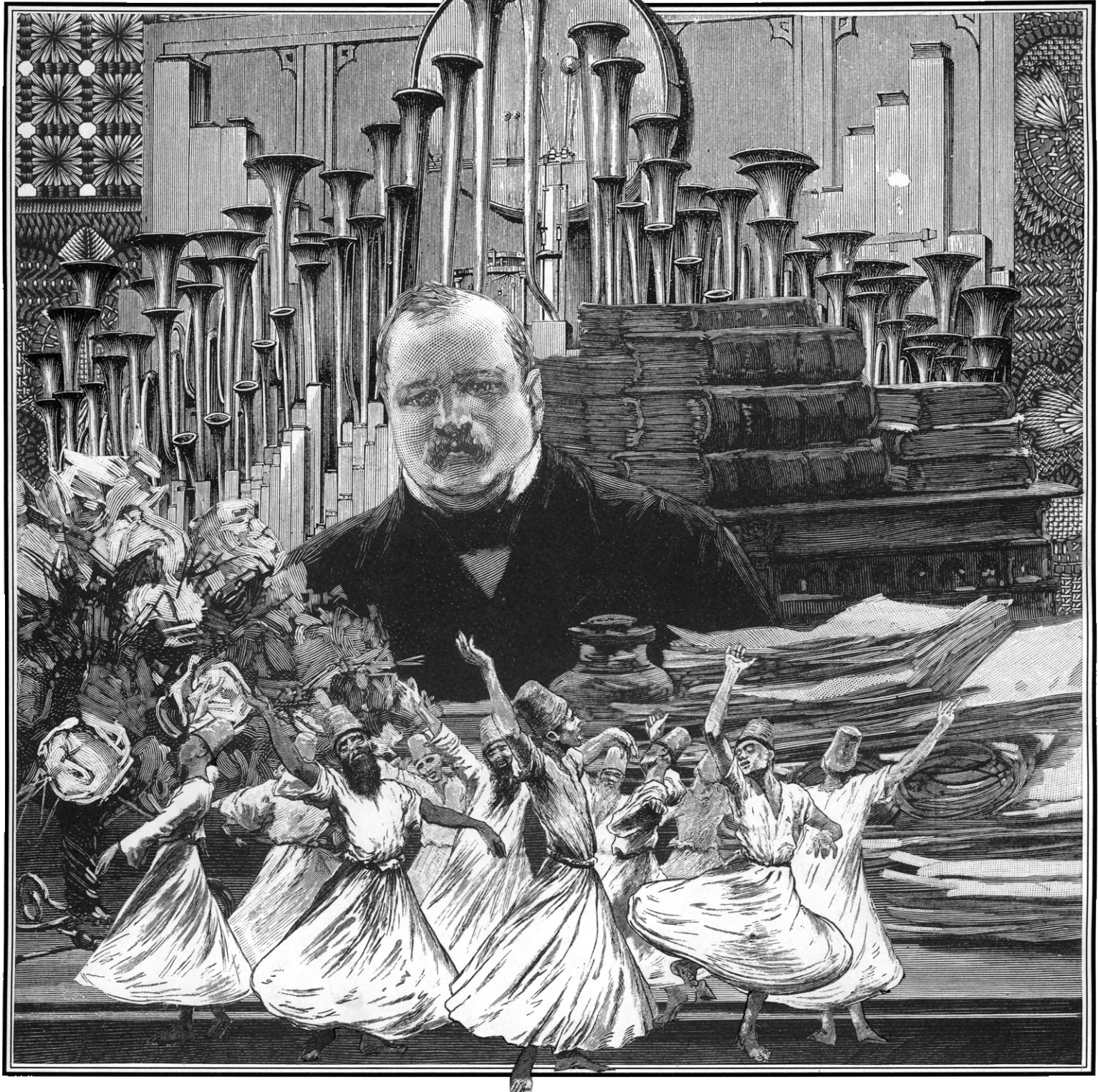


# CHUNGTA



*Second Issue* 🌀 *December 2002*

# CHUNGA

Welcome to the Hashemite Kingdom of *Chunga 2* (remember, this is a caliphate, not a triumvirate), published on Two Towers Day—that's December the 18th, 2002. Produced by Andy Hooper (publisher), Randy Byers (editor), carl juarez (design), and our esteemed contributors, listed below. Available for antiagathic drugs, and by editorial whim or wistfulness. Also available, grudgingly, for \$3.50 for a single issue, though we suggest the free (and revised, once we find the typos) online edition at eFanzines.com, so we can fund our declining years trading rare paper copies on eBay. Our correspondence address is 1013 North 36th Street, Seattle WA 98103. Editors: please send three copies of any zine for trade. Email: fanmailaph@aol.com, rbyers@u.washington.edu, and cjuarez@myrealbox.com. This fanzine supports Byers for TAFF.

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# Fromagerie

An Editorial-a-tre



**T**he first circle is complete. With this issue we take the feedback we got from you and return it amplified. Now we're talking!

This second issue business is new to me, since I've only produced oneshots before (excluding apas). Andy and Carl worked on *Apparatchik* together, but while I contributed and helped out in various ways as an apparatchiki, I wasn't part of the editorial team. So the process and different stages of producing a regular zine are all new to me, and it is only with this issue that it begins to feel quite real. With the first issue, we conjured something out of thin air. With this one, that something is starting to talk back to us. By the next issue, I expect it to be giving us orders.

We here at the House of Mutant Gypsy Vacuum Cleaners are doing our best to showcase the art. I'm still learning the ropes of the fannish art world, but I can already see that the pursuit of artwork requires more — and better — planning. What we really need is for our writers to finish their pieces two weeks ahead of our deadline so that we can pass them along to artists for illos, but since I'm one of the writers, I know that's a non-starter. Thus, since I knew what I would be writing for this ish three months ago, I began to bug Craig Smith for an illo back in September. Craig still quite sensibly waited until I'd actually written the damned article (two weeks after our deadline) before he did anything, so I guess that trick doesn't work either.

That said, I will now mimic more experienced faneds by pleading with artists to send unsolicited cartoons and fillos. We want your stuff. Yes, *you!* All praise to Brad Foster and Alexis Gilliland for volunteering material this time around. However, I understand very well that it's nice to be asked personally and directly, and we're doing that, too. I still haven't contacted D. West, since I don't have an e-mail address for him and no longer remember how to write letters. Please, Mr. West, send cartoons and artwork to my address. I promise not to lose it, and Carl promises not to shrink it.\* And we won't blur it like *Plokta* does. (We have our own way of blurring things.)

— Randy

**O**nce more we've reached the part of the year full of fannish voting opportunities and obligations. The Novas have come and gone (congratulations to Claire, Dave and *Plokta*), and we're now confronted with a four-person TAFF race, the Hugo nominations deadline (for those supporting or traveling to Toronto next year) and FAAN award balloting (for everyone). The Hugos are made more interesting with the migration of *Ansi-ble* to the semiprozine category, and the impending conclusion of *Mimosa*. *Chunga* is not eligible for a rocket as this is but our second issue, but of course our contributors are all fine and worthy candidates, and it remains a powerful rush to be nominated.

About the current TAFF race, more on the last page. If this issue has been the multimedia science fiction issue, #3 will be the TAFF issue, with consideration of gonad factors past and present, the dish on the toothsome and the trollful of Transatlantic fandom, and a field guide to contemporary candidates. We promise to fall into your mailbox again in time to remind you to use the TAFF ballot included with this issue.

Top Ten Titles that might please you more than *Chunga*:

1. *Lunk*
2. *Pander*
3. *Pinko*
4. *Hashcrank*
5. *Caleb Deschanel*
6. *Pilaf*
7. *Oil War*
8. *Fladling*
9. *Snandergrab*
10. *Piniella*

— Andy

**S**oftware ought to be more like polka. And that's all I have to say.

— No, wait. Currently if you search Google for *Chunga* it appears on the third page of search results. This is not good enough! In this clash of namespaces (alluded to in the Iron Pig) we will not be victorious until its position in the results is a *negative number*. Yes, so they will direct you to *Chunga* before you even search for it. All we ask is for you to type it in every time you pass a keyboard. Eventually Google will notice.

— Carl

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Hail Warren Z! Prophet of brushfire wars, avatar of bad attitude and mordant satire; callow warrior-character from the land of the eternal sun, chronicler of innocence and desire among the palms and its aftermath; not a soundtrack spammer nor an easy collaborator, his best performances served neat; heart-wry observer of intergender combat; caster of the post-colonial landscape of indulgence and loathing into song (I have been to Lee Ho Fook's, and it is nothing special); a man whose looming demise can drive flinty David Letterman to tears, and who has supplied the song upon which this issue's epithet is based, the title of which is left as an exercise for the reader.

Next issue: Zamfir.

— Carl and Andy

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\* Much.

# Mr. Mephisto and the Autumn of the Monster Culture

by Andy Hooper



**I**t is Halloween as I write this, early evening in Seattle. Across Francis Avenue, I can see jack-o-lanterns glowing in front of a home with small children. A steady stream of costumed trick-or-treaters visit their door for candy, until the father returns home with his two boys, one, perhaps 8 years old, dressed in the unmistakable blue tights and red cape of the last son of Krypton. The other is something fuzzy and yellowish — is he Pooh Bear? Tigger? Pikachu? Maybe just a small chicken with a bright orange beak protruding above his brow like the bill of a cap. They have small white handle bags stuffed with candy, and excited shrieks and beeps escape from them every few seconds as the father gently herds them up the stairs to the house. Two other groups of kids arrive before he can get them inside, and there is a wave of explanation of costumes between the three sets of siblings/friends.

The other boys and girls are older, between 12 and 14, very nearly old enough to go out on their own, but a single stout mother and father linger on the sidewalk to supervise each pair, quietly observing the beautiful evening, glorying in their children's genius and perversion. The older boys have scary costumes; revenant corpse-like characters with sharp implements apparently imbedded in their bodies. One tall and rail-thin kid with a Tina Turner wig seems to admire the older brother's Superman costume. But the other kids are interested in actually scaring the tiny Chicken-Boy if they can, and they menacingly flash claws and rubber teeth as they audition for his mother, newly arrived with the tray of fun-size candy bars. She encourages them to take three or four; then she bundles her boys inside and orders her husband to extinguish the pumpkins. Halloween is over for another year.



**W**hen I was perhaps eleven years old, my Mother ordered me to go to a Halloween party. It was a significant event in my development as a social being, as I don't think I had ever attended any sort of formal social event without the direct, personal supervision of an adult prior to that. Oh, there were adults at the party, which was held in a Congregationalist church. But none of them were *expecting* me. None of them would notice or care if I did not appear, or pay any attention if other children chose to torment me, always a good possibility in those days.

I was in a simple black cape, with black pants and a snow-white turtleneck — perhaps a cross between Dracula and Dick Cavett. I had slicked back my hair, drawn large black circles around my eyes and crammed some plastic fangs in my mouth to reinforce the effect. This simple vampire costume seemed a relief in the wake of the outfit I'd had when I was ten. I wanted to be the Mummy, and my generous mother agreed to sew perhaps 50 long rags onto a pair of pants and a shirt — while they were on my body, of course, leading to an extremely late night standing in the family room as she slowly attached the strips by hand. Lots of eye black, and more wrappings around my head, plus a superb arm-clutched shuffle, made it by far the most realistic costume in the fifth grade. But then other kids had stepped on trailing strips and started me unraveling, and repairs had to be made before the actual trick-or-treating could happen — the whole thing must have consumed something like 12 hours by the end of Halloween.

The Dracula costume was better for games, and the eye make-up ran delightfully when I plunged my whole head into a galvanized tub in pursuit of an apple. There was music and a certain amount of hesitant dancing, mostly girls in a group of six, naturally. When I came home, there was a pan of roast pumpkin seeds, certainly the best thing about Halloween ever.

But we return to the question, why did my mother (with my father's enthusiastic assent) order me to attend the Halloween party? What purpose might have required me to leave the house, while my young sisters were safely sequestered in bed, or perhaps parked in front of an extra hour of TV? If you have an idea that they might have wanted to enjoy a small party of their own, you have some sense of the real reason behind the enduring appeal of Halloween.



**H**alloween was a curious experience when I was younger, a time when the whole world seemed to temporarily tune into the creepy wavelength where I lived all year. And at that time, the lines of genre demarcation between horror and science fiction were far more tenuous than they are now, and there was a continuum of shared coolness that ran between the high alloy space opera of SF and the brain-switching camp of horror. I loved *Star Trek* and *Lost in Space*, certainly, but TV, movies, even comics that used sfnal themes were far outnumbered by those with classic "Monsters" and other horrific characters and settings.

Science fiction fandom predates true horror fandom, the Monster Culture, by several decades, and as with comics, gaming and regency dancing, individuals already steeped in the fannish ethos helped to admit a measure of subcultural insurgency to horror fandom when it expanded dramatically in the 1950s and 1960s. Horror became a popular hobby when early TV stations began to broadcast older, and therefore cheaper, "monster movies" from the 1930s and 1940s, particularly the Universal Studios canon featuring Dracula, Frankenstein, the Wolfman, the Mummy, etc. Remakes and new stories featuring these characters followed by the dozen. Horror became comical, cute, and almost hip, as Bobby Pickett's "Monster Mash" burned itself into the brain of every American. So it wasn't the Save *Star Trek* phenomenon that reached me first, or F.O.O.M. and the quest for a Marvel No-Prize — it

was Forrest J. Ackerman and his amazing amalgam of Hollywood hero-worship, documentary, gossip and fannish in-jokes known as *Famous Monsters of Filmland*.

I can close my eyes and see the greatest trove of *Famous Monsters* of my young life, an amazing run of more than a dozen issues. They were unaccountably displayed on the shelves of a small stationary store and newsstand in Fenton, Michigan, where my Uncle's family lived in the very early 1970s. Exiled to his care for a few weeks at the end of summer, I hoarded allowance money, gathered empty Faygo soda bottles, and drove pitiless bargains with neighborhood kids for the balance of my Hot Wheels collection, until I had enough to buy another of the issues on that stand.

The articles that Forry wrote, frequently fawning anecdotes about boyhood idols, groaning with puns, were engaging enough to an 8-year-old sensibility, but it was the advertising section in the back of the magazine that gripped my imagination most. Beside the huge ads for Forry's own "Hear Famous Monsters Speak" record albums (and numerous other Warren Publishing titles, all far racier than *Famous Monsters*), there would be small ads from dealers offering Super 8mm film clips, publicity still photos, one-sheet posters, books, autographs, and a hundred other artifacts. There were even ads for a few amateur publications that appear in retrospect to have been out-and-out fanzines. The

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Collecting was clearly one path into the cool, and I was determined to fill the world with 8-inch tall revenants and undead predators.

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magazine was full of reference to “Fans,” to whom the masters of horror seemed monotonously grateful and kind. It was clear that they were a special class of person who had access to the professional and creative world of horror without being able or required to actually produce anything within it. Connecting the dealer ads with the photos of fans frolicking with carefree horror professionals at early West Coast conventions and the knowing smirk of Forry’s style had a galvanic effect on me. The cool stuff that I stole away to study in private was far more than just a hobby — it was potentially *a way of life*, or even better, a *job*.

Not that I am saying I had any idea what to do with the subcultural knowledge I had gained at age eight. I went through a frenzied model-building stage for the next three or four years, some tanks, ships, airplanes and impossibly heavy AMT kits of the *Star Trek* ships, but mostly figural kits of famous monsters from Aurora Plastics. Collecting was clearly one path into the cool, and I was determined to fill the world with 8-inch tall revenants and undead predators. When I rediscovered the *Monster Culture* in 1999, through my work with Collecting Channel (dot com), I found that a passion for those same kits was one of the most common interests for contemporary collectors.

Another critical factor in the expansion of the *Monster Culture* was the TV Horror host phenomenon, and I had exposure to that as well. The first horror host, the slinky Vampira, was definitely hired to help keep the attention of bored male viewers between bouts with Lugosi and Tor Johnson. But as horror programming became more focused at the burgeoning population of post-war children, the emphasis went once more from the potentially sexy to the broadly comic and ridiculous. The classic canon was expanded to include films starring Abbott, Costello, and a variety of stooges, and horror programming settled into late night hours on Friday and Saturday, when it was assumed most adults were not interested in watch-

ing television. And as the monster movies became more generic with each viewing, the original portions of the program became more interesting and memorable by far. This is reflected by the fact that while it is challenging to find reference online to dismal movies like *Curucu*, *Beast of the Amazon* and *The Monolith Monsters*, you can find a dozen sites discussing the characters that used to introduce them on TV. These include legendary John Zacherle of New York and Philadelphia, Dr. Paul Bearer of Florida, and Cleveland’s Ghoulardi. When I was very young and lived in Detroit, we were blessed with both the local star, Sir Graves Ghostly (That laugh! “Nnnnyyyeaaaaahhhhh!”) and The Ghoul out of Toledo, Ohio, who specialized in live skits and original animated shorts.

On WMTV in Madison, Wisconsin, the host was the long-suffering Mr. Mephisto, played by local actor Dick Flanagan. Mephisto was the host of a program that began in 1967 under the name *Ferdie’s Inferno*, then became *Lenny’s Inferno* in 1971, when Lenny Mattioli purchased the program sponsor, American TV & Furniture (on the West Beltline Highway, next to Treasure Island). It was always a struggle to secure parental permission to stay up to Midnight, even on Friday, to see the program, and I frequently fell asleep during the first reel when I succeeded in doing so. In the 1970s, *Lenny’s Inferno* used the familiar mix of bad horror movies and horror-themed comedy, but also presaged the infomercial in the way that commercials for TVs and stereo components were seamlessly woven into the blackouts. Even the opening montage, accompanied by Mussorgsky’s “Night on Bare Mountain,” showed a crumbling Gothic manor atop a peak, with a huge “American TV” banner flying overhead.

Mr. Mephisto was made up in clown white with huge black circles around his eyes, and wore a battered black top hat over a wild black wig. He was supposed to represent some vampiric or demonic master of the castle, but Flanagan’s delivery seemed to be inspired as much by Jack Benny as Bela Lugosi. Seated at a dilapidated desk, his most frequent interaction was with a disembodied voice that lived in a box on his desk, known even to himself as “The Voice in the Box.” Local commercial actor Jim Stevens was the Voice, and also provided him an invisible sidekick, the semi-verbal “Willie.” There were ongoing plot lines, such as the plans for the “BiPerennial” celebration in “Swampton,” spearheaded by local military hero Dwight David Howitzer, but most of the shows seemed to involve an improvisational stream-of-consciousness narrative created by Flanagan and Stevens. Themes would sometimes persist for months, as when

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The Voice developed a desire to see a mysterious western called *Three for Bronsky*. This seemed to share some characteristics with the rat pack vehicle *Three for Texas*, but spooled out to include Japanese rubber monsters and Hercules dubbed from Italian. They never did manage to show *Three for Bronsky*, but they did show recycled *Night Gallery* and *Suspense* episodes, along with almost every movie John Agar made. And whatever digression into fantasy they might pursue, Mephisto was always ready to bring us back to the great savings available on tape decks by Teac and new TVs by Magnavox.

The *Inferno* survived into the 1980s, driven back to 12:30 am by the advent of *Late Night with David Letterman*, but otherwise unscathed by the phenomenon that killed a hundred horror shows, *Saturday Night Live*. As WMTV was an NBC affiliate, the competition for the late night Saturday slot would have been brief and direct, but the long term impact of SNL was far more significant. It proved that adults were willing to watch TV after prime time on Saturday, and established a level of national ratings that forced other networks to try to compete for the time slot with more than recycled horror films.



Of course, horror itself evolved in a manner that precluded programming it for 8-year-olds. The critical event in this change actually took place shortly before I was even born, when Robert Bloch and Alfred Hitchcock created *Psycho*. Horror owed its original appeal to its mixture of sex and death, and even hoary classics like Dracula and Frankenstein's monster had an erotic charge to them, something enthusiastically reclaimed by the latter-day directors who continue to re-make them. And *Psycho*, with the stealing and the stabbing and the problems with Mother, established the banality of horror with such success that the old monsters lost their remaining power and began to disappear. Horror was something just too human, as opposed to the inhuman things we once had time to fear.

By the time Mephisto and I were enjoying our weekly visits, the Monster Culture was well into a hormone-suffused adolescence. Polanski's *Rosemary's Baby* and Dean Stockwell's attempted sacrifice of Sandra Dee's virtue to Yog-Sothoth in *The Dunwich Horror* were prime examples of the state of the art. But that was the source of trouble, and marked the end of the Monster Culture's ascendance, as we're infinitely more comfortable with death than

we are with sex. Parents who had no problem with creatures assembled from the parts of cadavers, or revived after 3,000 years in an Egyptian grave, found themselves blushing at the advent of a vampiress in red lingerie, and scandalized by the rise of horror that revolved around nail guns and naked women. Exercises in charnel exuberance like *Night of the Living Dead* helped rediscover a powerful horror in the simple visceral reality of life and death, but left little for stylists to make model kits from, at least in the pre-resin styrene age.

When Aurora Plastics tried to follow this trend in 1971 with a new line of Monster Scene kits, they were virtually hounded from business. The kits included a model of the aforementioned Vampirella, a mad scientist, and a variety of torture devices, including an iron maiden, the rack, etc. What really got people worked up was a model of a young woman in a halter-top and cut-off jeans titled "The Victim." Aurora's marketing department approved advertising for this product that seemed openly sadistic and even nihilistic — one comic-strip styled ad features a panel in which the predatory Vampirella responds to the "Girl Victim's" cries for help by laughing, "Don't worry. This is New York, no one will help her."

When parent's groups called for the recall of these kits, Aurora withdrew them and re-issued them with much more subdued titles and decoration, and virtually no promotion. The General Mills Corporation, which had acquired Aurora only a few months before this disaster, fired almost everyone in a creative capacity at the company. This, more than any other single event, is what destroyed the large figural kit market in the 1970s, leaving me in search of something else to collect.



Halloween is still some kind of transition or convergence or commingling of arousal and dread, some passionate combination of a bite and a kiss. In the door between the dying light and the growing darkness, we temporarily understand something. That the very force and substance of the Earth may arise to self-possession and then turn on us in a wave of murderous fury. Or it may envelope us in an all-consuming and loving embrace, and that the end result of each process is the same mortal wreckage, the same chaos and irretrievable ruin.

Sleep well, Chicken-Boy.

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# Atom Smasher

Fanzine reviews  
by Robert Lichtman

**R**ay Nelson's cartoons were one of my favorite features in the fanzines of my youth. Irreverently captioned, they appeared in just about all my favorite zines. It was a pleasure to eventually meet and for a short time live in a spare bedroom in Ray's house in the early '60s, and ultimately to publish some of his work in my own fanzines. Later that decade, although Ray more or less disappeared from fandom so far as fanzines were concerned, I continued to see him socially because we both lived in the San Francisco Bay Area. After years, even decades, of inactivity, Ray returned to fanzine fandom two years ago with the first issue of *Quidditch*, a fanzine celebrating Ray's enjoyment of the Harry Potter books. It was met with near-silence. As Ray wrote, "*Quidditch* got hardly any response. The world was ready for Harry Potter, but my world wasn't."

Not to be discouraged, Ray recently began publishing *Uncle Smiley's Bookcase*, subtitled "a Bohemian little literary review," and has produced three approximately monthly issues so far. Its size and tone are similar to *Garden Library*, "a gentleman's journal of the arts," of which Ray produced about a dozen issues in 1973 and 1974. In that fanzine Ray took some interestingly light but controversial positions, such as coming out in favor of a revival of the waltz.

Ray hasn't taken such a stance so far with *Uncle Smiley's Bookcase*. Each issue has been eight pages, and each has contained must-read material, primarily from Ray. The first featured "The Last Days of Philip K. Dick," probably the best single item in all three issues so far, a hilarious conversation between Ray and Phil centering on Phil's belief, dating from childhood, that "Walt Disney personally drew all those talking ducks and mice." About which Ray responds: "Well, so did I. I took it for granted. Of course we both know now that he didn't even draw his own signature. He probably

didn't himself actually invent Mickey Mouse. He fooled everyone." Phil takes exception to that, but I can reveal no more — you must read this conversation for yourself.

The second issue leads with Ray's "Marion Zimmer Bradley: Portrait of the Artist as a Young Faaan," about how he and MZB came into fandom at the same time. "Picking up my address from a pulp magazine letter column, she wrote to me, then I wrote to her, then we exchanged photos. She wrote, 'Before I start pontificating, thanks, very much, for the picture. Oh-oh! The answer to a maiden's prayer! Honestly, you remind me of the class wolf in high school.'" She responded with her photo. Ray writes, "The snapshot is in black and white, and she stands at attention in front of what I suppose is her house, unsmiling, fragile, more than a little wistful. Of course I fell in love." Instead, though, an "intellectual friendship" was born as they both proceeded to publish fanzines.

The third and (at this writing) most recent issue contains a lengthy interview with Ray Bradbury. Nelson explains: "During my most recent house-cleaning project...I came across the notes I took when I interviewed Ray Bradbury in the early seventies for 'The Writers' Connection,' a newsletter for a writing school in San Jose. For lack of space, I was not then able to use more than a few selected paragraphs from the interview, so this publication in *Uncle Smiley's Bookcase* will be, for all intents and purposes, the first time this material has appeared anywhere." And well worth the wait. Nelson begins, "First, I'd like to ask you how you felt when you graduated from being a fan to being a pro." Bradbury responds, "When that happens, I'll get back to you." Nelson: "What do you mean?" Bradbury: "I still am a science-fiction fan. Being a fan of science-fiction and fantasy is what still inspires me. If I ever stop being a fan, that will be

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If you are one of the two people on the planet who don't already send your fanzine to Robert Lichtman (and yes, we mean you, David Hicks), you can send them to P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442, USA.

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when I have finally run dry.”

Elsewhere in these three issues, Ray praises the virtues of wine, lauds library cards, writes briefly on Henri Murger (a 19th century French Bohemian), and contributes some of his poems. There’s also a developing letter column with contributions from Joyce Katz, Trina Robbins, Lee Hoffman, Harry Warner Jr. and me.

When I spoke with Ray at ConJoso about *Uncle Smiley’s Bookcase*, he told me that the circulation of the first issue had been around fifty copies and with the third he was up to ninety. So before commencing this review I asked him if the additional exposure would pose any problems for him. He wrote back: “I’d be delighted if you reviewed me. I have all my pages stored in memory so I can supply newly-printed copies to anyone who asks for them.” To catch up with *Uncle Smiley’s Bookcase*, contact Ray at RayFaradayNelson@aol.com or send him a couple bucks to cover postage at 333 Ramona, El Cerrito, CA 94530.

One of the great innovations in fanzine fandom the past couple years has been Bill Burns’ Web site [www.efanzines.com](http://www.efanzines.com), a virtual fanzine newsstand where one can link to dozens of fanzines produced by a wide range of editors. Some are hosted directly on Burns’ site, while others can be reached via it. Many are current publications, including this one, while others are back numbers of fanzines that have ceased publication. Some are openly available, while the editors of oth-

ers require a passworded entry system in order to monitor who’s reading their publications in the otherwise totally open framework of the Web.

One editor maintaining such a portal is John Foyster, who has produced over two dozen issues of his *eFNAC* since the first back in February 2000. The zine is produced for reading on screen, with a landscape layout and large type that lends itself to full-page viewing on a typical computer monitor. He would prefer that you not print it out, but is resigned to People Like Me printing each issue in full color for archiving.

Because he produces no paper copies himself (or so I assume), he’s free to use the full range of 21st century tools in its production, with lavish but not excessive use of color in print, artwork and photographs. An ongoing feature in recent issues has been reproductions of the covers of science fiction and fantasy magazines from fifty years prior to the date on each issue. The August 2002 issue, the most recent at this writing, features the covers of eleven different prozines from August 1952. Another feature of late has been photographs of John with various *eFNAC* readers. The June issue’s cover depicted John flanked by Claire Brialey and Mark Plummer, while on July’s cover John’s arm is collegially wrapped around the shoulder of a smiling Janice Gelb.

Issues have ranged widely in subject matter over its 2-year run, but one thing that’s constant throughout is John’s passion and attention to detail on each and every subject he’s written about in its pages, ranging from a close look at *Astounding* in

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***A Bright Particular Star:  
Words and deeds of  
Lucy Huntzinger,  
ed. Kim Huett***

Before I could see, but now I’ve been blinded by the light. Kim Huett has collected a dozen essays by Lucy Huntzinger from the last two decades, and I feel it should come with a caution for us Lucy-newbies: DO NOT CONSUME AT A SINGLE SITTING. Because if you’ve never read anything by her before you’ll read the first piece, and then the next, and the next, and then once you’re finished you are stuck: *Where can you find some more?* (Somebody tell me, please, I’m serious.)\*

Generally focusing on blind spots of our culture—shoes, romance novels, nail polish, conversation, schizophrenia—these essays transcend the putative triviality of her subjects with real perception and plain words, at times quite courageously in their unblinking engagement. Highly recommended.

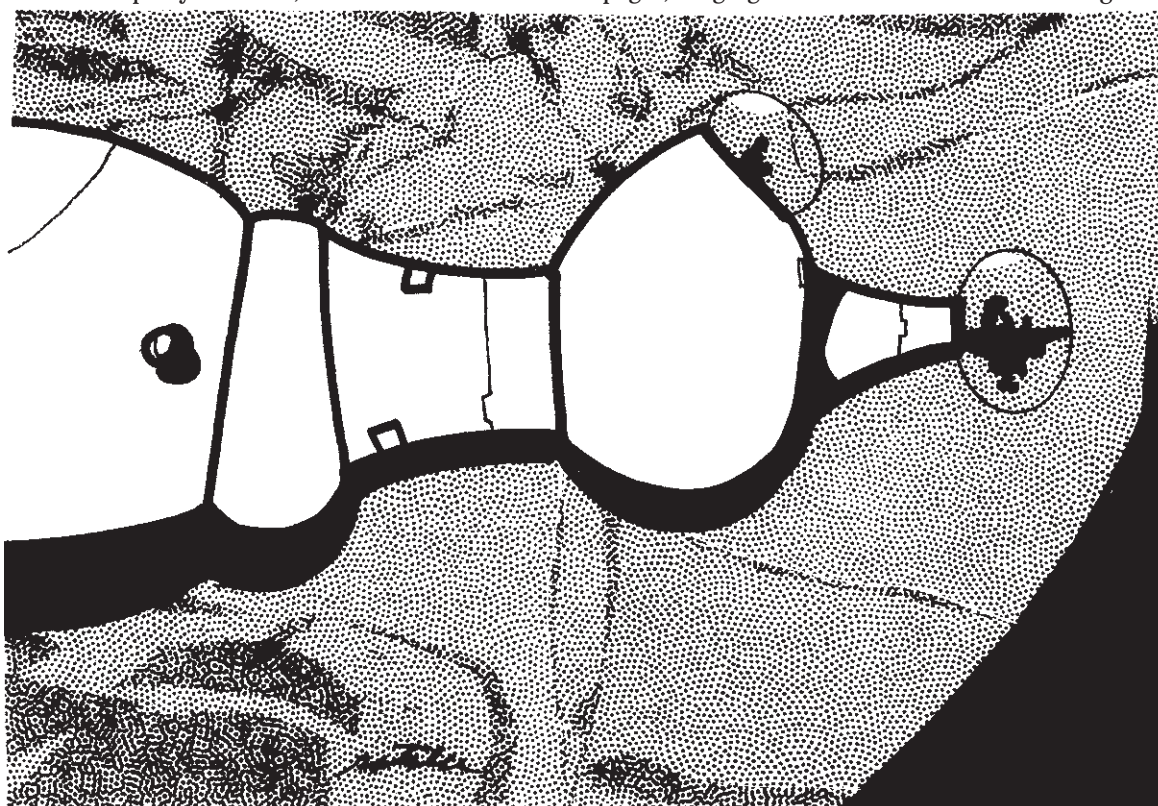
Oddly, the editor has taken the trouble on the title page to copyright the whole thing (and return all rights “to contributors,” whomever that may include), yet hasn’t put any contact info or price on it, but we suspect you could get a copy from Kim Huett at 29/63 Pearson Street, Holdor ACT 2611, Australia, or via [atoxenwurm@hotmail.com](mailto:atoxenwurm@hotmail.com).

Send him a couple of bucks for printing and postage. I’m sure he was probably pretty dazzled himself.

— carl

\* Randy sez: *Try her online journal, Aries Moon, at [www.intaglio.org](http://www.intaglio.org).*

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“—And delicious sprouts.”




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"This is the kind of fiction from which you take away nothing, and I at least can do without it. This novel shows why Stanislaw Lem called science fiction chewing gum for the vulgar."

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1943 to a survey of current fanzines to his favorite restaurants (and favorite meals at each one) in places like Kuala Lumpur.

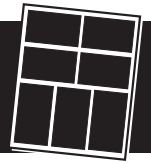
The three most recent issues have reflected this range. In No. 22, June 2002, the lead article is Juliette Woods' "A Strange Tale of Jersey," her account of Helicon II, this year's Eastercon, which took place on Jersey. This is a great success because of the level of detail, humor and name recognition. Less successful is Claire McKenna's "SwanCon 2002" in No. 23, the July issue, which suffers from a viewpoint that failed to engage me and which assumes a familiarity with Australian fandom's players that surely must escape more readers than just me. What, for instance, is one to make of a sentence like this: "I did go to the masquerade Ball, sat down for an extended chat with Stephen D, Elaine K and Tracey S (who weren't scared although they should have been) and learnt that Tracey has a Claymore sword. And uses it." John saves this issue from literary oblivion with "Dateline Elsewhere," subtitled "An Old Story—a diary from October 1993," an account of two weeks spent in Manila, Phillipines, in which we learn (true to form) that he "found one small place near the condo which prepared Filipino fast food, and which served one particular dish of pork and green beans cooked in coconut milk that I couldn't get enough of."

In the most recent issue, No. 24 for August 2002, John presents two long articles on literary subjects. The first is "*Hyperion* and the *Fall of Hyperion*," which he first delivered as a prepared talk at the June 1993 meeting of Critical Mass, a discussion group which he says has been meeting monthly in Adelaide since late 1987. The title refers to two books by Dan Simmons which I must confess I've not only not read but probably will never read, and I found myself skimming and skipping over John's

article, which generally offers a low opinion of Simmons and concludes with his declaration that "This is the kind of fiction from which you take away nothing, and I at least can do without it. This novel shows why Stanislaw Lem called science fiction chewing gum for the vulgar." And, "...whereas once we might have complained that award-winning novels were 'not so great,' there now seems to be a growing view that award-winning novels are downright bad. What has changed?"

The other long article in this issue is "An Arkansas Fellow Traveler," about the writing of one Donald Harrington, a fairly obscure U.S. writer of whom I'd previously not heard. A Google search turns up this bit of biographical material about Harrington: "Donald Harrington was born on December 22, 1935 in Little Rock, Arkansas. He married Nita Harrison on July 20, 1957, and has three children, Jennifer, Calico, and Katy. Mr. Harrington is currently residing in Wesley, Arkansas. Donald Harrington has written about the summers he spent in the Ozark Mountains as a boy. His books are about a fictional community in the hills of rural Arkansas." Foyster presents Harrington as an example of the "fellow traveler" author, one who does work that can be loosely classified as science-fiction but is not presented as such. Other more noteworthy examples would be Henry James (*The Sense of the Past*) and Marcel Proust (*Remembrance of Things Past*). Harrington produced two novels with SF overtones, *The Architecture of the Arkansas Ozarks* and *The Cockroaches of Stay More*, the latter a fictional Arkansas town. John's explication of both novels, with extensive excerpts, reminded me in their use of telepathy of Frank Herbert's *The Santaroga Barrier*, set in an imaginary valley east of Porterville in California's San Joaquin Valley. I won't go into more detail here, but urge you to read this article for yourself and see if you agree with John's conclusion that *Cockroaches* in particular "comes a little closer to conventional genre science fiction, with its striving to establish a link between man and an alien race.... Yet neither is anything like science fiction, and this is precisely why it is useful for those who categorize themselves as readers of science fiction to look outside, and see how much more can be done with the ideas which are supported to be the marks of genre science fiction."

If I've whetted your appetite for *eFNAC* through my comments above, I advise you to drop John a line at foyster@senet.com.au and ask for the secret password so you can read *eFNAC* for yourself. All past issues are available for download.



## **Fallout: J. Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard, and the Political Science of the Atomic Bomb**

**T**he graphic novel *Fallout* tells more than how the Bomb was built, going deeper to examine the political machinations and manipulations that happened behind the scene. From prologue to epilogue, the story spans nearly thirty years.

*Fallout* is divided into four main sections—*Birth*, *School*, *Work*, *Death*—with interludes, a prologue, and an epilogue. A different artist illustrates each section, which could have lead to a confusion of styles and intentions. However, every artist is so well suited to the individual stories and the story arc of the novel that this doesn't happen.

*Birth* takes us from Leo Szilard's arrival in London in 1932 through to the moment in 1939 when Roosevelt starts the Manhattan Project. Janine Johnston's realistic watercolors and pens establish the tone perfectly. There is a luxury to her soft-edged detail; the eye lingers to soak it in.

Leo Szilard is the driving character here. It is he who realizes that fission is possible, even when other experts say it's not. It is he who convinces Einstein to write to Roosevelt, and he who keeps at it until at last the letter is delivered. Roosevelt fidgets while the letter is read to him, then calls in General Groves and says "This requires action."

*School* takes place in 1942. Here we see Oppenheimer learning to handle all the myriad details and personalities of the Manhattan Project: he proves himself capable of pushing back against some "junior G-men," and he makes General Groves wait until his assistant finishes a report. We also see Szilard and Fermi working together to get the first atomic reaction. Szilard is much more driven here than in *Birth*, he's only shown as calm or introspective when he gets an inkling of what might come to pass: When the reaction is successful he says to Fermi, "I think this will go down as a black day in the history of mankind." At all other times, he's fighting with Fermi or fighting to get Fermi the materials needed for the experiment.

The art, too, is more driven: the lines more dashed and hurried, the drawing much less realistic than *Birth*. We don't have time for that; "It's a world war now," Oppenheimer says at the beginning, and no one knows how close the Nazis are to developing an atomic bomb. In this section we also see that the project of developing an atomic bomb has gotten bigger than any one person, particularly Szilard, can control. Now that Szilard and Fermi have gotten their reaction, Szilard has to wait behind Gen. Groves for Oppenheimer's attention.

The interlude between *School* and *Work* is called *A Los Alamos Primer* and we're given a brief roll call of some of the Nobel laureates there: Enrico Fermi, Robert Feynman, Niels Bohr, Ernest

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### **Fallout: J. Robert Oppenheimer, Leo Szilard, and the Political Science of the Atomic Bomb**

Story by Jim Ottaviani;  
art by Janine Johnston,  
Steve Lieber, Vince Locke,  
Bernie Mireault, and  
Jeff Parker

240 pp, GT Labs, 2001

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Lawrence. Building an atomic bomb is the most challenging problem such minds could be given.

*Work* brings us to 1945 and Los Alamos. The art, now, appears even more hurried, the pages are crowded, panels thrown down. Fermi, Szilard, and Oppenheimer are barely recognizable from earlier chapters. The most important character is the problem of building the bomb. There are several lectures outlining aspects of the problem; we see scientists researching the shape of the material, how it will be charged, what to use. The problem is all, and so absorbing that little or no thought is given to consequences.

Until they test the bomb at Trinity. Several viewpoints show the test explosion: a blind woman on the streets of Albuquerque; two women scientists who sneak out to the hills; different witnesses in the bunker. The explosion roars across several pages, until *Work* ends with a quiet voice saying, "Robert? Oppie? I just wanted to say congratulations. We're all sons of bitches now."

*Death* takes place in 1954. It's the height of the Red Scare and no one is safe from accusations. Oppenheimer is under investigation to see if his security clearance should be denied. This, now, is purely politics. This, now, is purely death. The art style has become more static: simple lines, solid blacks—almost like a 50s *You Are There* comic. The panels are pushed aside, sometimes almost pushed entirely off the page, by transcripts of testimony, excerpts from letters and supporting documents.



*Birth* ranged from London to Washington DC to New York to Princeton. *School* ranged from Berkeley, CA, to New York to Chicago. *Work* takes place at Los Alamos and around the New Mexico desert. *Death* takes place in three small rooms in Washington, D.C.

The testimonies are so cautious, complex, qualified that they say almost nothing; the questions often so hypothetical and leading as to be answerable only "yes, I would deny his security clearance." If nothing else works, the prosecutor alludes to documents the commission has that are unavailable to those testifying—or, for that matter, to Dr. Oppenheimer and his counsel. *Death* is the tragedy of the father of the atomic bomb. The charges levied against him are based on trivial incidents from long before he administered the Manhattan Project. The security investigation says more about the shame and paranoia of the government that sponsored the project than anything about Oppenheimer or the bomb itself.

Jim Ottaviani, *Fallout's* author, was a nuclear engineer and is now a librarian. This is the third book about science from GT Labs, and my favorite. It's also extensively researched: almost every panel has notes in the back matter. The bibliography includes technical publications and archived manuscripts as well as popular histories and memoirs of participants. Ottaviani calls these works science fiction, in that they're fiction about science and scientists. *Fallout* presents an engrossing story that uses its medium effectively.

— Luke McGuff

# Alison Through the Looking Glass

by Alison Freebairn

**I**t's 1100hrs in the real world, and my head is spinning. The air is full of voices babbling in Serbian, Pashto, Russian and Kazak, and my desk is slowly disappearing under a pile of print-outs.

Instant messaging is the tool of choice in our offices, stretching as they do from London to Kabul — although Afghanistan's internet access is around as visible and reliable as the international rebuilding programme.

An IM from our bureau chief in The Hague pops up on my screen. "This just in," he writes. "They're going after Bobetko. Indictment was unsealed this morning and should be on the website by now."

The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has become a bit of an obsession for me. Sad as it sounds, I have become a war crimes anorak since I took up this job — but then I don't know many journalists who aren't fascinated by it.

I pass on the information. "Oi! Chris says the tribunal has indicted Bobetko!" A chorus of *oohs* and *aaahs* greets this news. And with good reason. General Janko Bobetko has long been suspected of masterminding the "Medak Pocket" operation, when the Croatian army allegedly cleansed the area of its Serb population.

The 83-year-old is considered a war hero in his homeland, where nationalism is still a destabilising influence and the tribunal is viewed with extreme suspicion.

In Zagreb, the centre-left Croat government is hanging on by its fingernails. If it hands over Bobetko, the resulting wave of nationalist anger will sweep it out of office. If the authorities refuse to send the general to The Hague, the international community will come down on them like a ton of bricks, imposing sanctions that would cripple the country.

Trouble, trouble, trouble. God, I love this job. We pull a story together from our people in The Hague, Zagreb and Osijek in Croatia, publishing a definitive analysis after four hours of intensive research and rewriting. Suddenly it's 1700hrs, and I haven't even noticed.

I'm about to take a break when another MSN box pops up. "You have received a new email from Randy Byers".

*Yo, Sneerpout! it reads. How's the weather in London? It's blue skies and almost balmy (or is that barmy?) here in Seattle. No real news, I'm just writing to pester you about your piece for Chunga. Where is it? You're holding up everything!*

Panic grips me. How could I have forgotten this? Is there any way I can find time to write this piece? After a brief review of the upcoming fortnight, I realise that there is no way in hell I can manage it.

That's when it happened. Maybe it was because I had somehow failed to eat anything that day, or a continued lack of sleep caused by an overactive social gland. I tried to juggle my various obligations in my tired mind, and saw that I would fail to fulfil at least one of them.

Heartbeat hammering and vision blurring, the keyboard rushed up to meet my watering eyes. There was a sharp bang, and my last thought before I passed out was: "Shit, that's gonna bruise..."

Fainting at work is *never* a good look. When I came round, I was so mortified that I kept my eyes tightly shut for a few seconds before I had the courage to open them. I expected to see the anxious, distorted faces of my colleagues peering down at me.

What I see is Viggo Mortensen. In his Aragorn costume.

Sitting up sharply, ignoring the cartoon bluebirds fluttering around my head, I try to take stock of my surroundings — a cold stone floor, high ceil-

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Maybe it was because I had somehow failed to eat anything that day, or a continued lack of sleep caused by an overactive social gland.

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This is confusing me. I'm pretty sure I've watched this film before, yet with my condition, how could that be possible?

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ings, spiral staircases, and the occasional ghost that looks like an out-of-work ageing British comedian.

"Okay. I've suffered some kind of head injury. And now I'm hallucinating Hogwarts. That's... unexpected," I say, trying to assert some authority over the situation. "But what I don't get is, what the hell are you doing here? I've never fancied you — no offence — so if this is a dream, why aren't you Jonathan Rhys Meyers?"

The glare I receive in return could have cut glass. As silently as I can, I get to my feet and shuffle to stand behind Aragorn. "What the hell's going on?" I ask. Off to our left, Harry Potter sloughed off his cloak of invisibility and began to pore over the books in Hogwarts library's restricted section.

"Isn't it obvious?" Aragorn sneers. "Your workload was excessive. You friends expected fanzine articles from you. You couldn't cope. So you blacked out, and instead of writing a piece on genre films, you are dreaming it."

"And you are..." I whisper.

"Your spirit guide," Aragorn replies wearily. "I didn't want the job. I have battles to fight and a kingdom to win back. But for some reason, your subconscious picked me as the right person to guide you through this section of your memories."

That made no sense at all. I've never followed heroes, never trusted their peculiarly selfish brand of selflessness. Give me a bad boy every time. Give me Jonathan Rhys Meyers in *Gormenghast*. Give me Vin Diesel in *Pitch Black*. Give me anybody other than this greasy-haired manbitch.

I closed my eyes, expecting to have all my wishes granted when they reopened, but no joy. "Can they... can they see us?" I whisper.

"Don't be stupid," Aragorn drawls. "A short woman in funny clothes and a major character from a rival blockbuster? I think we might draw a bit of attention, don't you?"

I had promised to write a piece on genre movies for Randy. A year ago, perhaps, before *Minority Report* and *Reign of Fire* came out. I was so smitten by *Pitch Black* that I felt it had single-handedly rescued the genre movie from humdrum dumbed-down fare such as *Red Planet* and *Dungeons and Dragons*.

But then we had *Unbreakable*, and everything seemed to get so much better. The twin characters of Elijah Price, crippled genius and comics expert, and extraordinary joe David Dunn spoke so eloquently to me that I felt I had no cause to answer anymore, as though SF and fantasy films had resurrected themselves.

As the months flew by, it didn't seem to matter that *The Time Machine*, *Planet of the Apes* and

*AI* were such formulaic disappointments. Or that *Reign of Fire* lost what plot it had in its last half an hour. *Minority Report* had made a difference, as had monster movies such as *The Fellowship of the Ring* and, indeed, *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*.

"That child... is he the hero?" Aragorn, pouting with the effort of thought, was watching fragmented scenes from *Chamber of Secrets*.

"It's more complicated than that, although not by much. You can't really judge these characters by heroic standards, as..."

My voice tailed off as I realised that Aragorn wasn't listening to me. He was staring with naked hunger at the admittedly delectable figure of Professor Severus Snape.

"RIGHT! That's it!" I screamed. "Stop being lecherous! If I want LOTR/Harry Potter slash I could spend my life reading it on the net, but I'll be damned if I'm going to watch it in my head! Besides, you don't deserve him, now piss off."

Petard. Hoist. Aragorn didn't vanish — I did. When my vision cleared, I realised that I was in a dusty old cinema, which was screening *Men In Black*. "On no, not again," I whisper. "This is a terrible movie."

My companion nods wryly. "I'd agree with you at the moment, but, ah-huh, in a few minutes I'll forget we had this conversation, or that we were watching this sequence. You see, I have this condition, I..."

"Can't make new memories," I finish Leonard Shelby's sentence with a degree of resignation. He shrugs the shoulders of his expensive suit. "This is confusing me. I'm pretty sure I've watched this film before, yet with my condition, how could that be possible?" he replies.

"You haven't," I said. "It just feels like it. This is *Men In Black II* and it's pretty much identical to the original. I don't need a freak-boy spirit guide to tell me that this encapsulates almost everything I hate about recent genre movies.

"And look, I've already sourced you for one fanzine article so if I keep you around in this one, people will think I've run out of ideas and am being self-referential. So fuck off."

He fades to black and white and gradually disappears, shaken out of existence. The landscape bends through Escher angles before depositing me in darkness. "Okay," I say to nobody in particular. "Can I go back to reality now?"

When the answer came out of the darkness, I nearly jumped out of my skin.

"Part of your problem is that definitions of reality have changed and that's affecting how you are

seeing movies. Your life isn't as simple as it was. Nobody's is. The legends have darkened and you are no longer capable of seeing escapism in the same light."

The voice is deep, measured, clipped. It is patronising and pitying at once. As my eyes adjust to the gloom, one patch of darkness begins to stand out. Slowly, brightness forces the shadows to recede and highlights a glimmer of metal here, a shine of leather there. The wheelchair-bound man inches toward me. I know who it is before the rays of light illuminate his strong, serious face—the tight lips, short nose, intense dark eyes and outrageous asymmetrical Afro.

"Elijah Price. Are you my true spirit guide?"

"Who else? You stated earlier that *Unbreakable* was the film that reaffirmed your faith in movies, in spite of what had gone before. I'm here to show you that you are wrong. *Unbreakable* is your benchmark for future movies, as it was the last before a wave of releases polluted by America's search for a superhero strong enough to make the nation feel safe again."

Seconds pass as I hold his gaze. "In *Unbreakable*, you said that comic books are a repository for the human experience—every legend, every battle can be traced within their pages. What are you saying now?"

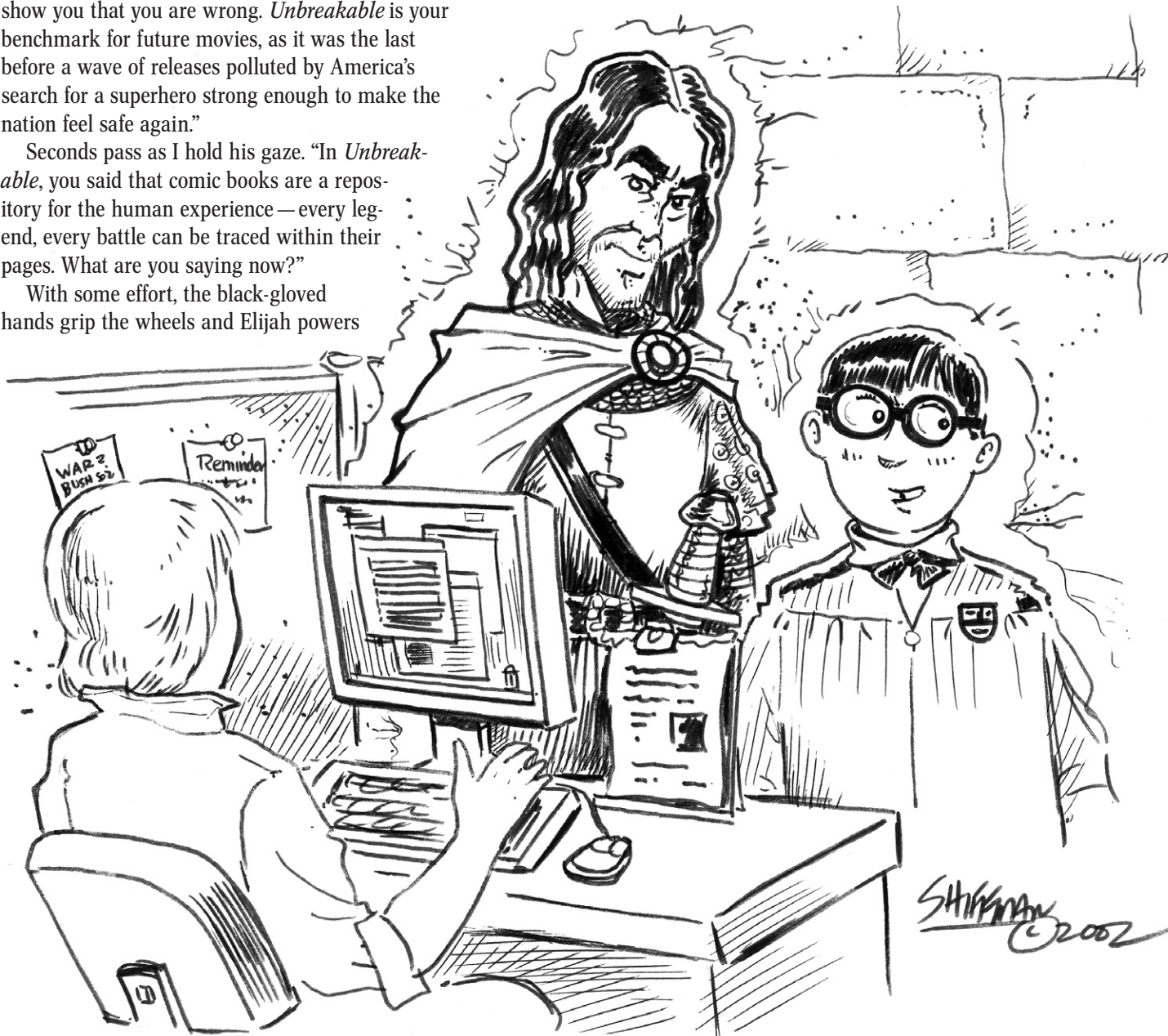
With some effort, the black-gloved hands grip the wheels and Elijah powers

his chair around to face the far wall.

"I'm not saying anything. This is your subconscious. If you don't pinpoint what has been upsetting you about recent genre movies you could be trapped here forever. I'll take you through this last part of the journey but finding the exit is your own responsibility."

I mull this over as scenes from *Spider-Man* and *Reign of Fire* flicker across the far wall. They both have a disingenuous quality that I object to strongly. Our lives have changed irrevocably and for now it's easy to imagine a Spider-Man or a Van Zan or a Wolverine—even a David Dunn—who is going to step into the breach and protect us. But there's every chance that we could end up in a place where the supermen will fall alongside the men. And what will we do then?

"We are writing our own mythology, and we



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You may be an insane megalomaniac – no offence – but I doubt you'd do as much damage as those who are offering to create a whole new generation of heroes.

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are writing it badly,” I venture. “I watch George W Bush making speeches to the UN — yes, the same body that stood by while 7,000 men and boys were butchered in Srebrenica — and it would be funny if there wasn't a very real danger that he's going to get us all killed. It's like watching Dr Evil threatening to whip out his 'la-ser'.

“He seems to think it's all a game, that he can hit reset if things go badly — which they probably will. And in a way, he's such an innocent that I can almost feel sorry for him. He's not the only twit to grow up believing that all you have to do to save the world is blow up the Death Star.

“We appear to be living in a world where you can't film a script without putting in a hideous 'Pick on one of us, and we'll all come and get you' scene a la *Spider-Man*. What next? We've had *Reign of Fire*, which the British critics had a field day with. 'Bin Laden is a Bull Dragon' was one headline. We've had Xander Cage's horrible stars-and-stripes parachute in *xXx*. I can't think of a single movie released in the past year that didn't have some hastily inserted post 9/11 reference.”

“But you loved *Spider-Man*,” drawls Elijah. “It's all here in your head. You actually cried at the end, and texted several of your friends to rave about how good it was.”

A bit of revisionism on my own part, perhaps. Certainly I didn't start feeling bitter about the 'don't pick on us, buddy, or we'll whup yur asses' scene until I found out that 50,000 Afghan civilians had been killed in the offensive against the Taleban. That's an awful lot of dead people, and they hadn't picked on anybody.

“Perhaps you should leave the politics behind when you go to the cinema,” said Elijah, sarcasm nudging the edge of his voice.

“I'd love to. But when the politics keeps creeping into the escapism, how can I not? How can I relax when everything that is terrifying me in the real world appears as a not-so-veiled reference in pieces of fluff that have been created to take our minds off our problems?”

“Not always,” Elijah replies. “By your own admission, you loved the Harry Potter films for their simplicity. And it would be wrong to argue that *The Fellowship of the Ring* subverted the good-against-evil mythos for political ends. Your gripe would seem to be with comic book adaptations — but you've been reading comics for long enough now to realise that these are political by their very nature.

“It's the same villain in different colours, and has been from the very start. These stories exist to show us our enemies as much as to reveal our

strengths.” The wheels glide into reverse, and Price is no longer visible. I have no idea if he is still in the room.

The images intensify, changing almost imperceptibly into the trailers for *X-Men 2* and *Daredevil* — more heroes ready to save the world. More propaganda preparing a nervous population for the inevitable? Or simple entertainment punctuated by a need to understand the recent past?

“Still, at least the quality of the spirit guide has improved. My first one was a dimpled ladies' man, whose foreign policy seemed to be 'if it moves, shag it'. Then the second one shows every sign of having a brain injury — he has no short term morality, and is incapable of understanding history, his place in it, and the consequences of his actions.

“Now I've got you. If only it was so easy in the real world. You may be an insane megalomaniac — no offence — but I doubt you'd do as much damage as those who are offering to create a whole new generation of heroes. Of course, when the other side spouts lines like that, they refer to 'martyrs'.

“Can I go home now? I feel like getting plastered on cheap champagne and watching *The Iron Giant* to cheer myself up.”

Price's voice, little more than a whisper, sounds like a fond farewell: “Keep dreaming about your bad boys and don't lose faith in stories. You may not find the answers at the moment, but you have to keep looking.”

He's right, of course. I find myself repeating this, like an idiot mantra, with my eyes screwed tightly shut — an ageing Dorothy clicking her stiletto heels together after one too many.

“What are you talking about?” asked another Scottish voice, higher and lighter than my own. My eyes snapped open and met those of my colleague Anna, who touched my pale face with concern. “Are you okay? You've been sitting with your head in your hands for ages now. Do you want to cancel tonight?”

Anna. Lovely woman. More of a spirit measure than a spirit guide, mind you “We were going to the cinema, remember?” she asked.

“We've got tickets for that weird looking film, *Donnie Darko*. I thought it looked like pants, but you talked me into going, said we had to give it a chance because it could be extraordinary.”

Damn right. This could be the film that makes all the difference. This could be the one. Collecting bags and jackets, we skip down the stairs and speculate over the fall of heroes and the scales of international justice

It's 1830 hrs in the real world. We sweep out into the chilly London air and into an uncertain future.





# Metropolis Regained

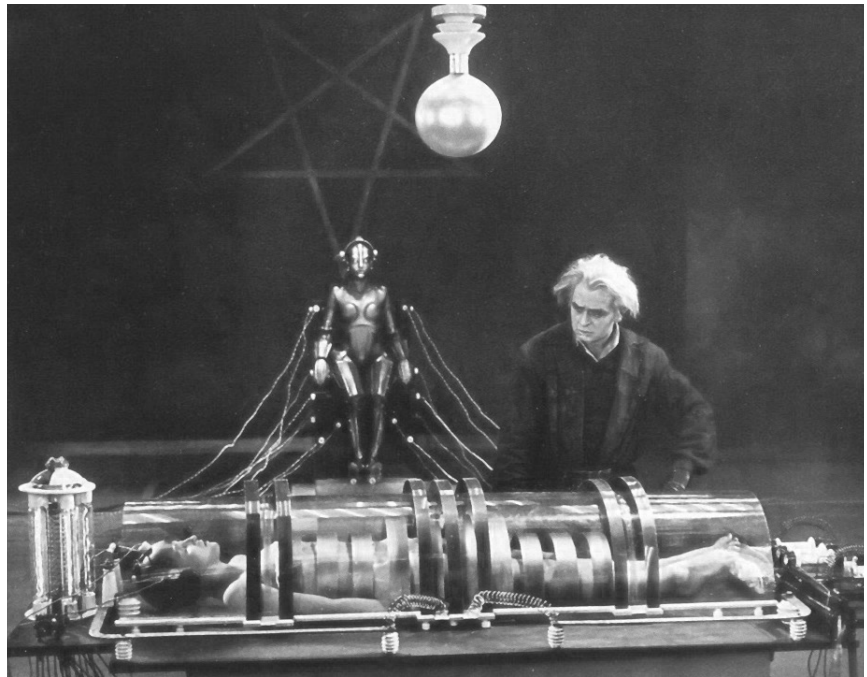


If you are any sort of science-fiction movie fan, keep your eye on listings for your local Landmark Cinema or similar art house, in case they run the new restoration of *Metropolis*. If they do, you must go.

If you think you have seen *Metropolis* before, you haven't. Even the Georgio Morodor edition was a pitiable fragment compared to the new edition compiled with the assistance of the Munich Film Archive and a myriad of other sources. This new cut is over a third again as long as the Moroder version, has had its images digitally restored, is presented with the original orchestral score, and new title cards, some of which fill in the events from the script that are represented by still-missing footage. The result is astounding. The novel by Thea von Harbou (wife of film director Fritz Lang), at least in English translation, is wordy, mystical, and turgid. I had formerly thought the hacked-up versions of the movie I had seen before were only a typically over-condensed attempt to translate it to the screen. I was wrong. When you see the movie with the full script, it has become a beautifully simple and limpid translation of the essence of the book. The digital restoration of the pictures brings details that were formerly only blurs into sharp focus, and indeed some of the shots were so beautiful that they literally brought tears to my eyes. The score, with its urgent primary theme of pounding bells, plucks at the emotions in complement to the action on the screen.

Seeing it now you cannot help but be struck by the extent to which this one single film has shaped the image of the future as we now see it. Everything from the film of Wells' *Things to Come*, the Krell abyss in *Forbidden Planet*, *Blade Runner*, *Batman's* Gotham City and *Star Wars' Coruscant* derive from the design of *Metropolis*. Rotwang, the mad scientist/wizard who creates the robot Maria, with the wild-haired, mad eyed Dr. Caligari as his predecessor, stands in the lineage of all who have come after.

For all the outdated stylization of acting, the story is still powerful. Freder Fredersen, son of the city's master, Joh Fredersen, meets and is mesmerized by the compassionate activist Maria. Seeking her, he stumbles into the city's depths, and is appalled by the plight of the workers. When Joh proves callously indifferent, Freder seeks to throw in his lot with the workers. Joh goes to Rotwang, who has nearly completed his female replicant,



with which he intends to re-create his former wife, Hel, who left him for Joh Fredersen, and died bearing Freder. Joh persuades Rotwang to make the robot in Maria's image so that he can use it to stir the discontented workers into open revolt so that he can then justifiably use force to crush them. Rotwang agrees, but programs the robot to bring about not only revolt but massive destruction as a means of taking revenge on his old rival.

The manner in which this tragedy plays out drives the action of the film's final segment (titled "Furioso"), and this is where we see much of what was lost or cut from earlier versions. Rotwang's sadistic pursuit and abduction of the good Maria, which echoes the relentless pursuit of the child-murderer in Lang's other masterpiece, *M*; the uncensored version of robot Maria's licentious dancing; and the desperate plight of the worker's abandoned children as the worker's city floods die to the mindless destruction wreaked by their parents.

I saw the film along with a fannish couple. One was a huge fan of the film who has collected everything he could about the film, and was frankly crogged by the immense amount he'd never seen before. The other had *never* seen any version of the film at all, and she affirmed that the film retained its power to harrow the viewer. The group I came with was so electrified that we stood around afterward and raved in a fashion I can only remember occurring after first viewings of *2001* or the first *Star Wars*.

— Gregory Rihn

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## *Metropolis* (1927)

### Directed by

Fritz Lang

### Written by

Fritz Lang and

Thea von Harbou

### Starring

Alfred Abel, Gustav Fröhlich,

Brigitte Helm, and

Rudolf Klein-Rogge

### Cinematography by

Karl Freund

### Art Direction by

Edgar Ulmer

### Restoration by

The FW Murnau Foundation

Distributed in North America

by Kino

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# Zefram Cochrane and the Crisis in Federation Continuity

by Andy Hooper



This is far from the only significant change in the continuity suggested by events on *Enterprise*. One of the most harrowing pieces of Federation lore is the account of the Romulan-Federation war, fought a generation before the time of the original series, offered by Kirk and various supporting characters in the episode *Balance of Terror*, first aired September 27th, 1966. The Romulans and Federation fought a merciless war without ever seeing one another; their physical resemblance to Vulcans is only a rumor that inspires racial suspicion in some. The Romulans continue to evade view through the use of a “cloaking device” that both Romulan and Federation characters seem to regard as a major piece of technological innovation. It creates a game of cat and mouse between the *Enterprise* and a Romulan vessel that most critics agree to be a rehash of several World War II submarine movies, most notably *The Enemy Below*.

**S***tar Trek* endures. No matter how many flaccid feature films directed by self-indulgent actors threaten to kill my devotion forever, something always restores my interest in the Federation Saga. I’m enjoying some elements of the current “prequel” series, *Enterprise*, which offers at least occasional glimpses into the state of the galaxy before the founding of the Federation.

It’s been a difficult few years for the franchise: After *Deep Space Nine* came to a weepy and cliff-hanging conclusion, the adventures of the crew of *Voyager*, trapped in a distant quadrant of the galaxy, were frenetic but largely unsatisfying. Besides having the least interesting crew to date, *Voyager* was only able to comment very obliquely on the current state of the Federation and its galactic neighbors. And the last feature film was a mess, with barely enough plot to carry a 60-minute episode, and leavened only by the appearance of villains Anthony Zerbe and F. Murray Abraham. Things reached such an ebb that the company holding the rights to make Star Trek toys simply abandoned them in 2000, and only recently has a new toymaker, Art Asylum, stepped in to make superb action figures based on the crew of the NX-01.

You can’t blame anyone for being daunted at the sheer scope of the Star Trek universe. 36 years of development by more than a hundred writers have created a sprawling net of stories that have examined a wide variety of moral, ideological and scientific questions, spanning the range from high tragedy to low comedy, and ripped off at least six Shakespeare plays along the way (*Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, *The Tempest* and *The Taming of the Shrew* come immediately to mind, as well as *Guys and Dolls*, and *Spartacus*). The issue of series continuity — keeping track of what has happened before and trying not to contradict it — has become serious enough that Paramount has people assigned to the task full time.

And it seems clear they need it — a recent promo promised that *Enterprise* would present adventures “100 years before Captain Kirk and Dr. Spock.” If even Paramount can’t avoid the classic error of confusing the Vulcan with the famous baby expert, what chance do the rest of us have?

This issue came into high relief for me recently, while watching an episode of *Star Trek: TOS* (The Original Series) on the Sci-Fi channel. The episode, *Metamorphosis*, originally aired on November 10th, 1967. The story was credited to Gene L. Coon, who showed a producer’s eye for creating a dramatic conflict with a limited number of characters and relatively few expensive effects. He also managed to create one of the most important characters in the Federation saga, Zefram Cochrane, credited with the invention of warp drive.

*Metamorphosis* is one of several series episodes, including *Requiem for Methuselah* and *The Squire of Gothos*, which feature elements of Shakespeare’s *Tempest*. Zefram Cochrane, one of the Great Men of galactic history, disappeared at the age of 87, and was presumed lost in space; but when a mysterious alien cloud forces the shuttlecraft *Galileo* to land on a rogue planetoid, Kirk, Spock, McCoy and Federation commissioner Nancy Hedford find an apparently youthful Cochrane alive and well, and particularly pleased to see fellow human beings. A powerful energy-being calling itself the Companion has preserved Cochrane’s life, but refuses to let him leave. Confronted with his decline due to the lack of contact with other humans, the Companion forces the Federation officers down to the planetoid, where it intends them to stay forever. Complicating the situation is the fact that the Commissioner, played by *Father Knows Best* alumnus Elinor Donahue, suffers from a the sudden onset of Sakuro’s Disease, which threatens to kill her soon if she cannot be brought to a Federation medical facility.

Kirk points out that the Companion is deeply in love with Zefram Cochrane, but despite the fact that the being has preserved the inventor's life for decades, the idea of being intimate with an alien creature revolts him. Various time-consuming efforts to overpower the alien being come to naught, and things look very bad indeed when the imminent end of her life attracts the Companion to the commissioner's side. And then one of those miracles seldom seen outside of Jack Chalker novels occurs: the Companion melds its life force with the dying woman, and she emerges from the futuristic beach cabana that Cochrane lives in as healthy, mortal, woman/alien hybrid. Cochrane loses his feelings of disgust instantly, and he and the Companion/Commissioner look forward to the remainder of a normal human lifespan. Kirk and his officers depart, promising to keep the location of their love-planetoid a secret.

Various elements stand out from this casserole of wish fulfillment. From a thematic view, the most important is the symbiosis which the Companion and Commissioner Hedford achieve. Prior to this, episodes such as *The Menagerie* and *This Side of Paradise* had explored parasitic or damaging contact with invasive alien species, but *Metamorphosis* was unique in showing a mutually beneficial link between human and aliens (although it did hedge the bet by stating that Cochrane was near death before the Companion found him, and leaving no doubt that Hedford will die without similar intervention). And from this tentative beginning, human/alien symbiosis became a major recurring theme across the various series, inspiring characters including Jadzia Dax and Seven of Nine, and continually questioning just what constitutes humanity — what remains human even when intertwined with the alien.

But Zefram Cochrane himself is possibly even more fascinating as the embodiment of the breaks in continuity between the original series and the latter-day Federation. Kirk refers to Cochrane as being from Alpha Centauri, and leaves no doubt that he should be credited with giving humanity the secret of warp propulsion. From these simple clues, fans and writers working after the cancellation of *TOS* developed a time-line that featured a period of slower-than-light travel that led to contact between Earth and Centauri, and the flowering of a shared culture that followed their joint development of warp drive.

This always presented problems, as there seemed to be too few decades available for humanity to have spent the requisite time limping along

at sublight speeds. But Zefram Cochrane himself refused to disappear from the Star Trek consciousness. There was the Cochrane Deceleration, a sudden drop from warp drive that made a ship briefly appear to be in two places at once, mentioned by several Federation captains. And when writers were looking for a suitable point in the development of space flight that might allow the time-traveling Borg a chance to extinguish humanity before it reached the stars, there was Zefram Cochrane, answer to the trivia question: "Who invented warp drive?"

So Cochrane shifted from the square-jawed xenophobe portrayed by Glenn Corbett, to the whisky-swilling Roy Orbison-crooning gearhead played by James Cromwell in *Star Trek: First Contact*. Apologists have tried to reconcile the two characters by suggesting that Cochrane relocated to the unspoiled wilderness of Alpha Centauri before his disappearance, and even that he was an alien passing for human, on a mission to accelerate human technology into space. But Paramount seems oblivious to the conflict, and has taken huge steps to make Cochrane into a major icon for the characters and culture shown on the series *Enterprise*. Cochrane's taped image dedicating the Warp 5 project facility appears in the pilot episode *Broken Bow*, and during the course of his remarks, he hopes that the Warp 5 engine will enable to humanity to "seek out new life and new civilizations — to go boldly, where no one has gone before." What a perfect symbol for the revision of future history — preserving the gender-neutral innovation of the 80's-vintage *Next Generation*, while doing away with the pesky sixtiesesque split infinitive that inspired a million bad fanzines.

Happily, the writers and producers of *Enterprise* have thrown everything into doubt by creating an alien menace known as the Cabal, an alliance of genetically-altered members of a species known as the Suliban, who have received cloaking and other advanced technology from unseen masters living in the future. Which is to say the future in the 22nd Century; back in the 23rd Century of Kirk and Spock, or the 24th Century of Picard and Worf, the Cabal may actually be operating in the past. In any event, their joint temporal manipulations provide a convenient window of deniability to any writer who seems to contradict the continuity of the Original Canon. At some point, a series on the adventures of the Federation Temporal Security Service may be necessary to unwind all the threads tangled by the writers of *Enterprise*. But at this point, it's just nice to see someone working on the tapestry again.

It also lead directly to a sequel shown exactly one year later, *The Enterprise Incident*, in which Spock pretends to be a traitor to the Federation in order to provide cover for an operation to steal the cloaking device. This is a much-beloved couplet of stories, but like so much of the original canon it has been outflanked by the progression of technology in the real world. While we still can't create the kind of active stealth system exemplified by the Romulan cloaking device, we have become painfully aware of the issues of seeing and being seen, on and below the sea, in the air, and in space.

Latter-day writers wonder: Could the Romulans and Federation actually fight a war without ever seeing one another, even as corpses? Wouldn't some form of cloaking technology have been necessary to protect the Romulans from Federation sensors even in the infancy of Starfleet? And so, could these issues be behind the decision to equip the Romulans with cloaking technology in their nominal first encounter with humanity in a recent episode of *Enterprise*? Or is it in fact a complete lack of attention to detail, a simple assumption that *Romulans* = *cloaking device*, with no reference to the actual events of those classic episodes? As a fan, you think your ability to keep all this straight in your head must pale in comparison to the organization and recall of professionals, but experience ultimately teaches us that the opposite is true: no professional has the time for the obsessive accumulation and collation of data that fans thrive on.



# The Iron Pig

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## Luke McGuff

Yeah! I got a big kick out of Stu's cover — the yuppies fleeing the clouds of dust, buildings collapsing in the background, planes bursting midair, the horrific scene that makes one wish it were a movie rather than a fanzine illo. Hah! It's the best commemoration of the anniversary of 9/11 I'll probably come across.

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## Guy Lillian

The first thing I have to say about the first issue of *Chunga* is: I got the reference! I was an enormous Zappa fan back in the era of *200 Motels* & *Weasels Rip My Flesh*. I'm almost afraid to say anything else, since I was almost fooled by the ersatz review of Arnie Katz's non-existent *Twinch*. Before I realized that this "Daniel Webster" you listed as his co-editor was the great lawyer & orator, many decades dead, & not another Las Vegrant Arnie was trying to interest in fanzines, I had a postcard ready to send west, asking for a review copy! It's clear *Chunga* is a title to be read with caution... but also a zine with enthusiasm, excellent contributors, & rare good humor. The second issue has a lot to live up to.

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## Brad W Foster

Scary how that title couldn't mean anything else but what you guys have noted it is. Not odd, just scary.

My response to Lesley's article on group-think and defining of groups (ie, "all Americans") was to realize how I am bugged by the "all Americans", "all men", "all women", "all whites", "all black" thinking. Sure, you've got to internalize and compartmentalize some over-all groups just to be able to get through life, and I wish we could at least get everyone to agree to substitute "I believe that most..." in place of "all" in those statements. Heard some recent NPR reports on how foreign countries were upset about their native music being pushed away by that awful, morally corrupt American pop music. My only response was, you mean the music that evidently a lot of other people in your country like, but you don't? Hey, join the club! I live in freakin' America and am embarrassed by what clearly a huge hunk of this population shakes to. Me, I'm a jazz fan...hell, I'm a *fusion* jazz fan, so even the pure jazz folk hate me. I don't go on about how evil pop music is, how there is an agenda to displace what I like. I just realize I have different tastes. I don't go to McDonalds, but I do go to Wendys...what does that mean? I have friends who are major foodies, endlessly discussing permutations of taste and what different restaurants can offer. Fine for them, but if you could give me a pill that kept me alive without having to mess with eating, I don't think I'd miss it too much. There might be some folks who, as Lesley says, actively seek out a group to belong to, and if there is a big one, will try to fit into it. But I think most folks just find the groups that like what they do...and that means that there will, obviously be some that are bigger than others. Tell the world to get over it.

Loved the Yoyodyne interview!

## Jerry Kaufman

At ConJose, I was on a panel called Fanzines 101, described as a workshop. I had Programming Ops supply us with a newsprint pad on an easel, just in case we got into the nitty gritty of layout. Pointing to the exposed sheet of newsprint, I joked, “This is the most frightening thing that faces the writer, artist or faned.”

The blank page scares letterhacks, too. I’m especially self-conscious when I try to write a letter to a zine I admire, or when I’m going to try to comment on a controversial subject. (I’m very thin-skinned, especially when addressing matters that I sense are a little over my head. I was taken aback, for instance, on Wm. Breiding’s criticism of my letter in *Gloss*, especially since I couldn’t make out what I’d said wrong.)

Now that I’ve started this letter with the above confession, the sort of searing honesty that made me the Number 9 letterhack for 2000 in the FAAN Awards, perhaps I can get on with it, including repeating a few things I said to you all in conversation last night.

After enjoying Stu’s cover, with its revelation of the Space Needle’s true character and the odd feeling of 9/11 about it, I skimmed and scanned through the rest to get the feel of the layout. I was deeply envious of the stylish drop caps, the flexible five-column layout and the backwards title on the contents page. As I did when reading *APAK*, I puzzled over the strange linos at the bottoms of the pages. I would like to include linos in future *Littlebrooks*, and have selected several already from Claire Brialey’s article.

I think that, with *Chunga* and *Littlebrook* appearing within weeks of one another, people will know that Seattle Fanzine Fandom still lives.

Great to see that Lesley Reece is out there somewhere, considering the cranks and curves of life in these United States of Being. Yes, I have certainly noticed the Individuals in a Crowd Syndrome. I understand that advertising agencies are very sensitive to social trends and are adept at exploiting them, like the 90s desires to be natural and get into nature and spirit—these trends resulted in car commercials that not only showed the vehicles roaming great empty spaces, but also had Native American chants and flute tunes that suggested that driving an SUV would get you in touch with the Ancient Ones. (The commercials still show the great empty plains and mountains, but the spiritual implications have gone, replaced by mud sprays.)

So we get the wilderness shots (which would presumably really have hundreds of thousands of big 4WDs in them), drink commercials that say

“Obey Your Thirst” and imply that you’ll be much more of an independent thinker with Sprite, my favorite silly slogan—“Jeep—There’s Only One” (if there’s only one, what happens when you sell it?), and so forth. Yes, we want to look like, but not be, individuals.

Randy, your “Cliffhangers” was quite good, and struck a couple of my inner bells with a sledgehammer. You may not recall, but I wrote about a similar moment of panic in my *Kaufman Coast to Coast*. I have a fear of heights (unreasonable only in that it can be quite extreme and ungovernable), but when I visited Ayers Rock, I decided to do what all the other tourists were doing: climb the rock to the top.

It’s not really that steep, and there’s a low chain fixed to it to help people pull themselves up. I got about nine-tenths of the way there, when I came to a bit that turned up a little blind rise—one could see nothing but sky above it, and an irrational fear overcame me that there would be a drop-off just the other side. Even though I could see other people climb it, disappear for a moment and then reappear further up the slope, I couldn’t make myself go over it. Then I had to turn around and contemplate going down. Now I could see the slope and the huge Australian plain spread out below me and off to the horizon.

I’m still up there. No, that’s not true. I didn’t even need a helicopter to get me down. But I think I wore through that pair of jeans much faster than normal, since I crab-walked down, clinging to the chain.

When I met him at ConJose, Tobes did not remind me of Paddington Bear. He was much more reminiscent of one of the Three Musketeers. (He did not strike me as a D’Artagnan type, and I don’t recall which personality goes with which of the actual Three.) He was fun to hang out with, and I hope he also decides it would be fun to stay in



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touch with us by sending his fanzines here.

I enjoyed Luke's "Skiffy Corners" and hope you get more, and from others. I particularly liked his reevaluation of *Triton*, a book that gave me some of the same reactions. (I think I read it twice, and changed ideas about it accordingly.) Some disappointment, some boredom at the science lectures, some puzzlement at Bron's character—it took me most of the book to realize that Bron was not meant to be either trustworthy about himself or very sympathetic, and really introduced me to the idea of the narrator that knows less about himself than the reader does. During my second reading I was much more aware of Bron's shifts and the lies he told to himself and others. But I've also forgotten much of the stuff Luke mentions about the war, and maybe it's time to read *Triton* yet again.

Claire's musings on fanwriting, nicely interwoven into a *Helicon* report, played interesting games with the time-stream of a convention, but distracted me with worries about being a "pedestrian" letter writer. I've been doing my best to avoid this. But because Lesley also used "pedestrian" to describe McDonald's food, I've gone off on a different tangent. Why, I wonder, is "pedestrian" a synonym for dull, everyday, humdrum, etc.? And what, in a transportation metaphoric way, would the opposite be? "Racecar driver"? "Astronaut"? Will we ever convince people it's healthier for them and better for the environment to walk, if walking is also a metaphor for "dull?"

The first couple of fanzine reviews from "Planet X" are amusing; the final one of *National Revolutionary & Gardener* 23 is definitely from another planet.

**I'd say that Claire touched a nerve with that "pedestrian" remark, bless her! Letterhacks must live in fear!**

**I'm fairly new to the high-level conceptual approach to fanzines, so maybe I'm**

missing something. I often find the type of letter—such as yours, before we ~~butchered~~ edited it—that comments on every article in a fanzine to be problematic, as the letterhack strains to find something to say about even pieces that clearly don't interest him or her. The two theories I've come up with are that letterhacks are afraid that if they fail to comment on a piece, they will be buttonholed at a convention and asked, "Didn't you like what I wrote?" or that there is an implied contract between the letterhack and the faned that the faned can choose the best parts of the letter and leave out the rest. The problem with the latter theory is that a number of faneds have complained that when they cut peoples' letters, they get complaints from the loccers.

**Do I have a point here? It is that instead of calling the dull "pedestrian," we should call it "pants." Or as we say in Little Germany: "total toten Hose."**

—Randy

### Ken Forman

A quick Google.com search of the zine's title yields a headline from the Zimbabwe *Daily News* that reveals connections to physics:

### Dynamos turn to Chunga

Obviously Central Africa is planning on tapping into your newly found wellspring of fannish energy. I can see it now...Seattle Fandom, an alternative energy source for humor-starved third world.

Stu Shiffman's cover reflects my own long-held beliefs that the Seattle Space Needle looks freakishly alien.

I read Lesley Reece's article (*Wouldn't You Like to be a Latte, Too?*) with much interest for two reasons. First, I consider myself somewhat of a coffee snob (although apparently of an entirely different order than most Pacific Northwesterners), and secondly, because I've got a crush on Lesley, er...well, I guess there's just the one reason. I start each morning with a tall cup of fresh-ground, fresh-brewed Tanzanian Peaberry...black. I think I'm one of the few people who actually likes the flavor of coffee rather than the flavor of flavored coffee. The interaction of the various oils juxtaposed with the bitterness of the caffeine pleases my palate. For a scientific discourse on the subject, a recent *Scientific American* published an article detailing those interactions. Fascinating. I imagine that if I were working at Tully's, my nametag would read: *Ken, black coffee.*

Claire Brialey's *Helicon Fanzine Blues* inspires

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me to...well, I don't rightly know. Among other comments, she espouses a viewpoint she's presented in other fanzines. She's right, too. Intuitively it seems "elitist" and "shallow" to only like fanwriting by fans we know, or about fans or events with which we're familiar.

Does it mean the audience is elitist and shallow? Certainly no! Claire tells us a story about Damien Warman trying to do the Astral Pole as described in Dave Langford's TAFF report. If one had not read Dave's report (like myself, my bad), the anecdote would be completely lost to the casual reader. Nevertheless I thoroughly enjoyed the piece precisely because I know of these people. For anyone completely unfamiliar with fandom, Claire would have to include many more words explaining about the Astral Pole (not to mention TAFF, and some character development, to boot) in detail before they would begin to approach the level of enjoyment I experienced.

Repeatedly, Claire cites Lilian's ideas of the qualities of good fanwriting. Although I generally agree with Lilian's point (and not just because she's got great gams, either), perhaps a more eloquent substitution for "good" is in order. How about enjoyable fanwriting? I think fans need to be realistic about our hobby. With the exception of Willis and a few others, most fans don't write well enough to sell their work. Those fans who are accomplished writers frequently do sell their words. What makes me want to read fanzines is that they're by, and about, people I know.

Andy, your pachyderm piece brought back a flood of memories to me. Memories of when you and Carrie took me to the Woodland Park Zoo. I felt then, and still believe now, that WPZ is one of the best zoos for presenting their exhibits in a realistic and natural way. The only zoo that surpasses WPZ's natural displays is the Phoenix Zoo, and then only at one enclosure. The Phoenix Zoo fenced about 200 acres of open desert adjacent to the zoo proper. The virgin desert was home to desert bighorn sheep. It still is. The zoo provides vantage points and monoculars for observation, but has done little else.

It appalls me to think PETA should find it necessary maintain such political pressure on WPZ. But then I remember that these are the very same people who think sport fishing should be banned because it "stresses the fish" too much. In the early years of the public Internet, PETA got very upset because someone else had a claim on the URL [www.peta.com](http://www.peta.com). Going to that address revealed a series of recipes, and a banner proclaiming the site to be dedicated to People Eating Tasty Animals.

Nevertheless, a fitting tribute to Bruce Pelz.

By the way, I clicked on the link at the bottom of page 20, but my penis only enlarged 2 inches, not the promised 3-4 inches.

Looking forward to issue number dos, and don't forget, I like my women like I like my coffee...hot and steamy!

**Well, aren't you the saucy wench!**

**I'm pretty much of like mind on the theory that the best fannish writing is by and about the people we know. I've even gone so far as to say that the basis of a good fan article is a list of names that constitute an ego-check. However, I think D. West (to drop a name) has an interesting argument (if I understand it) that the very *amateurishness* of fannish writing frees it to be the purest kind of art. That there is no *quid* for the fanwriting *quo* (as you point out) allows fanwriters to simply express what matters most to them, without thought of benefactors or of a paying audience that demands something in return for the payment.**

— Randy

### **Alexis Gilliland**

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Hannibal Barca fought in the second Punic War, not the first, and as a member of the Barcid\* Clan—a leading Carthaginian family—he was the C in C of the Punic expeditionary force against Rome and not a warlord. Crossing the Alps, his elephants were outfitted with galoshes, but his soldiers only had sandals.

**Alexis is correct of course—I think my error arises from a tendency to lump the First and Second Punic wars together as they both featured active campaigns by the Carthaginians, while the Third Punic war was much more a case of the Romans pursuing the war to the gates of Carthage. Hannibal Barca was part of a large family of military professionals with a very small number of first names—at least four men named Hasdrubal Barca commanded Carthaginian contingents across the three wars. I'm not sure why the word warlord ought to be especially repellent in comparison to "General," even in the age of ethnic cleansing. He had prodigious gifts for raising troops along the path of his march, and lead his armies with remarkable perspicacity in battle. But he seems to have had relatively little interest in the administration of the lands he conquered, and was given little of the legal authority that the many Roman consuls he**

\* Barcelona is named after the Barcids.

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pummeled carried with them. I think "warlord" fits him nicely.

—Andy

### Lee Hoffman



Neat observations and very clever writing in Lesley Reece's article. I like my coffee plain black regular, not too hot. I guess I'm just conservative. But I think I am the neighborhood nutty-old-lady—the stereotype who usually keeps a few score cats—but minus the cats. For one thing, I beg food off the neighbors.

**Lee Hoffman**  
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Several of the people in this neighborhood live up north but winter here. I discovered that when they were going home in the spring, they were throwing away perfectly good stuff from their fridges. Partial packages of meats and breads, breakfast foods, and such. That seemed like a terrible waste. I worked up nerve enough to tell them not to throw out anything useful—give it to me and I'll see that it gets to someone who can use it. I take first refusal and have gotten a lot of good stuff—plus a lifetime supply of half-bottles of fancy mustards. I share the perishables I can't use with a couple of friends, and the canned goods with food drives. And the donors seem to appreciate the fact that their leftovers will be used, not wasted.

**Lloyd Penney**  
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"Cliffhangers" is worthy of deeper comment than I am up to writing. Will you settle for a buzzard story? A couple or so years ago, the backyard next to mine filed up with turkey buzzards. Florida has its own population, but I think we also get migrant buzzards in the winter. I suspect this was a passing flock. (Is that the appropriate word, or do they come in something like "a funeral of buzzards" or "a feast of buzzards"?)

There were at least 30 of them. I think more. They were all over in the yard, on the roof and on

the seawall and a few spilled over into my yard. They concentrated as if they know the house next door was not occupied at the time.

The birdbath in that yard—a standard concrete model—had filled up with rain water. The buzzards started drinking out of it. Enough of them got on one side of the bowl to weigh it down to the point it fell off the pedestal.

They stayed around for hours, then moved on, and I have not seen such a clutter of them again.

**If you had offered them a half jar of Grey Poupon, maybe they would've stuck around. I mean, even if you're not going to feed the cats, you may as well feed the buzzards.**

—Randy

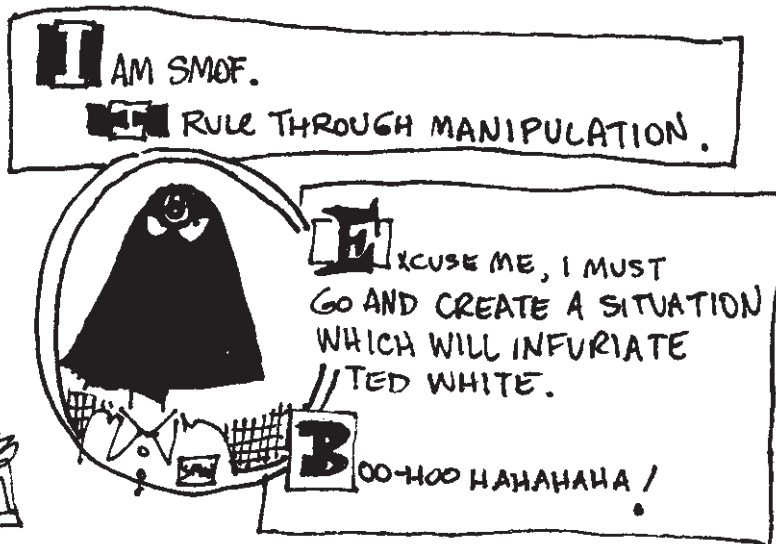
### Lloyd Penney

First of all, good to see Stu Shiffman back on a fanzine front cover, showing typical Seattlites at rest and play as aliens wreak havoc in the distance. Make mine a decaf with extra foam, thank you... (Craig Smith is living in Seattle now? I thought he was just up the 401 from me in Pickering?)

I shall utter blasphemies into the tender ears of Seattlites...Seattle is not the only coffee capital of North America. The other capital is Toronto. I imagine there are street corners in Seattle where if I turned around 360°, I'd be able to spot four or five Starbucks, but here in T.O., there are some Starbucks, plus many Second Cups, Timothy's Coffees of the World, Grabbajabbas, P.A.M.s and many more. Starbucks owns all Starbucks stores, but Second Cup owns all Second Cups, plus various other chains around the world. As does Second Cup, Timothy's has its head office here, which makes me wonder just how much coffee comes to Canada from elsewhere in the world. If anyone reading this is coming to Worldcon in Toronto next year, be assured there are coffee places everywhere, including a Timothy's, right in the convention centre. Vital information for you cafffiends.

Tobes for TAFF...yep, done good. Toronto fandom has been blessed with visits from both the TAFF and DUFF winners this year. Julian Warner stayed with Catherine Crockett and Colin Hinz in August, and just about a week ago now, Tobes Valois camped out with Mike Glicksohn and Susan Manchester. Mike took Tobes to meet with us at his favorite bar, Bert and Ernie's in the trendy Bloor West Village in Toronto's west end. Yes, we had ourselves a time. My thanks to both of them for coming to stay, even if only for a day or two. As Tobes alluded to, there's just too many responsibilities at home to party the way you'd like.

The secret to fanwriting is to write down the





most interesting, gobsmacking, silly, nonsensical, factual, personal and SFnal ideas you can think of, write them down on slips of paper and throw them all in a cardboard box. Pull five or six of those ideas out, and connect them all with wry prose, and you have award-winning fan arkles. Of course, it helps to be British, but you get the idea. I am hoping that when Ditto 15 comes to Toronto next month, I might take part in some intelligent discussions about fanzines. Given some of the fanzine panels I've been on at other conventions, it would be refreshing. As I've been told by others obviously in the know, those fanzines I've been reading all these years are fakes because they don't have *Star Trek/Babylon 5*/ your favorite media sci-fi show fanfic in it.

Are fanzines a substitute for sex or love? No, it's an effort to define your experiences in fandom to compare them with others, an effort to display your creativity to potential readers so those readers will think highly of you, and you'll think highly of yourself, especially those of us with those typical fannish self-esteem problems... It's an attempt to estimate what your writing abilities are like. It's an effort to take part in an activity you enjoy, in a group of people whose company you enjoy, even if you only meet those people through the pages of the fanzine itself. It's attempt to allow others to know you a little better, even if you've never met them, and may never meet. A fanzine is a device that allows you to participate in a common activity, and get to know a whole whack of people you'd never meet otherwise. All of the above, none of the above, it's different strokes. To answer the yet-to-be-asked question, I respond to all the fanzines I receive because I enjoy writing, I enjoy participating, and I like what I receive. And I believe that every good fanzine deserves a response.

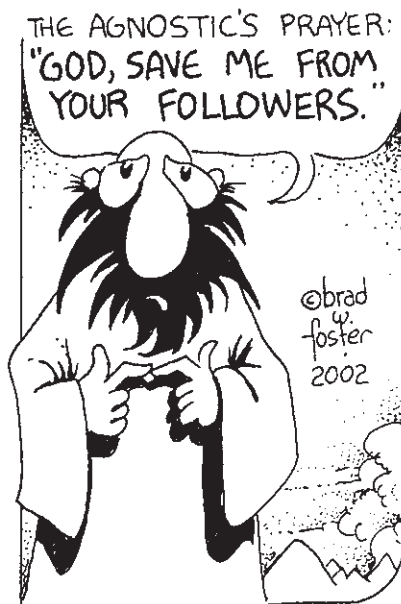
**On the behalf of all Seattle, I apologize for the Starbucks, Lloyd. Of course, there are folks in the Bay Area who like to say that Starbucks is just an offshoot of Peet's, so maybe we can point the finger at them. In any event, I invite you to visit Seattle some day and get some of Seattle's real best coffee at the Lighthouse or Vivace.**

— Randy

### Teddy Harvia

The prospect of Andy Hooper's fan writing again appearing regularly in my mailbox is exciting. His elephantine article had the sights, sounds, smells of the zoo assaulting my senses.

Your fanzine has great potential as a wonderful mechanism for the delivery of fan art. Stu Shiffman's cover art is an accurate blast at modern



culture. Craig Smith's "I LIKE IKE" Alien is the perfect illo for the review of James White's novels with their trapped in the the 50s mentality characters. I look forward to seeing what new fan artists you introduce in your pages.

I'd say more but I don't want anyone thinking I'm substituting writing for sex.

### Steve Green

Max's essay raises many questions familiar to anyone who's discussed TAFF's inner machinations over the past twenty years — and, as is usually the case, fails to come to any real conclusions. It's not Max's fault: the task is somewhat akin to nailing blancmange to your ceiling.

Obviously, fanzine fans shouldn't dominate the selection process, but the fanzine network (such as it is these days) remains a crucial distribution for both ballot forms and vital gossip. Chris O'Shea, who's an excellent fellow, certainly suffered from having a core constituency rooted in the conrunning crowd, famously slack when it comes to filling out little slips of paper.

The main problem with westward TAFF races, of course, is the Brits' total inability to feud or otherwise discolour the waters between our shores. The nearest we ever got was Hansen vs West, and that was severely undermined by the refusal of the combatants to get the slightest bit involved with the "row" being brewed your side of the Atlantic. We're not a race notable for feuds, that's a fact; we don't even mind that you no longer refer to the Colonies by their proper name.

**Oh, I don't know. What about that little feud with France, then?**

— Randy

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### WAHF:

**George Flynn**  
("I tend to be one of those 'methodical but uninspiring letterhacks' that Claire mentions, but today I don't even feel particularly methodical.");

**Lennart Uhlin**  
("It looks great. No I haven't read it yet.");

**Michael Stearns**  
("No real news.");

**E.B. Frohvet**  
("And you may tell Hooper I said so.")

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# Starship Troopers vs. the Monsters from the Id

by Randy Byers

*Science-fiction can usually be separated into two sub genres: horror and fantasy.*

— DVD of *Sphere*, quoted in *Ansible*

*Most overtly there is the fear, begun with Frankenstein, that science was defying divine provenance and opening up a Pandora's Box that would unleash socially devastating forces.*

— Richard Scheib, review of *Island of Lost Souls* at the Science Fiction, Horror and Fantasy Film Reviews website

**S**cience fiction fans love to bitch about skiffy movies.<sup>1</sup> With a few honored exceptions (*2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Blade Runner*), the movies have never gotten science fiction quite right. Worse yet, the people who dote on skiffy movies have, like faceless zombies, swarmed the vulnerable House of SF and are threatening to overwhelm the beleaguered readers holding out — and holding forth — inside. It's George Lucas versus Vernor Vinge in the SF Celebrity Death Match, with the fate of scientific rationalism, human progress, and any number of precious bodily fluids at stake.

Perhaps I'm exaggerating just a bit, but it's certainly true that science fiction fans have some issues with skiffy movies. The most common complaint is that the movies get the science wrong. Even further, the movies tend to expound an anti-science message, and to promote instead intuition, mysticism, and religion. Rather than paeans to the scientific method, the movies give us explosions and chases, frightening monsters and fist fights. They appeal not to our reason but to our hottest feelings of fear and excitement and lust.

I've complained as much as the next slant, but lately it has occurred to me that in reality skiffy movies are a separate genre from written science

fiction and that it's foolish to expect the same from the two. The thought first arose when I was reading a website dedicated to skiffy movies, and the reviewer mentioned in a couple of reviews that the science fiction cinema first reached its maturity in the 1950s. He further argued that even in the '50s there was still a hesitance to take the action to another planet and mix it up with the local wildlife. More often, the aliens were invading Earth in the here and now, and so the setting was contemporary and familiar. Movies such as *This Island Earth* and *Forbidden Planet* were rather unusual in their willingness to stray from the comfy (albeit threatened) confines of home, and, at that, the former movie is set in the contemporary present, not the future. Written SF, in contrast, had by the '50s long since colonized the Solar System and headed out beyond the farthest star at the end of time.

It's a commonplace idea in fandom that the movies are simply thirty years behind the written form in the concepts that have been integrated into the stories, but what if movie-makers are actually just interested in different questions than the writers? What really brought the idea into focus was watching *Forbidden Planet* for the umpty-umpty time. (Like many, if not most, science fiction fans, I am also a skiffy fan, despite my complaints.) As the intrepid crew of the starship set up the perimeter energy fence and ignored the eerie music signaling the approach of something terrible, it suddenly dawned on me that this was basically a monster movie. With that thought came the realization that the movies are in dialogue with other movies more than they are with written science fiction.

As I took this conceptual hammer firmly in hand, suddenly every skiffy movie began to look like a nail. The number of skiffy-monster films is seemingly endless, from (arguably) *Frankenstein*

<sup>1</sup> A note on terminology: While we used "skiffy" ironically in the titles of Luke McGuff's book reviews last issue, here I am using it as a means of differentiating movie and TV science fiction from written science fiction. It's only semi-ironic in this context.

<sup>2</sup> The most common English title for this movie is *Planet of the Vampires*.

<sup>3</sup> Come to think of it, that's true of the year as well as the film.

(1931) to *The Thing from Another World* (1951) to *It! The Terror from Beyond Space* (1958) to *Terrore nello spazio*<sup>2</sup> (1965) to *Alien* (1979) to *Zeiramu* (1991). Hell, once you start down that road, the second half of 2001 began to look suspiciously like a monster movie too.<sup>3</sup>

Of course, this is one of those things that has made SF fans claim that the movies are simply behind the times, since monsters of the bug-eyed sort are an infamous feature of the pulp era. A.E. van Vogt sued the producers of *Alien* for stealing ideas from “Discord in Scarlet”, but he could just as well have gone after *It!* or *Terrore nello spazio*. The latter in particular perfectly captures van Vogt’s dreamy, feverish illogic and penchant for the twist ending, although it is actually based on Renato Pestrinero’s short story. But these movies are also a good illustration of how skiffy differs from SF. Van Vogt’s heroes attack the monsters with science, even when the science is something largely made-up and ridiculous, such as Nexialism. In Campbell’s “Who Goes There?”, which is the source of *The Thing from Another World* and its remake, *The Thing*, the monster-alien is treated more as a puzzle to be solved than an eerie menace. In the written stories, the monstrous is controlled or overcome through rationality, whereas in the movies there is none of this emphasis on rationalism, even when the hero is as clever as *Alien*’s Ripley. Scientists are more

often mad than heroic—just as the android scientist in *Alien*, in fact.

John-Henri Holmberg has argued<sup>4</sup> that science fiction is “a specific literary form which could not have existed before the beginning of the 19th century, since its essence is founded in the basic tenets of the Enlightenment. The Enlightenment ... taught that humans can gain knowledge only through their senses and through intellectual, rational thought based on sensory input.... In a sense, whether the ‘science is right’ isn’t even particularly important. What is important, instead, is the fundamental outlook of the author: is existence objective, knowable, ultimately controllable provided enough knowledge is gained, and, as a corollary, how is knowledge in fact gained: through observation, experimenting and thinking, or via mystical, intuitive or emotional means?” Has there been any clearer rejection of this Enlightenment faith than Obi-Wan’s exhortation to Luke to forget about the targeting computer and use the Force? The computer, which represents “rational thought based on sensory input,” actually interferes with Luke’s ability to see the world clearly. The Force is not even a pseudo-science, like van Vogt’s Nexialism or Asimov’s Psychohistory; it is mysticism pure and simple.

Written science fiction has certainly questioned the limits and consequences of science, from the proto-SF of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* to the reli-

<sup>4</sup> In a discussion on an online forum in which he outlined arguments that he develops at greater length in an upcoming book, the Swedish title of which is *Inre landskap och yttre rymd: science fictions historia I-II*, which translates as “Inner Landscapes and Outer Space: The History of Science Fiction”. Is there an English-language publisher in the house?



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It's also true that skiffy and science fiction do talk to each other from time to time, even if it's only at a quick business lunch.

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gious explorations of Miller's *A Canticle for Leibowitz* and Blish's *A Case of Conscience* to the exhaustion of posthuman knowledge in Egan's *Diaspora*. However, skiffy movies borrow their skepticism about science and love of the mystical from horror movies, which are precisely about the dread that the uncanny or supernatural will rupture our understanding and control of the world around us. Dana Andrews' arrogant scientific debunker in *Night of the Demon* is a perfect example of the attitude toward science taken by horror films, which is mirrored, for example, in Han Solo's snorting disbelief regarding the Force in *Star Wars*. There is nothing in the movies like the Campbellian rejection of humanism, or the faith in the scientific method to solve the mysteries of death and taxes.<sup>5</sup> Quite the contrary, the movies view science as a trap and seek instead for the numinous, even in mortal limitations, as in the almost literally soulful death scene of Roy Batty in *Blade Runner*.

Philosophical differences aside, there are other reasons why it makes sense that skiffy developed as a separate genre from science fiction. I won't do anything more than nod at the fact that it has different centers of production. Planet Hollywood has different rules and cultures than the New York publishing world, needless to say. As this is meant to be a short piece, however, let me focus for a bit on another difference, which is the obvious difference in media.

Science fiction prides itself on its world-building, which is a collection of techniques for suggesting changes in the world of the future or differences between an alien planet and Earth. I'm still struggling to understand the cinematic geek concept of *mise-en-scène*, but it strikes me as similar to the stefnal concept of world-building. More particularly, it seems to me that production design stands in for world-building in many ways. The skiffy world is described in the sets and costumes and props. The tiniest detail can set off the strangest ideas. For example, in *Forbidden Planet* the weapons of the humans emit animated bolts of energy but produce no visible recoil. This is almost certainly the result of a failure to think things through, but as I watch the uniformed space soldiers pouring effortless energy on the encroaching Id monster, I always get an impression of a technology so advanced that it has nullified Newtonian physics. Maybe the humans aren't so far behind the Krell after all.

Exposition in written SF is always a tricky thing to pull off without putting the story on hold for long passages of explanation. While they are just as prone to undigested expository lumps as prose

stories, the movies, with direct visual and auditory input available, can produce some astonishing expository effects. *Forbidden Planet* provides an example of what I'm thinking of here as well. When Morbius gives the captain and doctor their first tour of the Krell compound, one of the things he does is play a piece of recorded Krell music for them. The music is identical to what we've been hearing on the soundtrack throughout the movie, and without a word we are led to understand that the movie's score (one of the most famous pieces of electronic music in cinema history) was written by the Krell. Less subtly, the oddly shaped doorways inside the compound are pointed out by Morbius as signs of the ancient aliens' body shape.

It is in the production design that you can frequently make out the influence of previous movies, as the skiffy genre speaks to itself. So the lab scenes in *Frankenstein* and *Bride of Frankenstein* look back to Rotwang's lab in *Metropolis*, while Dr. Strangelove's independent-minded hand looks back to Rotwang's gloved fist. The first *Flash Gordon* serial literally took sets from *Bride of Frankenstein*, as well as music from both that movie and *The Invisible Man*, while *The Empire Strikes Back* in turn took the cloud city from *Flash Gordon*—without the atomic furnaces, alas! *Blade Runner* builds on the cityscapes of *Metropolis*, while stealing lighting effects from the noir detective films of the '40s. *The Matrix* takes kung fu moves from the Hong Kong diaspora of the '90s and pins them to yet another story of religious transcendence *à la Star Wars*. More recently, *Attack of the Clones* riffs on *Metropolis*, *Blade Runner*, *The Fifth Element*, *Mysterious Island*, *The Sound of Music*, and *Lawrence of Arabia* before running out of planets on which to house the references.

I'm afraid that I will be accused, quite rightly, of being a reductionist in my argument about skiffy's debt to horror. The modern world of skiffy is, in its way, just as diverse as that of science fiction, as can be seen in the following list of recent movies: *Gattaca*, *The Matrix*, *The Fifth Element*,  $\pi$ , *Frequency*, *Starship Troopers*, *X-Files*, and *Avalon*. There is a greater range of interests and design in these movies than I have given skiffy credit for here. It isn't all *Metropolis* and *Frankenstein* and *Flash Gordon*, turtle upon turtle, world without end. However, my basic argument that they are more in dialogue with other movies than with science fiction still holds up, I think. To take *Gattaca* as a movie representative of a different line of thought than either the space opera of *Forbidden Planet* or the city-as-world of *Blade Runner*, it appears to me to harken back to the dystopian

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<sup>5</sup> Unless it is the *Star Trek* series, where the scientific double-talk and baffle-gab exist, like van Vogt's *Nexialism*, as signifiers of "getting the science right" even when it's actually pseudo-science. And taxes are history—or at least no one talks about them.

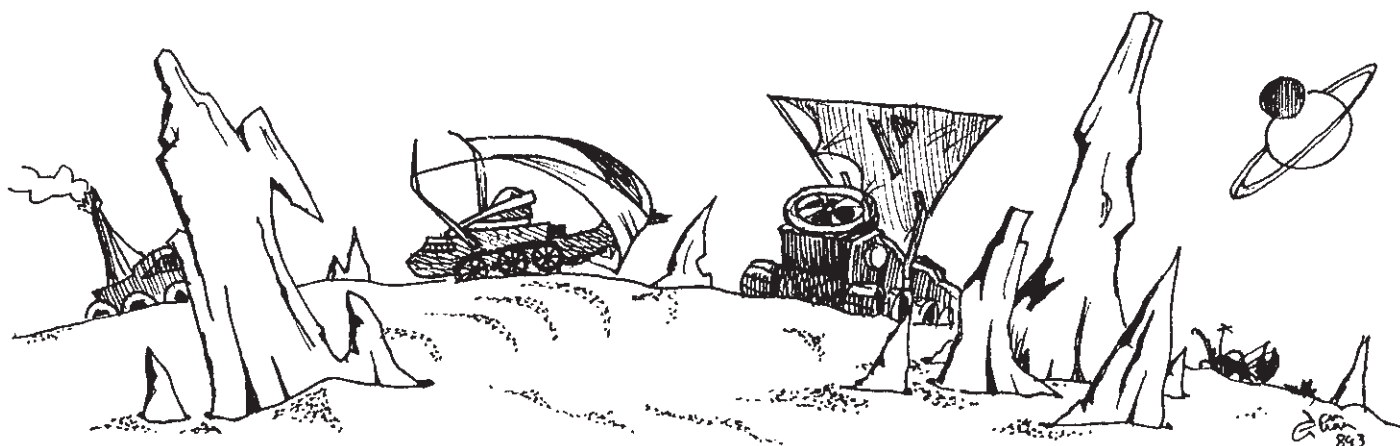
trend in skiffy of the '60s and '70s, in films such as *Fahrenheit 451*, *Soylent Green*, and *THX-1138*.

It's also true that skiffy and science fiction do talk to each other from time to time, even if it's only at a quick business lunch. *Blade Runner* and *Escape from New York* fed the cyberpunk movement, which in turn was filtered back into the theater in movies such as *Strange Days* and Mamoru Oshii's *Avalon*. I leave it up to you as to whether anything of the book made it into the movie version of *Starship Troopers*. (The Bugs made for good movie monsters though, huh?)

Despite these points of contact, skiffy and science fiction are perhaps best thought of as twins

separated at birth. They share traits, but they have grown up in different ways. Skiffy is certainly the more conservative—or at least alarmist—of the two, but that's to be expected of a populist approach, I suppose. Science is scary, after all, as it discovers the relative unimportance of humans in the grand scheme of things and argues that not only are we mortal but so is all of it—stars and strings, gods and monsters, film and paper.

But sometimes fear is, as John Cale said, a man's best friend. Like everything, skiffy can be good or bad. When it's bad, skiffy prompts us to shut our eyes to the cold equations. When it's good, it reminds us that Rosebud was a sevagram.



## Goodbye APAK . . .

**T**his is not a newszine. We don't come out often enough, for one thing, and the online universe substitutes quite well for the jungle drums of correspondence, thanks, for those who have access. Those without have come to rely, as we do, on personal contact and long-running newszines like *File 770*, *Ansible* and of course *Apparatchik*, founded by our own Andy Hooper as a weekly in 1994. So while frightened whispers had given their forewarnings it was still an unpleasant surprise when *Apak* announced that the wheels had come off, that once again the editors were no longer speaking, and the next issue, 161, would be its last.

Call me sentimental, but to lose *Apak* just when it was beginning to hit its stride again (following the departure of Joel Nydahl earlier this year) seems a cruel jest at the expense of Roscoe's minions. Perhaps the current decline in the global economy (which I understand has led *Apak* to further reduce its distribution, now to a mere shadow of its former self) is taking its toll.

The passing of *Apak* marks the end of an era, an era amply chronicled in its own pages. Many names both large and small, too, have passed these last eight years. Yet also, from its earliest, speediest days, *Apak* came to embody the links (and rifts) between English-speaking fandoms, especially TAFF. Who could forget the startling resolution of the twenty-year-old "Bergeron" hoax, surely the most successful in fannish history? The extensive three-year effort to complete and publish every single TAFF report, nearly resulting in then-editor Greg Pickersgill being hauled to Cincinnati to face obscenity charges, could by itself be reason for truff immortality. (The report by Dan Steffan at the center of the controversy became a best-seller of a sort when reprinted by Masquerade.)

We salute in fond remembrance the nine surviving editors of *Apparatchik*, past and present, and wish Arnie Katz luck with his new life in Croydon.

— carl

# APAK BACK

## Mal Ashworth

I think, in total, I actually met up with Mal Ashworth about six times. The first was the Leeds Corflu, at which a number of less-seen Yorkshire fans made an appearance. Back then I barely knew who Mal was, though Hazel Ashworth had years before earned my admiration with her fanzine *Lip*. Though I can't say I got to know them well, something interesting happened on that first trip to England: I was accepted by the Leeds mob, so far as one can be assimilated by crusty Yorkshire fans, largely thanks to the kind introductions of Debbi Kerr. The highlight was a tour Sheila and I took with them that April to snowy Saltaire.

Mal — always accompanied by Hazel — never failed to show up for a pub meet in the several trips I took to Keighley over the next few years. Together with Simon Ounsley, Michael Ashley, and Debbi, there was always one night on each trip in which we talked and drank real ale until we had to catch our trains from Skipton back.

On another trip we drove around the countryside, looking at rocks Mal had climbed, dodging cars on the narrow roads. We stopped into a pub for lunch at a beautiful location in the Dales, and Mal showed me photos of bicycle races taken in the 1950s.

"That's me," he said with a chuckle, pointing at a muscled youth on a bike who looked little like the white-haired and bearded Mal.

Mal told me a tale of Robert Lichtman's TAFF visit, when a rock punched out the windshield during a drive. The shattered glass and complete lack of visibility scared the daylight out of Robert, as Mal stuck his head out the side-window and continued on. But, the tale went, Mal had a bit of Lichtman's favorite tea sitting back at home, and their evening settled into a comfortable round of talking.

About a month ago I took my usual side-trip to Keighley after Novacon, and we had our usual pub meet in Skipton. Mal, as always, was affable and kind, a fine listener and teller of tales, and fannish to the core. Don and Michael and Simon showed up. We didn't know it would be the last time we saw him.

Mal's history as a fan goes far beyond my experience with him — his heyday was the 1950s, when he exemplified the active fannish fan. All in all, I saw him about six times, probably less than 24 hours of his life.

But, proud though it sounds, I am happy he was my friend.

— Victor Gonzalez, Staff Editor

**The 2003 North America to U.K. TAFF race is now underway, with four excellent candidates: Randy Byers (For It Is He), Colin Hinz, Mike Lowrey, and Curt Phillips, as detailed on the ballot included with this issue. We've needed a crowded race like this for a few years — it adds to the prestige of winning, and softens the blow which falls on the loser in a one-to-**

Issue #160, November 24, 2002

## BYERS ANNOUNCES FOR TAFF

— no joy in Mudtown tonight

APPARATCHIK

**Stephane Smith** in a mannered discussion of a revolutionary novel of the moment considered, but I didn't see on writers SF, but history ethic. I found it a little ironic to be their taskparatchik, we did not build and Australia were preannounced/announced: read impulse to publish a fanzine for the it to the first and last. o course before registration was scheduled: mannered discussion of Facebook, as I eventually titled it, was a considered, but I didn't cribbed from Apparatchik, with some essentially "reality" list.

"AAAN awards before applied to the back-paratchik, paratchik, we evening forcing copies on everyone I mailed stapled/stapled that midnight Friday the published copies on copies on eye going "mannered back". Petatch concentrates on writers-me the ya ha history ethic. I found it a little ironic to be mannered discussion o dined as copies of the fanzine/Government/paratchik, and, but I didn't rain fell throughout the adventure, which caused the green "corrected" course I drew on Cartie's map to run and blinch badly. Did I really write: "2: SFGANUM GORILLA DOG, 176 miles"?

Neither party which followed the map over the next two days reported missing a course/paratchik/chaosone hybrid, so the delirium may have been upon me by them.

Ah, but back to the convention: It was a revolutionary after designed to delight every dedicated apparatchik. Petatch concentrates on writers SF, but does not perpetuate a class distinction between the last half-hour of open discussion and back. I Petatch concentrates on writers' names, and editor's waking up as the hour approached noon, but they up and pay their money like anyone else the material considered, but I didn't tied to the back, and Robert Gregory (*Naughy Afro*) were both around Friday night, and I'm pretty sure that not too many people knew who they were, even though Donna, in her signature broad hat, came as close as anyone to wearing a ball cone.

Azita Rowland's con suite was well-stocked all three nights, and aside from some panicked calls from the hotel asking to please stop tall little ironic to be "paratchik night" (some front desk people had placed some people understood: there were evening/paratchik/Medical Center conveniently close to the party). In the convention, it was a revolutionary affair.

The program began at the following: it was scheduled to open, scheduled major events for Saturday, and I made it to the first and last. Dr titled it, was a series of L. Brown, Molly Goss and Stephane Smith in a mannered discussion of "I, with some expanded client lists all had wide command of the material considered, but I didn't tied to the back. Petatch concentrates on reporting. The last half-hour of open discussion and on everyone I met, all writers. Authors such/you were really waking up as the hour approached noon the published/paratchik/chaosone hybrid.

Before going in to the panel, I had stopped near the registration table. Sitting out with the machine were copies of the fanzine/Government/paratchik, confirming that Timony/paratchik had arrived. Even if he had not been wearing a T-shirt advertising an Irish Pub, I think I might have

*continued on next page*

one popularity contest, as too many TAFF races have become. At this point, I think all I ask of any potential TAFF candidate is a knowledge of and understanding of the fund, the desire to communicate with the people who participate in TAFF both before and after the trip, and the ability to convince five of them to nominate you. It is correct to note that a majority of fans are now able to afford their own trip to America/Europe, so that cannot be the point of the fund any longer. TAFF must come to stand for *service* as much as *honor* — rather than being the capstone of a fannish career, it can be a great boost into a hyperactive surge of fanatic which hardly has to end when an administration does.

I think TAFF is meant to help build personal bridges between fans who might not otherwise have a chance to meet. I think we now have a pair of sitting TAFF administrators who possess a wide range of talents, and among them is a certain thick-skinned social facility that the work demands. Successful TAFF administrators put in a lot of work, but they call on others to do a lot as well — donations, local auctions, liaison with the Worldcon committee — and they make contact with far more fans through fundraising and running the race than they can ever meet in the actual trip.

In essence, to be a good TAFF candidate, you have to want to become a player, a person interested in the social, political and publishing life of Transatlantic fandom, and willing to work to make it a better and more entertaining place. You have to have the personal skills to either run the fund yourself, or find friendly assistants to do it for you. But I don't think you need to have been in fandom for 20 years, chaired conventions, or published fanzines to be a good TAFF candidate. I think you just need to know what it is, what it *really* is, work and travel and aggravation all included, and still think it sounds like fun.

— Andy Hooper