

# FANZINES 18

June 2002

By Ted White

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QUASIQUOTE #4, May, 2002 (Sandra Bond, 7 Granville Road, London N13 4RR, UK; available “for a broadly defined fannish usual, for whim, or for £2 or \$5 (reviewers take note that a 19p SAE does *not* cut it)”); e-mail to [sandra@ho-street.demon.co.uk](mailto:sandra@ho-street.demon.co.uk))

*Quasiquote* is a solid, 50-page fanzine which blends a modern (and British) sensibility with curiously old-fashioned-looking production.

In earlier eras of fandom when computers were rare or unheard of and photo-copying was expensive and rarely used, fanzines tended to be banged out on mimeograph stencils (with old-fashioned typewriters) with only a rudimentary attention paid to layout and with hit-or-miss art which might be rather poorly transferred to stencils by the often artistically-inept editor (the art had to be traced with some skill).

These days many fanzine editors have access to publishing programs, routinely turn out double-columned text and scan in their art, creating a digital fanzine (before it is printed out) which could as easily be made into a PDF file. So it is curiously refreshing to encounter a well-written fanzine which has been created with only rudimentary attention paid to layout (no double columns here) and hit-or-miss art (the crudely amateur cover is particularly off-putting, while the back cover is of professional quality). At the midway point (well, page 28) the type size, never very large, shrinks by another point or so, and this, combined with printing that seems to get worse as the issue progresses (Sandra’s printer broke down), makes reading *Quasiquote* not so different from the experience of reading a poorly mimeographed fanzine forty years ago.

But only until you actually *read* the issue. Sandra’s editorial leads off. It presents both short bits of topical interest (she’s editing the 1995 *Fanthology* and is looking for pointers) and longer bits which could stand on their own as short articles. Bond is a solid fannish writer, capable of both serious topics and lighter moments. She came into fandom as a teenager in the mid-’80s, but has become knowledgeable about the fandom which preceded her.

Gail Courtney’s “How To Purge” is about getting rid of books when one has too many; long-time UK fan Ron Bennett describes the dodges he used to get past French customs when he was selling comic books at Paris shows in “To The Custom House Borne;” Harry Warner (another long-time fan and former newspaper reporter) tells about becoming a radio news announcer at one point in his career in “Bems In The Thames;” Arnie Katz remembers some undeservedly forgotten fanzines with “Say, Don’t You Remember?” and I have “Over The Top at Corflu,” a 2001 Corflu report (Sandra was delayed in producing this issue).

But the piece which dominates the issue is Australian Laura Seabrook's story of her more than twenty-year career in fandom, "From ShadowFan to GothicGallae," in which she describes her discovery that she was transsexual and what she did about it. It is not a triumphant story (the article is subheaded "A bitter-sweet recollection of fandom") – Laura apparently did not feel she fit into (Australian) fandom as either a male or a female, and her choice of friends (as she describes them) may have been part of her problem. But the piece is uncompromisingly written (and extensively footnoted) and is the sort of intensely personal journalism one occasionally finds in the better fanzines.

—Ted White