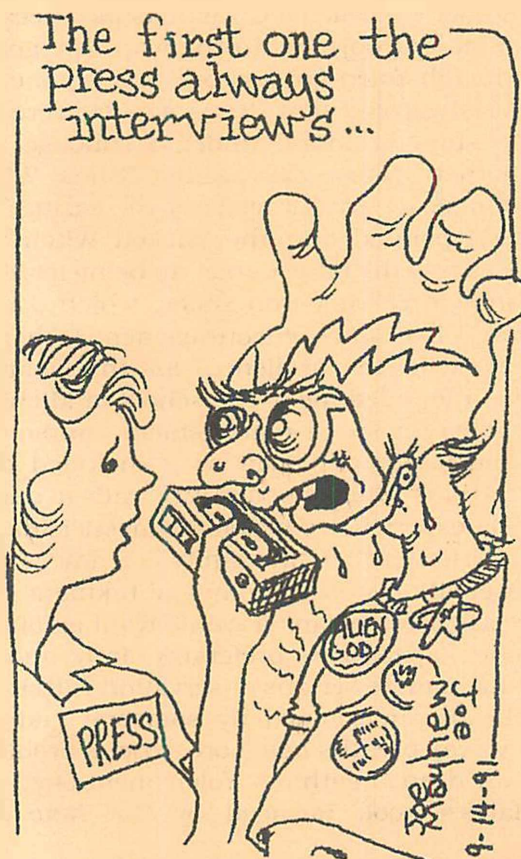
The "Meet the VIPs" party was held in the Boscave (the con suite). This was probably because last year the Con Suite went virtually unused during the party. Free soda was provided, but drinks and munchies were on a cash basis. Entertainment was provided by the Shirim Klezmer Orchestra, and while the music was perhaps too loud to allow conversation (okay, not perhaps—it was too loud), I enjoyed it a lot. A couple of dozen of us danced a line to one of the songs earlier on, but then were too out of breath to try it again later. Dave Langford came over and introduced himself to me (claiming I was his competition, to which I replied I wasn't much competition), and gave me a copy of his latest fanzine.

#### Guest of Honor Speech (Jane Yolen)

Yolen spoke about censorship. She began by defining what she saw as the main problem, or rather, twin problems: PC ("politically correct") language, and the "Satan hunters" (which she labeled, in the way of fantasy

novelists, as "Authorsbane"). She then read newspaper reports of many examples of both, some of which were so ludicrous that one had to laugh. For example, one person objected to a book because the number 33 appeared in it, and "two times thirty-three is sixty-six, which is just one digit away from the number of the beast." (I asked if this person also checked all the arithmetic books.) Another person objected to rainbows as "Satanic," in spite of their mention in the Bible as a sign from God.

She related that a book she wrote in 1971 referred to a garden full of "gay flowers and beautiful plants"; the publisher insisted she change this to "gaily-colored." She tried quoting Lewis Carroll to him ("The question is who [between the words and the writer] is



to be master, that is all"), but it didn't help. The Northampton Chief of Police once made a list of words he wanted to see banned, including the word "chitlins."

Now as Yolen points out, she considers chitlins (which are hog intestines prepared as food) as certainly not kosher, not something she would ever want to serve or be served, and possibly obscene, but she would not want to see either the food or the word banned. It is believed, however, that the Chief of Police had not the slightest clue what chitlins were, and decided it sounded dirty. (By the way, he is no longer the Chief of Police.)

One school removed a book titled *Making It* with *Mademoiselle* from its library, only to reinstate it when it was pointed out that it was a pattern book. (Long-time science fiction fans or "Twilight Zone" watchers may first themselves thinking "It's a cookbook!" here.:-))

Another cancelled a Christmas play because one parent objected to the word "pregnant" although Yolen pointed out that no one has ever suggested that Jesus was delivered by the stork or found under a cabbage leaf. Another protest was against "Snow White" because it "encouraged mirror-gazing." As Yolen pointed out, the Wicked Witch who gazes into the mirror ends up being forced to dance in red-hot iron shoes, which doesn't sound like much encouragement to her (or anyone in the audience, for that matter). This reminded me of the school in Michigan that had a stress-management course that came under fire because it included deep breathing, which apparently "leads to out-of-body experiences, promotes mysticism, and undermines Christianity." My first observation was that anyone taking a deep breath of Michigan air would want an out-of-body experience, preferably into another state. A more serious observation is that any religion undermined by someone taking a few deep breaths has more serious problems than deep breathing. Yolen mentioned Tex Marrs's book *Ravaged* by the *New Age*:

*Satan's Plan to Destroy Our Kids*, which has a whole chapter attacking fantasy. (I'm not recommending you buy this, mind you, because that only encourages them; check your library for it.)

Perhaps one of the most ridiculous attacks was the one against C. S. Lewis and Madeleine L'Engle on the grounds they were "anti-Christian."

Yolen recently edited an anthology for young adults titled *2041*, which contains a Connie Willis story about censorship: "Much Ado About Censorship." The premise is that in the future so many special interest groups attack Shakespeare that only two lines are left in *Hamlet*. A side-effect of this is that students spend a lot of time and effort to get the unexpurgated Shakespeare and read it. "It's an ill wind that blows no one good," as someone once said. (Ha! Fooled you! It was not Shakespeare—go check.

Why do books get attacked? Because, Yolen said, they carry the very dangerous message that we should "value our differences and speak out against authority when authority is wrong." Yolen also said that stories are what define us, because "only the human animal tells stories." Other animals may use tools, have language, or exhibit other behaviors frequently labeled human (though her claim that dogs and hyenas laugh is flawed, I think, in that the sound like laughter that they make is not to indicate that they find something funny). And also, she said, "Quite simply, stories change lives." To support this, she gave several examples of letters she had received from people whose lives or the lives of those they knew had been changed by her stories. Well, in this I'm sure the censors would agree with her, because if they believed that stories didn't change lives, they wouldn't be trying to ban them.

Yolen closed by saying that she had been called in a sermon "a tool of Satan." After thinking about that she decided that wasn't specific enough—which tool was she? So she

declared, "I am a ball-peen hammer."

And she produced "Satan's Toolchest" T-shirts, which listed a number of writers who oppose censorship.

(All this talk of school censorship struck a chord. My first-ever book review was of *The Passover Plot*. I wrote it in 1967, when I was seventeen, for the high school paper. The town was over 75% Catholic, the principal always checked over the newspaper's content, and my review didn't get printed.)

### **Meeting of the Society for the Aesthetic Rearrangement of History**

Panelists: Mark Olson (mod), Steven Brust, Steven Gould, Judith Tarr.

The subtitle of this panel, given at the beginning of the panel rather than in any advance schedules, was "How History Ought to Have Been," and it was claimed that the title of the panel came from Ferdinand Feghoot. Well, it's been too long since I read a Ferdinand Feghoot, so I can't "confirm or deny" this, but I'm sure someone can.

Olson started this off by saying that he often thought it was a pity that the Roman Empire fell. Tarr countered this by saying that it never really did: it's now the Cosa Nostra. Gould offered the scenario of Isabella and Ferdinand (not Feghoot, but the Spanish king) having never been born, not because of any effect on Columbus, mind you, but because without them there probably wouldn't have been any expulsion of the Jews and Moors from Spain. Brust wanted the Huns to meet the Vikings (in a tag-team match?;-)). Tarr's scenario involved Charles Martel losing at Tours in 732 against the Muslims.

There was some further discussion of Gould's scenario. Gould suggested that if the Moors and Jews hadn't been expelled, the Moor civilization in Spain would have continued, but others disputed this, saying that Muslim fundamentalists destroyed

Baghdad in the 7th and 8th Centuries, and could have as easily destroyed Spain. Checking later, I discovered my encyclopedia says that Baghdad was founded in 762 and remained a center of Muslim culture until 1258, when it was sacked by the Mongols, so there seems to be some contradiction here. (It makes one wish one had an encyclopedia right at the panel, doesn't it?)

Brust suggested somewhat frivolously that if Christianity hadn't gotten to Britain, we wouldn't have a lot of air-headed pagans today; presumably he meant we would have the real ones instead.

Someone in some context quoted Saki as having said that the Balkans produce more history than can be consumed locally. This led to a discussion of the Alexandria library and scenarios in which it wasn't burnt. One panelist observed that literary critics would now say that everything in it was by "dead white males."

One person suggested a scenario in which the library was a circulating library and all the best works were checked out when it was

Olson, returning to the Roman Empire scenario, observed that the Jewish population of the Roman Empire in the 1st Century was about 10%, and in addition was rising (because Jewish men were considered good husbands, so non-Jewish women would convert to marry them—but did this mean that non-Jewish men converted to marry Jewish women or what?).

Without Christianity, would we have had a Jewish Roman Empire? An author claimed that the Western world chose Christianity as its religion because it embodied the Western values of personal freedom, etc. This led to much heated debate on two counts. First, many people claimed that Christianity did not embody these values. And second, many thought that claiming these were Western values without defining Western was careless. In particular, I asked where the Native Americans fit into this East/West

dichotomy. Two books mentioned as pertinent to this discussion in some fashion were the fiction book *Toolmaker Koan* by John McLoughlin and the non-fiction book *Less Than Words Can Say* by Richard Mitchell.

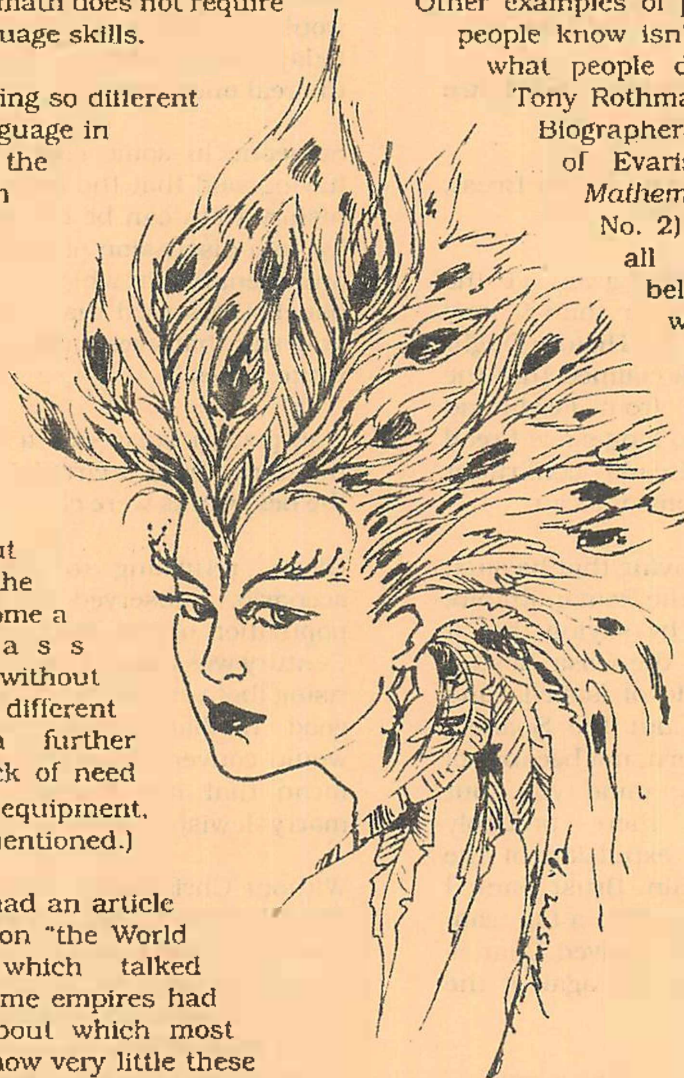
Somehow the panel got off onto a discussion of why Hungary had turned out so many great mathematicians. Brust said that it might be because math does not require a lot of expensive lab equipment. I suggested that it may also be that math does not require any particular language skills.

With Hungarian being so different from any other language in Europe (with the exception of Finnish and Estonian, I think), the ability to work internationally in other fields might be limited, but you could read mathematics papers from anywhere without knowing the language, and become a world-class mathematician without having to write in a different language. (As a further example of the lack of need for any special equipment, Ramanujan was mentioned.)

The Utne Reader had an article about a year ago on "the World Championships" which talked about how long some empires had lasted, empires about which most people probably know very little these days. I said that my husband often pointed out that we were living in the short period following the fall of the Egyptian empire. Along these lines of "what everyone knows

that isn't so," people also mentioned Stephen Robb's "A Letter from a Higher Critic," in which a historian from four hundred years hence analyzes World War II and proves it was as much myth and legend as the King Arthur stories that everyone used to accept as history. Given what we've learned about the sorts of "facts" that are thrown around during wartime (handless Belgian children and incubators come to mind), this story has a hard edge to it.

Other examples of pointing out that what people know isn't so (and its flip side, what people don't know is) include Tony Rothman's essay "Genius and Biographers: The Fictionalization of Evariste Galois" (*American Mathematical Monthly*, Vol. 89 No. 2) in which he disproves all the commonly held beliefs about Galois's work—for example, it turns out that most of what Galois wrote on his last night was not fresh work, but just rewriting some older papers); the fact that Dumas was black (pe're or fils was not clear); and the real meaning of Caesar's death (it was not a betrayal and murder by a friend, but the assassination sanctioned by law of a tyrant). As you can tell, we strayed off the topic a lot.



# Asimov's Chronoclasms

## Anthony R. Lewis

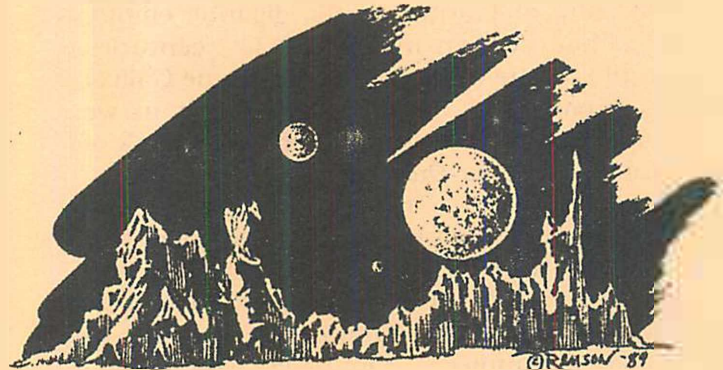
In the introduction to *Prelude to Foundation* Isaac Asimov places *The Currents of Space* earlier than *The Stars, Like Dust*. I took exception to this and went back and re-read both novels. Based upon internal evidence in those books, I decided I was right. I sent this information to Isaac around 1988—he admitted the validity of the argument and promised that later editions and books would correct this error.

**Radioactivity of Earth:** Let's take a look at *The Stars, Like Dust* (pagination from the original Doubleday book club edition). There, the radioactivity of Earth is credited to atomic warfare rather than true reason. Still, we are told that the buildings' thick walls are the result of a "thousand-year-old tradition dating from the days when the primitive nuclear bomb had not yet been countered by the force-field defense" (page 14). This is reinforced on page 17 where a Geiger counter is clicking—"It was the sound that had been invented one thousand years before." So together, this puts the story somewhere in the early fourth millennium (around 3000-3200 C.E. or so). Page 18 talks about freshmen from the Outer Worlds going to school at the University of Earth. The context indicates that Earth is certainly known and visited but the yokels can be fooled into buying radiation detection gear.

**Existence of Trantor:** (Page 25) "The Tyranni rule fifty worlds; they are outnumbered hundreds to one." A reasonable ratio if Tyrann is a military world. But in *The Currents of Space* (see below) we know that Earth is part of the Trantorian Empire and that polity, which includes Earth, encompasses half the galaxy. Yet, even on Earth, no mention is made of it. None of the Nebular Kingdoms even think of asking for its help against the Tyrann. Possibly it doesn't exist in this part of the

galaxy yet, or the Tyrann might be the beginning of the Empire. In either case, this story predates that of Rik and Valona. The whole feeling of *The Stars, Like Dust*, is more cramped than that of *The Currents of Space*. One feels that only part of the galaxy has been explored and settled.

**Positronic Robots:** (Page 35) "The robot messenger said again, 'Mr. Malaine, ...' There are still positronic robots here; there is no mention of any robots in the culture of *The Currents of Space*. Granted, Florinla was kept deliberately backward, but their masters did not seem to stint themselves for leisure on their own world.



**Size of Settled Space:** (Page 51) "According to the *Galactic Almanac*, admittedly dependent on imperfect records, Rhodia was the 1,098th world settled by man. Ironically enough, Tyrann, eventually Rhodia's conqueror, was the 1,099th." Other information on this and following pages indicates that this region was first settled about two hundred years after the Arcturian worlds and more than that after the Centaurian and Sirian (this includes Earth, page 61) sectors. In fact, the settlements were about 700 years prior to the start of this story.

**Psychic Probe:** Now to the *Currents of Space* (pagination from Signet, 1953). There is

existence of the psychic probe. This is an apparently wide-spread and well-known device even if its use is interdicted most places. It's hard to imagine the Tyranni not making use of it but they didn't. It probably didn't exist in their time.

**Earth as Legend:** Now on page 45, Dr. Junz is musing on his past and refers to worlds in the Centaurian Sector... "whose history could be counted in millennia and whose language was so archaic that its dialect might almost be that lost and mythical language, English." Now, *The Stars, Like Dust* is about one millennium from the present. Even in our time, with poor records, we have more detailed knowledge of languages millennia old and do not consider them mythical. *The Currents of Space* must be further into the future.

**To Galactic Empire:** (Page 55) "And they told him of Trantor, of the gigantic empire that had swollen in the last few centuries until half the inhabited worlds of the Galaxy were part of it." This includes Earth, as we will find out later. It is ludicrous to think of *The Stars, Like Dust* being set in a galaxy that includes Trantor's empire. "The Trantorian Republic had been a mere five worlds, five hundred years earlier... Now Trantor trembled at the brink of a new conversion: from Trantorian Empire to Galactic Empire..." On page 104, talking about Earth, "I suppose we started somewhere, my Lady, but I doubt that anyone can possibly know on what planet it happened." Already the knowledge is beginning to be lost.

On page 132, talking about the Trantorian Embassy on Sark, "...but behind that small band was the power of reprisal from the organized might of a million worlds." Quite a step up from the few thousand settled in *The Stars, Like Dust*. Or read, "A native of the planet Earth, which, by the way, is part of the Trantorian domain." (page 148).

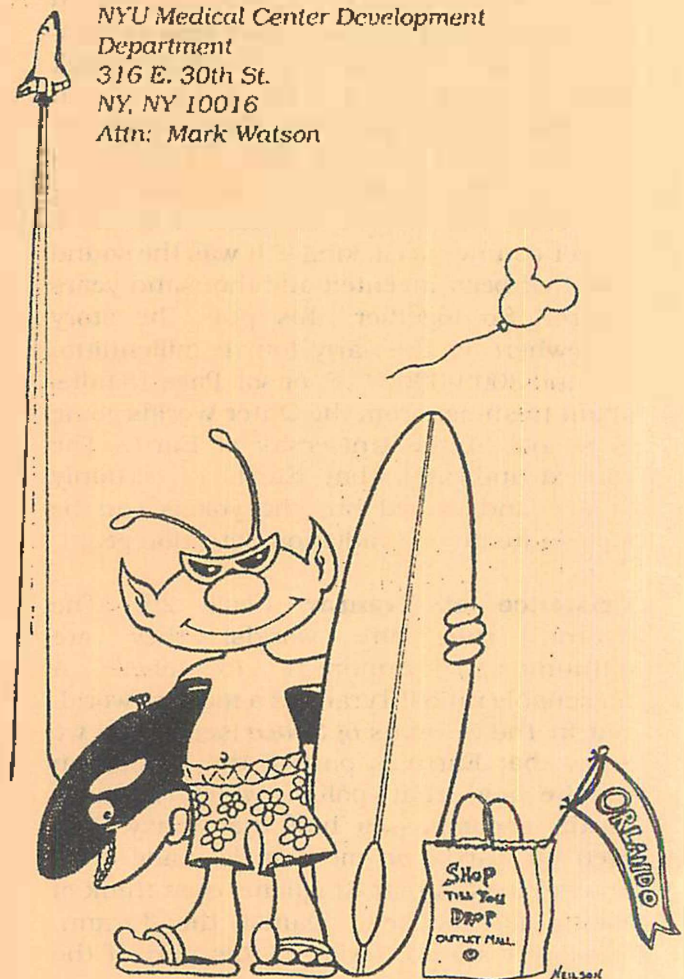
For all these reasons, I am certain that *The Stars, Like Dust* precedes *The Currents of*

*Space* rather than the converse.

I wonder, for all the Laws of Robotics, if the history of mankind would have been different if Elijah Bailey had been a different person. Sometimes, I think that Dancel extended his existence and set his goals not for some abstract mankind or some semi-mystical Galactica but to do what he thought would have pleased Partner Eliza.

Isaac Asimov died on April 6, 1992. During the next few days, tributes were made by many readers and writers on all the networks they could post to. There was almost a universal response that we had lost an important member of our family, and I know I feel that way as well. Beth Meacham reported on GENie that people who wanted to make a contribution in Isaac's memory could send a check to:

NYU Medical Center Development  
Department  
316 E. 30th St.  
NY, NY 10016  
Attn: Mark Watson



## **Harry Turtledove - Recommended Reading** **Mark Olson & Jim Mann**

Nearly all of Harry Turtledove's fiction has appeared in the past five years, during which time he has published nearly a dozen books and nearly fifty stories. Turtledove seems to have a particular interest in the Byzantine Empire—his professional background is in history—and he has at least five books set in a fictionalized version of the Empire (Videssos), as well as a collection of stories set in an alternate history where Byzantium did not fall.

It's also fair to say that Turtledove is one of the best *Astounding* writers to come along in many years. He writes good, solid stories which center around ideas rather than plot convolutions or style.

He seems to be at his best when writing short fiction; when we were making our list of recommended reading, we discovered that the list was exclusively shorter forms.

### **Recommendations**

#### ***"And So to Bed"***

A selection out of the diary of Samuel Pepys, the great 18th century English diarist and Lord of the Admiralty from the period when he purchased a Sim (a speechless species of North America, roughly half-way in intelligence between homo sapiens and the chimpanzee) as a servant and develops a theory of natural selection to account for their existence.

#### ***"Trapping Run"***

Another Sim story, this set on the American frontier. It's a good adventure story, and also an interesting look into Sim culture and thinking processes.

#### ***"Freedom"***

A modern day Sim story and a compelling look at the definition of freedom. Sims are

being infected with AIDS as a way to test new anti-AIDS drugs. A group of Sim freedom advocates break into the lab and "free" one of the Sims, telling him they are giving him his freedom, a concept he at first does not understand. They define the word for him, and he wonders why he is called free now when he can no longer eat what he wants, no longer mate with other Sims when he wants to and so forth. Worse, by freeing him, the activists are killing him, since he is being kept alive by treatments with an experimental drug. He can understand freedom even less as he becomes weaker and in more pain.

#### ***"The Road Not Taken"***

A subtle re-telling of Christopher Anvil's "Pandora's Planet." Anti-gravity and the hyperdrive turn out to be very, very simple to discover—they are usually discovered during the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age. Unfortunately, there is absolutely nothing else you can do with them except move large roads at high speeds over long distances. Unlike many other technologies, they don't lead you on to further discoveries, but rather into the dead end of looking for additional easy advances. When a society discovers them, technological progress pretty much stops, and fleets of wooden spaceships (caulked with tar) roam the Galaxy. The superpowers have cannon and muzzle loaders and use their advanced technology to plunder lesser races and build huge interstellar empires. An expedition discovers Earth...

The first part of the story is from the point of view of an officer on the expedition; the second part takes the point of view of a human linguist trying to communicate with the aliens after they have been captured. The two parties slowly learn the truth. The alien learns that there is absolutely nothing his

empire can do, now that Earth has the hyperdrive, and the linguist realizes that **anyone** can build an interstellar ship and go conquering helpless natives.

*"After the Last Elf Is Dead"*

A very nasty story. It's your typical land of laery and The Dark Brother is slowly destroying the High King and the Elves. His chief captain is ruthless, and effective, and, one by one, they fall. The captain serves evil freely and does terrible evil as he conquers the world for The Dark Brother. About the only good left in the captain is his determination to carry out his sworn service to The Dark Brother.

After the captain has conquered all, The Dark Brother destroys him, too, since nobility, even if perverted towards evil, ultimately has no place with evil.

*"The Last Article"*

Not a nice story. The Nazis have conquered, and their occupation army in India is facing Gandhi's non-violent resistance. Gandhi meets with General Model (not a Major-General) and tells him that Gandhi's party's policy will not change just because the Germans have taken over from the British, and that they will passively resist until the Germans leave. Model has Gandhi taken out and shot and then has lunch.

*"Hindsight"*

A great story for SF fans. In the early '50s, James MacGregor, editor of *Astonishing Stories*, and the narrator, a West Coast SF author, go to LA to try to track down and meet the new, reclusive writer whose spectacular stories "Neutron Star," "All You Zombies," "Time Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones," "Sunjammer," "Supernova," "Watergate," and "Tel Offensive" had dominated the field in the past two years.

They track him down and discover "he" is a young woman, a time-traveller from the '90s, who is attempting to divert the course of the future by publishing the cream of as-yet-

unwritten SF combined with cautionary tales. The story is interesting, but the real gem is the portrayal of MacGregor (a dead ringer for John W. Campbell) and his reaction to the futuristic gadgets (VCRs, PCs, pocket calculators) she has with her.

Sources

*Kaleidoscope* (del Rey, 1990)

a collection of nearly all the recommended stories and the single best source for Turtledove's fiction. If you read any single Turtledove book, this is it.

*Agent of Byzantium* (Congdon & Weed, 1987)

A collection of stories with the same setting, the same main character and the same plot: In the 1200s, a Byzantine secret agent stumbles on scientific discoveries (the telescope, immunization against smallpox, et.c.) which people accidentally have made. He makes sure the discoveries become known.

These stories are best read one at a time, well separated. East is enjoyable, but the sameness is a little too annoying if you read them in one sitting.

The Byzantine Empire of this series is the setting of the other, unrelated stories, including "x." The turning point in history is when one of Mohammed's trading expeditions take him into the Byzantine Empire and he is converted to Orthodoxy, becoming first a monk, and later a saint.

*A Different Flesh* (Worldwide Library, 1989)

A collection containing all the Sim stories.

# **The Physics of Working at Home**

## **Matt Sughrue**

I started my own graphic design and desktop publishing business about a month ago, fed up with the suit-and-tie rat race and wanting desperately to be the master of my own destiny. I'm doing all right, but I've discovered that working at home carries with it a set of physical laws unlike any I have encountered before. I have set them down so that other would-be work-at-homers will be better prepared than I was to face the challenges of the home office. Here they are, in no particular order:

### ***Sughrue's Theory of Relativity***

Not to be confused with that other guy's theory of the same name, my Theory of Relativity is stated as follows: The likelihood of a call or visit from your mother or other close relative who feels sorry for you because you're home alone all the time is equal to your blood pressure divided by the number of hours until the deadline for your current project.

### ***Perpetual Catatonia Hypothesis***

Anyone who has seen daytime talk shows should be thoroughly familiar with this one. It goes like this: A person who turns on the TV in the morning to see what's on *Geraldo* will remain at rest for the next eight hours.

### ***Refrigerator Magnet Theorem***

A person who opens the refrigerator once is magnetically drawn back to it at regular intervals, increasing in weight and mass with each return trip.

### ***Amtrak-ConRail Rationale***

This law proposes that no matter what time of day you actually begin to do work, the first time you look at the clock your train of thought will be totally derailed for a period of no less than two hours. It is at this point that the Refrigerator Magnet Theorem most often manifests itself.

### ***Coffee/Bathroom Ratio***

The number of trips to the bathroom is equal to ten times the number of cups of coffee consumed. This particular law takes an interesting twist when it occurs in conjunction with the Amtrak-ConRail Rationale.

### ***Brownout Quotient***

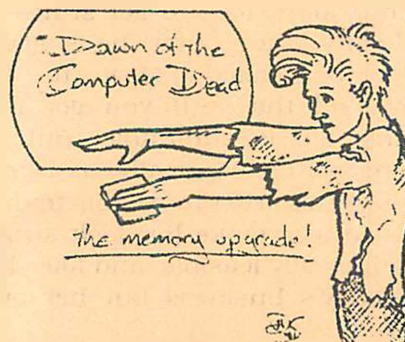
Fluctuations in the level of electrical power severe enough to cause your home computer to crash resulting in a total loss of data will occur only when:

- The work you are doing is vital to your continued survival
- You haven't saved your work in about six hours.

### ***Paper Clip Picasso Phenomenon***

This is perhaps the most unusual of the work-at-home physical laws: Ordinary paper clips allow instant access to a previously unknown artistic ability if and only if there is a stack of paperwork to be done. I have a drawer full of paper clip sculptures to prove it (and a bigger drawer full of unfinished paperwork).

There you have it, the first scholarly record of the physical laws of working at home. It's a new science, to be sure, but one that definitely warrants further study and research. To my esteemed colleagues, remember: forewarned is forearmed.



## Letters, We Get Letters...

**Alexander R. Slate 2/26/91**

I always enjoy reading stuff by David E. Romm. Microprogramming is an interesting concept. It seems that a few of us at Aggiecon some years ago came up with micro-programming ourselves. Of course, ours was totally inpromptu, and I'm not sure that counts.

**NEGLECTED AUTHORS:** I've heard a lot about Fredric Brown in the past year-and-a-half. As a result I borrowed a book of his short stories from a friend of mine and read them. I recognized a few. To tell the truth, though I enjoyed many of the stories, I really don't think Fredric Brown was as good a writer as all the hoopla suggests. Perhaps it's the format he used a lot. To me, the short-short is just not conducive to really great writing. It doesn't give me the chance to get involved in either the plot or the characters.

**Mog Decarnin 3/20/91**

I really liked the cover of 28 by Merle Insinga. It looked like it should be an illo for *A Tale of Two Clocks*, though that may just be coincidence. I was glad to see the attention paid to James Schmitz, as he was one of my faves in my youth. I like Mark Olson's reviews, and I'm glad they aren't just SF per se. Bismarck? A far cry from the noble battle of song & story, apparently, and indeed a blot on British honor.

Alexander Slate was so right when he mentioned how hard it is to get stuff—the hell with dignity, the course he suggests should just be called "How to Beg Successfully." All the stuff you got from artists in this ish is admirable. But the Insinga impressed me especially, as I know how rare it is for an artist to be able to draw a nekkid broad and make her look strong, serious, anatomically feasible, and like she's there on nobody's business but her own.

Even the dress looks like it might conceivably work, if the straps were elastic enough. I'm impressed.

*Years ago, Suford Lewis made that costume and wore it! It was on display in the costume exhibit at Noreascon 2.*

**Sheryl Birkhead 3/25/91**

Bubblegum pink cover—interesting theme (to me, it appears "Latino," but I'm no critic).

Wow, Phil's artwork popped up everywhere—so often so appropriate! Sounds as if Laurie's vacation covered at least 2 months and umpteen thousand miles—so much activity packed into so "little" time! Congratulations on mastering the 36-hour day.

*Thanks...just in time for MagiCon...<g>*

I also have visited Seattle in the summer—and never saw rain—lovely (but I **also** believe, as you do, the monsoon stories!)

Frederic Brown—Especially *Martians, Go Home*—I hope new readers at least sample his work. Nice to see an appreciation of his writing.

**Teddy Harvia 3/28/91**

Merle's art deco cover is both seductive and imaginative. Sheryl's dragonfly design on your title page is visually striking. Peggy's horrified cartoon figures on the back are simply charming. Her mermaid chasing the man in the mast of the sailboat beautifully reverses the cliché fantasy. Phil's editorial portrait captures you, but will it let you go again? I identify with Joe's canned humor. I've been doing my part for the ecology and now the aluminum monsters are threatening to take over my kitchen.

*Sounds like the evolutionary path of the paper clip to wire hanger to bicycle.*

**Mike Glicksohn 3/29/91**

Thanks for another very readable and extremely attractively-produced fanzine. I have only one tiny disagreement with the way you designed the fanzine this issue: I really don't like the look of the acknowledgment for each individual drawing and I don't see the need for it either.

*I try to be a responsive (albeit sluggish) editor, and have removed the artist designation. (The fanzine reviewer for Rune made the same observation.) Art credits will stay on the first page. This zine is the first major fannish project using FrameMaker.*

I enjoyed your editorial, even though it made me jealous I haven't had any similar trips to think back on. One of my long-term dreams is to do some major travelling in comfort on a train and certainly from all I've heard the Pacific Northwest would be a great place to head for. I expect that even a few years from now when such a plan might be financially feasible I'd still have a fair number of fannish contacts in the area and that always helps make a trip more enjoyable. (Besides, that area seems to be a veritable hotbed of homebrewing and microbreweries, which area--both areas--I have considerable personal interest in. And Mark Manning has already offered his services as a native guide if I get to the area. I'll just have to hope he has more stamina than the average active fan and is still active come the millennium.

David's continued description of his microprogramming activities was a real delight, particularly the Sturgeon bit he ended up with. Despite having been to several Minicons in my younger and more affluent days I managed to miss most of his creations so it's fun to read about them after the fact. And I even discovered that I once did a bit of microprogramming myself, back in about 1977. I'd written, published, and sold a trip report about my GoH trip to the Australian Worldcon in 1975, with proceeds to aid DUFF. Eventually I got to a convention (I think it was Marcon) with about \$160 to give to then DUFF administrator Rusty Hevelin but it seemed pretty pointless to just

hand him the money and let it be at that. At the time Rusty was running auctions to raise funds for DUFF, so when it came time for the Sunday afternoon auction I checked out what he had available and set my plan in motion, again with the aid of some shills in the auction audience.

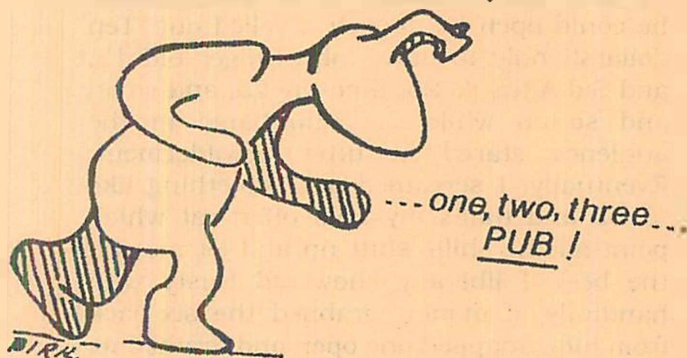
Someone had donated a six-pack of tiny little (maybe six-ounce) cans of Coors beer, which at the time still had something of a mythic quality (to anyone who hadn't actually tasted it, that is) since it was not yet nationally distributed. And I already had somewhat of a reputation as a fan who enjoyed a tippie or two. So while Rusty auctioned books and posters and buttons and stuff, I leaned against the back wall and kept yelling, "Get to the beer, Rusty, the con suite's dry" and similar exhortations. Eventually, Rusty held up this teeny tiny little six-pack and before he could open his mouth, I yelled out "Ten dollars!" only to have John Singer bid 15, and Sid Altus go 20, then my 25, and so on and so on while the uninitiated in the audience stared in utter bewilderment. Eventually, I screamed out something like "\$155 and that's my final offer!" at which point all the shills shut up and let me win the beer. I liberally showered Rusty with handfulls of money, grabbed the six-pack from him, snapped one open and drained its tiny, tasteless contents in a single swallow. To this day there may actually be some old convention-goers who still don't realize they witnessed an extremely early example of microprogramming on that day!

*Boskone was lucky enough to be the site of the Emma Bull -Andrew Sigel duel during the "Farewell Springfield" party. The duelists, without warning, spilled over into the Regency Dance....*

Having had to miss the Hague Worldcon, I appreciate reading reports from those who were there and Joe does an interesting job, aptly aided by his own excellent cartoons. (He's not far wrong with that bomb squad/Hugo cartoon either. When I carried back a couple of Hugos from Australia in 1975 to be presented to the actual winners at the LA NASFiC, the airport officials in Sydney made

me disassemble them so they could check they weren't dangerous hijacking weapons.) And Joe's comment about the rijsttafel restaurant reminded me of going into the Mongolian bar-b-que restaurant in Brighton, England, and suddenly realizing that in a room almost completely filled with a large crowd of people, I knew **every** one as a North American fan. No wonder the Worldcon has become a convention most cities are glad to have.

Arthur's comment about how we've changed since our early fannish days rang very true for me. Just earlier today, I was talking with someone, explaining why my latest fanzine hadn't even been started yet and remembering how at one point I published six forty-page genzines in a single year. Ah for the energy and enthusiasm of youth, eh!



Who is this Harry Warner person anyway? If he thinks that "Loc writers are slothful, indolent creatures." I very much doubt he has what it takes to make the grade as a fan. We probably won't hear much more from him once he finds out just how much hard work it really takes to be even a journeyman latterhack like myself. Why do you know that some months I actually have to **read** some of the fanzines I get so I can appear to comment on them intelligently?

**Robert Bloch 4/3/91**

Liked the item on Fred Brown in the current PB: Good to know he hasn't been forgotten!

**Brian Earl Brown 4/15/91**

Mark Olson's book reviews with their emphasis on military books seem odd even

for the eclectic tastes of most fanzine book review columns. Calling the Battle of Midway "too well-known to be worth discussing in detail" caused me to raise my eyebrows, as I doubt many people under the age of 50 have more than the vaguest idea which war it occurred in or in what ocean.

**Lauraine Tutihasi 6/10/91**

Thank you for the February *Proper Boskonian*. I have a few comments. The e-mail address makes writing a LoC easier.

*Not to mention how much easier it is to include it in this issue!*

The information about the sushi chefs you mention in your editorial is interesting. I have a theory about that. I think it may be because there are fewer orientals back east, so the women have to be employed as well as the men. Out here, the orientals are a large minority. In fact, that fact was emphasized when I was meeting someone I hadn't previously met at the international terminal at LAX. I told him I was a short Oriental; but I realized that wasn't very helpful, as half the people there probably would fit my description.

I didn't read Harlan's article about fandom in *Isaac Asimov's* (I hardly ever read the sf magazines any more these days—not enough time), but I have had a few dealings with Harlan. I think his bark is worse than his bite. He can be very polite when he wants to be. Anyway, I don't hold anything against him, since I know that some fans have been very nasty to him.

The voting statistics for the Hugo are probably not much worse than for elections in general. It's too bad that so few voters participate. I wish something could be done about it.

I don't know about you, but I'm not anxious to watch any more fireworks in the rain. Anyway, I won't be at this year's Westercon (1991-Vancouver), since the committee never answered my inquiries about the quad rooming arrangements.

**Lloyd Penney 9/10/91**

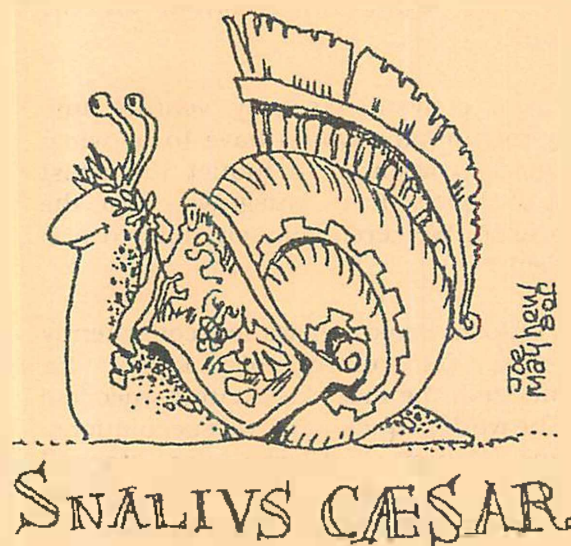
You were in a train wreck in the Rockies? That doesn't happen too often, and now, there are tunnels to protect trains that travel through the Rockies to get to the West Coast.

I was living on Vancouver Island when Mt. St. Helens blew its cone...all we watched for weeks was Seattle tv stations with their coverage. The cloud of ash was tracked on radar. We woke up one morning to find a fine layer of grey volcanic ash on our black car. The radio provided instructions for removing the ash without scratching your paint job. A lot of water went down the gutter that week, along with several tons of volcanic ash in our little community alone.

Kees van Toorn and crew proved that Worldecon can be held elsewhere in the world and can be run quite competently. I look forward to going elsewhere in the world, because living in the Netherlands for 11 days was a real treat in that it was different from what I was used to. All I need is a good excuse and about C\$5000, and I'd like to go back. Also, all dead dog parties need bottles of Stroh rum (160 proof) to smoooooth the hours away.

I'll take my sushi as raw haddock, with a light tempura batter, lightly fried, with a side order of chips, thank you. (I admit, I'm a gourmand, not a gourmet.)

Hi Mike! (I can just hear you saying, "Wot, him again? Who gave him a copy of this zine?") "IF<sup>3</sup>" ["If Fandom Isn't Fun It's Futile"] is the perfect summary of fannish fun these days. You get it where you can, because we all know by now that fannish grief is pretty easy to come by. I'm still having fun where I am, and when I didn't enjoy myself, I got out of there. Another reason why you don't find old fanzines in dealers' rooms is that everyone's got them in their collections, are loath to part with them, and usually wind up donating them to fan fund auctions.



Brian Earl Brown's letter shows me just how many fanzines I **don't** get. I loc enough zines to keep my IN box fairly low. I could use a few more, folks, gentle hint. Thanks for a good read, and please put me down for a regular order of PBs with gravy on the side.

**Richard Brandt**

Must compliment you on the combination of iridescent pink cover and green interior paper—it sets off nicely the orange Corflu 9 flyer I've been using as a bookmark.

Merle's cover is quite impressive; the foreground figure on closer inspection is dressed more revealingly than first apparent; the extensive stipplework on the background couples hinting at the predominant style in the Forties prozines. The "bubbles" remind me inevitably of the memory-bubbles in *Brainstorm*, so my first interpretation of the cover is no doubt contrary to what was intended, but it's a swell piece all the same (figures at a party all drawn off into their isolated cliques?).

Your editorial trip-report stirred some memories. Even though I missed the Portland Westercon, I made a visit to Gig Harbor and Seattle in February (last) year and even from Washington State the figure of

Mt. Rainier looms impressively on the horizon.

Our local convention's only venture into microprogramming would have to be when two guests conspired to induct the Artist Guest-of-Honor, Real Musgrave, into the knighthood. We ceremoniously dubbed him "Sir Real."

Mark Olson's book reviews are consistently enjoyable, particularly his knack for summarizing the most fascinating anecdote from the work in question. Two speculations: perhaps Arthur C. Clarke also stopped *Astounding Days* after 1960 because that was when Campbell dropped the "Astounding" name; and perhaps *SPQR* is marketed as science fiction because an author was successfully marketed in one genre, even when the author was patently writing in some other vein. (Or perhaps words set in the remote past are automatically classed as "fantasy" these days, particularly when by-lined by a genre writer.)

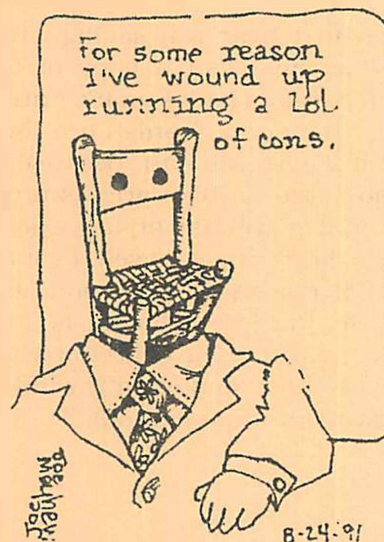
Interesting that two of your loc writers, from different continents, label sushi as "inherently Lovecraftian."

**WAHF:** Ingrid Neilson [who sent Florida vacation info with her art!], Alexei Panshin.

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