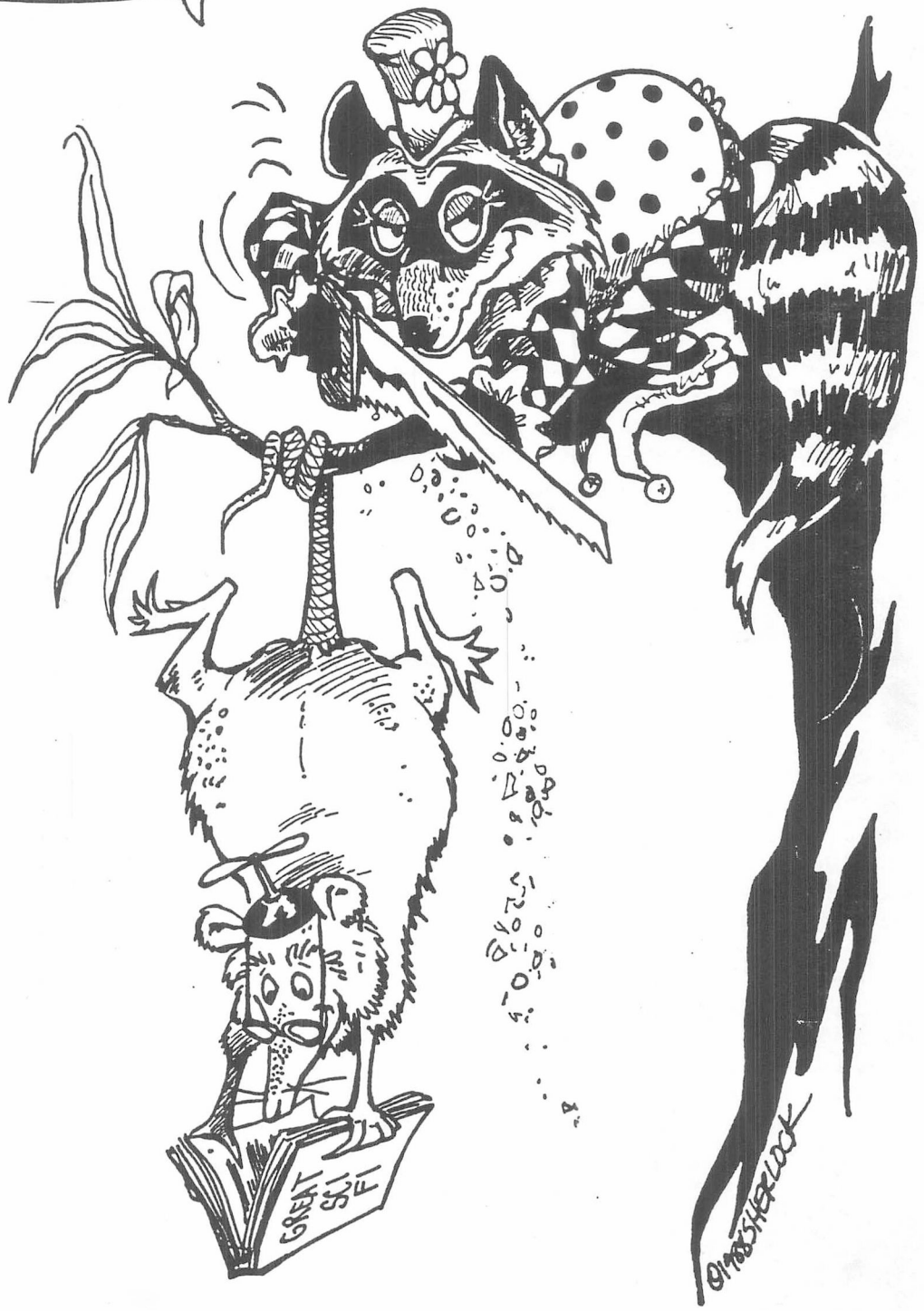


The Texas SF Inquirer  
April 1995 #54



## Table of Contents

Adios by me .....	3
Book Reviews by Evelyn Leeper .....	5
Some of My Favorite Fanartists .....	10
LocCol .....	12
Trades Listing .....	15
Conventional .....	17

### Cover by: Sherlock

### Interior illustrations by:

Linda Michaels (11, 14, 17)  
 Peggy Ranson (5, 10)  
 Sherlock (3, 4, 7, 8, 13)  
 Laurel Slate (11)  
 Diana Harlan Stein (16, Back cover)  
 Jim Thompson (10)

### Column headings by Sheryl Birkhead

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Advertising space is also available in this fine publication at ridiculously low prices. Address all inquiries regarding same and any other correspondence to FACT at PO Box 9612, Austin TX 78766. Should you wish to get hold of the editor for any reason the address is 8603 Shallow Ridge, San Antonio, TX 78239-4022. The phone number is 210-654-9604.

The current editor of this here zine is **Alexander R. Slate.**

## Some Notes On Last Issue

I apologize for the reproduction of issue 53. The place where I have the fanzine xeroxed normally does a much better job. On top of that I had no time to get them to take it back and do the job right as they had a lot of trouble getting the job done in the first place -- this involved their machine breaking down twice and misunderstanding my instructions for the front and back covers.

As it was I had just enough time to do the stapling and labeling before I had to bring them up to Austin, in time for ArmadilloCon.

Further apologies on the Table of Contents page, I had a proper one laid out, but must have given the copy place the wrong one. What got copied was the next to last draft. As a result, Sheryl Birkhead didn't get credit for the nice column heading she's done for the fanzine.

I do not apologize for the late mailing. That's someone elses responsibility.

Anyway, read my "editorial" starting on page 3.

I also apologize that this is quite a bit later than I planned, and also not the bang-up issue I had hoped for.



## From Boondock Central:

# Adios?

Commentary by Alexander R. Slate

This is my last issue of *The Texas SF Inquirer* as editor. I leave totally by my own decision. The obvious question is "Why am I quitting as *The Inquirer* editor?" There are lots of reasons.

The easiest to understand is that my life is getting more complicated. I'm very busy at work with no end in sight, I just went into a Master's program with 9 week semesters where every class requires a 10-15 page term paper, I hope to make a move sometime soon, if I can find a good job. All sorts of stuff like that.

Other reasons may be less easy to understand. Since having left the FACT Board of Directors, it has become more difficult to get information and those trades which go to the FACT PO Box and integrate all of this into the zine. This slows down getting the zine together. Since I'm not making regular monthly trips to Austin getting the zine up for mailing also means a special trip. My getting timely information has always been a problem. I feel that FACT would be better served by an editor located in Austin or real near Austin.

The last is that I've never been able to put together the type of fanzine that either FACT or I have ever really wanted to put out. And what FACT wants and what I want *are* two different types of fanzines. Part of this came out last year with the discussions concerning the content. Getting input has always been difficult.



On top of this, due to budgetary difficulties, we've slowed down the publication schedule, from the original bi-monthly (what I promised when Dale Denton and I took the jobs as editors), to quarterly, and now irregularly (though mostly three times a year). This has made the timeliness of the fanzine mean almost nothing. On top of that it is actually more difficult for me to get motivated to work on a fanzine that isn't due out for another 3 months than for one that's due in a couple of weeks.

What all this means is that all of the sudden it's not as enjoyable for me anymore. It's time to pass the quill on to the next 'generation' as it were.

Now let's change the tone of this editorial (which this column was not intended to be when I instituted it). I'd like to thank those that have supported me as the editor of *The Inquirer*. Your comments have been greatly appreciated.

I think I've learned a lot about fanzines in the past 5 or 6 years. Both from specific comments and just from seeing the efforts of other fanzine editors. Many have helped me whether or not they realize it. Specific thank yous to my ex-co-editor Dale Denton for his contributions of a few years back, especially for the proofreading so sadly lacking in the later issues. To the various Boards of Directors of FACT who foolishly had faith in me to let me first take up and later continue with this task. To Brad Foster for his comments about layout, especially cover layout. To Leah and Dick Smith for producing *Stet*, the best fanzine being put out today in my opinion. To R. Graeme Cameron and Steve Forty for *BCSFAZine*, setting a standard for clubzine consistency and sometimes publicly airing the woes of clubzine editing. Thanks to Henry (a.k.a. Knarley) & Letha Welch, Lan Laskowski & Maia Cowen, Tom Feller, Ruth Shields, David Thayer (a.k.a. Teddy Harvia), Tim Lane, Benoit Girard, Linda Michaels, Joe Maraglino, Peggy Ranson, Dick and Nicki Lynch, Art Widner, Richard Brandt, Mike Glyer and probably many more for being my friends when we got the rare opportunity to meet. Thanks also to those who I've only had the opportunity to meet through the mails, maybe someday.

You know, I had hopes when I began editing this fanzine of winning the Hugo for best fanzine. After a couple of years I gave that idea up. There were (and still are) many other fanzines out there that I considered better than this one. I am just gratified by the kind responses that I received at the several points when certain opinions started running against my editorship. To anyone who wishes to try the waters, come on in, the company is fine!

Completing my tenure as editor of this fanzine does not mean that I'm gafiating from fanzines. I intend to begin my own, *PhiloSFy*. When the first

issue will be I don't know, and I haven't determined how often I'd like to publish, but it will exist. I do know that it will be very different from *The Inquirer*.

Also thanks to everyone who has submitted to this fanzine. For your articles, your artwork, your letters of comment have been what has made doing this fanzine fun, and have been the essence of whatever value this fanzine has had. You are the stars of the fanzine world. It has been and continues to be a privilege to be among you.



ALAMOSAUROS

## Reviews:

### Book Reviews by Evelyn Leeper

All Reviews Copyright 1995 by Evelyn C. Leeper

TRAVELLERS IN MAGIC by Lisa Goldstein  
Tor, ISBN 0-312-85790-X, 1994, 285pp, US\$21.95

Lisa Goldstein has won wide acclaim for her novels, but this is her first short story collection, comprising fifteen stories written over the last decade. And an exceptional collection it is.

Many of the stories can be grouped around common themes. Some have their basis in Jewish culture and history. It used to be that most authors who used a Jewish background used it for humorous effect, but lately that trend is changing. This may be because readers are more willing to accept a Jewish background as serious rather than merely quaint, though even now Faren Miller in *LOCUS* can write that Goldstein is "heir to 'exotic' traditional folklore (by WASP standards)." And Goldstein is part of this new wave of serious Jewish fantasy, with stories such as "Alfred," "A Traveller at Passover," "Breadcrumbs and Stones," and "Split Night." (The latter appears here for the first time, since according to Goldstein there is still no real market for a speculative fiction story about Shabbetai Zevi. If you don't know who Shabbetai Zevi is, I guess that supports her theory.) Her use of Jewish themes in a serious fashion, and particularly in her use of the Holocaust as a force behind many of them is no doubt related to the fact that her parents were themselves survivors of the Holocaust, and this may be what gives her the ability to write with such depth and meaning.

Other stories are set in Goldstein's fictional land of Amaz (also the setting for Goldstein's novel *TOURISTS*): "Tourists" (Goldstein said she liked the title and wanted to confuse bibliographers), "Death Is Different," and "A Game of Cards." And besides the "Amaz" stories, Goldstein has used the idea of the strange people and places in "Preliminary Notes on the Jang" about a strange tribe of people living in Los Angeles, "Infinite Riches" about Sir Walter Raleigh's quest for El Dorado, and "Rites of Spring" about a woman's search for her daughter that takes an unusual turn.

Many of Goldstein's stories deal with control and, conversely, the unexpected. Certainly the "Amaz" stories are about how people cope with the unexpected. But there are also such gems as "Cassandra's Photographs," in which the main character tries to live a life laid out for him by the

photographs of the title. "Daily Voices" is about a woman who is constantly told what to do ("Find the next piece to the jigsaw puzzle and press the button"). "Ever After" is another story about a woman who seems to have everything except control of her life, and that is what she wants the most. "Midnight News," on the other hand, is about a woman who suddenly has more power she ever imagined.

The one remaining story, "The Woman in the Painting," doesn't fit any of these descriptions, but seems to be a relative of Karen Joy Fowler's *SARAH CANARY*: the mysterious woman who comes from nowhere, doesn't seem to be able to communicate, and has a strange effect on everyone she meets.

I've used the term "speculative fiction" to describe Goldstein's work, because it's more accurate than "science fiction" (only one story here is really science fiction), or "fantasy" (which may be accurate, but sets up all sorts of expectations that the stories wouldn't fulfill). But whatever you call them, these stories have a lot to say—if you're willing to listen. This is certainly one of the best collections of short fiction I have seen recently, and worthy of note.

%A Goldstein, Lisa %T Travellers in Magic  
%I Tor %C New York  
%D December 1994 %G ISBN 0-312-85790-X  
%P 285pp %O hardcover, US\$21.95



TOURISTS by Lisa Goldstein  
Orb, ISBN 0-312-89011-7, 1994, 239pp, US\$11.95

I can best describe TOURISTS by Lisa Goldstein as "Borgesian," and anyone who knows my tastes realizes that is high praise indeed. If I'm asked to name my three favorite speculative fiction writers (why is it always three?), my answer is, "Borges, Stapledon, and I don't know who the third one is." So to compare TOURISTS to such works of Jorge Luis Borges as "The Babylon Lottery," "The Garden of Forking Paths," and "Tlon, Uqbar, and Orbis Tertius" indicates that I think it is a wonderful book.

In speculative fiction, people talk about a "sense of wonder," but how often does one actually find it? Near-future science fiction, in fact, wins praises for being "realistic" and "believable"--in other words, specifically for \*not\* having a sense of wonder. But in magical realism (or fantasy, which might be an even better label), one can still occasionally find flashes of it, and Goldstein's city of Amaz is full of wonder--of streets that re-arrange themselves, and strange customs, and strange people with strange histories, and of a hundred things that are not what they appear to be. This begins early on--a group of turbaned people are keeping a vigil outside the house of the main characters, there is a mysterious bronze statue of a man contemplating an egg, and when the newly-arrived Casey meets her pen-pal Rafiz, neither is what the other person pictured them to be.

Into Amaz come the Parmenters: Mitchell, who is working on a translation of the national epic; his wife Claire, who spends her time drinking and reading trashy novels; their fourteen-year-old somewhat precocious daughter Casey; and their sixteen-year-old daughter Angie, who spends most of her time living in the fantasy kingdoms of Borol and Marol.

In regard to the latter, this book bears more than passing resemblance to the film HEAVENLY CREATURES, so it is worth noting that Goldstein's book predates the film by five years. Of course, it is possible that Goldstein knew of the original story. But I suspect it's more likely that there is a universality to the ideas, and that they are both representations of archetypes. Indeed, that is part of the idea of the book in the first place.

One might also wonder at the title. After all, the Parmenters have come to live in Amaz, even if only for a year, so aren't they more than mere tourists? But you soon realize that though they may nominally be residents, they are still tourists--they understand almost nothing of the city around them, and they remain outsiders to the people of Amaz.

But they are also outsiders to each other, and part of what the story is about is how we are often just tourists in the domains of our family members; we have only a superficial knowledge of them and think of them as a place to visit rather than a place to live.

Goldstein's first novel, THE RED MAGICIAN, won the American Book Award. Her next two (THE DREAM YEARS and A MASK FOR THE GENERAL) were also highly acclaimed. TOURISTS continues that high standard of remarkable works, and I strongly recommend it.

[Goldstein also had previously written a short story using the same setting and many of the ideas and places that TOURISTS uses. The story, which was published in 1985, was also called "tourists." In the afterword to the short story in her new collection TRAVELLERS IN MAGIC, she says, "I gave them the same title because I liked it, and because I wanted to confuse bibliographers, but bibliographers turn out not to be as easily confused as one would wish." She also has two other stories set in Amaz, "Death Is Different" and "A Game of Cards," but they are not in a series.]

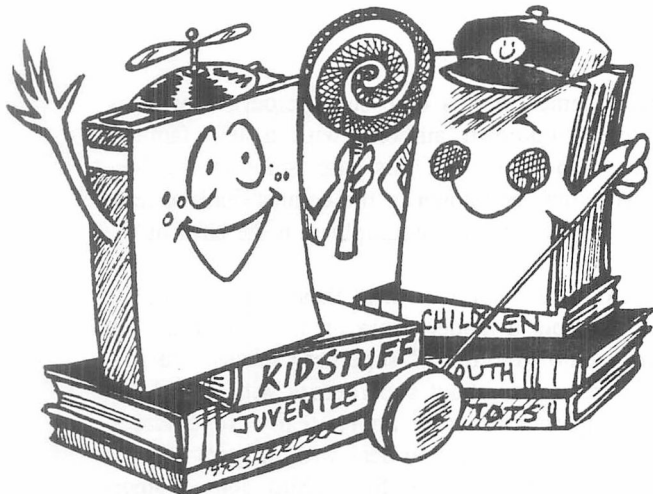
%A Goldstein, Lisa %T Tourists  
%I Orb %C New York  
%D September 1994 %G ISBN 0-312-89011-7  
%P 239pp %O trade pb, US\$11.95 [1989]

WHITE QUEEN by Gwyneth Jones  
Orb, ISBN 0-312-89013-3, 1994, 316pp, US\$12.95

Fans have complained about the peculiar practices of the book-publishing and selling industry that result in the ecologically wasteful practice of stripping books and result in books going out of print too soon. Well, Tor's Orb line is trying to do something about that. Whether the fans respond positively remains to be seen, because there is a price to pay.

The price is that it is not practical to bring some books out in mass market editions, so Orb is a line of trade paperbacks on acid-free paper which are reprints of works that the publishers believe should stay in print even though their market is not the size of, say, the "Star Trek" novels. Tom Doherty has said that all he needs to bring something back into print as an Orb book (other than the ability to get the rights, of course) is the belief that it will sell a thousand copies over an eighteen-month period.

Which brings us to WHITE QUEEN by Gwyneth Jones. This is definitely not a book that would sell at the "Star Trek" level, but certainly would appeal to the literary segment of science



fiction fandom. It is definitely British, with a much more global view than one finds in (most) American science fiction.

It begins, for example, in a fictionalized West African capital with an exiled American electronic journalist who makes contact with aliens who have arrived in Africa, the Aleutian Islands, and Thailand. (In Thailand, they go to a conference on women's issues, thinking that this is where Earth's leaders are.) The aliens seem to be all-powerful and all-benevolent, but we can't seem to understand them. And they can't seem to understand us. One result is that an underground organization, "White Queen," has sprung up to resist the aliens. Unlike the straightforward "first contact" stories of the past, WHITE QUEEN is a more realistic look at what a first contact might really be like.

I have a few of minor nits: The proof-reading could be better. (It appears that whenever the word "for" is followed by a word starting with "ever," the two are joined, e.g., "forevery foreigner.") The cover art is uncredited, which means I don't know whom to berate for putting blue lipstick on someone whose lips were clearly described as "wet ruby" in the same passage as the accurately portrayed armor-petal dress. And will people still be quoting Cole Porter songs in 2038?

As I said, this book isn't for everyone. (I still haven't decided if it's for me.) The writing is convoluted at times, and the machinations and misunderstandings are not easy to follow, especially since the aliens are telepathic and hence communicate on two different levels. But WHITE QUEEN should appeal to "first contact" readers. (It also won the James Tiptree Award, given to stories which deal with gender issues.)

%A Jones, Gwyneth	%T White Queen
%I Orb	%C New York
%D November 1994	%G ISBN 0-312-89013-3
%P 316pp	%O trade pb, US\$12.95 [1991]

THE DYKE & THE DYBBUK by Ellen Galford  
Seal, ISBN 1-878067-51-6, 1994 (1993c), 248pp,  
\$10.95

In a Polish shtetl two hundred years ago, Anya and Gittel were close friends. They talked about traveling to foreign lands and spending their lives together. But Gittel abandoned Anya to marry a scholar, so Anya cursed her and the first-born daughters of her female line down to the thirty-third generation with the curse that they should be possessed by the dybbuk Kokos. Kokos is "exorcised" from Gittel, however, by a pious rabbi who traps Kokos in a tree until a bolt of lightning frees her in the present. Naturally, she needs to find the current recipient of the curse, Gittel's great(7)-granddaughter, one Rainbow Rosenblum, London taxi driver and the other eponymous character.

Now in a situation like this, the obvious approach to take is to show the clash of cultures between a dybbuk out of touch with the world for two hundred years, and a trendy London lesbian. Or you could have had a very up-to-date dybbuk with a much more traditional victim. Galford decides to combine these, however, and the result is a bit jarring. Kokos comes back to discover that her group is now part of Mephistco Industries and run as a modern corporation, but there is no problem, no clash: she slips right into place. Nor is there any sort of clash between Kokos and Rainbow (whom Kokos is, after all, supposed to be tormenting). In fact, they get buddy-buddy almost immediately. The conflict has to come from the fact that if Kokos doesn't get Rainbow on the way to producing Gittel's great(8)-granddaughter in very short order, her assignment will be terminated and she will be demoted, and also from the fact that Rainbow has decided to fall for a good-looking, but apparently unattainable Chasidic woman.

In spite of the somewhat chaotic and illogical plot (why \*is\* Kokos so benign a dybbuk?), there are some funny moments and interesting side comments. (My favorite is Kokos's comment regarding a lesbian dance club: "I don't see what the big fuss is all about. Women dancing with women. Men with men. Big deal. It's the same at any respectable Chasidic wedding.")

I can give only a lukewarm recommendation to this book. Much of the humor is "ethnic," meaning its appeal to non-Jewish readers is somewhat limited, yet its depiction of dybbuks strays considerably from Jewish tradition for those looking for a story based in Jewish tradition. Still, it has some interest for what it attempts to do.



If you can't find this book at your local general or science fiction bookstore, try your local gay and lesbian bookstore. For those in the hinterlands who have neither of these resources, there are several science fiction or gay and lesbian bookstores that do mail-order (the SF Shop in New York; Uncle Hugo's in Minneapolis; Other Change of Hobbit in Berkeley; A Different Light in New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco; Lambda Rising in Washington, etc.), or you can order it direct from Seal Press, 3131 Western Avenue, Suite 410, Seattle WA 98121 (include US\$1.65 for shipping and handling).

%A Galford, Ellen    %T The Dyke & the Dybbuk  
 %I Seal                %C Seattle WA  
 %D October 1994    %G ISBN 1-878067-51-6  
 %P 248pp            %O trade pb, US\$10.95 [1993]



**SUPERHEROES** edited by John Varley and Ricia Mainhardt  
 Ace, ISBN 0-441-00137-8, January 1995, 373pp,  
 US\$12

Well, I looked and looked, but I couldn't find MartinH. Greenberg's name on this anywhere.

But that doesn't mean this is radically different from an anthology that Greenberg \*would\* edit. It's quite similar to the original anthologies DAW is putting out these days: twenty-five new stories, all on a

single theme (in this case superheroes), mostly by relatively unknown authors, with a few familiar names thrown in. (In this case, some of the "unknowns" may be known in the comics field, at least according to the brief biographies in the back of the book.)

As is also common with these anthologies, the idea is to put a modern spin on the old ideas. So there are no "traditional" superhero stories. Instead, there are stories about superheroes with trivial talents, superheroes who aren't really superheroes, superheroes who have to deal with lawyers and the media, superheroes who fight child abuse, superheroes who are politically correct, and superheroes who are politically incorrect--in the literal sense, in Varley's own "Truth, Justice and the Politically Correct Socialist Path." The latter was apparently the inspiration for this volume, but has in the meantime become somewhat dated. I suppose the superhero aspect makes it an alternate history anyway, but still....

The problem with all this terribly 90s stuff is that it becomes predictable after a while. (The blurbs at the beginnings of the stories make this even easier.) There are a couple of above-average stories, such as Paul Kupperberg's "Reflected Glory" and Roger Zelazny's "Long Crawl of Hugh Glass," although strictly speaking, I don't think the latter belongs in this anthology. Varley's story is amusing in a nostalgic sort of way. (What will people do now that they can't make jokes about a road named the "Praise And Honor To The Glorious Heroes Who Stormed The Winter Palace In Petrograd On November 7, 1917 Expressway" or the "Let's All Shout KHOROSHO! To Celebrate The Fifth Party Congress Gulag And Orphanage"?) The others, though, tend to run in fairly predictable and unremarkable paths. While they were at times entertaining enough while I was reading them, they didn't have much in them to dwell upon when they're done.

If you are a comics fan, you will probably enjoy this anthology. For the non-comics fan, however, I suspect it would be disappointing. I'm not sure why Ace chose to bring it out in trade paperback format, though, especially since it is not illustrated. (I mention that only because it seems like the sort of book that \*would\* be illustrated.) Whether there will be a mass market paperback remains to be seen.

%E Varley, John                %E Mainhardt, Ricia  
 %B Superheroes               %I Ace  
 %C New York                %D January 1995  
 %G ISBN 0-441-00137-8    %P 373pp  
 %O trade pb, US\$12



THE DIAMOND AGE by Neal Stephenson  
Bantam Spectra, ISBN 0-553-09609-5, 1995, 416pp,  
US\$22.95

Reading THE DIAMOND AGE is like eating an entire cheesecake. No matter how good it is, one reaches the point where enough is too much.

Stephenson's earlier SNOW CRASH (\*not\* his first, though most people think so) was also written very densely, but not quite as much as this book. The result, at least for me, is that SNOW CRASH was a success, but THE DIAMOND AGE misses the mark. (Stephenson's co-authored INTERFACE was written in a far more straightforward style, but that may have been due to the influence of his co-author.) To carry the dessert metaphor a bit further, you can eat a lot of a moderate dessert, or a little of a very rich dessert, but not a lot of a very rich dessert. Stephenson is making his desserts richer; he needs to cut down on the portion size.

The basic plot is certainly enthralling enough: In the future, nations have been replaced by clones. The Neo-Victorians are one of the major clones, and a leading Neo-Victorian has commissioned a primer--an interactive teaching book--for his daughter. However, the designer makes a second, bootleg copy, which then falls into the hands of a young, lower-class girl. What happens when she receives the same training that an upper-class Neo-Victorian girl would get is part, but just part, of the story.

There is also the question of the reactionary Fists of Righteous Harmony, the Drummers, and the Seed. One of the difficulties in reading THE DIAMOND AGE is that Stephenson has a higher proportion of neologisms than just about any other author writing today. Readers have to remember what a clone is, who the Drummers are, where New Atlantis is, and what chevaline, nanosites, and mediatron mean.

The odd thing is that in spite of the flaws in THE DIAMOND AGE, it will probably be one of the best novels of 1995. Its strengths do make up for a lot. I'm just worried that Stephenson's next book will be even denser and longer. Of course, that would make Stephenson the Umberto Eco of science fiction--not an entirely negative appellation.

%A Stephenson, Neal	%T The Diamond Age
%I Bantam Spectra	%C New York
%D January 16, 1995	%G ISBN 0-553-09609-5
%P 416pp	%O hardcover, US\$22.95

THE MOUNTAINS OF MAJIPOOR by Robert Silverberg  
Bantam Spectra, ISBN 0-553-09614-1, 1995, 240pp,  
US\$19.95

Way back when, when Hector was a pup (September 1950, to be precise), GALAXY ran an ad on their back cover which consisted of two columns of text. The right was a typical Western scenario, with hoofs drumming and the hero ambushed by the bad guys with six-shooters. The left was a science fiction scenario, identical, but with jets blasting and the hero ambushed by the bad guys with proton gun-blasters. This, GALAXY said, was not the sort of science fiction they intended to print.

Alas, Robert Silverberg's MOUNTAINS OF MAJIPOOR is just this sort of science fiction. Prince Harpirias accidentally shot the prize game of a powerful noble, so was exiled to a remote diplomatic post, and then given an opportunity to redeem himself by going into an unexplored land populated by savages and rescuing some scientists. The prince could be English, the remote post India, the unexplored land Tibet, and the bilatoons, tuamiroks, vandars, and onathils, foxes, boars, rabbits, and elk.

Now, since I haven't read the original Majipoor trilogy, it's possible that there is enough background there to make this something more than just a cross between H. Rider Haggard and Rudyard Kipling. And even if there isn't, there's nothing inherently wrong with those sorts of stories. Maybe now that the Earth is pretty much all explored and mapped, anyone wanting to write about mysterious barbarian tribes cut off from the rest of the world has to set his story on a distant planet. And Silverberg does a reasonable job of telling this adventure story, even if it is rather traditional and predictable. But it's not science fiction.

On a purely mechanical note, the layout of the chapter openings (the first nine lines split in the middle by a rectangle of black sky with stars), is very difficult to read. The eye (well, my eye, anyway) wants to read first the left column and then the right, but instead you have to read straight across, jumping over the rectangle nine times. The purpose of typography should be to make the book more readable, not to sacrifice readability for a flashier look.

%A Silverberg, Robert	%I Bantam Spectra
%T The Mountains of Majipoor	
%C New York	%D February 1995
%G ISBN 0-553-09614-1	%P 240pp
%O hardcover, US\$19.95	%S Majipoor
%V 4	

## Some of My Favorite Fanartists

Art has been a somewhat important part of this fanzine. At least I hope it has. We've presented art by a number of different fanartists but actually given them less than their due. Having a little extra space in this, my final issue I thought I'd present some of their work and say just a little about them.



Jim Thompson was introduced to me by Brad Foster. He (Jim) lives up Dallas way.

Brad Foster is conspicuous by his absence this issue. Brad wins fanartist Hugo's. He and his wife Cindy are a couple of my favorite people.

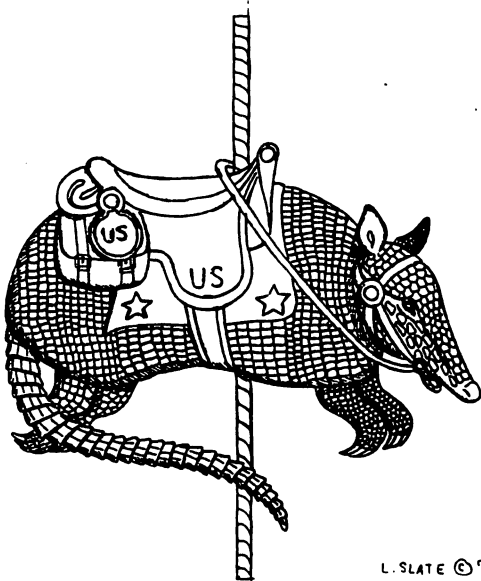


Peggy Ranson has also won Hugos for her marvelous work. She lives in Louisiana.

Linda Michaels,  
IMHO, is the best  
fanartist to not have  
won the Hugo. She  
richly deserves it.

Teddy Harvia is also conspicuous  
by his absence.

My wife, Laurel,  
hasn't done much for  
the zines lately. She's busy  
with school assignments.

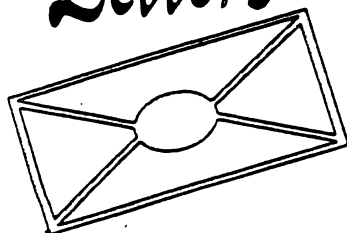


L. SLATE © 94



Sheryl Birkhead (see our  
column headings) is a vet who  
resides in the D.C. area.

# Letters- we Get Letters



A  
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Brian Earl Brown  
Beaconsfield, MI

8-19-94

Dear Alex,

This will be more a short letter of acknowledgment of receiving TSFI 51 & 52 than a letter of comment because I find there's little to comment on this time around. Life's too short to read Evelyn Leeper's conreport; who is too tedious to bother with even if she wasn't long-winded.

I missed many of the early episodes of Babylon 5 but the more recent episodes have been filled with hints of mysteries and "Destinies" providing a far deal of programmatic history. Actually I consider this quite unusual because most American TV show are developed intentionally to be completely interchangeable one episode to the next. Growth, Evolution were regarded (I assume) as counter-productive. You speak of the evolving history on ST:TNG but I confess I don't see it. Oh, there are vague traces of it, like Wesley's presence at the Academy but nothing much else. Maybe I'm just looking for connections more closely in B5 than ST:TNG. In any case we are in agreement the ST:DS9 pretty much sucks. Just why DS9 sucks is hard to say - although, yes, the characters are for the most part bland. I think they suffer from the Riker problem. There seems to be little liking or empathy among views for the Will Riker character on TNG and yet there's no one obvious thing to explain this antipathy. Is the actor too smug in his role? Is the character bland and passionless with no apparent purpose on the show?

Well, whatever.

Regards

*Some examples of the continuity in TNG are Picard's playing of the flute from one episode to the next, the Denise Crosby Romulan character, the relationship which was slowly growing between Worf and Deanna. Granted, that TNG wasn't consistent in this and the personal growth of the characters wasn't what it should have been, but I think this is quite a bit audience driven. Fans often hate change of a major type.*

Joseph Nicholas  
15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4JU, UK

9 December 1994

Dear FACT

Thanks for *The Texas SF Inquirer* 53. On its way to you be surface, posted about a month ago, is the long overdue sixteenth issue of *FTT*, which I imagine should reach you around the Christmas/New Year break (if it hasn't done so already: we received our first North American response earlier this week, so some copies have obviously got through quicker than one might have expected).

This will be a short letter, since I have nothing much I wish to say, and all of it in response to E A Graham's short article. Obviously, I don't have first-hand knowledge of the television commercials to which he refers, but I can tell him that the song which accompanies the Miller beer promotion is "For What It's Worth", written by Stephen Stills in response to the 1965 Sunset Strip riots and performed by Buffalo Springfield, of which he was then a member. (With "Fixing To Fly" and "In The Hour Of Not Quite Rain", it's probably one of their best songs.) Although he suggests that the line "There's a man with a gun over there" has been excised to protect the sensibilities of the censorious US television audience, it strikes me as more likely that the whole of the verse in which it appears -- and all the other verses as well -- have been excised, so that the song cuts straight from the intro to the chorus (which he slightly misquotes: it's actually "Stop, hey, what's that sound/Everybody look what's going done"). Or maybe not -- if the lines "There's something happening here/What it is ain't exactly clear", which immediately precedes the excised line, *do* appear then there has been some censoring, and Stills should sue.

In his first paragraph, though, Graham says that although he has a poor musical memory, he does remember that Cream (note the spelling -- it's not Cream [*that was probably my typo - Alex*]) performed Layla was recorded by Eric Clapton alone in 1971 and -- in an attempt to distance himself from the hero-worship which then dogged him -- released under the pseudonum of Derek & The Dominoes.

Finally, Graham says that the current owner of the Beatles catalogue should be shot -- presumably for liscensing the songs to inappropriate commercials. He may be interested to learn, therefore, that the current owner of Northern Songs Limited, the company incorporated to hold the copyright in material written jointly by Lennon and McCartney, is not other than Michael Jackson.

Yours

*Ed responds, "I know who owns the rights to the Beatle's songs. My comment still stands."*

Lloyd Penney  
412-4 Lisa St., Brampton, ON, Canada L6T 4B6

December 23, 1994

Dear Alex:

I've got the September Issue of TSFI, issue 53, in front of me, but I don't think it's been here long. No matter, I think I'm catching up on things. It's been a while since the last issue, but since then, there's been Worldcon and the fanzine lounge, which went terrifically well, and fall conventions, and... well, the fanzine backlog has been tremendous. Don Fitch said recently that he wasn't experiencing a fanzine renaissance, but a fanzine tsunami. I know of which he speaks, but I'm fighting the stack down to a small pile.

Congratulations on San Antonio winning the 1997 Worldcon! (Some would say condolences...be careful what you ask for, you might just get it.) I imagine the bidcom is still recovering from the victory. Yvonne and I have volunteered to run the fanzine lounge at Lonestarcon 2, and we fully intend to compete in the chili cook-off.

My general attitude towards O.J. Simpson is "Who cares?", although it's clear that a lot of people do care what happens to him. I think the Simpson situation affected Bills fans in Buffalo, which may be a reason why the Bills missed out on their fifth opportunity in a row to lose the Super Bowl. Casey, exactly what small town near Olean, NY did you grow up in? You'd probably be happy to know that in this area, it's two days before Christmas, and there isn't a scrap of snow on the ground.

You list plenty of awards, but not the Fan Auroras! I won for Fan Achievement (Organizational). The full list is in Locus and File 770. Many of the masquerade award winners were Canadian, which is good to see. Canadian costumers have been taking home the big awards for many years now.

One complaint many people had about ConAdian was the committee not answering their mail. We all know people have jobs, lives and many other things to do, but when a letter is sent, and re-sent, and other letters follow, either to volunteer or to ask a question, and all are ignored (not personal experience), then people get justifiable steamed. Otherwise, the convention ran smoothly on site, and people seem genuinely happy with this small but cozy Worldcon.

[proton edited] Don Fitch describes Garth Spencer's efforts to assemble a Convention How-To

Book. Such a handbook might be a good idea, if it were not for the fact that conventions seem to be a quite different depending on what area of the continent you're on. What might work for Ad Astra here might not work for Aggiecon, or for any other convention. Ad Astra borrowed a lot of good ideas from other conventions in the Michigan and Ohio.

An update on Worldcons...Baltimore has had to move their proposed date into August because they lost the Baltimore Convention Center for the Labor Day weekend. I'd heard that Atlanta in '98 had folded in the middle of this year, but they were in full force in Winnipeg, and I can't remember if they were bidding for 1998 or another year. There is rumor of a Toronto in 2000 bid being planned by the Winnipeg Worldcon folks, but here's something I can confirm...Toronto in 2003! A flyer is enclosed.

End of fanzine, so it's time to go. I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and a happy, prosperous 1995. Bye!

Yours,

*Casey told me that the little town was Portville. Her purpose in writing the article was that the OJ trial has a little different emotional impact on her than most of the fans down here since she grew up in that area.*



Mike Whalen  
PO Box 55422, Metairie, LA 70055-5422

Did I actually send you Phassioate Fulcrum #2? I don't remember. I suppose I should check my mail out notes before I ask that question, but it makes for some bit of conversation.

I read and enjoyed The Texas SF Inquirer, but I must say that I found the story on Confransisco a bit dated. I can certainly understand how it came to be in this issue, but it was just sorta weird.

Do you guys have a Winnipeg report? I wouldn't mind seeing it as the Confransisco was a very good article. I liked getting a panel-by-panel account of what went on.

Thanks for this. Please send more!  
Sincerely,

*Yes, you did send Phassionate Fulcrum #2. Glad you enjoyed the fanzine. Evelyn's con report was very long, which made the serializing necessary. I could probably have gotten Evelyn's Winnipeg report, but since this is my last issue as editor, I didn't want to oblige my successor to have to print anything. I also didn't get any other reports. - Alex*

#### WAHF

Kelly Freas Studios - A 1995 calendar featuring Kelly's work is available. Contact Laura Brodian at 818-992-1252 for further information. The calendar is also available direct from the publisher at (800)937-5557 for \$8.99.

SF Belgium  
Henry Welch aka Knarley  
Baen Books



# Trades Listing



## ♣ APA: NESFA October 94

ed: Mark Hertel, 93 Greenwood Rd., Andover, MA 01810. NESFA's APA. I'm not even going to try and review an APA.

## ♣ BCSFAZine #256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262

ed. R. Graeme Cameron; BCSFA, 1855 West 2nd Ave., Apt 110, Vancouver, BC V6J 1J1. A new address. What do I think of *BCSFZine*? Didn't you read the editorial? #260 is a memorial to fan and artist Sara Brearley (Peregrin).

## ♣ Ben'Zine #4

Ben Zuhl, 2239 Highland Ave., Falls Church, VA 22046. Long time fanzine fan Ben returns to the scene after a long overseas absence. Except for of an explanation of the long absence, the articles are on conventions and convention travel. Welcome back, Ben.

## ♣ Canadian Journal of Detournement 1-5

Sent along with the latest *Opuntia's* by Dale Spiers.

Strange little shorts, basically all editorial cartoons.

## Challenger 2

Guy H. Lillian III, PO Box 53092, New LA 70153-3092.

An interesting fanzine, that has survived challenge by Ted White (at least for one issue). A variety of topics including a con reminiscence, a GOH speech and Guy's remembrances of the 60s in Berkeley.

## DASFAX Aug 94, Sep 94, Oct 94, Nov 94, Jan 95

eds. Rose Beetem & Fred Cleaver; DASFA, c/o Rose Beetem, 3225 W. 29th Ave., Denver CO 80211-3705. (Aug) Two more Denver fans pass away, bringing the total this year to three. Not a good year for the mile high city. (Sep) Jenny Glover from the UK sends a different type of 'hecto jelly' recipe. (Oct) Review of *Timecop*, *Heavy Weather*, *Northern Stars* and *Black Holes and Baby Universes*. (Nov) *Stargate* review. (Jan) More stuff.

## ♣ DASFAx March 95

ed. Mitzi Barlett, 1755 Fraser Court, Aurora CO 80011-4449. A new editor, but no real changes.

## ♣ De Profundis #269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275

ed. Tim Merrigan; Los Angeles SFS, 11513 Burbank Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91601. News and club minutes, though the club minutes are a little more interesting than most. (#271) I recommend everyone, particularly the FACT Board of Directors read at the least, the minutes of the LASFS BoD; some of the regular meeting minutes (re LOSCON) should also be read.

## ♣ Envoy V.1 #1, 2

Aaron Allston, PO Box 564, Round Rock, TX 78680-0564. Aaron's first. Info on the Texas SF scene, concentrating on the pro writing side. Includes a profile of Austinite Bruce Sterling (author of the newly released *Heavy Weat-her*) by Alan Varney (#1) and Tom Knowles by Martha Welss (#2).

## ♣ Fictons 6

BCSFA. "A collection of short fiction by members of the B.C. Science Fiction Assn. Writers' Workshop." Most are only so-so, but I do recommend "Canis Mechanicus" by Eugene James and "Queensnight" by Lisa Shepherd.

## File 770 #105, 106, 107

Mike Glycer, 5828 Woodman Ave #2, Van Nuys CA 91401. Lots of news, most of which is old hat by now. Anyway, congratulations Mike and Peggy Rae. Mike is obviously bucking for another Hugo, he's publishing a lot more often these days. #106 is pretty much a Canadian issue. (107) *File 770* becomes *Ansifile* (for this issue at least). A note on the first page explains it, if you don't already understand.

## Fosfax #171, 172, 173

Eds. Tim Lane & Elizabeth Garrott; FOSFA, PO Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281. *FOSFAx* is getting to be pretty consistant in terms of content.

## Frozen Frog #10 (October 94)

Benoit Girard (pronounced Ben-wah Je-rar), 1016 Guillaume-Boiset, Cap-Rouge, Quebec, Canada. A fanzine seen much to infrequently. Benoit is one of the finer up-and-coming faneds. You can sort of tell, when a fan-zine gets to the point where over half (of a decent sized zine anyway) is locs. An article on American comics (US ones this time).

## Habakkuk 3:4

Bill Donaho, 626 58th St., Oakland CA 94609. More killer book reviews by Debbie Notkin and Ted White does fanzine reviews. An article on the early days of Los Angeles fandom, and a loccol that continues to burgeon.

## Insider #187, 188, 189, 190

ed. Kay Goode; St. Louis SFS, POB 1058, St. Louis, MO 52188-1058. (187) Hints on traveling in Canada and a silly pastiche of ST:TNG involving Bill Gates and Microsoft. (188) Funny, nothing about the World-con site selection in this issue. (189) The start to a Canadian trip report and all the World-con award winners, but nothing about site selection. Also a



remembrance of meeting Frederic Brown. (190)  
The St. Louis club seems to be a club in trouble.

♣ **Instant Message 553-563**

ed. Rick Katze (?); NESFA, POB 809, Framingham MA 01701-0203. Every once in a rare while NESFA prints an *IM* that is actually readable. #553 was one of those times. Shock! Horror! So was #554. You know, guys, that fannish lore has it that twice makes a tradition. #555, however, almost returns to total boredom. #556 indicates that #555 may have been a temporary throwback aberration. In fact it was the most interesting *IM* to date., #557 - less interesting. #558 - Magic the Garhering has hit NESFA. 559& 561 - Zzzz.

♣ **Journal for Space Development** June, July/Aug 94

ed. Richard Braastad/Carl Guderian; Houston Space Society, PO Box 266151, Houston TX 77207-6151. (June) Richard's last issue as editor. Features "A 19th century approach to space development" which compares space to railroads and canals. (J/A) New editor Carl Guderian takes over. Stuff on Shoemaker-Levy and the Internet.

**Knarley Knews #48, 49, 50**

Henry & Letha Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Granfton WI 53024-2077. I can't believe that Knarley and Letha were actually able to make it to Conadian! #49 contains the cartoon laws of physics. Congratulations!!! on # 50. Knarley and Letha have also picked up another effort (see below).

♣ **Mobius Strip** Aug 94, Sep 94, Oct 94

ed. Donna Aranda; El Paso SFFA, POB 3177, El Paso, TX 79923. A new editor and a new masthead.

♣ **MSFire #1**

editors?? but I think it's Knarley & Letha; Milwaukee Science Fiction Services. It's sort of a cross between *DASFax*, *BCSFAzine*, and *The Knarley Knews*.

♣ **Opuntia** 20.2, 21, 21.1, 22, 22.1, 22.5, 23

Dale Spiers, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2P 2E7. (20.2) The *Opuntia* index. (21) Dale does Conadian, and more. (21.1) Fanzine reviews. (22) A defense of print publishing in the age of the information super-highway. (22.1) Some fanzine capsules and some stuff on the fall of Communism and the flow of money. On the rest, the beat rolls on.

**PSFS News** Sep 94

ed. Rich Kabakjian; Philadelphia SFS, PO Box 8303, Philadelphia, PA 19101.  
Just about all news.

**Rambling Way** #46, 48, 49, 50, 51

W. Andrew York, POB 2307, Universal City TX 78143-1307. More than just postal-Dip moves.

**Reasonable Freethinker #3**

Tom Feller, Box 13626, Jackson, MS 39236; CCWS74A@prodigy.com. Tom updates us on his life and there are reviews of movies and books.

♣ **Reluctant Famulus #38**

Thomas Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave, Adrian, MI 49921-1627. The first one we've seen in a while. Among other contents, it contains Terry Jeeves' reminiscences of life as a British Officer in WWII.

♣ **Space Cadet #1**

R. Graeme Cameron, 1855 West 2nd Ave., Apt 110, Vancouver, BC V6J 1J1. Graeme is doing the same as I, leaving as editor of his club zine (*BCSFAzine*; later than I) and starting his own fanzine (earlier than I). *Space Cadet* is that zine. In which we begin to get an insight into the earlier history of Graeme.

**Spent Brass #27**

Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave. N., #103, Seattle, WA 98103. Well written and interesting, the best of which was Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll on how Readercon 7 was or was not like WisCon.

**Sticky Quarters #24**

Brian Earl Brown, 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit, MI 48224. Continues "The Sarah Chronicles."

**Trash Barrel**

Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606-2308. Capsule fanzine reviews.

**Westwind** #192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197

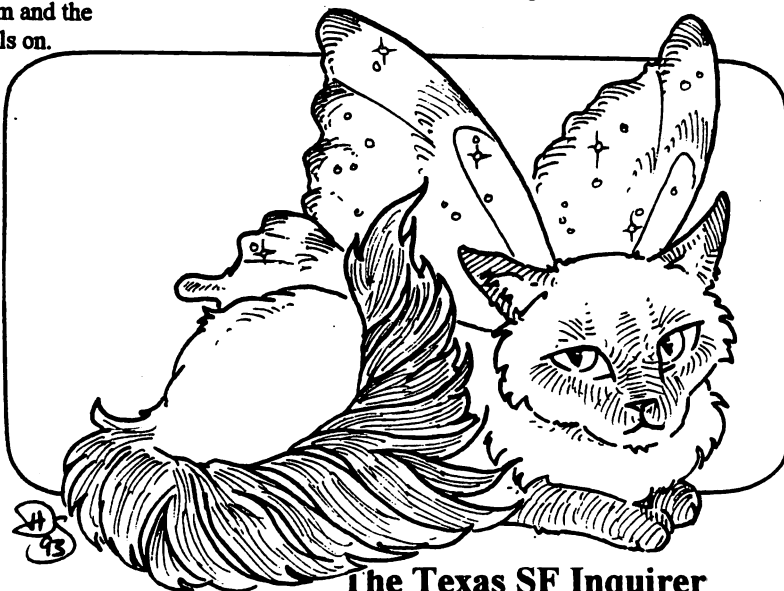
ed. George Nyhen; NWSFS, POB 24207, Seattle WA 98124. (192) Special Conadian issue, without a single mention of Conadian that I could find. The fiction was better than most, but I think I've seen it before. (193) An article about on-line role-playing, called MUDs, Multi-User Dungeons. (194) A response to an article in #193. (195) Tattoos as gifts. (196) Pretty much a Norwescon 18 progress report. (197) Really just a basic clubzine.

♣ **White Trash** Fall 94

Thomas Anthony Longo, POB 130121, Roseville, MN 55113-0121. No opinion on the contents yet, but the layout needs a lot of work.

♣ **Wondering & Wandering #5**

Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722. The last issue was *From Sunday to Saturday*. Either way it's Don's perzine and worth reading.



# Conventional

## April 21-23 AmigoCon X

Quality Inn Airport, El Paso, TX

Fuests: Michael Moorcock, Judith Tarr, Peggy Ranson

Info: AmigoCon, PO Box 3177, El Paso TX 79923,  
(800)585-8574.

## May 26-28 Thundercon 5

Century Center, Oklahoma City, OK

Info: PO Box 892545, Oklahoma City, OK 73189-2545

## May 26-28 ConQuest 26

Park Place Hotel, Kansas City, MO

Guests: Octavia Butler, Mike Resnick, David Lee  
Anderson, Cheryl Medley, Mike Glyer.

Inof: \$16 (until April 95), Box 36212, Kansas MO 64171

## May 26-29 Leprecon 21

Fransisco Grande Resort, Casa Grande, AZ

Info: Leprecon Inc., PO Box 26665, Tempe, AZ 85285

## July 13-16 NASFIC '95

Atlanta Hilton & Towers, Atlanta GA

Guests: Orson Scott Card, George Alec Efiinger, Bjo  
Trimble, Michael Whelan, Timothy Zahn

Info: \$40 until June 15, then \$45. Dragon Office.

## Aug 24-28 Intersection (Worldcon 53)

Scottish Exh & Conference Center, Glasgow Scotland

Guests: Samuel R. Delany, Gerry Anderson

Info: \$85 (\$25 supporting) 121 Cape Hill, Smethwick,  
Warley, West Mids, B66 4SH UK

## Oct 6-8 ArmadilloCon 17

Red Lion Hotel, Austin, TX

Guests: Alexander Jablov, Vincent Di Fate, Dick &  
Leah Zeldes Smith, Terry Bisson

Info: \$20 (until 4/30), contact FACT

## July 4-7 1996 ConDiablo (Westercon)

Camino Real Paso del Norte Hotel, El Paso, TX

Guests: James P. Blaylock, Howard Waldrop, Brad Foster,  
Arnie & Joyce Katz, Pat Cadigan

Info: \$30 (until Dec 31), PO Box 3177, El Paso, TX 79923

## 1996 LAcon III (Worldcon 54)

Anaheim Convention Center, Anaheim CA

Guests: James White, Roger Corman, Takmi & Schiko  
Shibano, Connie Willis, Elsie Wollheim

Info: \$75, c/o SCIFI, PO Box 8442, Van Nuys, CA 91409

## 1997 LoneStarCon 2 (Worldcon 55)

San Antonio Texas

Guests: Algis Budrys, Michael Moorcock, Roy Tackett,  
Neal Barrett, Jr.

Info: \$65, LoneStarCon 2, PO Box 27277, Austin TX  
78755-2277

## Bids

1998 Worldcon - Niagara Falls, NY; Baltimore, MD;  
Boston, MA; Atlanta, GA; Arkham, MA; NY, NY;  
TinyMUD

1999 Worldcon - Novosibirsk, Russia; Portland, OR;  
Wellington, New Zealand; Las Vegas NV;  
Dusseldorf, Germany, Melbourne, Australia;  
Kettlemen City, CA

2000 - Worldcon - Kansas City, MO; Chicago, IL;  
Jerusalem, Isreal

2001 - Boston, MA; Philadelphia, PA

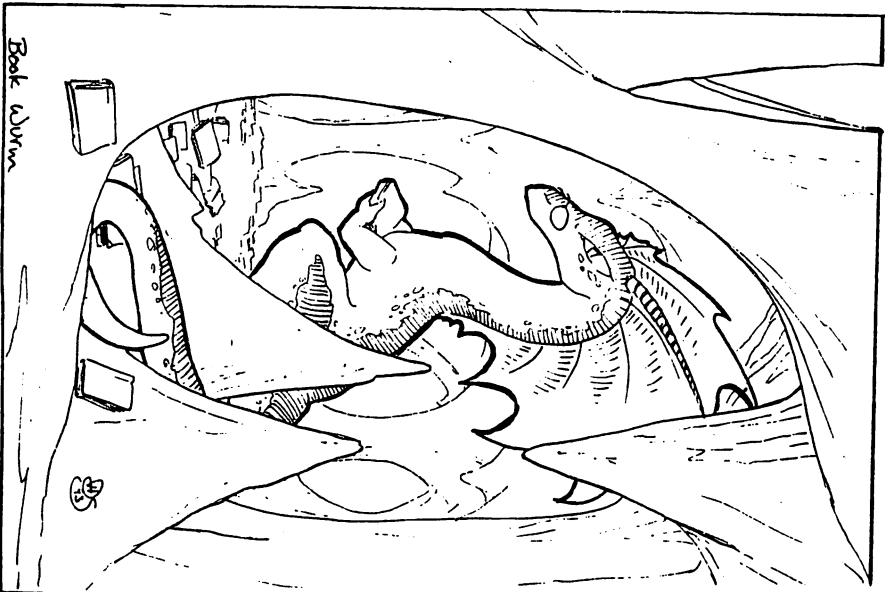
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