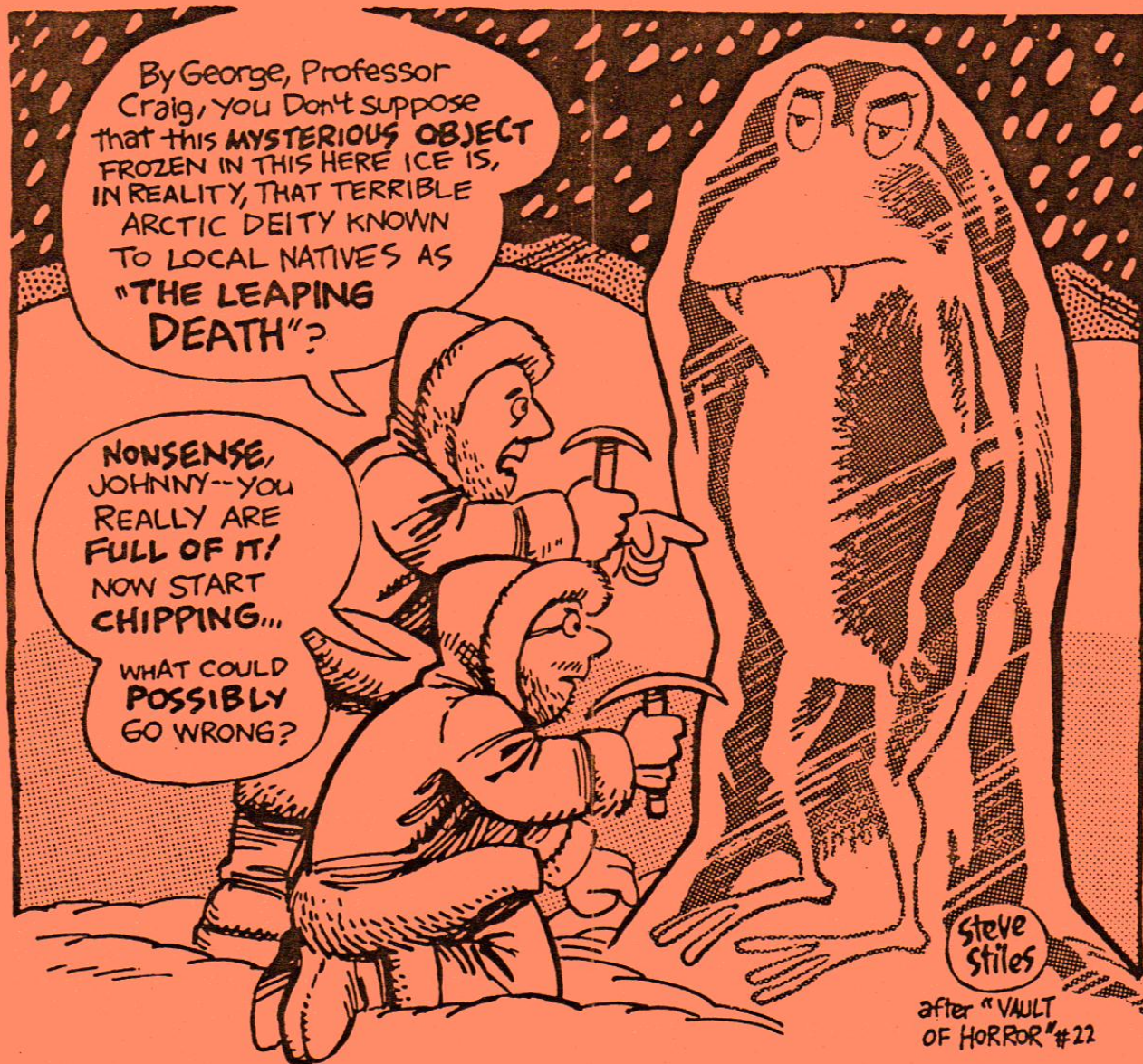


# THE FROZEN FROG

Issue #8

Released in January 1994



# EDITORIAL

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**THE FROZEN FROG, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge, Quebec, CANADA, G1Y 1Y9** is a semi personal fanzine created by Benoit Girard. It is centered on science fiction but ranges widely around to include considerations on science, politics, history, gaming, writing and whatever its readers or editor may happen to be interested into. The Frozen Frog may be expected to appear about 3 times a year, depending on contents availability, funding and level of enthusiasm both in readers and editor.

The Frozen Frog welcomes all contributions except for fiction. It is available mainly for trade, in exchange for a contribution or at production and distribution cost which is estimated at around 2\$ per copy for the moment.

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I've had a wonderful time in ConFrancisco where I could meet about 75 fanzine fans in the flesh. Almost no programming for me this year. I spent my time in the wonderful fanzine lounge (thanks Andy Hooper, great job!) meeting and talking to people. I planned on doing a con report here but, once again, I couldn't fit it in.

By now, you all know how hard it is for me to fit everything I want in any given issue of *The Frozen Frog*. I know I'm repeating myself, but the problem is still very much with me. Especially since I've had to revise my estimate of the number of pages I could allow in an issue. Last time, my 32 page issue bounced back from the Post Office with a note asking me to add nearly \$100 worth of supplementary postage stamps which, then, they failed to cancel properly. "Sigh" So this here will be a 28 page issue.

Helen Davis wrote about her "Frog Wars" and said:

*"Fiction! Frog Wars isn't/wasn't fiction! Since you said you didn't want fiction, I sent you a genuine piece of my family history. What kind of gifts did they exchange, you seemed to wonder? Besides the Frog organ I can specifically recall a telephone in the shape of a frog that "ribbits" instead of ringing, and a set of plastic frogs playing poker around a lily pad. The matching set of pajamas and nightgown printed with frogs on roller skates. The ceramic canister set with a frog perched on each one. But that's just a tiny sample of what goes back and forth. A couple of years ago I received what must have been another blow in the Frog War: a planter, the kind with a central opening and several shelf-like openings along the side. Each of the side opening was the mouth of a frog, and the whole god-awful thing was done in yellow blotched white pottery. If I can unearth it, I'll send it to you. So your non-fiction record is still virginal. So there!"*

Thanks Helen, but I wouldn't want to err... impose on your generosity...

I'm finally killing the Collectible Card project. Thanks to all the fanartists who contributed. For your effort, I'll send each of you a complete set of what I received in answer to my call, and I'll send it to no one else. As you are not very numerous, hang on to these cards.

They're sure to become true collector items in years to come... just before they pass into oblivion entirely.

There is so much I'd have wanted to say. Especially thanks for all those Season's Greetings cards. I wish you all a wonderful 1994. But damn, I have to keep it short. Enjoy and keep loccing. - Ben ■

## BOOK REVIEW

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In a World Not of His Own Making, Stephen Papson, Blue Canary Publishing, Canton, New York, 1993, 197 pages.

Can you believe it, *The Frozen Frog* is now getting press copies of books! Yeah, Stephen Papson saw fit to send me a copy of his SF novel. Right out of the blue. Well, I'm not that jaded and I thought the least I could do was to give it a try. The fact is, I enjoyed it very much.

It is a classic mystery suspense set in a near-future cyberpunk universe. The whole business is somewhat reminiscent of Blade Runner or, even more so, of the first Clifford Joe Faust book, A Death of Honor.

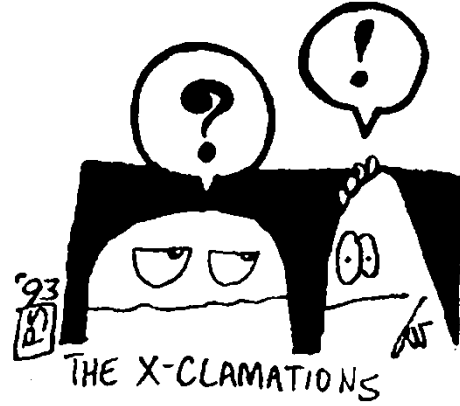
Mr. Papson is a professional sociologist and a lot of thought has obviously gone into the design of his near-future extrapolation of our present-day situation. This is what I found so frightening about this book: I could recognize in the grim situation it depicts the contemporary roots of the near insoluble problems it faces. The picture may be exaggerated but the problems and the patterns are real enough.

You will find at times that the tough detective hero exhibits a surprising tendency to analyse his surroundings in sociological terms, but the few lectures of the book are short and to the point and none is useless, in the end. Don't worry, the bulk of the novel is taken over by relentless action as the hero tries to make sense of a complicated case of terrorist threat to the lives of millions. Suspensewise, this book is a page-turner.

In subtle ways hard to pin down, the novel does not follow the rules of professional publishing. But the fact is that I liked it even for these slight flaws. There is something refreshing in them, like a good fanzine.

As we are talking small press publishing here, the following may be useful. In a World Not of His Own Making

is available from *Blue Canary Publishing, PO Box 754, Canton NY 13617, USA* or from *The Conservatory of American Letters, PO Box 298, Thomaston, Maine, 04861, USA.* ■



## ARTICLE

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**IN SEARCH OF MASCULIST SF**  
an article by David M. See

No, no, no -- clean out your ears.

I didn't say "masculine" SF, if by that you mean what one editor of my acquaintance calls "techno-military" fiction (the David Drake school). Certainly not "macho", the buckle-swashing, rape-and-pillage swill written for pagan twelve-year-old boys ("Conan" etc.).

"Masculist" is an adjective (though I can't recall seeing it elsewhere, it seems so obvious that I can't claim to have coined it) which is the direct corollary of "feminist".

"Feminism" is defined in the dictionary as "political, social and economic equality of the sexes"; and further, "organized activity on behalf of women's rights and interests". The feminist movement has necessarily produced a considerable body of feminist fiction in the SF/Fantasy field. Much of it has been excellent (Alice "Tiptree" Sheldon, Kit Reed) -- and some of the good feminist fiction has been written by men (e.g. John Varley). Unfortunately, a certain percentage of feminist SF has crossed the line into perfervid exercises in tub-thumping anti-male rhetoric.

Feminist SF/Fantasy is that which portrays women in a positive and egalitarian fashion, and is concerned with subjects of special interest to women. "Masculist" fiction would be fiction which correspondingly treats men in a fair and equal light, and reflects things of interest to men. I categorically reject the notion -- falsely labelled as "feminist" in some circles -- that the basic interests of men are combat and rape (or their obvious sublimations, competitive sports and ignoring the sexual/emotional needs of women). That such behavior occurs among men is undeniable. That it is inherent, I deny; Mike Tyson notwithstanding.

Perhaps you have seen the beer commercial in which two male astronauts land on a planet and are surrounded by a bevy of attractive women in skimpy costumes. "Let me get this straight," says one fellow. "There are no men here, there's an unlimited supply of [brand name beer], and we can never leave." A gorgeous blonde creature says coolly, "Correct." The two men exchange a smile, and the spokesman replies, "We can live with that."



Clearly this is a masculine and sexist fantasy. But closer examination of the unwritten Freudian subtext behind it reveals a classic masculist dilemma. Women have sexual drives. There is no reason to assume these women have not been sexually active with each other. How are these two guys going to cope in a society in which they are totally unfamiliar with the sexual mores? How will their egos hold up when the women criticize the size of their penises, or express disinterest in heterosexual relations? It would be interesting to look back at this situation a couple of weeks later and see whether these men are really happy with their fate; but somehow I suspect the beer company won't be telling us that story. (Poul Anderson tried -- and failed -- in Virgin Planet, because he was unable or unwilling to address the masculist or feminist sides of the problem.)

I don't perceive masculist fiction as being opposed to feminist fiction. On the contrary, the best of both would probably overlap. Ursula K. LeGuin's The Left Hand of Darkness portrayed a gender-neutral society of hermaphrodites in which most people, at any given time, were functionally neuter. It is a fascinating and compelling book, but it fails at being either masculist or feminist due to the nature of the language in which it was written. English does not contain gender-neutral pronouns for

people (think how awkward you feel referring even to an unborn child as "it"); and the viewpoint character of Left Hand, reduced through lack of any alternative to referring to any given Gethenian as "he", unavoidably subverts any particular feminist or masculist perspective.

A book which comes closer to succeeding on both counts is Elizabeth Lynn's The Sardonyx Net. One of the major male characters in this intriguing book is trapped in another typical masculist dilemma: he is sexually fixated on his sister. Rather than consciously working out his problem, however, he has sublimated his incestuous longings into a flagrant sadism, and thus forfeits the reader's empathy. The book succeeds on a feminist level (the sister, who has a corresponding problem, has worked through it to an appropriate if not perfect psychosexual adjustment), but falls a trifle short of being acceptably masculist.

Others have tried. Lois McMaster Bujold's amusing and effective role-reversal novel Ethan of Athos stands the problem on its head, but its conclusion -- love is where and how you find it -- while acceptable, is not particularly masculist. A certain school of writing evades the problem by stipulating that all characters are ambisexual, as if choice of sexual partners were all there were to it. One book which misses by only a hair's breadth is Richard Grant's Rumors of Spring (a marvellous book,

incidentally, and one which I enthusiastically recommend to you).

I consider myself a feminist. Please, ladies, spare me the argument about whether a man can "really" be feminist. I foolishly made that assertion once at a convention, and received in reply a screeching, top-of-the-lungs dissertation on the "all men are pigs" theme; a diatribe for which the only and carefully chosen adjective is, "hysterical". A female/feminist friend of mine came up afterward, put her hand on my shoulder, and said, "That's not what feminism is all about."

Well, that's not what masculism is all about. Masculist fiction is about the same things feminist fiction is about: equality, cooperation, balance, nurturing, restraint. One is the instrument and one is the music, indispensable parts of the same whole.

Masculist fiction is out there somewhere, or ought to be; but I'm still looking. ■

# PHILOSOPHY

Plato in the Night Kitchen  
by  
Alexis Gilliland

The evening before Prof. Chilton's final for Philosophy 217 they went down to the local Night Kitchen franchise for coffee and onion rings. Well, the menu called them onion rings; what they were was Bisquick, eggs and onions run through a blender and deep fried like funnel cake. The girls took the booth under the Sendak poster of their favorite Wild Thing, and Mario pulled up a chair to the end of the table rather than trying to crowd three on a side.

"This essay question on a 'just state'," said Alex, "How do you get a handle on it?"

"You should have been reading the assignments in Plato's Republic," replied Judith unhelpfully. Then she relented because she knew enough to fake the answer. "Old Socrates started off explaining what a just person was, and either he didn't know or his mind wandered, because he wound up saying that, well, a state is bigger than a person, you know, so you can see it without squinting, and once you knew what a just state was, a just person would be the exact same thing, only smaller."

"L'État, c'est moi," said Susan. "Was that Evita Peron or Mao Tse-dong?"

Joe-Bob took a sip of coffee, ignoring her. "A just state," he said, pensively. "Well, I suppose one could exist. But only momentarily, for just the barest instant, as it swung between equal and opposite perversions."

"Well no," replied Mario. "That assumes that the state changes continuously and in an orderly fashion. If you want to mix Poli-Sci with Plato, the halfway point is where you have a 50-50 chance of being screwed by either of two mutually exclusive injustices."

"The just state is a Platonic Ideal," mused Alex. "Just like a clean, clear river is the ideal river. The problem with the river is that everyone wants to use it for irrigation and sewage disposal and so forth so that the flow gets all drawn down and polluted." He broke off a length of onion ring and dipped it in salsa. "You don't denounce the river because people used it badly or the

rains made it flood the lowlands, you build a levee or a sewage treatment plant."

"Spoken like a true civil engineer," said Susan. "Then a just state would be one that nobody has used, yet?"

"Well, the just state is a Platonic Ideal," replied Mario. "Which means that it's what you're aiming at, not anything that's actually going to get installed in the real world." He took a sip of coffee to hold the floor while he was thinking. "So the ideal state is sort of the plan . . . no, the prospectus, actually. The plan is the blueprint you work from, in order to build what actually is going to get built. The prospectus is what you go around showing people to persuade them to invest in this Wild Thing of Yours, explaining what a great deal it's going to be. The just state is the prospectus, what Prof Chilton calls 'the way it s'posed to be'."

"The just state is Socrates's prospectus?" asked Judith. "What was he trying to sell?"

"Textbooks for Plato's Academy," said Susan and Mario together.

"No, no, no," said Joe-Bob. "The just state is part of a system, along with just people and honorable politicians."

There was a general laugh at the table. "Plato conceded that wasn't likely to happen," said Alex, scrolling through his notebook. "He was talking about philosophers becoming kings, or maybe vice versa, which isn't all that different if you figure the odds." He dipped onion ring in salsa and took a bite. "Do you suppose he wanted to put those beautiful, logical theories of his in practice?"

"Depend on it," replied Judith. "Plato spent his life 'arguing' with the students at his academy, who figured to be a bright but docile bunch sucking up to him for their grade. If they couldn't catch him in some gross logical error, they let him have his way. So even if he knew the real world wasn't like that, old Plato thought his academy was 'the way it s'posed to be.'"

"Professor Chilton will want to know what Socrates and Plato were thinking about, though," said Joe-Bob scrolling through his notes. "Here's Socrates: 'When everyone minds his own business, that is justice and will make the city just.'"

Judith took another piece of onion ring. "Socrates could never quit while he was ahead," she said, dipping it in salsa. "What about his argument for having all women and children in common?"

"That was only for the guardians," corrected Alex. "Otherwise the ruling class to which old Socrates so ardently aspired to belong."

"Looks like what Socrates really wanted was a no-fault divorce from Xanthippe," said Susan. "So he figured out the philosophical equivalent."

"What do you mean?"

"Think about it, Joe-Bob. Socrates was a social climbing jock sniffer. What he liked to do was hang out with the affluent and athletic Athenian youth. Those young and impressionable men, who, it goes without saying, would become the future movers and shakers of the city."

"Which is why they slipped him the hemlock for corrupting the youth of Athens," said Mario. "His former students kept trying to overthrow the government."

"You saw how Professor Chilton liked that idea," Susan reminded him. "Historical accuracy will not get you through Philosophy, young man. The way I see it, Socrates came up with a plan that would let other people service Xanthippe, because he wouldn't have the duty to her more than once a year."

"You can't blame him, Susan; Xanthippe was a notorious scold and shrew."

"Hellfire and damnation, Joe-Bob! Who was it wrote that lying and pernicious history? Socrates and the good old boys at Plato's academy is who." She held out her coffee mug and the waitress refilled it for her. "If they ever discover the Socratic dialogues with Xanthippe, you can bet your sweet ass that Socrates came off a sorry second best."

Alex looked up from scrolling his notes. "Got it," he announced triumphantly. "The quote, the summary and a crib note. What do you want?"

"Just only the summary and the crib," said Susan, stirring sweetener into her coffee.

"Right. The summary says: 'The community of women and children is good because it promotes the unity of the state.'" Alex paused. "The crib note says: 'Discuss the ideas of Socrates, not his sexual preferences. Which means you can skip Xanthippe' and go directly to unity."

Leaning over, Mario studied the quote for a moment. "Unity. Solidarity. Cohesion. Ever righter thinking by ever larger majorities, wanting only what is best for the state. What was it Kipling said: 'This is the state above the law. The state exists for the state alone?'"

"Men are so easily distracted," mused Judith, resting her chin in her hand. "What the old boy should have said was: 'This community of women and children is a neat idea which would be good if it did, indeed, promote the unity of the state.'"

"It doesn't?" asked Joe-Bob.

Judith shook her head. "In practice, men are all too likely to run off and abandon their own women and children. Weaken the family bond like the old boy wants to do, and when times get tough they'll all bug out. I'll bet that's what Xanthippe told him and the son of a bitch didn't want to hear it."

"A platonic red herring," said Susan. "Très élégant."

"In the real world," Judith continued, speaking with the calm authority of a sociology major, "the communal sharing of women and children has been destructive of the community wherever it was tried. You get these goddamned duty rosters listing who sleeps with whom, and when, because somebody has to sleep with ugly old Xanthippe." She took a sip of coffee.

"So what we have is Socrates advancing this logically impeccable but practically appalling idea, an idea he must have known was wrong, to support what? The greater unity of the state. Guess what gets argued about, and what gets to slide by in all the confusion?"

"Unity slides by, of course," said Joe-Bob. "But look, a state needs some degree of unity to keep from splitting into warring fractions."

Mario put down his coffee cup. "Look, yourself. If you want a just state you need to have some way of

dealing justly with dissent. Which means that dissent ought to be expected, and ought to be tolerated, so that you can have too much unity as well as too little. Too much unity means an unjust state."

"Well, a 99.98 percent majority means somebody is lying," Joe-Bob conceded. "A just state could do with less."

"States don't get votes," said Alex. "politicians get votes. A just state tries for an honest count, but look, 'unity' expresses the degree to which people are in agreement on things. How can you have too much unity?"

"When Isabella was Queen of Spain," replied Susan, "she instituted the Holy Inquisition which was extremely popular with the Spanish people because it confiscated Jewish property and burned Jews who wouldn't convert to Catholicism. The persecution of minorities is always popular, usually inspires a feeling of unity in the majority, and is not done in a just state. Too much unity on any issue could demand --and get-- unjust solutions."

"I'll buy that," agreed Mario, "although Philosophy Class may not be the best place to argue that a just state functions within limits, including limits on unity. But when Plato quotes Socrates as saying the more unity the better, he isn't thinking about a real state, never mind whether it's just or not, but about the Platonic Ideal of a state. The man is touting his own intellectual property and doing it in a shabby, dishonest fashion because the truth won't serve."

Judith scribbled in her notebook. "'Yes, yes! That takes care of unity and commonly held women and children. Self-promoting propaganda hidden inside a scandal. What about the 'golden lie' Socrates advocates telling?"

"You mean the 'royal lie'," said Alex. "The idea that some people--men, I mean, Professor Chilton marks down for anachronisms--are gold, so we make them guardians, while others are silver so they get to be auxiliaries, while the rest are brass and iron and have to be tradesmen and craftsmen."

"Ri-ight," exclaimed Joe-Bob looking up. "And that good old boy of an oracle who says that, hey, when a man of brass or iron is elected president, the city will be destroyed."

"Elected president?" said Mario. "Better to follow the text and say 'guards the city.' The idea seems persuasive on the face of it, though."

"You think so, oh man of gold?" asked Susan. "This is more snake oil, packaged so you argue interminably about whether the lie is justified, and never look to see who it is that gets to do the gold to iron rating. A job that looks to be tailor made for Plato's Academy, surprise, surprise."

"Is the royal lie justified?" asked Joe-Bob. "Chilton asked the question in three out of the last five finals."

"You slop over from Philosophy into Political Science," said Judith, resting her chin in one hand. "Every state justifies itself to its constituents, using whatever lie is handy. Slogans to rally the plebes around the cause du jour. They wear out, the gummint replaces them. The slogans that is; the plebes have to replace themselves."

States lie because they have to," said Joe-Bob. "Philosophers are held to higher standards, at least, they're held to higher standards than politicians. Can the royal lie ever be justified?"

"Can you justify Machiavelli?" asked Mario. "The question never comes up in Poli-Sci, only in Philosophy."



**ZX** - "'ZX" stands for "Zine Experimental". It derives from the MX missile program in the States, as well as from the fact that this is the first 'zine I've tried to do, so I'm still seeing what I can come up with." - Andrew C. Murdoch, 2563 Heron Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8R 5Z9. ■

*[[ Whatever you can think of, Walt Willis has already been there. The zine titles thing inspired him to sent me the following article to prove it. ]]*

**A Question of Titles**  
by  
**Walt Willis**

About fifty years ago I wrote an article about fanzine titles for Vernon McCain's fanzine WASTEBASKET. It was called A Question of Title, and it started with a mention of the fact that a fan writer in Quandry had recently called for fanzine titles that were "sparkling and eye-catching", deploring dull titles like Fantasy Review.

It went on--"Suppose the curious neofan notices the author's name...Bob Tucker. "Ah", he asks, "what then is the sparkling eye-catching title this Mr. Tucker has chosen for his very own fanmag? What evocative, glamorous, semantically powerful name has his inventive genius conjured up? The answer falls about his ears like a soggy rice pudding---Science Fiction Newsletter.

"No doubt," will say our warmhearted neofan, "Mr Tucker was stuck with this title before the light dawned on him, and fears to change it lest he lose his goodwill". Alas, no, Mr Tucker has changed the name of his fanzine recently, but only like the man in the old joke who changed his name from Joe Stench to Harry Stench. His mag used to be called Bloomington Newsletter. Not an inspired title; it does not sparkle noticeably. But nevertheless it has some merit. It had local colour. It was distinctive. One imagined the inhabitants of Bloomington sitting in their rose-covered cottages listening to the newsboys pattering up the street. "Newsletter. Newsletter. Boggs raps Campbell. Vance is Kuttner. Read all about it. All the news that's fit to print. Extra... Extra... Vance not Kuttner... Newsletter... Newsletter..." As the childish voices fade away into the distance the gentle people of Bloomington say to one another "God bless Mr Tucker for bringing such fame to our little town."

And then Bob ruthlessly wipes the colourful name of Bloomington off the map and substitutes the epicene words 'Science Fiction', as if he was afraid the readers might start looking for gossip about the Bloom-

ington Sewing Circle. What possible justification can there have been for this? A small matter, you may think, but how superior was the old name to this new epitome of dullness and insipidity. 'Bloomington Newsletter'. It rolled trippingly off the tongue. It had tradition. And furthermore, it started with the second letter of the alphabet.

This last is a very important fact, as all you Wilsons and Young will agree. If your name begins near the bottom of the alphabet your whole life is overshadowed. You sit in the back row at school. Your name is always at the end of lists. It is called last in every possible occasion, from viva voce examinations to firing squads. You follow where Adams and Bonapartes lead. You assume the role of an onlooker. For your fanmags it is equally serious. If its name begins with a late letter it comes far down the review columns where even Rog Phillips is running short of superlatives.

So let us pick a few names from the first few pages of the dictionary---

ABACUS---The fanzine you can count on.  
ABASEMENT---A really low storey every issue.  
ABBESS---The Superior Fanzine.  
ABDOMEN---The fanzine with guts.  
ABSINTH---Be conspicuous by your Absinth.  
The fanzine of spirit.

Of course there are other things to consider when picking a name for your zine. For instance, the name should be very short so that irreverent fans can't make embarrassing abbreviations of it, and so that it doesn't take up space in your reviews which might have been filled with egoboo. You want a word that fulfills the desiderata above, and also carries some suggestion of innovation, of mutancy, and if possible of fannishness, or some hint of some typical fannish characteristic. There is only one word that answers all these requirements. I offer the ultimate in fannish titles. The word "AI". I need hardly explain to all crossword puzzlers and Scrabble players that this is the name of a three-toed sloth, known for the "feeble plaintive cry which it utters while in search of its kind."

This article illustrates a few of the changes which have taken place in fandom over the last 50 years. It belongs to an era in which people read the same fanzines, so that references to Tucker's fanzine, including its mistaken attribution of Kuttner's work to Jack Vance, were comprehensible to everyone. ■



# ARTICLE

## THE ZINE TITLES THING Part 1

Here is a compendium of the submissions I received about zines titles. I just reproduced what I got in the mail, in alphabetical order. If a zine is still published, I included the name and address of the editor at the end. Otherwise, only the name is provided. As the "Part 1" imply, I'll be accepting submissions for future instalments of the "Thing". Consider contributing.

**Apple Of Discord** - "...My own title, Apple Of Discord (3 issues published, between 1985-1990) is not overly mysterious, but if you want the exact details of how I came to choose it, it's this way: a cover illo originally commissioned for a different fanzine (which was never published) came into my possession. It prominently features an apple. I had plans to publish my own fanzine, which I expected to prove highly controversial. Combining an apple with controversy, the classical allusion of the apple of discord sprang immediately to mind. (You remember, the golden apple, inscribed "to the fairest" that sparked war among gods & men.)" - David Palter.

**Breakfast in Bedlam** - See "Torus"

**From Sunday to Saturday** - "I started out with some unmemorable ones (which presumably seemed clever at the time) and undoubtedly annoyed Collectors by giving my APA-L Zine (for the LASFS/local club APA) a different title each week for somewhere around a year (all were cultivars of apples, of course). After a few years (decades ago), it dawned on me that all these publications, from the supposedly-quarterly genzines (which turned out to be one-shots, or at most double-barreled) to those for various (and numerous) APAs, were actually part of an on-going Diary or Journal of what I was thinking about at the time, so I settled for a general title for all of them: From Sunday to Saturday, and paginated them by year & page published that year (currently I'm on something like 93:65). The title is a bit obscure & indirect; it comes from a Filk version of a mundane filk of an old folk-song. The words I seem to remember don't quite scan, but go something like: "Oh, Dear, what can the natter be?/ Dear, dear, what can the natter be?/ Seven fen locked in a lavatory/ They were there from Sunday to Saturday/ Nobody knew they were there." (The Filk goes on with seven verses describing (humorously and insultingly) seven well-known fans

the singer wishes to ridicule). Aside from day-to-day Journal aspect, I was taken by the line "Nobody knew they were there" --quite true of us, I think, in the larger context, and perhaps useful in discouraging us from becoming excessively pretentious." - Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722, USA.

**Intermediate Vector Bosons** - "I chose Intermediate Vector Bosons way back when the IVBs were just a theory, predicted by the so-called "standard model" of particle physics. It took a few years before the particles were actually found in the atom smashers, at just about the energies predicted. All three of them. It was a tremendous boost for the "standard model". Why did I choose such an esoteric title? This was way back in my drinking days, so I have no clear memory about all the steps that led up to it. One basic idea was to have a fanzine title that would be recognized by real science fiction fans, and a mystery to media fans like trekkies, Dr Who fans, and the rest of the sci-fi crowd. After all, real science fiction fans read about science and are up on the latest developments in particle physics, right? WRONG! The newer generation of fans who read are mostly into the sausage fantasies and science fiction without much science. The "hard-core SF" genre is a minority interest now. If a SF magazine carries a science article, it is on a mostly superficial level." - Harry Cameron Andruschak, P.O. Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309, USA.

**It Goes On The Shelf** - "...Both my current zine title and the one I did for 28 issues back in the 70s - *It Comes In The Mail* and *It Goes On The Shelf* - have been subjected to rude and uncalled-for interpretations. *Honi soit qui mal y pense* and all that..." - Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News, VA 23605, USA.

**The Knarley Knows** - "Judging by your fillo art I have obviously chosen a poor name for my fanzine. Since very few people know what a "Knarley" is I don't get all the great "theme" art. To understand the origins of Knarley we have to go back a few years but not to some surfer culture. In high school and college I used to play a lot of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons™. One of my favorite types of characters was the Hobbit Thief with the surprising ethic. Part of my identification with the Hobbit were some of the rule advantages for that race and the fact that I was generally the shortest person playing (I was 5 feet tall at age 16). Generally I played a thief as a friendly entity preferring to practice the dexterous arts to benefit my companions rather than to steal from them or break laws needlessly. I also had a bit of a revenge streak figuring that I would be up front with everyone else as long

as they were up front with me. I did this by basically letting others know that I was better at concealing (say treasure I found) from them than they were from me. One of my last and more successful incarnations was Knarley who had a fetish with window boxes and flowers. Given this, people in the group started calling by my character's name and the rest is more-or-less history. (Todd Bushlow still uses the name of his character, Sydrus, from this game as well.) *The Knarley Knews* is apropos because my original intent with the 'zine was to keep in touch with friends as I left my undergraduate school and moved on. To some extent it has been successful giving me a vehicle to maintain correspondence with three or four of them and at the same time finding me many new ones. I hope this fits the parameters of your request. Now perhaps this will help me "troll" for some art now that people know who Knarley really is." - Henry L. Welch, 1525 16th Ave., Grafton, WI 53024-2017, USA.

**Penney Dreadful** - See "Torus"

**The Private Papers of the Doppler Gang** - "My friend Lucy Kemnitzer and I came up with "The Private Papers of the Doppler Gang" for our high school zine in the late Sixties. Then we invented the Doppler Gang, frontier rabble whom I was able to use in several stories for Asimovs. I don't know if anyone ever found the joke particularly funny." - Sharon N. Farber.

**Rambling WAY** - "Well (as you know), my zine is primarily a gaming zine. But, I'll throw it in if you wish to use it. *Rambling WAY* is a play on my initials William Andrew York - and, well the *Rambling* bit fits the way I write, sometimes. I plan to use *WAY* in all my future publications (though, of course, things may change). My two gaming flyers are titled *WAYfarer* and *WAYSide*. I don't have any planning names for the future; but I'm sure I'll come up with something." - W. Andrew York, PO Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307, USA.

**Slant** - "I picked the title of my first fanzine, *Slant*, by use of a pin and a dictionary. I must admit we didn't settle on the first word to be selected in this way, which turned out to be "pamphrey", but I used that title years afterward for my *FAPA*zine. *Slant* turned out to be an inspired choice, with overtones of Van Vogt's *SLAN*, and the Gaelic toast "Slainte", and it led to our house becoming known to fandom as *Oblique House*. When in due course we looked for another title for a less formal zine, *Hyphen*

was an obvious choice as symbolising the bridge we wanted to be between British and American fandom. Years later a young American fan wrote helpfully to point out it could also be read as "Hi, fen". - Walt Willis.

**Smart-Ash** - "I can sort of explain the genesis of "Smart-Ash", though the story is one of those "I guess you had to be there" ones. Our club, the Chimneyville F & SF Society, was founded by Faith Vedder (who has since moved on to other projects). Faith invented the club name, which was inspired by "Chimneyville" being a post-Civil War nickname for Jackson. (Because after much of the city was burned by the Yankees, all that was left standing were the many chimneys.) When we decided to start doing a zine, back in the late 70s, Faith and I brain-stormed for hours to think of something fannish and clever, and we ran through all kinds of puns on chimneys, and fireplaces, then ashes ... and we ended up with *Smart-Ash*. It seemed very funny at the time." - Ruth Shields, 1410 McDowell Rd., Jackson, MS 39204, USA.



**Torus** - "I cooked up the title TORUS for some exact reasons. First of all, many zine titles had a single-word name, or a mathematical or a scientific name. Second, it had to be a name that reflected where the editors (there were as many as four of us at one point, but eventually, two remained) were from. The name TORUS fit both... this zine is from TORonto, and it's produced by US, reflecting more

than one editor. I'm not in any apas these days, and haven't been since 1990, but I used to be in canadian apas like TAPA, APAplexy and The Final Frontier, just to name three. I would take zine titles from the patter of some of the local DJs on my favorite radio stations. "Yeggs 'n' Picaroons" was the title of my TAPAzine, running for 91 straight issues... one DJ said that the station had a security guard by the name of San Fernando Dave, who was there to protect us all from "thugs, mugs, yeggs 'n' picaroons". Look 'em up in the dictionary. My zine in The Final Frontier was called "Breakfast in Bedlam" because of another DJ who would sometimes use the phrase to describe his morning show. Finally, "Penney Dreadful" was the name of my zine in APAplexy, self-explanatory." - Lloyd Penney.

**Yeggs 'n' Picaroons** - See "Torus"

**ZX** - "'ZX" stands for "Zine Experimental". It derives from the MX missile program in the States, as well as from the fact that this is the first 'zine I've tried to do, so I'm still seeing what I can come up with." - Andrew C. Murdoch, 2563 Heron Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8R 5Z9. ■

*[[ Whatever you can think of, Walt Willis has already been there. The zine titles thing inspired him to sent me the following article to prove it. ]]*

**A Question of Titles**  
by  
**Walt Willis**

About fifty years ago I wrote an article about fanzine titles for Vernon McCain's fanzine WASTEBASKET. It was called A Question of Title, and it started with a mention of the fact that a fan writer in Quandry had recently called for fanzine titles that were "sparkling and eye-catching", deploring dull titles like Fantasy Review.

It went on--"Suppose the curious neofan notices the author's name...Bob Tucker. "Ah", he asks, "what then is the sparkling eye-catching title this Mr. Tucker has chosen for his very own fanmag? What evocative, glamorous, semantically powerful name has his inventive genius conjured up? The answer falls about his ears like a soggy rice pudding---Science Fiction Newsletter.

"No doubt," will say our warmhearted neofan, "Mr Tucker was stuck with this title before the light dawned on him, and fears to change it lest he lose his goodwill". Alas, no, Mr Tucker has changed the name of his fanzine recently, but only like the man in the old joke who changed his name from Joe Stench to Harry Stench. His mag used to be called Bloomington Newsletter. Not an inspired title; it does not sparkle noticeably. But nevertheless it has some merit. It had local colour. It was distinctive. One imagined the inhabitants of Bloomington sitting in their rose-covered cottages listening to the newsboys pattering up the street. "Newsletter. Newsletter. Boggs raps Campbell. Vance is Kuttner. Read all about it. All the news that's fit to print. Extra... Extra... Vance not Kuttner... Newsletter... Newsletter..." As the childish voices fade away into the distance the gentle people of Bloomington say to one another "God bless Mr Tucker for bringing such fame to our little town."

And then Bob ruthlessly wipes the colourful name of Bloomington off the map and substitutes the epicene words 'Science Fiction', as if he was afraid the readers might start looking for gossip about the Bloom-

ington Sewing Circle. What possible justification can there have been for this? A small matter, you may think, but how superior was the old name to this new epitome of dullness and insipidity. 'Bloomington Newsletter'. It rolled trippingly off the tongue. It had tradition. And furthermore, it started with the second letter of the alphabet.

This last is a very important fact, as all you Wilsons and Young will agree. If your name begins near the bottom of the alphabet your whole life is overshadowed. You sit in the back row at school. Your name is always at the end of lists. It is called last in every possible occasion, from viva voce examinations to firing squads. You follow where Adams and Bonapartes lead. You assume the role of an onlooker. For your fanmags it is equally serious. If its name begins with a late letter it comes far down the review columns where even Rog Phillips is running short of superlatives.

So let us pick a few names from the first few pages of the dictionary---

- ABACUS---The fanzine you can count on.
- ABASEMENT---A really low storey every issue.
- ABBESS---The Superior Fanzine.
- ABDOMEN---The fanzine with guts.
- ABSINTH---Be conspicuous by your Absinth. The fanzine of spirit.

Of course there are other things to consider when picking a name for your zine. For instance, the name should be very short so that irreverent fans can't make embarrassing abbreviations of it, and so that it doesn't take up space in your reviews which might have been filled with egoboo. You want a word that fulfills the desiderata above, and also carries some suggestion of innovation, of mutancy, and if possible of fannishness, or some hint of some typical fannish characteristic. There is only one word that answers all these requirements. I offer the ultimate in fannish titles. The word "AI". I need hardly explain to all crossword puzzlers and Scrabble players that this is the name of a three-toed sloth, known for the "feeble plaintive cry which it utters while in search of its kind."

This article illustrates a few of the changes which have taken place in fandom over the last 50 years. It belongs to an era in which people read the same fanzines, so that references to Tucker's fanzine, including its mistaken attribution of Kuttner's work to Jack Vance, were comprehensible to everyone. ■

# THE MAIL

♦ Tom Feller, P.O. Box 13626, Jackson, MS 39236: (9/8/93) "...I knew Robert Adams slightly from his appearances at conventions in the southern part of the U.S. While his political views were conservative to an extreme, I never heard him say anything racist or bigoted. He would rail against liberals and socialists in his writings and public appearances, but they were always welcome at his parties.

Curt Phillips' account of the born again Christian fan reminds me of a recent conversation with a female Star Trek fan here in Jackson. We were beginning what might have turned out to be a romantic relationship, when the subject of religion came up. After I admitted to being an atheist, it seemed like a wall came down between us. In addition to her disapproval, she said she didn't feel that an atheist could appreciate Star Trek. Needless to say, I have not seen her since.

I have never seen Roger Elwood at a convention, so I don't know how good a guest he is. However, Orson Scott Card is an articulate spokesperson for his Mormon faith and at the same time is an excellent con guest..."

♦ Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666, USA: (9/30/93) "...So where do frogs occur in literature? A few minor roles: footmen in Alice in Wonderland (or Through the Looking Glass, don't pin me down!). As guards, actually frog-men, in A. Merritt's The Conquest of the Moon Pool. There are a few for you. Frog princes occur in fairy tales, altho uncomplimentarily, since it is regarded as an unattractive form. I don't recall any frog heroes. They do not, it seems, inspire admiration, those big, dull eyes, a huge mouth opening only to snare a fly with its springlike tongue, attached in the front yet! Anyone knows a tongue should come from the back of the mouth! No wonder they go for flies instead of, say, some nice broiled trout.

H. P. Lovecraft had frog-like creatures among his Dagon-worshippers. The hero of "The Shadow over Innsmouth" did not wholly transform into a frog, but did develop webbing between his fingers and toes (sort of a proto scuba diver.)

Well, enough of this -- Oh! A big fat delicious fly just flew by. Excuse me --"

*[[ Lovecraft has been more specific in describing his frog aversion. He wrote somewhere that the Quebec area was backward and degenerate enough to provide a perfect background for his stories. I notice that he used New England much more extensively, though. ]]*

♦ Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH, U.K.: (10/1/93) "I'm perplexed by your apparent need to apologise for the lateness of the issue, or the fact that henceforward you'll be publishing three issues a year instead of four. After all, a fanzine is not something you have to publish according to a pre-determined timetable; a fanzine is something you put out as and when you feel like, when you have the time and energy (and the inclination) to write the material. Setting yourself a timetable, and telling yourself that you have to publish x number of issues per year containing y number of pages each, is guaranteed to rob the exercise of its spontaneity and enjoyment. In addition, you can't really write according to a timetable -- or at any rate, you can't write anything genuinely interesting and amusing according to a timetable -- and you shouldn't try. (Although I do think that you should perhaps try writing a few articles yourself, rather than relying on what people might send you.)

*[[ I agree with you entirely. I was not apologising. It was more like... sharing disappointment. As for spontaneity and enthusiasm, don't forget I'm still very new at it. Every aspect of fanzine publishing still looks bright and fascinating to me. Maybe twenty years down the road... ]]*

I haven't much to say in response to this issue... but do wish to wag a cautionary finger over your remarks, in reply to some of the letters, about the role of SF fans in the formation of a planetary society and such like, which smacks to me rather too closely of Deglerism. If you don't know -- and there's no reason why you should -- Claude Degler was a US fan of the early forties who convinced himself that SF readers were the next stage of human evolution, "*homo cosmen*", and wanted to establish love camps in the Ozark Mountains to accelerate the breeding of the new master race. Needless to say, these claims swayed few people -- but, ever since, the term "Deglerism" has been routinely applied to any and all claims advanced for the supposed potential of SF fans to transform the world.

I am of course familiar with claims that science fiction readers have a more objective grasp of global affairs than others, but have never found the arguments in favour of these claims particularly convincing. In general, SF readers are no different -- and are often more conservative -- in their outlook than anyone else, and prone to exactly the same desires and vices; while the bulk of science fiction itself has little of originality to say about the real world. (Indeed, most science fiction is unreadable adolescent power-fantasy.) In addition, and as many people have been pointing out -- see, for example, Charles Platt in the most recent issue of *SF Eye* -- SF is no longer at the cutting edge of human or scientific development, and one has to look elsewhere to find out what's happening in, say, the worlds of nanotechnology, virtual reality, and smart drugs. (Never mind the worlds of street fashion, classical minimalism and post-modernist design.) This is hardly surprising: genre SF, or what John Clute refers to as "agenda SF", is largely an outgrowth of the technocratic worldview which has dominated the twentieth century, and as that worldview runs aground on the same cultural intractabilities which brought down modernism's drive for order and control, so will SF drift into impotence and irrelevance. If a planetary society is ever to be constructed, it won't be by reading SF."

*[[ Deglerism? Ah! Come on, Joe. I was simply commenting on the fact -- and it is a fact, this very discussion being the living proof of it -- that fandom is nowadays reaching not only across frontiers and continents, but also across cultural barriers. Still largely within Western civilisation, granted, but Western civ. still presents more than enough facets to foster xenophobia within itself. I simply meant that in so reaching, fandom contributes, in its small way and along with many others, to be sure, to the lowering of said cultural barriers. I do not confuse a small step toward the Global Village with the next step of evolution, I assure you.*

*As for the intellectual superiority of fandom, I wouldn't know. Claiming a superior intelligence is often considered the proof of a lack thereof as well as bad taste and bad social manners. As a group, though, fan strike me as unusually willing to take the long view over the fashionable (which might or might not explain their lack of interest in street fashion, classical minimalism and post-modernist design :-)). I can't claim objectivity. To me fans are interesting. Birds of a feather fly together. And those who share interests with you always seem brighter.*

*Incidentally, you already know that I decided to create the Frozen Frog because I wanted more*

*of this kind of social interaction. But the last drop before that decision was reached was a panel precisely on nanotechnology at Chicon V in 1991. I also remember that in the crowd (not even on the stage) was a man involved professionally with the development of single-atom manipulating tools. You can't get more cutting edge than that. Right here, in fandom! ]]*

♦ Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Charlton Heights, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EW: (10/01/93) "...Yes I can indeed agree with Don Fitch on the dangers of becoming the Token Francophone. Danys Howard's experiences were similar to my own a few years back. I could write a LoC several pages long commenting on every item and letter in a zine and the Editor would only use that part of the letter which dealt with disability. True I am disabled and true I have been very much involved in the fight to increase independent living for people with a disability but I happen to have interest in and some knowledge of a great number of other subjects. Wise man, pubbing your





own ish is one safeguard against being typecast or tokenised.

The other danger of being a letter hack rather than an editor or a regular Con goer is that people do not hear the question mark in your voice or worse fail to read your LoC properly. I admit in my response to the La Première Fois item I expressed myself with undue strength on the matter of attitudes to celibacy. I had just prior to writing that letter seen two pertinent audience participation and discussion programmes on TV, as each of the four channels have to get in on the act subjects get beaten to death. In those programmes the lone brave souls who had stated that they had chosen celibacy were first more or less accused of lying and then told that they were not making a natural choice and therefore needed help of a sex therapist if not a psychiatrist. Mea culpa, I should clear my mind of an irritation before embarking on writing what I consider a serious question.

I did not mention sexual violence, STDs or rape. I did not blame the sixties for anything but identified the decade as the beginning of a trend. For Algernon D'Amassa I will rephrase the question. Is it possible that the level of sexual activity currently portrayed as the norm is as unrealistic as, for example, the romantic attitudes of a Mills and Boon novel? Is belief in that image as a true norm likely to create a low self image in both young men and women and a difficulty in establishing relationships? Are not low self image and an inability to establish comfortable relationships regarded as triggers to violence in many individuals? I certainly do not deny that there are many triggers for violence, not least the proliferation of fictional characters who meet every obstacle with extreme violence and are regarded as heroes. While it is fashionable and in my opinion proper to speak out against the portrayal of violence, poverty, poor education and other triggers, it seems to me that this other possible cause is ignored.

The Frozen Frog

I certainly agree with Algernon that the demand for rights without education regarding the responsibilities that go with rights creates disastrous situations. I hope Steve Jeffery is correct when he writes (in effect) that responsibility is becoming more fashionable."

♦ Sharon N. Farber, 1000 Panorama Drive, Chattanooga, TN 37421, USA: (10/3/93) "Here's a question for everyone: What were you taught about the outcome of the War of 1812? I was definitely taught that the US never lost a war; it was only recently that I heard we lost that one. Did I misunderstand, did I just have a mistaken and jingoistic teacher, or was everyone here taught that we won? (Or was I born in an alternate universe? That would explain a lot.) Let's expand the topic. Are students in the French and English speaking parts of Canada taught differently about the unification of the nation, and about the French and Indian War?"

*[[ I don't remember much of what I was taught in school about the War of 1812 but I checked some standard references here in French Quebec. In essence, this war is considered a rather blunder-ridden inconsequential war. The treaty of Gand which ended it simply gave back to each belligerent what was his at the start of the war and consecrated these positions. I suspect my fellow Anglo-Canadians will have more to say, for Ontario was more directly hit by the conflict than Quebec was. So, I guess the USA never lost a war in the sense that it didn't lose any territory or other possessions in war. But at the same time, it didn't win that one because it didn't accomplish what it set out to do.*

*As for the differences in perception and historical interpretations between various groups, I've taken them for granted for many years, now. ]]*

♦ Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News, VA 23605, USA: (10/3/93) "...The photo from Oz is startling and offensive - didn't Marilyn's mother ever tell her not to wear high heels to bed? Plays hell with the sheets... And besides it makes me feel old - Marilyn probably wasn't born yet when I was in Australia in 1975! I had not heard of Marsden or Prohibited Matter before, sounds interesting - I'll put him on the list for IGOTS.

Everybody seems to know about Gorecki's 3rd Symphony except me, it was even in the paper the other day. I have never read a good explanation of how or why instrumental music can seem sad or moving, other than

if it carries connotations from previous experience. And yet the first time I ever heard Satie's *Trois Gymnopédies* I thought it was the sadest thing I had ever heard.

*[[ If the association of sounds with emotions is inherently arbitrary, so is language, the association of sounds with meaning, and yet, we all learn at least one language in our life. So the musical language of emotions can be as real as any other, even if it is less delineated. It is culturally transmitted but conserves itself, evolves and lives a life of it's own. But I wonder if the thesis of the total independance of sounds and emotions is as solid as it is said to be. Certain tempos and rythmns are more suitable for dancing than others, and dance is usually executed while in a happy mood. There could be a given number of ethological roots to this particular language that explain the cruder associations. ]]*

Well, it's all your fault, I did go out and buy Ishmael by Daniel Quinn yesterday. One of only two books I bought yesterday (a slow day, for a Saturday - the other was a book of Osbert Sitwell's memoirs thrown out by some local public library, for a dime) and have read up to where he gets that name. Which of course is a reference to Melville's *Moby Dick* as well as being Biblical. Pretty good so far, but it's hard to imagine that it will live up to the implied promise that a gorilla will tell us how to save the Earth.

*[[ Daniel Quinn (not the gorilla) does not tell us how to save the Earth. He leaves us with a clearer view of the problem... and of its magnitude. Since reading it I've discovered that when considering any given "sustainable development" problem at work, I could generally tell in what direction Daniel Quinn would push if he were confronted to it, just as if it were a religious text. But this knowledge doesn't tell us how long is the road to "salvation", only the direction we should take. ]]*

♦ Andrew C. Murdoch, 2563 Heron Street, Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8R 5Z9: (10/5/93) "«Frog Wars» - sibling rivalry at its silliest. Lovely. Derek Pickles' mention of THE SEALED KNOT reminded me of when I was in Wales last summer. Before I left Victoria, two friends (who were going to be coming over later on) and I made plans to meet at the youth Hostel in Colwyn Bay, which we did. My friends had rented a car, and since the three of us were major D&D players, we went the next day to Conwy, to check out the castle. Quite by chance, we ran into a group of SEALED KNOT people, who were putting on demonstrations and re-enacting a civil war battle over the week-end (Conwy was a royalist stronghold). They

started out by marching down the streets in full uniform to the shore, just outside the town's walls (which are still standing after centuries), issued a proclamation that war had broken out and called for young, able men to recruit, then fired off a salvo from their matchlock rifles before marching back to the castle. At the castle, they had set up a campsite with old canvas tents, and had basically done everything to make it look authentic, right down to the wooden plates. They gave a demonstration of how to load and fire an old matchlock rifle (man, those things are loud), and then went to re-enact a battle. We remained at the castle while they were off fighting, checking out the towers, the scenery, the seagull's nest on one of the towers, and watching as one of my friends played a damsel in distress at a tower window. Then the SEALED KNOT guys came back, with a prisoner, and proceeded to execute him. We asked the leader of the group if they had ever heard of the Society for Creative Anachronism, but apparently he hadn't. It was a memorable day to be had, by far, and I'm lucky we stumbled upon it.

Sexual gratification as a human right? Only if it's of the self-inflicted variety. If not, then one has to consider the rights of whoever else is involved.

Much in the lettercol on fanzine publishing, I see. I remember when starting my own 'zine that I was worried no one would bother with it because it wasn't desktop published. Fortunately, I've since had many wiser 'zinepubbers tell me otherwise. My initial idea was to produce something along the lines of BCSFAzine, UNDER THE OZONE HOLE, or even FROZEN FROG, when I got myself a newer computer and software (which would have been realsoonow). Then I decided that when I got a new computer, I would do a different type of 'zine. In the meantime, I was going to do a 'zine this way. Thus was born ZX. Lloyd Penney is quite right when he says the papers are using the term "fanzine" as a new buzzword for any amateur publication. I recently read quotes from and mention of a fanzine called "The Gentle Conquerer", devoted to fans of superstud model Fabio.

*[[ Mention of Fabio reminds me of a laminated poster seen in the restroom of the apartment of a couple of gay friends. It showed a young man in jeans but otherwise naked, with a perfect body and very handsome besides. Below the picture was an inscription which read: "All men are not created equals". Very depressing... ]]*

On writing con reports: In the two I've written for my 'zine, I've tried to balance subjective and objective as much as possible. According to Erwin Strauss, one of

the basic truths of fandom is that no two people go to the same convention. Everyone experiences a convention differently. I try to stick to things that most people will have encountered, such as the dances, the parties, the excessive fan politics and feuds, the fire alarm going off, et cetera but I also put in a few personal anecdotes, like when the Washington state customs officer asked me and my carmates if we were entering the U.S. for business or pleasure, and where we were headed. Having replied we were here for pleasure, and going to Bellevue (for Westercon XLVI) he said "You're going to a mental institute for a pleasure trip?" We replied that it was a science fiction convention, and he said "Same thing". We all had a good laugh. Anyway, my point is that I try to write something that everyone who went to the con can relate to, and everyone who didn't can get a general idea of what it was like, as well as tell a story or two.

Being somewhat a fan of hockey, I personally look forward to seeing the Anaheim Mighty Ducks in action. That way, I know that my favoured team, the Vancouver Canucks, are guaranteed to give someone else a few good thrashings this season.

*[[ Let's trade custom officer's stories. A few years ago, Valérie Bédard and Joël Champetier crossed the border on their way to a few days in the sun. Even though they were in the second half of their twenties' they both looked, and still do, much younger than their age, especially Valérie who was regularly asked for ID in bars before being allowed to order a drink up until very recently even though she's been a practicing doctor for years. So, the custom officer asks Joël what he does for a living. Well, at the time, Joël worked for a small family firm and, for accounting reasons, happened to hold the title of vice-president. He says so and the officer takes a long hard look at him, apparently trying to decide what kind of response such impertinence rated. He gives up and turns to Val. "And you?" "I'm a doctor!" Longer pause still... then he waves them on. For a moment, they were convinced their car would be selected for the thoroughest of search seen in the history of customs control. ]]*

♦ Gary Deindorfer, 447 Bellevue Ave., #9-B, Trenton, NJ 08618, USA: (10/1/93) "...I turn to your epic letter column and find that first place is occupied by somebody whom I think is one of the best loc writers in fandom, even though he keeps insisting he is gafiated. I refer of course to the Great White North's David Palter.

But perhaps what we know as the observable universe is a tiny local manifestation of a phenomenon vast and far ranging beyond our comprehension. Maybe the possibly oscillating universe is merely a "string" in a much vaster universe of nth dimensions. Well, just a thot. In which case "God" concepts may merely be our projective anthropomorphisms.

*[[ How can a God represented as an old bearded man fail to be an anthropomorphism? ]]*

I love classical music, but have yet to hear the Gorecki symphony. Since symphonies are my favorite classical music form I really must audition it. Is it as unghodly beautiful as Roussel's "The Spider's Web" complete ballet, of which I have a recording on the invaluable Musical Heritage Society label. (I might add that I love French and Russian classical music above all the rest. I revere Debussy, with Stravinsky my favorite composer.)

Tho as I write this letter I am eartracking Led Zeppelin's PHYSICAL GRAFFITI album. Led Zep is one of my all-time favorite rock groups. I never get tired of listening to them.

*[[ Do not expect Górecki's third to sound like a "normal" symphony, if there is such a thing. I don't have Roussel's ballet, but I'll check it out as soon as possible. What I'm listening to, right now, is Arvo Pärt's ARBOS, which is as haunting as the Górecki and which gets more than it's share of my CD player's attention, these days. Led Zeppelin is also one of my favorite groups, but mainly for nostalgic reasons, I guess. (You'll admit there's not much in common between "Dazed and Confused" and, say, Debussy's "Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune". Is this eclecticism, broadmindedness, or utter confusion of taste?) I'd nominate Brahms as my favorite composer. ]]*

♦ Harry Warner Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, Maryland 21470, USA: (10/01/93) "...The principal reaction I felt after reading your book review section was a mixture of terror and self-doubting. The five books you reviewed range from a high of 1,024 pages to a low of 488 pages. Maybe this is one reason for the recent reports of declines in paperback sales: so many readers are like me and feel reluctance to tackle such books whose reading time is equal to that of three or four normal novels and selling price is fearsomely high.

Hockey seems to be on the mind of a lot of loc writers represented in this issue. It has ocured to me



that hockey might gain immensely in popularity in the United States when high-definition television becomes available within the next few years. Its limited appeal in this nation must result in part from the fact that television is the only convenient way for a huge segment of the population to see hockey played. Hagerstown residents, for instance, must drive 70 miles to see live hockey (as far as I know, unless a college nearer than that has a team that gains little or no publicity). It's different for other popular team sports because there are baseball and football fields at every high school, in many parks, and basketball courts everywhere. Seen only on tv today, hockey's speed doesn't really register for viewers, because the camera generally keeps the puck centered, and the puck is hard to see except on closeup shots. When the television picture improves, the puck should become easily visible and television directors should offer more wide angle shots that will give a better idea of how fast the players and the puck move on the ice.

I've never understood why people should write dates using only numeral and slash marks. The potential confusion created by uncertainty about which numerals refer to the month and which to the day could be avoided by simply using the numerals for the day, an abbreviation for the month, and the final two digits in the year in circumstances where there isn't any question about the century involved. It would mean only a few more strokes of the pen or pressures of the fingers. Just the other day, I learned through a book of published correspondence of Frenchmen in the 19th century that some persons at that time and place indicated the last four months of the year by numerals corresponding to the derivation of the months' names, like 10 for Décembre.

*[[ Human ingenuity at its best, no doubt. The difficulty encountered in solving this problem once and for all is an interesting example of the independance of the social level from the individual level. Social mores live a life of their own that can explain why entire nations run head on to their doom while every individual in their population sees clearly the danger and would very much like to avoid it. What chances do we have to convert to sustainable development if we can't even opt decisively for the metric system? ]]*

Incidentally, all the references to French in this issue reminded me of something. To the best of my memory, you've never instructed us English-speaking people how you prefer your name to be pronounced. I suppose if you lived in France it would be represented in English characters as approximately Ben Wah Gee Rar, without a strong accent on any of the syllables, but maybe you do it differently in Quebec.

*[[ No! You're right on! That is, if a read you correctly. ]]*

I was quite surprised one day recently when I inspected a newly purchased secondhand book and found a sticker in it stating: "Property of Alexandria Library". The book is in excellent condition, which astonished me all the more. I looked at the copyright date, but that didn't

indicate whether it was B.C. or A.D. However, it was an English language book and I doubt if the most famous Alexandria Library had a strong English language section, so I've decided it must have come from the library in the city across the Potomac River from Washington in Virginia.

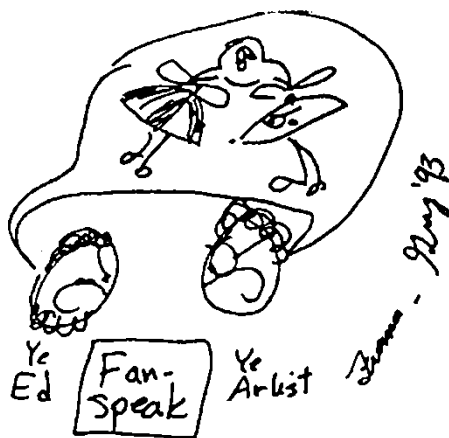
The theory that fans are the generalists of the 20th century frightens me a little. I feel like Pigpen in the Charlie Brown Christmas special which has been televised every December since just after the Civil War in the United States and has probably been on the tube in Canada, too. Charlie tries to raise

Pigpen's self-esteem by telling him that the grime he normally wears may contain dust that was once part of Caesar's body and this seems to cause Pigpen to wonder if he can bear under such responsibility.

As for frog sports, the most obvious one would be team competition in leapfrog. This may be extinct among today's youth so if you've never heard of it, you might find details in a large English dictionary. Tadpole vaulting would be another possibility.

*[[ No mention of the less esoteric swimming and diving sports? ]]*

♦ Joseph T Major, 4701 Taylor Boulevard #8, Louisville, Kentucky 40215-2343, USA: (10/4/93) "I think it was in



Again, *Dangerous Visions* where there was that stunning tale of batrachian splendor "Gorf! Gorf! Gorf!" about guess what.

I sampled some part of *The Deed of Paksennarion*, but when I got to the section where the protagonist, imprisoned and bound to the sacrificial altar, is miraculously released and as she rises to confront the evil priests her wounds miraculously heal, I decided that there could really not be all that much conflict in the story and hence not much of a novel.

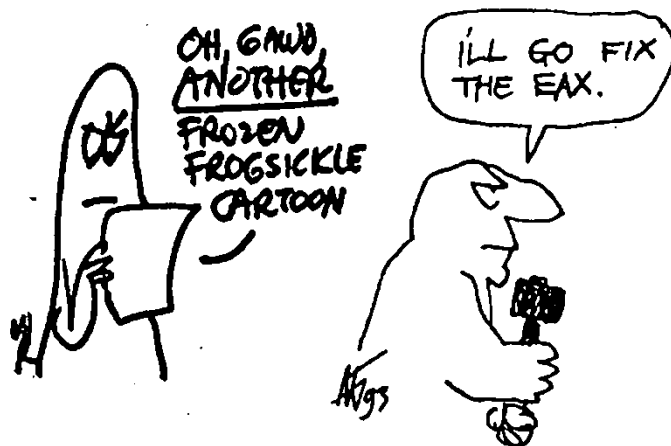
*[[ That's what you get for peeking at the last chapter of a novel prior to reading it. In that novel, the gods are real but they very, very rarely meddle in human affairs. That's why Paksennarion was not expecting such a special treatment at all. Ms Moon used a thousand pages preparing her readers for that scene... ]]*

As Vinge based his data communication net in *A Fire Upon the Deep* on modernday computer bulletin boards, the content of the messages exchanged follows. That that sort of behavior is commonplace is one reason I have never been one for BBS'ing.

Ben Indick might be interested to know that I went to the fights the other night and a hockey game broke out. (Well, not really.) Fighting is getting all too common in team sports, to the point where (for example) they hardly seem worth reporting in baseball news unless something really noteworthy occurs, such as when Nolan Ryan, who being forty-seven ought to have known better, took part in one. And then people wonder why there seems to be a coarsening of society and relationships.

In one of his alternate histories, Avram Davidson had "United-Stateser" used as a term for the inhabitants of that country. Albeit it was in a rather absurd one where John "Nolichucky Jack" Sevier, governor of the State of Franklin (instead of checking an atlas, just let me tell you that it was in what is now Eastern Tennessee) having flipped a coin to decide whether or not to become independent of the United States, the coin landed the other way and he decided to become independent. A century and a half later, a prosperous, powerful Appalachia is envied by a poor United States, and "United Statesers" are mocked as stupid by Appalachianers. Finally, the United States attacks Appalachia, and is conquered.

As I said, absurd. Unfortunately, that seems to be the current trend in alternate histories where instead of trying to explore the plausible consequences of an impor-



tant historical event having "gone the other way", the writer tries to be as grotesque and absurd as possible.

As the editor said to John Francis Haines, trade paperbacks in French going for \$35 to \$75, mass-market paperbacks \$12 - \$20 new and \$7 - \$10 used -- My Ghod! (also Mon Dhieu!) No wonder you read English books. Why such high prices?

*[[ The standard explanation revolves around the relative size of the markets considered. A best-seller, here, is a book which has sold 2000 copies. More often, a book will sell 500 copies. Still, the editor has to make a profit at it. Books imported from France get a transportation cost added to their price. And ours can't be massively exported since France is very jealous of its market. So... ]]*

The point, though (carrying on from my previous loc), is that the provenance of *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion* has been established, so the collaborators of *Holy Blood - Holy Grail* seem a little off in attributing it to a secret document of the Priory of Sion. Not to mention that the portentous description of the "Prieuré Documents" being deposited in the Bibliothèque de France means only that Pierre Plantard copyrighted his fanzines.

Another point there shades into American ("United-Stateser?") romantic legend. The bit about the woman who knows nothing about poker cleaning out the expert players is a facet of a deeper, more encompassing attitude, a sort of anti-intellectualism. The idea is that the "Common Man" (or "Common Person") is so possessed of inherent virtue that he or she can easily outdo experts in any field. Thus, the *Bad News Bears*, *Mighty Ducks*,

and so on theme about the totally novice coach taking the team of losers to the top of the league comes from that same attitude. It also leads to a lot of trouble, accidents, deaths, and destruction...

It may interest **Curt Phillips** and **Derek Pickles** (or maybe they already know, perhaps even from experience) that the recent movie *Glory* used Civil War re-enactors to train the extras who took the roles of the various units in that movie. Evidently that was such a success that the re-enactors got a chance to do it all again in the newly-released Turner Broadcasting Movie *Gettysburg*. (Ted Turner his own self plays a Confederate captain who in his fifteen seconds of fame gives an order to charge and then is shot and killed. Was he glad they were using blanks or what?)

Also, going on with Derek Pickles's revelations about the Sealed Knot, as I recall one of its outstanding leaders was the famous (and unfortunately late) military historian Brigadier Peter Young, WWII commando hero of Dieppe. (I believe a few years ago there had been an unraveling in the ranks. Has this been spliced?) I suppose what all Brigadier Young did was better than what retired American generals do, which seems to be sitting on boards of directors. Usually these are of major corporations, but sometimes it seems to be of organizations with names like "100% Americans for a 100% White Christian America!!!"

I would like to add to the general congratulations from **Cathy Doyle** and others on the adoption of Alexandre. Of course, our Eternal Editor Tim Lane once commented that for all that the Nazis prided themselves on their Aryan heritage, they had set about exterminating the only genuinely Aryan people resident in Europe. He referred, of course, to the Rom, also called Ziguener, Tzigane, Egyptian, and Gypsy, come from the Aryan homeland of India via Byzantium to Europe. I suppose it would be funny if there were not so many deaths involved.

**Curt Phillips** might be willing to take some perspective second-hand, originally from Dale Speirs. Being in both stamp-collecting and aquarium organizations also, Speirs had noticed a certain superficiality about reporters' questions in those fields as well. Namely, and respectively, "What's the most expensive stamp here?" and "Where's the biggest fish?" It happens to everyone.

Generally: It seems odd to see comments on the order of "Fanzines are dying" following a letter that be-

gins "I am sorry to be so late in responding to the last ish but I had to catch up on a backlog of fanzines." Rather like Nikki Lynch's comment in the back editorial of *Mimosa* about how people were complaining that the proliferation of computers made it easy to pub your ish. I had not been aware that had been a problem..."

♦ **Roy Lavender, 2507 East 17th Street, Long Beach, CA 90804, USA: (10/5/93)** "...As an SF fan, how do you like the One World government being thrust upon us? The UN to have jurisdiction above that of national governments."

In the USA, they are trying to combine the FBI, the BATF and the DEA into one national police force. The BATF plus the FBI is the combination that brought us Waco and a few earlier fiascos. The CIA plus the DEA shipped weapons to South American rebels in exchange for cocaine. A sort of self financed overthrow. You have a sample in the RCMP, but much more restrained since they got that R on the front. Isn't it fun to see SF become reality."

*[[ One should not put all one's eggs in the same basket. I'm not refering only to the unified police force here. It applies also to the One World government. Since we are governed by random whim, we should insure that the dice are thrown more than once and that a normal distribution of random outcome is maintained. The SF community certainly had second thoughts about technocracy between the fifties and today, didn't it? ]]*

♦ **W. Andrew York, PO Box 2307, Universal City, TX 78148-1307, USA: (10/3/93)** "...Most of my reading, of late, has been dedicated to reading through John LeCarre's many volumes. I'm reading them in order, and am up to The Honourable Schoolboy. I've found them to be of uneven quality, with the spy novels (for the most part) excellent. I particularly have enjoyed The Spy Who Came In From The Cold and Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Spy. His non-spy book The Naive and Sentimental Lover I found to be quite difficult to read through.

The book you mention, The Pillars of the Earth is going on my Christmas purchase list for my family. I traditionally buy books for all my relatives, and this sounds like one they would definitely like."

*[[ What a great idea, to have a "traditional" gift. It spares you the trouble to find something original year after year. And what could be easier to manage than*

books. I have a friend who works for the public relations department of a major museum. At each exhibition's opening press conference, he has taken to wear a necktie whose printwork matches the exhibiton theme. After many years, everybody, press representatives included, anxiously wait to see what he has found to match the latest exhibition. He has a great time, but he will confidently admit that it is harder and harder to outdo himself or, sometimes, simply find a proper match. And what will he do when the current craze for whimsical neckties is over and all he can find are stripes and tartans? No. Books are definitely easier. ]]

♦ Nola Frame-Gray, PO Box 465, Inglewood, CA 90307-0465, USA: (19/6/93) "...Great comments from Curt Phillips and his information on this hobby of "historical re-enactments" (tho I'm still mightily curious as to how the combatants of WWII would dress.). Wonderful opening for a discussion, his wondering as to why anyone would want to dress up as a Nazi. I was also very pleased as to your answer -- pointing out the difference between a Nazi and a member of the German military. Look at DAS BOOT.

As for Curt's question, let me generalize it to "Why would anyone want to playact on the side of the underdog?" (Which, I admit, is a bit of a stretch.)

For starters, there is the element of "siding with the underdog" a thing which we Americans love to identify with. When I was a kid, and a movie that I was watching on the television was truly awful, I would start raving for the villain. Mind you, I did this not because I thought the Baddie had any redeeming qualities, but I did this in the faint hope, that the guys in the black hats would win for a change -- just for the novelty.

However, aside from the element of "cheering for the underdog" I think there's something else we should consider as well.

Suppose I had the right qualities of money, time, the right build, and mebbie the right gender, that I could pretend -- take part in a re-enactment of the Civil War (or would It's more proper name be The War Between the States?). Now suppose that I was one of these persons who, through a series of unusual circumstances, such as being severely disabled and thus being treated as an Underperson for most of my life, I could well understand (or at least I might think I could understand) what it means to be an African-American? Suppose also that I was a per-

son who, also because of these unusual circumstances, be able to identify with all the people who have been treated most unfairly here in the United States.

Having written the above paragraph, suppose that I was someone who, upon being given the chance of not only "playing" in the Civil War, that I also chose to play the part of a soldier who fought on the side of the South?

So the obvious question is: Why would I do it? Why would I want to be on the side of the South, the part of my country that wanted to continue the institution of Slavery?

Would you believe that I might want to play the part of the South just for the challenge of it? The challenge of my identifying with an alien mind set? And isn't that what we science fiction writers, and wanna-be science fiction writers attempts to do in our writings? To try to identify with alien mind sets -- those mind sets which are truly different from our own?"

*[[ Seen from afar, where I stand, I would expect Civil War re-enactments to be a touchy subject among Americans. I can understand that the romantic side of war can lead many people to overlook those touchy aspects, and I doubt that masquerading in a costume implies in the least adopting, even temporarily, the mind set that used to go with it... But read on, Nola. ]]*

♦ Algernon d'Ammassa, 323 Dodge Street, E.Providence, RI 02914, USA: (10/01/93) "War re-enactments. I live according to the conviction that war (real war, where the casualties don't dust themselves off and have a beer after the battle) is by its nature despicable, criminal, and ignoble. This does not lead me to condemn military re-enactments, however. Gathering up battalions of burly men to put on uniforms and re-play Antietam (or what you will) is an act of theatre, a sporting event, no more horrifying than a game of football. But I reject it as history.

If this is history, why don't the organizers of these events recruit children to portray a segment of a new generation left to wallow in poverty, filth, and disease? Where are the rapes and other war crimes? Where are the mutinies and fragging? The execution of "spies" without trial? If this is history, shouldn't a war re-enactment include a contingent of conscious objectors --the men who refused to fight or in any way assist governments in waging war on humankind-- being jailed, whipped, and



murdered on the sidelines?

All this would be inappropriate, of course. Despite its superficial concern for realistic detail, war re-enactments are not about reality. War re-enactments are about mythology.

There is a story for every war the United States fights. These stories are meant to unite people who will support their country in time of war, to give them a just cause compelling enough that they will send their children off to be inducted, submit to economic hardship as their government diverts money to support its military operations, and help make the story come true, with a patriotic fervor that keeps leaders in power and makes dissent very unpopular.

War, out of necessity, becomes mythology and in due course is taught as "history". As a result, American history (as Americans learn it) is full of myth and plain lies.

These stories have one important premise in common: in service to a just cause, war is glorious. This message is reiterated by every monument, every military parade, and every fanciful re-enactment of war (including lots of our video games). It's a message western culture is almost ready to leave behind. We don't love war as we

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used to; the next step is realizing that we don't need it, either. I'm not optimistic about this, just hopeful."

*[[ You raise one of my constant philosophical questioning: Is there any way I can still believe in human perfectibility? Even though the evidence is sobering I just seem to be unable to resign myself to it. ]]*

♦ Rodney Leighton, R. R. 3, Pugwash, NS, B0K 1L0, CANADA: (10/5/93) "...Personally, I consider it extremely unfair of Sharon Farber to not provide a detailed, graphic and preferably illustrated description of that volunteer flick she alluded to.

*[[ Yeah! Somehow, I thought you would. ]]*

Picture too dark... tried to copy a Polaroid, didn't you?

*[[ No, regular picture. Sorry about that. You didn't miss much, except for a good look at Penny Lipman. Speaking of pictures, two people took my picture in Orlando last year, Dick Lynch and Phil Tortorici. Then I went to the Hugo ceremony with Joël and Valérie. When Dick Lynch came on stage I gloated: "You know, this man took my picture earlier today. Have you had your picture taken by a Hugo award winner recently? Valérie went: "Oh really? Great! You're getting access to the higher circles, etc..." Then later, the MC invited us to cheer the designer of that year's Hugo, Phil Tortorici. I whispered again. "Funny, Phil also took my picture this afternoon." Valérie turned to me with a suspicious eye: "How many people took a picture of your irresistible features, today?" "Just those two." "Are you putting me on?" "No, I assure you..." "You're putting me on!" And, to this day, I'm sure she didn't believe me. ]]*

It may or may not be worth mentioning to Eunice Raymond that the stockinged foot was a spur of the moment thing and it was very effective... and, yeah, I saw stars... 25 minutes later. It was my first time and I hadn't learned how to last a decent amount of time, yet.

*[[ Groan... ]]*

Got a good laugh from Alan Sullivan's "Action Fan" descriptions. Are they true??? Peggy Ranson's drawing on page 21 was the best artwork, or at least my fave. I had a notion to refer to it as Peggy Ranson's piece and, if she uses herself as a model, I'd love to have a

piece of... well, you get the idea. And, anyway, I'm celibate. Sorta.

*[[ Don't be surprised if you end up on somebody's black list. ]]*

FACTSHEET FIVE changed hands twice. Latest publisher, R. Seth Friedman, used many very old zines; stuff sent to Mike Gunbderloy and Hudson Luce. Perhaps you sent a copy of #1 or #2 to one of those? Friedman claims he is honoring all subscriptions. If you need his address, I have it somewhere.

*[[ I no longer need it since I met Seth Friedman in San Francisco. When I asked about my missing issues he bluntly said he had deleted all the Canadians from the mailing list because the postage was too costly. "You're saying this to my face?" I wondered, astonished. He then relented and explained how he'd been himself "screwed as much as (me)" in this deal and the trouble he had getting it all back together. He gave me the two latest issues of the zine and I resubscribed promptly. ]]*

Well, there's an easy cure for being behind on reading SF fanzines. Simply announce that you no longer (or, better, never really did) like SF, although you love some aspects of SF zines and that you are ceasing to publish. You'll soon wonder what a SF zine looks like."



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*[[ Thanks for the tip but I'm not quite ready to use it. Besides, I'd be found out and labeled a liar instantly. ]]*

♦ John Francis Haines, 5 Cross Farm, Station Road, Padgate, Warrington WA2 0QG: (10/01/93) "...Lloyd Penney seems to have misunderstood me - I realise you have to look behind the lurid covers of both sf and romance novels to find the goodies within, but non-fans don't - they still judge the books by their covers, thus helping to perpetuate the ghettoisation process.

*[[ I think you both agree. Lloyd provides a clear example of the preconceived notion about SF in action. ]]*

If you enjoyed Ken Follett's The Pillars of the Earth, can I suggest you try The Spire, by William Golding? This too, is a novel about cathedral building and one I think you'd enjoy (try your local library, they ought to have it in).

*[[ If The Spire was translated in French, and William Golding very well might, I have a chance of finding it at my local library. Thanks. ]]*

One solution to the slow reading problem is to get tapes of books - invest in a Walkperson and then you can listen to the books as you go about your everyday business. Voilà!

*[[ I definitely prefer your solution to that of Rodney Leighton above. Now, do you know of any spoken fanzines... with very clear enunciation? ]]*

♦ Helen E. Davis, 2327 Shroyer Road, Oakwood OH 45419, USA: (10/05/93) "...For Harry Warner Jr. - Small children learn language as a part of their neural development, the actual growth and differentiation of brain tissue. If they do not have a language to copy, develop their own. Adults lose this ability because once the brain is formed, it's formed. This is also why children can recover better from brain damage than adults - their still-forming brains can build around minor damage, where adults are left with permanent mental holes. It's also why deprived children never learn certain things (severe deprivation, like good food, or the proper stimulus for learning language or math). They missed the window, when their brains were trying to build that mental ability. So they just don't have it.

That picture of you, Ben, on page 17. It bears an odd resemblance to the face on Mars. I think it's the way the light catches some features but not the whole thing."

*[[ Ben to Mars-HQ. Been uncovered. Mission aborted. Beam me back at once. ]]*

♦ Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina, CA 91722, USA: (10/01/93) "After finally admitting (as happens about every nine years) that It's Not Possible To Catch Up, I'm filing away the Stuff which has accumulated in several enormous stacks, without making the detailed or intense Response which seemed called-for when I first set the items aside. For many of them, such a Response still seems to be needed, but all they're going to get, lamentably, is something pro forma, like this.

It's usually safe to follow Walt Willis' lead in things Fannish, so I'll LoC FF #7 though there are 62 names on your WAHF list (& I recognize 78% of them, mostly as admirable writers); after all, perhaps everyone will decide to skip, this time.

I might wish you could continue a quarterly publication schedule, since that seems to be about the maximum for Fannish Memory Span, but we all have to face the facts of economic considerations. \*sigh\*

I'm glad you're not abandoning the FanArtist Colectable Card Project; collectors' cards, per se, don't seem very Fannish, but FanArtists are, and usually so little is known about them that the information, as well as the samples of their work, would be extremely welcome. That as many as five responded so rapidly seems remarkable -- FanArtists do seem to tend to wait for Inspiration, to ignore deadlines, and to put non-crucial Projets off almost indefinitely...

[You may well have decided to cut off this topic, but...] I think I've finally figured out why I dislike Sharyn McCrumb's books -- she's using them as propaganda vehicles (perhaps not an admirable thing in entertainment fiction) for an Ideology which I consider detestable. She appears to feel, strongly, that The Only Proper Goal in Human Life is Materialistic Success, and that it's her job to convince everyone of this. (It's also possible that she's just trying to convince herself of it, but...) There's not room in this View for many fandoms, since most are based on Having Fun and on achieving social status in

a small group, in ways not recognized by mainstream (&/or Yuppie) TV.

I'm looking forward to a Response by Lloyd Penney to David Palter's letter... and to seeing how (not "if", I think) you avoid getting embroiled in a Fan Feud. David's fanwriting has always been interesting & rewarding, though he did strike me as being (even) more prickly than most fans, and I'd be distressed if he actually gaffed as a result of what might have been an injudicious decision/comment on the part of one fanzine editor.

*[[ Lloyd decided not to reply in print to David's comments. I feel that neither of them really wanted to revive this feud, and especially not in the pages of Frozen Frog where, this is hardly a secret, feuds are not welcome. My probable way to deal with any nascent feud would be to invite opponents to restraint and, if this is not enough, to smother it in silence after both sides have had a chance to express their side of the story. ]]*

I was fascinated by Easter Island as a kid, well before Thor Heyerdahl's time, and seem to remember that the techniques for making those statues were well-known (or deduced) before the 1940s... and that the native inhabitants had by that time been almost exterminated, and had little or no oral history of their pre-Contact culture. The Great Mystery which Heyerdahl exploded seems to have been a construction of the second-rate sensationalist literature common during much of the first half of this century. [Not entirely Aside... at least one U.S. Great Plains Indian tribe is reported to take pride in the Authenticity of its Sun Dance Lodge -- set up very carefully in accordance with the illustrations and descriptions in an early publication of The Bureau of American Ethnography.]

Canadian Politics may not necessarily be intrinsically boring to U.S. readers -- Dale Speirs often goes into considerable detail on them in Opuntia, and manages to convey, entertainingly, the idea that they're just as silly as U.S. Politics. On the other hand, even Fans have sometimes been known to get Serious about this subject, and one wouldn't want FF to become another Fosfax.

*[[ I have but one political conviction: Pessimism! ]]*

Sheryl Birkhead is (almost) wrong on two points: though I'm one of many carrying the ball, the ideas about the (Fanzine) Fan Lounge and Party Room (Roscoe Room, after the beaver who's the fannish ghod

of mimeography) were really Geri Sullivan's (as implemented at MagiCon), and they're Novel in being given much more physical prominence than the traditional (stuck-in-some-obscure-closet) Fanzine Room. (This is probably the result of Conventions becoming so big (and hotels changing their business patterns) that Convention Centers are utilized, frequently causing the ConCom to need things to fill up All That Space.) New, also, is Geri's realization that bidding ConComs can no longer be expected to contain even one enthusiastic & knowledgeable Fanzine Fan; such Projects have to be developed & organized (usually) by a coalition of members of our (now) sub-fandom, and presented to the ConCom as a sort of plug-in unit. I think Sheryl's right that these haven't and won't spawn very many new fans, but they do seem to encourage a few, and certainly provide a useful focal point for Fanzine Fans (and, if ConFrancisco is indicative, for old-time fans who've come out of the woodwork).

While there seem to be strong arguments against Harry Warner's suggestion of holding a Fanzine Fan mini-con the weekend before or after a Big Con, there does seem to be a growing tendency for some people to arrive a day or two early and invite everyone they recognize to a Room Party. There are, of course, drawbacks to this as well, but... Ginette's problem is a common one, now that many schools resume classes before Labor Day, but it seems unlikely that WorldCons will change their traditional schedule.

Brian Earl Brown commenting on the design & appearance of fanzines -- and quite sensibly, at that? I tend to feel that, as some people are said to have "a tin ear" in regards to music, Brian has a tin eye when it comes to layout & appearance of fanzines -- some of his own are almost Classical Horrible Examples... which is annoying because they're so interesting that I have to plow through them. I suppose, though, that (though perhaps only grudgingly and eventually) we'll all agree that all fans do the best they can in juggling their desire to present as much Good Stuff as possible with their financial limitations. Personally, I don't expect ever to move beyond fanzines-on-paper, but do rather look forward to the time when computers will be sufficiently developed and standardized that it will be possible to swap disks so that we can print-out copies of zines in different formats, if we wish. (For FF, I'd use a serif face, and a somewhat larger font and page size -- though I hasten to say, like Brian, that you do a superb job at getting so much material onto 2 oz. of paper.)...

*[[ How do you like the new presentation? ]]*

I'm surprised at the indication that there's especial strife between Francophone and Anglophone fanzines -- I'd think that being a Fan would transcend such matters, and that the problem of incomprehensibility would be regretted all-round.

*[[ David Palter was referring to the Canadian society at large. Not to fandom. As you suggest, fandom is one of the most tolerant and open-minded sub-culture around and it would indeed transcend these differences. Trouble is, the two Canadian communities are so different there is simply no French-Canadian "fandom" in the traditional sense. We almost had one, but it collapsed a few years ago. We now have only atomistic individuals who keep in touch one-on-one with each other. No French SF clubs either. What you'll find though, are bilingual clubs, in Montreal. Both languages are intertwined down to the single conversation where participants of both communities contribute input using the most convenient language of the moment. The recently created Con\*Cept convention works that way. I find it dizzying to switch languages in the blink of an eye. At the last con, with all the coming and going, I even found myself in deep conversation with another French-Canadian... in English. Some people around here find such occurrences frightening. "At what point, do they ask, does open-mindedness become acculturation?" ]]*

Thanks for all the LetterColumn mentions of various (mostly battle-reinactment) historical fandoms. My major "other Fandom" is that of American Indian Hobbyists -- a group which holds, twice a year, Powowows/-Dances distinguishable from pan-Indian ones held by Plains Tribes primarily by the fact that most of the singers and dancers are obviously not Indians (and perhaps by the fact that their outfits are often more expensive, and some of the "old-time" ones more authentic, than those seen at most Indian events). And I understand that the "Mountain Men" Rendezvous (largely a re-creation of the French-Canadian Voyageur subculture) sometimes attract over 20,000 participants. The Society for Creative Anachronism is probably best-known to us because its early formative stages in the San Francisco Bay area included much overlap with fans there, but the Renaissance Faire fandom seems to be pretty much another group, and a mystery novel by Charlotte McLoyd/Alisa Craig suggests the existence of still another tradition of this sort, mostly upper-class, on the U. S. East Coast, probably with roots in the pre-Raphaelite Movement. It does seem as though SF Fans are far from being alone in the desire to escape from Contemporary Reality from time to time.



Now I must return to the harsh Reality of trying to make space for the Computer (Macintosh Centris 650) which should arrive by the middle of next week -- and that task isn't as easy as it might seem to some people; I've been living here, and Accumulating Things, for over 30 years, so at least some things Must Go."

*[[ And you call this a pro forma loc??? ]]*

◆ Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA, UK; (10/10/93) "...I can sympathise with Helen's Frog Wars. My family run the gamut of collectable animals: from owls to unicorns, and moles to Rupert the Bear. Having an interest in, say, axolotls is relatively safe, since these are not a frequent item in Xmas gift shops, not rating high in the cute-and-cuddly stakes. Which does lead me to wonder why frogs are so popular...

*[[ How dare you?! ]]*

I hugely enjoyed Vernor Vinge's *Fire Upon the Deep* and thought it fully deserved its Hugo status. And if the Galactic Net messages seem dumb & ill-informed have you seen transcripts of the current Internet "discussions"? I suspect Vinge may have it right, and a galaxy wide e-mail system will just have more, of less.

...I liked Brad's cute little lilo on the bottom of p.13. I've just picked up a copy of his Mechthings comic. This, along with the irreverent Cerebus the Aardvark (Dave Simms) & Tank Girl, could almost sucker me into comics.

*[[ Yet another parallel between you and I: I've never been interested in American comics. I always preferred the European ones which I deemed more original. But since the breakdown of the Majors' monopoly in the US and the apparition of the Independents, various people have tried to get me to read some of the new stuff. Watchmen, Sandman, Cerebus, etc. I must admit I am now getting more interested. ]]*

The Frozen Frog



You are right in your reply to Joseph Major, that Baigent & Leigh did not take the Protocols of the Elders of Zion at face value. However, they do go off into a host of fairly hilarious conspiracy theories (followed up in The Messianic Legacy) of the sort that Umberto Eco had such joyous fun with in Foucault's Pendulum. I was also extremely uncomfortable with the way they would demolish theories based on orthodox Christian doctrine and then build even flimsier constructions of their own on shaky foundations.

*[[ What could be shakier than orthodox Christian doctrine? The most fascinating point of Umberto Eco's book is the demonstration that our grasp on reality is shakier than we ever thought it to be and that reality is, indeed, heavily "consensual". In an "information overload" environment like today's society, this consensus breaks down and we are left with a Babel Tower society where not much can be taken for granted. I have colleagues who are Stock Market dreamers, acquaintances who believe in "serious astrology", and relatives who are not quite sure who Jean Chrétien, Kim Campbell and Brian Mulroney are. None of these groups live in quite the same universe. We can almost choose our reality simply by selecting the people we hang out with or the bars we patronize. In this context, fandom is not so weird as it is purported to be. ]]*

On suckering poor neos into Fanzine Fandom, the last Mexican published a compilation of fanwriting as a discussion point for a panel. To be honest, I don't think this would have excited me, had I not been familiar with the names already. I'm not sure how to do it, but perhaps a hefty grant to print up a thousand or two copies of TFF to be distributed in the goodie bag at a major convention might give people an ideal introduction. (Can you handle a thousand LoCs, Ben?)

*[[ Oh my Ghod! I never thought I could actually be happy at the thought of not be granted some money. Besides, if such a grant was available, shouldn't we push it toward the short list of Hugo contenders? Think of Mimosa, STET, Trap Door, Outworlds, and the others. I*

appreciate the compliment, but I know I could never invest as much time and energy as the editors of these real heavies of the fanzine world in my little offering. TFF is but an overstretched letter-substitute that will stay good only as long as it stays small. A thousand locs might very well kill it, don't you think? But thanks anyway, it feels good to know so many people like it.

As to fanzine fans recruiting, I recently suggested to Lloyd Penney to have big posters made for the Fanzine Lounge in Conadian with actual fanzine quotes of interest. The idea being to replace the telling that fanzines are interesting by the actual showing. A judicious selection of quotes would probably hook quite a few fans into taking a further look into fanzines. ]]

Algernon D'Amassa makes some valid points on abstinence & celibacy, but loses my belief in his arguments with that comment that media images are irrelevant to sexual violence. I sort of remember a quote from the «liberated» 60s. When somebody (Stokely Carmichael?) was asked about "the position of women in this movement". "Prone". Very liberated, I'm sure.

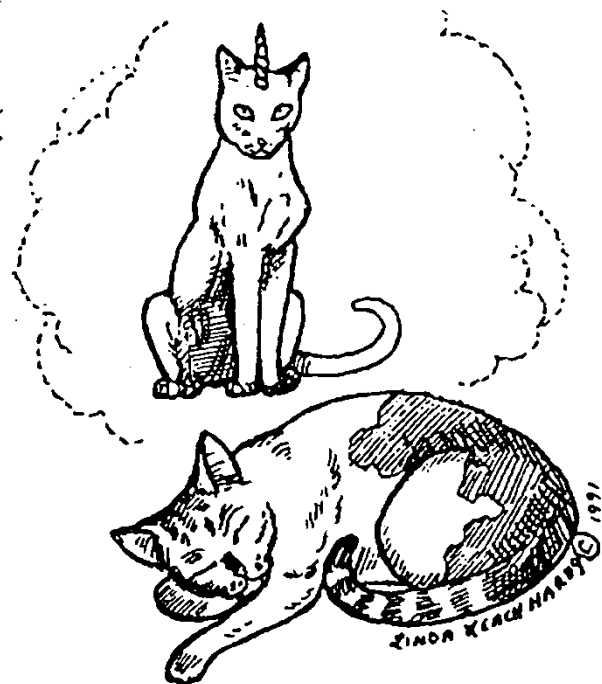
[[ The trouble with sexual violence and the media is not so much what they say as what they don't say. My generation, the Baby Boomers, was as much exposed to violence as today's youths. I must have already killed a thousand cow-boys and as many Indians in my old neighbourhood's backyards by the time I was 12. But this exposure was always balanced against the moral education we were getting at home, in school and just about everywhere else. I remember going to the movies once to see some interpretation of Billy the Kid or some such Old West outlaw. The owner of the place made an exception and came on stage before the movie began to explain that we should be especially careful not to overempathize with the outlaw protagonist, that his choices were wrong and that in the end, he got what he deserved when he was killed. Can you imagine this scene in 1994? I'm not sure today's young minds are as much exposed to the philosophy of decent behavior as we were during the fifties. Somebody gave up on the Barbarians at the Gate. The other part of the problem could be that today's Billy the Kids don't get killed. Their lawyers seem to be getting them off the hook very easily. I'm not advocating lawful violence, but did you notice that a large part of the appeal of media violence is a thirst for some sort of "quick and simple" justice people feel is absent from the 90s society? ]]

Why do I recognize all the "Action Fans™" in Alan Sullivan's letter? And you can swap at least two categories of Fans & Pros around with no loss of accuracy. But if you see a Trekkie with a beergut, guitar and laptop, then it's time to run. Or gafiate.

...I was caught recently with a hand written letter in which I misread «quilt» for «guilt», with some interesting results for my attempted reply to a profound question on the nature of man and tapestry.

Picking up on your idea, in reply to John Hertz, about fandom as a bridge between the Two Cultures divide, we posed a question from Sue Thomason about how people might reconcile the ideas of Science & Beliefs, the Rational & Intuitive modes of thought. Three issues later the two sides seemed deeply entrenched, sniping at each other over No Man's Land, with the original question still unanswered. It was an object lesson that two cultures do exist, and are divided by a deep distrust, verging on hostility, of each other. I would still like to see the question answered, in the spirit that Sue proposed it."

Hans Persson, Alsättersgatan 48, S-582 48 Linköping, Sweden: (10/14/93) "...I wonder what Harry Warner



found in his time capsule box? I thought it sounded like a wonderful idea, perhaps I should try putting some books away in a dark corner from time to time and take them out in twenty years time. Or perhaps that is what is happening already in the deep recesses of my storage room.

I hope you'll keep publishing TFF. It's just like the zine I was trying to publish in Sweden for a while, except for the fact that you actually have LoCs to put in it. That was the problem I had, that fandom in Sweden is going through a down period. Hopefully, it's getting better soon. I might even give it another try some day, who knows? On the other hand, I will soon have children to take care of so I might not have any spare time to make a fanzine in. Oh well."

*[[ Québec's fandom is also in a down period and a French fanzine like TFF wouldn't have been a success here either. But I started an APA which is thriving. Only a dozen or so friends are needed to start an APA and once the ball is rolling, it is relatively easy to pick up an occasional new member. You might consider this solution to your problem. ]]*

**Rod Marsden, 21 Cusack St., Merrylands, Sydney, NSW 2160, Australia: (10/28/93)** "...The piece of art work on page 14 blew me away. This Alan Hunter character can really draw and he knows how to cross-hatch for good effect. Could you possibly let him know I'm on the look out for good Horror artists? And let him know I've got a H.P. Lovecraft special coming up. You don't mind terribly if I steal him for just one issue, do you? Honestly, this guy is good. I pay \$10.00 for an A4 page of artwork I can use *[[ in Prohibited Matter ]]*

*[[ Consider it done. And, by the way, I hope you were not affected by the monstrous fire around Sydney. ]]*

**Lloyd Penney, 412-4 Lisa St., Brampton, ON, L6T 4B6, Canada: (10/28/93)** "...There's been some changes about the fanzine room in Winnipeg... Yvonne and I are the new people in charge. In fact, John Mansfield asked us if we would do it while we were in Montréal for Con\*Cept. So, we need feedback. From everybody. What would you like to see in a fanzine room? Who could put together an exhibit of Canadian fanzines? What things should we not forget? I've already written to Paul Valcour, Geri Sullivan and Joe Siclari about what to do, and I hope we can stage a fanzine lounge to everyone's liking. But, you've



Simon & Saburas  
1899

got to let me know! My address is at the top; please write and give us advice and sage tips..."

**Brad Westervelt, 544 Debbie Court, Boulder Creek, CA 95006, USA: (11/08/93)** "By your back page urging, I purchased and read *Ishmael* on a recent business trip. Yes, it is an excellent book, and most of the views expressed therein were comfortably familiar. It's so refreshing to find a kindred soul in the world, isn't it?

I had two problems with the book; the heavy use of the word "man" in place of humanity, or even mankind, and the weak presentation of optimism at the close.

Some feminists would be quite satisfied with tagging "man" with blame for the world's problems, so perhaps that was the subtle intent of the author.

I can understand Daniel Quinn being hesitant to propose more than just a general outline for a solution to the apparent headlong race to self-destruction being pursued by humanity. Okay. But I felt our point of view character was on the verge of drifting off and abandoning his new resolve to do something, anything! positive with his recent spiritual growth.

Maybe that was Quinn's objective. To make the reader feel responsible and motivated to take action, instead of allowing the reader to simply be entertained. After all, a reader might not be haunted or thoughtful about the novel's ideas if the reader felt the protagonist was prepared to shoulder the burden of changing the world.

Part of my interest in your publication stemmed from your observations on culture and design aesthetics. I hope you will get back to some of those interests in future issues..."

*[[ There's no telling where TFF is heading. I feel like a man trapped in a roller-coaster akin to the famous one in Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom. Would you believe I'm enjoying the ride? ]]*

**Andy Sawyer, 1 The Flaxyard, Woodfall Lane, Little Neston, South Wirral, L64 4BT, UK: (11/08/93)** "...As a newcomer to the Net, still trying to find my way around and understand what I'm doing I must say I've got a lot of sympathy with Vinge's inter-civilizations communications network in A FIRE UPON THE DEEP. It seems to me that he was making a point about the ability of any communications system to revert to noise if those involved misunderstood what was going on. The technology may be available, but in the end Vinge is describing attempts at communication between different species, with very different assumptions."

**Derek Pickles, 44, Rooley Lane, Bankfoot, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD5 8LX, UK: (12/01/93)** "...Sharon Farber's medical films reminds me of the *colour* films that inductees were forced to watch during WW2. Gigantic close-ups of the worst effects of all known sexually transmitted diseases caused mass faintings. Squads of Medical Corps attendants flung the bodies on stretchers and carried them out of the theatre. Names were taken so that it

could be ensured that they would attend another showing of the programme. Unfortunately the films didn't work, I knew the City Council's Health Education Officer, who had served in North Africa and Italy as a Chief Nurse during WW2, and he told me that in both theatres of war there were more men in hospital with venereal diseases than wounds."

*[[ Empirical biological warfare! Fascinating! ]]*

**Alan Sullivan, 30 Ash Road, Stratford, London, E15 1HL, UK: (10/28/93)** "...Sharon Farber's "Designated Drinker" sounds original to say the least. The best our crowd managed was a "Professional Crasher". No, he didn't gate-crash parties - he went to parties and crashed out, in a variety of positions and places. He was formally known as "The Incredible Sleeping Man". We once got the chair he was in as far as the door before he woke up..." ■

**I was also very happy to hear (zines, locs, Christmas cards, etc.) from: Harry Andruschak, Jeff Behrnes, Sheryl Birkhead, "Black Hole", Robin Brunner, Peggy Burke, Ken Cheslin, Ron Clarke, Fred Cleaver, Buck Coulson, Isabel Craveiro, Chester D. Cuthbert, Bill Donaho, Kurt Erichsen, Ethel (the aardvark), Brad Foster, Lynn Garcia, Jenny Glover, Ian Gunn & Karen Pender-Gunn, Linda Hardy, Mark R. Harris, Teddy Harvia, John Hertz, Lynn Hickman, Greg Hills, Arthur Hlavaty, Andy Hooper, Alan Hunter, Terry Jeeves, Karl Johanson, C.F. Kennedy, Philippe Labelle, Tim Lane & Elizabeth Garrott, the LASFS, Roy Lavender, Robert Lichtman, Mark Manning, Lynn Margosian, Christian Martin, Michael McKenny, Linda Michaels & Joe Maraglino, Franz H. Miklis, Elizabeth Osborne, David Palter, Bruce Pelz, Peggy Ranson, Eunice Raymond, David Robinson, David L. Russell, Tom Sadler, Roy Schaffer, Ben Schilling, Ruth & Rickey Shields, Alexander Slate, Dale Speirs, Mark C. Stachiew, Alan Stewart, Mae Strelkov, Neil van Niekerk, Alexander Vasilkovsky, Keith Walker, "WARP", Jean Weber & Eric Lindsay, Laurie Yates & Bill Kunkel. ■**

