

The frequent fanzine of family values. Published by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave. N #103, Seattle, WA 98103. members fwa. Available for the usual. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #140, 9/29/92. Material this time comes from Andy, Peter Larsen and Luke McGuff. Art: Craig Smith (pgs. 1 and 5), Alexis Gilliland (pg. 3), Phil Tortorici (pgs 2 and 4). Logo by C. Ross Chamberlain. Formatted for the first time using Word for Windows, and printed on a real laser printer! Better, John?

RESULTS OF THE FIRST SPENT BRASS POLL:

We had 28 full or partial responses to our poll; we got about 20 in the mail, which is around a 10% return, and I'm told that is a lot better than direct mail usually receives. Even so, we received ballots from three continents. Next year, we'll send along a postcard that people can just fill out and send in.

All that being said, we were very pleased to get your votes, and without further discussions, here are your favorites from the past year.

FAVORITE FANZINE: *TRAP DOOR*. This was a hotly contested category, with Robert's zine narrowly edging out the next two finishers. Fanzines also receiving votes were: *Bento*, *Folly*, *Fosfax*, *Hitchhike (!)*, *Idea*, *Mimosa*, *Outworlds*, *Pulp*, *Saliromania*, *Science Fiction Five Yearly*, *Stefantasy*, *Stet* and *Tand*.

FAVORITE FAN WRITER: **AVEDON CAROL** was the writer receiving the most votes, and this category featured a greater variety of favorites than any other. Also chosen were Michael Ashley, Velma Bowen, Richard Brandt, Terry Carr (!), Ken Cheslin, Sharon Farber, Bruce Gillespie, Chuch Harris, Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Arthur Hlavaty, Dave Langford, Mark Manning, Bruno Ogorolec, Vicki Rosenzweig, Kate Schafer, Paul Skelton, D. West, and Walt Willis.

FAVORITE FAN ARTIST: **STU SHIFFMAN** was the most overwhelming victor of the poll, garnering three times the votes of any other artist. Other favorites listed included Ken Fletcher, Jeanne Gomoll, Ian Gunn, Teddy Harvia, Linda Michaels, Peggy Ransom, Bill Rotsler, Steve Stiles, and Charlie Williams.

FAVORITE LETTERHACK: **HARRY WARNER AND WALT WILLIS**, were the obvious leaders throughout the race, and it seems apt that they

ended up in a tie. There seems to have been no "type" of letter-writer favored over another: Sheryl Birkhead, Richard Brandt, Avedon Carol, Gary Deindorfer, Don Fitch, Mike Glicksohn, Judith Hanna, Chuch Harris, Joseph Nicholas, Paul Skelton and Jean Young all received votes.

FAVORITE CONVENTION: **CORFLU** was the clear favorite, although some people referred to certain years which they favored over this past one. Also receiving votes were *Armadillocon*, "The 1975 Disclave," *Marcon*, *Midwescon*, *Minicon*, *The New Orleans Fantasy and Science Fiction Festival*, "The Next One," *Orycon*, *Readercon*, *SwanCon I*, *Wiscon*, "Worldcon," & *The World Fantasy Convention*.

Something to remember out of all this is that the poll asked voters to name their favorites, not necessarily the best, in each of the fields listed. Fanac being as subjective a pursuit as we can

imagine, determining the "best" in any given area is not a task we would like to be burdened with, while our favorites actually came pretty quickly to mind. Many people complained of the difficulty of choosing just one favorite; perhaps next year we'll change things so that three favorites could be chosen, weighted toward the first choice,

but giving some credit to the others. While we know that this really just produces more sample without altering the results perceptibly, people might find it easier to vote in consequence.

In any event, thanks to everyone who voted, and congratulations to the winners. Certificates of victory, designed by Jeanne Gomoll, and calligraphed by Jae Leslie Adams, will be on the way to the winners by the time this issue is mailed.
-- aph & cr



The Future that Time Forgot
by Luke McGuff



Seattle Center is a forgotten future. American steel is there, American Ingenuity and know-how are there. Looking through the history books, The Seattle World's Fair presents a

clean, simple Caucasian world. Dad works at the factory -- robots do the jobs, but everybody still works. Mom knits scarves for India with all the spare time saved by her atom-powered appliances. Sis and Son go to school. After an hour of television (educational and commercial-free) every night, Mom retires to the kitchen and Dad to his den or workshop. Son spreads his homework out on the living room floor, and Sis takes hers to the dining room table to be with Mom. America stands tall, calm, secure and united as the beacon of democracy and prosperity to the world.

But crossing the Center, and walking through the Fun Forest Amusement Park, this future begins to clang. Light bulbs are out and the rides groan as they move. The paint is chipped, the American steel rusting a little. Not all the rides work.

Then you get on the monorail. The transport of the future -- quiet, efficient, no traffic jams, it would take you from job to home in minutes, providing time for reading and personal betterment. But here it's just teenagers from the amusement park in NFL jackets, popping gum, talking trash and drugs. Some miracle has kept them from being covered with graffiti, but there are only two trains, and one of them has been under repair for months. Original plans said the monorail would go to the airport, up to Everett, out to the East side. It's been extended an entire block since it was built, to the Westlake mall. The door of the monorail opens onto the future today.

Bustling, polyglot, commercial, noisy, glittering, diverse, status-ridden, filled with trinkets and inessentials. The information booth is a computer with touch-screen maps and recorded spiels about local restaurants and buildings in English and Japanese. In the rest of the country, it would be in English and Spanish.

The forgotten future was Wonder Bread, miracle drugs, security. the future today is not as relaxed as the forgotten future. There is no time for workshop projects or volunteering. We step over the bodies without interrupting our phone calls. The future today is hushed-up epidemics, hushed-up social decay, hushed-up apathy, hushed-up fear of the future-to-be.

The future today starts to look alien to Americans. It's smaller and faster than we ever were, and it certainly isn't as white as we wanted it to be thirty years ago. even as a beacon of democracy, we've failed. The world is full of uncertain democracies, not because of our example, but because of the internal collapse of an even more inefficient system. At home, our system will fade into senility unless it is reinvigorated. I would rather see it reinvigorated, as much as I dislike most of it.

The day after I wrote the preceding passages, riots erupted all over the country, the worst national riots we had seen in twenty-five years. they spread to Seattle for a couple of days, mostly people smashing windows and looting a little bit. I wanted to go downtown after it was over, looking at boarded-up windows as I walked from the Westlake Mall to the past that never was.

I've taken the journey a few times, when showing off Seattle to tourists. It's time-traveling. Seattle Center to Westlake Mall to the Pike Street market. You look at the crafts, the musicians and performers, buy something for a nice dinner. Then you go down the hillclimb.

The past that never was is the waterfront, particularly the waterfront trolley The touristy

piers that smell, but never stink, of fish. the clean commuter ferries that come in, where there used to be boats stuffed with salmon, huge by today's standards, salmon that came right from Puget Sound. And the Sound, always calm, that used to make Bainbridge and Vashon remote outposts of hermits and artists -- now the sound can be commuted over in half an hour. Barely time for a crossword.

The waterfront piers are too clean for the past. The past was dog shit everywhere, filth, mud, more drunks and violence than we could tolerate today. Today a homeless bum is a bum forever. In the past, he could be a bum one day and a stevedore the next. Our college campuses argue about cultural diversity, but in the past, before the American future, we had it. Asians, Mexicans, African-Americans, Native Americans, all there on the waterfront. They didn't all like each other, and white people viciously stacked the laws, but it was there. You can't find it in official history books, it's in the journals and letters.

But for about fifteen years after World War II, there was the American Century, the century of the Space Race, the Great Society, the World's Fair. And that future was so white, it made the past white too. As if white people would ever admit that other people helped with this country's past.

The trolley comes along with a little toot toot when it crosses a street. It's barely faster than walking, but it's fun to ride. It's a bit of Seattle, resurrected for the tourists and imported from Melbourne, Australia. The waterfront ferry takes you by all the piers, Ivar's Acres-O-Clams, the ferry terminal, all the way to the past that is.

Pioneer Square. Bars, Elliot Bay Books, panhandlers and anti-panhandling signs in shop windows, trees and traffic down Main Street. The Smith Tower still looms over Pioneer Square. It's the right scale, the buildings are tall and elaborate enough to confidently show off capitalistic success, but they aren't the huge steel and glass monoliths that make you feel like an ant.

At all times, Pioneer Square is alive. At night it claims a little of the old ribald past, glossy, deodorized and sanctified for yuppie consumption. The OK Hotel, with its punkish tribalism and kids pretending they're in Repo Man, was probably the last place with the actual down squalor of the real past. And even its closing down now.

Maybe Pioneer Square is the past that "is" because it's a sham. German and Japanese cars drive down its streets. Pioneer Square is the Pro-American conservative who drives a BMW.

We have the forgotten future, the future that is. a forgotten past, and the past that is. But where are we now? -- Luke McGuff

Maybe I just haven't read the corpus of giant cockroach stories...

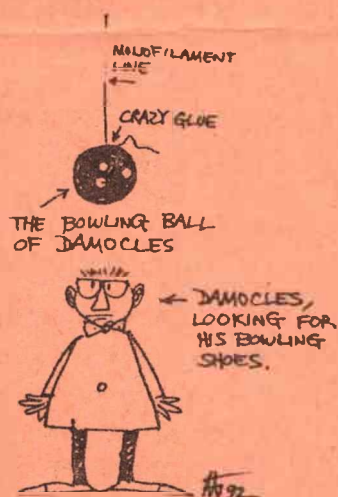
The Fighting Fanzine Review Column By Peter Larsen

The zines have not exactly been spewing through my mail slot. Are you not producing, or am I just not getting them? If you would like to see your name in lights (or mud), send your stuff to:

Peter Larsen
Box 13253, Dinkytown
Station, Minneapolis, MN
55414-0253

If you just send a review copy to Andy and Carrie, it won't get into this column, 'cause I'll never see it. okay? On to what did arrive....

First off the bat is *Bento* #4, by Kate Yule and David Levine. A snappy little zine, *Bento* has great production values, lots of character and a twisted experience to share. The articles are short, generally to the point, there aren't too many illos, and the letter column doesn't go on too long. I'd give *Bento* top marks except for three things. First, once a year is not often enough. Second, their irony slips occasionally and cuteness threatens their tone.



Third, their guest writers are weak and distracting - Ariel Shattan's "My Wasted Youth" is easily the weakest thing in #4. However, if you like weird scrabble, frightening sushi, and Elvis worshipping, coin-operated storefronts, *Bento* is probably perfect for you.

Cube, the Madison clubzine, is always going to have a place in my heart, if only because they published my first reviews. Now, after 46 issues, it's hit the big time, under editor Steve Swartz, breaking out of the clubzine neighborhood and offering fat, general interest issues. Not that *Cube* didn't have good writing before, but the larger size moves the local concerns back and reads more like a genzine with a club affiliation. the larger size needs a tighter hand, though, and Swartz let a few things into #47 & #48 that probably should have been rewritten or sent home. Hooper's "Analytic Survey" of fanzines was a dubious exercise in numerology that obscured his otherwise solid reviews, and "True Confessions" by Tracy Shannon was just the sort of sweet fan-smarminess that zinedom could really do without. After Swartz and his newer writers get a little more experience, *Cube* should really be something.

Nigel E. Richardson has fallen on hard times, and *Sluberdegullion* is his vehicle to tell us about it. If you are looking for bitter comments on the U.K.'s economy, angry stories about dead end jobs and

social prospects, and entertainingly savage (but sometimes cheap) shots at all available targets, this is a zine for you. With the exception of his view of women (which can be pretty creepy), Mr. Richardson has something worth saying about just about everything, and his letter column is one of the liveliest I've seen. Richardson isn't for everyone, but then he isn't supposed to be. So, sharpen your sense of humor, and of the bitter unfairness of it all, and take a holiday in Nigel E. Richardson's misery. It's worth it, okay?

-- Peter J. Larsen

Fanzines reviewed:

Bento, edited by David Levine and Kate Yule,
117 NW Trinity Place #37,
Portland, Oregon, 97209
Available for the usual.

Cube, edited by Steve Swartz for SF3
Box 1624,
Madison, WI 53701-1624
Sample available for the usual,
or write for membership details

Sluberdegullion, edited by
Nigel E. Richardson,
9 Windsor Green, East Garforth,
Leeds,
LS25 2LG United Kingdom
Available by editorial whim, or
maybe for the usual.



I know, I know -- it's all hooley.

WE HAVE SHARED THE INCOMMUNICABLE EXPERIENCE OF WAR by Andy

After a lay-off of nearly two months, it's nice to be working on an issue of *Spent Brass* again. This hiatus was due to my attending the Clarion West science fiction workshop for six weeks of the summer, and in retrospect, I was quite right in deciding that I would be unable to contribute to an issue during that period. Having to keep up with fanac at the same time would have been one thing too many.

Besides, the whole point of Clarion is to steep young authors in the life of a writer through total immersion; students are advised to leave their jobs

and other responsibilities behind for the duration of the six weeks. Any fan-writing that I might have undertaken while in the workshop might well have had a "letter from Stalingrad" quality to it; at times, we felt as if we were under siege.

The field on which we were assailed was that of time and energy. The day began with between four and five hours of class, criticizing in detail work submitted the day before, with occasional asides and tangents from our instructors. Students then dispersed in small groups for lunch, in order to talk behind one another's backs, a process more

essential to maintaining our sanity and general tolerance than I would have thought. In the late afternoon, students generally read the stories submitted that day, and prepared their critique; at the same time, some would work on their own stories, meet with the instructor, or catch up on sleep.

The evenings were almost always spent in writing, although Tuesday night featured a bookstore reading by the week's instructor, which most students attended. When other things intruded into the schedule, the activity cut out most often was sleep, which led to a clinically intriguing mindset.

Living in a college dormitory for six weeks was a new experience for me. Since Carrie and I live at least five miles from the building where class was held, it seemed far more convenient, if expensive, for me to stay in the dorm. But the real reason to stay was that our time in the classroom only occupied a sixth of each day, and the bonds between the students were largely forged during our "off" hours in the dorm. I had resolved to go home on weekends, but soon cut that to one night and a day; I felt unaccountably anxious in being away from the dorm, and had to return, despite the fact that I also wanted to spend more time with Carrie.

The workshop was a story in and of itself, with different supporting characters coming and going, and different members of the class deriving the bulk of attention over the six weeks. Each week's character was largely set by the instructor. We began with Nancy Kress, who was maternal and nurturing, and helped us form good habits that carried us through the class. Then we had to adapt to John Shirley, who believed in Clarion far more than he believed in himself. He was prickly, almost paranoid, but brilliant, and his views of the "business" were priceless distillations of hard experience.

Howard Waldrop was unpretentious and deeply lovable, but got tough in class, insisting that we look for further meaning in our stories, and understand the thematic and structural demands of good fiction. He often struggled, grasping for the words to tell us what he wanted, what he needed, to say, but I think we learned the most from him. Pat Cadigan was our dissolute but passionate big sister, who urged us to reach deep inside ourselves to find things that were true and worth our effort.

Gardener Dozois was a vaguely deviant uncle with a jar full of spring-loaded snakes; he kept us laughing at his jokes so hard that it didn't hurt when he told us a story was junk. I think from now on, most of us will send our stories to him first, putting no other editor before him.

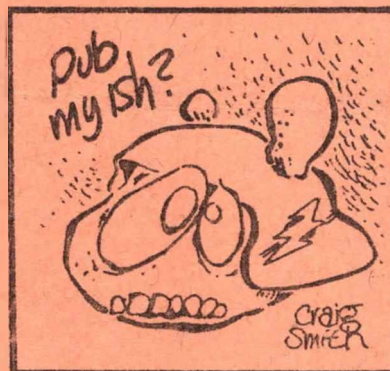
And we concluded the workshop with John Crowley, whose ethic of writing was alternately mystic and workman-like. He urged us to break rules, write big stories and avoid devotion to any "method" of writing. In the end, he may have puzzled us, even undermined all the work we had done in the five weeks before, but he did communicate the notion that writing has higher purposes than simply being sold. Some of us were left aspiring to the same "vertical" audience that Crowley seems to have; not to be read by millions at any one time, but to be enjoyed by a select audience over a prolonged period of time, perhaps even transcending our own life-spans. Crowley

taught us that one of the great rewards of writing is functional immortality.

As grateful as I am to the instructors and administrators of Clarion West, I know it is to the other students that I will feel the most lasting bond. They were from scattered cities across the country, differed in age, sex, politics and profession, but they now all share the experience of having

learned, sweat and suffered sleep-deprivation together.

I may have cursed their blind, pig-ignorant dismissal of my best work, their peddling of weak



plots and characters, their perverse criticisms on work that I found sublime, but now I know: they are new additions to my family. At the first week's party I was puzzled by the way in which members of last year's class clung together in a knot, were diffident or evasive of our overtures, and even expressed contempt for our fresh-faced enthusiasm. The only people they talked to were the administrators who had hectored them through six weeks of hell the summer past. We dubbed them the "crawling, bitter, ex-Clarion suck-ups," and made jokes about them even into the fourth week.

But in time, we knew. Yes, we knew. They were our version of the Old Contemptibles, the soldiers

who had dug the trenches in which we now cowered, experiencing the barrage of work and stress that had turned their hair prematurely white and left them with a powerful thirst for straight bourbon. Now that we are united in our experience, that distance has been closed. I can be as bitter and crawling as anyone. And while people praise my writing, tell me how much they enjoy it, I am inwardly aware of how weak and halting my voice is, and how far I have to go before I can be comfortable with my skills as a writer, and how wonderful it will be once I get there.

And that, my friends, is what the Clarion Workshop Experience is all about. -- aph

These people have ben cooped up like guinea hens for 37 years...

Change of address:

Woody Bernardi
5900 W. Tropicana Ave.,
Space #37
Las Vegas, NV 89103

Bill Bodden, Elspeth Kriser, and Steve
Swartz
2104 Keyes Ave.
Madison, WI 53705

C. Ross Chamberlain
2200 S. Fort Apache #1227
Las Vegas, NV 89117-5714

Algernon D'Ammassa
42 W. 13th St. #2E
New York, NY 1011

Cathy Gilligan
1017 Troy Dr.
Madison, WI 53704

Bill Hoffman
1017 S.W. Grover St.
Portland, OR 97201-3041

Bill and Julie Humphries
1034 Jennifer #2
Madison, WI 53703

Lucy Rhonur
245 N. Thompson Dr. #5
Madison, WI 53714

Tracy and Michael Shannon
1941 Ellen Ave.
Madison, WI 53716

Nevenah Smith
218 DuRose Terrace
Madison, WI 53705-3323

Joe Wesson
55 Griggs St.
St. Paul, MN 55104-6915

SPENT BRASS # 14
C/O Mark Manning
1709 South Holgate
Seattle, WA 98144 USA

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

BULK MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON
ZIP CODE 98144
PERMIT NO. 765

Lee Hoffman
401 Sunrise Trail NW
Pt. Charlotte, FL 33952-6637