

Steve
Stiles

GREETINGS

Welcome to Twink. The title is from the familiar nursery rhyme: "Starkle starkle little twink/How I wonder what I think." We would have used "starkle" but James H. Schmitz beat us out by thirty years or so. (See The Witches Of Karres, p. 256.)

CONTRIBUTIONS POLICY

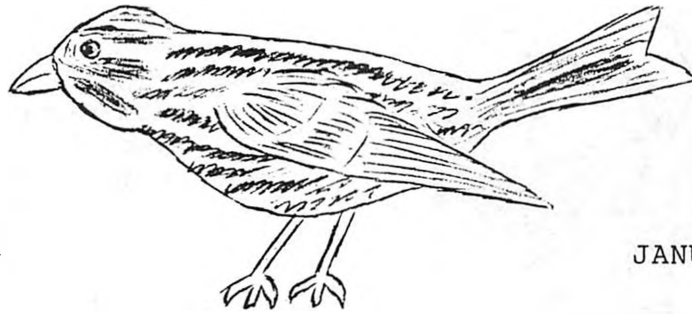
The lifeblood of any fanzine is reader participation. We actively encourage your contributions and feedback. WHAT WE WANT: Articles clearly about SF/fantasy/fandom/some clearly related topic. Brevity is a plus, but say what you need to say. Book/film reviews of SF/fantasy or related works. (We personally have no great interest in horror.) Again we encourage brevity. Art work to include cover art: we obviously have no talent in that area. One column-width or horizontal half-page size is most convenient. LOC's are actively solicited. WHAT WE DON'T WANT: If you wish to state your views on abortion, the Middle East, or the President, write your local newspaper. We do not want to get into the "what I did on my vacation" travelogue thing. Convention reports, if timely, are distinct from travelogues. No amateur fiction/no amateur poetry, please. All contributions are subject to editing for length and content. This does not mean we will censor controversy. We are all in favor of intelligent controversy; we're just not into ad hominem insults or gratuitous vulgarisms just to be offensive. Contributions represent the opinions of individuals and should not be construed as the opinion of Twink or its editorial staff. If you want your material returned, please send SASE. All letters will be presumed to be LOC's and considered for publication unless clearly marked "NFP". All fanzines received in trade will be subject to review herein. No floppy discs please. Thank you.

As our second year begins, we feel a mixture of satisfaction and disappointment. Progress has been made. Twink and "Frohvet" have staked out a place, however small, in the dialogue that is fanzine fandom. Certainly the magazine as it now appears is much closer to, though not entirely congruent with, what we originally had in mind.

The new year is by definition a time of changes, and we're making some. The first will come as no surprise: Twink is officially going quarterly. Basically we do the magazine as the material comes in, and the bulk of that is in the first month or so after an issue is released. You can expect #5 in April, then July, October, and so on. In an obvious visual change, the much-hated black column lines have been eliminated; we hope you agree this improves the "look" of the zine.

Reaction was mixed, but generally negative, concerning some remarks we made last issue about two artists. On further consideration, we believe we owe at least one of them an apology. The first artist who was asked to illustrate the Bothari article simply didn't respond at all, which irritated us. When the second one declined, our anger made the letter seem less polite than it was. In fact, that person's response was civil, and we overreacted. Your editor was ungracious, to put it charitably, and we apologize.

On a more upbeat note, we now have the pleasant duty of thanking everyone who contributed generously to the current (and future) issues. Special thanks to: Steve Stiles, who turned a tossed-off phrase into this issue's amazing cover; Marge B. Simon, who turned over several folios of her art with permission to use it as we saw fit; Ed Meskys at NIEKAS, who helpfully put us in touch with Ms. Simon; William Rotsler, who donated a stack of his Hugo-caliber fan art; Robert Lichtman, who with great charity made Mr. Rotsler's art available to us; Victor Gonzalez at Apparatchik for constructive criticism and suggestions; Kevin W. Welch for his fascinating lead article.



TWINK #4

JANUARY 1997

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Twink is a fanzine published quarterly. Our next issue is scheduled for: April 1997. Our main focus is on SF/fantasy/fandom. Twink is available for contributions, LOC's, cookies, in trade for your fanzine, or by editorial whim. All contributions are greatly appreciated. We can't publish all of every letter, but we were certainly glad to hear from you. Keep those cards, letters and fanzines coming. If you wrote/contributed/sent a fanzine, you will stay on our mailing list. However, anyone who does not respond after two issues in a row may be dropped from the mailing list without further notice.

Twink

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THE WOUNDED CITY
by Kevin W. Welch

Dhalgren is a novel about a city named Bellona and a kid named Kid who has some adventures and writes a book of poetry without quite being aware of how he did it. That's really all it is about. Dhalgren is the longest SF novel ever published in a single volume and it sold about a million copies in the 1970's which was also, you remember, the decade of The Brady Bunch and Star Wars. Then it went out of print and stayed that way until Wesleyan Press reissued it in trade format with an introduction by William Gibson that pretty much is the smartest thing ever said about this great novel.

What Gibson says is that Dhalgren is about the feel of the city itself, which was the feeling of a lot of cities back then, in the early 70's. This was the counterculture, remember. People went to seedy cities and campus towns and tried to create spaces for themselves where they could live apart. They created their own

institutions -- newspapers, co-ops, vegetarian restaurants, bookstores and clubs. People wanted nothing to do with mass culture, with what they saw as predatory capitalism. They wanted alternatives.

It was all so silly, of course. It was a time when you might read a Trotskyite newspaper thinking it contained real news. It was a time when people talked about the "war machine" with a straight face. The counterculture, in the end, was a lot of paranoid daydreaming about The Man versus The People. It bore about as much connection to the real world as the conspiracy daydreams of the American militias.

And a lot of it was about drugs, and that is truly regrettable. There was still a core of a vision there for society that was comparable, say, to the Transcendentalists of the 1840's. Drugs were bad, of course, and they messed up a lot of people. The Vietnam war was bad, too, and that messed people up just as badly.

In the 70's the culture was subversive and novels like Dhalgren were the result. This wasn't just something that came out of Delany's head. His friend Tom Disch wrote a collection of short stories titled 334 which is basically about Bellona with twelve million people, and J.G. Ballard and Barry Malzberg fretted away the first half of the decade with apocalyptic dread. Philip K. Dick questioned all of reality itself.

SF wasn't the only thing going a little nuts. So were the movies of the time, once you got past the blockbusters. Chinatown and Taxi Driver and MASH and Carnal Knowledge and Five Easy Pieces and Badlands and McCabe And Mrs. Miller and Fat City and The Conversation were all great films about outlaws and non-laws living on the edge of civilization, literally or figuratively, trying to find space to make sense of things. Everybody in authority was a phony and the whole point of living was to cut through the crap. The best movies of the decade, the Godfather films, were definitive outlaw works. These movies didn't have happy endings, and sometimes, like Dhalgren, they didn't have endings at all.

You saw it everywhere, in R. Crumb comix or in novels like Gravity's Rainbow. It was always a different city like

Gibson says. It was coextensive with the city you lived in, but it was different, someplace else. You could get there, though. That city was Bellona.

It's easy to think of Dhalgren as set in the future or in some indeterminate, sort-of present, but the few clues available place the novel firmly in the past. "The Anathemata: A Plague Journal" section at one point halts to describe an envelope placed in the notebook; it is addressed to Mrs. Richards (with her husband's name significantly misspelled) and it is clearly the same airmail letter the Kid took out of the Richards' mailbox. The return address is "Los Angeles 6, California". There is no zip code, only the older postal zone code. Zones were replaced by zip codes in 1963. The envelope is franked with two eight-cent stamps. Effective January 7, 1963, sixteen cents paid for a two ounce air mail letter sent within the U.S.; this rate lasted into 1968. I would not bet that Delany is a stamp collector or postal historian, but he is damned specific about these two details. Much of the action of Dhalgren takes place in the spring of 1963, on the bright side of the 1960's.

Think about it; in the spring of 1963 JFK was still alive. There was no Vietnam yet -- nobody heard of the place before Diem was killed that fall. In spring 1963 Delany was 21 and hanging around Greenwich Village, playing folk music in clubs and writing SF novels. Twenty-one is a time in your life that you probably remember fondly, later, as being a kind of golden time, when your life was fresh and the city seemed to have possibilities. Think of Dhalgren, then, as a utopian novel about a city and a time when almost anything is possible. In Bellona, with its pair of moons and massive red sun, that was quite literally true.

I read Dhalgren one summer in Ithaca. I was living by myself in a dumpy College Avenue apartment and I was supposed to have two roommates. Both were gone most of the time and I had the place to myself. I was putting in time, waiting to move to Seattle.

I read it at night, when I got home from work or the library. I listened to the radio a lot, to jazz on the college station, or to the Democratic convention,

where Jimmy Carter was nominated. I read it only at night and I remember a dreamy feeling when I read it. I thought something should happen soon but nothing ever did and somehow I found that all right.

Bits of it scared the hell out of me; the moons, the giant sun, the red eyecaps, Kid's fugues. The scariest was when Kid found the store room filled with boxes of eyecaps and orchids and mirrors and chains. It was like lifting the floorboards of utopia and looking at the infrastructure. Freedom was unlimited but at the same time manufactured.

I was 23 and hardly scared of the dark anymore. Every night, whatever I read would keep me from falling asleep easily. Soon after I read Dhalgren I had a series of dreams, all related, that took place in landscapes of urban waste, where mysterious characters wandered through rubble and broken streets. They always took place at night and while I identified these dreams with Seattle or Madison or Buffalo or New York or Washington D.C., I knew they were about Bellona. I had these dreams for twenty years: that's how the book affected me.

That's why I never cared that I never read another book like it. Nobody ever really published anything similar. That's odd; SF is an imitative and derivative exercise and someone should have taken a shot at it. I'm just as glad nobody did. Dhalgren is like a Terrence Mallick film. He only did two, Badlands and Days Of Heaven, and both were like nothing I'd ever seen. Critics love them but the public is completely indifferent. They are moody, dreamy, and the characters sometimes speak their lines sidewise, showing that they have completely different assumptions about how the world operates. Nobody has ever done anything like them.

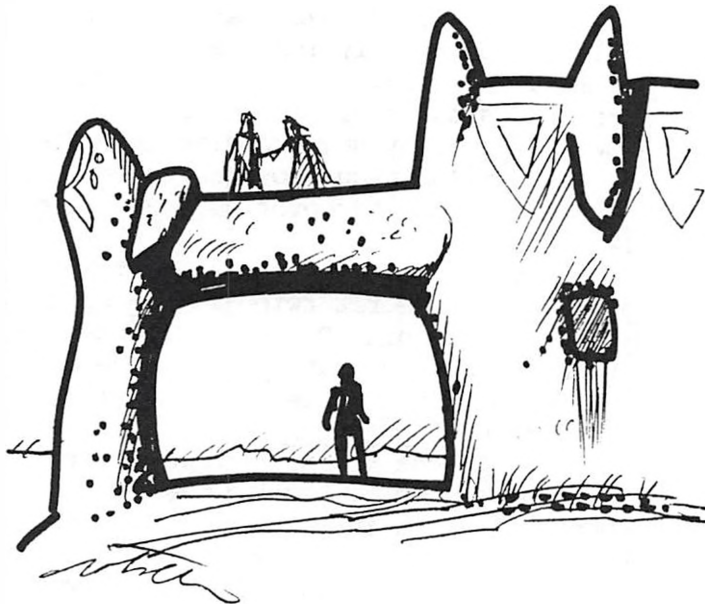
The novel I always associate with Dhalgren, its secret twin, is A Scanner Darkly. You'd think Delany and Dick have nothing in common, but Scanner revels in the same underground seediness that is the terrain of Dhalgren. Dick shows the underground gone wrong, though; speed kills and all that. Death is everywhere, symbolically and in point of fact, and Synanon tries to take over the world. Both books clearly started with a common

set of near-utopian assumptions about the future of America. Of the two, Dick's is the one that came true.

The scorpions deal drugs now and they're about to open a crack house across the street. If you don't like it, they have Uzis now, and they keep the brass orchids for show. Bellona is very dangerous now -- gangs, drive-bys, AIDS. In 1970, you could be poor and genteel. It was a career choice for middle class dropouts. Now, poverty is about nothing but despair.

Dhalgren makes no sense anymore because the big cities are all rotted and poor and drug-infested. Nobody moves to Detroit or South Los Angeles to drop out and get away. Livable cities, like Madison or Seattle, are yupped-up centers of coffee house culture, where folks have too much money. Nothing wrong with that; but the Kid would feel out of place there too.

Actually, I imagine the Kid did pretty well for himself. After scuffling for a couple of years, he probably recorded Brass Orchids as a spoken word set in collaboration with Henry Rollins. Two more volumes of poetry, gigs as "artist in residence" in the Minneapolis and Santa Fe school systems, and now his memoirs have been optioned by New Line Entertainment, who are looking for the next Basketball Diaries.



[[Editor's note: We, too, wrote a short article about Dhalgren. By an odd coincidence, we independently arrived at the same metaphor; though nominating another volume for siblinghood. Perhaps between the two comments, readers will feel they gain some small insight. Therefore, as a companion piece to Mr. Welch's article, we offer...]]

TWINS
by E.B. Frohvet

They are two of SF's most respected books. In style and structure, they are antithetical. In theme they form a peculiar linkage: fraternal twins of anarchy, dark brother and bright sister, yin and yang of sociopolitics, inextricably holding up funhouse mirrors to each other at odd angles.

Dhalgren, by Samuel R. Delany; The Dispossessed, by Ursula K. LeGuin.

Any understanding of these books must rest first on the distinction between government and social contract. The dictionary defines anarchy as "the state of society where there is no law". This is traditionally viewed as a negative, as reflected in the synonym of "chaos".

But anarchy is the absence of government, not the absence of social contract. Every grouping of people has some understandings determining how people interact. The simplest is "Og, son of Ug", based on the notion that the strongest and/or most aggressive imposes his will on others by physical intimidation. A reasonably pure form of this may be observed on any playground. Its political manifestation is that most traditional of human governments, military warlordism. Fill in the blank of your favorite tyrant: Stalin, Hitler, Pol Pot, Idi Amin -- to confine the record merely to 20th Century examples.

The relationship between government and social contract is inherently uneasy. Rarely, an explicit social contract may define the government (Constitution of the United States). More often, the government defines and imposes the social contract it chooses, either by consensus (United Kingdom) or by brute force (The People's Republic of China). Revolution, and anarchy in the "traditional" sense,

occur when the government is unable to fulfill the social contract on which the majority of power brokers (which may or may not include the public) have agreed.

Creating hypothetical societies is the stock in trade of SF. It therefore comes as no surprise that it is in SF where one finds portraits of an anarchist society. Dhalgren and The Dispossessed are two definitive examples.

Despite its transcendental language and dream-vivid imagery, Delany's novel is the less revolutionary portrait of the pair. This is an anarchy of the traditional and accidental sort. For reasons never explained, an American city has simply come apart at the seams, largely unnoticed by the rest of the country. Most of the population have fled, leaving the smoldering remains of Bellona inhabited by the dregs and outcasts of "normal" society: gangs disguised by hallucinatory hologram-shields, dope-smoking hippies, blacks, gays, and poets. The protagonist is a mixed-race, bisexual former mental patient who has forgotten his name; and the book is a deliberately disjointed "journey of wonders" (almost an immram as the Old Irish word would be) as Kid wanders the tumbledown city and meets its eccentric people.

No one planned Bellona, it merely happened. The social contract is implicit and amorphous, as ambiguous as the smoke which seems always to be drifting in the streets. Law and authority have vanished, and the residents work out their interactions by trial and error. Delany is of course using this to bring under scrutiny doctrinaire positions of "normal" society. A black rapist and his white "victim" -- the ambiguous quotation marks are deliberate -- are studied with detached sympathy; a roving gang find themselves responsible for abandoned children. Everyone answers to his own sense of order, and cooperation, while it exists, is strictly voluntary.

The society described by LeGuin in The Dispossessed could hardly be more different. Here we find an anarchist society which was deliberately engineered by a single gifted theoretician. Her followers proved such a nuisance to the authorities -- the "archists" as LeGuin wittily puts it -- that they were deported en masse to a

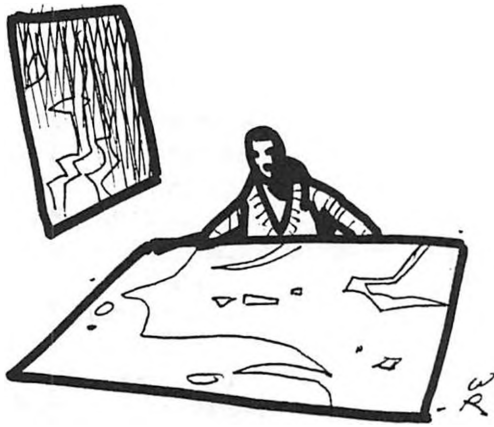
barely habitable moon. The novel takes place several generations later.

The 19th Century philosopher Francois Fourier proposed a society based on group homes of unrelated adults and group ownership of property (what we would now call a kibbutz). His countryman Pierre Proudhon went one better and suggested all physical property should be commonly owned, and all interactions freely negotiated among individuals. LeGuin's "Annaresti" are yet further down the same road. Peer pressure and social disapproval have taken the place of law. The worst social offense is to be a "propertarian", one who covets physical possessions more than the barest essentials for survival. (Like Buddhist monks?) So deeply engrained is this ethic that small children are encouraged to say the neutral "the parent" rather than the possessive "my mother". Children beyond the age of three are raised in communal nurseries. Personal names are randomly assigned by a computer. The socially correct form of address is "ammar" ("sister" or "brother" equally); and while everyone is free in theory to pursue what he or she wishes, everyone takes a fair share of necessary drudge work.

The anarchist culture of the Annaresti is the product of a reasoned though passionate belief in a reasoned political theory. In every way it is at the furthest remove from the random violence of disintegrating Bellona. Yet the underlying principle is the same: it is wrong for the individual to abdicate responsibility to the necessarily distorted and impersonal rules of government.

Dark sister, bright brother: look in the funhouse mirror and reflect on the reflections.





ONLY
OUR
OPINION

Fluke directed by: Carlos Carlei 1995
rated: PG

Fantasy is one thing; allegory is something else; and mere anthropomorphism is different again. We would place The Wind In The Willows in the first category, Animal Farm in the second, and this film (together with the similar but better known Babe) in the third.

Suppose you were a yuppie who one day splatters himself and his Jag into a tree, and wakes up reincarnated as...a puppy. But gradually you remember being human, and set out to find your wife and son.

Carlei boldly rips off the entire Disney catalog -- Bambi, Old Yeller, and Ghost are all obvious influences. The endless unhappy fates that befall the cute doggie are unintentionally humorous: it's all so shameless you have to laugh. Small children will probably think it clever. Before you watch it with the kids, take some Pepto-Bismol. Forewarned is forearmed.

Galaxies Are Colliding directed by:
John Ryman 1992 rated: officially R

This is SF only in the sense that, say, Theodore Sturgeon's "And Now The News" is SF: which is to say, not very. In the month before his wedding, a man (Dwier Brown) suffers an existential crisis, and comes out the other side -- or an other side -- by recognizing there is no other side. The "R" rating is earned more from the film's skepticism toward religion, than from one tepid sex scene. This obscure film is worth seeing once, though probably not more than once. Take what you find and move on.

Firehand Andre Norton & P.M. Griffin
Tor 1994 \$4.99

At the end of Key Out Of Time (1963), Ross Murdock and Gordon Ashe were trapped in the far past of an alien world. That seemed to most readers, and clearly to Andre Norton as well, the natural place to end the "Time Traders" series. Griffin now revives the series with a miraculous time-rescue never contemplated in the original, and soon the time agents are venturing into the past of yet another world, where they have to prevent, or at least win, a local conflict instigated by the alien "Baldies".

Norton appears to have turned over to Griffin most of her old series: two Witch World novels, plus the "Solar Queen" sequel Redline The Stars (1993). In Firehand -- the local nickname acquired by Murdock due to his burn scars -- Griffin has a noticeably better feel for style and characters than in Redline, which was totally incompatible with the old "Solar Queen" stories. If Griffin's sense of how to conduct a low-tech war is more stylized than realistic, well, that's true of many SF writers. Still, it just doesn't feel like an Andre Norton book.

Forever After "created by Roger Zelazny", sic Baen 1995 \$5.99

We seriously considered writing a review of this book which stated only, "Duh", since that's about how we feel. But that would be unfair and misleading. This is the last book credited to Zelazny's name, though he wrote less than 10% of it, nor did he "edit" it in any meaningful sense.

It is our sad duty to report this is, at best, a mediocre book, pedestrian in concept, dull in execution.

The forces of "good" have won a war using four magical doodads, which are too dangerous to keep around the castle. Trustworthy people must take them to safely distant places. Hey presto, four instant "quest" novellas, actually written by: Michael Stackpole, David Drake, Robert Asprin, and Jane Lindskold. Zelazny is officially credited with brief intros. Stackpole offers an uneasy mix of martial arts and rustic humor. Drake's butch heroine carries an axe called "Castrator" -- now there's subtlety for ya. Asprin's brief piece features a dragon smarter than the humans. Lindskold's tale of a woman officer whose hobby seems to be hanging bandits, manages to be both depressing and dull. The Drake story in particular is way too clever for its own good.

Some years ago, Theodore Sturgeon wrote: "Roger Zelazny is a writer of such merit that one judges him by higher standards." Exactly. This piece of fluff exploiting his name is not how we should remember him. Go back and read the Hellride sequences from Nine Princes In Amber; or the taming of the Rakasha in Lord Of Light; or "A Rose For Ecclesiastes". That's how we should remember Roger Zelazny.

Light Raid Connie Willis & Cynthia Felice Ace 1989 \$4.99

Quebec is at war with the Western States. The chief weapon is the "light raid": attack from orbiting satellite lasers. 17-year-old Ariadne is a refugee in neutral Victoria, but the war news gets so bad she escapes home to Denver Springs to find her mother under arrest, her father a lush, her home demolished, and herself the target of a randy Prince. Then it gets complicated, as Ariadne must find the real traitor, rescue a vital bio-weapons project, and keep her clothes on.

This is evidently a reissue: the title page says "mass market edition/April 1990" but the cover alludes to Willis's more recent Nebula for Doomsday Book. It's sort of like Nancy Drew playing a 3-D game of bumper cars, zip-banging in all directions with a new plot twist at the end of every chapter. You can tell the authors had a

lot of fun writing this. It would be unkind to suggest maybe they had more fun writing it than we had reading it. When they make the movie, Alicia Silverstone will play the lead.

The Summer Of Love Lisa Mason Bantam/Spectra 1994 \$5.99

It's the summer of 1967: LSD, Jefferson Airplane, flower power, the last age of innocence. Susan, calling herself "Star-bright", has run away to San Francisco in search of love. Or something: she's not really clear on what she wants except it's other than what she has. Chiron Cat's Eye in Draco has been drafted to return to 1967 from the distant future in search of the one hippie girl who is the Axis, the key to his century. Inevitably they meet in the "Summer Of Love".

This is pretty stange even by Bantam standards. It's part a full-blown nostalgia trip for the Age of Aquarius, evidently feigned, judging by the number of "researchers" thanked by the author. Onto this is artificially grafted a routine variant of the standard Grandfather Paradox. Heinlein used it in "By His Bootstraps", Edward Bryant in "Hayes And The Heterogyne", John Varley in "Air Raid". The style is a very affected, present-tense-run-on-blurry, like James Joyce on Prozac. We read it in a sort of fast-forward mode, and we don't think we missed much.

Dun Lady's Jess Doranna Durgin Baen 1994 \$4.99

Suppose you woke up one morning and found you were a horse. That would seem pretty strange. But suppose you were a horse, and woke up to find yourself human: now that would be weird. Fleeing a dark magician, the messenger Carey and his mare, Dun Lady's Jess, invoked a flight spell. Jess found herself alone and human in a strange land called Ohio. Fortunately, Dayna and Eric and Jaime took her in and helped her do the one thing she knew to do: find Carey. But then they had to figure out how to return to their own magical world, or even if they should.

Someone in the American Library Assoc-

iation must love this book, our library has six copies. Not surprising, really. It's a girly, horsey fantasy by someone who loves horses. (Curious that in your average pony club girls outnumber boys 8 or 10 to 1, but in top dressage and show jumping the genders are about even.) The first half is okay but after that it loses focus. It reminded us of a DAW book, i.e., a book which really could have used more editing than it received. But if you like horses, you'll probably enjoy it.

Chicks In Chainmail edited by Esther Friesner Baen 1995 \$5.99

A music critic, commenting on the early quartets of Beethoven, once made the sharp observation that, "The trouble with being an enfant terrible is that your public expects you to be terrible all the time." The same applies to comedy. Esther Friesner is the Michael J. Fox of fantasy writers, stuck in a self-created niche as humorist and unable to get any serious respect. Her first crack at editing, this slight book proves the point. Its best moments are the title, and publisher Jim Baen's ingenuous disclaimer: professing to be a "sensitive New Age guy", Baen claims to be shocked at the title. Would that the stories were half so funny. There's a lot of broad parody of existing mythos, Norse (Sharon Schwartz, Laura Frankos), Greek (Harry Turtledove), Cinderella (Holly Lisle). There are lots of breast jokes and a surprising number of lawyer jokes. We actually chuckled out loud twice in the whole book -- if it's any help, once in the Elizabeth Moon story and once during the Margaret Ball story. You may find more humor here than we did; but we'll wager there's nothing here you'll remember or want to re-read a year from now.

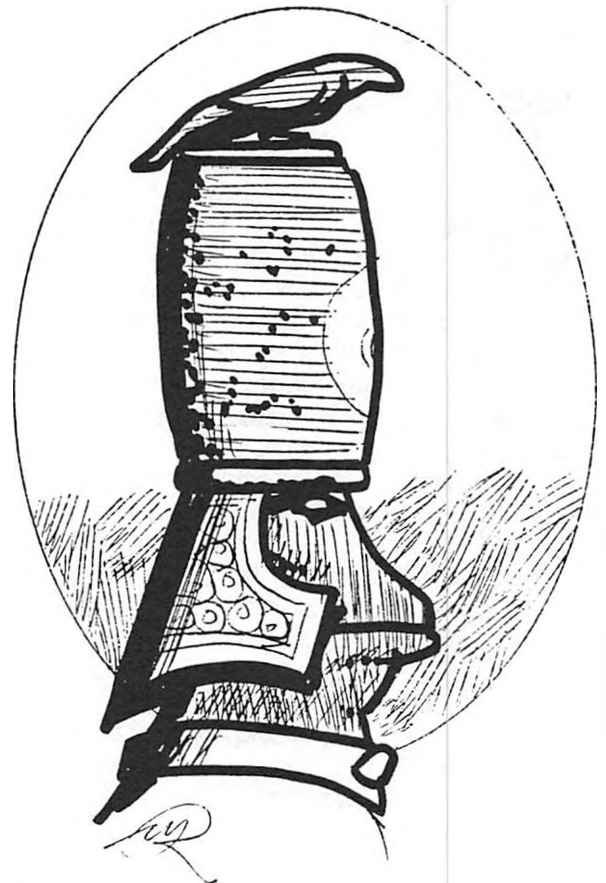
Man-Kzin Wars VII "created by Larry Niven" Baen 1995 \$5.99

Two novellas, by Hal Colebatch and Paul Chafe (neither of whom we'd ever heard of before); and a short novel, which has since been released separately in book form, A Darker Geometry, by Mark O. Martin & Gregory Benford. We're not a particular fan of Niven and haven't read

the other books in this series. This material is dense with technobabble and frequent references to the militarists' favorite subject, The Last Moral War. (You may know it as World War II.) We found only the Chafe story even remotely readable, but that's Only Our Opinion.

You Just Don't Understand Deborah Tanner, Ph.D. 1990 Ballantine \$10.00

Dr. Tanner is an academic feminist of a sort we can identify with: someone who's trying to bridge the gap between women and men, not widen it. However, she makes her key point in the first chapter (men view all conversation as about hierarchy and status-competition; women view it as about consensus-building). She then proceeds to elaborate the same one point for 300 pages. It's a valid point, if a little simplistic; but Dr. Tanner has no real idea how to step beyond it. Assertions such as "Gender is a category that will not go away" leave us with the urge to reply: "Duh! You think?"



The Half Naked One on the Left

Quipu #6

Vicki Rosenzweig
33 Indian Road #6-R
New York NY 10034

The editor's admittedly irregular personalzine -- the last was more than seven months ago. Rosenzweig discusses the bacterial life on Mars thing: "Under the excitement, there's disappointment; we've opened our birthday present and found new pajamas." Also a long article about Wiscon, the feminist SF con. She was in a dramatization of LeGuin's Almost Coming Home, an experience we envy even though we found the book unreadable; and was on some panels ("If parenting is so important, why is nobody willing to do it?"). Some really good stuff this time. We just wish Rosenzweig published more often.

MSFire Vol. 2 #3&4

Lloyd G. Daub
P.O. Box 1637
Milwaukee WI 53201

A much less ambitious (and therefore much more typical) clubzine than FOSFAX, this contains ex-editor Lisa Mason's apology for relinquishing her duties; G. Schnobrich trashes The Celestine Prophecy; Daub's continuation of, apparently, a parody of fan fiction. Also book reviews from Mason; a well-researched article about where to look for habitable worlds by Peter Kokh; and a brief lettercolumn featuring some familiar names. We quite enjoyed it and we hope to contribute to MSFire in future.

It Goes On The Shelf #16

Ned Brooks
713 Paul Street
Newport News VA 23605

Much as we described it in a previous issue, this is halfway between a fanzine and a sourcebook for collectors of really obscure stuff. Brooks finds something interesting to say about nearly all the stuff sent to him, which rarely includes much currently published or commercial SF -- unless he happens to like it. Also several pages of comments on the comments people have sent to him: not exactly a letter column, but serves a similar purpose. This issue is printed all on a very attractive shade of blue paper. This zine complements rather than overlaps our own area of interest; we're glad to get it.

Apparatchik #67 and later issues

Andy Hooper & Victor Gonzalez
4228 Francis Avenue N, #103
Seattle WA 98103

Sadly, Apparatchik did not win the Hugo. Despite having dropped back to a triweekly schedule, this remains far and away the most frequent and regular zine we know. Articles (Greg Benford trashes Star Trek, Victor offers criticism and suggestions for new fanzine editors), Ted White's "Dr. Fandom" column, conreports, lettercolumn, fanzine reviews. Well, you should all know where we stand on Apparatchik by now.

Derogatory Reference #83

Arthur D. Hlavaty
206 Valentine Street
Yonkers NY 10704

This small personalzine continues as one of our regular trades. Hlavaty discusses his new job (proofreading/fact checking for a legal publisher); mystery novels; same-sex marriages. There is also a brief lettercolumn. References to SF/fandom may be counted on one hand. Even if you've had frostbite. See the continued vigorous discussion of this point from both sides in Twink's own lettercolumn.

FOSFAX #182

Timothy Lane & Elizabeth Garrett
P.O. Box 37281
Louisville KY 40233

Okay, this time we counted. According to our count, 26 pages of this FOSFAX concerned SF or fandom. (We generously gave credit for the front cover [Hugo results], back cover [club news], and the ad on p. 39 [for a Michael Bishop book].) We counted 29 pages devoted mostly or entirely to mundane subjects, including E. Garrett's editorial [gardening], J. Major's "Errata & Addenda" and "True Crime Beat", T. Lane's "Clinton's Folies", F. Westford's poetry reviews, S. Guthrie's "Peering At Faces", and the bulk of the lettercolumn. We got 12 pages which seemed more or less divided between SF/fandom and mundane topics, including T. Lane's editorial, J. Carruthers' "Riddle Me This", and several pages of the lettercolumn. (Several made it to this category only by virtue of discussions of the Doctor Who movie, which we consider extremely marginal SF...) And a five-page article about Arthurian legend doesn't seem to fall anywhere. So there you have it. Or don't have it. As you see fit.

FTT # 21

Judith Hanna & Joseph Nicholas
15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham
London N15 4 JU, United Kingdom

Our only British trade resumes, on cheery gold paper. Joseph ties suburban cemeteries, Connie Willis' Doomsday Book, and global warming into an enlightened

if somber article. Judith reflects on her rustic childhood. Travelogues by Roslyn (another of Judith's numerous siblings), Andy Sawyer, and some American person; the usual letter column. We remain on cordial terms with the editors even if we disagree on some things; and we enjoy FTT even if it's not the fanzine we would publish.

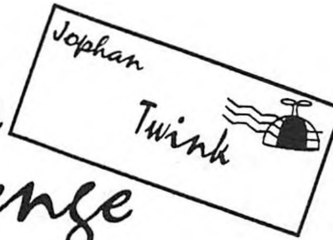
Mimosa #19

Dick & Nicki Lynch
P.O. Box 1350
Germantown MD 20875

Well... We liked this issue better than the last one, if that helps. Neat cover by Debbie Hughes, contributions by people we know (at least by correspondence: Harry Warner Jr.'s reflections on being a Fan GOH, art from Teddy Harvia and William Rotsler). There was one article we could actually relate to, having been in a somewhat analagous situation. ...And then endless pages, or so it seems, on what happened to Mr. Ackerman in 1951 and Mr. Kyle in 1933. This is a beautifully produced fanzine, and Lynch & Lynch seem like nice people. We just can't get interested in obscure fan history. If that's damning with faint praise, at least it's how we honestly feel.



Rheaders Rhevenge



[[Editorial comments appear in the customary double brackets.]]

SHERYL BIRKHEAD
23629 Woodfield Road
Gaithersburg MD 20882

If it ever comes down to one of my doodlings and a piece of art from Steve Stiles -- go for the Stiles piece every time.

[[Since we're going quarterly, we would hope there will be ample opportunity for both of you to contribute.]]

Have you considered a WAHF list? It would help a bit with the explanation after the TOC and people would know/not know their LOC's arrived.

[[Jokes notwithstanding, we tend to assume the Postal Service does their job. We assume letters we write to other fans and zines are delivered.]]

Don't bother prefacing my name with "Dr.".

For some obscure reason, the fillo on page 15 reminds me a bit of both ATom and Jeeves.

[[Okay, we know who "Jeeves" is. "ATom" must be another one of those fannish obscurities someone will have to explain.]]

Politics, in its own way, is just as prevalent -- if not more so -- in zines as in conventions. If you choose not to get "involved" with it, it is fairly easy to ignore it in both places.

[[Precisely.]]

JOSEPH T. MAJOR
3307- H River Chase Court
Louisville KY 40218

Noting the bit about Aubrey the apprentice and Lilith the wizard's listless wife

from Shinn's The Shape-Changer's Wife, I recall a short story by Karl Edward Wagner about his mad immortal wizard-warrior Kane, the first murderer. Kane had an apprentice (male) and a beautiful (female) ward for whom he constantly worked at some esoteric spell potion. The apprentice decided that Kane was keeping this unfortunate woman in durance vile, and so needed a Hero who just happened to be at hand. Rescuing the lovely prisoner from the evil mad sorcerer, the apprentice escaped Kane's wrath and fled to the local village. Where he found there was a reason that Kane had been working so hard on those potions and spells.

[[["Kane the first murderer", indeed! Well, we guess nobody's going to accuse Wagner of plagiarism. / The female characters in our stories tend not to be so routinely beautiful. Maybe that's why the stories aren't selling?]]

"How does one get nostalgic about people you've never heard of and events decades before you got into fandom?" the editor asks in the review of Mimosa. Perhaps because those people and events shaped the fandom the editor got into.

[[Yes, of course. Still, fandom's obsessive concern over its very brief history puzzles us. Millard Fillmore helped shape the country we live in, and we're not much interested in him either.]]

Right, Edmund Love's An End To Bugling was not published as genre. Indeed, as it was published in 1963, there was no genre then for it to be published in. Rather it would seem to have fallen into the then "general fiction" category. N.B. your point about Morris to Cabell, Haggard to (T.H.) White being published and considered "as essentially mainstream writers".

[[In publishing and marketing, there still is no fantasy genre. See any book store, where fantasy is filed as a subclass of SF. It's only in fandom that we tend to make that distinction. But SF as a genre publishing category existed in 1963. Neither An End To Bugling nor The Burning Mountain would have been considered SF by SF editors, or so we guess.]]

We in Louisville are fortunate to have nearby a fan under 25 who can answer your question, at least as far as her experience goes. Upon reading the editor's musings as to whether fans that age have read The Lord Of The Rings or even merely know what it is, I called our local artist Paul Gadzikowski and explained the question. He put on his step-daughter Jessica Baesler, who indeed knew of The Lord Of The Rings and had read the first half of The Fellowship Of The Ring before having to return it to the school library. It looks like another trip to the used book stores, but Tolkien is easier to find than the other interest of hers that Lisa and I have been supplying, "Doc" Smith's Lensman Series. We do not want Jessica to remain culturally illiterate.

[[We're delighted that Jessica reads Tolkien, and that LOTR is in her school library. We just wonder if that's typical on either count.]]

Since Napoleon's exile to Elba was in 1814, the British War Office must have had access to a time machine in order to start the War of 1812 in order to occupy bored soldiery between that event and the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.

If you think it fortunate that "quadroon" (not to mention "octaroon", "mulatto" etc) have vanished from the language, you should be even more grateful that the complex gradations denoting ethnic background used in Spanish America and Haiti have gone the same way.

[[And the Soviet Union used a similar system for its internal "passports" until the 1980's, wherein a 10th-generation Russian born in Moscow would be classed as "Jew" -- and barred from most graduate schools and well-paying jobs.]]

Incidentally, the microwave oven also appears in Space Cadet, along with a description of microwave foods. Heinlein also predicted their taste problem. Experimenters were warming up their lunches

at the microwave radar sets back then, but it took a while to get the process down to where it could be commercially usable, and even longer to bring the price down to where ordinary people could buy one. Like with your comments about Playboy: Hugh Hefner had videotaped movies back in the early 1970's, but he could afford the complex machinery and the huge reel-to-reel tapes.

[[We use our microwave (a gift, we didn't buy it) mostly for popcorn and burritos. On the other hand, we couldn't live without our VCR.]]

PATRICK MCGUIRE
7541-D Weather Worn Way
Columbia MD 21046

I just got Twink 3, with your variation on the customary red X. Actually, I had not given up hope of locating the previous issue; you're just moving too fast for me.

A little directory research suggests that your mail drop is probably the Parcel Plus in the Dorsey's Search Village Center, which is part of Columbia despite its Ellicott City mailing address. There has not, to my knowledge, been another fanzine fan in Columbia since I moved here in the late 1970's, although of course it is conceivable that your mail drop is merely located midway between work and home in a town twenty miles from here.

[[Victor Gonzalez at Apparatchik shocked us by correctly alluding to a "Heavenly Ham" near our mail drop, citing unspecified local "sources". As you are self-admittedly the only (other) fanzine fan in Columbia, were you that source? / No, we really do live in Columbia.]]

I've complained in FOSFAX that it seems to be getting harder to get hold of newly acquired SF at the Howard County Library, and you make a similar remark in Twink 3. You are presumably part of my competition for the new books and I, of yours. This is a trifle more personalized than I am accustomed to in recent years...

[[We would prefer to share the library peacefully, but if that can't be arranged, send your seconds to call...]]

In FOSFAX, I once made the non-serious suggestion that Joseph Major was a FOSFA house name, since it was clearly impossible for one human being to read so much and

write so much. Despite the fact that I hadn't intended the remark seriously, Joseph took great umbrage. I note that he would now have the opportunity to retaliate by suggesting that you are, in fact, me. Surely it is more likely that a longtime letterhack would at last decide to publish his ish than that someone would come in cold from convention fandom. I hasten to add that, like my remark about Joseph, this is another frivolous theory, and I publicly avow that I am not in fact E.B. Frohvet.

[[Joseph is responsible for his own umbrage, but we publicly avow that we are not Patrick McGuire.]]

Actually, considering the books in your review section, it seems our reading tastes differ considerably and maybe we're not in competition for the same books at the library after all.

[[If you would care to do an article or some book reviews about works you like, we'd be glad to publish them.]]

I am about as bored as you with the mundane political discussion in FOSFAX, but it doesn't take up all that much of the zine's content, especially outside of the letter column... Even leaving that aside, my own guesstimate is that each FOSFAX issue has at least twice the word-age devoted to SF/F/fandom as does the average Twink...

[[We respectfully disagree. On our admittedly limited experience, at least 50% of FOSFAX, more like 75% of the letter column, is devoted to mundane politics. We freely concede they still have more SF/fandom content than we do (but we don't have a club to pay for Twink). Twice as much? We don't think so, Tim...]]

I'd probably be commenting more extensively on the Twink letter column if I wasn't trying to wrap this up. As it is, I've restrained myself to Rachel Russell's bemoaning the fact that few books of the "exotic genre-breaking edges" are being published these days. I can't remember the last "exotic genre-breaking" book that was worth the paper it was printed on. Genre-lifting books are another matter (early Heinlein in SF, LOTR in fantasy), but those aren't somewhere off on the genre edges -- they're in the middle, lifting the standards for every one. However, I agree with pretty much the rest of Rachel's comments.

[[You wouldn't call Babel-17 an "exotic genre-breaking" book? The Left Hand Of Darkness? Dune? Neuromancer?]]

NED BROOKS
713 Paul Street
Newport News VA 23605

Thanks for the Twink #3, here is It Goes On The Shelf #16. As to whether intelligent life on Earth is a fluke, a recent Smithsonian (I think it was) had a long article contending that life itself was inevitable in an energetic chemical soup such as the Earth's oceans of a billion years ago.

[[Fred Hoyle once speculated (The Black Cloud, Chapter 10) that the largest single factor favoring mammals, and eventually intelligence, was the development of a plant that could grow back after being cropped to ground level -- i.e., grass. At least that was the Cloud's opinion.]]

I am reliably informed that 'Chico Kidd' is a woman named A.F. Kidd who lives at Ruislip in Middlesex -- this does not necessarily mean that she is British, of course. She tried to sell the novel in England but could not. I thought it was very good myself.

The blue pencil that Elizabeth Garrott mentions is a specific shade that will not copy in multilith printing and is sold for that purpose. I forget the technical name. It doesn't copy because multilith plates are made through a filter that eliminates it. The exact shade that won't photocopy probably varies from one brand of copier to the next.

[[Berol "Prismacolor" 919, Non Photo Blue. Check any art supply store. We hope our readers will agree the absence of the black column lines is an improvement.]]

I don't know about fans under 25, but both my sister's teenage boys have read LOTR. I have read it several times, and I think it is a book that will be read for hundreds of years.

[[Multiple examples just among Twink's limited readership may suggest that LOTR is not so unknown to younger fans as we feared. We still wonder if many young readers' MTV attention spans will have the patience for the books' liesurely style. Hundreds of years? We're not so sure.]]

Odd that you call Lois McMaster Bujold a 'fan-turned-pro' -- I was under the impression that she had little contact with fandom before becoming a popular writer. I met her when she was GoH at the Birmingham DeepSouthCon -- she seemed unused to the antics of Southern Fried Fandom...

[[Actually, it was Buck Coulson, not us, who used that phrase. We psychically predict a letter from him, soon to be received, will address that very issue. Dionne Warwick, eat your heart out.]]

I don't know how you can criticize Ray Bradbury's idea that large corporations would solve all our problems -- he didn't say we would always like the solutions! I can't think of a single problem that some corporation has not solved...

[[Good point. Look at all the contributions to public health made by R.J. Reynolds.]]

CATHERINE MINTZ
1810 S. Rittenhouse Square #1708
Philadelphia PA 19103

Dear Masked Fan [[sic]],

Thank you for sending issue #3 of Twink.

Reading Harry Warner's letter about how In The Wet could not be published as is today, I searched out my copy and checked on the offensive nickname: Nigger. It reminded me of shopping in London's Bond Street and being shown a cashmere sweater in what the clerk called "nigger brown". I blenched, and she said, with asperity, "Well, what would you call it?" "Chocolate," I replied, and went on to buy something in blue.

[[We might have simply taken our patronage elsewhere. Or complained to the manager.]]

Nevil Shute took a moral stance in all his works: On The Beach has been credited with playing a role in arousing public opposition to nuclear weapons. Books reflect their times and their writers, and it is our loss if we don't want to read about the past, and the past's futures, as they were.

[[Perhaps the movie of On The Beach, more than the book itself, impacted public opinion. / We recently read Wylie & Balmer's When Worlds Collide, 1932, which is densely laced with such terms as "Jap". It made us uncomfortable.]]

As for the media influence in SF, some of the blame -- or credit, depending on your point of view -- for this must be given to the editors for the larger publishing houses, who selectively buy material written in a style that eschews literary devices, or even large words. More literary SF is confined to the small presses. Dhalgren's trip from being a Bantam SF paperback in 1975 to the product of a specialty press in 1996 is a case in point.

Enough, enough. I'll end with the questions: "Who is that Masked Fan?" and "Doesn't using a pen-name obscure the purpose of Twink?" If not, why not, in not more than fifty words.

[[No. The purpose of Twink is to be a good, regular, little genzine. Our "legal" name has no bearing. It's just a distraction we prefer not to get into. Pen names and editorial anonymity have ample precedent, from "George Sand" to modern "rappers". 43 words.]]

ROBERT "BUCK" COULSON
2677 W - 500 N
Hartford City IN 47348

Never been on a roller coaster; never intend to be.

[[We're not so sure. We suspect these teens are hip to an art form totally opaque to us.]]

A pig, yes, but it's a cute pig, and therefore entirely fictional. I know pigs; we rented a house on a hog farm for awhile. Nice house, good landlord, but... I did find out something. If one goes into a pigpen or a hog lot, one carries a hammer. Why? To whop the hogs with when they try to flatten you against a wall or gate or post. Piglets may be cute, but hogs ain't. Juanita has been commenting that modern audiences don't understand why the farm hands are so excited when the girl falls into the hog pen in The Wizard Of Oz. It's because the hogs are quite capable of eating her before they can get to her. It used to happen often enough that a good percentage of the 1930's audiences knew about it.

[[A little more than we needed to know about hogs, though you relieve our conscience about serving ham for Thanksgiving dinner. / We can't take credit for Sheryl's amusing cover, but we did choose the color of paper, which is called "pulsar pink".]]

Reasonable diagnosis of Bothari, I guess. Juanita is the psych expert here. You did ignore Bothari's hatred of officers in general. Early in their association, Cordelia asks Vorkosigan why he keeps someone like that around, and he tells her that Bothari is the only trooper who will give him a physical workout without pulling his punches. He's obviously below-normal intelligence, but able to understand and obey commands. Vorkosigan also says that, "He hates me. He enjoys hating me." Which doesn't entirely jibe with some of the later examples, but this is after all fiction, and on the whole it's a good description of an amenable monster. He also changes over the course of the series, as any good character does.

My recent reading has been Time And Chance, L. Sprague de Camp's autobiography from Don Grant (\$35; I ordered it as soon as I heard about it). Then David Drake's Fireships, the final book in a trilogy about Sir Francis Drake's exploits transmuted into space battles; and a trade paperback anthology of Australian writers, and The Virgin And The Dinosaur by R. Garcia y Robertson, which wasn't as good as his first novel, but was good enough to finish. I longed for the small press hardcover, The Minotaur Trilogy, by Thomas Burnett Swann, but I couldn't convince myself to pay \$50 for three novels I already have in paperback.

The only way people supported themselves by writing SF was by writing a lot or by having another job, or by ignoring luxuries like decent housing. A penny a word used to be standard pay for pulp writers, except for those markets that paid less, but there were a lot of pulp magazines... Very few writers in the 1920's and 1930's even tried to concentrate on SF; the field wasn't big enough and didn't pay enough. They wrote for any publisher who would buy their output. By the 1940's when Heinlein started, there were book publishers, and some of Heinlein's SF went originally to better-paying markets like Bluebook and Saturday Evening Post and Boy's Life.

Yes, Lois Bujold began Shards Of Honor as a Trek novel, because Trek novels were big at the time. But she'd been a part of Columbus OH fandom for years before that. I was advised by a correspondent to be sure to find Lois at Marcon and get a copy of

her first book, which was excellent. I paid little attention; even then Marcons were attracting 1800-2000 people, and who's going to locate one person in that mess? Then we walked into the hotel and this young woman I'd been talking to at Marcon for the past several years came over and handed me a copy of her book. I knew her; I just didn't know her name. Another advantage to cons; the people one meets just might turn into big-name authors. Of course, the people writing to your fanzine might do that, too...

[[Our psychic prediction comes true! You may all be amazed. Write to us for aura readings and advice about your love life! Maybe we should get a 1-800 number.

/ Sadly, our experience in meeting wannabe writers is more typified by the geek who once cornered us and delivered a heated lecture on why conspiracy among editors was preventing his brilliant 2000-page novel from being published.]]

I don't see Michael O'Hara's statement as sexist; it's a comment on his business. If the business is sexist -- which it is -- that's not his problem. A true egalitarian might want to get into another business, but finding one that isn't sexist might be a problem. In the meantime he has a living to make.

[[That the movie industry is sexist is obvious. But it is possible to make terrific movies which don't exploit the abuse of women and children: Strictly Ballroom, Trust, Leaving Normal, among many. Mr. O'Hara chooses to exploit the abuse of women and children because it's easier to make a living that way. And we think that's despicable.]]



ALEX SLATE
8603 Shallow Ridge
San Antonio TX 78239

Thanks for Twink #3. I enjoyed it. A copy of PhiloSFy will be on the way to you shortly. I would suggest you lose the column lines. They're just a bit annoying.

I am curious as to why you use the plural form of address for yourself. It's all right, I don't care whether you use it or not. I don't find it annoying, though I'm sure that some people will.

[[Thud. Thud. The sound you hear is us beating our head against the wall...]]

Interesting article about Sgt. Bothari from Bujold's Vorkosigan books. I wouldn't have thought about doing something like that. By the way, you are right; Shards Of Honor started out as a Star Trek story. The Barrayarans were originally Romulans. Lois Bujold and Lillian Carl both got their start as Trek fans in Ohio. If I remember right, they did a Trek fanzine together. I don't quite understand your comment about post-literate taking over writing. I'm not arguing that it won't, but I don't think you can use Lois Bujold as an example of this. She is very literate.

[[We never meant to imply that Ms. Bujold was not literate. But she did get into SF via media "sci-fi". Most media fans never get past media stuff to real SF/fantasy.]]



JOSEPH NICHOLAS
15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham
London N 15 4 JU United Kingdom

Thanks for the latest Twink (and associated bumf) [[sic]], and for the review therein of FTT #20. I'm sorry that you felt offended by Julian's travelogue, but -- to date, at any rate -- you seem to be the only U.S. reader who has been. Perhaps this demonstrates again the vast differences between the U.S. and British senses of humour; while I can see how you view as savagely traducing the country you know and love, to me it's full of deadpan irony and black self-deprecation. Still, at least you correctly attributed the authorship of the article: the only other reviews of FTT #20 I've seen, in Attitude and Apparatchik, assign it to Judith.

[[In order to be fair, we dug out the FTT and skimmed the article again. We found little that was "self" deprecating (but endless characterizations of Americans as paranoid yokels) and less that struck us as "humour". We're just going to have to agree to disagree on this, Joseph.]]

You also ask in your review why we publish a fanzine such as FTT when it doesn't mention SF (although it has in the past and will doubtless do so again in the future). As you'll have discovered for yourself from the trades you're receiving, neither do most fanzines: the days are long past when an overtly expressed interest in SF was necessary to acquire "membership" of fandom, and most fanzines instead concern themselves with whatever happens to most interest their editors -- foreign travel, marquetry, dwarf-tossing...

[[Yes, we've noticed. Perhaps we'll be the Ricky Skaggs of fanzine fandom. (For our British, or otherwise musically deprived readers, Skaggs is the musician most credited with returning American country music to its traditional roots.)]]

I freely admit that FTT is a little more out of the fannish mainstream than most, but we "publish it in the SF community" because we are fans -- we receive and comment on other fanzines, we attend fan meetings and parties, we read SF(sometimes), we go to conventions (rarely -- they usually cost more than they're worth and you always come home with someone else's cold). But we also

Sheekley, William Tenn, Poul Anderson, Eric Frank Russell, Randall Garrett, Mack Reynolds, Andre Norton, Lloyd Biggle Jr., Frank Herbert, Zenna Henderson, Anne McCaffrey, Jack Williamson, Robert E. Howard, Fredric Brown, James H. Schmitz, A.E. Van Vogt, Jules Verne, four or five years of Analog magazine complete with John W. Campbell's editorials, and even a little early Harlan Ellison (though he was a bit over my head at the time) before Star Trek ever hit the airwaves in my junior year of high school. Not to mention Arthur Conan Doyle, Rudyard Kipling, and C.S. Forester. (Though not, curiously, H.G. Wells, though I did read one vaguely remembered book of his short stories.) (Zelazny, Delany, and Cordwainer Smith came along a bit later for me, or they'd be on this list too.)

[[Wow. As a reviewer we see so many obvious Heinlein clones, obvious Cherryh clones, that when a first novel comes along that has a distinct voice of its own, we're left floundering, as in, "Hey, where did that come from?" There may be a tendency to ascribe influences that aren't there. / We humbly withdraw and apologize for any inference that you came into SF by way of media sci-fi (but we suspect that inference is still out there in the minds of some fans).]]

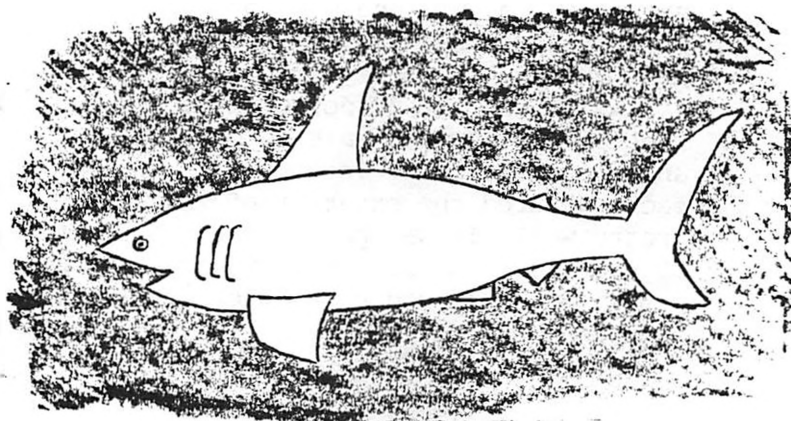
I do think 20th Century literary style has been profoundly influenced by the invention of visual media, replacing the authorial voice of the prose of the 19th Century and earlier with greater emphasis on the eye; this is particularly noticeable in things like transitions, but this is a technical observation, not one of values. The two styles are different, with different strengths and weaknesses. I would guess I classify myself as having come from a background of both reading and watching SF (is there a human on the planet who hasn't seen the Star Wars trilogy by now?), and I am acutely aware of the differences between the two media. But if the visual media had been paramount (so to speak) in my influences, I would have grown up to be a scriptwriter.

[[That's part of what we had in mind -- though much more clearly stated -- when we reflected whether people trained by MTV and David Lynch films will have the

patience to cope with the literary tradition as we understand it. There do seem to be an increasing number of people in the genre, both fans and writers, whose backgrounds are in media, or video games, or role-playing. / Now, can you explain to Ned Brooks about DeepSouthCon and Southern Fried Fandom?]]

P.S. It's lovely to see a science fiction fanzine whose lettercol has such a high proportion of talk about science fiction in it. Refreshing! Keep up the good editorial work!

[[Thank you! Nice to have someone support our policy. This fanzine is going to keep some focus on the literature if it kills us. And if "sercon" is a term of derogation, we'll wear it defiantly as a badge of honor.]]



MARGARET B. SIMON
1412 NE 35th Street
Ocala FL 34479

I was pleased to get your letter and sample of Twink, and I like this, and wish you the best with its continuation. One thing I liked was your candor, and particularly re: reviews. HONESTY.

[[If a reviewer isn't giving her/his honest opinion, that person shouldn't be doing reviews at all.]]

Also liked what you didn't have to say in praise of those artists who "didn't come through for you"...I also noted some of the subject/materials that you are interested in publishing. Very interesting, but I'm by any means a "fanzine" artist.

I love NIEKAS because of the writers/articles and Ed, who keeps it together, and Larry Dickson is a dear friend of mine, too.

[[We also admire NIEKAS, though we don't personally know many of the people involved with it. Just wish they published more often.]]

"Fans" (sf/h/f) know more about things that have been written and to what extent and when the author was born and how many paragraphs and so on per book than any biographer would commonly expect. "Scientifiction" as I recall, was a term that was given first by Asimov, and "sense of wonder" (a tribute to Robert Silverberg, back when he was a young fella) was in an editorial by H.L. Gold in Beyond. By the way, I hear that a movie is now in the works of Alfred Bester's The Stars My Destination; this first appeared as a serial in Beyond, and was voted one of the all time BEST SF stories. Bester is dead, but Gully Foyle lives.

[[We've thought of doing an article on what SF books would make good movies -- and which wouldn't. The movie of Dune in fact captured the exterior of the book pretty well. It was portraying the inside of what was, for all its thud and blunder, a very internalized book, where the movie failed.]]



ROBERT LICHTMAN
P.O. Box 30
Glen Ellen CA 95442

I haven't had an opportunity to read through Twink #3 yet -- it came just days after my return from cons on two successive weekends (a small one, Toner, in Las Vegas, and the Worldcon in Anaheim near Disneyland) and I'm quite backed up on fanzine reading -- but I noticed in Victor Gonzalez's comments on this issue in the latest Apparatchik that you are suffering sufficiently from fan artist frustration that you vented perhaps somewhat injudiciously.

Rather than take this occasion to heap scorn on you, however, I'm going to heap artwork on you instead. Not being a fan artist myself, I'm utterly dependent on the kindness of friends. William Rotsler, Hugo-winning fan artist for both 1945 and 1995, sends me periodic helpings of his artwork with the understanding that I'll pass a lot of it along. All he asks is that you provide decent reproduction and send him a contributor's copy. His address is: 17909 Lull, Reseda CA 91335. Hope you like this assortment; I've included both sfnal and fannish work.

If you're not interested in Rotsler's artwork, please return it at your convenience.

[[From a shortage of art and inflicting our amateurish doodlings on the readers, we now face the other extreme: an embarrassment of riches. Toujours perdrix, as we French say. / "Not interested" in having the legendary Rotsler represented in Twink? You're joking, right? / Isn't there a famous line somewhere -- we've heard it mostly in parody -- about being dependent on "the kindness of strangers"? Here we see it in action.]]

KEVIN W. WELCH
P.O. Box 2195
Madison WI 53701

I enjoyed the piece on Bradbury, especially as I don't read Playboy, even for the articles. It's not surprising that his ideas about space travel show a "blithe disregard for practical physics and practical finance". His writing never did and there is no reason to expect that he

should pay attention to such things now. His early works -- the Chronicles and so on -- were milestones in the history of SF, but anyone with four years of high school science could spot the howlers; it was easier than finding the historical inaccuracies in Braveheart. There were some very good reasons why he could never sell a story to John Campbell.

[[No one would claim to have analyzed Bradbury in five paragraphs; and critiquing Bradbury for lack of scientific accuracy is much like critiquing James Joyce for grammatical errors. The writing of poets must be understood as metaphorical.]]

I've never gotten this argument that space travel is somehow necessary to the spiritual evolution of the human race. Sure, I'm in favor of colonizing the entire galaxy, but not right this minute. It might be prudent to wait 40 or 50 years until the post-war demographic bulge works its way through retirement and beyond, when the nation's fiscal health will be in better shape.

[[Two interesting assumptions there: that the U.S. will do it, or most of it; and that the fiscal health of the country will necessarily improve in future. Do our readers want to comment on those?]]

Folks like Bradbury like to compare the grand space adventure to the frontier experience of the 19th Century. Frederick Jackson Turner argued that the frontier shaped American democracy as we know it. ... The fact is that the great 19th Century migrations were a mass experience.

Millions of Europeans and Africans left or were taken from their homelands. Most (the white ones, anyway) found a place in a rapidly industrializing economy; they got jobs that paid well or else they got free land... The 19th Century migrations changed the lives of millions simply because millions of people were involved.

This is nothing like colonizing Mars. Where are the jobs? Where's the free land? The entire effort will be a quasi-military enterprise where a small, highly paid elite on Earth will work their tails off to get an even smaller elite to another planet. The public won't be directly involved at all; they'll be asked to pay taxes and watch the damned thing on TV... Just what is so "uplifting" about that?

[[Colonizing the Americas in the 17th

Century, or the American west in the 19th, was done with available technology. The assumption, apparently, is that changes in technology will bring space colonization within reach of, at least, some people if not all people. We're a little skeptical about that one too...]]



ARTHUR D. HLAVATY
206 Valentine Street
Yonkers NY 10704

Dear HB [[sic...]],

Thanks for the LOC and the latest Twink, which I enjoyed. All that came to mind, however, was that the revelation (to me, anyway) of Rod Serling's true name leads to the dangerous vision of Dennis Rodman Serling:

Submitted for your approval...an athlete wakes up one morning with orange hair and a desire to wear women's clothes...

[[A little more Franz Kafka than Rod Serling, maybe. Now that you mention it, though, if Dennis Rodman were an escapee from some weird alternate universe, that would explain a lot...]]

Bujold book which inspired it. I've gone through three or four of the Miles novels but don't recognize this particular event.

[[Bothari was a character in several of the books -- notably Shards Of Honor, The Warrior's Apprentice, and especially Barrayar. The article alluded to events throughout his career, but Barrayar is probably the clearest picture of Bothari as an individual.]]

To make a bad situation worse, I've read only one of the books you review on the next several pages, The Printer's Devil. Like you, I thought the 17th Century language didn't ring true. The portions of the novel that dealt with computers scared me much more than the supernatural events.

[[L. Sprague de Camp wrote a 17th Century "letter" in one of his stories ("Dead Man's Chest" in The Purple Pterodactyls) which not only sounds right, but is amazingly funny.]]

Your dismay over the reviewed fanzines that have little or nothing to do with SF might mitigate as time passes. You'll find that it's increasingly hard to find something new to read or write about the field after a few years and so many of us branch out to other fields when publishing or reading fanzines or chatting at cons...

[[We have no objection to "branching out"; what bothers us is when SF is completely abandoned, even dismissed as irrelevant to fandom.]]

Short stories didn't produce much revenue to authors in the 1930's, except for a few big names in literature like William Saroyan or Stephen Vincent Benet. Pulp writers in that period might get a penny a word or even more if they could sell to one of the aristocrats of the field like Blue Book, but most pulps paid less. Twenty bucks for a short story might keep a single man alive but a writer with a family would find it hard to get along solely with short stories. Jack Williamson's biography contains much on the pittance he received for novelettes and even novels during the years when he was one of the most prolific and best-liked writers for the prozines.

I suppose there's a good chance that many of the overtly outrageous statements Ray Bradbury makes nowadays are intended solely pour epater le bourgeois and to irritate the Up To Date young people.

Incidentally, I suffered a brief burst of reading energy back in the summer and read and re-read half a dozen Bradbury paperbacks. It was mostly re-reading but I found a few things I'd not read when they were new. These stories held up better on re-acquaintance than most SF does for me. I'd love to see a TV network or channel produce a new screen version of The Martian Chronicles, in the form of one half-hour episode for each of the chapters in the book.

[[Great idea, though that format might need some juggling. With the increased interest in Mars (as this is written, the Russian Mars mission's unplanned ballistic re-entry is front page news), it might happen.]]

I grew up in a row house in Hagerstown ... It wasn't bad except for the fact that the cellar had a dirt floor and there were rats in the walls. Alas, that row of houses fell upon hard times long after my parents and I moved away, vividly illustrated by the fact that it sold recently for \$5,000 per house, a low figure even in a city the size of Hagerstown. The new owners plan to gut the interiors and convert the structures into fewer and better dwellings, and I'm sure they'll be advertised as "townhouses" when ready to rent.

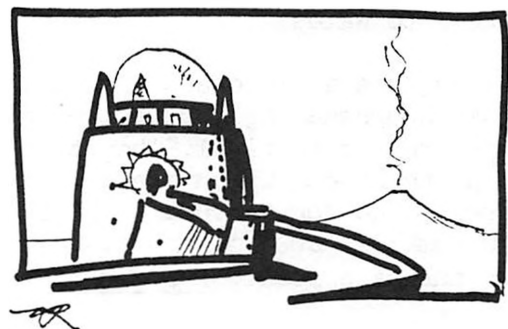
[[Yeah, but they're in town, as opposed to "townhouses" across the street from us, in the far suburbs.]]

* * * * *

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"If they call it tourist season, why can't we shoot them?"

-- our niece, in conversation. We asked, "Where does that leave us?" There was a distinct pause before she replied, "You're not a tourist, you're family!"



MISCELLANY

From now on, rather than shoving it in wherever we chance to have room, we're devoting the entire last page of Twink to this department.

We saw this sign in the department store the other day. Now we know perfectly well it's an accepted term in the industry for household linens. Still, it instantly conjured an image in our mind. A preppie honkie, hands tied behind his back. A bunch of Africans in tribal garb are bidding; a chief with a big Afro holds the gavel poised. The sign reads, inevitably: WHITE SALE.

Anybody wanna draw it for us?

Article in TV Guide about Kristen Johnston, "Sally" on TV's 3rd Rock. She was waitressing in New York looking for serious theatrical work, but there were few parts for six-foot blondes. So she moved to L.A. and auditioned for the part on 3rd Rock. The producers kept asking her back, feeding her more outrageous lines -- including some far too raunchy to be actually used on broadcast TV -- to see how far she would go for a laugh. Finally they decided they better hire her: "This broad is crazy!"

QUOTE OF THE DAY

"The aim of science is understanding, not the accumulation of data and formulae." -- J.M. Ziman, in Public Knowledge (1938).

Sitting in our brother's spare room, sharing the California sunrise over the Douglas firs with Dylan Thomas' Quite Early One Morning, it occurred to us that Thomas seems to have been a stylistic influence on Delany and Zelazny and all that New Wave 60's lot. We know Delany's been to Greece and Turkey; wonder if he's ever been to Wales?

We read this article about Buñol, Spain. The last Wednesday of August they have a tomato-throwing festival. They truck in loads of tomatoes (which are not grown in the area), and for two hours, everyone throws tomatoes at each other. Why? "Por nada," shrugs a local. "Por tirar los

tomatoes." After two hours there's a signal, and throwing fruit stops. Sensible people who have hidden behind closed doors come out with hoses and pushbrooms. In two hours, the town square is spotless again. Now that's our idea of a party! World-con committees, please take note.

If magick, goddess worship, and Qabala are your thing, the magazine for you is: New Age Journal, (subscriptions) P.O. Box 488, Morris IL 61054. High quality professional print job. We found the ads more fun than the articles.

There's a single word for everything in the English language, or very nearly. We offer yet another "prize" to the first reader who can tell us the single word for "editorial plural".

If a writer of the stature of C.J. Cherryh is slumming media tie-ins, SF is in deeper shit than we thought

If you know someone with MS (multiple sclerosis), have them check with their dentist about fillings containing mercury. By some as yet unclear mechanism, even trace amounts of mercury exacerbate the illness. Patients with MS who have had fillings containing mercury removed, have shown improvement. Go figure.

