



The Frozen Frog

Issue #6

Released in March 1993



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Thanks to all.

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 4 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 1\$ per copy for the moment (\$1.50 outside of North America).

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Editorial

This issue is a deliberate attempt to do justice to your wonderful locs. As usual, you sent enough material to fill about 40 pages of TFF. So the very attempt will also be a kind of demonstration *ab absurdo* of the impossibility to succeed. Once this is clearly established, maybe I'll stop agonizing so much over whose letter and what issues will have to be left behind for the IAHFs. I'll also make use of a few topical illustrations that are rapidly becoming obsolete and may need explanations for some of you. I'd hate to let them go to waste....

Since the readers of TFF are by now well-acquainted with Ginette's sister Sylvie and her husband Michel, the ones who went to Peru for a few years, they will probably be glad to learn that their family has acquired a third member. His name is Alexandre, and he comes from Russia.



For obscure medical reasons, Sylvie and Michel can't have babies of their own (just as Ginette and I, for

that matter). So they resolved to try their luck with international adoption. They tried first for a Chinese baby, because they were given to understand that those were looking at a somewhat bleaker future than the babies of most other countries. But while they were waiting for due process, Russia signed an agreement allowing its babies to be adopted outside of the country. Michel & Sylvie presented a request and in less than three months, everything was over and the child already here. Alexandre is a wonderful boy nearing two and a half. He is easy on his unexperienced parents and is in perfect health, though very myopic. They were told that, because he is of Gypsy origin, with darker shade of skin and dark hair, his prospects of being adopted in Russia were less than average. "Their loss and our gain", his new parents are now thinking. Alexandre is also reacting very well to the change. Michel told me that after one day short of three months in Quebec, he suddenly stopped speaking Russian and adopted French definitively. Say Hi to everybody Alexandre.

I didn't ask Philippe Labelle what was the inspiration for this issue's cover illustration, but it is a fact that this year's hockey season is a cause for deep satisfaction here in Quebec City. After more than five years at the bottom of the National Hockey League's totem pole, Quebec's Nordiques have made a spectacular recovery and are now winning a lot more games than they are losing. I had almost forgotten how profoundly satisfying it is to watch your home team play and win consistently, with spectacular sequences in virtually every match. And we owe it all to Eric Lindros. Thanks Eric!

For those who live too far to care about hockey, I should explain that according to the rules of the NHL, the Nordiques were entitled to take their pick among the new and promising rookies last year. First on anybody's list, was Eric Lindros, 18 years old, 6'6", talented, natural scorer in the minor leagues, etc. He was a living promise of better days for the team. Except that he flatly refused to come to Quebec City. His reasons were never clearly expressed but their very obscurity fed

speculation and he was suspected of the darkest motives. And he was adamant to the point of skipping an entire season when the Nordiques refused to exchange him.

This year, the Nordiques, having made their point, were willing to part with the troublemaker. Philadelphia offered no less than five young and talented players, two first-choice picks for later rounds and \$15 million dollars for him. They got him and now have to pay

his multi-million dollars contract negotiated before he ever put on his skates for his first NHL match. But the Nordiques got a whole new team out of the deal. A new gestalt of talent and enthusiasm that catapulted it to the top of the scores. Even players who didn't do so well last year are now outdoing themselves. A whole new team I say. Meanwhile, Eric Lindros is not doing so well. He is obviously talented, but he put much pressure on himself when he negotiated his golden contract. He is also facing charges for having insulted a lady in a bar and having spat beer in her face. Frankly, I'm no longer disappointed he refused to come here.

The first time Philadelphia came to visit the Nordiques this season, that is, Lindros' first appearance on Quebec City's ice, the hockey world was expecting some kind of partisan trouble. Reporters from all over North America came to witness the events. This is usually a kind of no win situation. If the partisans do nothing, they don't get to vent their frustration and they end up looking like whimps. If they boo the insulting player, they end up looking like juvenile resentful jocks incapable to distinguish between the trivial and the important. Under

the leadership of a local radio station, the crowd went instead for making fun of Lindros' kiddish tantrums: They brought baby nipples and sucked noisily whenever he appeared on the ice, and such. The reporters were disappointed but the partisans got their point across without disgracing themselves too much.

All in all, exchanging Lindros was a very good deal for the Nordiques. ■



I got this one after complaining I was getting much more "Frogsicles" than "Frog princes".

Book Reviews

Giants and Dwarfs - Essays 1960-1990

Allan Bloom

Touchstone - Simon & Schuster, 1990, 395 pp, \$11.00
US, ISBN 0-671-74726-6

a book review by Benoit Girard

Allan Bloom burst upon the scene in 1987 with his controversial best-seller The Closing of the American Mind. The book was a clear-eyed defence and illustration of the Western intellectual tradition of political philosophy and an exhortation to read and benefit from its great works: Plato, Shakespeare, Rousseau, etc.

Then, to its author's surprise, the book was violently attacked by the Academic Left and as a consequence propelled to the rank of a best-seller.

The Left accused Bloom of being elitist and Europeano-centrist, of not making room enough for other cultural traditions and, generally, of all the sins of those who have not yet understood the requirements of today's political correctness. In a word, Bloom was thoroughly crucified!

And now he publishes an innocent collection of essays selected from his writings of the last thirty years. There are essays on books: Swift, of course, who gives its title to the collection, Shakespeare, Socrates and Rousseau; essays on his own teachers: Leo Strauss, Raymond Aron and Alexandre Kojève; and finally a section entitled *The Fate of Books in Our Time*, where are found, among others, essays on *Commerce and "Culture"*, *The Study of Texts* and *The Democratization of the University*. All good and proper, a continuation of his earlier thrust...

But wait, there is also an introductory essay entitled *Western Civ* which is an address delivered at Harvard University on December 7, 1988, and a response to the detractors of Closing. This essay makes clear that he does not intend to simply ignore the opposition. So, is

this book really as innocent as it looks?... But the full course of Bloom's counterattack is very subtly presented.

First, as he always was a supporter of the great books, he gives some examples of what is to be found in them. His analyses are penetrating and refreshing even when he deals with books you could think you are familiar with. You can't help but wonder where he gets all these riches from. Then, his very analytical prowess becomes a game of sorts as he publishes two short Socratic Dialogues in extenso before analyzing them. Each time, his interpretation digs up much more than this reader could, unaided. The experience is enlightening.

When he has you really wondering about his ability, he obliquely hints at its origin while dealing with Leo Strauss: Essentially, the texts cannot be understood from the point of view (the categories) of contemporary scholarship. We must rediscover the Ancients' worldview before we can understand them. Leo Strauss has devoted his life to this task, working backward, developing an understanding of the Ancients with the aid of their later commentators, and so on until he felt confident enough to interpret Socrates himself. The interpretations in the present book are the final products of this approach, Bloom having benefited from Leo Strauss's teachings.

Bloom then tells us how to go about analyzing a text. It is a demanding process requiring a careful attention to the details which are usually overlooked, where one can usually find the key to some important divergence between the Modern and the Ancient mental sets. It also requires, for instance, that you learn Ancient Greek before trying to analyse Plato, as the translators are not always reliable. (This, admittedly, is not easily within reach for most of us, even if Gene Wolfe, for instance, did precisely that, in a few months of private lessons, in order to write his series *Soldier in the Mist - Soldier of Arete*.) Elsewhere, Bloom tells us that the great writers know each other and call on each other through the centuries. One should let a book be the guide to another one and so on until he has come full circle.

The next logical step, for an alert reader, is to apply the method to the very book he is reading. It then dawns on him that this book constitutes not only a subtle guide to the methodology of intellectual work and an oblique introduction to the great books, but also a very precise and circumstanced refutation of the opposition expressed to The Closing of the American Mind. This way, all the essays are seen as forming a seamless whole, where nothing is left to chance and where every text

has a part to play. Just as the author tells us a Socratic Dialogue should be read.

The reader then comes to realize that this subtle demonstration also act as a kind of filter. If the opposition is too firmly entrenched in its preconceived ideas, it is most likely to miss the point. And if it gets it, that is proof it is no longer as staunch an opposition as it once was, since it is using Bloom's method.

All in all, a great book in itself. Intellectually satisfying as well as inspiring in its breadth. ■

Other Reviews

Henryk Górecki
Symphony No. 3

Classical CD discovery of the month. This is probably the most moving piece of music I've ever heard. In spite of its "symphony" designation, it is more akin to a Requiem or yet a Stabat Mater. It is subtitled *Symphony of sorrowful Songs*. Each of its three movements is *lento* and written for orchestra and a single soprano voice.

The musical inspiration comes from traditional Polish themes blended with Orthodox religious ones. The words are taken from widely differing sources: A 15th-century Polish prayer entitled *The Holy Cross Lament*, for the first movement; a folk song where a mother laments her son's death in battle, for the third movement; and, most poignantly, a "prayer inscribed on wall 3 of cell no. 3 in the basement of "Palace", the Gestapo's headquarters in Zakopane which reads

No, Mother, do not weep.
Most chaste Queen of Heaven
Support me always.
"Zdrowas Mario." (Ave Maria)

Beneath is the signature of Helena Wanda Blazusiakówna, and the words "18 years old, imprisoned since 26 September 1944". ■

The Frozen Frog

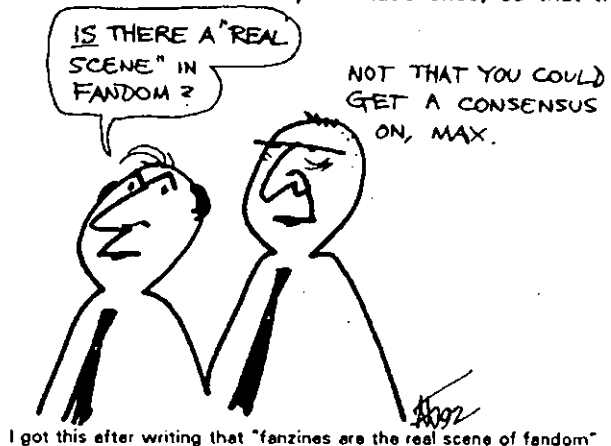
The Mail

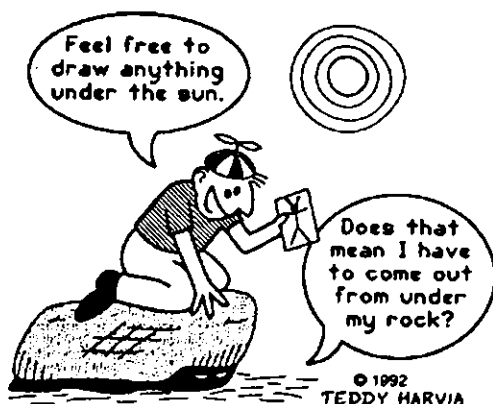
Buck Coulson, 2677W-500N, Hartford City, IN 47348 USA: (12/30/92) "...I've seen most, though not all, of the other bad covers mentioned, and I'll stick with mine, though the Gor covers are pretty bad. (On the other hand, Juanita and I have an original cover painting for *Transvestite of Gore*, from "Raw Books", that we and most of our guests find hilarious.)

Since I didn't go to Magicon, I can't comment on your account of it, except to say that if I'd been there, my days would have been spent in the huckster room, and my nights in parties. // *We would have met often - Ben.]]*

I haven't the vaguest idea why the universe exists, but I doubt very much that it has any purpose. Animals have purpose, though not a purpose; each animal has its own. I doubt that trees, clouds, or mountains have purpose themselves, though they may be useful to creatures who do.

I don't have a soft spot for Thor Heyerdahl for proving that prehistoric ocean voyages were possible; that has very little bearing on whether or not they were actually made. But I do like his results at Easter Island. Scientists have been speculating for years on how the statues were erected; Heyerdahl took the radical course of asking the natives, who then showed him. The ocean voyages benefitted the people who claim that every human invention can only be made once, so that the





After I'd announced I'd given up on stopping you from drawing all those frogs, for fear of overkilling the joke

Mayan pyramids had to have been originated by people who had seen the Egyptian ones.

Reenactments seem to be enormously popular. Hartford City has a Civil War "reenactment" despite being over 150 miles from the nearest real Civil War battle, and the next town west of us, Marion, has a War of 1812 reenactment of a skirmish which actually took place, but which now includes artillery and British regulars, neither of which were at the original fight. It was American militia against Indians, originally. The "British" unit came down from Canada and wanted to participate, so they were allowed to do so, with a warning from the announcer that this wasn't entirely accurate..."

Lloyd Penney, 412-4 Lisa St., Brampton, ON L6T 4B6, Canada: (12/29/92) "...Over fifteen years of fandom for me, I'm still learning about it, still finding out the nuances, the customs, the jokes and the BNFs of this engaging subculture. I will continue to learn about it, and will never find out all there is; part of my fascination with fandom is how intricate, detailed, complex and convoluted it is. I think we'll find that Dick Lynch's re-edit and reissue of Harry Warner's A Wealth of Fable has been a marvelous introduction of younger fans to older fans institutions, and will give those institutions a new life...

Interesting to see David Palter in your pages... David, I trust you're still corresponding with Jessica Amanda Salmonson on your own stamp? Or has everything been settled amicably?

Another good effort... it makes me want to get moving with my own fanzine, but money doesn't allow. The way some local fans are responding to a convention-oriented publication of mine, technology may not allow, either... they are pouring scorn on a newsletter produced

with primitive desktop software and a 9-pin printer. I shall put it down to technological snobbishness, and will publish anyway... when money allows..."

// My comment about certainly having learned a thing or two during last year was meant to convey how much I was ignorant at first; Certainly not some sort of bragging about what I know today! I look forward to the learning curve you talk about. - Curiously, I've got three or four comments from various sources about people having been inspired to do their own fanzine after reading TFF. Will the Frog preside over some much wished for Renaissance? How ironic! If I didn't conform to the average formula fanzine, it's simply because I didn't know enough to do so. I certainly look forward to your fanzine but, in the meantime, you could use a page or two in mine, if you want. Hmmm? //

David Palter, 55 Yarmouth Road (Basement), Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M6G 1X1: (12/30/92) "Thanks for FF #5; I had been waiting for it. Good work! Normally I don't comment on typographical errors, which are a part of fannish life. However, the novel reviewed under the name "The ring of Sharon" is in fact "The Ring of Charon" which, although it differs by only a single letter, is still very different. (And personally I enjoyed the novel immensely.)

In the following review, David Shea notes "rationalism and its bastard child technology have us in deep shit" which I regard as a half truth. More accurately, it is the way in which rationalism and technology have been abused by selfish, foolish, and short-sighted human beings, that has gotten us into deep shit. And despite this deep shit, I for one would not prefer to live in an irrational and non-technological society; we merely need to use them more wisely, if we can. (If we can't, well, "Après moi le déluge.")...

Regarding "Operation Red Nose": what a logical ideal I'm impressed. You see, sometimes rationalism does work.

Regarding Charles Montpetit's project of compiling illuminating sexual stories: an interesting idea, to which I could contribute, if I were willing to bare my soul to the world. Actually it's the sort of thing which, if I were to write it, I would prefer to have published posthumously, to avoid embarrassment..."

// You mean... the lady was married? //

Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666-2626, USA: (1/3/93) "TFF in, a remarkable zine - by golly, when will FAPA get you in and save save you lots of individual postings..."

As to "Louis" McMaster Bujold, maybe I liked her first book I read ("Borders of infinity"?? something like that) so well that anything else was redundant. Still, I'm glad you liked The Vor Game. Really - it is better to like something in this hypercritical world than to dislike, and if I had the energy and desire I'd try Vor again. No doubt this time I'd like it! Indeed, I'm so certain of it there's no need even to bother rereading it. We can just say with positive fact I LIKED IT!! There David, we agree!...

I tried Foucault's Pendulum recently and while I more or less enjoyed portions of it, I gave up on this extended fun-with-words game. Just like Finnegan's Wake. I really liked the first part, through six attempts but do not expect to live long enough to spend my life on one book...

Our mutual name (sort of) results in various nicknames. "Benny" is my least favorite. My mother-in-law always used it, and my sister-in-law still does. However, my wife never does (just as I never call my son anything other than "Michael" - no short cut.) "Benjy" is standard to one of my buddies, and "Benj" -not easy- has been used by a few friends. My father-in-law used "Benito" frequently, and "Ben-yuchas", a pun on yiddish, at times, but rarely did he use the simple "Ben". Benoit wouldn't be bad. Rather exotic down here!

All best - Ben-jay-min (yet another variation)"

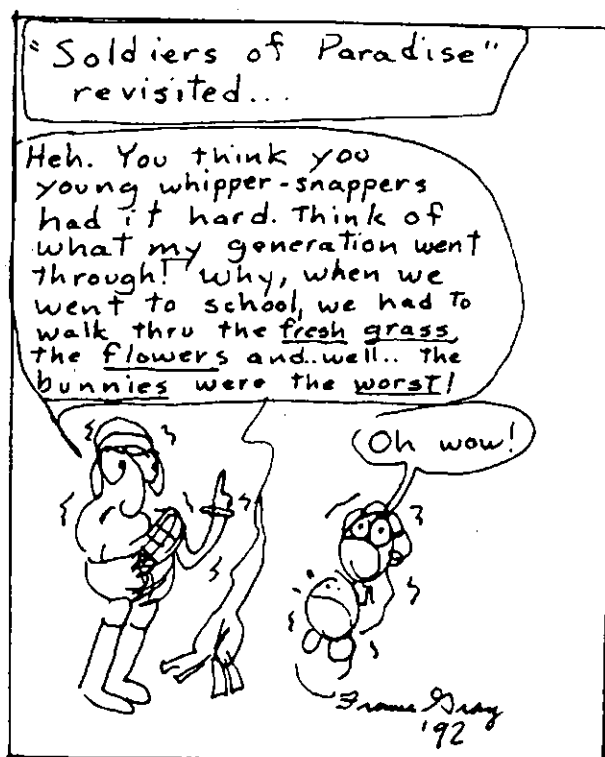
If You really fell in love with my name, didn't you? Well you can have it. I stopped liking it when, at 10 or 11, I discovered that, through some mysterious French literary tradition, it used to be closely associated with "simpleminded" or "stupid". And that some people remember... As for nicknames, somehow, I don't attract them as much as you seem to do. Nobody here ever called me anything but "Benoit". There were a couple of jokes with "Benji" when the dog and his movies came to be known worldwide, (and especially since the Gi in Girard is pronounced as plain "G", just like anything spelled "ji" in French) but it didn't catch. When I first crossed the border and met with anglophones, I voluntarily instituted the practice of using "Ben" - much simpler for everybody.

Oh yeah, incidentally: "Indic" in French popular language means "police informer".]]

Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frinton Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH, UK: (1/5/93) "...This is a quick response to your "The Edges Of Fandom" piece, to say that Tom Cockcroft in Wellington, New Zealand is not the southernmost fan. Leaving aside Ken Cheslin's suggestion that the polar research stations probably harbour a fan or two from time to time, the most southerly resident fan (i.e., one with a permanent address) is most likely Tim Jones, in Dunedin, on New Zealand's South Island. A glance at the map will show you that Dunedin is further south than Wellington, at approximately latitude 46°S."

[[Indeed, that makes him our southern champion for now.]]

Rodney Leighton, R. R. 3, Pugwash, NS B0K 1L0 Canada: (1/5/93) "The more I see of fandom, the more it looks like wrestling fandom. Various publications,



This is a take-off from a review of Soldiers of Paradise, by Paul Park, where the year last many generations.

complete with feuds, some running in different publications. Why would a zine publish a critique of a letter to another zine?

I was intrigued by your reaction to the pile of goodies from OZ. Kind of insulting to the guy but I understand how you feel. It's like... or, at least, the way I felt the odd time similar things happened to me.. "oh, I love this stuff and it's such a great gift but, my God, how can I ever repay him??" It is necessary to realize that some people have lots of money and are very generous and like to give gifts. Accept them with pleasure and don't fret about them.

[[You're right, and I hope David Russell sees it your way. I certainly did not want to insult him. On the one hand, I felt his grand gesture deserved to be known and talked about, but, on the other hand, I was afraid it would start a ruinous "pottatch" competition among my whimsical readers. I wanted to convey the idea that "this was great, but please don't think you have to do this." My editorial was also a knee-jerk first reaction to the gift.]]



Later, with a conscious effort, I could accept that this and other gifts are themselves a form of answer to a gift of mine: the zine. Somehow, TFF was deemed worth such a response. Well, thank you! It's just that I didn't expect gifts. It takes a little getting used to, you know.]]

I liked most of the illios, although I am a non art person. The one on page 2 is especially cool.

There is a pro wrestler who goes by the name of Chris Benoit. The promotion in Georgia pronounces it Ben-Wah and even had it spelled that way one time.

The first time for sex book project is quite intriguing. Beyond the facts that part of the initial "seduction" included me placing my stockinged foot in the gal's crotch and it was the one and only time I ever saw stars, my first time was quite unremarkable. *[[Seduction is a strange animal, indeed!]]*

I should think that any heterosexual male would be happy to be thought of in the same fashion as ben-wa balls. Then again... I'm none too sure I'd want to be swallowed whole by any female's reproductive organs. Especially not with 3 companions; as in the last time I saw those things in use.

Just out of curiosity, why do you print people's addresses every time you use something from them? Wouldn't it be better to just print a list of addresses?"

[[Surprisingly, it's laziness. Writing the address as I go along, I don't have to cross check what finally gets in the zine with the address list. This process would rapidly get more troublesome than a few redundant addresses.]]

Michael McKenny, 424 Cambridge St. S, Ottawa, Ontario, K1S 4H5 Canada: (1/7/93) "I really enjoyed The story of a bookaholic. *[[in TFF #3]]* Like so many I see myself in that. I'll have to write to her, offer her an enclosed copy of "Bardic Runes" and... I like the reaction I get when a visitor standing in our house on the ground floor says, "You have a lot of books" and I say "Most of them are upstairs." One difference between me and so many fans I've met is that I buy books at the pace I read them. So if you ask me about a book on my shelf, I've read it and can talk about it. Some people will say, "Oh, the books on that wall are in the "to be read" file." The significant change in the past 2 years are the Russian

ones. I'm still a slow reader in Russian and there's lots on my shelf I've yet to read.

[[This is totally unfair! There is no justice in this world. You will have gathered that I am a VERY slow reader. Just imagine: a book lover who happens to be a snail-paced reader. Needless to say, I buy far more books than I can read. Right now, I have more than a lifetime's supply and I keep buying supposedly for "later". Over the years, I've devised all kinds of delaying tactics to avoid buying books. Rules like "Read three before buying one" and "Buy only outside the city, while on travel"... Useless! I'm a desperate case of compulsive book buying. If at least I could make use of them! But no! I had to start a fanzine that breeds faster'n a rabbit so that I've been reading nothing but fanzines in the last year and can't even keep up with them. This is nearing crisis proportion and then what happens? Mr. McKenny writes and says his house is full of books but he only buys them at his reading pace and that to slow him down a bit the books have to be in RUSSIAN! ARGGGGHHHHH!!! Off with your head! I say. (Some people have it all! I guess he's young and good-looking too! Should be hanged short, I say!) Who are these men in white? What do they want with me? Leave me alone! No! No!]]

...I sure don't agree with David Pelter. I'm fond of other people more than Asimov and I guess Card's greatest SF novel could well have a 4 digit number on a list of mine. I agree with Ursula K. LeGuin that Yevgeny Zamiatin's We may be the best SF novel. Gee, Jules Verne isn't on David's list of influential SF writers. Anyway *de gustibus non disputandum*. And it is a shame that the early authors are all dead (All my favorite Lord Dunsany, William Hope Hodgson, A. Merritt, Francis Stevens, Clark Ashton Smith, H.P. Lovecraft, etc.) and the ones who were so vital in the 50s are going too. Well, they must all be having a great time up in heaven. Think of all those new books waiting for us to read when we get there..."

[[..... It's alright. I'm calm now. I'm calm.]]

George Flynn, P.O. Box 1069, Kendall Square Station, Cambridge, MA 02142, USA: (1/7/93) "...The Roger McBride Allen novel reviewed is of course *The Ring of Charon*, not *Sharon* (I'm sure my friend Sharon will be amused by this).

Walt Willis needn't worry: The Steve Crisp painting that he gave his award to at Magicon was in fact quite impressive in the eyes of those "more knowledge-

able about Art." I was one of the art show judges, and might well have pushed for an award for that one myself if he hadn't already done so. (How, you may be asking, does one get to be an art show judge? Mostly by being reasonably knowledgeable on the subject [working on art shows for a decade helps], being known to the people in charge, and not ducking in time. Then you get together with the other judges, and spend several hours arguing apples vs. oranges. When you're working on an art show, this is sometimes the only chance you have to actually see it.)"

Harry Andruschak, PO Box 5309, Torrance, CA 90510-5309, USA; (1/7/93) "...I do not remember much along the way of "Operation Red Nose" down here in Los Angeles. For one thing, I am not sure any such group could afford the liability insurance that would be required in our over-litigious society. Maybe such groups exist on a very informal basis for a small group, but I do not remember any country-wide organization.

[[Liability insurance? I don't know the details, but I've been given to understand that the Insurance companies were among the very first to back Red Nose when it got started. The way they see it, they have more to gain than they have to lose what with all the car accidents avoided through Red Nose.]]

What we do have is the "Designated Driver Program". The idea is that one person from a party group agrees not to drink alcohol, and will drive the group home. Some bars, restaurants, and other establishments will provide free non-alcoholic drinks, and sometime even free meals, to the designated driver...

To take up Curt Phillips challenge, I had a huge backlog of fanzines to answer after my African Vacation in March/April 1990. I was on one of those truck trips, in this with GUERBA EXPEDITIONS, crossing the Sahara Desert on a 31 day journey that took me from Tunis through Algeria, Niger, Benin and Togo. Trans-Sahara Coast to Coast! I still have the notes of that trip, and still have not got around to writing up a single trip report. I really should one day, if I can ever find the time. Perhaps LAN'S LANTERN is the only fanzine that could find the room to print it.

I also thank Curt Phillips for his comments on Sharyn McCrumb. I had read her book HIGHLAND LAD-DIE GONE, and had done a review to the points that the murder plot was totally unbelievable, and that I had never met any of the characters at any gathering of Scots in

the Los Angeles area. Now Curt claims she does authentic research, so I must conclude that perhaps they do things differently back east. Interesting.

However, if Sharyn had REALLY done her homework, she would have known that there was no such thing as THE Clan Tartans prior to The Proscriptions. The book shows that she more or less accepted the ancient clan tartan system that, in fact, never existed. Or maybe I misread the book, but I doubt it."

Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Dr, Hurst TX 76054, USA: (1/5/93) "...My writers group elected me treasurer for 1993. I write the checks. It's an activity that requires honesty, but little creativity. In my acceptance speech I said, "I'd rather be rich than president."

I want to see the rest of the Alan Hunter female on page 6. She looks like Medusa, but with deep-sea tube worms for hair instead of snakes. I can only imagine what sinuous form her body must have.

I'm disappointed in your cover. You have stooped to a cheap gimmick to get attention."

Steve Jeffery, 44 White Way, Kidlington, Oxon OX5 2XA, UK: (1/6/93) "A Japanese woman's sex toy eh? We should all be so lucky. Whatever were your parents thinking of (well, obviously they were thinking about *that*, or wouldn't be here in the first place, but perhaps not about *ben wa* specifically, otherwise at least one of them might have decided they were having more fun separately than together, and then who would send me copies of The Frozen Frog?) I digress. (Often. But I'm taking the tablets for it.) It must be your cover illo.

[[My parents were preparing a birthday gift, at the precise time you inquire about. As my mother explained to me once, her birthday (April 11) is exactly nine months apart from mine (January 9) and that's because I was her birthday present, though much delayed in delivery. Does that answers your question? As for the name, I doubt very much that they were ever aware of the peculiar coincidence we are refering to.]]

Collecting. Don't people collect some odd things? You get frogs, edible or ornamental, and which I rather think you're going to be saddled with for some time, fans being a breed to take a joke to the limits and then some way beyond. My brother has now cleared his pub of the 500 odd amphibian souvenirs, toys and trinkets in, on and around the bar. My mother collects owls,

and after several years of this the trick is to make the gifts a bit different: There are only so many Leonardo china owls you can fit into a cabinet, or pictures to hang on the walls.

Vikki collects unicorns - as does Bernie Evens of Birmingham fandom - but digresses into Kinder Eggs (hollow chocolate eggs with little toys and figures inside, if you haven't come across this particular addiction). There is even a little Kinder fanzine listing the toys and "swaps" which someone gave us a copy of. Strange, these fringe fandoms.

My sister-in-law, strangely, is into moles. Much harder to find at Xmas and birthdays; moles are obviously not very high on the "cute" rating for gifts ideas.

Books collect us. Though not to the extent that they collect Buck and Juanita Coulson, it seems. 10 rooms seems a trifle excessive, unless you're planning a major lending library.

I read Lindsay Clarke's The Chymical Wedding last year, which set me on a trail of other alchemical/magical related books and browsings, through John Crowley's Little Big, Aegypt (just a good second time around), Mary Gentle's Rats and Gargoyles to Jung and Frances Yates' The Art of Memory. To borrow a line from the Dead, "what a long strange trip it's been". But fascinating. Odd how themes and motifs in books seem to follow you around for a while. At one point we read three books fairly close together with a main character called Cal. Maybe there's something in Terry Pratchett's idea of streams of "inspiron" particles hitting authors around the same time. This might explain the current spate of Mars novels, and the vampire outbreak of last year.

I thought Eco's Foucault's Pendulum was hilarious, a wonderful romp through the strange worlds and minds of occult conspiracy theorists. I can see why the piling on of erudite references might be wearing, but I was reading this about the same time as Leigh and Baigent's religious/historical delvings in The Holy Blood and The Holy Grail and The Messianic Legacy, and the combination was irresistible.

La Premiere Fois sounds a worthy and intriguing project, which deserves every success.

A long and impressive letter from David Palter. It's a shame he's decided to limit his return to the 'spe-

cial case' of TFF, but fandom's loss is definitely your gain in this case. Unfortunately he beat me to the observation that the whole existence of the Universe is geared to the Strong Fanthropomorphic Principle, and my receipt of The Frozen Frog. There's a Rotsler cartoon in the latest issue of Folly which goes "In the beginning was the Word". And the Word was *publish!* which rather support this view of creation as a special case of fandom.

I'm not sure it will be Bujold who will unlock the Platonic ideal form of the SF novel and refold the Universe within its covers. I would have nominated Vernor Vinge's *A Fire Upon The Deep* as the quintessential SF novel of recent times, although the Universe still seems to be waiting for something. Delany put forward a case for Dhalgren as being the all time highest selling SF novel, but maybe God, like a lot of us, never got much beyond chapter three. Lem had a theory that there could be such a perfect book (though without such catastrophic effect - except perhaps for publishers) that would satisfy the reader so completely she would never need to read anything else (I understand there are some people for whom Finegan's Wake performs this task, although some people may wish to substitute 'want' for 'need' in the previous sentence).

For me, the universe exists so I can write the Perfect LoC. For faneds it is the Perfect Fanzine (although they all probably have different ideas as to the isreal form this would take); for artists, perhaps, it is the perfect illo. By extension, the universe exists so that everyone has the chance to do one thing perfectly. As Jim Morrison wrote "Grant us an hour for Magic, to live our lives and perfect our Art".

Curt Phillips could start a whole new trend, after the remotest fans, for the best excuse for a late (or even the latest) loc. Mind you, there are some fanzine who go a dozen or more years between issues, so a loc might have to be very late in this case.

A Tale of Two Josephs. Like you, I think it would be a real coup to publish a dialectical synthesis of mutual agreement in TFF, on a par with getting a review copy of The Last Dangerous Visions through the post...

(My spell checker says that this wasn't the perfect loc. We are safe so far)"

// Maybe, but a dangerous try anyway! Maybe there is something to this Magick stuff, after all. While transcribing your loc I just realized that it has been clo-



sely intertwined with my life of late. A couple of weeks ago I read The Holy Blood & The Holy Grail, and last week, while in Montreal on a business trip, I bought Mary Gentle's Rats and Gargoyles and Vernor Vinge's A Fire upon the Deep. On this same trip I discovered the existence of two sequels to the Blood/Grail book, which I didn't buy. Maybe we are connected esoterically? Or maybe your loc was still in my subconscious while I was browsing. //

John Francis Haines, 5 Cross Farm, Station Road, Padgate, Warrington WA2 0QG, UK: (1/1/93) "...David Shea's book reviews are very well done - unusual to find in-depth reviewing of that sort in a fanzine.

Found your survey on cover art interesting - I sometimes wonder if the awful artwork isn't one of the main reasons why some people dislike SF - what they really dislike is SF art, and that prevents them actually reading the book or magazine. If the book came in a plain cover would they manage to forget that it was SF for long enough for them to become hooked by the story?..."

Algernon D'Ammassa, 394 4th St, #3, Brooklyn, NY 11215, USA: (1/7/93) "...There is a curious habit among many fannish writers, and Ben, you seem to have picked it up yourself. Maybe there is a reason for it. The question is: why is it that so many con reports, and other accounts of fannish events, seem to be written for people who were there?

Because of my theatrical career, and my school work, I have not been able to attend a convention since Noreascon in 1989 (except for a brief visit to Lunacon in 1991). I haven't been to a local Fanoclast meeting in years. I am, as Kate Bush put it, suspended in gafia.

At least I can read fanzines. But so many con reports are written like I know the stories already. The writers wink and nudge, and make vague allusions to events they assume I witnessed. They are writing nostalgia. I would submit that it's a bit early for that; and while I do not expect journalism, I would be happy to see at least a couple of steps in that direction.

(By the way, "journalism" does not mean boring, solemn news coverage. Any fan who has read H.L. Mencken's accounts of American political conventions understands the true literary potential of the con report.)

[[I can think of two answers to your rhetorical question. The first one is that surrounded by about five thousand people, you easily get the impression that everybody must be there. The second is that so many things go on at once that I always leave a con thinking that I missed all the essential events. Therefore, I can hardly report on them. But one would think that you would simply ask Andrew Porter. After all, he endeavoured to do just what you ask for, didn't he?]]

Next, I must point out that nobody who comes from a country where so many men are named "Dick" has any business making jokes about "Benoit balls".

This brings me to the subject of sex, which I normally do not discuss in fanzines. It's not because I'm a prude, it's just that there are much better places to talk about sex than in print. The dinner table, for instance. It is difficult for an American to talk about sex without seguing into the ignorant and juvenile attitudes about sex which pervade our country.

Incidentally, if you read the anthologies of erotic SF and horror fiction which have been released recently (the latest being Hottest Blood from Pocket Books), you may wonder --as I do-- if some of these writers have had any sexual experience whatsoever."

Pamela Boal, 4 Westfield Way, Charlton Heights, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EW, UK: (1/11/93)
"I'm glad that The Frozen Frog thawed out enough to hop my way. I think the cover is great, especially the cartoon of the panicking editor.

There are various commercial 'get you home' schemes operating in areas of Britain but I haven't heard of one being run for charity. What an excellent idea.

While sex may be vital for the survival of the species (at least for the time being) it's not the only reason for the existence of every individual. A book that demonstrates to young people that first encounters (or subsequent ones for that matter) are not necessarily earth shaking, may have its value.

I wonder if any one has considered that constant harping on all matters sexual, by all media outlets, since the sixties may have contributed to the rise in violence? I do not mean pornography, nor do I consider the pro or anti censorship argument relevant. It is the attitude that instant and complete sexual gratification (what ever the sexual preference) has been raised to the status of 'Human Right'. Of course the preference for celibacy or even moderation is not regarded as a 'Right', that is regarded as a sickness. How ever, lucky you, there is plenty of expensive advice in the market place once you have seen the light and realise you are sick!

Young men at certain stages of their development were ever inclined to boast, and their fellows had leave to doubt. Now it is virtually axiomatic that a young man who is not a sexual athlete seeking and finding satisfaction at least on a daily basis is deficient. Self dissatisfaction is known to lead to violence. Young women are also given the impression that they are abnormal if they are not constantly expressing their sexuality (but of course males must not respond to that expression in inappropriate places) and that they are traitors to their gender if they fail to change a partner who does not provide transports of delight at every encounter. Tenderness, giving, mutual discovery? Goodness me, you'll be advocating means tests or suggesting the homeless should not be housed next! La Premiere Fois may redress the balance a little but I suspect that I will have to await the swing of the social pendulum before young people are allowed once again to discover sex for themselves and also to decide its relevance in their own lives. Have you noticed how those who object most strongly to so called establishment interference are those most eager to force feed their sexual beliefs on the next generation?"

[[Charles Montpetit is an artist as well as a writer and an all-around performer. When he offered to do the cover to promote his article, I eagerly accepted and suggested a cartoon to establish continuity with TFF's nascent tradition. I guess he found a way to satisfy his own requirements as well as mine.]]

Stephen R. George, 642 Ingersoll Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 2J4, Canada: (1/14/93) "...Reading

TFF was an interesting experience. Your own excitement at discovering fanzine fandom comes across clearly, and it brought back fond memories. I, too, remember my first LoC, from Harry Warner, Jr. in my case, and my suspicion that it would be the only response I got. God, how wrong I was. I don't think I ever got over the thrill of opening my mailbox and finding it stuffed with letters addressed to me. Publishing a fanzine is an excellent method of mimicking popularity! Though I haven't published a fanzine in over ten years, I still enjoy receiving them. I even fantasize periodically about putting one out. There's something that fanzine production and fannish writing gives the writer/editor that no other type of writing can, and though I haven't quite figured out what that elusive something is, I know it exists. I used to think that writing for fanzines would be a great way to learn how to write, sort of an apprenticeship to the real thing, but now I know better. Fanzines and fanzine writing are an end in themselves, worthy and enjoyable in their own special ways, their own real thing."

[[Whether in fanzines out not, you certainly have learned how to Write! I've wondered too about the elusive gratification associated with fanzine writing. On first approximation, it looks more closely related to socializing than to pro writing, because of the feedback. But at the same time, it is a specially modulated form of socializing which suits some of us particularly well, sometimes better than the usual, eyeball to eyeball, form. I don't know...]]

Eunice Raymond, 24971 Leicester, Sun City, CA 92584, USA: (1/15/93) "TFF#5 arrived in late December. I was happy to see my mascot, the Tuckered Toad, on page 4. Just think: if not for the Frozen Frog, I would never have been inspired to create a mascot --or at least, not a mascot who was so MEI...

I tried to find Cap-Rouge on a National Geographic map of Quebec, but no luck. Of course, I may have overlooked it. I really don't know what part of Quebec you live in.

[[Cap-Rouge is a suburb of Quebec City. A narrow valley opening on the magnificent St. Lawrence river.]]

Backtracking to TFF#4 and earlier: is the claim that Star Trek inspired many people to go into sciences "mistaking a symptom (interest in science fiction) for a cause (an interest in a career in the sciences)." I can't agree. One significant point about the "Star Trek phenomenon" is that many fans had no previous interest in science fiction. They fell in love with Trek primarily through interest in the characters. Some went on from there to become interested in general SF, while others did not. And some, indeed, continued on to careers in sciences.

Other vocations have also been inspired by Trek, especially writing and art. Many fans have said they had no particular interest in such pursuits until their fascination by ST set the creative gears turning. Some have gone on to become professional writers and artists..."



Don Fitch, 3908 Frijo, Covina CA 91722, USA: (1/14/93) "The Jan/Feb 1993 issue of Frozen Frog arrived here on the last day of 1992. You should be warned that it may be presented in evidence if a Motion to Censure you for UnFannish Activity is made at the next Fanzine Fans' Convention. The zine is sufficiently polished and fannish that you would certainly have difficulty pleading Neohood and/or ignorance of the Standing Rule that it's Extremely Unfannish to publish an issue on time, much less in advance of the announced date. (Publishing a month or so, or even a few years, after the cover/colophon date is, of course, admirably in accord with Fannish Tradition.)

Such Censure is, of course, something less than a Fate Worse Than Death, but it would be a Blot on your Fannish Escutcheon, and could perhaps be best avoided by attending Corflu (May 21-23, '93; P.O. Box 1624, Madison WI (USA) 53701) and allowing offended fans to complain in person, after which they're unlikely to take Formal Action.

[[I'd sure like to go, but I'm too excentric... Geographically excentric, I mean. At today's rates, I can't afford more than the WorldCon each year except for the occasional con that takes place in Montreal. If ever Corflu comes to Boston, maybe...]]

More seriously... Reading this issue made me aware that fanzine fandom today is even larger and more fragmented than I had thought. It's something of a shock to discover that such an excellently fannish fanzine could reach its fourth issue in the course of about a year without me being aware of its existence. (The fault is probably mine; since returning from FAFIA about four years ago I've neglected to re-connect with LAN'S LANTERN, & you constructed your Mailing List from the LetterCol therein. *sigh* (One of these days, maybe I'll be able to acquire copies of the first 4 issues of FROG.))

[[I'll look into it, but I can tell you right away that issues #1 and #2 are gone. As for the latest ones, maybe a few left...]]

Point of Order: Only the Secretary Treasurer (if memory serves) of FAPA can actually invite people to join, extending this Official Invitation to the top person on the W.L. when there's a vacancy on the Roster; what Ben Indick did was more like inviting/suggesting that you apply for membership/WL status. I'm glad he did, & that you did; I probably won't be happy to see anyone dropped from FAPA, but am/will be delighted to see you as a New Member.

[[Applying! That's what I meant, of course!]]

Your problem in locating fanzine fans at MagiCon is understandable (& common); as far as I know, it was the first U.S. WorldCon to actually have such a place (since the Good Old Days when more than half the people attending a WorldCon were fanzine fans). Even old-timers who recognize one-another and can coagulate easily often don't manage to connect with many of the people they want to see, at a large Con, and newcomers can easily remain totally lost. Most large Cons have some sort of Fanzine Room (though this is becoming less dependable), but it's often hidden away in some remote corner and not really effective as a meeting-place. MagiCon Chair Joe Siclari, however, was once an active fanzine fan (& is still a collector & fanhistorian), and he cooperated fully with Minneapolis fan Geri Sullivan's idea of a Fan Lounge in the Exhibit area during the day, and the "Mpls in '73" party suite in the hotel at night. Probably fewer than half of the fanzine fans at the Con discovered these Focal Points or checked them frequently, and only a few brought their zines for display or sale--this was, after all, the first time it had been done--but the experiment was successful enough that I hope it will become a Tradition.

Unfortunately... Con-producing has become such a specialized form of fanac that very few ConCom members nowadays can be expected to know much of anything about fanzines, or to initiate such a project. Most of them would, I think, be willing to provide some support (i.e., space, and Program listing/publicity), but it's really up to a fanzine fan (or group) to (*shudder*) Volunteer (at least a year in advance) and present the ConCom with a Package--something already organized, with the names of people who have signed up to help run it. This sort of Fanzine Fans' Convention within the Worldcon could easily become a Tradition (probably after 3 or 4 repetitions), but so far I've found no indication that anyone is doing it for ConFrancisco (it's a bit early for Canadian, perhaps) so this year we may have to make do with "The Fanzine Room" (if there is one).

[[As a relative newcomer, maybe I can shed some light on the problem of fanzine fans recruiting. I was aware of fanzines maybe ten years before getting involved. But aware in a remote and uncommitted kind of way. When first introduced to fanzines, I thought of fanzines as some kind of half-baked professional products. Something I could buy and read, but from which I wouldn't get the same level of pleasure as I can from prozines or books because they are produced by amateurs. I was missing the point entirely. Fanzines are a form of communication among friends, among equals. Not a commercial deal between pros and consumers. In fact, it's only when I decided that I was not getting enough fan communication from cons alone that I suddenly saw the special appeal of fanzines.

So I would propose that any effort toward fanzine fans recruiting should emphasize the personal "keeping in touch" aspect of fanzines and should put as much distance as it can between fanzines and commercial publishing.

Second point: We are not going to recruit anyone by emphasizing the special pleasure to be derived from publishing or letterhacking. This pleasure, like the taste for science fiction itself, is either instantaneously recognized or is never felt at all. It can almost never be taught. A better asset for recruitment is the content of fanzines. Fans interested in just about anything can be attracted to fanzines if they learn that this particular subject is discussed in their pages. But imho, the best asset of fanzines are the people themselves. And never were they so well showcased as in fanzines. Fanzine fans are all distinctly fascinating voices. If we wanted to advertize fanzines, this is the asset that should be em-

phasized. Give a glimpse of who fanzine fans are, of who one can expect to meet in fanzines, and I really can't see why we wouldn't attract newcomers.

Now, how can such an advertizing campaign be possible? Why, Don, your proposition is quite on target. If fanzine fans would accept to behave like a special interest group, they could use the convention framework advantageously: Fan Lounge, fanzines exhibits, fanzines related panels with titles designed to attract newcomers... and so on.

I specifically invite comments on this matter. Don's proposition is important.]]

As far as I could see, the worst thing about MagiCon was the blunder in announcing one of the Hugos --such a trivial thing, really, that even the complaint becomes praise. (Well... actually, two boxes of stuff I'd sent ahead for the Fan Lounge/Mpls in '73 suite got misplaced & weren't discovered until several weeks later, but that was also a most minor matter.)

If you're tabulating responses to David Palter's question, "Why does the universe exists?", I shan't be of any help; questions beginning with "How..." usually can be answered definitively, but those beginning with "Why..." rarely can.

Thanks for including the letter from Curt Phillips, even though it doesn't help much in understanding Sharyn McCrumb. I'm looking forward to Zombies of the Gene Pool when it comes out in paperback, but indications (from the title, and from reviews) are that her attitude hasn't changed much since Bimbos of the Death Sun. Perhaps I err in believing that the major female character in the latter represents McCrumb's attitudes towards fandom, but a similar outlook is pervasive in McCrumb's other mysteries. I'm not sure whether her approach would best be called "Puritan" or "Yuppie", but she certainly seems to scorn fans (much as F. T. Laney did in "Ah, Sweet Idiocy!") for not turning their talents and energy towards More Important Things (either Virtuous Causes or Making Money). Her portraits (I agree with Curt; they are accurate to type & to individuals) seem to me to be misleading because there's an implication that they depict typical fans, whereas (imho) the vast majority of fans are far less spectacular, and more pleasant than obnoxious. McCrumb may well be significant to fandom in that her books may cause good prospective fans to shy away, and encourage the less-good ones with the idea that this is a place where they will be

tolerated. She may, also, be Significant as a representative of (as it seems to me) a growing attitude in contemporary society which encourages people to discourage or prohibit the following of lifestyles or goals other than their own. Intolerance and repression (if only by ridicule) are nothing new, of course, but I'm saddened to see them gaining increasing acceptance.

You seem to have gotten almost phenomenal returns in the way of locs -- for which a number of probable reasons come to mind. You chanced upon a zine with lots of active loccers, on which to build your original mailing list. You were probably (if #5 is any indication) clearly an extremely promising neofan. (This deserves some elaboration: FROG exhibits not only intelligence, but also the sort of sense of humor, and of playfulness which are basic to "fannishness" -- not many new faneds display these traditional virtues.) Most fans would tend to feel very supportive of a fanzine in English when it isn't the editor's native language. (I'm assuming that this is the case, from your name, address, and the occasional error or just-slightly-unusual (and refreshing) turn-of-phrase.) Mostly, though, FROG's an enjoyable fanzine."

[[Thank you. I would prefer my zine's success to owe less to such a contingency as my being from a different cultural background, and more to its own merit, but if you press me hard enough, I'll admit that I'm ready to play this fortuitous advantage TO THE HILT! C'est la vie!]]

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Ave., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740, USA: (1/21/93) "...I had experiences when entering fanzine fandom very similar to yours, as far as the kindness of most people was concerned. Material for my first fanzine came in from most of the people I asked for it, comments on my first few issues were gratifying, and aside from one or two bad moments, the experience was good enough to keep me going to this very day. Occasionally I read about someone who claims to have experienced great trouble making himself known in fandom or finding kindred souls, and I can't help but think that these rare individuals somehow alienated other fans by their attitude or conduct on first contacts...

I too felt very bad on learning about Fritz Leiber's death. If his passing hasn't created as much attention in fanzines and in the public mundane media as the deaths of Heinlein and Asimov did, the difference might result from Fritz's comparative inactivity as an author in recent years, while the other two were active almost to

the end. Teen-agers and even fans in their early 20s had probably read little or nothing of Leiber unless they were the kind of fans who hunt up out-of-print books and ancient pulp magazines. Then, too, there is the fact that Fritz didn't come to the attention of the mundane world as much as Asimov did, with his many non-fiction books, and Heinlein, whose *Stranger in a Strange Land* was frequently publicized as a factor in the youth rebellion and New Age thinking and various other matters. I hope and trust that more of Leiber's fiction will come back into print now that he has died, a phenomenon which often occurs following the demise of a popular writer...

Curt Phillips provides in the letter section the most extended description I've seen yet about Sharon McCrumb's attitude toward fandom and how she has used it as a basis for her books. So far I haven't read either of them, and I suppose I'd better get busy and ferret out copies, because I have a premonition that they won't stay in print a long time and within a few years will be top rarities and almost impossible to attain at a reasonable price.

It was edifying to read all those ideas about the fans who live at geographical extremes of one type or another. The comments leave me wondering if there is any one fan who outstrips all the rest in travel around the globe. As far as I know, there are no airline pilots or stewardesses in fanzine fandom, so we'd probably need to look to some other occupation. It could possibly be Chuck Connor, a British fan who is a member of Her Majesty's Navy and leaves his lodgings for extended cruises from time to time, but I have never seen a detailed listing of his itineraries and perhaps such information shouldn't be public knowledge because of the nature of his work.

The usual apologies for the poor typing. It's obvious, after 18 months of efforts to use properly an electric typewriter, that I am just plain allergic to such mechanical contrivances."

[[If we discard those fans whose line of work provides with an unfair advantage, I'd think that Ken Lake is probably on his way to the Gold Medal of the most travelled fan contest.]]

Bruno Ogorelec, Kopernikova 10, Zagreb, Croatia: (1/18/93) "It seems that out of all the FROZEN FROG excellent content I'm most likely to be stirred from apathy by the mixture of philosophy and cosmology, earnest as well as spurious, as exemplified by Marc Ortlieb's

Misanthropic Principle article and the readers' reactions to it. Now it is David Palter's LoC that has prodded me into thinking (which is no mean feat; I *hate* thinking -- it inevitably interferes with the enjoyment of life's simple pleasures: food, sex, sleep and delusions of grandeur).

Perhaps my argument is not really with David, but with Stephen Hawking, whom he quoted: "As Stephen Hawking points out, the remaining big question is why does the universe exist." Such a question would have sense only within a logical system which uses causality as one of the rules of the game. The perceived link between the cause and the effect may, however, be an illusion. Our interpretation of the link might be overly simplistic. It might be plain wrong. In all such cases the question of "why" would either be meaningless, or would have to be rephrased..."

Craig Hilton, PO Box 430, Collic, Western Australia 6225, Australia: (1/17/93) "...I was just thinking about the date on the top of this letter *// written "17/1/93" //*. You would probably write 1-17-93, like they also do in the USA. It seems to me a common feature of your two countries. When a visiting Canadian gentleman came to visit me as a patient and I had a medical student with me, I explained to her that "that's the way Americans write their dates". The man was most affronted - he thought I was calling him a United States American. To outsiders, here anyway, Canada and the USA are part of North America. Still, it took some placating to undo that terrible nationalistic insult. No harm done in the end.

"Operation Red Nose" sounds fascinating. Still, I suppose the taxis aren't too happy. They'd prefer people who intend to drink at a party to take a taxi there and back. Or on a similar line, it's become customary here in Australia to have one member of a group who go out marrying to act as the "skipper", to stay dry and be responsible for driving them home. As far as I can tell, the term "skipper" in this context came into vogue a few years ago as part of a road safety advertizing campaign. Now it's so easy, at a party, to say "No thanks, I'll stick to orange juice, I'm the skipper", without having to go through lengthy explanations and ending up sounding like a killjoy. Such is the power of language, where one word can help crystallise into being an idea whose time has come.

// Yes, and there are now alcohol-free beers on the market that one can order as easily and unobtrusively as possible. Somehow, this choice will be respected by

the real drinkers, where an orange juice would prompt comments. The tide is rolling back. Did you notice how many parties were dry, at your last Con?]]

While people are talking about Sharyn McCrumb's "Bimbos of the Death Sun", maybe I can toss in my twenty cents' worth. I thought it was awful. I called it a murder mystery with one murder and no mystery. As a detective novel it fell flat. But as to defending its characterisations, the problem wasn't that the characters were unbelievable. Get a big enough con and you'll find all sorts of people somewhere, including the outlandish types sketched in this book. The problem was that it could have been done so much better. There were long --really, overly long-- descriptions of the key figures, with unnecessary volumes of documentation of each one's motivations (for the sake of the imperceptive), but the broader atmosphere of a con was missing. It describes what some parts of a con looked like, but failed to capture what one felt like. It was the poor effort of a fan speaking from the midst of fandom to the mundane world, saying "Hey, look at us, guys. Aren't we really weird? Some of us even dress up or sing funny songs. I tell you - we're a weird bunch, don't you think?"

One other thing. McCrumb's descriptions of role-playing games are enough to turn anyone off them for life. If I were in a game where it was clear that the GM was simply running an exercise in sado-masochism I'd quit there and then. Any chance for an outsider to pick up the book, read it and think "science fiction conventions, and gaming, and filking. They sound like really great fun." is a forlorn hope.

So that's "Bimbos of the Death Sun". It was better than the title might suggest. But not much."

[[I tend to believe Curt Phillips when he says that Sharyn McCrumb was never a fan and never interested in fandom. I think of her as someone who has rediscovered the old gimmick that outrageous stuff will sell and attract notoriety. She did it with other groups, and has discovered that fandom will buy her books just to see to what length she is ready to go. It is a cheap trick that is likely to backfire if she pushes it too far... and that doesn't speak well of her talent as a mystery writer. If my interpretation is correct, she will move on to another target as soon as the sales will drop. For all its numerous faults, I've enjoyed Bimbos for it's outrageousness, and I'll probably read Zombies too. But I also think that it will probably be enough. I'll drop her as soon as she starts repeating herself.]]

Ian Gunn, PO Box 567, Blackburn, Vic 3130, Australia: (1/17/93) "I think I can beat the Most Northern and Most Southern fans mentioned. There's an active fandom throughout New Zealand, including a group in that country's Southernmost city, Invercargill. The latitude is 46.26 South. At the other end of the Earth, there is (or was) Canadian fan Annette Lotz, a corporal with Canadian Forces in Germany. Before that, a year or two ago, she was stationed at an early-warning tracking station a mere one hundred kilometers from the North Pole! She tells me the endless night really played havoc with her eating habits."

Derek Pickles, 44 Rooley Lane, Bankfoot, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD5 8LX, UK: (2/2/93) "I have before me issue #5 of *The Frozen Frog* with an attention, if not more, grabbing cover. This is the old newspaper sales ploy - have someone rich, famous and sexy on the cover - will your photo be on the cover of #6?

[[I thought you'd already noticed me on the cover of issue #2. You know, with the engaging smile?]]

Congratulations on the first anniversary of TFF, the speed at which you have developed the style, layout and persona of your magazine is a credit to you. What really makes a fanzine are not just the artwork, letters and articles that are printed but the personality of the editor that shines through the magazine and generates the right kind of attractive artwork, letters and articles.

I am not enclosing anything frogg/fish/like in this letter as all chocolate frogs are an endangered species when my grand-daughter is around and I wouldn't like to be responsible for their disappearance.

"Operation Red Nose" is a very good idea, I'll pass it around later in the year in plenty of time for Christmas. I know that my children, when they go out, always arrange (in turn) that one of the couple does not drink. As all their jobs depend on their having a clean licence they stick to this rigidly - a further factor is that anyone with a drink-driving conviction finds it prohibitively expensive, if not impossible, to obtain insurance cover.

Your description of receiving the news of Fritz Leiber's death reminds me that Leland Sapiro's RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY's last issue had the first part of a biography of Fritz Leiber by his son. Until I read it I never realised F.L. was 6ft5ins tall!

I see in his letter that Ken Cheslin agrees with me about TFF. Like you Kench publishes a marvellously individual fanzine, THE OLAF ALTERNATIVE, which is original, unusual, fascinating, full of marvellous Olaf cartoons and Ken's personality, together with photocopies of reader's letters which makes reading TOA seem like reading Ken's personal letter-file.

As usual you have received some great letters, shows how good they were in that my letter was WAHF'd. A propos David Palter's comments on the reason, if any, for the creation of the Universe, I would refer all those who are interested to WONDERFUL LIFE by Stephen Jay Gould, the story of the Burgess Shales. In the shales were found the fossils of many species including a group of twenty creatures of which nineteen became extinct - the twentieth is the distant ancestor of man! Rather like Blake's "What Immortal hand or eye shaped thy fearful symmetry," - who rolled the cosmic dice in the Cambrian period?

I sent you a copy of PHANTASMAGORIA 2.2, November 1992. I hope you have received it and had some enjoyment from reading a little bit of fannish history. It is a one-off, although some recipients seem to think I am reviving the monster. If you should mention it in TFF please say it is a one-off as I'd hate to be committed to a publication schedule of 37 years - bit too regular for my liking."

// There you are! //

Joseph T Major, 4701 Taylor Boulevard #8, Louisville, Kentucky 40215-2343, USA: (2/10/93) "You do not mind being thought of as a woman's sex toy? My, my. Well, then, just report to the God-Editor of BCSEFazine in Vancouver and Graeme will put you in touch with the Leather Goddesses of Phobos, who will no doubt be immensely pleased at their new acquisition. We will miss you. (Here is your contribution to Montpetit's *La Première fois/The First Time*.)

Operation Red Nose is original, though the general idea is not. Here in Louisville, for example, there is a holiday service of tow-truck drivers doing much the same, offering to tow home drivers who have had a little too much and will admit it. The problem, of course, is that many partygoers know that "I can hold my drive and drink", and end up taking too many innocent bystanders to morgue slabs with them, or killing and being freed to kill again.

David Shea questions the need for Martin H. Greenberg's collection *The Leiber Chronicles*. As far as I can tell, Greenberg is hooked on anthologizing the way some people are hooked on heroin. Back in the seventies we were worried when Roger Elwood was doing an anthology every third week, because he might "take over SF". Well, Greenberg is beating that rate; but then Greenberg seems not to have any overriding obsession other than putting out anthologies and collections. By way of contrast, some people could not stand Elwood's comical religious propensities. (Nowadays, seeing the stupendous success of Peretti in that field, Elwood is writing Christian novels.)

The various discussions of *wiedernotstand* (a German term which can be very loosely translated "I was only followink Orders") can be piqued by the recent dismissal of charges against ex-Head German Red Erich Honnecker because of his poor health. The historical-minded will recall a similar dismissal of charges against oil executive Armand Hammer, who brought in doctors' affidavits by the carload on how his poor fragile health could not withstand the burden of a trial. The dismissal of charges produced a miraculous recovery, enabling him to resume his worldwide career of being the bridge between the East and West ("selling the rope" as the phrase actually attributed to Lenin puts it). And it looks as if Democratic party insider Clark Clifford is about to pull off the like medical miracle.

But *wiedernotstand* is not acceptable as a plea. The Allies noticed that no one was disciplined for refusing assignment to a concentration camp or an SS killing team (*Einsatzkommando*); it was always possible to get a transfer to a fighting unit. As Cheslin says, it was perfectly possible for the Vopo (*Volkspolizei* "People's Police") border guards to "accidentally" miss.

Curt Phillips's choice of "Gulf" as a high point of Heinlein's work seems unusual in the light of Heinlein's dislike for the work. Heinlein wrote it, on a commission from John W. Campbell for a special issue for *Astounding* - the famous "trick issue", where a fan had written a loc to the November 1948 issue reviewing the November 1949 issue, so the genuine November 1949 issue had to look like that. (The problem with the current state of fandom is that such items as this will be totally unknown to so much of the readership and stale boring old news to so much of the active readership.) By that time, moreover, Heinlein disliked Campbell - Campbell had opined that the Navy high command was incompetent for permitting Pearl Harbor to happen and Heinlein took offense

at anyone not showing the utmost respect for his beloved Navy. (What did he do when the congressional hearings showed that naval commander Admiral Husband E. Kimmel was incompetent?)

I am still waiting for Sharyn McCrumb's forthcoming novel on mystery fans, given her presentations of SF Fans, Civil War re-enactors, Scots-Americans, et cetera, as being inept geeky nerds who could succeed at life if they put the same effort into their real lives (and so unfit and unworthy to criticize her). I am not holding my breath, though."

Alan Sullivan, 20 Shirley Road, Stratford, London E15 4HX, UK: (1/31/93) "...That's a fairly subtle cover, you have there..."

I like the map of Fandom on P2. I take it this is based on U.S. and/or Canadian Fandom? My impressions of U.K. Fandom are not dissimilar, although there are one or two differences.

The Gamers, Japanime and Costumers are more closely associated with *Trekdom*, and each other. The Hard SF, Conrunners, Book-Fans and Hucksters form another grouping, with Comics Fans forming a semi-independent bridge between the two.

Trufen are still "Proud and Lonely", and SMOFs get *everywhere*. Few seem to have a good word for the Filkers, and as for the writers of "Slash" Fiction...

And there are those of us who flit from group to group, usually to be found wherever there is a bar or a silly event happening.

Don't ask me how it works, but it does. Mostly. Never mind...

LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX: This reminds me of an old joke about Aural Sex, which I will spare you.

More seriously though, it sounds like a very interesting project, with a lot of potential. It is high time sex and romance were treated in a more "mature" fashion, removed from the innuendo, but without losing the essential emotional side of things. Such handlings of the subject matter are very few and far between. Small wonder that *La Première Fois* not only sold so well, but also needed reprinting at such relatively short notice.

I shall think more on this, and may even submit something. Whatever happens, I wish this project and those involved every success.

Walt Willis, 32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, BT21 0PD, N. Ireland: (2/5/93) "...I was interested in your expression of the desire to be sent maps of where your readers live. I understand this very well, having always been a devotee of maps. I remember during the war, when it was illegal to have ordnance maps, for fear they would fall into the hands of invading forces, going to immense trouble to obtain maps of Northern Ireland for gloating over..."

I was very pleased to read your review of *Lila*. This is the first review I've seen of it which expresses what I think would be my own reaction to the book. Like you, I was very impressed with Pirsig's first book. In fact I wrote an article about it, (which was eventually reprinted in *Warhoon* 28, an anthology of my stuff.)

Palter's question, what preceded the Big Bang, is easily answered ---another collapse of the Universe. As its expansion ceases and gravity takes over again, all matter will contract again into a huge black hole, which will eventually explode, starting the cycle anew. This may already have happened an infinite number of times. The process to my mind eerily resembles the breathing of an animal. It is possible that it is so far removed from us in time as well as in space that we will never be able to understand what is going on, any more than a corpuscle in our blood stream can comprehend the working of our bodies.

Buck Coulson's vision of fandom as particles of impurities floating in a cosmic beer may not be far off the truth.

Thank you again for another outstanding issue. It's amazing how short a time it has taken for TFF to become an essential of fandom."

// "Come on Ben, did Walt Willis really write that last sentence?" "Yes, he did! I can prove it. Just take a look at the original letter in that gold frame on the living room wall!" - Seriously folks, I usually edit out most of the egoboo I get in your locs, even if I've been somewhat more self indulgent with the present issue. But I simply couldn't resist printing this one. Thanks Walt. //

I was also very happy to hear from: James Allen, Fiona Anderson, Jeff Behrnes, Sheryl Birkhead, Bill

Bowers, Ned Brooks, Brian Earl Brown, Robin R. Brunner, Tim Lane, Ken Cheslin, Fred Cleaver, Chester Cuthbert, Gary Deindorfer, Dale Denton, Stephen H. Dorneman, "De Profundis", Kurt Erichsen, Brad Foster, Klaus N. Frick, Seth Goldberg, David Griffin, Karen Pender-Gunn, Judith Hanna, Lynn Hickman, Andy Hooper & Carrie Root, Cathy Howard, Alan Hunter, Terry Jeeves, Karl Johanson, Jerry Kaufman & Suzanne Tompkins, Robert Lichtman, Eric Lindsay & Jean Weber, Mark & Vanessa Loney, Andrei Lubenski, Dick & Nicki Lynch, Allan Pekka Manninen, Mark Manning, Joe Maraglino, Rod Marsden, Christian Martin, Mark Nelson, Bruce Pelz, Hans Persson, Curt Phillips, Robert Sabella, Tom Sadler, Leland Sapiro, Andy Sawyer, David M. Shea, Ruth M. Shields, Ben R. Schilling, Alexander R. Slate, Dick & Leah Smith, Dale Speirs, Mae Strelkov, "Ethel the Aardvark", John Thiel, Lisa Thomas, Kristin Thorrud, "Thyme", Phil Tortorici, R. Laurraine Tutihasi, Alexander Vasilkovski, Henry L. Welch, Brad Westervelt, Laurie Yates, W. Andrew York and Brian Youmans. ■

that follow to produce his or her own original collectible card and send it to me for official registration and publication.

Each card received will be attributed an official number in order of arrival. As soon as I have accumulated 16, I'll publish them in the central pages of the next issue of *The Frozen Frog*.

Here are the guidelines: 1) Front of card should show a self-portrait of the fanartist. "Self-portrait" can be liberally interpreted. Directly below the "TFF" label I will put the official number of the card. The name of the fanartist should appear directly to the right of this number.

2) The back of the card is yours entirely. It should be used in the usual way, to give statistics, artist's biographical notes, etc. One rule though: it should include at least one piece of shameless bragging.

3) Send your originals to Benoit Girard, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge, Quebec, CANADA, G1Y 1Y9. And please, pass this on among fellow fanartists. See you next issue. ■

THE FROZEN FROG'S FANARTISTS COLLECTIBLE CARDS PROJECT

There are baseball cards, hockey cards, cards of every kind and now even Dungeons & Dragons cards. Why not fanartists cards?

So -
mewhere on this page, you will find a template which fanartists may use to create their own collectible cards. Every fanartist in the world, old hands, neos, near pros, merely passable, virtual unknowns, all are hereby invited to use this template and the guidelines

<p>TFF</p>	<p><i>The Frozen Frog Fanartists Collectible Cards</i></p>
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