

## Cons warned: pay royalties or fade to black

The verdict is in and the news isn't good. Canadian conventions which display videotapes of movies or television programs are probably violating copyright law and likely to lose any court action alleging infringement of copyright. It's time to start investigating royalty agreements.

Last issue, MLR reported that a trio of Western Canadian conventions had engaged a legal firm to prepare a Memorandum on the question of Intellectual Prop-

erty law. One western convention (Con-Version in Calgary) was already paying royalties for showing videos, and representatives of NonCon, Keycon and V-con were worried about their legal status.

MLR has obtained a copy of the Memorandum, which concludes that "the activities of Non Con Ten and its sister non-profit societies would likely be found to be an infringement of the Copyright Act, if such an action were brought against them." Both film and TV are affected.

In the case of television, the Memorandum states, the landmark case (Sony Corp. of America vs Universal Studios Inc.) which has been widely interpreted as allowing the taping of TV shows, does not apply to conventions. The decision, it says, "has been read in such a way as to allow the taping of television programs for private home use. However, the decision cannot be extended to copies made for any other purpose."

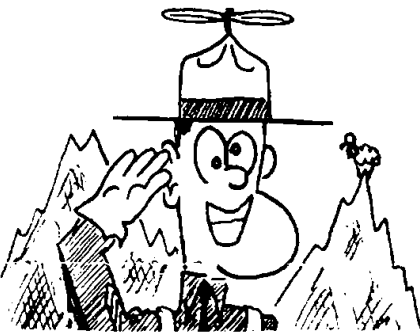
*continued on page 2*



NUMBER 2

November/December 1987

When I'm calling yoo-hoo-hah-hoo-ooo...



### PRIX BOREAL

Highlights of the 1987 Prix Boréal, as presented at Boréal 9 in Montréal:

Best Novel: Esther Rochon, *Coquillage*.

Best Short Story: three-way tie between Alain Bergeron, "Happy Birthday, Universe;" Jean Dion, "Une Chambre à l'Ouest;" Agnes Guitard, "Contre-courant."

Best Critic/Essayist: Norbert Spehner, for *Ecrits sur la fantastique*. (provided by Luc Pomerleau)

Oh, to be in the mountains, now that autumn's here. A newly formed society, with members across the northwest, intends to make Banff the Place To Be in October of 1989. That's when the International Speculative Future Society (ISFS) - a non-profit organisation registered in Alberta - plans to hold Banff International '89, a convention matching some of the biggest names in northwestern convention fandom with some of the most famous scenery in the world.

The convention grew out of an idea to hold a combined NonCon and Moscon in the mountains. (Moscon is the annual convention held in the university towns of Moscow, Idaho, and Pullman, Washington.) From this it has grown to the point where the convention committee features people who have worked on (among others) NonCon, V-Con, Moscon, Norwescon and Westercon.

As the scope of the convention has grown, so has its potential guest list. Vincent di Fate has been confirmed as Artist GoH, and Mike Glicksohn has accepted as Fan GoH. A well-know British writer is rumoured to be ready to accept as

Author GoH. Many other well-knowns are reportedly interested; Banff is one convention site known the world over.

The legendary scenery isn't all that attracted the people organising this con. "The reason we're doing this in Banff," says co-chair Deloris Booker with tongue not too firmly in cheek, "is that everyone just wants an excuse to go to the mountains. Besides, I hear beer is better at high altitude. The bubbles are bigger."

Certainly fun and games would appear to be a strong attraction for the veteran convention fans putting the con together. Hotel Liaison Ron Gillies says the Banff Park Lodge has been chosen as convention site; letters of intent may have been signed by the time this goes to press. Among other things, the hotel boasts a con suite with its own jacuzzi.

Because of the semi-isolated location, and the expense, this isn't going to be a convention for everybody. But there are limits to attendance: the hotel accommodates only 600. Pre-supporting memberships are already being taken; send \$10 for each to P.O. Box 964, Red Deer, AB T4N 1X0.

# CUFFed

The legendary Casperapa is back on its feet again after a several-years' absence. But CUFF, the much-maligned Canadian Unity Fan Fund, is still encountering difficulties as people try to revive it in time for Convention 8, at Keycon 5 in May.

Casperapa was started by Fran Skene nearly three years ago, when she chaired V-Con 14/Convention 6. It was intended to be a forum through which successive administrators of Convention could learn the ropes, as it were. The apa hasn't had much of an opportunity to fulfill that part of its mandate, but it has played an important role in the evolution of Convention. ~~It was as a result of input received~~ through the first three mailings that Convention and the Casper Awards took their present form. The revival of Casperapa can only be seen as a positive step for Canadian fandom.

The fourth issue, dated 19 November, 1987, contains a brief historical background to the apa; a series of letters dating back several years (the most recent seems to be one dated October, 1985); sample press releases and ballots; and an outline of the current status of CUFF.

There is one small question dogging CUFF, however: who is the Eastern administrator? Skene is running CUFF from the western half of the country. But Mike Glicksohn, named by Michael Wallis as Eastern admin, says he has never been approached to administer CUFF, and wouldn't have been able to had he been asked. It would appear that CUFF's attempted revival still has a few hurdles left to surpass.

~~Nevertheless, Skene promises a new issue of Casperapa for January. It could successfully be argued that if anybody can get CUFF back on its feet, this crew can.~~

## MLR

Published bi-monthly (more or less) by Drunken Dragon Press, Ink  
79 Karma Road, Unionville, Ontario  
L3R 4S8, CANADA. Editor: Michael  
Dennis Skeet.

Subscriptions available at C\$6.00 for six issues. Make cheques payable to Michael Skeet.

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## Royalties from page 1

The conventions placed their hopes in three arguments they hoped would persuade that cons are not in violation of copyright when they show videos: 1) That cons are non-profit; 2) that videos are not the primary attraction of a con; and 3) that a convention is a private, not a public place.

It was the latter argument that the cons felt was the strongest. Indeed, the first two are more or less irrelevant because copyright owners hold the exclusive right to allow performance under any circumstances, whether profit is involved or not.

But, while the Memorandum agrees that "the third argument has the most merit," the law firm ultimately finds it insubstantial. Cons are not private places, it says, because "a) The convention is held in a public place - in a hotel; b) The

event itself is advertised to the public at large; c) 'Membership' carries no benefits other than the right to attend at this specific convention; d) 'Membership' is not restricted; all members of the public are invited to become members of the convention, and have a right to attend the convention upon payment of the specified sum. For the above reasons, it is unlikely that a Court would find that convention is a private gathering."

The Memorandum advises conventions to contact copyright holders and arrange to pay royalties for all motion pictures and television shows intended for display at conventions.

Stuart Cooper, the Edmontonian who acted for the conventions, is disappointed with the results. "It's not what we'd been hoping to hear," he says.

Other con cons, now facing a clear and uncomfortable choice, no doubt agree.

## New sf anthology

*Tesseract Squared*, the second anthology of Canadian sf to be published by Victoria-based Porcépic Books, was launched in November with publication parties in three cities.

A follow-up to the critically respected *Tesseracts* (Judith Merrill, ed.), this most recent entry in what is hoped will be a long-running series was edited by Phyllis Godlieb and Douglas Barbour. It features fiction and poetry by some of the leading names in Canadian literature, and introduces more than a few promising talents.

The publication parties were held in Vancouver, Edmonton and Toronto. The Vancouver and Edmonton parties were held in bookstores; the Toronto launch was held at the Spaced Out Library.

T2 includes works by (among others) Margaret Atwood, William Gibson, Elisabeth Vonarburg, Andrew Weiner, Terence M. Green, Leon Rooke, Candace Jane Dorsey, Esther Rochon, Alain Bergeron and John Park. It features a cover painting by Jeff Kuipers, a member of Vancouver Island's Island Illustrators Society (the cover is the winning entry in a contest

## Press Porcépic

held by Porcépic Books).

The Toronto launch, attended by your editor, was virtually ignored by local fandom. (Vancouver's was apparently better attended, having been advertised in *Bcsfazine* as a signing.) The professional sf community was out in force, though, and a good time was had by all. Andrew Weiner was congratulated on the appearance of his first novel, *Station Gehenna*, while Terry Green was commiserated with for the continuing delays in the publication of *Barking Dogs*. Quebec was well-represented in Toronto, with Joël Champetier and editor Luc Pomerleau (*Solaris*) in attendance.

*Tesseract Squared* is published in trade paperback at \$9.95 (suggested) and should be available at your local sf bookstore. If your bookseller can't or won't obtain it, try writing directly to Porcépic Books, 560 Johnson Street #235, Victoria BC, V8W 3C6.

# WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

## NEWS 'N' STUFF FROM AROUND CANADIAN FANDOM...

### Vancouver

INAC rules in Vancouver! Steve Forty invites any and all fannish visitors to the west coast to drop in on F.R.E.D. any Friday. F.R.E.D. stands for F\*ck Reality, Enjoy Drinking, and is a long-standing Vancouver activity. Although not officially a BCSFA function, Steve says 90% of F.R.E.D. attendees are BCSFAns. The weekly parties are held in the Time Out Lounge of the Centennial Motor Hotel on Broadway, one block east of Oak. BCSFA itself continues to grow; the club is up to about 100 members, with 40% of them active according to Steve. F.R.E.D. is a big draw, and the club newsletter, Bcsfazine, also pulls newcomers. "Bcsfazine has never been late since I took it over," sez Steve proudly. The final financial statement for V-Con 15 has been released... the con made a profit in excess of \$3900. Since 1985, V-Cons have cleared over \$10,500. Yet, because of large losses in '83 and '84, it's only this year that WCSFCCA (pronounce it "Wisficca") has, in the words of WCSFCCA Pres Ed Beauregard, "reached the stage of having convention profits which were not already spoken for." The con has built up a \$4000 financial reserve, and plans to resume capital purchases (items such as art show, communications and computer equipment)... A rumour is circulating in Vancouver to the effect that the moribund relaxicon, Rain, may be revived. Nothing has come of this yet, and it remains an unsubstantiated - if fascinating - rumour...

### Calgary

For the third time in 11 years, NonCon will be held in Calgary in 1988. The bid headed by Phillip "Tempest" Liesmer edged out an Edmonton bid run by Howard Gibbons in the annual NonCon business meeting, held to amuse fans from other provinces who never have to wonder what city will host their next con. Liesmer's group will return the con to Calgary's Palliser Hotel... the Calgary group which normally organises Onocon for February has been displaced by the Winter Olympics, and is instead going to help out with a substitute relaxicon three

hours to the north - Edmonton's Noncon... the Con-Version fan group has organised something it calls the "Book of the Month Club." Members meet monthly to discuss a previously agreed-upon book. The club tries to concentrate on newer authors; Cliff Samuels calls it "a collective way of expanding experience."

It also helps to expand the guest list for Con-Version (something that shouldn't be too necessary - the con is now imposing a membership ceiling of 700)... Samuels says the group recently raffled a set of George Lucas-signed movie posters, raising \$320 for Calgary's children's hospital... Spider Robinson will be in Calgary in February to take part in the Olympics Arts Festival. He'll appear on an sf panel run by Dave Duncan, the Calgary-based author of Rose-Red City and Shadow. The Festival will also feature a fantasy panel moderated by another Calgary writer, J. Brian Clarke... MLR reported last ish that Pamela MacLean was involved in Philipp Liesmer's Non-Con bid. We have since been informed that our source for the story was in error.

### Edmonton

Final figures have yet to be drawn up, but MLR has learned that NonCon 10 lost money. The loss was not the result of a drop in attendance (attendance was actually up over the last two years) but rather a result of dramatically higher hotel costs... The annual NonCon business meeting produced the usual hard feelings... there was confusion and argument over the acceptability of proxy votes, which the Calgary bid had attempted to use in order to win next year's con. The proxies being judged out of order, the Calgary bid dragged its supporters from bed and when the complicated procedure was finally complete, Calgary won the right to hold NonCon 11... For the first time since January of 1983, ESFCAS will have to limp along without Kathleen Moore-Freeman as treasurer. The ebullient Ms Moore-Freeman and husband Philip plan to leave Alberta next summer... which will also deprive ESFCAS of a newsletter editor. Kathleen's been doing that job for the last several years as well... ESFCAS has been somewhat peripatetic of late: its long-standing meeting

room was snaffed up by another group at the University of Alberta, and the club has had to move its meetings from the H.M. Tory Building to the Students Union Building... Next year's ESFCAS elections (28 January/88) should prove, uh, interesting... There are three slates running: the Asylum Slate; the Coherent Slate; and the Malevolent Dictators. The latter group is making its second attempt to place a stuffed dragon into ESFCAS office... ESFOG, the other Edmonton fan group, continues to meet Friday nights at Chickey's lounge. Crowds of 30+ are not uncommon... The rumour mill has it that Robert Runte and Mike Hall are returning to convention fandom. Together with Steve Fahnestalk, they're reported to be organising a con for the summer of '89. The con will be modelled on Sercon, and should be VERY interesting; the time is ripe for a return to serious sf cons...

### Winnipeg

Star Trek Winnipeg has had a successful fall social season. The Open House on 15 September was termed a great success by club president Greta Young, who says 200 people turned up. From that crowd, the club gained 10 new members, people who had never heard of STW before. Young credits local radio and TV coverage for the successful turnout... A similar success is reported for the club's annual Halloween Social. Despite the substantial turnout, Young says the annual bash raises little money for STW; most cash comes from membership fees... A talent night on 20 October gave club members a chance to strut their stuff; the November meeting was a come-dressed-as-a-superhero theme night... and the club is preparing for its annual Christmas party and gift exchange... Anyone getting the impression STW is primarily a social club wouldn't be far off the mark, says Young... Despite the fact that the club is one of the co-sponsors of Keycon (and therefore of next year's Convention), Young says STW has nothing special planned for Convention... Likewise he says that, despite STW's large size, the club has no desire to effect a leadership role in any national grouping of ST clubs. "We're primarily a local group,"

he says. "We formed in isolation; we haven't really had a lot to do with other groups. To start a new group like that would take a lot of effort. I have my reservations."

## Toronto

The success of a parodic theatrical staged at Ad Astra 7 by members of Star Trek Toronto has spawned a fully fledged amateur theatrical group, the Toronto Trek Players. TTP has a two-play "season" planned for 1988... Ad Astra 8 will be the venue for "Star Trek: The Musical," described as "a comedy spoof of *The Search for Spock* with a few surprises." (No comment.) Two months later, TTP will present "Star Trek: The Motion Sickness" at Toronto Trek Celebration 2... Auditions for STtM will take place 30 Jan./88 at the Spaced Out Library, and rehearsals will begin in mid-Feb. STtMS has auditions 26 Mar./88, in the Auditorium of Boys and Girls House, which, like SOL, is at 40 St. George St. in Toronto... For further info, the address listed is "P.O. Box 21," presumably Toronto, though no postal code is given. Locals might try calling Carole Mallett, or attending STToronto meetings at SOL... The second issue of *TORUS*, a new genzine, was published in October. The Kamikaze Editorial Collective (Keith Soltys, Lloyd Penney, Michael Wallis) is again responsible, with assistance from your correspondent... Two Toronto-based apas celebrated birthdays in '87. Both The Final Frontier and TAPA are seven years old; TFF, though with fewer issues (it's a bi-monthly), is marginally the eldest. TFF, by the way, has just changed CMs. New dictator is local comix publishing tycoon Paul Stockton; former CM Keith Soltys has left the apa... Preliminary reports suggest interest (both local and international) is high in Ditto, the fanzine con slated for next summer in Toronto... The Spaced Out Library will join other Toronto library branches in closing on 10 Dec. to protest the federal government's proposed Bill C-54, the draconian and generally silly anti-pornography bill.

## Ottawa

The Ottawa University Science Fiction Festival (30 November-4 December) was reportedly a success... Highlights included a reading by Esther Rochon (30 Nov.); Judith Merrill speaking on "SF as a rehearsal for social change" (30 Nov.); a panel on fantasy writing featuring

Charles de Lint (Dec. 1); a panel on Europe's SF "bandes dessinées" with artist Paul Roux (Dec. 2); Robert O'Riordan and Elisabeth Vonarburg reading from and discussing their works (Dec. 3)... the Ottawa Science Fiction Society (OSFS) has been hit with a mini-controversy over the subject of Honorary Memberships in the club. The issue revolves around two questions: the impact on OSFS' reputation of the handing out of memberships to Big Names; and the cost of mailing the OSFS Statement to these honorary members... and even the cost (in money terms) is being argued about. A motion proposing a solution to the problem has been postponed until January... Michael McKenny says that the first issue of *Bardic Runes*, his (celtic) fantasy fiction zine, has been delayed. The problem is a shortage of submissions; send yours to Michael at 90 Willow St. #305, Ottawa ON K1R 6W1. Projected appearance of the first ish is now 1 May/88... Joe Casey has announced a new con for Ottawa. "Pinecone" (yeech) is to take place in mid-October/88 (see con listings elsewhere). Joe envisions it as more literary in orientation than Maplecon, but stresses he does not intend Piney to compete with Maple. He continues to work on the Maplecon com...

## Quebec

Sometimes it helps to have a con run by a completely new committee each time out. No sooner had Boréal 9 finished than Elisabeth Vonarburg, coordonnatrice of Boréal 10, sent out a letter to potential members outlining programming proposals for the tenth anniversary con, to be held in Chicoutimi in June, 1988.

Vonarburg is trying something new for '88: a two-day colloquium to be held before the con itself. In her letter, Vonarburg warns that there may be so much quality programming in this academic meeting that it may have to stretch over to Saturday morning; it's currently planned to run Thursday and Friday. The programming is wonderfully sercon: where else would you find a presentation by a representative from France's Grenoble University on "The mythic image of the woman in the québécois feminist sf novel?" And that's just one of some two-dozen presentations, which Vonarburg wants to hold to 20 minutes each in order to allow time for follow-up group discussions... Boréal 9, meanwhile, ran a small deficit. Luc Pomerleau says a benefit evening held in Montréal for the con attracted a good turnout... Boréal 9 had 105 registered, which is par for the con... Philippe Gauthier and Claude J. Pelletier released *Samizdat 9* at Boréal, which proves that reports of the fanzine's death had been greatly exaggerated... Pelletier, meanwhile, is editor-in-chief of *Protoculture Addicts* - a bilingual Robotech fanzine. The first issue has just been released; write Les Éditions Janus, 20 ch. Du Mistral, Îles Laval, Laval QC, H7Y 1S1 for details... *Imagine*, meanwhile, has altered its production schedule. Once bimonthly, the magazine is now a quarterly... The latest *Solaris* should be in mailboxes shortly... Luc Pomerleau says 1987 was a good year for SFQ, at least as far as the short fiction published in *Solaris* and *Imagine* is concerned. Not that many novels were published this year...

## About this issue

What happened to October? Good question. Actually, it's just that I was so busy travelling during October that I never quite got around to starting work on this issue until we were already well into November. I don't regret the travel, and I hope that you don't resent the delay in this issue's appearance.

I think I'm finally coming to grips with the publishing software I purchased for MLR, and so the horrid print quality of Number 1 should be a thing of the past as of this issue. My thanx to those

of you who were too tasteful to make negative remarks on what must have been a source of incredible eyestrain. (Be thankful I didn't send a copy to Harry Warner. It could have put him out of the fanzine business permanently.)

Some of you will notice a green dot (or blob, if I'm less than careful) on the mailing label. This is your final warning. If I don't hear from you (money or comment; make cheques payable to Michael Skeet) by the time Number 3 is ready for mailing, you're off the list.

# CONVENTIONS

**No-No Con '88:** Feb. 12-14, 1988, at the Regency Hotel, 7230 Argyll Road, Edmonton AB. This is the time at which Calgary's Ono-Con relaxicon is usually held. It's also the time of the 1988 Winter Olympic Games (name used by permission) in Calgary. So this con is subbing. A relaxicon in Edmonton in February? Barmy. Memberships \$8 to 15 Dec., \$11 to 5 Feb./88, \$14 thereafter. c/o Kathleen Moore-Freeman, 10832 69 Ave. Edmonton AB T6H 2E2.

**Willcon IV:** Mar. 12, 1988 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. at Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo ON. Author GoH S.M. Sterling. Artist GoH: Kevin Davies. FanGoHs: Lloyd & Yvonne Penney. Memberships \$3 pre-reg, \$4.98 at the door. c/o Dennis Mullin 69 Donald St. #6, Kitchener, ON N2B 3G6.

**Halcon:** Held in late March in 1987. No information received on 1988.

**S.T. Con '88:** April 8-10, 1988, at the Marlborough Inn, 1316 33 St. NE, Calgary AB. A first-time Trek con. GoHs: Bjo Trimble, Sonni Cooper, Diane Carey, Gregory Brodeur, Ralph Cooper, John Trimble. Memberships \$20 to 31 Dec., \$25 to 31 March/88, \$30 at door (\$15 per day). c/o Anthony Demers, 3223 83 St. NW #38, Calgary AB T3B 2P9.

**Valleycon:** May 13-15, 1988, at Cornwall Civic Complex & Convention Centre, Cornwall ON. GoH: Poul Anderson. ArtGoH: Guy Frechette. Special GoH: Gary Gygax. FanGoH: T. James Blakely. Memberships \$12 to 31 Dec., \$15 to 31 Mar./88, \$20 at door. c/o Box 1576, Cornwall ON K6H 5V6.

**Keycon 5/Convention 5:** May 20-22, 1988, at the Holiday Inn Downtown, Winnipeg MB. GoH: Gene Wolfe. GoH: Charles DeLint. ArtGoH: Kevin Davies. FanGoH: Fran Skene. The fifth Canadian national con; we must be doin' somethin' right. CASPERS rule OK! Memberships \$20/US\$17 to ?, \$25 at door. Supporting membership (CASPER voting) \$5. c/o WINSFA, Box 3178 Winnipeg MB R3C 4E6.

**V-Con 16:** May 27-29, 1988, at Gage Residence, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC. Theme: "The Science in Science Fiction." GoH: Hal Clement. TM: James P. Hogan. Also featuring "Mr. Science." Memberships \$18/US\$14 to 31 March/88, \$20/US\$16 to 16 May/88 (postmarked). c/o Box 48478 Bentall Station, Vancouver BC V7X 1A2.

**Ad Astra 8:** June 10-12, 1988, at the Holiday Inn Airport, 970 Dixon Rd., Toronto ON. GoH: Orson Scott Card. GoH: R.A. MacAvoy. FanGoH: Fran Skene. Special GoH: Taral. Memberships, \$20 to 15 May/88, \$25 thereafter and at door. c/o Box 7276, Station A, Toronto ON M5W 1X9.

**Boreal 10:** June 16-19, 1988, at l'Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, Chicoutimi QC. Possibly the most sercon convention in Canada, this 10th-anniversary of the Québec national con has issued a special invitation to anglofans. Memberships \$15-\$25. Special room rates, bus fares available. c/o Elisabeth Vonarburg, 266 Belleau, Chicoutimi QC G7H 2Y8.

**Con-Version 5:** July 22-24, 1988, at the Carriage House Inn, Calgary AB. GoH: Robert Silverberg. TM: Ed Bryant. FanGoH: Jon Gustafson. Special GoHs: L. Sprague & Catherine Crook de Camp. Memberships, \$15/US\$12 to 1 July/88, \$20/US\$15 thereafter and at door. c/o Box 1088, Station M, Calgary AB T2P 2K9.

**Maplecon 10:** July 28-Aug. 1, 1988 at Carlton University, Ottawa ON. GoH: Alan Dean Foster. GoH: Diane Carey. FanGoH: Michael Wallis. Further info c/o Box 3156 Station D, Ottawa ON K1P 6H7.

**Ditto:** July 28-31, 1988, at the Bond Place Hotel, 65 Dundas St. E, Toronto ON. Fanzine fans con, patterned on Corflu. Memberships \$20/US\$15. c/o Mike Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Ave. Toronto ON M6S 3L6.

**Toronto Trek Celebration 2:** Aug. 12-14, 1988, at the Ramada 400/401 Hotel, Toronto ON. GoHs: Diane Duane & Peter Morwood. FanGoH: Shirley Malewski. Info address TBA.

**NonCon 11:** October 7-9, 1988, at the Palliser Hotel in Calgary, AB. No other info available at press time.

**Pinecone:** October 14-15, 1988, in Ottawa, ON. Location TBA. GoH: Barry Longyear. GoH: Emma Bull. GoH: Will Shetterly. FanGoHs: Lloyd & Yvonne Penney. Membership info TBA. SASE to Pinecone c/o 1220 Merivale Rd. #908, Ottawa ON K1Z 8P2

# LETTERS

Garth Spencer  
3467 Quebec St.  
Vancouver, BC V5V 3J9

Halfway through your editorial I felt like saying "Michael. I do not appreciate being lied about; nor yet being lied to. Two things I do not forgive. But when people lie about me to my face, that's ridiculous!" I'm going to correct you on some points.

You talk about a statement of principles, and about NCF, and about Maple Leaf Rag, and about me. "Crusading," *bullshit*, Michael!

I saw fans shooting themselves in the foot - in person, and by report. Either they were fukking up each other, and their fan activities, because they simply weren't aware of good procedures for the activities - or if they knew a little, they were content with it, wouldn't ask for or give any information. They wouldn't communicate.

I saw my friends in town, powerless to defend their reputations, their credibility, even their credit ratings if things had gone that far - because mundanes had to lump my friends in with "fans" - including the certifiable schizophrenics, with delusions of grandeur and the whole bit, who happened to be mediafans trying to put on a preposterously grandiose con in our small town.

Now, for personal reasons I won't go into, my friends became my adopted family (I didn't know this myself), and by extension any fans I corresponded with were my adoptive friends. And I wanted to protect my friends from this CRAP I saw happening.

On the one hand, there was this general tendency of fans not to know what standard practice to refer to, how to get things done, what could and could not be accomplished. I tried to offer information on that, not my own by the way, and insist that people look at it and find out what could do, or how to do it. Well, I failed. You call that crusading?

On the other hand, there was the other general tendency for people not to take sufficient care of their business, not to pay attention. "It's only fandom, it can't matter that much, let's party." (I found myself repeating this one point over and over, saying with clubs and cons and zines you gotta take care of all the god-

dam details, but for four years?! How long do I have to repeat myself? What was I doing wrong, for Christ's sake?) Evidently it isn't the Fannish Thing To Do to follow this simple direction. Or, to put it another way, I was projecting my trip onto to everyone else; or maybe no-one understood what I wrote. The bugger of it is, *nothing has changed*.

You call that crusading, Michael? Now I ask you. "Crusading" means "You don't have to be taken seriously and I don't have to listen to you," doesn't it?

*(No, it doesn't. My OED defines "Crusade" as a "vigorous movement against poverty-etc." - the etc. in this case being ignorance. The one word that always seemed to apply to your (and through you, MLR's) attitude toward fan-nish ignorance was vigorous opposition, so "crusading" seemed to me a particularly apt word. And if "crusading" has any pejorative connotation, that has to do with a vigorous movement doomed to failure. And you yourself have admitted, at tedious length, that you failed. I never suggested that what you did should not be taken seriously; I was one of those who applauded your Casper win. I may take that applause back, now. I am very upset with your implication that I am a liar. I may not take fandom all that seriously, but I do value my reputation, and you have besmirched it with your letter. Calling you a crusader in no way contradicts the truth. It shouldn't even be taken as insulting - except by somebody incredibly thin-skinned.)*

Heather Ashby  
444 Victoria Rd. #401  
Guelph (excuse me) ON N1E 5J8

Nice to see a Canadian newzine that isn't more-anguished-than-thou. The Rag always made me feel guilty before I started. MLR makes me feel cheery, until I realise that Guelph ("excuse me") has no fan news to give you. We will try to provide some for you (short of getting arrested), but it may take some time. Is there anything you'd like us to do? (She asked innocently, batting her eyelashes.)

Ellisabeth Vonarburg  
266 Belleau  
Chicoutimi (Q) G7H 2Y8

Diving into the mail accumulated on my desk (a metre thick) I found the last MLR, a letter from Garth telling me the

good news (your picking up MLR) and the letter inspired by my own letter to Ad Astra. I just hope this thing won't trigger any anti-francophone feelings among the fans (aggravated by the creeping anti-feminism always ready to lift its head in this predominantly male-adolescent milieu. (Uh, sorry; I had a loadful of it at Conspiracy in Brighton.)

Anyway. Nice "mise en page," but the lines are blurred and it would be a pain to read for more than three or four pages... either use larger type or look out for the quality of the copies. I regret your decision not to have any writer-oriented news; seems to me that many "active fans" are would-be writers and would be interested in knowing what is going on in Canada and the States without having to subscribe to foreign magazines like *Locus* et al...

I also hope you will welcome any kind of news, among which who has published or will publish what in Canada is important. I know this is one of the differences between anglo and franco-fans, but I do think that without writers there would not be any sf and related fandom.

*(As you'll have noticed from the Tesseracts arkle in this issue, I am not averse to printing Canadian publishing news when I get it. In fact, I agree that it's important that we know of Canadian publications. But while your point about writer-oriented news is well taken, I just don't believe that MLR is the place for publishing U.S. market news. Canadian markets are a different story, of course.)*

Leslie Williams  
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MLR looks well put-together and well written. I'm looking forward to seeing more issues (if I may). I like your idea of making MLR a newsletter rather than a forum: crusading, I agree, is much too wearing, and really doesn't accomplish much.

Regarding the video copyright, Con-Version did look into trying to get around it before going ahead and paying for it, and we now pay the fees because of what we discovered. It is for that reason that we declined to participate in the inquiry. By paying for it, we get what we want, in clean copies (not sixth-generation television tapes), and can concentrate on quality, not quantity. Probably the best bet for getting around

this legislation is lobbying, as I believe the copyright laws are fairly rigid and comprehensive.

*(It has already been suggested that one result of this legal opinion will be a return to the older, more structured "film" rooms of cons gone by. This isn't necessarily a bad thing.)*

The Starwolf  
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Relying on NCF to keep Canadian fans together is not a very good idea. While NCF has some very good points to it, a reliable publication schedule is certainly not one of them.

You are, of course, the editor, and your ideas of what MLR can/should be (or right to such ideas) will be respected from this quarter. But as editor of a similar amateur publication for some years (the O.S.F.S. newsletter), I've found that having feedback was important, so a small letters column might not be out of place. Also, while your current format looks very professional and marvelously organised, many of the O.S.F.S. enjoyed having their material appear "as is" (albeit sometimes ever so slightly cleaned up for legibility). You may lose out some of that source of material. But I gather you're not really interested in it to begin with. Information, however, comes in many forms and from many sources. Closing yourself off from some may not be to the best advantage. Think it over.

I agree with Linda (hi!); it is a bad idea to do *anything* which will draw regulatory bodies' awareness of you. A U.S. dealer trying to smuggle material into the Canada, and the subsequent RCMP raid on Maplecon III is directly responsible for the establishment of a sales tax on the previously exempt comics. The government was made aware of money to be made in that area because of the case, and so promptly slapped duty/tax which we've had to live with ever since.

In this way, bringing the case of copyrights as they apply to cons may only result in governmental agencies getting in on that bandwagon and making life even more miserable for consoms everywhere. This is one instance where the old saw of "don't rock the boat" holds most definitely true. And a pox on Keycon, NonCon and V-Con for not following that dictum.

If tariffs/fines/fees wind up being charged as a result of this case, will these people be willing to shell out that sum to other consoms to make up for the problems they have caused?

*(What a preposterous suggestion. Cons which choose not to pay royalties are in violation of copyright. They always have been. The only difference now is that they've been told in no uncertain terms, and no longer have even the flimsy excuse of ignorance. Your "don't rock the boat" urging comes a little bit late; because Con-Version is already paying royalties, the boat has more than a few leaks in it. Rocking won't alter the fact that it's sinking. Your condemnation of the three western cons is therefore inappropriate; they were presented with a fait accompli by Con-Version, and took the action they did only because it seemed apparent they could no longer count on being ignored by the copyright holders. Your kind comments about layout are appreciated. Nowhere in MLR I did I suggest I would not have a lettercol; there were no letters in that issue because it was the first. As for contributed material appearing "as is" - the patchwork-quilt layout that results is one of the things I like least about zines like the Statement and BCSFAzine. I realise that circumstances often make this approach necessary for clubzines, but that doesn't make it any less difficult to read. I maintain that anything worth printing is worth printing as competently as possible. I can't conceive of anyone withholding an article because I wanted to retype and edit it.)*

Donna McMahon  
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Just had to drop you a quick letter to let you know that I finally got around to reading MLR (sorry I hadn't read it before I saw you at Moscon) and I LOVE the new format. It is short and sweet, but very informative and the selection of articles was excellent. Frankly, although I admired Garth's dedication in compiling such long issues, with all the material that I have piled up to read, something two or three sheets long is about as much as I have the time or inclination to plow through.

Next time I see you at a con I would be happy to sit down and argue about what an "active" fan is and how many of them

there are in Canada - put it on your agenda for late-night smoffing.

I was trying to think if I knew of any news from around Vancouver that doesn't strictly fall into the area of gossip, but not much has happened (newswise). Although it's pretty old now, Vancouverites are still rather pleased that Spider and Jeanne have moved here, joining Bill Gibson, Michael Coney, Eileen Kernaghan and Crawford Killian to give us an impressive array of west coast talent.

Keep up the good work - this incarnation of MLR is the best ever.

Allan Burrows  
320 Maple Grove Ave.  
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On p. 4 you state that few Canadian fans "...could be considered 'active' in any real sense..." By what criteria do you judge a fan's "activeness?" Do you require a subscriber to be "active" in order to remain on your subscription list? In the past, I have obtained most of my news from Garth Spencer's *Maple Leaf Rag*. I was occasionally able to supply him with bits and pieces of news as we lived in very different regions of the country. You and I live in the same region, in fact almost in the same city. It is obvious that I can never supply you with news items. In fact, of the nine items in MLR #1, I was previously aware of not one of them. Whatever you may require of your readers, I earnestly hope that you do not require news item submissions!

*(You may rest assured, Allan. All I really want from my readers is some form of response, be it fiscal or epistolary. Your apa and loccing activity certainly qualifies you as "active" - an active fan to me is anyone who goes beyond mere attendance at cons or club meetings, who writes for or pubs or locs zines, or who organises club activities or works on cons. I'm looking for the three to five per cent who traditionally take an active part in things instead of just following.)*

We also heard from: Robert Runte (thanx for the kind words and enthusiasm); Luc Pomerleau; Chester Cuthbert; Michael McKenny; and a refreshing number of people who just sent cheques.

We conspicuously did not hear from: Michael Wallis, Keith Soltys, Lloyd Penney; Steve Forty; and anybody in Edmonton. I'm miffed.

# Why bigger is not necessarily better

The final figures are not yet in, but it is apparent that, for the first time in its ten-year history, Alberta's NonCon has lost money. The loss may not be that severe, but it remains a come-down for a con that has always made money.

NonCon 10 did not go into the hole because the Chair, Jane Starr, mismanaged in any way. In fact, the con was well-enough promoted to draw a higher attendance than either of the previous two years. It was well-run; the various money-earning elements of the convention pulled their weight. (If my experience was any indication, the con suite earned more than its share through beer sales.)

The income earned, however, could in no way offset the awesomely high cost of running the con. And the high cost is almost totally the result of the con's choice of hotel.

This is in no way meant to be considered an attack on NonCon or the people who ran NonCon 10. But the story of this convention serves well to illustrate a point that has become especially pertinent at a time when cons like Boskone are threatening to get out of control: a con that over-reaches itself is a con riding for a fall.

NonCon has been held in Edmonton four times since 1981. The first three cons were held at the Regency, a smallish hotel on the Edmonton outskirts. The

Regency wasn't the biggest or the fanciest of hotels, but its prices were the best in town. And for each of the three Thanksgiving weekends sf fans flocked to it, NonCon was the only game of any consequence at the Regency.

This wasn't enough for some people. It was alleged that the Regency hadn't been up to the task of hosting an sf con. A number of people complained vociferously about food service. And some charged that the hotel's function space was insufficient. So for its fourth Edmonton con of the '80s, NonCon returned to the Edmonton Inn, home of NonCons 2 and 3.

The Edmonton Inn has undergone considerable changes since 1980. And it costs considerably more than it used to. The bill NonCon 10 paid for function space at the Edmonton Inn was apparently 10 times that charged by the Regency the year before. It's hard not to figure out where last year's profits went.

And what did NonCon gain from its swank new surroundings? A few people who mightn't have gone had it been held again at the Regency. A lot of unnecessary confusion as people tried to find function space scattered all over the spread-out ground floor of the hotel's multiple wings. Oh, and the banquet was better than anything the Regency has ever prepared.

It is to be hoped that the handful who complained so bitterly about the Regen-

cy's food enjoyed themselves at the NonCon 10 banquet. Yes, the food was better. But the cost was so high that almost nobody could be persuaded to go. The banquet was a money-loser.

Last year at the Regency, the staff dressed in silly, sci-fi costumes. They made an earnest effort to make the fans feel at home. The hotel earned every penny of its paltry fee.

By comparison, the staff at the Edmonton Inn treated us with a cool, professional courtesy that suggested that "aberrant" was about as polite a thing as you could say about us. Nothing they *did* could be considered unpleasant. But there was plenty they *didn't* do that made the con a less-than-thrilling place to be.

There is simply no need for sf conventions to entertain grandiose dreams of magniloquence. There is nothing to be gained by grasping for a larger attendance or flashier surroundings. In fact, recent evidence seems to suggest that the bigger cons get, the less fun they become. So why waste energy and money pursuing a wasteful goal? The con of the future - Con-Version is an example - is the con that knows how much it can handle and puts an intelligent limit on what it attempts.

The fun is what matters. Few fans need luxurious surroundings or a cast of thousands in order to enjoy themselves.

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