

FANZINES 1

January 2001

By Ted White

ANSIBLE (Dave Langford, 94 London Rd, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 5AU, United Kingdom; ansible@cix.co.uk; monthly single sheet newsletter; available in the U.S. for a self-addressed, stamped envelope sent to U.S. agent Janice Murray, Box 75684, Seattle, WA 98126-0684)

Ansible has been appearing regularly for 20 years; the December issue is #161. Dave Langford writes and edits *Ansible* with clarity and wit and has been winning Fan Writer Hugos for it with an almost monotonous consistency for years – if not decades. This is a newsletter with a British accent which covers both fan and pro events, cramming an amazing amount of wordage into its two double-columned pages. There is actually more real news in an issue of *Ansible* than can be found in most issues of *Locus*.

Here's an example: “**Stephen King** suspended publication of his ‘download free, pay on the honour system’ serial *The Plant* as of 9 November. His assistant Marsha DeFilippo first said this was because only 46% of readers paid up (success beyond the wildest dreams of anyone else publishing in that way); in a later statement she insisted that reader response had nothing to do with it. Some think King grew tired of a project that in his terms never generated more than small change, supposedly around \$375,000.”

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TRASH BARREL (Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Ave., North Hollywood, CA 91606-2308; available “on request,” but a stamped self-addressed envelope wouldn't hurt)

Trash Barrel typically runs only two to four pages of typewriter-typed double-columns, and although it's printed by xerox copying, it has the look and feel of older-fashioned, mimeographed fanzines. This fanzine is devoted to nothing but listings (with a sentence or two of description) of fanzines. They are almost too brief to be called “reviews,” and they don't make exciting reading, but the latest issue (dated “Nov. 2000” and unnumbered) has 52 fanzines listed, in alphabetical order – making it a good place to find out about a wide variety of fanzines for anyone wishing to explore this aspect of fandom.

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IDEA (Geri Sullivan, Toad Hall, 3444 Blaisdell Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315; idea@toad-hall.com; available for Letters of Comment; query about single-copy availability)

Idea falls at the opposite end of the fanzine spectrum from *Trash Barrel*. The new #12 runs 78 pages and is an ambitious “genzine” or general, unspecialized fanzine. Geri uses

a high-tech mimeograph to produce this very attractive fanzine, but the text is all computer-set and looks virtually photo-copied. The front cover (both sides) is produced on a color inkjet printer and presents eight full-color photographs of such notable fans as British TAFF-winner Maureen Kincaid Speller. Inside are articles by American TAFF-winner Ulrika O'Brien, Dave Langford, Martin Hoare (who often accepts Langford's Hugos at Worldcons for him), Rob Hansen, Jeff Schalles and Geri herself – and a 30-page letter column. Discussions fill the letter column and invite your responses (there's nothing like seeing your own letter in print!).

That's all the space I have this issue, but I'll be reviewing more fanzines here in issues to come.

--Ted White