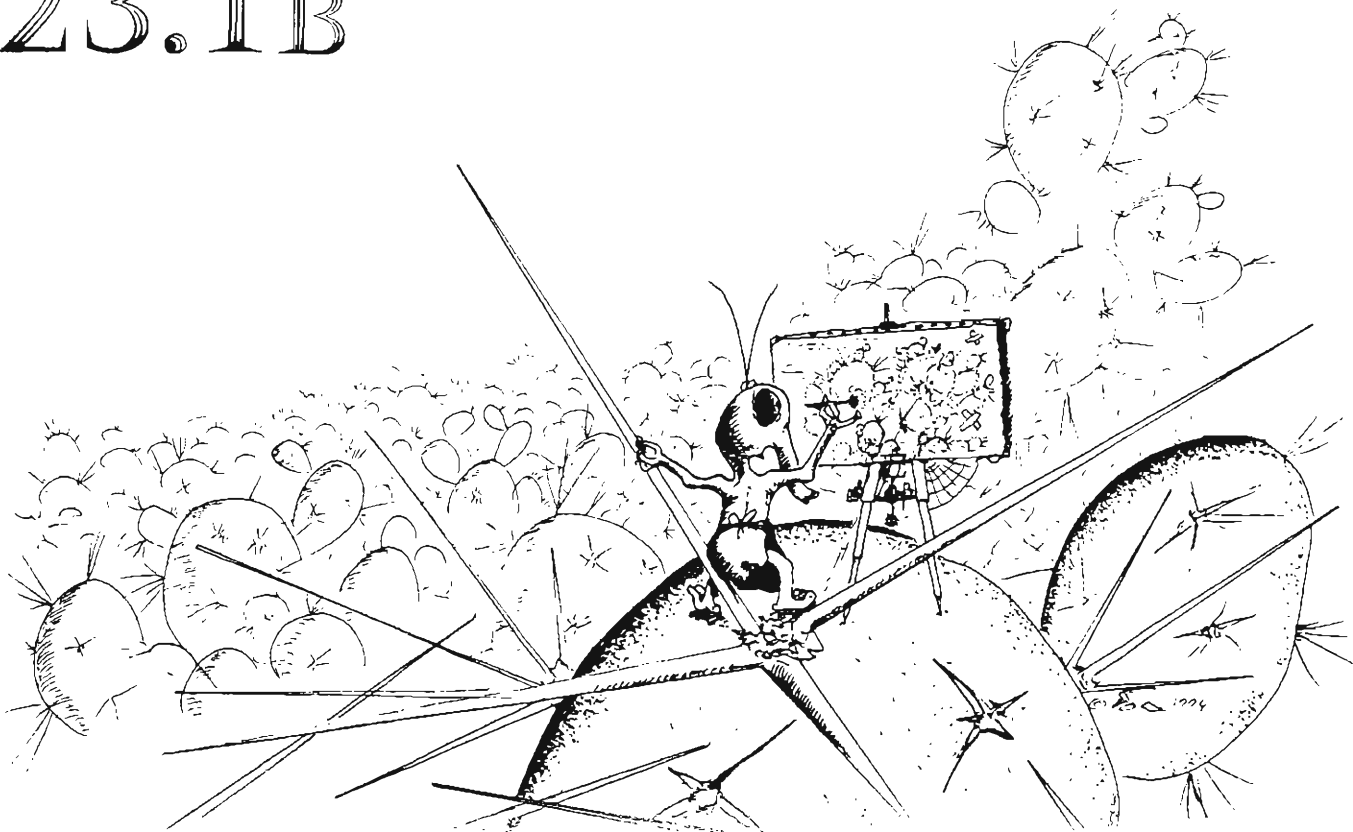


OPUNTIA

23.1B



OPUNTIA #23.1B

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ZINE REVIEWS
by Dale Speirs

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OPUNTIA is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment.

ART CREDIT: Cameras and sensors are all very well for a collection of data, but many expeditions include artists to capture those elusive things a camera cannot. The Wuzi expedition to OpuntiaWorld is no exception; here their artist does a landscape. From a series by Franz Miklis, A-5151, Nussdorf 64, Austria.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: The Society for the Preservation of the History of SF Fandom, a.k.a. The Timebinders, is hosting FanHistoricon 3 in Cincinnati, Ohio, from June 22 to 25 at Midwestcon 46. Details from Dick and Leah Smith, 410 West Willow Road, Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070. The Timebinders promote the preservation, cataloguing, and dissemination of fanzines and other materials from fandom's past.

TESSERACTS 5 is the sixth volume of a series of original anthologies of Canadian speculative fiction. TESSERACTS Q was volume 5 in case you're wondering; it is due for the Christmas 1995 season and is a compilation of translated francophone fiction, Q for Québec. For TESSERACTS 5, the deadline is August 15, 1995, for short fiction about 5000 words or less. Details can be had by sending an SASE to Tesseract Books, 214-21 10405 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3S2. Open to Canadians (home or expat) only and submissions accepted in both languages.

Unless otherwise stated, zines are available for The Usual which means \$3 cash for a sample copy, trade for your zine, or contribution such as art, letter of comment, or an article. It is best to send banknotes; cheques to a foreign country cost more in banking charges than the amount of the cheque. Canadian zine pubbers usually take US\$ at par; the profit on the exchange rate is countered by the higher postage for foreign mail. You can also send mint Canada stamps or IRC coupons.

LIME GREEN NEWS #11 (US\$2 or pre-arranged trade for other mail-art zines from Carolyn Substitute, Box 626, Green Mountain Falls, Colorado 80819) This is a mail-art zine with the usual photocopy collages, collective project, and an unusually large loccol (most mail-art zines I've observed get little feedback). The project was Blender Art; readers sent in scraps of paper or cloth which were then run through a blender or diced, and subsequently used to make homemade paper. A recipe is given on how to make your own paper, using common household items. Next is a section on paper dolls, again contributed by readers, the dolls being strange photocopy collages such as an owl head on a business suit. The locs include one providing a good history of zines in a nutshell, for those in subfandoms who think zines were invented in 1981.

LOWER ROSEDALE REVIEW #9 (The Usual from C.F. Kennedy, Box 40, 90 Shuter Street, Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K6) This reviewzine looks at a variety of small-press and other items. L.R.R. is to merged in the near future with the other zine published by Kennedy, called DRIFT.

MASTHEAD (\$3.75 from North Island Sound Ltd., 1606 Sedlescomb Drive, Unit 8, Mississauga, Ontario L4X 1M6) Subtitled "The Magazine About Magazines", this colour glossy is a trade journal covering news of publishers and periodicals in the mass market. I buy it occasionally, and once a year for sure when they have their annual tally of magazines. For the 1994 year, 115 new titles started up, and 48 died or went missing. A better year than 1993, a recession year that had 120 startups and 89 deaths. In other news, a summary of the troubles Québec magazines have in attracting advertising out of Toronto. It isn't just the language barrier; Québec has many periodicals with no anglophone equivalent, leaving megacorp ad executives uncertain how to sell in the distinct society. For the SFishly inclined, there is a news report that THE OFFICIAL STAR TREK FAN CLUB OF CANADA MAGAZINE (snappy title, eh?) will revive this year. This magazine was suspended in April 1994 due to the publisher's dispute with Paramount over royalties and mailing lists. A new publisher is to revive it as STAR TREK COMMUNIQUE. It will be quarterly, with a projected 25,000 circulation. (The old title had about 10000.) Editor of the new title is Rob Salem, an entertainment reporter with the TORONTO SUN. Another news report is about two Calgary magazines with the same title. IMPACT, the fitness bimonthly has co-existed with IMPACT the music monthly, but the former has applied for a trademark. The latter was founded by a Tory who has since moved on to manage the rock group Tragically Hip. I didn't know Tories were allowed to listen to rock music, much less publish or manage in that field.

FOR THE CLERISY ABOUT LATVIA #8 (No cash, trade only for zines or letters. Zines don't have to be yours. From Brant Kresovich, Riga Business School, Riga Technical University, Skolas 11, LV-1010, Riga, Latvia) This time on Latvian holidays, taverns, superstitions, school, language wars, and other aspects of Latvian life. Some zine reviews and Q&A about life as an expatriate.

ON SPEC #20 (Sample copy for C\$6 in Canada, US\$6 elsewhere, Visa accepted. From On Spec, Box 4727, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 5G6) Canada's prozine, perfectbound with colour cover. This issue on the theme of dark fantasy and horror. Also essays on art and writing.

BCSFAZINE #263 (\$2 for sample copy or pre-arranged trade from West Coast SF Association, 1855 West 2nd Ave., Apt. #110, Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 1J1) Clubzine of the WCSFA. This time round, a report on a minicon about survival, with presentations by experts on underwater robotics, cavediving, arctic survival, and hazmat tech. There was the scientist who wanted to study fish but was unable to use ordinary fishing gear in the arctic: "But fortunately the colossal impact of the 15000 tonne ice-breaker crashing through the ice would occasionally hurl a single cod (or some such hapless fish) on to the ice. Whereupon the engines would be reversed and the entire ship would shudder to a halt, the scientist chap being grabbed from wherever he was ... and lowered over the side to pick up his fish. ... World's biggest and most expensive fishing gear!". Elsewhere in the issue are an Ackerman reprint cataloguing his collection in 1934 and Star Trek. Locs and the latest in the Canadian Unity Fan Fund crisis, this time from Linda Ross-Mansfield. It is awfully tempting for me to say something about CUFF, but I'll let others slug their way through that one.

FOSFAX #174 (The Usual from Falls of the Ohio SF Association, Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281) This is ostensibly a clubzine but the 66 pages of microprint are anything but club business. Lots of SF book and con reviews, much about American politics, and 33 pages of polemic locs. One lengthy book review on American multiculturalism was an interesting contrast with the entirely different direction taken by Canada, which has a Ministry of Multiculturalism that approaches the subject via our squabbles over constitutional reform and compulsory bilingualism, not political correctness as in USA.

THE LEGACY OF WINNIPEG

I came back from ConAdian, the 1994 WorldCon, with a suitcase full of books and zines. ConAdian attendees got a copy of PRAIRIE FIRE in their goodie bags. This small-press literary magazine published a special issue in honour of the WorldCon, dated Summer 1994 and comprising 256 pages. The normal run of 2000 copies sold at newsagents had a different cover than the 4500 copies given to ConAdian members. (I mention that for completist collectors) The issue, Volume 15, Number 2, is subtitled "Canadian Speculative Fiction", which highlights a trend in this land to avoid altogether the sterile debate on what is SF and where is the boundary between it and fantasy. 'speculative' takes in anything one wants to define as SF or fantasy, and also sweeps up near-future books such as the Rohrer novels (separatism, invasion by USA), horror, and other categories that ask the what-if? question.

While in Winnipeg, I was fortunate enough to obtain a copy of the 1952 book FANTASY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM, courtesy of Chester Cuthbert. This book was compiled by Alastair Cameron and published by the Canadian Science Fiction Association, based in the Winnipeg suburb of St. Vital. It is roughly a Dewey decimal type system for classifying SF&F stories. Cuthbert told me that Cameron didn't want it reprinted as he was going to produce an enlarged edition, so this book has fallen into obscurity. A shame, as it could be quite useful for indexers. It consists of a subject classification system (the main part) and a subsidiary system called the Literary Information Profile which deals with the format (single stories, anthologies, non-fiction). Although I could reprint brief sections of the Fantasy Classification System (FCS) and the Literary Information Profiles (LIP) for review purposes, I thought it might be better to use PRAIRIE FIRE as an experimental subject to test the FCS and LIP, and illustrate them in action.

The first story, "How My Son Became a Dragon Slayer" by Maria Billion, is a dialogue between the narrator and her son. She remembers the stories and books of her childhood in Malta, and regrets that her teenaged son is into roleplaying games and stories generated by commercial companies. The next generation is not learning stories passed on by grannies; they are learning stories designed to sell merchandise. The story is open-ended; she is resigned to it. I suppose the happy-ending people at ANALOG would have had her loading her stories into a CD-ROM to catch her son's interest and steer him back to the old ways via modern technology.

I had trouble fitting this into the F.C.S. beyond the main division of #30, Extrapolations on Living. If one is an optimist, the story could be fitted into the sub-category of #30 entitled #36 Conditions of Expanding Culture, or even more precisely as #36.1 Achievement in the Arts. A pessimist would place the story in #38 Conditions of Cultural Decay.

The next story is "Report 323: A Québécois Infiltration Attempt", by Jean-Louis Trudel. It is about as Canadian as an SF story can be, alternating dialogue from English to French, and dealing with the capture of a supposed spy infiltrating from independent Québec. His captors are unable to determine the reason for the penetration of the guarded border, and the infiltrator is exchanged for an anglophone spy. The reason was, as the infiltrator does not want to admit, simply an urge to see the house he grew up in, now on the wrong side of the border.

In the F.C.S., I would place this story in #38.1, Conditions of Cultural Decay: Revolt, which is described as "While this is properly an element of plot, its use here denotes a state of conditions in which the central authority has weakened and the outer fringes of its domain begin to assert their independence." This is actually a

[continued next page]

pretty good description of modern Canada, where not only Québec but other provinces, territories, and tribal Reserves are fighting the federal government for political autonomy. Someone from Québec might not consider this story to be Conditions of Cultural Decay, as revolt could be liberation. There is a subtext in this story about bigotry between language groups, and the Canuck police are brutal as they could never be in our world, so I suppose these elements admit of cultural decay.

The next story is "Pseudoforn", by Keith Scott, and is a routine story about android replicas of endangered species being used for a big-game hunting outfitter. One can see the story coming by the third page; it's been done before and better. There is the loudmouth millionaire hunting a replica tiger who meets a predictable fate. The story is set southwest of Calgary in an area I've been. When I first read it, I was jarred by the second paragraph and never recovered a suspension of disbelief, although those who live elsewhere may not notice the error. The sun is setting over the Rockies, and the narrator of the story mentions "sun-drenched golden peaks". Since the sun sets behind the Rockies from our viewpoint in Calgary, we do not see golden peaks, only a deep purple silhouette of a jagged skyline. In Calgary, the best time to view the Rocky Mountains is in the morning, when the rising sun is shining full on the eastern slopes of the mountains. But this is a minor error only noticeable to Cowtowners, just as I probably would not notice a mistake about the geography of New York City in a story set there.

Classifying "Pseudoforn" in the F.C.S. is fairly easy; I put it as #68.8 Artificial Life.

I won't classify every story. The F.C.S. isn't a perfect fit, as many stories today won't conform with it, but the basic idea is interesting. As far as PRAIRIE FIRE, subscription and single copy info can be had from Prairie Fire, 423 - 100 Arthur Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 1H3.

Another item specially produced for ConAdian was a chapbook called WHETSTONE, which I think can be had for \$4 from The Whetstone Writing Group, 13 Chippawa Bay, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2J 2E3. A selection of stories from the writers' workshop, with a bit of everything. I particularly liked the short-short by Sean Scott Garrity called "Bar Rules", which tells the story of drinking glasses from their point of view, with a shock-horror ending: "They all watched as the bartender took him out of the dishwasher. In pieces."

A bestseller at the ConAdian dealer bourse was the Mike Resnick anthology ALTERNATE WORLDCONS. Resnick has done so many of these alternates that someone (I think it was Lloyd Penney) told me that there are plans for ALTERNATE RESNICKS. This anthology would have Resnick stories rewritten in the style of other authors. Resnick as if he were Hemingway, etc.. Sort of reminds me of Victor Borge the pianist and his routine where he plays "Happy Birthday" as it might have been done by various composers. I would like to put in a quibble for a lost cause, that of using the word 'alternative' instead of 'alternate' to describe these histories. 'alternate', as I learned it in university botany classes, means one after the other, switch back and forth, change regularly in sequence. The histories are better described as 'alternative', a different choice, another selection or turning. But this is a lost cause. 'alternate' is as firm as 'irregardless', and as popular as 'I could care less' (to which I always reply "How much less could you care?").

Meanwhile, back at the anthology, ALTERNATE WORLDCONS (US\$10 from Pulphouse Publishing, Box 1227, Eugene, Oregon 97440) was born in the agony of ConFrancisco, when some of its victims were thanking themselves that it wasn't in Zagreb at least. Zagreb, one of the 1993 bidders for the WorldCon. What if? ... and from there it was an easy step to speculating on other WorldCons that might have been.

The first story, "In The Beginning ..." by Anthony Lewis, starts with the first WorldCon in 1939, and what might have happened had the New Fandom gang been excluded from attending by the Futurians, not the other way around as in our universe. There are stories on the never-held WW2 WorldCons, where Hubbard, Degler, and the wacky side of German congoing comes to fore, and the Shaverian Deros mythology gets mixed in with a plan to save the world by subscribing to AMAZING. The 1964 WorldCon ends up, as it almost did in real life, in Tijuana, where the hotel is a place of ill-repute. The story about the 1966 con suggests what might have happened had STAR TREK failed in the competition against that other SF show THE TIME TUNNEL.

And so on. The stories are mostly good natured humour, with serious moments (it's hard to create fun with what might, and did, happen in Yugoslavia in 1993). There is one sour note in the book, Rick Katze's "WorldCon Blues", where Louisville beat Winnipeg for 1994. There are some cheapshot remarks about how Winnipeg would have been a disaster, made worse by the actual event being a success. But overall the anthology is a good read, and I recommend it.

An anthology making its debut at ConAdian was a Tor hardcover NORTHERN STARS (ISBN 0-312-85747-0). Subtitled THE ANTHOLOGY OF CANADIAN SCIENCE FICTION, it was edited by David Hartwell and Glenn Grant. This is a reprint anthology, with many stories from the TESSERACTS series or translated from French. There is a concluding essay by Candace Jane Dorsey on speculative fiction, which seems to be fast becoming the preferred term. Also, a useful compilation of all the Aurora Awards and Prix Boréal.

If I had the energy and time, and perhaps I will someday, I would use the FANTASY CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM to analyze a selection of anthologies and magazines to see if there is a noticeable difference in contents. This could be on

a country by country basis (Are Russian SF writers more political? Canadians gloomier? Americans more optimistic?) or over a period of time (Were there really that many doomsday stories in the Cold War or is it just selective memory? Do horror and monster stories increase after battlescarred veterans come home from a war and frighten civilians with their mutilated bodies?). I know the accepted dogmas about after-the-Bomb stories dominating the 1950s and 1960s, but is this really true? Do such stories actually dominate if one sits down and does a count, or is it that they may have stayed in the mind better or were anthologized more often? Perhaps someone has done such studies; I know there are story indexes or the like, but I am talking critical literary studies not fannish listings.

At the ConAdian dealer bourse, Smithbooks had a booth, from which I bought, among other books, THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SCIENCE FICTION. This 1300-page doorstop tome is by John Clute and Peter Nicholls (publ. Orbit). I have found it useful from the beginning, whether to quickly verify a fact or spelling for an article I am writing or to start a basic search on some aspect of SF. I have seen some nitpicker reviews of this book, not that I never do the same, but it is as well to remember Samuel Johnson's observation that anyone troubled with pride in accuracy should become a lexicographer. Normally I wouldn't have been able to afford this massive reference but Smithbooks put it on sale at \$75; by the time I saw it there were only two copies left, and the other went about an hour later.

Also at the dealer bourse but not from Smithbooks, was the hardcover A WEALTH OF FABLE, by Harry Warner Jr. It is not to be confused with a previous fanzine version of the 1970s. WEALTH chronicles fandom of the 1950s and is a sequel to ALL OUR YESTERDAYS, which did the 1940s. It will go on my bookshelf as part of my collection of basic fanhistory, such as YEARS OF LIGHT, WARHOON 28, or THE IMMORTAL STORM.

Garth Spencer

The ConAdian program book carried an article on Canadian SF magazines, by one D.G. Valdrón. (Chester Cuthbert informs me that Valdrón is an SF authority in Wirrupeg, but has no connections to Canadian fandom.) It was a bit of a shock to see his article; I had been polishing and updating an article on the same topic for some years ...

A closer reading reassured me that the following offers more information. D.G. Valdrón gave a good overview of some current and recently-published SF and fantasy magazines, and adequately represented the fact that Canadian SF and fantasy publishing is on a small-press, semi-professional or amateur level. But he gave no addresses, mentioned only one French-language periodical, and lumped in some media fiction fanzines with the semi-professionals.

The following offers a slightly different perspective. Please note: Apart from the listings for *On Spec*, *Bardic Runes*, *the crosstime journal* and *Solaris*, much of this text dates back to 1987 or earlier. I cannot guarantee that all the magazines spoken of in the present tense are current, or even at the addresses given.

§

Just as there were fans and writers in Canada as early as elsewhere, so there were attempts at Canadian genre periodicals almost as soon as the SF or fantasy genres emerged. The SF and fantasy periodicals in Canada seem always to have been limited to semi-professional, or small-press, publications.

I write "small press" in hopes of defeating some confusion. Bear in mind that early *fan* magazines were closely modelled after the paying professional publications. In the 1930s, fans were often aspiring writers or editor/publishers. It was some time before fanzines found their own style.

For example, Nils Helmer Frome's two issues of *Supramundane Stories* (from British Columbia in the late 1930s) featured SF and fantasy by well-known authors, but were a labour of love, rather than a professional or corporate publication. The first issue had individual hand-drawn illos on each copy. But the periodicals profiled below may range from a fan's short-lived fiction magazine, up to longer-lived semiprofessional magazines. I haven't been able to distinguish them clearly, as in many cases I had no samples — or, if I had samples, I had no indication how enduring the publication was.

In Order of Appearance (Roughly)

Science Fiction Studies

An internationally-known academic journal of SF criticism and review, *SF Studies* was founded at Indiana State University in 1973, but was published from McGill and Concordia Universities in Montreal from 1979 to 1992. A juried journal that appears three times a year, its editors and contributors have included Darko Suvin, Norbert Spehner, Robert M. Philmus (Concordia University) and Marc Angenot, all of Montreal. Colombo reports that Philmus, at the 1980 Conference on the Fantastic in Boca Raton, Florida, claimed there were more SF scholars in Montreal than in any other city in the world.

(John R. Colombo, *Years of Light*, Hounslow, 1982;

Dale Speirs, personal communication, June 1994)

In 1981, Robert Runté commented on *SF Studies* #22:

Contents of this issue ... are: 'SF as Symbolic Communication', 'Making Culture Into Nature; Or Who Put the "Special" Into "Special Effects"?', 'SF Characterization and TV's Battle for the Stars', 'Symposium on *Alien*', 'The Rocky Horror Picture Show: More Than Lip Service', 'The Empire Strikes Back: Monsters from the Id', and a host of book reviews, review articles and letters. Absolutely great stuff ...

(Robert A. Runté, *New Canadian Fandom* #1, 1981)

Dark Fantasy

This SF, fantasy and graphic-art magazine from Gananoque, Ontario was first published in the summer of 1973, by the famous Gene (Howard E.) Day. There were 21 irregular issues of *Dark Fantasy* until he died, in the fall of 1982. DF #13 never saw print; a printer took his money, trashed the masters, and disappeared. One gathers that this continues to happen in a recurring fashion, but usually to naive comics fans. Gordon Derry (formerly Derevanchuk) published a special issue, #24-25, in the summer of 1984.

Dark Fantasy formed a circle of writers and artists who have gone on to other things: Charles Saunders (author of the *Imaro* heroic-fantasy series), Galad Elflandsson, John Bell (now an editor), Gordon Derry, Charles de Lint, Dan Day (artist), and Augustine Funnell; Larry Dickinson, Ron Sutton, Dave (*Cerebus*) Sim, and Tim Hammell (the well-known Edmonton artist). Gene Day and Charles Saunders were among the founders of the Small Press Writers and Artists Organization (now succeeded by the Small Press Genre Organization), and Gene Day served as its President for the SPWAO's first two years.

Almost from the beginning, DF maintained a constant format and style of layout. There was little in the way of reviews and letters in early issues, and these were eliminated after several issues. From then on, DF was dedicated only to publishing fiction, poetry and art in the fantasy, SF and horror genres, with no advertisements to interrupt the brilliant flow of creativity.

Generally the page count was 42-52, in the familiar digest size. The magazine was always strictly B&W, except for issues #2 and 23, which had a second colour on the cover.

(Gordon Derry, letter to *Maple Leaf Rag*, ca. 1984?)

Charles Saunders, another *Dark Fantasy* veteran, is now living in Halifax. Charles de Lint is a prolific and famous author,

translated into several languages, and occasionally puts out a fiction magazine called *Dragonfields*.

Borealis

Borealis, "A Canadian Magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy" (edited by John Bell from Halifax), was intended as a quarterly offset publication from 1978. The first issue, edited by John Bell and Alain Chabot, included a Gene Day portfolio, contributions by Spider Robinson and Norbert Spehner, a conreport on Boskone 15, and articles in "The Adventure School" (Donald M. Grant" and on the *anglais'* ignorance of foreign SF (Alain Chabot). The second issue includes contributions by Dave Sim, Spider Robinson, Charles Saunders and John Robert Colombo. In 1981 Bell announced *Borealis* would in future appear as an annual in book form.

There is now a mundane slick newsstand magazine of the same name.

John Bell, formerly of Halifax, went on to edit *Visions from the Edge*, a reprint anthology of Atlantic Canadian SF and fantasy; to co-edit *CND SF & F*; and to help found the Canadian SF and Fantasy Award.

Stardust

Stardust was published irregularly in Toronto from 1976 onwards, according to *Years of Light*, featuring SF and reviews. As a 1981 review put it,

Stardust, 'The Canadian SF Magazine' (*cough*cough*) featured a lead story by Phyllis Gotlieb in its Spring 1981 issue ... reprinted from 1959. John Robert Colombo's "Four Hundred Years of Fantastic Literature in Canada", based on his talk delivered at The Harbourfront in Toronto July 19, 1981, was also featured. ... *Stardust* pays 1¢/word for first North American rights.

(*New Canadian Fandom* #2, Aug-Sept. 1981)

I have seen *Stardust* and had some contact with Forrest Fusco [the editor] ... The early issues were more fannish ... *Stardust* had only newsstand distribution and subs, and ran into capital problems. As well, the regular newsstand distributors just aren't very tolerant of the irregularities of semipro publishing."

(Mark Shainblum, letter to *Maple Leaf Rag*, Dec. 1984)

Potboiler

Lari Davidson (of Roberts Creek, B.C.) write that his semiannual fiction magazine

was founded in 1978 when I scattered info to the corners of the continent, begging for contributions. The first issue did not appear until almost two years later, in 1980. Since then, the zine has appeared fairly regularly and semiannually. Unlike some other 'SF' zines, I've always tried to keep a healthy balance of comics contents.

(Lari Davidson, letter to *Maple Leaf Rag*, ca. 1984?)

An irregular small-press fiction magazine featuring SF, horror and comics, *Potboiler* has been rated by *Writer's Digest* as one of the best small-press magazine markets.

Cascade

About 1977, Charles Saunders founded *Stardock*, the club fanzine, and edited it for several years.

Stardock was to have been the "bonus" for being a full member. It never was and it was as much or more an anthology as a fanzine. It was succeeded by *Maplecade* and later *Cascade*, edited by Sansoucy Kathenor Walker.

(Ann Elid, "Worm's Castings", *Ottawa SF Statement* #200, Feb. 1994)

Sansoucy Kathenor Walker, who started *Cascade* as a fictionzine, was a fan active in the Ottawa SF Society, whose

members sponsor the annual Maplecon; she started offering a special *Maplecade* issue for Maplecon preregistered members. *Maplecade* had been produced in a digest-size, photoreduced format. The two eventually merged into the present *Cascade*, an annual featuring SF, poetry, fantasy and art, plus a few science articles. Featured writers have included Marianna MacDonald, Charles Saunders, Elisabeth Holden, Michael McKenny, Barry Blair, Hal Clement and Larry Niven.

In 1985 the digest began offering payment on acceptance at \$5 per page or per illustration, plus complimentary issues. Unfortunately, due to increasing workshop and writing commitments, Sansoucy Walker found it necessary to suspend *Maplecade* in 1986.

Wastelands

Wastelands, a "small press zine that features written words with visuals", was briefly profiled in the first *New Canadian Fandom* (1981). They solicited writers and artists for future issues on the themes of "myths, magic, religion, macabre-horror, illusion, or evolution", and announced an upcoming summer 1981 theme issue on "Machines". There was no mention of payment.

(*New Canadian Fandom* #2, Aug-Sept. 1981)

Timewarp and Visions

Bruce Brown of Ottawa was reputedly editing *Timewarp*, a small-press SF magazine, in the mid-80s. There was a report in 1987 that he was producing a writers' market newsletter/tip-sharing sheet, titled *Visions*.

Orion

Orion was billed in the early 1980s as "The Canadian magazine of time and space", and lasted two issues. Editor Mark Shainblum seems to have tried to cover SF and comics, and to cater to fandom, in an offset magazine with glossy covers, distributed through bookstands. Shainblum is now editing a series of comics under the imprint "New Triumph".

Publishing a semiprozine takes as much or more effort than it takes to publish a prozine, usually with far less possible expectation of profit. Semiprozines must be sold in large quantities (1000 minimum, 2000-3000 is better) simply to break even on production costs. Subscriptions alone are not enough to support semipros, newsstand distribution is a toilet run by gangsters, and direct-sale distribution for semipros is marginal even if you have a strong comics orientation. In the past two years comic book publishing has exploded, with thirteen new publishers and over two hundred titles on the racks. The money just isn't there for publications that are going to move a couple of hundred issues at best. When you combine these factors with a regional interest, Canadian, say, then you're really up a creek. In my view, the only way to survive as a semipro publisher in Canada is to have a lot of capital behind you, and a fairly regular publishing schedule to outwit the wolves in distribution. Of course then the question can be asked, are you still semipro?

(Mark Shainblum, letter to *Maple Leaf Rag*, Dec. 1984)

Miriad

Other Canadian semipros tended to repeat the pattern of *Orion* and *Borealis*. *Miriad*, published by Bill (William F.) Marks and Kevin Davies from Toronto, and edited by Hania Wojtowicz, was a slick publication with dot-matrix print. Shainblum describes this zine as dying "a slow and painful death, and was more or less reincarnated as Vortex Comics, in much the same way that my own *Orion* segued into The Matrix Graphic Series." Colombo describes *Miriad* as "a somewhat smudgy looking glossy magazine full of movie ads ... more at home covering the movie scene than the literary scene."

Shainblum also mentions something called *Comic Cellar*, published by one Neil Fifer in Calgary. One suspects a pattern.

Borderland

MLR 11 carried a report on a November 15th, 1984 reception at Toronto's Spaced Out Library, in memory of Edward Llewellyn-Thomas, and to celebrate the launching of a new fantasy magazine, *Borderland* (Bob Hadji ed.).

Robert Hadji founded his quarterly semipro magazine to publish "dark fantasy" (ghost stories, contemporary urban horror, and many other subjects), but *not* SF stories, sword-and-sorcery, pop fantasy, the Cthulhu mythos or *grand guignol*. Some humour is welcome, though.

Borderland's writers' guidelines stated that the magazine was to be a hobby pursuit, but professional in attitude and standards. Alan Rosenthal (now living in Seattle) confirmed to me that *Borderlands* has folded.

The editor of *Borderlands* was a judge for the 1988 World Fantasy Awards.

Bardic Runes

Michael McKenny of Ottawa has been editing *Bardic Runes* for a few years now. Last February he was looking for directors of advertising, distribution and publicity.

... this in a sense arose out of the void caused by the folding of *Maplecade* and of *Fantasy Book*. Susan Rea wrote an article for the *Statement* shortly after Maplecon 1987 about the heady feeling concerning writers, writers' groups and publishing that came out at that convention and around that time. Or maybe she only wrote about Writers' Groups and I wrote about the general mood. Anyway, it was a thrilling time, and it seemed at that time that an SF magazine (later to be *On Spec*) was soon going to emerge. So, I decided to publish *Bardic Runes*, and this was announced probably in the fall of 1987, though possibly in the winter of 1988, in the *Statement*. It was postponed when I decided to go back full-time to University ... After that I worked on it, and brought out #1 ca. February 1st, 1990.

B.C. connections through Janet Reedman [sometimes of Victoria] ... Mary Choo, and Jennifer Taylor. (She lived for a while in the late 80s in Ottawa and was a member of Lyngarde, APAPLEXY, and other writers' activities that ought to be mentioned in the *Statement*.) I believe [*Bardic Runes*] generated a number of other B.C. people to submit stories. James R. Field had his published in #2. Owen Neill from B.C. (latest I heard, he's in Thunder Bay, Ontario) had poetry in that issue, and many others. So, #1 had 3 of 6 stories by B.C. writers ... and all 4 poems ... and #2, 4 out of 7 stories ... and 7 out of 8 poems (Choo, Neill & Reedman). The 8th was by Bone Keating from Saskatchewan.

(Michael McKenny, personal communication, June 13, 1994)

Bardic Runes #8, dated 1994, was a 64-page word-processed digest, with fiction and art from Maritime and Midwest writers and artists. McKenny is soliciting traditional fantasy stories (3500 words or less) and poems, paying ½¢/word on acceptance. Sample copies of *Bardic Runes* can be obtained at \$4 each from Michael McKenny, 424 Cambridge St. S., Ottawa, ON K1S 4H5. Subscriptions are \$10 for 3 issues.

Horizons SF

Horizons SF is a biannual fiction revue from the U.B.C. SF Society (Box 75, Student Union Bldg., 6138 SUB Blvd., University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Y4). A new editor from the club takes charge each year, which creates a minor problem for potential contributors. Ostensibly this revue comes out in December and April, but a recent editor, Lisa Gemino, admits that it usually runs about a month late.

This local club's membership rose as high as 150 in 1992 and 1993. While *Horizons* was originally the club's "fanzine" (fictionzine), under editors like David New the revue became a small-press market for SF. In fact David won an Aurora Award in 1992 for his editorship.

The guidelines in my possession say that *Horizons* accepts stories under 15,000 words, typed, double-spaced, and accompanied by a SASE. Poetry is not accepted. *Horizons* pays 1-2¢/word and \$15-\$45 for art on publication. All stories, articles and drawings are copyrighted to their respective writers and artists. Single copies cost \$4 plus postage; subscriptions are \$8/yr (postage included). Some copies are distributed through Vancouver bookstores; circulation for the summer 93 issue was 200 copies.

Lisa Gemino told me the UBC club had about 30 members until recently, and the fictionzine was in suspension until this spring. Current editor John C.H. Wong launched the most recent edition in mid-February, 1995.

(Lisa Gemino, in conversation, June 17th and Sept. 13, 1994;
John C.H. Wong, Feb. 1995)

On Spec

Many of the same people who have formed SF Canada, the national speculative writers' association, since ConText II in 1991 now participate in the Copper Pig Collective, which produces *On Spec*. This quarterly "flagship of the Canadian SF publishing community" is listed in *Locus*, *SF Chronicle* and *Writer's Yearbook*, and states "we feature SF, fantasy and speculative fiction and poetry by Canadian authors and artists." Writers interested in submitting are advised that *On Spec* requests submissions in competition format, to a maximum length of 6000 words. The deadline for the horror theme issue is Aug. 31/94, to be released Spring 95. Andrew Porter has called *On Spec* "often excellent."

Andrew Porter also called *On Spec* "Canada's only magazine of speculative fiction." This is not precisely the case, but *On Spec* has been one of the few continuing magazines up to now, and perhaps the only one with newsstand distribution across the country.

(*Science Fiction Chronicle*, June & March 1994)

Champagne Horror

D.G. Valdron describes this small magazine as a 60-page letter-size revue, which appeared from Regina in 1990. Editor was Cathy

Buburuz, well-known in the small press. *Champagne Horror* published as much poetry as fiction, representing an international cast of authors. Valdron writes that Buburuz is not publishing the revue this year.

(D.G. Valdron, "The Canadian 'Zines: F/SF/H Magazines in Canada",

ConAdian program book, Sept. 1994)

From a 1993 market report:

The Gila Queen's Guide to Markets published a survey of Canadian markets in Jan. 1993, for the interest of writers. Listed markets for SF and/or fantasy included *Bardic Runes*, *Horizons SF*, *On Spec*, and some small magazines I hadn't seen elsewhere.

the crosstime journal, with an address in Edmonton, made a point of specifying "We are not a fanzine", and asked for character-oriented SF and fantasy. Colin Remillard was listed as publisher/editor; Larry Gasper as fiction editor; and Norman Dupuis as nonfiction editor. They offered \$35 on acceptance for fiction up to 6000 words.

I was shown a copy of *the crosstime journal* on one occasion that I went to Con-Version (1989). This was a letter-size, dot-matrix, photocopied, stapled publication that I classed as a club fanzine, and like a lot of first fanzines, went for publishing amateur fiction. A description of a proposed shared-world fantasy fiction universe was included. Publishers were identified as the Imaginative Fiction Writers' Association (IFWA). I am now trying to find a current address for IFWA. (*Scavenger's Newsletter* recently reported that mail has been returned from their former address.)

Legends, produced by Michael DeWolfe, David Robinson and James Harris in Victoria, asked for original, entertaining SF and fantasy, excluding *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* fiction. *Legends* has ceased to be a small-press periodical, and is now Legends Publications, still at the same Victoria address. Michael DeWolfe now proposes to publish SF novels in the electronic medium.

(*The Gila Queen's Guide to Markets* #54, Jan. 1993, & 69, April 1994)

Senary

Senary, The Journal of Fantastic Literature, was published from Calgary in 1992. However, *Senary* appeared only twice (the first issue a sort of trial balloon; the second, dated Sept. 1992, was labelled #1). An extraordinary number of calamities happened to editors Wayne Malkin and Derryl Murphy at once, and *Senary* has been in suspension since. Derryl Murphy, is attempting to marshal resources for the next issue. In the meantime he has become editor of *Communiqué*, the journal of SF Canada.

NorthWords

Something called *The Journal of Canadian Content in Speculative Literature* was launched at Ad Astra, the Toronto summer convention, in 1993; since subscription cheques were payable to CanCon (the "Conference on Canadian Content in Speculative Literature" founded in 1992), one suspects a connection with the committee. (CanCon 95, May 12 to 14/95, will also host the Aurora Awards for Canadian SF & Fantasy.) Andrew Porter (of *SF Chronicle*) described it in May 1994 as "simply dedicated to publishing and reviewing Canadian SF and fantasy. The second issue, cover dated Fall/Winter 1993, contains columns, fiction, poetry and interviews with a very definite Canadian slant."

Under the Ozone Hole reported in spring 1994 that the *Journal* was holding a writing contest, soliciting hard-SF stories by April 15th at least 1500 words long, featuring either Jupiter or Mars, with a SASE and short author bio. A series of free *Journal*-sponsored writer workshops at the Emerald Plaza library branch were also mentioned; James Botte, the *Journal* editor, was given as the information contact.

The *Journal* was retitled *NorthWords* in mid-1994. *NorthWords* literature reads, "As it says on our front covers, it features 'Great Stories, News, Reviews, Articles, Essays, Interviews, and Poetry by Canadians, with a distinctive Canadian slant, or of general interest to everyone who reads or writes speculative literature'. The idea was to provide a vehicle for fostering Canadian writers and artists by providing them with an outlet ..." One might infer that the

founders had heard little about *On Spec* or the Tesseract line, or felt that more outlets were needed.

CanCon presented the winning bid at ConAdian to host the 1995 Aurora Awards. CanCon, the 15th Convention, will be held May 12-14, 1995.

Transversions

Transversions, recently announced in SF Canada's newsletter *Communiqué*, is to be a new magazine filled with science fiction, fantasy, horror and non-fiction features; probably digest-sized, with a glossy B&W cover and anywhere from 56-96 pages.

The editors, Victoria writers Sally McBride and Dale Sproule, will look at anything original. "Length is not a problem, but if you want it back, send enough postage. ... we lean toward work which crosses boundaries and/or comes at the genres sideways. We have a slight bias against elves, dragons and cuteness in any form (while humour is fine, we prefer it somewhat dark and nasty); and don't bother to send us anything too fannish or media-related. So pieces which are hard to classify stand the best chance. We're not committing ourselves to a schedule, but hope to do two or three issues in 1994 with #1 out before [the Winnipeg] Worldcon ..."

Sally and Dale are also interested in book/magazine reviews and articles probing the changing nature of SF/Fantasy/Horror literature, movies, games, computer programs and graphic novels. They will pay 1¢/wd for fiction/nonfiction, \$5 per poem, \$50 for cover art, \$10 a page for interior art. Write to *Transversions*, 1019 Colville Rd., Victoria, B.C., V9A 4P5.

(*Communiqué* 17, Mar-Apr. 1994)

Writers Block

Another forthcoming magazine is described in Valdron's ConAdian article. *Writers Block*, from Edmonton, is to be a primarily regional market for reader-oriented adventure — be it SF, fantasy, horror, mysteries or westerns. Canadian submissions and content will be preferred.

(D.G. Valdron, "The Canadian 'Zines: F/SF/H Magazines in Canada",

ConAdian program book, Sept. 1994)

Something Completely Different:

Solaris

The focus of this French-language glossy-cover offset revue is on SF and fantasy; some issues regularly have themes such as fantastic and comic art. The *Solaris* editorial collective (which includes such writers such as Elisabeth Vonarburg, Yves Meynard and Daniel Sermine) also features interviews, graphic art portfolios and a back page of miscellaneous news.

Founded as *Requiem* in 1974, the birth of this magazine apparently coincides with the birth of Quebec fandom, and SF/F magazines. As Luc Pomerleau described it (in *New Canadian Fandom* in 1985), that fandom was largely literary, and has evolved into a community of writers, editors and publishers of *science-fiction et du fantastique québécois* (SFFQ), with their own perambulating convention (Boréal).

The founder of *Solaris*, Norbert Spohner, stepped down after nine years and subsequently worked on *SF Studies*. He was succeeded by the editorial collective, which kept up his high production values. Originally a bimonthly, *Solaris* is now quarterly.

(Luc Pomerleau, *New Canadian Fandom* #7, 1985)
(Yves Meynard, October 1994)

Imagine ... is the other major magazine of francophone SF, exclusively featuring science fiction. Founded in 1980 by Jean-Marc Gouanvic, a former *Solaris* contributor and co-editor of the VLB fiction line, *Imagine ...* offers a contrasting outlook on SFFQ than *Solaris*. A report in 1985 stated that *Imagine ...* had "abandoned its policy of experimentation for experimentation's sake and is aiming for a broader readership, while retaining its intent to publish a 'different' sort of fiction."

Yves Meynard adds that *Imagine* ... "in its 68 issues has published a lot of short stories (about a third of them from European authors) and critical essays."

(Luc Pomerleau, *New Canadian Fandom* #7, 1985)
(Yves Meynard, October 1994)

Carfax (or *Transit*) was a quarterly small-press magazine collaboration between Pierre LaCroix and Patrice Joubert (the submissions editor). This fiction magazine was devoted to the fantastic, news, studies, interviews, criticism and comic art. Yves Meynard informs me that Pierre Lacroix was the main force behind this zine; other collaborators included Marc Lemaire, who was fiction editor for a time, and later left to work on *imagine* ... *Carfax* ceased publishing in mid-1988, after 45 issues.

Faerie was a computer-generated, cleanly photocopied digest zine with a plastic-coated cover, when Vol. 1 no. 2 was produced in May 1987. The "comité de rédaction" included Daniel Serrine, Fabien Coté, Paule Valade, and Lorraine Juneau; the artistic director was Jacques LaPointe, and literary director was Daniel Coulombe. *Faerie* featured stories and critical studies, some of them by the same people. *Faerie* ceased publishing after six issues, in 1989.

Le Courrier SF (later CSF) was founded in 1988. "It went through many changes in format and its periodicity went from thrice-yearly to (in effect) yearly. Its last issue (the 11th) was in 1992. It published fiction and some articles and news."

(Yves Meynard, October 1994)

Pandore was supposed to be a quarterly collaboration, featuring SF, fantasy and *bandes dessinées* (graphic stories), when it was founded in April 1985. *Pandore* published two issues and then folded.

Samizdat ceased publishing in November 1994, after 25 issues.

Originally intended as a newszine, it did not maintain its intended frequency of publication. Over the years, the zine became oriented towards fiction and criticism — both of which remain fresh for longer periods. Philippe Gauthier, one of the two founders (the other is Claude Pelletier), faded from the zine in 1990. I became literary editor in 1988. The zine became more and more sporadic as Claude's commitments and trine increased. With my nomination as fiction editor for *Solaris*, it became clear that continuing *Samizdat* further would be a losing proposition.

(Yves Meynard, October 1994)

Temps Tôt was founded in 1989 by Christian Martin, and is still publishing after 32 issues.

This zine has offered a mix of fiction, news and reviews, with some interviews thrown in. Comic strips are also featured in most issues. Some well-known writers have had stories in *Temps Tôt*, but the fiction has been mostly the work of young/ beginning writers. Production values are average (although fans from France seem to acclaim the zine as being of the best quality): non-proportional dot-matrix printing is the rule. The zine has garnered new collaborators (especially for reviews) over the years, but its continuing existence is in no way assured; Martin can ill afford the losses he accumulates each issue.

(Yves Meynard, October 1994)

What Is the Background?

The story that seemed to emerge, from the history of the English-Canadian semipro, may be explained by some domestic market research I did in 1985 or 1986. Look for Canadian book publishers, and you find two categories: (1) tiny poetry chapbook publishers living on government grants, or regional-history and children's book publishers; (2) textbook and multiple-genre publishers, who turn out to be Southern Ontario divisions of

foreign publishing houses, often acting mainly as warehouses and distributors. Until Press Porcépion launched the *Tesseract* anthologies and SF imprint, Canadian SF books were sporadic one-shot ventures by different publishers; there were no English-Canadian regular SF publishers.

To some extent the nature of this country Does Things to domestic publishing. We have about 28 million people unevenly distributed across a landmass somewhat greater than the continental United States. This means a tenth the market, or revenue, combined with higher distribution/ communication and transportation costs — problems which simply don't exist for American publishers and distributors, who can simply add in the Canadian market to theirs.

Nancy Kilpatrick, source of *Gila Queen's* 1993 Canadian report, wrote:

1. 80% of all publishers (book and periodical) are located in the province of Ontario. Quebec also has a large market, much of it French-speaking.

2. Most fiction published in Canada falls into the categories of "literary" or "experimental." Little commercial or genre fiction is based here. ...

(*The Gila Queen's Guide to Markets*, #54, Jan. 1993)

Taral Wayne wrote more bluntly to me in 1987:

There are many many reasons why Canadian publishing is the pits, but here are two you didn't seem to consider.

- 1) The [Canadian government] subsidy program encourages only the publication of conventional literary exercises. You can't get money to publish popular reading as a rule.

- 2) The crooks to the south of us sell Canadian publication rights lumped in with U.S. rights. This almost ensures that a writer will sell his work to a New York publishing house, in order to take advantage of the larger

market. (Canadian publishers don't include US rights in their contracts, you see.) It's also worth pointing out that distributors, customs, booksellers, etc. exert forces against Canadian-published books being sold in the States. In other words, the publishers here have a cozy thing publishing stuff they don't have to sell, but get reimbursed for anyway. And unfair business practices make it hard to sell to 90% of the potential readers.

(Taral Wayne, unpublished correspondence, ca. 1987)

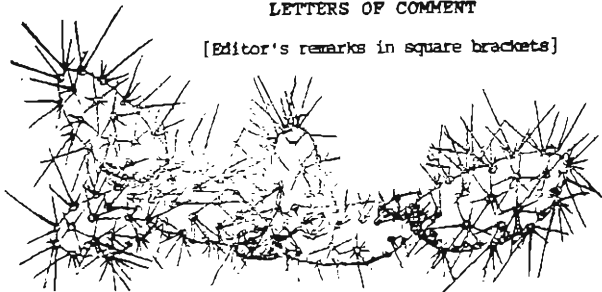
Perhaps this will change under the recently-announced new federal budget ...

In French-speaking Canada, things seem utterly different. A reader perusing *Solaris* regularly in the mid-80s could see an odd picture emerging: even operating on the same government-grant basis, small French-language publishers in Canada maintained regular lines of genre fiction, not only science fiction but fantasy as well. How they contrived to do this I simply don't know. Since a French paperback can easily run to three times the cost of its counterpart in English, perhaps French-Canadian publishers and readers are willing to accept Canadian cost structures as a basis for category fiction, where anglophones simply will not.

From 1986 on, when I began drafting this article, I began to wonder if there were some natural law in Canada against growing beyond the semipro limitations. But that was more likely the case seven or eight years ago than today.

For one thing, the centralization of North American publishing has changed somewhat. As described in *The Vancouver Review* (#15, Summer 1994), one André Schiffrin spoke in Vancouver on the publishing scene ... in New York. Mr. Schiffrin, former publisher of Pantheon Books and currently president of The New Press, contends that publishing firms are becoming increasingly consolidated, to the point where a few global corporations form near-monopolies, and choices in available publications are dictated

[Editor's remarks in square brackets]



only mass-market bestseller criteria. One Alan Twigg countered with the argument that, on the contrary, independent regional publishers have been multiplying tremendously, as for example in British Columbia since 1974.

For another thing, the efforts to start genre periodicals persist in Canada. Not only are some Canadian small-press magazines lasting more than two issues, or two years; but also, ConAdian saw the launch of *Transversions*, and the relaunch of the Tesseract SF line under a new editorship committed to Canadian SF. *Tesseract 5* has just announced its reading period for submissions, under the editorship of Robert Runté and Yves Meynard. A new SF publisher, Riverbend Press, has been launched in Calgary, offering terms comparable to American publishers, or more favourable. So it seems Canadian genre publishing *has* survived, and even expanded.

Garth Spencer can be reached at Box 15335, Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5B1.

FROM: Sheryl Birkhead

1995-4-6

23629 Woodfield Road

Gaithersburg, Maryland 20882-2819

Sigh ... The Usual has gone from sticky quarter to \$3.

[The idea of a \$3 sample copy is to discourage passive readers and subscribers in favour of active contributors such as loccers.]

WORLDWIDE PARTY #2

Last year Benoit Girard started the Worldwide Party, on the summer solstice. I haven't heard from him lately, but let's do it again (Franz Miklis of Austria will).

At 21h00 on the night of June 21st, wherever you are, raise a glass of some refreshing liquid (it need not be alcoholic) and drink to the health of fandom. The idea is to get a wave circling the world of SFish folk. Then write to Girard and tell him how you celebrated the event. His address: Benoit Girard, Editor, THE FROZEN FROG, 1016 Guillaume-Boisset, Cap-Rouge, Québec, G1Y 1Y9. You might like to send a copy to Miklis for his zine; his address is on page 2. Cheers! (Mine's Jolt Cola, what's yours?)

I hope that eventually the proceedings of FanHistoricons can become documentation, but so far I figure it is only organizing the goings-on which will become the fanhistory 'documents'.

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Carolyn Substitute, Chester Cuthbert, Murray Moore, John Thiel, Harry Andruschak, Chuck Connor, Rodney Leighton, Harry Warner, Joseph Major, Buck Coulson, Henry Welch