

UNDULANT FEVER

a journal of the three R's: reading, 'riting and rototilling

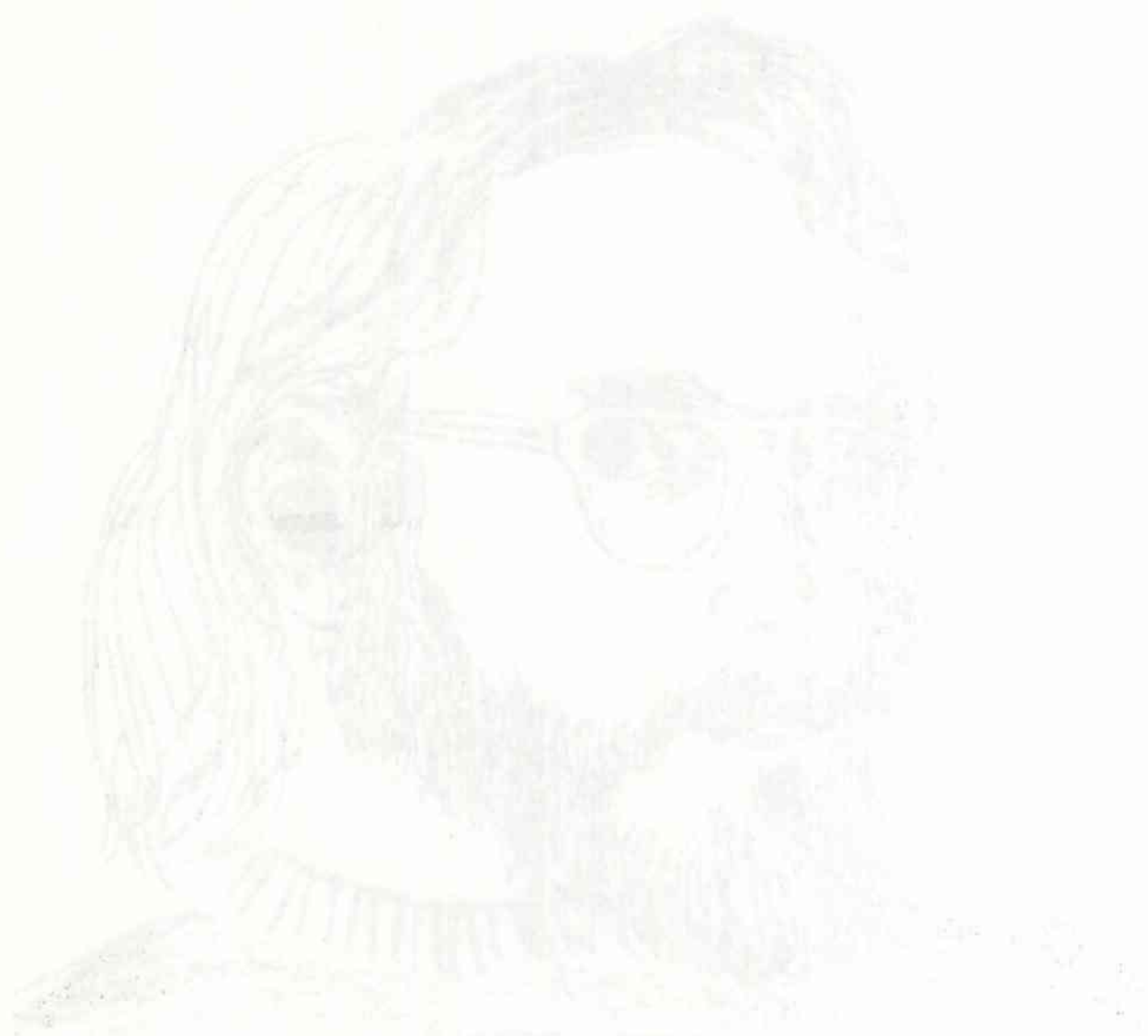


Self Portrait - circa 1976

in this issue: TEN YEARS A FANED

INDULGENT FEVER

Indulgent Fever is a new and exciting series of books.



INDULGENT FEVER is a new series of books.

SO SORRY, OLD MAN,
IT'S JUST A TOUCH OF
UNDULANT FEVER I
PICKED UP IN THE
ORIENT...

I'LL... BE FINE... COFF!

POPO

Thermo-Meter

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Well, you know what they say about best-laid plans.... I did indeed plan to adopt a daily-journal type format for UF after last issue. But right after I'd mailed out UF #6, the realization struck me that summer of 1981 would mark my tenth year of fanpublishing. Naturally, I immediately decided that UF #7 would be something a bit more special, a bit larger, a bit fancier, to mark the occasion...

...Well, at least this UF will be out before I have to start referring to it as my 'Eleven Years--A Fanned' issue. And I do intend to have UF #8 out a lot sooner than this one has taken.

So, what's been going on at Caer Ananda since the last ish?

Probably the highlight of 1981 was when I took two weeks off from work at the end of October, the first extended vacation from the Postal Service I've had since being hired in 1978. The reason behind this was Hilde's and my trip to the San Francisco Bay Area and the 7th World Fantasy Con.

The WFC was, simply, the most enjoyable convention I have been to in years. There were a number of reasons for this: One was that the membership was restricted to 750, this is small enough to retain some of the informality and openness of small cons and large enough to have a wide variety of attendees. Another was the absence of one particular type of attendee; thruout the entire con, I think I saw maybe half a dozen people carrying knives or swords, none of which ever left their sheaths, and I saw not one rottenstinkinggoddamputrid zapgun!

But the main reason I enjoyed WFC was the attitude of the people who were there. As I remarked in a letter to PONG, I think if you had counted the number of people there who were not either professional writers or artists or trying to become professional writers or artists, you might have had to move from your fingers to your toes to count them all...but not by much. The attendees at WFC, however informal their behavior (Ellen Kushner; editor at Ace Books, put on one of the best Flaming Wacko performances I've ever seen), were people who have not forgotten where fandom came from, people who don't look on fandom as a purely social occasion, people who still care about science fiction and fantasy. WFC gave me the feeling that I had traveled "back to the roots" of fandom. It was refreshing and invigorating, and I hope to make it to another WFC some year.

That invogoration was, in part, responsible for my finishing another pro-aimed story while Hilde and I were staying at Greyhaven, the Zimmer/Paxson/Stud baker/at al household in Berkeley before and after the WFC. That makes four I've got going the rounds. I've gotten encouraging notes on all of them, but no cigars. Not even on the oldest, "Glorypain", which has been going around for nearly two years now (tho' Roy Torgeson's note seemed to indicate it might have sold if he'd had any markets open when I sent the story to him); have to pack it up again for submission #15, to RIGEL.

A convention Hilde and I didn't get to was Tuscon in November. The reason for that was because Hilde was undergoing the first in a three- or four-operation series of wrist and hand surgery. The purpose of the surgery is to straighten out twisted digits, remove decayed material and in general try to keep the arthritis from doing further damage. Hilde is scheduled for the next operation March 18th.

Other noteworthy events around here include the arrival of *The Computer*. The Computer (T.C. for short) is a TRS-80 Model II, 64k

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SEQUENTIA - EDITORIAL

memory and all, and the only cost we've had to pay for equipment is \$50 a month to rent Bruce Dane's terminal as a printer. How we managed this is that we didn't; the deal was worked out by Paul Schauble with a Texas psychiatrist who wanted some statistical work done. The doc pays for the lease of the equipment, we keep it cozy in our air-conditioned library, Paul does the statistical work, and all the leftover free time on the machine is to use as we see fit. So far this has included mailing lists for Westercon, Coppercon, and UNDULANT FEVER; word processing for MAW; and an income tax program Hilde is trying to build from scratch for her mother to use in her accounting business. I intend to use the word-processing program more myself for some fan pieces I have in mind. The drawback to using a computer for fanzines, tho', has always been that daisy-wheel printers don't cut stencils worth beans. This problem is eliminated, tho', if one has access to an electrostencil machine....

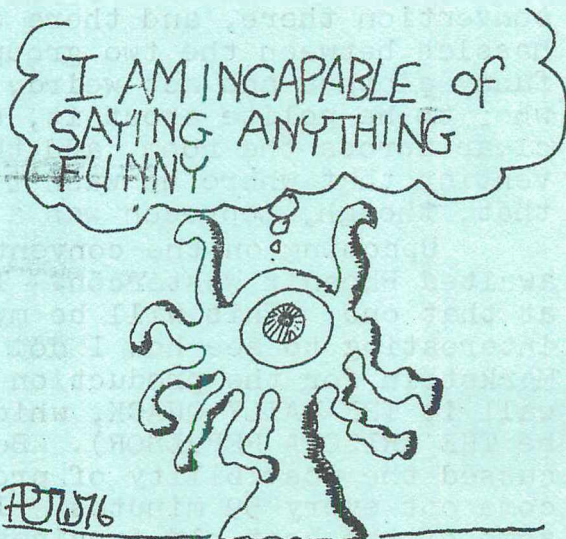
I have access to an electrostencil machine. Hilde's church recently purchased a Gestetner 1120 electrostenciller for their church bulletins and whatnot. Hilde's active enough in the church that she was able to wrangle permission to use it for non-church material. So...the church pays about 50¢ each for the blank electrostencils, we pay them \$1.00 each for the ones we run, the church makes money to help pay back the cost of the machine, and we have an electrostencil source less than two miles away at nearly half the cost of having them done 25 miles away at ASU.

Now if the mimeo works OK.... I had the machine cleaned, adjusted and re-conditioned a couple of months ago, so it should be in working order now. This time I won't make the mistake of letting it sit unused, ink curdling and separating for months on end. I'm going to try and use the machine at least once a week, even if it's just turning the cylinder over a few times to keep the ink mixed. I've had to move the mimeo to my study, as the mimeo-room-cum-closet in the library is presently occupied by the presently unused CASFS offset press.

Speaking of the library, Hilde recently whipped her brother Greg and me into an orgy of bookshelf-building, so there are now bookshelves on just about all the available wall space in the room. We even have, by Ghu, empty shelves for the first time in too many years. We might even have enough available space to last us for another year or two. I can always shift the juveniles to Aric's room eventually, I suppose....

And speaking of ARIC, we switched him to a parochial school this year, one sponsored by Hilde's church so we can make donations directly to the church rather than paying tuition to the school. It's expensive, but it's worth it. Between the lowest-common-denominator attitude of the public schools and Aric's own natural hellaciousness, he came out of the first ~~grade having learned almost~~ literally ~~nothing~~. Hilde spent hours with him every day during the summer, drilling into him all the things he should have learned at school, getting him to an acceptable level for the second grade at the parochial school.

We've been very pleased with the change. Aric is doing a lot of work (sometimes much against his will) and learning a lot in the process. The parochial school has also been much more effective than the public in improving Aric's behavior. The rock-throwing and people-biting seems to be totally eliminated. Now if we can just get him to stay in his seat, quietly, during his classes....



I started this editorial with a remark about best-laid plans. That was about two months ago. It's now getting dreadfully near the end of May, and this issue very well might be my "Eleven-Years-A-Faned" issue after all by the time I get it in the mail.

In between the last stencil and this one, Hilde and I have been to two further conventions. Hilde was Fan Guest of Honor at Fantasy Worlds Festival in Oakland in April. I enjoyed myself there more than I expected to. FWF is much more oriented towards Darkover fans, costumers, and filksingers than the usual convention I go to. I was, basically, encountering a whole new group of fans that I didn't know and who didn't know me. Like I said, though, I enjoyed myself. I met some new people whose company I enjoyed, such as Philip Wayne and his wife Annadea, and Cindi Unrememberable (I'm sorry, but I have a hard enough time remembering regular names, much less adopted Darkovan names). I was also surprised and delighted to run into Carol Angel there, a Denver fan whose company I've always enjoyed, and who it turned out had been working for a law degree at UofC in Berkeley for the last couple of years.

There was a major point of similarity between Fantasy Worlds Festival and the World Fantasy Con, and that was the lack of zap-gunners running around blasting everything in sight. There were lots of people in costume at FWF, many with attached weapons, but their outfits were just that, a costume, and I never saw anyone behave in a reckless or bothersome manner. Some of the remarks during one of the panels seemed to indicate that the people who don't lose their adulthood when in costume find those who do just as loathsome as the rest of us; Adrienne Martin Barnes made the remark that "'Runners' are the best argument fandom has ever come up with for retroactive birth control."

The question that comes to mind is: How did both World Fantasy Con and Fantasy Worlds Festival manage to keep the runners away? And I think the answer is very simple. Neither con had any media programming; no movies, no video. As simple as that. It's the media stuff that draws them to the convention in the first place; eliminate it, and you eliminate the problems with the people it attracts.

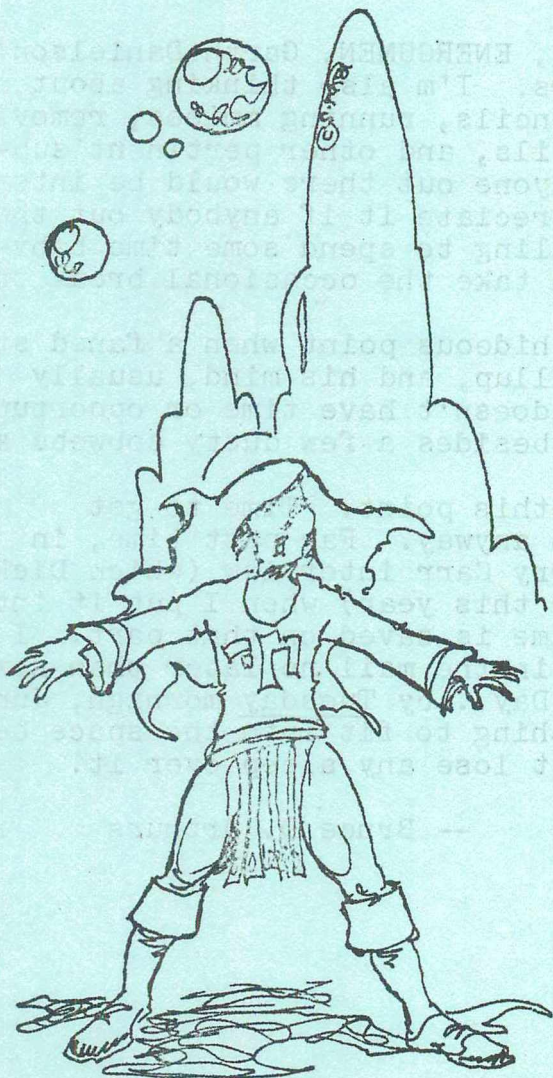
The other convention we've been to was Leprecon 8 in May. It was a very smooth running convention from my point of view. The cash bar didn't take in very much money, so the con may go back to the banquet route next year. The Jaycees were having a weekend convention there, and there were a few incidents of friction and hassles between the two groups. (I say if the Jaycees want to wear funny clothes and act weird, let them.) And there was one fan there who, to be polite about it, stank; you could smell this fellow clear across the room, and there were several times during the convention that where he wasn't determined where I was. Aside from that, though, Leprecon was a low-key, quite enjoyable con.

Upcoming on the convention circuit is Westercon 35, the long awaited Phoenix Westercon. I'll be in charge of the fanzine room at that one. This will be my first time at that job, so it'll be interesting to see how I do. I'll be sharing the room with Don Markstein for the production of the daily newsletter (he wants to call it THE DAILY QUACK, which title he's used before; I want it to be THE ARIZONA REPULSOR). Besides the newsletter, we've also discussed the possibility of producing APA-59, an apa whose mailings come out every 59 minutes. I'm also going to work up a display of some of the best old fanzines from my collection: LIGHTHOUSE, LE

BAST

A COLUMN

BY HILDE



So many things to think of and so many more to do....

Perhaps out of guilt at watching Bruce cope with the laundry, dishes, cleaning, cooking, garden and yard, fanzines, apas, programming for CASFS meetings, professional writing, etcetera, I have gotten rather involved in things myself such as -- member of my church choir, president of my local AAL branch (a church connected fraternal benefit organization) which puts on educational programs, social events, and a yearly book sale, assistant to programming for Westercon, Coordinator for Coppercon 2, plus working on lost wax casting, trying to learn computer programming, and once in a while writing a book review. Sometimes I'd like to cut back on some of this stuff but I can't bear to quit on any of it; either it needs me very badly or I need it, or both. Thank Yahweh for the help I get from my many friends who give a hand or wait patiently for work which has been promised.

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You know, it's getting to where I feel I should almost apologize for believing in Jesus Christ. What with the holier-than-thou attitude and lack of tolerance of so many "Christians", many of my firends dislike and/or distrust people who profess a belief in Christ. I guess the same rule applies in social relationships as in money; the baser drives out the better. The same people who condemn Christianity for the Jerry Falwells, male chauvinists, etcetera, don't like to have fandom judged by the behavior of "Runners" or "Trekkies." The only time in the Bible that Christ is shown as lacking tolerance is when people were using the Temple as a money making device. (Ever see one of Falwell's

solicitation letters?

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Hackneyed as it sounds, I love spring. In Phoenix, spring is one of the two times a year you can have the door open and breathe fresh smog. And the power bills are even affordable.

I've heard people say that Phoenix has no seasons but that isn't true, you simply have to look closer. I've been going out almost daily to keep track of the new buds. Everything is coming beautifully except for one skeptical rose (I don't think it trusts the warmth to last; it's a recent import from Washington), and our apple tree which has sprouted mold -- the silling thing is trying to be as fuzzy as a pussy willow. We should have out first daffodil any day now, and in a few weeks the migratory birds will be going north. Sigh, summer is just around the corner.

-- Hilde.

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(INCONSEQUENTIA, ctd. fr pg. 4...)

ZOMBIE, PSYCHOTIC, Haskell-era RUNES, ENERGUMEN, Garth Danielson's special Christmas fanzine, and others. I'm also thinking about having short seminars on cutting stencils, running mmieos, removing ink stains, patching in electrostencils, and other pertinent subjects. I'd appreciate knowing if anyone out there would be interested in any of these. I'd also appreciate it if anybody out there in this zine's audience would be willing to spend some time babysitting the fanzine room, so's I can take the occasional break to eat and opposite.

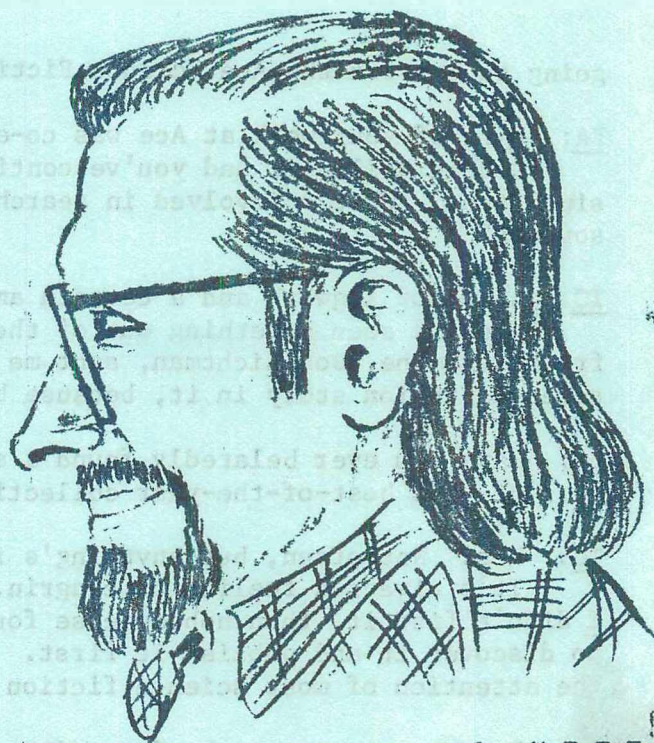
I appear to have reached that hideous point when a faned still has half a page of empty space to fillup, and his mind, usually bursting with thoughts and ideas he doesn't have time or opportunity to write down, is empty of anything besides a few dusty cobwebs and a cockroach or two.

So I think I'll wrap it up at this point. Time to get cracking on running off the stencils anyway. Far past time, in fact. Fortunately I pre-ran the Terry Carr interview (which Dick Geis will be reprinting in SFR later this year) when I put it into the CASFS newsletter, so a little time is saved on that part. I hope to have this zine finished and in the mail no later than next Monday morn...oops, that's Memorial Day...by Tuesday mornign, June 1st. Wish me luck. If I find something to fit into the space below, good on me; if not, please don't lose any sleep over it.

-- Bruce D. Arthurs

AN INTERVIEW WITH TERRY CARR

conducted by Bruce D. Arthurs
World Fantasy Con 7
Oakland, California, 1981



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BA: You were a very well known and highly regarded fan of science fiction in the 1950's and '60's, including winning a Hugo with Ron Ellick for FANAC, and you had sold a number of stories, but I think your recognition as a professional began when you became an assistant editor at Ace Books in the 1960's. What sort of work did you do as an assistant editor, as compared with a senior editor?

TC: I was doing largely what might be called the junkwork, stuff that "somebody has to do it," going over manuscripts and checking to make sure that all the commas were in the right place and the words were spelled correctly, and correcting them if they weren't. Copyediting, in other words. Proofreading on manuscripts that had been set in type. Writing cover copy or blurbs. Such things as that.

BA: Editors have traditionally talked about the horrors of wading through the slushpile fiction, the unsolicited manuscripts. Is it really that bad or do the occasional well-written and promising stories make the effort worthwhile?

TC: Well, obviously I think the effort is worthwhile because I continue, and I'm not making that much money at it, so yeah, I must like it somewhat. It does get awfully tiresome at times, but, when you do find the really good story that comes in, out of the blue as it were, from someone you never heard of before, that's just terrific. I've had a couple of those just recently in the last year or so. I've never heard of them, and nobody else has. I either buy their first stories or encourage them to send me more soon.

It's really delightful, especially when you find somebody who isn't just good enough to sell, but who is very, very good compared to the people who are already selling. That's exciting, when you run into somebody like that.

BA: What new writers have you found among your unsolicited manuscripts?

TC: The most recent one I've found is a fellow named Lucius Shepard, of whom you've never heard, because he hasn't been published yet. He's just sold his first story to NEW DIMENSIONS #13 or 14, and I have a novel from him which I'm

going to buy for the Ace Science Fiction Specials.

EA: Part of your work at Ace was co-editing the best-of-the-year anthology with Donald Wollheim, and you've continued your own best-of-the-year anthology since then. What's involved in searching out obscure sf stories in obscure sources?

TC: A lot of legwork and a certain amount of luck. And asking your friends if they've seen something out of the ordinary. Just yesterday in the mail a friend of mine, Bob Lichtman, sent me a copy of CoEVOLUTION QUARTERLY which has a science fiction story in it, because he figured I might not see it.

BA: Have you ever belatedly found a story you would have wanted to include in one of your best-of-the-year collections?

TC: Yes. Not often, but anything's far too often. I try not to think about it. It's always a feeling of chagrin...particularly - if the story's obscure - if I didn't find it, then nobody else found it, and I would have loved to be the one to discover it and publish it first. Reprint it first, at least, and bring it to the attention of most science fiction readers. *sigh* It's so sad.

BA: Do you ever get sick of reading all that science fiction to find the best of the year?

TC: I wish I could say no, but yes, I get sick of it. About two or three times a year, I go what I call "science-fiction blind," which is a state of mind in which I read two pages of a story and have no idea of what I've just read. I don't know whether this story is set on Earth, in the far future, on Venus, on some other star. I have no idea what's going on. It goes through my eyes and doesn't hit my brain. I have to stop reading at that point and take a week or so off and either not read anything or read mainstream fiction or non-fiction, just get away from science fiction for a while.

BA: The first series of Ace Science Fiction Specials was done under your editorship and a remarkable percentage of them, such as R.A. Lafferty's Past Master and Ursula Le Guin's Left Hand of Darkness, are still regarded as exceptional or classic books in the genre. What factors enabled you to achieve this success?

TC: Essentially, I was in the right place at the right time. It was a very interesting time in the history of science fiction. There were a lot of very, very good new writers in the field in the Sixties and it wasn't yet a matter of having to fight with other publishers in terms of the amount of money you were paying. There were other publishers who were paying more money than I was, but not that much more. The spread wasn't up to a hundred thousand or a million dollars as it is today, so I could compete with most of the publishers.

I was also in a position, through professional contacts and in fandom, in which I was usually aware of who was writing new fiction, short stuff in the magazines or whatever, who looked like a promising newcomer. And also the established names I obviously knew, so I got in touch with as many people as I possibly could and let them know that I was open to, and in fact looking for, adult science fiction, not simply the space-opera adventure fare that was very common then and still is very common.

When you do that, with writers who are serious about writing science fiction, they'll respond. In particular because I was packaging those books with covers that didn't have spaceships and naked girls on them; they had very fine paintings instead, and a tastefully done package in general, in terms of the logo types and

so on.

So it became reasonably easy for me to get good manuscripts submitted to me. After that, it was simply a matter of picking what I wanted - which isn't really very hard. If you get something like Left Hand of Darkness submitted to you, it isn't hard to decide to buy it. People say, "Gee, you're so brilliant. You bought The Left Hand of Darkness." And all I can say to that is I would be awfully stupid if I had not bought it.

BA: Several years ago, Ace Books brought out a second series of Ace Science Fiction Specials under a different editor, and they never achieved the amount of critical acclaim they did under your editorship. Since then, Ace has retained you to once again edit the Ace Science Fiction Specials. Can you give us some sort of idea of what works you will be presenting under the renewed series?

TC: The new series is going to be somewhat different from the original. The original was both new writers and established writers - John Brunner, James Blish, Roger Zelazny, and people like that - whereas the new series will be essentially a discovery series, finding people who either haven't published before or have published not very much. The most established writer I've bought so far is Howard Waldrop, who's been writing for about ten years but has done only one novel, and that was a collaboration. I bought his first solo novel. The other three books that I have so far are all first novels, by new writers who are very, very good. People like Carter Scholz, Donnan Jeffers Junior, and Lucius Shepard, the fellow I mentioned earlier.

BA: When you left Ace Books in 1973 for a freelancing career, you moved from New York to the San Francisco Bay Area. Does the distance between yourself and the house editors and publishers in New York cause any special difficulties or delays in your work?

TC: No, it doesn't cause any whatever. It does make it a little more difficult to sell an anthology idea or something like that, where I have to work through agents. But I'm in a position now where I'm doing three continuing series - Best Science Fiction of the Year, Fantasy Annual, and the Universe series - and essentially that's all I want to do for now, just those three books a year and then getting back to some more writing on my own. I'm writing a new novel.

BA: The first two issues of Universe, your original anthology series, were published in paperback by Ace with illustrations by Alicia Austin preceding each story. When Universe moved into hardcover with #3, the illustrations disappeared. Was this voluntary on your part or would you resume having the stories illustrated, if possible?

TC: I didn't stop using illustrations because I wanted to; it was simply because I switched publishers. When I was publishing the first two, I was in New York City, and I was the editor who was handling the production work on Universe 1 and 2. So it was easy for me to arrange to have Alicia Austin do those illustrations. After I moved to California, and I was sending in the manuscripts to Random House, Random House chose not to have interior illustrations, either because they didn't feel they should be there, or it cost too much money, or production problems, or whatever.

Currently Universe is being published by Doubleday, and I think we could possibly do it, but it would add on a certain amount to the budget on the book. And if that's the case, I think I'd rather add that amount of money to the budget for the authors.

BA: What is your opinion of the flood of profusely illustrated trade paperbacks that have been coming out the past several years?

TC: I'm of two minds about that. When I started the Universe series, as you've mentioned, I had them illustrated by Alicia Austin, an artist whose work I like very much. I also published illustrated editions of Kuttner's The Mask of Circe and London's Before Adam. I was in favor, then, of using good illustrations with good stories, because I thought they complemented each other very nicely. It wasn't being done back then. Almost all books being published then were a lot of type and something on the cover, but no other pictures. I just thought that dressed up a book and made it kind of pretty and more interesting.

But more recently, the trend towards the visual aspect in science fiction has become so strong, so marked, that I'm reacting the other way, against it. I would like to see people forget about the pictures, for God's sake. At least in most cases, because they don't add that much. They really are only window dressing.

God, don't tell any artists I said that.

No, really, I think the emphasis should be on the stories themselves. In fact, I see the whole movement toward what I think of these days as "picture books" as a combination juvenile trend - kids like to have pictures in their books because the words are hard for them - and a trend which is caused largely by a growing illiteracy in this country and in the world. People just do not read as easily as they used to. That bothers me a lot; I'd like to go against that trend.

BA: Do you have any particular working method for choosing the stories in Universe? Are the manuscripts from recognized professionals read before unsolicited manuscripts from individuals?

TC: Yeah, the ones from recognized professionals are read first. I do the same system most people do: you have the professional pile and what's known as the slush pile. With a slight variation: You don't have to be a recognized professional to get out of the slush pile and into the "pro" pile if I've read something by you before and I think you're a pretty good writer, whether or not you've sold anything. I'll probably remember your name and put your manuscript over onto this pile to be read first.

BA: Do you try to solicit stories from specific writers?

TC: I do, yes, definitely.

BA: Would you rather work through agents or through the writers themselves?

TC: It doesn't make a great deal of difference. It's a little bit easier to work with the authors directly, simply because you can talk with them about perhaps an idea for a story, or if it comes to having the story revised then you can simply talk directly with the author. Almost every time that I have dealt through an agent, if it comes down to revisions or something like that, I write directly to the author and send a carbon copy to the agent so the agent knows what's going on. It really doesn't make a great deal of difference.

BA: When you're compiling one of your reprint anthologies, how are the stories picked for those? Do you rely on your memory, keep a card file on good stories, ask your friends?

TC: I keep a card file. Whenever I read a story that I think is outstanding in some way, I sit down and do a card on it. I give the number of words, the

title, the author, and a short synopsis of the story and put that in the card file. At the end of the year, I go through it and pick out the stories that seem to me to be the best.

BA: How are rights obtained for stories you want to reprint? What happens when an author you want turns out to be dead or vanished?

TC: That very seldom happens. In fact, I can't recall that it has ever happened to me with the best-of-the-year anthologies.

It has happened in the case of some other anthologies, since I've done anthologies of material going back to, say, the thirties and the forties. Some of those authors have died or have simply disappeared.

There's one author named Burt Filer who was writing in the 1960's. Indeed, I knew him then. He's disappeared completely since then; nobody can find him. Harlan Ellison is looking for him too; Harlan owes him money in royalties on a story that Harlan published. Harlan can't find him. I can't find him. I reprinted a story by him. Since I couldn't find him...One option that we have in the science fiction field is Forrest J. Ackerman, who serves a very valuable function. He's, among other things, an authors' agent, and if somebody cannot be found, or he's died and his estate can't be located, Forry acts as a kind of clearinghouse for that; he will accept the money and put it in escrow, as it were, just hold it there, and he'll advertise in writers' magazines and so forth, trying to find these people. Eventually, he usually does.

BA: One area of sf editing you've never done is in the science fiction magazines. Have you ever had the desire to do so, and if you were editing an sf magazine, what would you do to try and make it a success?

TC: I've always wanted to edit a science fiction magazine. It's the one thing that I've wanted to do that just hasn't come my way. I've never been in the right place at the right time. Yes, if anybody ever wants a real good science fiction editor for an sf magazine, get in touch with me. I would love to do it, and I could do the job.

What I would do to make it sell is make it good. That is to say, I would make it good in a way that would sell. I'm not the kind of editor who has his head in the clouds and buys a whole lot of literary stories and damn the readers! I never was that kind of editor, though some people have "praised" me in such terms.

Besides, my own tastes, as I've found over the years, coincide very closely to the tastes of the readership at large. Which is very fortunate for me. I don't have to second-guess things. You know - read a story and say, "Well, I don't like that but I think other people will; I'll buy it." That's a very dangerous way to edit; it means you're guessing all the time. Whereas, particularly in The Best Science Fiction of the Year, every story that I publish is something that I really liked myself, not just something I cynically chose because "I think that's going to win the Hugo" or something. It's worked out very well.

BA: Your own fiction has been almost entirely in the short story area, with only one full-length novel, Cirque, to date. Is this because of a natural inclination on your part, or a lack of time due to your editing work? If you were to start writing full-time instead of editing, would you tend to write more short stories or move into the longer lengths?

TC: I'd be doing both. What I most like to write, and what I write most easily, is the short story; that seems to be my natural medium. However, there is a lot more money in novels. I can write novels; I've written one, and it was

successful. I am writing another novel now, as I mentioned.

BA: I've got two final questions. First, if there had been no science fiction, what would have happened to Terry Carr?

TC: Interesting question. I think Terry Carr would be working in a library somewhere, because that was what I did before I got into science fiction. I worked in a variety of libraries around San Francisco and Berkeley. I'd probably be a librarian.

BA: Lastly, in what direction do you see the science fiction field heading? What do you feel is the future of the magazines, the original anthologies and the other markets for shorter fiction, as compared to novels?

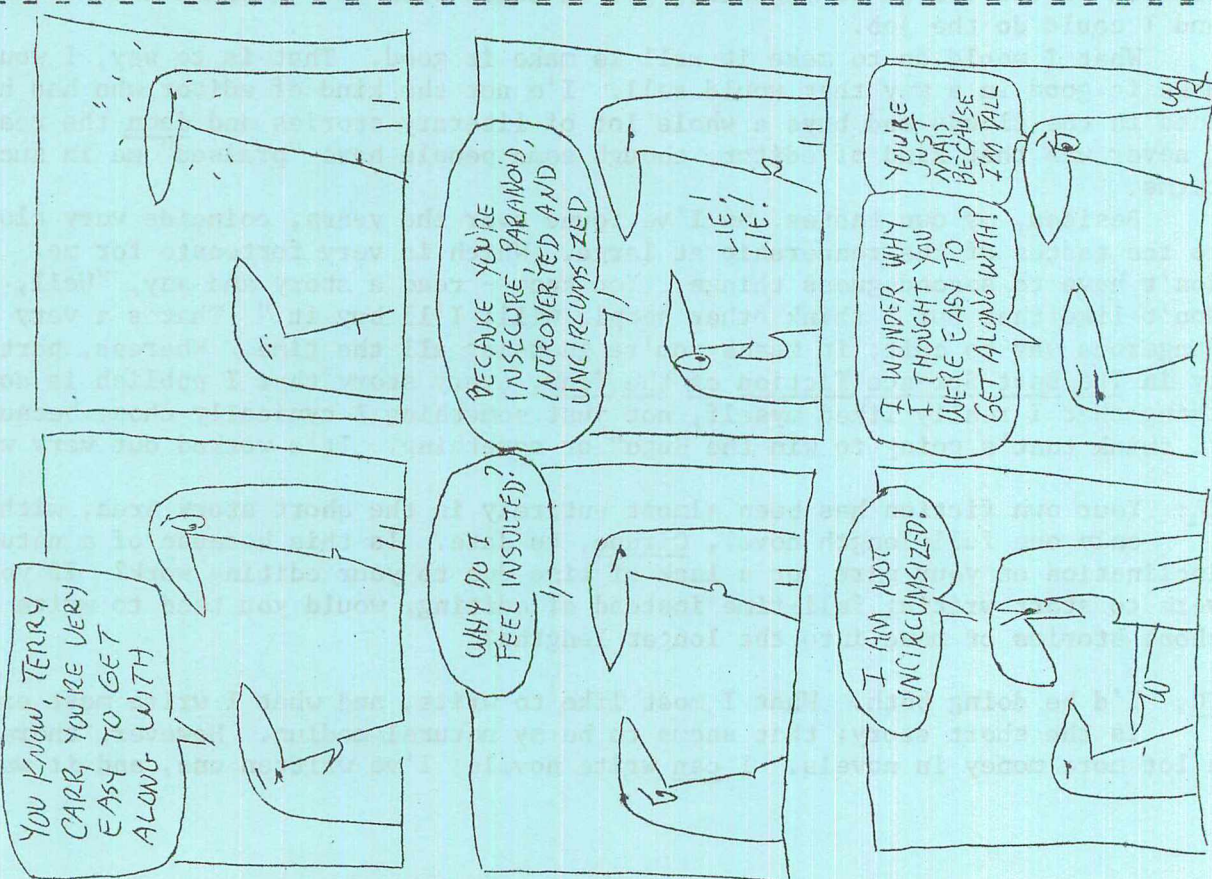
TC: I wish I knew. Things are in a state of flux right now; it's very difficult to predict things.

Anthologies have never sold as well as novels, of course, and right now there's a countrywide - worldwide - recession going. In such a situation, publishers get very conservative and they publish only those things that they know they can make money on. So it's somewhat harder to sell anthologies.

Some of the magazines, as you know, have died - but there are new magazines coming in. As best I can tell, the future for pure science fiction magazines is questionable. But on the other hand you have OMNI, which is primarily visuals again, and science articles and so forth, with a certain amount of fiction. That can obviously be sold very well; OMNI's been doing it and they have imitators coming out already.

I think that, unfortunately, is where the future may lie. I say unfortunately because I'd like to see more pure science fiction being published.

BA: Thank you very much.



A GAME MEN PLAY
Vance Bourjaily
Dial Press, \$9.95

KILL THE DEAD
Tanith Lee
DAW Books, \$1.75

THE PALACE OF LOVE, \$1.75
THE FACE, \$1.95
THE BOOK OF DREAMS, \$2.25
all by Jack Vance
DAW BOOKS

THE LIGHT BEARER
Sam Nicholson
Berkeley, \$1.95

DOGSBODY
Dianna Wynne Jones
Dell, \$1.50

TALES OF NEVERYON
Samuel R. Delany
Bantam, \$2.25

BEYOND REJECTION
Justin Leiber
Del Rey, \$2.25

FOUR-DAY PLANET & LONE-STAR PLANET
H. Beam Piper
Ace, \$2.25

FIRESTARTER
Stephen King
Viking Press

THIEVES' WORLD, \$1.95
TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN, \$2.25
edited by Robert Lynn Asprin
Ace Books

TIME TRAVELLERS STRICTLY CASH
Spider Robinson
Ace Books, \$2.25

DARK FORCES
edited by Kirby McCauley
Viking Press

OCTAGON
Fred Saberhagen
Ace, \$2.75

MYTH CONCEPTIONS
Robert Asprin
Starblaze, \$4.95

READING

Vance Bourjaily is a writer I've long admired for his works. (THE HOUND OF EARTH, THE VIOLATED, the massive NOW PLAYING AT CANTERBURY, and others.) So I was pleased to see a new novel by him on the shelves. Oddly, since all his other books have been solidly "mainstream", A GAME MEN PLAY was filed in the Mysteries section at the local library.

The reason for this is that the 'hook' of the novel is the protagonist's learning that two young sisters he had known when they were children have been brutally murdered in New York City. From this point, however, the book flashes back to the life and times of Chink Peters, the protagonist of the book. Bourjaily knows how to do this sort of thing extremely well, and Peters' life, beginning with the odyssey across Siberia and to the US of his father, a Russian cavalry officer fleeing the Revolution, Chink's boyhood on a private horse farm, his life and loss of virginity as a high school wrestler, working as a commando during WWII, and his various jobs and loves as a horse trainer (and occasional reluctant operative recalled by the government), is extremely fascinating. So much so, in fact, that when the narrative returns to its beginning point and Peters becomes involved with an investigation of the girls' death, it's a bit of a letdown.

One other disgruntling thing about the book caught my attention. More clearly than in any of Bourjaily's other books, the female characters in A GAME MEN PLAY are irrational, unfathomable, and emotionally destructive. Nonetheless, Bourjaily's portrait of competent, honorable man concerned with the rights and wrongs of his actions is vivid enough that I still give A GAME MEN PLAY a high recommendation.

Tanith Lee has amply demonstrated a past mastery of highly styled fantasy in such books as NIGHT'S MASTER. And while KILL THE DEAD doesn't quite live up to that particular tour de force, it's strong plot, dramatic characters, and vivid evocation of mood and setting make it more than worthwhile. The plot involves Parl Dro, a

professional executioner of the deadalive, ghosts who have not gone to their due realm and prey on the living. Dro meets, and is pursued by, the ghost of a woman whose sister's ghost he had exorcised. Mysteriously entwined in this situation is a self-destructive musician oddly attracted to Dro, and a fabled town populated entirely by the ghosts of a catastrophe's wake. Very little is as it seems, and the levels of deception and mystery are ripped aside one by one until the book's final climax and resolution.

The Jack Vance Books listed on the previous page are the final three volumes in the Demon Princes pentalogy. THE PALACE OF LOVE was originally published in 1967, and the final two volumes were not written until this last several years. Yet there is a similar, and disappointing, motif running through the three books. The disappointment has to do with the nature of Evil, which the Demon Princes are supposed to represent. Yet, in the first two books of the series, the evil of Malagathe the Woe and Kokor Hekkus was a grand evil, evil for the sheer joy of evil. Yet in the three final volumes, Vance seems to lose sight of this perception, and the motivations of Viole Falushe, Lens Larque, and Howard Alan Treesong are trivial and spiteful in comparison, and the three villians come across merely as spiteful, petty and mean.

Nevertheless, there's enjoyment aplenty to be found in these books. Besides the usual fascination of Vance's baroque world-building, there is the subtle characterization of the major characters, and the 'good bits', the side portions of the narratives that are fascinating little stories in themselves (I am particularly thinking of the DRuids' burial ceremony, and its outcome, in THE PALACE OF LOVE). And THE FACE concludes with one of the most delicious, satisfying, diabolical (and that's a compliment) bits of revenge I have ever seen outside of the pages of THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO.

Sam Nicholson's THE LIGHT BEARER is a romp in the grand tradition of Campbell's ASTOUNDING in the days before it transmogrified into ANALOG. The Good Guys from Earth are hovering above the Bronze Age planet, Mus-al-ram, with the long, slow mission of raising it peacefully to a more advanced level of technology. Their main instrument in this mission is Prince Zeid, who is odd by reason that he cares more about what he can learn from the Earthmen than what they can give him, and who is called the Light-Bearer because he supports his charitable and scientific work by sellings by selling Spacer lamps. Enter Coral Bud, daughter of a sea-pirate who has been betrothed to Zeid without his knowledge. Add in family politics and rivalries in Zeid's family, a half-caste renegade called Peelafell the Space Bastard, and a host of other complications, and you have an enjoyable tale of derring-do and daren't-do against an Arabian-style background.

DOGSBODY was an ALA Notable Book in its hardcover edition, and for that reason you will more likely find the paperback in the juvenile section of your local bookshop. The book's secondary character is the usual young adolescent of most juveniles, but the viewpoint of the book is that of Sirius, a dog. But a dog in appearance only, for Sirius is actually an effulgence -- a star-being -- sentenced to Earth in the body of a dog for causing the death of another star-being. Sirius will live, and die, in the dog's body...unless he is able to find and recover the Zoi, a mysterious and powerful device that was lost somewhere on Earth during the fight with the other star-being.

There are two special things about a good juvenile fantasy that make it more than just enjoyable. One of these I call Charm, and is a slightly bent view of the events of the books; one might also call it whimsy, altho not so overpowering as to be saecharin. The other quality is Mystery, by which I mean a stretching of mental horizons, a look beyond what might ordinarily be expected, an invocation of a sense of awe; Susan Cooper, in her THE DARK IS RISING series, is particularly good at this, but Dianna Wynne Jones is also an exceptionally good writer whose work is imbued with Charm and Mystery.

Whatever else you might say about Samuel R. Delany's writings, I think just about everyone would agree that they are extremely vivid. Full of detail and color, atmosphere and mood. Whether or not you like the stories, there's enjoyment just in seeing being used, rather than just presented.

TALES OF NEVERYON is a collection of inter-related stories set in the pre-historic/fantasy? world of Neveryon. This is not your run of the mill Hyperborea-style land, however. These tales are set in a land just barely coming into what can be called civilization. Writing & the replacement of barter with coinage are fairly new developments. Philosophy and ethics are in their infancy. It's against such a background that Delany moves his characters, or, rather, it is the background that moves them, as they are subjected to the pressures and influences of a developing civilization.

Some people will probably find these stories boring, and there are spots where Delany goes off into side-lectures at remarkable length. Ah, but he does it so well....

A good writer is sometimes like a magician. He has to make things happen in such a way that you won't notice he's trying to slip something else past you unnoticed. By that standard, Justin Leiber is a good writer, and BEYOND REJECTION is a good novel. He seemed to have introduced a whole slew of interesting characters, then dropped most of them partway thru the book. And I didn't catch the trick he'd pulled, and I thought to myself as I kept on reading "What a piece of poor writing that was; oh well, it is a first novel", and then I got to the last chapter...and found to my chagrin that no he hadn't dropped all those characters, merely disguised them for perfectly good and valid reasons.

Oh, the plot? Has to do with brain transference and the protagonist's search for the murderer of his previous body.

I have a suspicion that Ace Books originally planned to publish FOUR-DAY PLANET and LONE STAR PLANET as separate books. But, realizing that the latter story would be an incredibly skimpy 120 pages if published on its own, tacked the two together as a double feature.

I'll review the latter first: LONE STAR PLANET is set on the planet of New Texas, which has a rather unique political system. If a politician acts contrary to the public interest, he can be gunned down by said public, and a special court can acquit and even publicly congratulate the killer; this makes politicians very careful about representing the public. Stephen Silk, the new ambassador to New Texas from the Solar League, has to convince the New Texans to ally with the League against the s'Srauff, a doglike alien species that wants to conquer the galaxy, while trying to work within this system. A rip-roaring, fast-paced adventure tale.

FOUR-DAY PLANET is also an adventure tale, with action fast and furious. But it's much the better tale for a variety of reasons. For one, it's a more serious story, avoiding the parody and ethnic jokes of LONE STAR PLANET. The society is much more thoroughly thought out, with a society and economy that would work. And the characterization is more human and less cardboard.

One might easily compare FOUR-DAY PLANET to some of Heinlein's juveniles, featuring as its main plotline the coming of age of an adolescent. The problem with that is that Heinlein comes off the poorer. Walter Boyd in FOUR-DAY PLANET is a young, yet thoughtful and maturing, man, without the cloying flippancy that is so often found in Heinlien's juveniles. Thinking along these lines makes the thought of Piper's suicide even more painful and frustrating, because you begin to get an inkling of just what sort of future work he might have gone on to create.

Stephen King managed to put a red herring straight down my throat in FIRESTARTER. The book involves a couple who had been the subject of a highly secret drug test in the late 60's, in which the subjects had evidenced psi powers while under the influence of the drug. The drug had also killed or driven insane most of the other subjects of the test, so the entire test had been labeled Top Secret and

carefully swept under the rug by a government agency known as The Shop. Not only do the couple survive the drug, but they continue to exhibit the psi powers they had shown under the drug's influence, to a lesser degree; this they try to keep secret and ignore as much as possible. Then they have a daughter, however, who can start fires by merely thinking about them...that's when The Shop, who have been keeping all the surviving experimentees under surveillance for years, start to close in.

And the red herring King put in was this: At the time of the book's main events, there is only one other surviving experimentee left, a fellow out in California by name of Frank Richardson. Richardson is still being kept under surveillance, despite the fact that he has shown no evidence of psi powers whatsoever since the test. One of the other things that had been shown in the book is that Andy and Charlie (the father and daughter, the mother having already been killed by agents of The Shop) keep getting precognitive warnings whenever The Shop starts to close in on them. "Aha," I said to myself, tying the two together. "Now I know how King is going to end this book. This Richardson fellow is actually a telepath, therefore aware that if he ever evidences his powers The Shop will try to convert him into a weapon for themselves. So, he's been sending telepathic messages and manipulating people all over the place without anyone realizing it. Eventually, Andy and Charlie will get into a set of circumstances where Andy will get killed off (since King has a habit of killing off one of his main sympathetic characters in mid-book, and he can't kill off Charlie, since that's who the book is about). Charlie will then use her pyrokinetic powers to totally obliterate The Shop's personnel, facilities, equipment and, most importantly, their records. And at that point Frank Richardson will be safe from the no-longer existant Shop and will come out of the woodwork, taking Charlie under his arm as a surrogate father." I thought this train of thought was a damn good deduction, and I can't understand why King didn't think of it himself. But no, Richardson's name was never mentioned again in the book, and events took a somewhat different turn of events. (The copy I am reviewing is a Book Club edition, which is why I don't have the regular price listed with the other essential data above.)

THIEVE'S WORLD and TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN are two anthologies of original stories by different authors set in a common universe, the crime-and-sorcery ridden town of sanctuary at a far end of the Rankan Empire. Some of the various authors involved used and amplified on characters and elements in yet other authors' contributions to the volumes, which is frequently fun.

The first volume, THIEVES' WORLD, is a bit uneven, partially I think because such a project never had been done before and took some getting used to. I would have to say that the best story in TW is Andy Offutt's "Shadowspawn"; he creates the most vivid character of the book, has a carefully crafted story, and seems to have a more complete picture of Sanctuary in his mind. All the other stories are at least competent and entertaining.

The second volume, TALES FROM THE VULGAR UNICORN, is much better to my mind, although the book gets off to a very poor start with Phil Farnar's "Spiders of the Purple Mage", a piece of 1930's-pulp style at its worst and almost no interconnection with the characters and settings set up in TW. The rest of the book is much better, particularly the last three stories; "Vashanka's Minion" by Janet Morris, "Shadow's Pawn" by Andy Offutt and "To Guard the Guardians" by Robert Asprin, all of which involve a character introduced in Morris' story, Tempus, a member of the elite Hell Hounds, the highly trained personal guards of the prince who governs Sanctuary and tries to raise it from its low depths, and who is much more than he seems, and is very complex and grim (boy is he grim!).

In short, TW and TFTVU are both interesting experiments that are mostly successful, and would probably be worth the purchase price to those fantasy fans of, particularly, Fritz Leiber's Lankmar stories, of which the best of these stories are reminiscent.

Spider Robinson's work can get too be a bit cloying in large doses. The strings of fast-flowing puns are only one trademark of his. Another such trademark that

gets to me occasionally is that his characters are frequently so damned empathic, sympathetic and feeling that I want to throw something at them.

In small doses, though; Robinson's work is extremely entertaining. The Callahan's Crosstime Saloon series of stories, of which there are four in TIME TRAVELERS STRICTLY CASH, seems to be wearing a bit thin to me; it's quite possible though that this is because the format and plot structure of the stories is essentially the same each time, and that a newcomer to the series would find the stories here as refreshing and amusing as I did the first few in the series.

I won't comment on the non-fiction pieces included in TTSC, except to say that I, with my peculiar set of prejudices, found a lot more of interest (and worth) in "The Web of Sanity" than I did in "Rah Rah R.A.W.!". Of the four non-Callahan stories in the book, "Soulsearch" and "Local Champ" are dull. "God is an Iron" is better, tho it takes a while to get an understanding of why the main character is doing what he's doing. But my own favorite in the book is "Serpent's Tooth." This may be my own peculiar prejudices again, because one of the characters therein is a thoroughly nasty, malicious, evil little bastard, and it makes a refreshing change from the usual Robinson nasty who turns out in the end to have his good points after all.

Kirby McCauley's DARK FORCES is a rather large book, with stories by 23 different authors (counting the father-&-son Matheson story as one writer); so I don't think I'm going to take the space to treat each story individually. So, poor, average, and superior stories are:

Poor: Dennis Etchison's "The Late Shift"; Isaac Bashevis Singer's "The Enemy" (which infuriated me because it totally violates just about all the tenets of good story-telling, and I think if it hadn't have been written by a Nobel Prize winner it would have been soundly and quickly rejected); Robert Aickman's "Mark Ingestre: The Customer's Tale"; Ramsey Campbell's "The Brood" (someday I am going to write a filksong entitled "Those Lying-Paralyzed-With-A-Broken-Back-While-Weird-Icky-Things-Eat-You-Up Blues" and give that stupid cliché of the horror genre the respect it deserves); Lisa Tuttle's "Where The Stones Grow" (an archetypical Idiot Plot); Edward Gorey's "The Stupid Joke"; Ray Bradbury's "A Touch of Petulance"; and Charles Grant's "A Garden of Blackred Roses".

Average: Davis Grubb's "The Crest of Thirty-six"; Joyce Carol Oates' "The Bingo Master" (which is not a horror story of the traditional Icky Things type, and therefore much more effective); Theodore Sturgeon's "Vengeance Is" (personally I found the fate of the two brothers, which was supposed to be so horrifying, to be merely amusing); "Russell Kirk's "The Peculiar Demesne" (although Manfred Arcane is one of the most interesting characters in the book, and I'll probably look up some of the other of Kirk's stories featuring him); Robert Bloch's "The Night Before Christmas"; Joe Haldeman's "Lindsay and the Red City Blues"; Manly Wade Wellman's "Owls Hoot In the Daytime"; Gahan Wilson's "Traps"; and Stephen King's "The Mist" (the obvious menace in King's story is this crowd of gibberingly funny monsters that come straight out of 1950's Grade Z horror movies, but I found the actual horror of the story most overpowering in the scene where the narrator and another character discover the bodies of two soldiers who had worked in the military installation that apparently brought the monsters into our world by accident...and the two soldiers had hung themselves rather than face what they, in part, were responsible for).

Superior stories: Ed Bryant's "Dark Angel"; Karl Edward Wagner's "Where the Summer Ends" (which overcomes its Eat-You-Up ending by dint of superior plotting and a very strong style); T.E.D. Klein's "Children of the Kingdom" (probably the best story in the book, extremely well written, with a slow and careful build-up to the conclusion); Gene Wolfe's "The Detective of Dreams" (another non-traditional Horror story, maybe not even in the genre at all); Clifford Simak's "The Whistling Well" (wherein the Horror in the story isn't one, which is Simak's point); and the Matheson's "Where There's A Will" (a predictable ending, but saved by a very intensely written digging-out-of-your-own-grave scene).

Overall, despite the poor stories, it's quite a good anthology overall.

I even paid money for it, which I don't usually for horror stories. (Another book club edition, so no price handy on this one either.)

OCTAGON, is, I think, the first Fred Saberhagen book I've read. I liked it, if not exceptionally so. It features a clunky looking cover of a killer robot apparently built out of a wheelchair base, bits of plywood and cardboard, a few Christmas tree lights, and a pair of human hands grafted onto the ends of its arms. Not quite what the author had in mind, I think.

The plot deals with a play-by-mail simulation game called Starweb (which is real, originating out of Flying Buffalo, Inc., in nearby Scottsdale, although Saberhagen -- giving due credit to the real Starweb -- is careful to give the game a fictional base and operators), the players in which are slowly being murdered, one by one. One of the players in the game is Robert Gregory, a computer expert dating back to the ENIAC days. Another of the players is the grandson of Henry Brahmaguptra, Gregory's old colleague who split from Gregory over political differences. Gregory suspects Brahmaguptra of being behind the murders, with a secret method of computer control the two men had devised somehow being involved. Brahmaguptra suspects Gregory of being behind the murders. Enter Alex Barrow, Gregory's nephew, who is sent by Gregory to investigate the Starweb game. Exit a female Starweb employee unwise enough to go to bed with Barrow, who is unable to stop the killer robot from the cover from breaking into their motel room and strangling the girl. Enter complications, increasing violence, and a lot of running, culminating in a massive robot attack on Gregory's heavily guarded mansion.

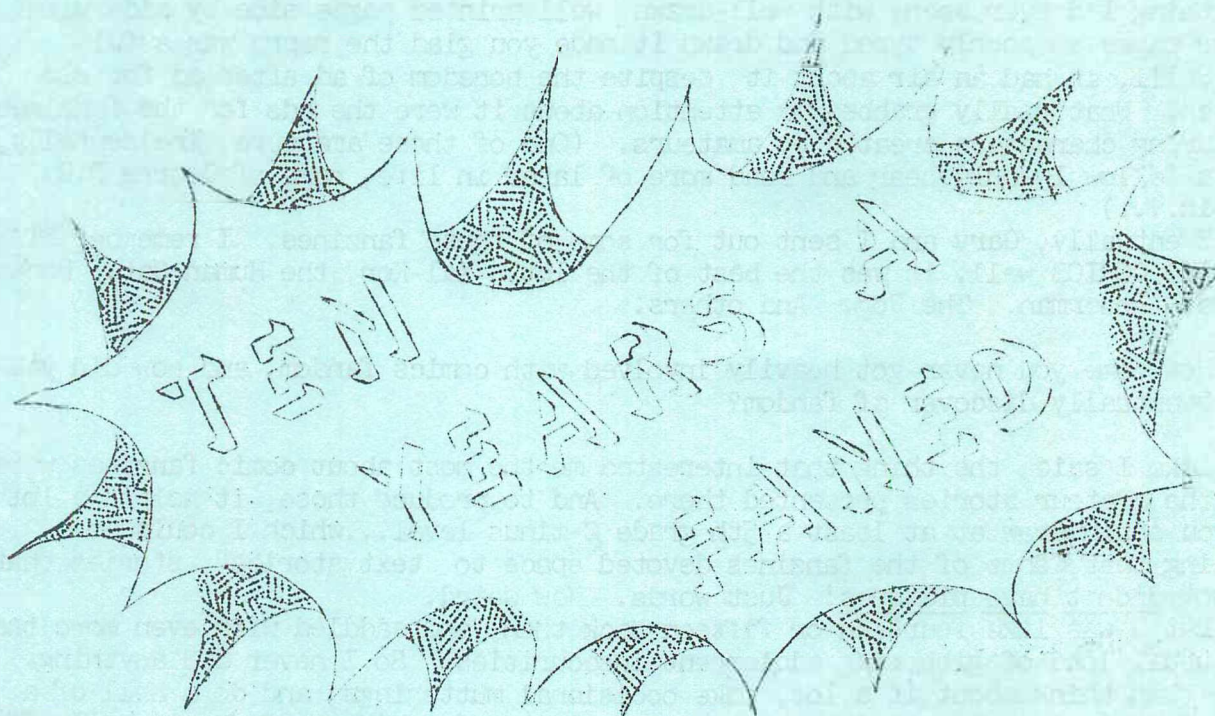
It's a fairly good action-adventure book, with a few deeper thoughts on the capabilities and dangers possible in the computer revolution. None of the characters made any deep impression on me, though, and I rather got the feeling that Saberhagen was manipulating them much like figures in a role-playing game and didn't himself have any deep feeling for or concern for the characters. Also, I'm afraid that the present-day setting of the story made it a bit boring to me; the characters were unexceptional, the background and settings were unexceptional, and the plotting, if a bit intricate at times, is still easily followable and predictable.

Probably not Saberhagen's best book, but I keep hearing good things about him, so I'll probably give some other of his books a try one of these days.

MYTH CONCEPTIONS is the sequel to Asprin's ANOTHER FINE MYTH, and concerns the further adventures of Skeeve, the apprentice wizard, and Aahz, the demonic instructor of the lad. This time around they find themselves suckered into the task of defeating an invading army with only the aid of an ill-assorted group of characters they pick up at the Bazaar on Deva (including a gargoyle who'd been working as an order-taker at this funny food joint with yellow arches...).

Is it funny? Yes. Is it amusing? Yes. Is it a jolly good read? Yes, yes, yes. It's crammed with outrageous characters, situations, statements, plot twists, and puns. This is, basically, a 1930's style screwball-comedy done in print with a fantasy motif. Its purpose is to entertain, and that it does right nicely.

It's been close to six months since I typed up the above books reviews, and of course I've done more reading since then. Space and time, however, prevent any additional reviews in this issue, so next issue may, and probably will, include reviews of...THE CHRONICLES OF TORNOR...DANSE MACABRE...CLAN OF THE CAVE BEAR...KINDRED...DELUSION'S MASTER...WEB OF ANGELS...THE POINT MAN...THE STEEL OF RAITHSKAR...PARTICLE THEORY...CAVERNS...REEFS...and doubtlessly a few others.



Q: Ten years? Is that too many? Or not enough? For the answer to these and other questions, we are here today to interview Bruce D. Arthurs, Average Name Faned. Bruce, has it really been ten years since you published your first fanzine?

A: Yes, me, it has. It was in June of 1971 that GODLESS #1 rolled off the ditto machine I used at Arizona State University.

Q: What made you want to publish a fanzine of your own? And how did you find out about fanzines in the first place?

A: Blame my oldest brother, Gary. He and I both liked to read and collect comics. He was caught up enough in the idea that he formed a comics club. The Galaxy Club, I think it was called, although I don't remember for sure at this point; this took place back in the mid-sixties.

At any rate, although the membership of the club never got more than three, one of the things Gary did was to draw up, every year, award certificates and send them to the comics he felt had been the previous year's best. One of those awards got its cover letter printed in the letter column of THE FANTASTIC FOUR, and a month or so later a...thing...showed up in our mailbox.

Q: What was it?

A: It was a comics adzine called ROCKET'S BLAST -- COMICCOLLECTOR. It was, for the most part, quite similar to many apa mailings; people who wanted to advertise comics for sale, or comics wanted, or their own amateur comics--zines, would send a sheaf of printed flyers or whatever to the RB-CC's publisher, who collated them all together along with a cover, smaller ads he'd paste up and print himself, and a few pages of non-ad material, and mail it out. That was the first fanzine I ever saw.

Q: What was your reaction to it?

A: I didn't know what to make of it. It was about the sloppiest, most chaotic thing I'd ever seen, with well-drawn, well-printed pages side by side with other pages so poorly typed and drawn it made you glad the repro was awful.

Still, it had an air about it, despite the boredom of ad after ad for old comics. What really grabbed my attention about it were the ads for the fanzines featuring characters created by amateurs. (One of those amateurs, incidentally, was a fellow I would hear and read more of later in life, name of George R.R. Martin....)

Eventually, Gary and I sent out for some of these fanzines. I remember STAR STUDDER COMICS well; it was the best of the lot. Xal-Kor, the Human Cat. Doctor Weird. Powerman. The Fog. And others.

Q: How come you never got heavily involved with comics fandom, and how did you eventually discover sf fandom?

A: Like I said, the thing that interested me the most about comic fanzines were the amateur stories presented there. And to produce those, it helped a lot if you could draw at at least a 5th grade C-minus level...which I couldn't. Failing that, some of the fanzines devoted space to "text stories", stories that *gasp* didn't have pictures! Just words. How weird.

But I was like fourteen or fifteen back then, and saddled with even more than the usual load of gibbering adolescent insecurities. So I never did anything more than think about it a lot, make occasional mutterings, and do a hell of a lot of beginnings to stories about my own characters. (Most of whom were *koff* "inspired" by the prozines. My Captain America clone had the godawful name of Freedom Fellow, and I took the Vulture out of SPIDERMAN and made him into a hero called The Albatross. The only fairly original character I came up with was called Ebony Scarlet, and I think I may have actually come up with the idea of having a professional super-criminal as the main character of a series before any of the prozines did.)

As to how I got into sf fandom...there was a group of people who wanted to hold the 1973 Worldcon in Dallas, and who put out a promotional fanzine called DALLASCON BULLETIN. I forget the other names involved, but one of them was Tom Reamy, who was a crossover fan involved with both comics fandom and as-yet-unknown-to-me sf fandom. One of the goals of the Dallas bid was to appeal to all the various subfandoms, so their mailings went to just about everybody.

Because it was circulated so widely, DB gave advertisers a large audience. One of those advertisers was Richard E. Geis, for his SCIENCE FICTION REVIEW. The ad intrigued me, so I sent in a buck for a couple of sample issues.

And that was the spark that struck flame. I was intrigued, fascinated, spellbound. I wanted to learn more. What was this "New Wave/Old Wave" everyone was arguing about? What was Dangerous Visions? What did this strange term, "fu-ghead", mean, and how could I get to be one myself?

Q: And that's what prompted you to publish your first zine?

A: Not right away. Those galloping insecurities, remember? But I did purchase a full sub to SFR, got into irregular correspondence with a few other fans, found there was actually a (small) local fandom, saw a few other zines, and thought about it a lot.

The direct motivation behind my first zine resulted from writing an sf story as my final exam in my 1st-year English course at ASU. I saw the instructor again the next semester, and she mentioned that another student in a different class of hers had also written an sf story. She showed the paper to me, and I thought it was a fairly good story. In fact, the more I thought about it, the more certain I was that I had read it before. The story had been plagiarized.

But try as I might, I couldn't remember who had written it or where I had

seen it. I looked thru dozens of short-story collections with no results. I asked some of the local fans I knew, and one of them also remembered reading the story, but not where or by whom. So what I finally did was to write Dick Geis a letter outlining the story's plot and the circumstances around it, and asked him to print it in the next SFR. Which he did.

Q: And the response?

A: About two dozen cards and letters from his readers, identifying the story as "Pattern" by Fredric Brown, and telling me several books in which it was included. I gave the instructor the information, and the plagiarizing student's grade was changed to an F.

Q: But how did this bring a fanzine into being?

A: I felt a responsibility to the people who had written me, to inform them of what had resulted. Two dozen separate letters seemed an awful lot of work, so I started thinking about the idea of typing up a report, having it duplicated, and sending it out to everyone who had responded.

And then it suddenly struck me that these two dozen people made a good start on a mailing list, and that the report on the plagiarized story would make a starting point for material for a full-fledged fanzine!

So I did. I got some cartoons from Bill Rotsler, a story and a column from, respectively, Bill Rupp and Alex Vitek, two of the people I'd been corresponding with, plus my own report, an editorial, and some book reviews. That was GODLESS #1.

Q: What sort of reaction did it get, and what do you think of that first zine nowadays?

A: If I had had the sense to leave the editorial out completely, it would have been much better. It earned a "killer" review by Jeff Glencannon in an issue of Linda Bushyager's GRANFALLOON. I plead youth, insecurity, and ignorance. I made an *ahem* forceful stand for the superiority of "classic" and "mainstream" literature over sf. I thought at the time that this would be an impressive stance to take. What I didn't realize was that most of the fans on my mailing list knew and had read more of both sf and regular books than I had. Re-reading it ten years later, I find that I actually wrote things like -- and this is a mild example -- "What fans must do is to forget the impossible dream of science fiction becoming popular and concentrate on keeping it from being forgotten."

Q: Had you figured out what "fugghead" meant by this time?

A: Next question, please.

Q: So where did GODLESS go from there?

A: Uphill. The next issue was larger (24 pages plus cover), better looking, and the material was, I think, more interesting. (Although I find on review, again, that my own writing is the poorest.) Some good letters from various people, most of whom reacted very kindly and tolerantly about the previous issue's editorial. I'm not exactly sure in what direction GODLESS might have gone from there if I'd kept publishing regularly; #2 was in many ways dreadfully sercon in tone.

Q: What kept you from publishing?

A: I joined the Army in January of 1972 for a three-year hitch and it wasn't

until a bit more than a year later that the third issue of GODLESS came out, with further issues coming out fairly regularly after that until I folded the zine.

Q: Can you give us an overview of the zine's life?

A: Well, in between the second and third issues, I had quite a bit more contact with fans, mainly the group around Donn Brazier's TITLE, and saw a lot more fanzines. I think this both educated and tempered me a lot and made the resumed GODLESS more enjoyable and comfortable to read.

GODLESS #3, Spring 1973, was the "Special Resurrection Issue", printed offset, and served mainly to announce my return to publishing. Everything except the Rotsler art and the lettercolumn was by me, and I note nothing of any particular distinction.

GODLESS #4, Summer 1973, was the first mimeoed issue. This was thanks to the generosity of Ned Brooks, who lived about 90 miles from where I was stationed and who offered me the use of his mimeo whenever I could get down to his place. It was a gracious offer which I still appreciate. The repro of that ish suffered as a result of my inexperience, and I wish I'd had more than one lettering guide at the time. But I'm still rather proud of the cover, where I think I designed the title lettering and border to go quite well with a Cy Chauvin drawing.

Contents were, umm, unexciting. A dull editorial (which is, at least, an improvement over stupid), a Donn Brazier article, a letter excerpt from Paul Walker, book reviews, a nonsense poem by me that I understandably published under a pseudonym, and the lettercolumn. Actually, the last mentioned was, and still is, the most interesting part of the zine. More than one person has told me I edit a good lettercolumn, and I've occasionally pondered the idea of doing a pure letterzine. Never did, though, even if one reviewer called an issue of my Army perzine, POWERMAD, by that term.

GODLESS #5, November '73, was fairly good, with a piece of pseudo-fanfic by Lord Jim Kennedy. It also featured a long book review, by me, of a Roger Elwood anthology titled Ten Tomorrows, that set off a string of occurrences that eventually resulted in my first professionally sold writing.

GODLESS #6, February '74, was the first to feature a cover by Bruce Townley. A lot of people don't appreciate the crude surrealism of his work, but I've always been intrigued by it. It was also the first issue to have artwork by Brad Parks, who was also...ummm...unappreciated by a lot of people. Articles by Donn Brazier on memorable stories, paranoia by Doug Leingang, Sheryl Birkhead writing about Darkover, and a very good article by Mike Shoemaker about the different types of criticism in the sf field. And also, preceding the letter column, a response by Roger Elwood to my review of Ten Tomorrows in the previous issue, and my reply to his response.

GODLESS #7, May '74, had as its highlight a funny-animal piece by Dave Locke that I had Jackie Causgrove (then Franke) do an illustration for. Something I still find hard to believe I did was, when the black portions of a skunk in Jackie's illo reproed poorly, to go over each and every of about 200 copies with a ballpoint pen and blacken in the skunk on each. Sometimes I amaze myself. The issue also featured an anti-astrology article by D. Gary Grady, responses to Brazier's article in the previous issue, reviews and letters.

GODLESS #8, Fall '74, is, I think, the first issue that can be described as "very good". The repro is good, the artwork is more varied (and better) than any issue before, the layout I think is very good, and it also had the best mix of articles of any issue. The major piece was one of my own, an article titled "Roger Elwood - A Personal Reaction". To explain its presence requires a bit of backtracking:

After his letter and my response had been published in GODLESS #6, Elwood called me, unsatisfied with what had seen print, and offered to let me interview him. One thing led to another and it ended with him actually paying my plane fare

from Virginia to New Jersey for a face-to-face interview. I found after the interview that I was unable to write it up as a direct question-and-answer piece, and instead wrote it as a highly subjective essay-article, using numerous quotes from the article. I did a lot of work on the piece, rewriting it some three or four times to make it as fair and balanced as I possibly could, and I find it still stands up well today. It stood up well then, too, because Dick Geis paid me \$65 to reprint it in THE ALIEN CRITIC, which made it my first pro sale (although I got the check from my second sale, a story to FANTASTIC, first).

GODLESS #8 also included "The Phosphor-Bronze Cockroach," the first in a series of sf parodies by Rich Bartucci, and a pro-astrology piece by Jeff May.

The major feature of GODLESS #9 was my 19-page report on Discon II, the 1974 Worldcon, my first. Rereading it now, a lot of it seems trivial and poorly written (it was done on-stencil) but it also contains a lot of good memories from the time I was still enough of a starry-eyed nee to think of fandom as almost all good. It also had a Townley cover, another Bartucci parody, a Don D'Amassa article, and a reprint from a service newspaper about defending Earth from an alien invasion. It was also, at 51 pages, the largest zine I'd ever done, and the last issue I published while in the Army.

Q: Perhaps at this point you should discuss POWERMAD.

A: POWERMAD was the personalzine I put out while in the Army, nine issues plus one letter supplement, #3.5. Re-reading both it and the Army issues of GODLESS, I find to my surprise that POWERMAD was the markedly better fanzine. GODLESS was a lot of fun for me, but as a genzine it tended to be uneven and with the possible exception of one or two issues, I don't think it ever ranked as more than a slightly above average fanzine. The odd thing is that my editorials in GODLESS were the most consistently mediocre thing about it, while my writing in POWERMAD got me some of the best egoboo I've ever had. Mike Shoemaker wrote a rave review of it for THE WSFA JOURNAL, and more than one person told me they'd written my name on their Hugo nomination ballots as Best Fan Writer (although I never made it onto the final ballot).

Part of this was because I wrote about some fairly intense subjects, such as the violence and racial problems I'd encountered in the Army. I've found that my writing improves dramatically if the subject is an emotional one for me. And another reason POWERMAD was so well-received was that I got a lot of good letters in response to it, and I tended to print and respond to a lot of them, which in turn brought me more good letters!

Offhand, I'd have to say that POWERMAD is the best multi-issue fanzine I've ever done, although there are individual issues and pieces of writing in other zines for which I have a higher regard.

Q: It was also while in the Army that you first got into apa's, wasn't it?

A: Yes. The very first apa I got into was, oddly enough, APA-H, Elst Weinstein's apa for hoaxes. Almost everyone in it used a pseudonym (mine was William D'Excalibur), and it was great fun while I was in it. One of the members was known simply as A Well Known Gafiate (I think he was Elst Weinstein) (I think about a half dozen members may have been Elst Weinstein), and his goal was to destroy fandom. This gave rise to a bizarrely interactive fan-fiction saga I refer to as "The Great Gafiate War." Members would write about their character's adventures while drawing on and rebounding off of other member's zines in earlier mailings, at the same time as those members were writing continuations off of other people's narratives. Despite this, everything held together amazingly well, and it turned out to be a great adventure, replete with plots, counterplots, betrayals, sword-fights, explosions, a freebooting Federation starship, a commando raid into the labyrinthine dungeons of a Los Angeles fortress, and even an army of triffidish

wild pickle plants! (A bit I came up with that never got into the saga because my character got sidetracked elsewhere between mailings was to have D'Excalibur visit the home of Ed Cagle, the Kansas Madman, who would have revealed his plans for building the Trans-Pacific Railroad, reaching from the US to Australia, so he could drive his car to the 1975 Worldcon.)

The other apas I joined while in the Army were CHAPS and TAPS. CHAPS was a short-lived special-interest apa revolving around Westerns. Despite the fact I read almost no Westerns, I enjoyed it, and I discovered that I did enjoy Lee Hoffman's books, as well as a few other writers. CHAPS had a rotating editorship, and it folded after six or seven mailings when the next editor in line failed to put out the mailing and no one else picked it up. My own CHAPSzine was titled GROWLER.

TAPS was another apa with rotating editors, and I actually belonged to it longer than any other apa I've been in (though my stay in FAPA is getting close), some five years from 1974 through 1979. It was a letter-style apa, and while I don't recall any individual high marks from THE CRAPHEAD EXPRESS (which was retitled MEANINGLESS MARKS after I lost track of the numbering), overall I had a tendency to be more open in there about some of the more personal things in my life. Quite a few of the more troubling things that happened pre-, during, and post-Ignacon, that I didn't want to bring into a wide public forum, would get a mention there.

Q: Any words in general about your Army-period fanac?

A: The most croggling thing about it, as I look back, is the incredible amount of time I had to spend on fanac. I'd spend a good two or three hours a night typing stencils or writing letters of comment, and even more on weekends. I'd do more fanac in one night back then than I sometimes manage in an entire month nowadays!

Q: Shall we move on to the post-Army period? What was the first zine you did then?

A: That was a serial one-shot called DEEP NOSE, although I didn't get the stencils run off until nearly a year later. It was an episodic zine done while I drove from Virginia, where I'd been discharged, back to Arizona. It was part personalzine and part a continuing one-shot done with the fans I stopped to visit along the way (Ned Brooks, George Beahm and Tim Marion in Newport News, Meade Frierson in Birmingham, and missing Don Markstein in New Orleans.).

Q: What was your post-Army fanac like?

A: 1975 and the first half of 1976 stands almost by itself as a period in my life as a fan. It was in many ways a period of self-indulgence. I had an apartment of my own, went to classes at ASU maybe 3 or 4 hours a day, and managed to live almost completely on GI Bill checks. While my time for fanac wasn't quite as large as in the Army, it was still a very major part of my life. GODLESS #'s 10, 11 and 12 were published in this period, and it was also in 1975 that AZAPA, and my zine -- FLUKE OF THE UNIVERSE -- for that apa, began. The first two issues of UNDULANT FEVER were also published in 1975.

Looking through those issues of GODLESS, I find again that the most memorable things about them were the lettercolumns. I really did a good job there, if I say so myself; I managed to have one letter lead naturally to the next, one subject shift gracefully to another and back again. Of course, it's also possible that I most enjoy the letters because they were people talking to me, rather than myself editorializing or presenting someone else's article to an audience; the satisfaction and pleasure from that stays fresh a lot longer.

Also, while the layout and graphics were never exceptionally outstanding or polished, I think I did develop a consistently attractive and readable format for GODLESS.

Then, of course, came May of 1976....

Q: What happened then?

A: It was in that month that I did both the smartest thing I have ever done, and the third dumbest damned thing I have ever done in my life.

The first was that I started to become romantically involved with Hilde, a move that would eventually result in marriage, fatherhood, home-ownership, a job, astounding changes in thinking, and a hell of a lot less free time for fanac.

And the dumb thing I did was to let myself get involved in convention politics!

Q: Do you want to talk about it?

A: No, but I suppose I have to.

six month long pause

Basically, a group of Phoenix fans were bidding for the 1978 Westercon. In March or April of 1976, Linda Bushyager made a typo in KARASS that reported Phoenix was bidding for the Worldcon.

I pointed out this typo to Tim Kyger for his amusement. (My God, the guilt I feel!) And a bit later Tim and Bill Patterson decided to announce Phoenix was bidding for the '78 Worldcon.

This rather upset me, along with a number of other Phoenix fans, since while Phoenix had a fandom large and cohesive enough (we hoped) to field a Westercon, doing a Worldcon was another ball of wax. I recall being told by Tim that the Worldcon bid was really just a "joke bid", so I agreed to let my name be used on the bid literature. Besides, the idea of Phoenix winning such a bid was obviously sheer lunacy, right?

Right. Enter Mike Glyer. Glyer was running an opposing bid for the '78 Westercon. Glyer was also in charge of publications for the 1976 Westercon. In the last PR before that Westercon, Glyer used his position as publications head to arrange to respond directly, on the opposing page, to the ad the Phoenix Westercon bid had placed for themselves. I regarded this, and still do, as a shitty and unethical thing to do.

The Phoenix bid was upset, and I got mad. I was in the midst of preparing GODLESS #13, the 5th Anniversary issue, at the time. Con politics promptly became the subject of my editorial, incorporating not only the complaint against Glyer I mentioned above but various other "dirty tricks" that the Phoenix bidders felt the LA bidders had committed. I rewrote the editorial three times, and at least twice passed the manuscript around at meetings for comments and corrections. It's still a point of some bitterness with me that some of the people who now claim that they tried to make peace between Glyer and myself after the shit hit the fan are the same people who told me "Hit 'em with everything you've got" when the manuscript was passed around, and who did not inform me of errors of fact in that editorial that they were aware of.

Because that editorial was loaded with errors. I particularly wronged Craig Miller, attributing to him things that he turned out not to have said or written. Additionally, my emotional tone in the editorial was one of utter gasping rage. Between the errors of fact and the "voice" of the editorial, I suspect I ended up invalidating even the legitimate complaints I made.

Anyhoo, Phoenix lost their Westercon bid by seven votes, and I stayed mad. This led me into the incredible fallacy of supporting the Phoenix Worldcon bid. With the advantage of hindsight (wonderful stuff; someone ought to bottle it), I can tell you no that letting your emotions control your politics stinks.

Things raged back and forth between Phoenix and LA, and Glycer and me, for about a month. Around about the first or second week of August, things finally got to me; I was literally losing sleep over the affair and growing more and more disgusted with the way I was thinking and acting.

I declared truce in my AZAPazine, dropped off of the Worldcon bid committee, and spent the rest of the month working on GODLESS #14.

GODLESS #14 was an all-editorial issue of six pages in which I tried to separate fact from error, make apologies where due, and in general try to finish off the brouhaha for good and all.

I hand-carried copies with me to MidAmeriCon, the Worldcon being held in Kansas City that year, where I distributed about fifty or sixty copies to people on my mailing list. I intended to mail out the remaining copies from home as soon as I got my GI Bill check.

Unfortunately...when I got back to Phoenix and started going to my classes at ASU, I found the sense of dissatisfaction and pointlessness I'd been feeling with college for some time previously had grown to an intolerable point. I dropped out of ASU a week after MAC and started looking for a job.

It took me three months to find one, and all that time the remaining copies of GODLESS #14 gathered dust as I watched my savings melt away. When I finally did get a job, as a legal secretary to a Tempe lawyer, it had been long enough that I felt the controversy was pretty well forgotten and I did not want to bring it back up again. So the copies did not get mailed out, and I let GODLESS join the ranks of fanzines past.

Q: But if you didn't feel comfortable about continuing GODLESS, couldn't you have started a new genzine with a new title, a new beginning?

A: Probably, but there were several reasons not to. One was that genzines are expensive to produce and my job didn't pay that well; after taxes, I only got about a hundred bucks more per month than I'd been getting from GI Bill. And a lot of that hundred bucks was going into gas for the frequent and long drives back and forth between my apartment in Scottsdale and Hilde's home in Northwest Phoenix. Both my job and Hilde left me with even less free time than before. And there was one other major reason:

Phoenix had won the '78 Worldcon. In a genzine, going out to fandom at large, I would have felt an obligation to comment on how preparations for the Worldcon were going in Phoenix. Unfortunately, even that early in the game, the personality conflicts and petty squabbles that eventually grew to epic proportions between members of the committee were growing more and more frequent and serious.

I didn't want to put fanpolitics into my zines again. I was trying desperately to maintain an attitude of "Don't get involved. Let people work it out between themselves. Keep your mouth shut." I eventually quit as Iggy's recording secretary around March of 1977 and didn't start attending meetings again until about a year later, after Greg Brown's resignation as chairman. I still feel considerable guilt about this attitude, because I can't help wondering...if I had publicized these conflicts on the committee, might I not have made some of the people involved think twice about their actions or statements or feelings, might not I have acted as the conscience that Iggy so sorely lacked?

In short, I stayed out of the generally-distributed line until I revived UNDULANT FEVER in 1980. My fanpubbing was almost exclusively in apas: THE CRAPHEAD EXPRESS/MEANINGLESS MARKS in TAPS, FLUKE OF THE UNIVERSE in AZAPA, and assorted titles in FAPA. The one exception to this was FANTHOLOGY '75.

Q: How did that come about?

A: I had started keeping a mail log shortly before leaving the Army. When I browsed through the log at the beginning of 1976, I found that I had received

in the vicinity of six hundred fanzines thruout 1975. I also found myself remembering good stuff that had been printed in the fanzines I had listed.

This was shortly after I had obtained a copy of Terry Carr's FANTHOLOGY '64. The two factors combined, and I decided to put out a similar collection for fanzines of 1975.

Between getting reprint permission from the writers and editors, having Alexis Gilliland do illustrations for each piece, typing and running off close to a hundred stencils, and collating about half of the 250 copy print run, the first completed copies weren't available until June of 1977. About fifty of those went to contributors and the editors of the original zines. Only about 50 additional copies were ever bought, though, which rather disappointed me. Of course, due to the fuckup with the ad I placed for the FANTHOLOGY '75 in IGUANACON PROGRESS REPORT #3, I really don't know how many people tried to order copies.

Q: What was this?

A: That particular PR ran late enough that by the time the printers started shooting and developing the plates, the photostat of the ad I'd worked up for the FANTHOLOGY '75 had faded, to such an extent that the printers felt obligated to redo the ad. *sigh* Not only did they use such a melange of type styles and sizes that the ad came out looking like garbage, but worse than that, they inadvertently reversed the first two numbers on the mailing address in the ad. Only one order ever managed to get to the right address anyway. I expressed my disgruntlement at the time by not paying for the ad, but I realize now that what I should have done is insisted that the original ad be run in the next PR.

Q: Let's change the subject. Why did your FAPA contributions have assorted titles?

A: To piss off Bruce Pelz. My initial FAPazine was entitled THE APWRUX QUARTERLY, and each successive title changed to begin with the next letter of the alphabet. So my second fanzine was BOBASILICON #2 (formerly THE APWRUX QUARTERLY), my third was A CRANIAL MARP #3 (Formerly BOBASILICON (formerly THE APWRUX QUARTERLY)), and so on, progressing thru DEADLY DOOM OF DECOLLATIO, EGO TRAP, FAGELFOOTER'S MONSTER, THE GUBRUAN SACR, and HEIL DISCORDIA! IGUANACON LIVES, which was in the mailing after HEIL DISCORDIA!, fit the progression only by coincidence. I now have a regular title, STAGGERING, for FAPA.

Q: You've already discussed your FAPazine. Do you have any remarks about your zine for AZAPA, FLUXE OF THE UNIVERSE?

A: FLUXE was, for approximately the first two years, a very good apazine. It was, I hope, a reflection of the state of AZAPA, which was one of the apas to belong to until after I left. Like most apazines, FLUXE tended to be choppy, dashing from comment to comment, subject to subject, but a fair percentage of those comments still remain interesting, perceptive and witty today.

After about, oh, mid-1977, though, the character of FLUXE began to change. Although I managed, barely, to continue to hit every mailing, FLUXE shrank from its former average size of about six to ten pages to, mostly, one or two pagers. Mailing comments were frequently skipped altogether, and FLUXE often consisted of depressed, cryptic ramblings that would have done Bill Bowers proud.

Part of the reason for this depression was the discord going on behind Iguacon's public face. It's hard to be cheerful and ebullient when your friends keep growing more and more hostile to each other. Another reason was adjusting to married life. I had to cope with changes in lifestyle, responsibilities, desires, thinking, et cetera, and not all of it was enjoyable. And yet another reason was the second dumbest thing I ever did in my life, which was letting

myself develop an incredibly stupid one-sided infatuation with Teresa Nielsen.

Q: According to one of the countless rumours concerning Iggy, you actually wrote and published IGUANACON BLUES because you were insanely jealous of Patrick Hayden's relationship with Teresa. Is this true?

A: No. Actually, I exercised a fair amount of restraint in the writing of IGUANACON BLUES, at least so far as I could and not lose the thrust of it, precisely so I could not be accused of purely emotional motives. I'll admit it hurt a lot, though, and for a long time, that Teresa chose to participate in actions which she knew in advance would make her a pariah in Phoenix.

Q: What was IGUANACON BLUES about, anyway, and why was it written?

A: I'd really rather not drag the shitty details out again. Let's just say IGUANACON BLUES was sparked off by Black Saturday. If you know what "Black Saturday" refers to, fine; if not, you're better off not knowing.

Q: What about IGUANACON BLUES REDUX and THE LAST, REALLY, NO SHIT, LAST IGUANACON BLUES?

A: One of the major reasons I wrote the original IGUANACON BLUES was to try and provoke the people responsible for Black Saturday into making some kind of public explanation or justification for their actions. Therefore, I deliberately made it uncomplimentary, uncompromising, and unfair. I thought of it as a stiletto thrust to their egos, and I was certain at least one of the people involved would make some response in kind. It did get me a number of angry phone calls, a threat of lawsuit, dirty looks, and I was banned from the headquarters area at Iguacon, but there was still no public explanation, even after Iguacon. This mystified me for several years.

IGUANACON BLUES REDUX was published about five months after Iggy. It's somewhat unique in that the writing deliberately has multiple levels of meaning and interpretation. On one level, it expressed my continued outrage over Black Saturday. On another, it expressed my doubts that anybody was guiltless that day. On another, it examined the social mechanisms of the rumour mill. On still another, it contained personal messages to people who were aware of the private references. IGUANACON BLUES REDUX was, quite simply, the most complex and best writing I have ever done, and I am still extremely proud of it.

I shouldn't have bothered, though. With the exception of Art Widner in FAPA, nobody seems to have gotten anything out of the zine beyond the most obvious level of anger.

As for THE LAST...it was basically a clean-up zine, reprinting a letter I'd sent to the Iggy committee in 1976 which had contained a number of amazingly Cassandric warnings of what was likely to happen to the people involved in Iggy, that I had meant to include with IGUANACON BLUES REDUX but misplaced, and an angry response to Mike Glycer about remarks he'd made in FAPA smearing Hilde's character (which, as usual, he tried to excuse as coming from "unreliable sources."¹).

Q: In general, what was it like post-Iggy?

A: It was bad. It was very, very bad. I dropped out of AZAPA (or what was left of it) at the end of 1978, and my last zine in there was THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF IGUANACON, a very simple, very bitter zine consisting of a cover and four pages. The first page repeated the word "LIES" over and over to make a page-size "L"; the second page repeated "LIES" to make a giant "I"; the third page made an "E", and the fourth an "S." Dave Klaus described it quite accurately

— "a scream of pain."

Just as I was finishing IGUANACON BLUES REDUX a month or two after that, Pat Mueller announced a new invitational apa, PHOENIX; the list of people she invited included both myself and several of the people responsible for Black Saturday.

I thought, at the time, that IGUANACON BLUES REDUX was my final word on Iggy, and that accepting Pat's invitation would be a new start. I even decided to adopt a new name, Benjamin St. Cyr, and that I would steadfastly avoid any references to the bad blood Iggy had left behind.

So much for that hope. I think it was in the second issue of SCOURGE OF THE UNIVERSE that I ended up calling Alan Bostick a whore. Before the repercussions from that stopped, Patrick Hayden, Teresa Nielsen and Alan Bostick had all dropped out, and I suspect a large number of the remaining members thought of me as a raving madman.

Which wasn't too far off the mark. I was swinging through cycles of hideously deep depression and manic wall-pounding frustration, along with occasional fits of trembling, weeping, and an intense phobia towards being with other people. I did seriously consider committing myself for mental treatment. That was on my good days; on the bad days I simply considered suicide.

Q: One presumes that this is no longer the case.

A: The credit for that belongs to Hilde. Left to myself, I probably would have crawled under my rock in one way or another and disappeared. Hilde, though, kept active in local activities --- the rotating deluxe dinner parties at the Dane's, and later the organizational meetings to hammer out the paperwork for CASFS --- and dragged me along with her. Bruce and Gigi Dane's "NotACons," marathon weekend parties, also contributed to the slow improvement of my mental state.

A significant landmark in this improvement was my decision in early 1980 to revive UNDULANT FEVER and resume publishing a generally-distributed zine. While the press of job and household have kept issues from coming out as frequently as I'd prefer, I expect to keep on publishign UNDULANT FEVER for a long time.

I also entered FLAP, Dave Locke and Jackie Causgrove's invitational apa, in that year. It doesn't have the same ambience that AZAPA did, but in its own way is as good or better than AZAPA was, with a higher percentage of interesting material and less crud. One issue of LAST STAGE FOR SILVERWORLD, my FLAPzine, ran twenty pages of mailing comments, a record for me.

And yet another landmark of that year is that I finally figured out the real reason Black Saturday took place. It turns out this theory is based on information I promised to keep confidential, so I can't tell anyone what it is, but it's the only explanation I've been able to come up with that explains everyone's actions and statements or lack of same. I will merely state my belief that Black Saturday had nothing to do with Iguanacon. Coming to this understanding took a lot of the black creepy-crawlies out of my brain.

Q: Are you aware that Bill Patterson is writing a history of Phoenix fandom up to and including Iguanacon?

A: Yes, he's even sent me copies of the early part of the manuscript, up to early 1977, for comment. I'm waiting to see the rest of it before I respond, although I can already tell it's going to be a long letter. Otherwise, I prefer to abstain from public comment until the manuscript is finalized and published, if ever.

Q: Aside from UNDULANT FEVER and LAST STAGE FOR SILVERWORLD, what other fan publishing are you doing nowadays?

A: Well, PHOENIX seems to have folded, so SCOURGE OF THE UNIVERSE isn't coming out any longer; I hope SCOURGE isn't one of the reasons why PHOENIX has folded. Otherwise, there's the occasional STAGGERWING for FAPA, and I'm presently helping with MAW, the CASFS newsletter, trying to get it published more regularly and distributed more widely.

Q: Do you have any remarks about fanzine publishing in general?

A: Hmm. Off the top of my head, I'd have to say that if Iggy didn't make me beat the fastest path out of fandom, I doubt if anything else will. That statement could, of course, merely indicate that fandom is the only social set I feel even halfway comfortable with, and that I simply don't have anyplace else to go to. That might be a project for some enthusiastic young faned one of these days: Contact old gafiated fans and question them about why they gafiated and what replaced fandom in their lives.

Fanzine publishing in particular is the subset of fandom I feel most comfortable with. The three main areas of fandom, outside of everyone's roots in reading sf and/or fantasy, are conventions, clubs and fanzines. I made a comment in FLUKE once that feuds and disagreements are more prevalent in clubs and convention organizers because there the interface was more direct, with less time for organizing your thoughts or statements, and hence more opportunity for misunderstandings, misstatements and egobarfing. That was before I'd been through any really bad con or club politicing, but my experience since then seems to confirm my statement.

Furthermore, fanzines are concrete, physical mementoes of one's views and opinions and talents. Some, like GODLESS #1, might be embarrassing to still have sticking around years later, but even so I'd have to say that I get more enjoyment and satisfaction out of publishing fanzines than I have from any convention or party I've been to.

I hope I never quit.

Q: Do you have any special plans for future fanzines?

A: I do have one idea that's been ticking around in my head for a while. The 200th mailing of FAPA, it's 50th anniversary, is going to be coming up in 1987, and I'm sure there will be a number of members putting out a special effort to make their contributions to that mailing extra-special. I thought about what I might do along those lines, and I've decided I'm going to publish a collection of the best writings of the fan whose work I most like to read, and whose fanzines I frequently go back and re-read.

Q: What's this collection going to be called?

A: THE BEST OF ME.

Q: I think that's an appropriate note to end this on.

A: Yes, it is.

POSTSCRIPT, MAY 1982: I have at this point read the completed draft of THE LITTLE FANDOM THAT COULD, Bill Patterson's version of Phoenix fanhistory. A full response would, I estimate, require a minimum of 25,000 words. Rather than that, I'll just restrict myself to one comment -- THE DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF IGUANACON, described above, is still the definitive histoyr of Iguanacon.

KICKBACKS

LETTERS

Tim C. Marion, c/o Kleinbard, 266 E. Broadway, #1201B, New York, NY 10002

Thanks for UNDULANT FEVER 6. I found it enjoyable as always, but I note with dismay your new attitude toward DNQs. You claim that DNQ means, "When you repeat this to somebody else, don't tell them you heard it from me." You also say that DNQs are "...information that will hurt or upset other people," yet all of this excludes all the other reasons a letter-writer might mark a particular passage as DNQ. It could be of the sort you imagine, although with perhaps not-quite-so-sinister motives. Maybe somebody we both know just did something that I think is incredibly foolish, and I want to tell you about it merely to let off steam (although admittedly it's hard to tell a person's real motives here, and I can understand your wanting to get away from this sort of ambiguous bullshit). But I could also be recalling our friendship of several years' past (which I hope is still in existence) and want to tell you some intimate, personal detail of my life that I might not want too many other people to know, for one reason or another. But of course, I can't tell you such things now, since you claim that you will no longer honor a DNQ.

((Why not, Tim? All you have to do is tell me in some way that it's something you consider private. This is the point I'm trying to make, that "DNQ" has lost its meaning; it's a buzzword, a throwaway phrase. Communication is a two-way street. You have to decide whether to send this information to me, and I have to decide whether I should do anything with it besides read it. You have to put your trust in me, not in some acronymic phrase that only has a (fragile) tradition behind it. If you, or anyone else, sends me anything, I have to make the decision whether or not it should be printed. If you know me well enough to trust my judgment, write away; if you don't, then think about what you write. I hope this makes my position on DNQ clear, because I'm getting tired of writing about it.))

Brett Cox, Box 542, Tabor City, NC, 28463

My deepest sympathies concerning the loss of your father. After reading about that and the other hardships you went thru last year, I think you may be right about 1980 being the Year of the Jackpot. In my case, my mother went into a coma after a prolonged illness last spring, and although she's all right now, she had to endure a lengthy hospitalization and even lengthier recuperation at home. Then during the summer, partly due to the strain resulting from my mother's illness and partly due to a large outside-the-family trauma (which is another story entirely), I came as close to a complete nervous breakdown as it's possible to come without actually being tossed into a rubber room. And then to top it all off, while driving home from school early last fall, a three-year old boy walked in front of my car and was run over and killed --- which proves that, contrary to what Ellison said in Shatterday, the maximum length of time for sustained, genuine pain is much longer than twelve minutes. At any rate, it wasn't exactly a banner year for me either, nor for others of my acquaintance. (Having laid all this death and destruction on you, I feel obligated to point out that 1981 is shaping up fair-to-middlin' for me, and I hope that it's doing the same for you.)

Mike Bracken, PO Box 387, O'Fallon, IL 62269

Thanks for UF6. I'm not doing much fannish anymore, though occasionally a fanzine from an old and familiar name slips through --- like UF6 -- and I find myself drawn to read it. (Fanzines from unfamiliar names, or shitty fanzines, what

few I still get, are tossed into a box and await the day I'm bored enough to sort through them.)

In some small way I envy your and Al Sirois' involvement with writers' workshops. I've frequently thought that a good workshop could be beneficial to my own writing, but the writers I know locally, while all interested in writing sf, make the bulk of their money from writing outside the field, and have the bulk of their experience outside the field. For the most part, none of us seems interested in the others' areas of "expertise", and none of us have a solid enough background in sf to be the necessary guiding light.

For example, one writer teaches journalism, has sold sports stories and travel pieces to major markets, and, after sales to a few semi-pros, just broke the sf market with a story in Chrysalis. Another works in public relations for a local hospital, has sold sf scripts to comic books, and edits a semi-pro horror magazine. I've sold sf to a few semi-pros, but I make the bulk of my writing money from a variety of short pieces to places like HUSTLER, INTIMATE SECRETS, TRUE SECRETS, GENTLEMAN'S COMPANION, READER'S DIGEST, etc. After all, somebody has to write the fillers and the jokes and the short poems, etc. And word for word the pay beats hell out of writing sf. (My best sale got me almost \$5 a word, and I have yet to see an sf magazine offer that much. Still, though, I'd like to sell more sf.)

John Purcell, 3381 Sumter Ave. So., St. Louis Park, MN 55426

Still complaining about your club's non-nonprofit permit, eh, Bruce? I suspect that what will happen to fanzine fandom, thanks to the current postal hikes, is that the number of fans with their very own bulk mailing permits will increase. Arthur Hlavaty has one, also Brian Earl Brown, Ian (George Laskowski, Jr.), myself, and quite a few clubs have nonprofit mailing permits. I shelled out \$80 for my "profit" permit (I wish...) which is still less than one single mailing of my zine via 3rd class would cost. When your circulation is over 200, you qualify for a permit. Let me give you the figures: The 10th issue of THIS HOUSE cost \$93.04 to mail everything (domestic, overseas), whereas #11 (my first with the permit) will cost \$28.33 for the American mailing, and approximately \$10 for foreign zines. I'd say that the \$55 savings is worth the effort and initial expense. Mail twice and you repay the permit fee and authorization fee. ((This issue will be going out bulk rate, which should save me a lot of money. When CASES finally gets its non-profit status approved -- the IRS papers finally got completed a couple of months ago and are now wending slowly thru the bureaucracy -- I expect to save even more money. Using their permit, incidentally, is the reason for the "Sponsored by CASES" line in the colophon.))

This economic factor could be the cause of a resurgence in the general circulation fanzine. We are already hearing the *harrumphs* and *grunts* of disappointment of some older fans towards the zines being pubbed today. Perhaps what they are forgetting is the fact that more zines are being pubbed now than ever before, so the quality of writing and artwork is rather spread out. (I speculate, being active in fandom only since 1973.) ((I think I'd disagree. As I mention elsewhere in this issue, in 1975 I received nearly 600 fanzines. While I don't keep an exact count anymore, and while I haven't been as active in fanpubbing as I was back then, I doubt if I received more than half that number in 1981. On the other hand, since I got your letter last May, I have noticed more and more fanzines and faneds going the bulk permit route: yourself, the Nielsen-Haydens, the Lynchs, Lee Pelton, even Ted White and Dan Steffan! And these "bulk" fanzines do seem to have a tendency to be larger, with more material and content, than the average "first-class" fanzine. This issue of UF is yet another example.))

Onward to the lettercolumn's discussion of the mindless media-freaks at "our" cons. Minicon 17 this year saw quite a few of these prepubescent wunderkinds schlepping around the hotel, zapping anything that moved. "Behind you, Luke! An Imperial Stormtrooper!" *bzatt* *crack* "Take that, Imperialist scum!" And so

on. Saturday night about 2 in the morning, on my way back to my room to zonk out, four of them leaned out of the opening elevator doors and pointed their lasers, phasers and what-nots at me. "Come no farther," one said with a sneer. "Stuff it or I'll stuff it for you!" I snarled, and they didn't bother me until I had left. I distinctly heard one of them say, "What's eating him?" Kids like you, I thought to myself, and went to bed.

Cy Chauvin, 14248 Wilfred, Detroit, MI 48213

Thanks for your fanzines (UNDULANT FEVER #5 & #6). I meant to write a loc on your earlier issue re: buying a house, because buying one in Detroit seems to be so much cheaper here than in Phoenix. After reading the lettercol in #6 I guess that buying a house in Detroit is cheaper than anywhere. Mine cost only \$19,000. There is nothing wrong with it; it isn't one of those fix-it-up specials in downtown neighborhoods. (I know two people who bought those kinds for \$300 and \$700 respectively.) It's 2-story, English Tudor style, 3 bedrooms, nice little extra features like some leaded glass windows, brick kitchen floor, 4 fruit trees in back.... A nice neighborhood, but integrated (maybe that's what made it so cheap?). I'm sure your garage must be in better shape than mine ((Is yours lacking walls on two sides? All I've got is a covered carport.)), and I suspect your lot is larger. Detroit had at one time more single family homes than any other city in the US -- I don't know if that's still tru, but what with the depressed auto industry, it means it has a definite housing surplus. The number of decent vacant houses is incredible. Too bad you can't export houses the way you can cars! The rent in NYC that Norm Hollyn mentions really seems incredible. I see an advertisement every week in the newspaper that advertises furnished studio apartments in one of the first-class downtown highrises for \$275.

Buck Coulson, Route 3, Hartford City, IN 47348

Your trouble with McKillip's Riddle-Master trilogy was that you read the first book first. I got the second book for review and read it, and was enthused enough to go back and buy the first one. Which disappointed me. By then, though, I'd read two out of three, so I finished the trilogy; third book wasn't bad. First book was by far the worst, which is odd.

Books that one doesn't need being bought just because they're cheap; that strikes a chord -- hell, a symphony -- of sympathy. One can, of course, build bookcases to fit a nonuniform pattern -- but then one is stuck with them when one moves. If one moves. We, however, are to the point of having run out of room for bookshelves.

Mimeo repair tips; at one apartment we lived in, there was a coal stoker furnace that I was more or less responsible for (meaning I called the repairman when it didn't work - or Juanita did). When the belts on the stoker wouldn't pick up coal and transmit it, the repairman doused them with molasses. Worked fine. I don't see why it wouldn't also work on your feed rollers, and provide you with good-tasting fanzines at the same time.

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740

Joseph Woodard probably doesn't know about Lee Hoffman producing what may have been the first folk music fanzine. I suppose there had been little publications devoted to one particular singer or group by admirers previously, but Lee seems to have started the practice of publishing fanzines devoted to folk music in general. The only organized form of folk music fandom that I'm aware of in this area is the square dancers, who have become quite prominent in numbers and projects.

David Stever-Schnoes, 788 Dayton Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55104

I agree with you that James Hogan is an exciting but flawed writer. I find that my reactions to Alan Dean Foster are similar, but the skills are different,

of course. I find that the flaws that Foster exhibits are much too glaring for me to stomach, so I gave up on him at least two or three novels ago. Hogan, on the other hand, seems to be tightening up his skills, so that Thrice Upon A Time represents his best realized characterizations, something that his Ganymede books were sorely lacking in, I'm afraid.

Looks like Dean Grennell has really had a rough time of it with fandom, eh? I guess somebody must have a bad time at cons, what with the law of averages and all, but it seems weird that it should be Dean time after time. It reminds me of a story in GALAXY back in '68 by H.L. Gold, "The Riches of Embarrassment". The narrator encounters a woman who seemingly stumbles into situations where the people around her are constantly caught in embarrassing positions. He figured that she had a strange idea as to what the rest of the human race was like.

Al Sirois, 385 Norton Street, New Haven, CT 06511

To Brett Cox: I like Pynchon's work, but I can't read it! He's so good that he's beyond my understanding. James Joyce and John Barth affect me like that, too. When I read too much Pynchon I have to go read through Edgar Rice Burroughs' Mars novels to bring myself back down. I also enjoy Tom Robbins, tho his new book Still Life With Woodpecker was even more self-indulgent than his other two. McGuane is very good, but I'm surprised that you didn't mention William Hjortsberg, who is in more or less the same league as McGuane and Robbins, but less well known. Hjortsberg knocks me out. He has done one "sf" novel, Grey Matters, but it's his non-"sf" stuff, such as Alp and Tora! Tora! Tora! which are truly maniacal. Highly recommended for sheer lunacy and sparkling characterizations. Tora! Tora! Tora! contains some amazing prose and scenes, such as a fight between a mechanical bull and a cowardly bullfighter. One of the characters in Alp is a crazed cannibal dwarf who waylays skiers and eats them. Too much. Also recommended is The Princess Bride by William Goldman, which contains the single best sword fight scene in the language.

Ed Cagle

I gather that you and I know the same things about biting dogs. Now, what do you know about dogs that try to urinate on everything that will remain at rest for three seconds, including people, and dogs that are sexually attracted to human legs? I had an old shepherd that you had to watch like a hawk to keep him from pissing on people or trying to screw somebody's leg. Ordinarily this drove me up the wall, but I will freely admit that there were certain of my distant relatives who, when they came to visit, I would in no way try to protect from Old Tip's urinary and amorous advances. And I will never forget the day 3rd cousin Darlene crawled under the hedge after a ball while Old Tip was nearby.

Leslie David, PO Box 5057, Fort Lee, VA 23801

Fort Neverleave is as beautiful and gracious as the day you left it. I'm working as the Executive Officer of an AIT unit with some 300 enlisted students. Life is a never ending 3-ring circus, in which I am beginning to lose my sense of humour. Actually this is my second job, the first one lasted about two months as I had been assigned to do protocol work. I hated it and still think generals should be treated like buffalo -- rounded up and people allowed to draw lots to shoot them. The only part of my protocol job I enjoyed was taking Friday of Labor Day Weekend off to go up to Boston for Noreascon. I enjoyed Noreascon as well as my first look at fandom outside the Phoenix-LA area. It was awesome to walk from crowded party to party and to stand in stuffed elevators and realize I didn't know anybody!

I didn't know you put out a zine while you were in the Army. I've thought about it myself, but who wants to hear about my experiences dealing with the Lesbians/homosexuals/drug addicts/rapists/thieves/pregnant women/with VD that I've got in my barracks? No one; the subject is too dull.

WAHF: Harry Andruschak, Geroge Beahm, Mark Blackman, Frank Denton, Cathy Doyle, Sourdough Jackson, Barney Neufeld, Joe Scheffer, Dave Szurek, andoutofroom!

