

Littlebrook: a Journal of the Fannish Arts and Sciences is a fanzine published by Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins (aka Suzle), to appear on an irregular and unpredictable schedule. The publishers' address is 3522 N.E. 123rd Street, Seattle, Washington, 98125; their phone number is 206-367-8898. Email can be sent to littlebrooklocs@aol.com (email of a titillating or personal nature may be sent to Jerry at jakaufman@aol.com or Suzle at suzlet@aol.com). This first issue is dated August, 2002. *Littlebrook* will be available for the "usual." This could be a letter commenting on a previous issue, an article or artwork intended to be published in a future issue, or your own fanzine in trade. We will also accept in-person begging, the provision of a beverage, or \$2. We do not accept subscriptions. *Littlebrook* will also be available on-line in a PDF format at efanzine.com. If you prefer the electronic version, let us know, and we'll simply send you an email announcement when another issue is ready.

What's inside:

This page: Stu Shiffman art, and publication details

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Page 10: "Corflu Fakefan" a Guest of Honor speech by Moshe Feder, with art by Craig Smith.

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BOTHERED

AND

It's been a few years since we published the final issue of *Mainstream*. You may consider this to have been a long time. However, if you take into consideration that my original impulse was never to publish again, you'll agree that "never" has arrived rather quickly.

I guess I was tired of pubbing the big issues, and even more tired of the innumerable delays and long waits for material that made publication of a fanzine more of a broken tree limb hanging over my head than a chocolate-covered carrot dangling in front of my nose.

To prevent that sort of self-defeating agony, here's the plan for *Littlebrook*: smaller issues, a little more frequently published, with Suzle's column not a necessity for each issue, but a luxury seldom provided and therefore all the more delectable.

The name comes from the nice little creek that runs through a ravine next to our property. It plunges into a culvert and disappears under our property; later it joins Thornton Creek, which empties into Lake Washington. On some maps it's called Littlebrook Creek, on others it's Little Brook Creek. We like the continuing water theme in our zines, and are trying to come up with a suitable new title for the letter column. Don't be surprised if we use "Cross Currents" again.

The explicit trigger for this fanzine's creation was Tamara Vining's fascination with Dave Hartwell's newest necktie at Potlatch this year. The tie, a hideous art project consisting of polished stones and glitter glued to a wide 60's eyeglass, was an auction item at this year's Potlatch. Tami decided

that such a spectacular example of neckwear must have a secret history. She set about collecting details. We said if she wrote the History of the Necktie, we would publish it. Somehow we are publishing without the History, but Tami may yet write it. She swears she still has her notes.

Instead, we're happy to include Moshe Feder's Corflu Valentine Guest of Honor speech, slightly edited and beefed-up with more comments. If you want to see an earlier version, check out the Corflu website at http://www.hawkida.com/corflu/corf_speech.htm. We're also gratified to bring you an installment of a fanzine review column by Andy Hooper, "Sausage Time." In this one, Andy opens his mail.

So raise your glasses and welcome...us. We salute you, too.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer and I go way back, all the way back to the summer that the WB reran the first season's episodes. Since then I've seen every episode. Most recently, as I write this (April 20, 2002) I watched an episode on March 12, 2002, called "Normal Again." As of this writing, there hasn't been another new one. I wouldn't be surprised if there never were another. Joss Whedon could announce tomorrow that the show ended its run, a carefully guarded secret known only to him and guessed only by me. I could say that "Normal Again" told me so, and that I feel oddly betrayed.

If you're a *Buffy* fan who hasn't seen that episode, and likes surprises, stop reading now. If you have no television or only use yours to watch figure skating, Bob Vila, late night public access, rented movies or the Weather Channel, you may not find the following entirely interesting. Be warned that I will cheerfully give away plot details and at some point I'm going to talk about the right of the artist to pull the rug from under the loyal audience – whether in a film, a book or a television series. *Buffy*'s just a jumping-off point.

Buffy Summers starts the series as a teenager, freshly moved to Sunnydale, California, who has a Destiny. She's been somehow selected to be the Slayer – always a girl or woman who is given remarkable strength and rigorous training to fight vampires and other evil supernatural beings. Fortunately for Buffy, she soon finds friends and allies in her fight; fortunately for the series, Sunnyvale turns out to be located over the Hellmouth, both a source of evil and an attraction to it.

Over the course of six years, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has developed a rich cast of permanent and recurring characters, and a complex history and set of rules governing Slayerhood and the demon world. The show isn't always consistent in these rules. For instance, in one season, when Buffy was clin-



cally dead from drowning for a few minutes, Giles the Watcher revealed that when one Slayer dies, another is selected. The new Slayer died after a couple of appearances, and another Slayer, the infamous Faith, took her place. However, when Buffy died again at the end of the fifth season, no new Slayer showed up. (I was disappointed.)

This season, Buffy's main nemesis has been a trio of college-age nerds, including at least one character who's shown up since season one. They want to rule the world, using a combination of unlikely technology and ill-intentioned magic to try to gain their ends and simultaneously defeat Buffy.

In "Normal Again," the boys call up a demon that secretes an hallucinogenic toxin; it stabs Buffy, and she begins mentally to switch from the real world to one in which she's a patient in a mental hospital. In the "fantasy" world, the Buffyverse is nothing more than a carefully built-up delusion. Her parents (both alive and still together) worry about her and allow a new therapy to be used to snap her out of it. Buffy becomes so confused about which is the reality and which the fantasy, that she nearly allows her pals to be killed by the rampaging demon.

In the hallucinated mental hospital, Buffy's mom Joyce sees that Buffy is about to accept the "normal" world and resist the desperate plight of Xander, et al. Joyce gives Buffy a pep talk to help her through, mentioning her strength and determination. This has the effect (the opposite of Joyce's intention) of helping Buffy to accept the world of vampires, demons and painfully beaten friends as the real one; she defeats the demon and is given an antidote to the poison.

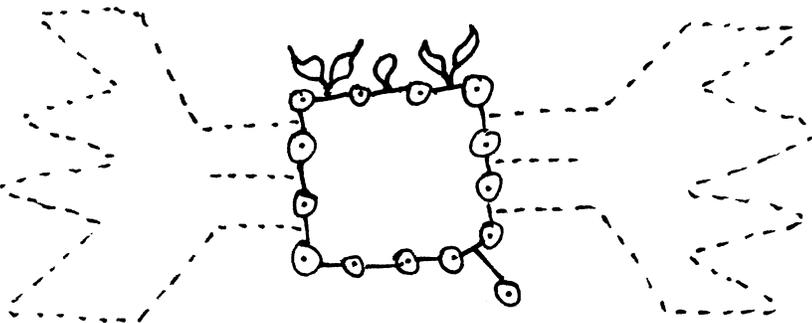
But wait. One more scene plays out: In the hospital, in the world we're sure has been Buffy's hallucination, Buffy's parents and the Doctor look at the catatonic Buffy, gone from their world into the other. Was this the "real" world, after all? The camera recedes from the scene, leaving me believing so.

In science fiction circles, we've been debating the question of "willing suspension of disbelief" for so long that most newcomers to the field, whether through reading books or watching movies, don't give it a thought. They've become entirely used to accepting whatever happens as "real" for the duration of the experience. Artists use this acceptance in many ways.

The most basic way, of course, is to tell a story that's entirely respectful of the audience's belief. The artist does her best to keep the details consistent, to vary from consensual reality only to the degree needed for the story to work, to be convincing and astonishing at the same time. Another basic way is to be as fast and outrageous as possible, and hope the audience doesn't notice that things really don't make sense, or that a cool-sounding detail here is really impossible even in the world the artist presents, because of that awkward detail over there.

Buffy has followed a little more complex way through most of its history. It's used self-aware humor to point out the show's underpinnings of formula and the unlikelihood of the sheer number of supernatural perils that Buffy has fought against. (Her headstone, shown at the end of Season Five, was inscribed, "She Saved the World, a Lot.") For me, this post-modern point of view has added to the show's appeal.

Then there are the artists who actually question the structure of reality itself, using their art as a tool. Phillip K. Dick did this in quite a number of his novels and short stories. Characters often accepted their surroundings, only to be informed



that they were consistently lied to by the government, or under the influence of distorting drugs, or were dead and in stasis, dreaming their world. A more recent example is Christopher Priest, whose protagonists discover that they're living in an impossible place or time in which memory, perception or some other factor have led into paradox. Both are among my favorite writers. Movies like *Vanilla Sky* and *Memento* have also, in different ways and with varying success, done the same.

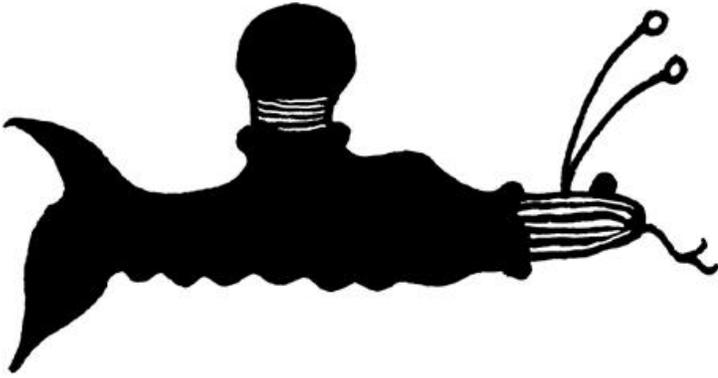
Series television (and perhaps series books) might be different. It's usually a much more conservative form in certain ways. We who actually watch such shows enjoy the continuing cast of characters and the continuity of history we share with the show and other viewers. We get angry or annoyed when something happens that wrenches that history. We get confused when one actor suddenly replaces another to play a key character. We enjoy the surprise we get when a major character is killed off, even the frisson of imaginary grief (usually when the actor dies or leaves the show), but we smack our foreheads when the character impossibly returns.

And when the show tells us that the last two years were all a dream (like *Dallas* did, though I never watched the show myself) we loyal viewers go nuts. (Marilyn Holt reminded me that the last episode of *Newhart* ended with the idea that the entire run had been a nightmare of Bob Newhart's psychiatrist character from his earlier show. That was different because it was meant as the final episode, and it was brilliantly witty.)

"Normal Again" seems to be saying that the entire run of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and presumably its spin-off show *Angel*, has been one long sad delusion. Because we, the faithful viewers have willingly, even eagerly, suspended our disbelief enough to share Buffy Summers's various triumphs and tragedies, we've been delusional, too. It's hard to want to start watching *Buffy* again when new eps begin airing, with what amounts to a slap in our hysterical faces still stinging our cheeks.

Am I getting overwrought? Perhaps I'm taking the show too seriously? You're asking me, and I'm asking myself. I have to entertain the idea that Joss Whedon is not asking me; he's telling me. As the creator of a commercial program — done for money as much as, if not more than, anything else — he's expected to humor me and the millions like me. Yet I consider him an artist, and as an artist he has the right to follow his ideas where they lead, whether they disturb me or not. That's one of the privileges and obligations of an artist. I think he may have been saying, at least in part, that I'm taking the idea of Buffy and her Buffyverse too seriously. I need to suspend my disbelief just a little bit less.

So I'll certainly watch the new episodes as they start April 30. I'll be more wary of Whedon's hints and suggestions, and a little less ready to accept everything I see at face value. But I'll be there in any case.



[July 20 afterthought: Despite the above, when I watched the rest of the season, I was sucked in just about as deeply, and even enjoyed the shock—as I predicted above—of losing a major character in the series to sudden death. It certainly explained why Amber Benson never got the billing she deserved.]

Technology can mean more than electronics, much more. It can mean something as crude as a stick stripped of leaves and used to pull termites from a nest. It can be as big as a multi-story construction crane. It can be as delicate as the three-hair brush a miniaturist uses to paint the Lord's Prayer on the head of an ant, or the restraints he uses to keep the ant still.

Or it can be as brutal as my "new" chipper/shredder.

I was walking along Lake City Way one Saturday morning early this year, having just completed a round of Post Office Box checking. As I passed Fletcher's 2^d Hand Store ("Quality Used Tools/Furniture/Antiques – Absolutely No Donations Left When Store Is Closed"), I noticed a black and orange monstrosity on three bent-metal legs. The words "Used Chipper/Shredder \$65" were painted on the orange portion.

I thought about it the rest of the day, and drove over about 4 o'clock, checkbook tucked in an inside jacket pocket, to give the thing a closer look. Mr. Fletcher pulled a power cord from behind the counter, plugged it into a handy socket and stuck the other end into the chipper. It made appropriate noises, so I bought it, along with a CD of "The Best of the Divynls."

Once home, I gave it a closer look. It was culled from the first three albums, and didn't include "I Touch Myself." I know, I know.... The chipper stood about three feet high. The upper portion consisted of a black chimney into which one shoved branches and other detritus. This sat on the orange upper housing, covering the chipping mechanism, with a small tube poking out at an angle and designed for feeding straight sticks. The black under-housing held the whirling mechanism and was attached on top of the gray motor.

I removed the upper housing by loosening two nuts with a little wrench that came attached, and found a rather rusty interior. The chipping mechanism was a wheel that would spin rapidly when the juice was on. It had four slots and two smaller, inset cutting wheels, all sharpened on the leading edges, and bolted to the center were two thick pieces of metal, bent and welded together to form an upright diamond. When spinning, this diamond would do the greatest share of chopping big sticks and thick vines.

The chips would simply spit towards the front and bounce downward, roughly guided by the leading edge of the upper housing. I got a plastic bin for the chips, an extension cord, protective glasses, and heavy gloves from the garage, and a big pile of cut blackberry vines, branches and other brush, and was ready to begin.

I put the upper housing back on, and found that Mr. Chipper was a cranky thing. If the housing didn't sit precisely in the right place, that upright diamond would catch on something in the interior and stop dead, with the electric motor buzzing weakly. After a dozen attempts or more, I finally got the satisfyingly big roar I wanted. After that, I could manage to get the positioning right in only six tries, almost every time.

Now my fun began. The various pieces of wood, stems and vines made great crunching noises as they went into the stack, met the diamond, fell into the spinning wheel and, chattering out the front, landed more or less in the bin. (A lot of pieces bounced right out again, leaving a semicircle of cellulose around Mr. Chipper and me.) This was brute force yard work, and I loved it. I could safely destroy things and create mulch while doing so.

I never suspected that I was potentially so macho. I'm a pretty quiet fellow (stop laughing, you in the back) and have become tame over the years. I've never been big on sports or other forms of competitive heavy breathing. NASCAR does nothing for me, and I do nothing for it. I do like technological stuff, but my understanding of it is shallow; instead of getting inflamed about the convoluted innards of computers, I wonder why they don't come in earth tones, wood finishes or brushed aluminum.

Yet I'm eager to find more excuses to drag Mr. Chipper out, make noise and a mess, maybe roll my sleeves up and cut down some more branches or find some more blackberries taunting me by growing where I don't want them.

In fact, that camellia by the front door is getting way out of hand, and the spiraea at the front of the yard is overgrowing the retaining wall. Excuse me, gotta go. It's chipping time!

I moved to Seattle in the fall of 1977. Instead of flying or taking the train, I traveled mainly by hitching rides from fans, traveling from convention to convention, fan center to fan center, until finally being reduced to taking a Greyhound bus from Minneapolis to Seattle.

I associate Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund winner Peter Roberts with this move. Rob Jackson and Peter arrived in New York in late August, while I was still packing books, clothing and records, and trundling them two boxes at a time to the nearest Post Office. They were visiting prior to attending Suncon in Florida. Then Peter and I arrived at Windycon in Chicago a month later, from different points of the compass, and continued together, moving cleverly eastwards (backwards for me), to East Lansing and Detroit before I headed west to Chicago again.

My friendship with Peter was entirely through letters and fanzines prior to our first meeting in New York. Peter published several excellent fanzines, including *Checkpoint* and *Egg*, and from some hidden well of boldness, I asked him to contribute to the fanzine *Suzle* and put out in the 1970s, *The Spanish Inquisition*. I even "channeled" him at the 1976 Balticon, where we put on the Live SpanInq, and I read Peter's con-

tribution aloud to an appreciative audience. But New York was our first meeting, and I liked him a good deal, including his orange clothing and hand-rolled tobacco cigarettes. When I ran across him at Windycon, and we traveled together for about a week, I found my liking for him and his sly sense of humor growing.

So I looked forward to his TAFF trip report, which I was sure would be published soon. Of course, I looked forward the most to any chapters that might include Peter's New York and Midwestern adventures. I was partly gratified as chapters began to appear in the fan press, including one on New York. However, the flow stopped in 1982, without reaching the Chicago chapter.

Well, Peter emerged from gafia (or so it appeared to us in the U.S.) in the late 1990s. He wrote the balance of the chapters, and Dave Langford published the whole report in 1999 as *New Routes in America*. I received a copy only recently, but the thing is now out of print. (I have hopes that a new edition will emerge soon; I'll keep you posted.)

With artwork by Dan Steffan, Jim Barker, Stu Shiffman, D. West, Steve Stiles, and Pete Lyon reprinted from original publications, the report has a little whiff of time capsule about it. (Sue Mason's art was posted with Chapter 10 on the unofficial TAFF site, and other art by Steve Jeffery and Rob Hansen was done for this edition.) But for me, at least, the time was worth remembering. New York fandom was quite different when we still lived there; it had more the feeling of a unified community than it has today, from this 3,000-mile remove.

Those of you who were not there, you too would enjoy this, because Peter is a hell of a good writer. He's able to embroider such ordinary TAFF report minutiae as describing the people he meets: "Ideally, all fans should look thoroughly remarkable so that it would be simple and straightforward to introduce them; I could then say, [for] example, that Suzanne Tompkins was eight feet tall with green hair, or Gary Farber was the furry bloke with purple ears and a gold lamé eye patch.... In fact, of course, apart from a faintly luminous fan-nish aura, most fans look almost human." (Page 4.)

However, Chapters 10 through 15, being written

twenty years on and based on notes and memory, are skimpier than early portions, and the chapter in which I fit, "Largely Forgotten Loganberries" (Chapter 14), occupies about three-quarters of its double-columned page. In remarking on our Detroit stay, he lightly throws a gauntlet in my direction by saying, "Jerry Kaufman was there and holds the key to this part of the trip, since he can still remember the names of the people we stayed with."

Oh, can I?

I think I can remember some things better than Peter; the above quotation probably refers to a conversation we had at some convention in the late 1990s, possibly a Corflu. But I also have a notebook in which I kept a journal of the trip. It doesn't include all the things I remember, and includes other events and details I've forgotten. You may consider what follows to be a little suspect.

I know that Peter and I crossed paths and shared meals at Windycon. (The person that made the biggest impression on me at that con was Terry Garey; she critiqued a poem of mine, published in one of my apazines, helping me make it more concise and powerful.)

Peter remembers getting to Annie Hall in East Lansing, Michigan, from Chicago, vaguely recalling that Gary Farber was in the same car. That Mustang was owned and driven by one of the Annie Hall inhabitants, Stu Stimson; not only was Gary a passenger with Peter, but so were Patrick Hayden (before he'd met Teresa Nielsen and adopted the current version of his name, I'm sure) and me. I remember the hole in the shotgun-seat floor that made the ride cold and noisy. I also remember vividly that Gary and Patrick carried on a rapid and erudite conversation about *The Lord of the Rings*, trading references and remarks for what seemed like hours.

Peter stayed at Annie Hall, a house packed tight with brainy and eccentric fans like Patrick, Gary, Stu (who was the official renter of the property), Anne Laurie Logan and Ken Josenhans, and named after the Woody Allen film, of course. I stayed with Seth McEvoy in his much smaller apartment. My notebook refers to three meals with Annie Hall residents, Seth and Peter at the Pantree, an old post office building that had



been beautifully refurbished into a restaurant, with high airy ceiling, enormous booths, and plants in-between the booths that seemed to stick their leaves into our ears as though wanting to distract us from conversation.

One incident I remember was walking to Annie Hall from Seth's, and finding everyone asleep. I woke Peter, but the others had stayed up most of the night, presumably talking and playing Kate Bush albums. Peter and I went out for breakfast, followed by a visit to at least one excellent bookstore. We wandered through, recommending books to one another. I talked Peter, who had a serious interest in American fiction, into buying a book by regional author Hamlin Garland. I wonder if he still has it?

I got a ride to Detroit with Denise "Neicer" Hudspeth (later Denise Brown), before Peter came in by bus. The mysterious people we stayed with were Paul and Alicia Madaraz and their six-year-old son Josh (who are all scattered to the winds), and Cy Chauvin. (Neicer was due to move in shortly.) Gary and Denise Mattingly featured in the visit as well; they were all active in the Wayne Third Foundation, editing or writing for the club's fanzine *Selden's Plan*, directing plays, strumming guitars, drinking Scotch. Perhaps the Scotch explains why memories have grown dim; it was my first time.

I wrote in my notes that the Wayne Third Foundation club meeting was dull enough to chase Peter and me into other parts of the Student Union; we found pool and bumper pool tables, and after a game or two of eight-ball, Peter taught me what I remember as snooker on one of the bumper pool tables, which not only involved holes like in pool, but also a set of bumpers in the middle. I enjoyed it hugely and have never played since.

After that, we went separate ways; Peter headed back to New York to fly home, while I retraced the miles to Chicago. The complete story of my trip out here, from its start at Pghlange to its completion in the Seattle Greyhound Station, may never be told completely. Some of it is simply too dull, some of it is fraught with overwrought emotion. However, I'm glad Peter's trip report gave me the excuse to air some of it here.

[July 28, 2002 Note: I'm happy to say that I've put *New Routes in America* back into print; I'm selling it for \$10 postpaid. If you're at ConJose this year, look for them in the Fan Lounge; otherwise send me the \$10 and I'll mail you a copy. Profits will go to TAFF.]

Are you tired, run down? Do you fall asleep during concerts, car rides, dull parties? You may be suffering from tired blood, low thyroid output, narcolepsy. Or maybe you have one of the newest scourges to sweep America, sleep apnea. (Andropause is even newer.)

I had no idea, myself, that sleep apnea was my problem. Other people had it, not me. I didn't have tired blood (better known as anemia) or too little thyroid juice. Those had been tested. I was just tired a lot. Even when I got enough sleep, or what ought to be enough, I could still fall asleep at odd moments during the day, or just spend the afternoon yawning.

It wasn't until I started snoring excessively last fall, that anyone suggested I see a sleep specialist.

No one had ever complained about my snoring before: not housemate, roommates, nor bedmates. Suzle's been sleeping next to me for umpteen years without a problem, but last fall things changed. I was snoring so loudly at times that she could hear me from the living room. It was becoming impossible for her to fall asleep. (Typically I go to bed first by an hour or more, so when she came to bed I was already performing my version of night music.)

Coincidentally I started seeing a new doctor in the fall, Dr. Ted Kapanjie. As I rattled off my list of standard problems and symptoms, I got to the newest, the big snore. He first suggested I try a nasal decongestant. That didn't work, so after a few weeks he gave me a referral to the Pacific Sleep Center.

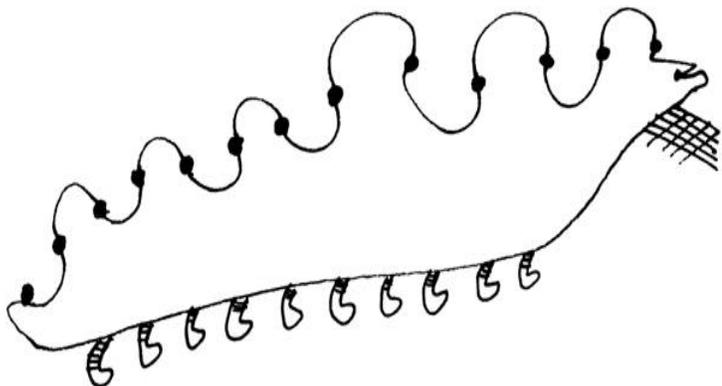
My first appointment was a get-acquainted meeting. I filled out a lengthy medical history that concentrated, not surprisingly, on sleep habits and potentially related problems. I took it to the Sleep Center's office in the Medical Arts Building, on the grounds of Northwest Hospital. I know the hospital grounds well – it's a ten-minute drive from our house, my mother stayed there several times, and Kapanjie father and son have their office in the same building.

Here I met Dr. Teresa Jacobs, who explained to me that sleep apnea is a condition in which the person's breathing passages are partially or fully blocked while sleeping. This results in less oxygen getting to the brain, so the person gets much less deep sleep than necessary. Cause: floppy tongue or other loose bits in the throat. Symptoms: restlessness, snoring, perceptible pauses in breathing during sleep, tiredness, falling asleep during the day. Well, I certainly had some of those, except for the alarming pauses in breathing.

Just because I presented some symptoms did not mean I was truly afflicted, however. The Sleep Center would have to observe my sleep through one night. The observation would require that I be hooked up to a recording machine, and the records of my slumber were called a polysomogram. I made an appointment for a week or two later.

I also did some Internet browsing, finding a number of sites with definitions, symptoms, treatments. I was surprised to read that the condition had first been described in 1965, much earlier than I expected. I found out that "apnea" is Greek for "want of breath." I found details at the National Sleep Foundation site, the National Institutes of Health site and the CPAP Store site, among others. (I'll have more on CPAPs below.)

When I returned to the Medical Arts Building with my overnight bag in hand at 10 o'clock one Tuesday night, John, the technician, buzzed me into the building. He showed me the bed I'd be using, in a clinic room with one door opening into



the Sleep Center and another locked door that John said was to a corridor, and explained all the various hookups. I changed into sleeping shorts while he went to talk to another patient, a woman I never saw, in another room.

When he returned, he began to stick electrodes all over me – there were two on my chest, two on my thighs (I strung the wires through my shorts for him), three on my face and three or four stuck to my hairy head. He gathered all the wires together, formed a bundle that ran down the back of my head like dreadlocks, and plugged them into a connector that would attach to a cable by the bed. The connector was about the size of a notebook computer. Then he fastened two straps around my torso, one around my belly and the other around my chest. Finally he clipped a blood pressure monitor on my left index finger. All of these also plugged into the connector box.

We walked into the “bedroom,” where he plugged the connector and other devices in. If I needed to go to the toilet in the middle of the night (a certainty), I could unplug the connector and carry it with me. If I needed him at any time, to adjust the fan in the room or the like, I could unclip the blood pressure monitor, and the device would beep. (He would also watch me on a monitor to make sure none of the electrodes pulled free.)

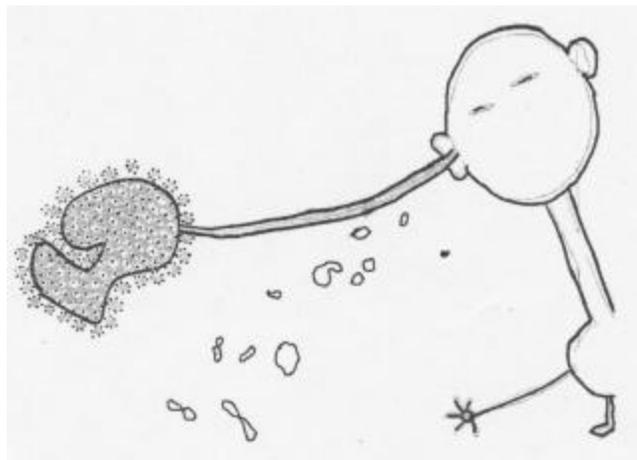
The plan was that he would wake me about 5:30 or 6:00 am. Since Wednesday that week was a day off, I wasn’t concerned about getting up early or late. As it happened, when John woke me, he told me it was almost 6:30. The other patient had been unable to sleep until almost 4:00. John removed all the electrodes and other paraphernalia, and gave me wet paper towels to get some of the gunky glue out of my hair. I wondered, as I dressed, whether they’d been able to get much useful data from the sleep-resistant woman. Just as I finished pulling on my pants, the door from the corridor opened, and I found myself looking at three or four men who were there to start renovations. John steered them down the hall to a different room, and I zipped home to get a little more sleep.

In the following appointment, two weeks later, Dr. Jacobs read the runic inscriptions to me, and showed me the seismographic record of my brain activity, breathing, heart rate and so forth. I did not sleep well at the Sleep Center. I got light and REM sleep, but little deep sleep, and my breathing slowed frequently. I asked if the unfamiliar surroundings and the great number of electrodes and other devices John had attached to me might have caused that. She said no.

Then she told me about the treatment options. One of them was surgery on my soft palate to prevent it from blocking my windpipe at night. This was a painful operation with a 50% success rate. I didn’t think this sounded like good odds.

The other option was to wear a breathing mask at night, which would be hooked up to a CPAP system. To quote from the manual that came with it, “The Respironics REMstar Plus System is a CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) device designed for the treatment of adult Obstructive Sleep Apnea only.”

The idea is that the CPAP, which is an air pump, will create enough pressure to keep my airways open. The mask, which fits over my nose, is connected to a long flexible tube, which in turn is plugged into the pump. A doctor can set the pump for various pressures, though secret programming methods not included in the patient manual. The controls at my command will change a setting for different altitudes, in case I travel; they also can set the pressure to half the setting the doc-



tor has selected, to increase my ease in falling asleep. If I choose “ramp,” the term for this setting, the pressure will gradually, over the course of fifteen minutes, increase from half to full pressure. (The ramp time and initial pressure can also be changed.)

Over the last few months, I’ve been adjusting to having this ridiculous thing on my face at night. The mask includes adjustable straps to clamp the thing tightly; otherwise, air whizzes out all around my cheeks and eyes. At first I couldn’t sleep for than an hour or two without taking it off; at least once I took it off in my sleep. Now I can manage to keep it on almost all night. But I still wake more times during the night than I used to, and I still feel exhausted in the morning. I’m also dreaming a lot more than usual.

I have a follow-up visit to Dr. Jacobs next week, and I’m getting a different style of mask to try. Meanwhile, I’ve been pondering the ailment and its implications. I haven’t taken it very seriously, as I only got into this to cut down on my snoring, and have never, says Suzle, exhibited the frightening complete halt to breathing that other people report. Stu Shiffman also has sleep apnea and uses a CPAP. He takes it much more seriously, and probably has experienced more severe symptoms than me. (He may want to write about this for next issue.)

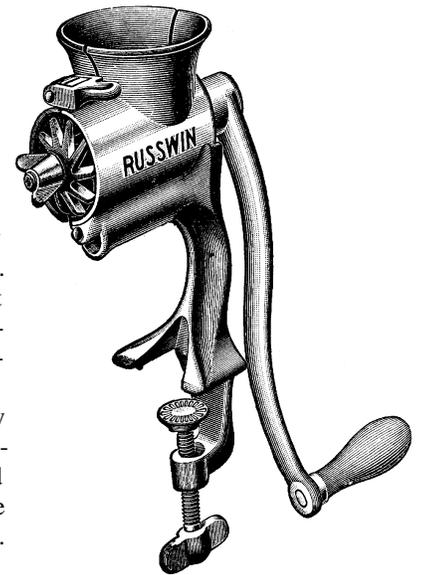
While Andy Porter was in town recently for *Norwescan*, I told him about the apnea; he asked, “If you hadn’t been tired so much, what do you think you could have accomplished?” It’s a typical Andy Porter question, I think: insightful and yet annoyingly close to the bone. I don’t want to think about it. I tell myself I probably wouldn’t have done too much differently, or too much more, than I already have. But it’s the sort of question that intrudes, fruitlessly, on other thoughts. I can’t change the past, but if the CPAP eventually starts doing its job (with a change in the pressure setting or a better mask), I can change the future.

[July 28 update: The new mask, with a different design, was harder to get used to than the original. I’ve learned how to program all the arcane functions. Dr. Jacobs even gave me a copy of the doctor’s version of the manual. And gradually I am beginning to feel less asleep most of the time, unless I’m just fooling myself to justify the time I’ve spent (and the amazing amounts of money my health insurance company has spent. Oh, and I’m now a member of the American Sleep Apnea Association. I swear, there’s a club for everything.]]

SAUSAGE TIME

A COLUMN ABOUT CONTEMPORARY FANZINES

BY ANDY HOOPER



After more than 20 years of reading fanzines, I expected to jump into my impressions of four or five contemporary fanzines with relatively little preamble here. But I'm struck dumb with *gafia*. Ever since the last issue of *Apparatchik* appeared, I've been orbiting away from my near encounter with the surface of fandom. Fans still make up some large percentage of my friends and acquaintances, but I haven't possessed as consuming an interest in fandom's past, present and future since I stopped publishing a frequent fanzine. There's a multiplicity of reasons, explanations and excuses for this, but all of them are painfully immaterial in the face of my immediate need to say something about one or more fanzines issued in the 21st century.

The closest I can come to describing the situation is to compare it to those dreams in which you have failed to attend class for weeks on end, yet somehow report for an exam or other exercise, revealing your imbecility and lack of preparation. Yet, that's far too universal to explain my personal chagrin at exhibiting behavior I have expressed sheer contempt for in the past, and not just in the theater of dreams. While searching my apartment for fanzines to review, I was stunned to find a pile — in fact, more than one pile — of unopened fanzines, some of them dated to late 1999 and early 2000. I'd still carefully collected and protected them, so that a mere two days of searching, opening and sorting was enough to assemble a fair pile of fanzines from three continents. Actually, I exaggerate slightly — I have still managed to actually open most of the fanzines I receive — but reading them is another matter.

It's not just that this leaves me ignorant of various events and issues in fandom — making the transition to *gafia* is to become an outsider again, returning to your pre-contact state after a lifetime in the embrace of Roscoe. To review fanzines effectively, on their creators' own terms, you have to be part of the fandom that creates them. When people from outside fandom, or even from different fannish traditions and subfandoms, attempt to review or evaluate fanzines, the results are either comical or cringeworthy. Knowing all this, I shudder to imagine what I'm about to commit. Perhaps I should start with easy generalities, and lull myself and the reader into the misapprehension that it is still 1997....

In a general sense, fanzine fandom remains entertaining even from a Nurofen-induced distance. My own contemporaries continue to turn gray and depart with disturbing alacrity — farewell to gentle Terry Hughes and the impossibly busy Bruce Pelz, both silenced since I wrote one of these columns. After our long experience with them, the absence of such talents and friends can't help but leave us an impression of gaps in the landscape. But I'm also convinced that the fundamental impulses that drive fanzine fandom continue to inspire new voices, and that they are still entering the conversation nearly as quickly as others leave it. If fandom is truly to decline and disband, I despair of seeing it myself.

Still, it feels duplicitous to comment on the regularity and dependability of certain fannish titles when my own recent

history is so completely lacking in those virtues. But seeing the better part of two years worth of fanzines in one pile is an immediate reminder of the generosity and energy some fans have tenaciously continued to send my way during my state of suspended animation. For example, I have an immense amount of respect for Dave Langford and his hero distributors, particularly Janice Murray, for carrying on month after month with *Ansible*, always entertaining, and always a focal point for a remarkable cross-section of fans, professionals and interested parties. When emerging from the flood of *gafia*, a so-called "Focal Point Fanzine" is an essential life preserver, recounting events, tragedies and jokes we've missed. And even if most contemporary fanzine editors recoil in horror from the characterization of ANY title as a "Focal Point Fanzine," I think there are several that could fairly accept the sobriquet with pride.

Particularly so if you back away from the original definition of the term, as a focus for more or less all of fanzine fandom, to its more common contemporary use, as a zeitgeist for the efforts of any fannish circle or tribe of the moment. As fandom itself became too large, diffuse and co-opted by mundane social institutions for any one person to experience, we have responded by creating smaller and smaller subcultures within it, each reproducing the structure of greater fandom as its members see fit. The contemporary fan really has no choice but to define fandom within the context of their own acquaintance, without apology. A focal point fanzine might therefore reach a relatively tiny number of fans — but it is its function within its readers' fannish experience that defines its utility as a focal point.

Following that helpfully nebulous reasoning, I have absolutely no hesitation in naming *Plokta* as one of the most significant focal points of our age. Early issues struck me as quizzical, a kind of absurdist serial subtitled "Five Go Mad with Fonts." But the generously populated *Plokta* cabal, including at least Alison Scott, Steve Davies, Mike Scott, Steven Cain, Sue Mason and Giulia DeCesare, have refused to spend any time or space discussing the theory or function of the fanzine which could not be more profitably filled with the word "bollocks." *Plokta* #25 is the Tolkien pastiche issue, composed to accompany the release of the film of *The Fellowship of the Ring*, and shows the cabal operating at the full measure of their fannish powers. They use art to complement their text as well as any fanzine I've ever read — virtually nothing in *Plokta* seems generic or thrown in to fill space. It may be absurd and occasionally of ephemeral interest to even the most familiar reader, but everything in *Plokta* seems very specifically con-

nected to its creators. And ultimately, over the course of 25 issues, the cabal have succeeded in presenting an excellent portrait of themselves and their fandom, without using big words that hurt your head or writing editorials in four or five fonts to represent all the changes of voice. Contributors from outside the cabal have done a great job of picking up what might be called “The *Plokta* Tone,” and Rob Jackson and Patty Wells both offer amusing pieces in Issue #25. Happily paddling down the River Avedon to the Bay of Bollocks, *Plokta* is a fine example of how the journey is more important than the destination.

Plokta also scores points for appearing on a generally predictable schedule, which obviously facilitates the ability of the reader to participate in the fanzine. There is a distinct satisfaction in writing a letter of comment to a fanzine when you know that another issue will appear in a short span of time, and either print or WAHF your missive. Much less nerve-wracking than contributing to a classic genzine, where the gestation period will always run to months and frequently years. *Wabe*, published by Jae Leslie Adams, Tracy Benton and Bill Bodden, has been touted as a focal point of sorts, but as Tracy correctly observes in the editorial to issue #5, it doesn’t appear predictably enough to really fulfill that role. Genzines, like *Wabe*, need to be appreciated issue by issue, and the reader always has to be prepared for the possibility that instead of issue #6, silence will follow. If *Wabe* #5 were the last fanzine issued by any or all of its editors, it would be a fine testimonial to three exceptionally clever and useful fannish careers. But as *Wabe* #5 also contains the first intelligence of the Corflu 20 Committee, gathering fanzine fandom to Madison, Wisconsin in 2003, it’s clear that future issues are forthcoming and likely to attract even more attention.

After early complaints that the fanzine seemed to lack focus or substance, later issues of *Wabe* have been organized on a unifying theme, and #5 features a number of articles on the subject of collecting. Contributors on the subject include Robert Lichtman, Ted White and Max, as well as the editors, who all have a colorful relationship with various collections of stuff. The fanzine is studded with extremely short fanzine reviews, impressive in the breadth of the content they cram into “22 seconds,” and I also enjoy their editorial touch on the letter column. The cover by Dan Steffan is also superb — didn’t I work with those guys? *Wabe* was selected as Best Fanzine in the FAAn award balloting for 2001, and as absurd as it seems to speak of anyone “deserving” a FAAn award, I found it a very satisfying result.

Wabe #5 also features discussion of the candidates in the recent TAFF race, Sandra Bond describing her meeting and subsequent experiences with Chris O’Shea, and Jae Adams offers her impressions of eventual winner Tobes Valois. This is the kind of timely material that leads people to make dangerous observations about focal point fanzines — the *Wabe* team had better concentrate more intently on Victorian knick-knacks and penguin costumes if they want to remain charmingly unpredictable.

Sandra Bond wrote and published several things in support of Chris O’Shea’s TAFF candidacy, making me think that she would be an interesting candidate for a future race herself. Her fanzine *Quasiquote* has brought forth a fourth issue in time for the recently passed Ploktacon 2.0, and in addition to more material about the TAFF candidates, contributors Ron Bennett and Gail Courtney both offer articles in regard to col-

lecting and accumulating SF books. These are reasonably generic fannish topics, but even so, *Wabe* and *Quasiquote* amplify each other’s impact in just the way you wish fandom worked all the time. Sandra has her own slate of fannish ancients contributing to the issue, including Arnie Katz, Harry Warner, Jr. and Ted White. Ted offers a report on Corflu 2001 that made me blush to see his praise for my efforts at the convention, but troubled me with his characterization of the FAAN awards as a popularity contest — what award is not, after all? Arnie Katz speaks briefly of a number of editors and titles of yesteryear, many of which brought a smile. Laura Seabrook’s personal memoir of her career in Australian fandom struck a nice combination of affection and contempt for the past, something always fun to find in a fanzine.

My failure to remain current in my fanzine reading lead to a few instant timebinding experiences, including the belated examination of a new issue of the Minneapolis clubzine *Rune*. Issue #86 was edited by Jeff Schalles as a memorial to the late Scott Imes, a long time Minneapolis fan who passed away in December of 2001. Imes was a major unsung cog in the machinery of crazy Minneapolis fandom — he was once the manager of the famous Bozo Bus building, a long time ago in a fandom far, far away. The full color photo of Scott and Maggie on the cover of the fanzine gives a warm feeling to the whole venture, which evokes appreciation as much as grief. Jeff suggests that this might be the first issue of a renewed *Rune*, after several years of inactivity. If so, this is an excellent first step; if not, it’s a fine piece of work on its own and a great collection of stories about a remarkable and much-loved fan.

As a tramp fanzine reviewer, it is hard to say where or when this column might appear next, and after the delay in completing this installment, Jerry and Suzle might be forgiven if they don’t care to provide a home for it again. But I’m happy to say that the act of writing it has sufficiently rekindled my fannish ardor to the point that I once more promise to open any and all fanzines any editor sees fit to send my way. And as for actually reading them....

What’s your next deadline, Jerry?

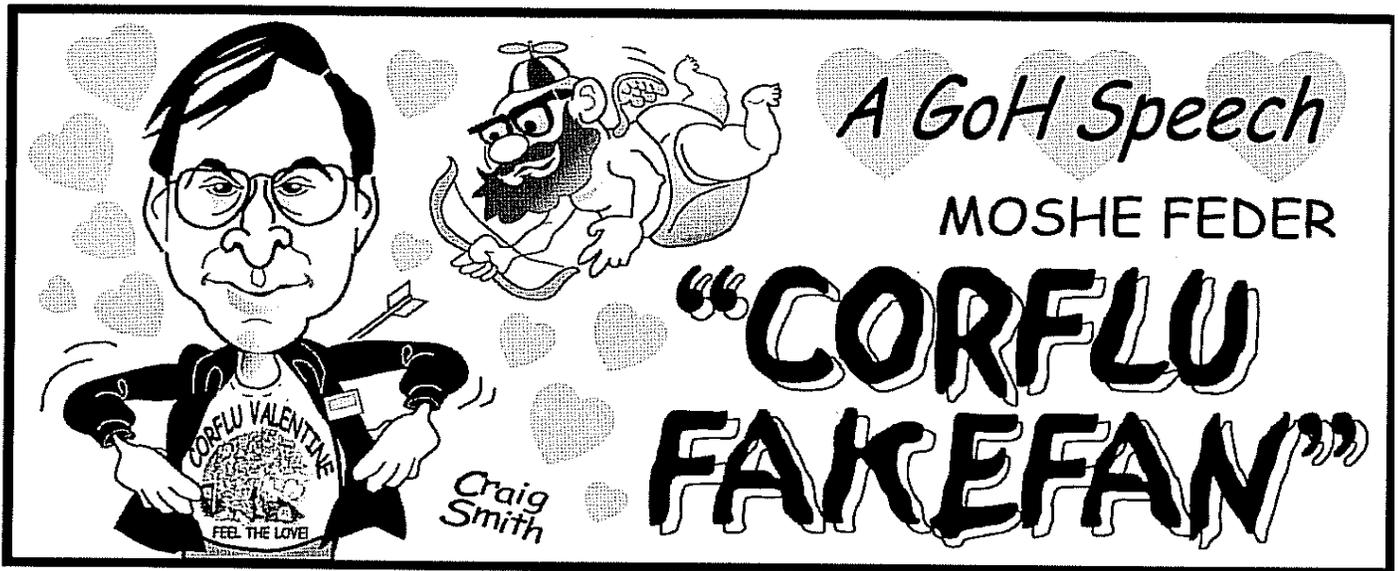
Fanzines Reviewed (unless otherwise noted, available for “the usual” – letter of comment, trade, contribution or editorial whim):

Plokta #25, edited by Alison Scott (24 St Mary Road, Walthamstow. London E17 9RG, UK), Steve Davies (52 Westbourne Terrace, Reading, Berks RG30 2RP, UK), Mike Scott (39 Fitzroy Court, 6 Whitehorse Road, Croydon CR0 2AX, UK), et al, and at locs.plokta.com. They request trades to each editor, if possible.

Wabe #5, edited by Jae Leslie Adams (621 Spruce Street, Madison, WI 53715, US), Tracy Benton (108 Grand Canyon Drive, Madison, WI 53705, US), and Bill Bodden (P. O. Box 762, Madison, WI 53701, US) and at jaeleslie@aol.com, billzilla@mailbag.com and benton@uwalumni.com. Trades to all editors, if possible.

Quasiquote #4, edited by Sandra Bond, 7 Granville Road, London N13 4RR, UK or sandra@ho-street.demon.co.uk. £2 or \$5 for a single copy or the usual.

Rune #86, edited by Jeff Schalles, available from the Minnesota Science Fiction Society, P.O. Box 8297, Lake Street Station, Minneapolis, MN 55408 or rune@mnstf.org. 📖



Author's Note: This is my Corflu Guest of Honor speech as written and pretty much as given at Corflu Valentine (aka Corflu 19) in Annapolis, Maryland on Sunday, February 17, 2002. In reality, there were ad libs and paraphrases made on the spot that aren't reflected here. (Some day I may get to collate them from John Harvey's video tape.) Also, I must here acknowledge Lise's assistance. She was getting to the con late, and without her willingness to bring a number of key items with her, the speech couldn't have been given in this form. At a few points I'm going to insert some additional comments in brackets to describe what I did or what the audience saw when it's not obvious from the text.

[Shortly after my name came out of the hat on Friday, I was jokingly complaining that the con hadn't provided me with a visible symbol and signifier of my new special status. Bill Bodden took this to heart, and on his own initiative and with his own money, went out and got me a very amusing hat to serve that purpose. When I came up to the lectern on Sunday, this was put on me from behind so that I couldn't see that I now had a large crab on my head.

[Earlier in the weekend, I had also been complaining – not jokingly – because the con hadn't made any t-shirts in my size, only extra-large. So I went through the banquet wearing a sweater. After removing the crab from my head, I pulled off the sweater to reveal a Corflu 7 t-shirt (with its brilliant Ross Chamberlain design) underneath. That t-shirt, having been produced in a full range of sizes for the Corflu Lise and I ran, of course *was* in my size, and I noted that this proved things. I then began the speech proper:]

This honor has been a long time coming, and I've saved up a lot to say, so take your potty break now.

As you may know, Moshe is the original Hebrew form of Moses, so although this speech includes only a couple of commandments, it does have ten sections. The commandments — well, really they're themes — are fannish responsibility and the nature of fanhistorical consequences. But we'll get to that later.

I've done a lot of things in fandom, but I've always

thought of myself as a genzine editor. Of course, it's been a long time since I published one. Here's the last genzine issue I published, *Placebo 5*, dated July 10, 1977. [At this point, I showed the cover and the title page with its Coca-Cola-style logo, demonstrating a certain consistency of interests.]

It's been almost as long since I was last a fan GoH. It happened, thanks to Taral, at a little con you've never heard of called Ozymandias 2 in Toronto on August 10-12, 1979. Alexei & Cory Panshin were the pro GoHs, and I met Judy Merrill and Don Kingsbury for the first time there. Little could I have imagined that over 20 years later I would be one of Don's editors. [Go out and buy Don's book *Psychohistorical Crisis*, please; you won't be disappointed.]

But how did I get to the point of being GoH at that little con? [Held, almost exactly, I've just realized, on the tenth anniversary of my first awareness of fandom.] I have to credit someone in this room. Ted White revived "The Clubhouse" column in *Amazing*. It was a "Clubhouse" column by John D. Berry in an issue of *Amazing* that I bought in Tel Aviv in the Summer of '69 that first made me aware of fandom's existence. Truly a turning point in my life. (And of course, John Berry himself later became a friend.) So thanks, Ted, and please accept my congratulations, since, with Art Widner's regrettable absence this year, you've become the only fan to have attended every Corflu.

I also have to acknowledge two other people who had a huge influence on my fannish life and who will never have a chance to be Corflu Guests of Honor: Barry Smotroff and Lou Stathis

I got Barry into fandom and he quickly, if temporarily, surpassed me in fannishness. By doing that I put him on a life-track that would lead to a great many good things, but also to his murder, still unsolved to this day, at the age of 24 in 1976.

Lou found his own way into fandom, as he did in all things. He was for many years my closest and most trusted fannish friend, someone whose judgment and frankness I knew I could always rely on. I helped to care for him in the last year of his life, before he died of complications of brain cancer in 1998.

I will never forget either of them.

Of course there are other friends, still living, that I

wish were here today to witness this occasion, among them Geri Sullivan, Joe & Edie Siclari, George Flynn, Hank Davis, Patrick & Teresa, Jim Young, Sharon Sbarsky, Jon Singer, & Susan Palermo—all of whom for some reason are in Framingham this weekend. [This is by no means a complete list of absent friends. (Far from it.) Rather, it's a list of those who were at Boskone rather than Corflu due to the unfortunate and unnecessary scheduling of Corflu on Boskone's traditional weekend.]

Having co-chaired Corflu 7 with Lise, if I had any further ambitions with respect to this con, it was to someday be elected a past president of FWA, a post with duties precisely suited to my preferences and proclivities. Instead, I find myself in the much more demanding position of Guest of Honor, expected to say something memorable or entertaining, edifying or inspirational while symbolically representing you all as temporary first among equals in our cosmic circle of peers. This is a strange sort of honor, which I have earned no more and no less than any of the rest of you. It is one which, by its nature, can and will in fact be bestowed on each and every one of you if you keep coming to Corflu long enough. It is for that reason, perhaps as much as any other, that I am pleased to have had that honor come to me this weekend. In other words, at least I'm getting it over with!

Now, since it's Sunday, it's time for the Bible lesson.

In the New Testament — by which I mean the Christian Bible and not *The Enchanted Duplicator* — Jesus — another nice Jewish boy who unexpectedly found himself a center of attention — refers to himself not as the Son of God, but as the Son of Man. This is an odd locution, a funny translation of the original Hebrew phrase he was using: “ben Adam.” It literally means “son of Adam” and in colloquial Hebrew it means something like the English “everyman”. A “ben Adam” is an average person, a randomly chosen man-on-the-street. So, in my opinion, Jesus wasn't claiming divinity, he was claiming to be an ordinary guy. He was telling his followers that they could reasonably follow his example. By analogy, the Corflu GoH could be called the Son of Fan. He or she is not a BNF claiming fannish divinity and special status, but an ordinary fan-on-the-street with virtues and vices common to us all. Happily, no one expects the Corflu guest of honor to be a fannish Savior, only the voice in which our community reminds itself once a year that we have something special here, something precious, something worth preserving. And we have to be willing to work at it.

Let me give you a practical example of what I mean. Just two weeks ago today I was with Jonathan White — whom some of you may remember as Ron Smith's successor as editor of *Inside* — visiting the very full home (and that's “full” with a capital “F”... come to think of it, “full” with a capital “F” “U” “L” “L”) of Joy Sanderson, widow of Sandy Sanderson of Joan Carr-hoax fame, and ex-wife of the late and beloved Vinç Clarke. After almost a decade of living alone in a decaying split-level house on Long Island, she has decided to sell out and move into an apartment, something more manageable for a 78-year-old with a bad hip. Happily for us, Joy is still a fan at heart and felt an obligation to our community. She contacted me and we arranged for me to come over and unearth what was left of her and Sandy's fanzine collection. The conditions in the crawlspace of her basement were akin to those in an Egyptian

tomb, but with the addition of mold and cat dander, both of which I'm allergic to. After almost three miserable but exciting hours, I'd rescued 10 boxes. At least now what the water leaks and mice didn't get won't go into a Dumpster. Both Joy and I did what we were supposed to do, and unfortunately, what doesn't happen enough. So, go thou and do likewise.

Of course, when it comes to the more typical fanactivity of publishing, or even contributing to other people's zines, or to writing letters of comment, these days I'm pretty much coasting. I guess I've been coasting for over a decade now. My thanks to all the faneds who sent me their zines anyway. So like a lot of the alleged self-appointed elite that attends Corflu these days, I'm strong on theory and wimpy in practice. I guess you could call me a Corflu fakefan. [At this point, after some difficulties with the clock-radio CD player I had to use for my accompaniment, I sang the following, to the tune of “Broadway Baby” from *Follies* by Stephen Sondheim.]

Corflu Fakefan

I'm just a Corflu fakefan.
Fandom's always been my way.
Sorta like if I were gay.
Just living my life.

Corflu fakefan.

Haven't pubbed my zine in years.
No, it's not too many beers,
Just living my life.

Once, I wished to be
A BNF,
Or a SMOF in the know.
But the work required,
Left me too tired.
Now I'm taking it slow.

Corflu fakefan.

Got away to get a life.
Maybe what I need's a wife.
I really don't know.

So, all of you neos,
Don't end up like me. Oh,
You don't need a lot,
Energy you've got.
Just be sure to use it,
When your zine is hot.

Someday, maybe,
I will really pub my ish.
Until then, my lox is fish. . . .
As one of Corflu's fa kefans,
I believe we still must make plans.
It's the only way to go.

[Those last three lines need work, but it's the best I could manage writing overnight before the banquet, so let it stand for now.]

When guests of honor are chosen in the conventional way — note pun — it's usually because of their fannish accomplishments. So it seems reasonable to briefly review my fannish

resumé and mention the things I've done in fandom that I'm proudest of.

I founded the SFFSAQC: the Science Fiction and Fantasy Society at Queens College. That resulted directly in the recruiting into fandom of the late Barry Smotroff, Hugo-winning fan artist Stu Shiffman (whose Hugo I eventually got to accept for him in Holland) and the charming Hope Leibowitz, who's with us today. Who could have known in 1971 that her meeting me was an alternate history divergence point that would result in her moving from the Bronx to Toronto, where she's now lived for 20 years! Still, as you may have noticed, you can take the girl out of the Bronx, but you can't take the Bronx out of the girl.

In 1974 I edited and published a one-shot called *Quo Davis* — note pun — as a surprise for Hank Davis's 30th birthday. Not only was it a good zine and — perhaps even harder to accomplish — a total surprise to its recipient, it also contained the first short version of a fannish parody called "The Mimeo Man" by Debbie Notkin and Eli Cohen

I was so taken with "The Mimeo Man" that I decided to write all the songs Eli and Asenath hadn't gotten to and edit and improve the ones they had. Then Jerry Kaufman suggested that we actually put it on, and I produced it at Pghlange and at Disclave. The success of those shows led directly to the creation of "Midwestside Story" in Minneapolis fandom and the dramatic version of "The Enchanted Duplicator" in Seattle. One of my proudest moments as a fan was when Susan Wood, who had taken over *Amazing's* "Clubhouse" column, quoted one of my "Mimeo Man" songs in full ["There is Nothing Like an Apa"] to begin one of her columns, putting my work in the very place where I had discovered fandom five years before.

Not long after that, I organized the creation of the original FAAn Awards: that's "F" "A" "A" "n", for Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards. Though they only lasted about five years, they were the best chosen and most meaningful awards ever given in our hobby. Obviously, they haven't been completely forgotten, since Corflu's own very different awards have borrowed their name.

In 1990, I co-chaired Corflu 7 with Lise Eisenberg, and personally organized one of the con's highlights, a video interview with Harry Warner, Jr. And speaking of Harry. I'd like to revive a fannish custom that goes back to the 1930s, the practice of reading a greeting from an absent dignitary. I called Harry yesterday and here is what he said:

I'm pleased that Maryland has acquired a new convention . . . and grateful that it's not in Hagerstown. I hope that Annapolis does not use Potomac River water, because the Hagerstown sewage treatment plant has been broken for the last two weeks and I wouldn't want my sewage to be in Corflu's water or anything else. I hope everybody has a good time at the con.

Thank you, Harry.

A few years ago, after the apparently final demise of New York's Fanoclasts without my ever getting to be host, I founded a new monthly meeting at my own home called the Last Chance Salon, which has become a focal point of our local fandom. You're all invited when you're in town on the last Sunday of the month.

And although my time and energies are more tied up

than ever in my work since I became an editor at Tor, I'm still definitely a fan as well as a pro, and my most recent fannish accomplishment — not counting keeping a certain valued but eternally luckless friend from moving in with me again — was founding the Third Level, an e-mail discussion list for SF rail fans.

And of course, on and off over the years I did publish fanzines under the imprimatur of Panacea Press: *Placebo*, of course, and *Quibble* in Apa-Q, *Wadi* in Oasis, *Pemberton* in Apa-L and *Hysteresis* in FAPA, and a personalzine called *Class Act*. I was also in TAPS, and ALPS and Apple.

That's not a bad list, but after this many years there should have been even more. The reason perhaps, apart from sheer laziness, has to do with something I only learned about myself in the last decade. A reason why I'm sometimes — like this weekend, luckily — bubbly and energetic and impossible to shut up, and other times close-mouthed and sullen and listless. It turns out I have bipolar disorder — what used to be called manic depression. I make a point of mentioning it because I strongly believe that psychological disorders — brain diseases really — need to be talked about and dealt with openly. Many lives are saved now because cancer is no longer spoken of only in whispers, and so it must be with mental illnesses. They're no more the fault of the victim and nothing to be embarrassed about. Only when they're recognized for what they are can they be treated effectively.

So now you know why I'm sometimes a bit unpredictable and impulsive, like the time I convinced the 1984 LACon business meeting to censure the concom for something they hadn't actually done. Ahem. Sorry about that.

So if there's one thing I've learned in fandom, it's that we all should try to get along and we shouldn't jump to conclusions So... [At this point, I removed the Corflu 7 shirt to reveal the Corflu Valentine shirt I'd had custom made in Medium at the nearby mall. Thanks to Steve Stiles for kindly loaning me the original artwork.]

Nic apparently understands about medium chili but not medium t-shirts. But, as you can see, I can cope, and no hard feelings.

Thirty-two years in fandom. That's not too many. Thanks for letting me hang out with you guys and thanks for listening. I guess now there's nothing left for me to do but pub my ish.

Moshe Feder

Annapolis, Maryland, February 17-19, 2002. 📖

