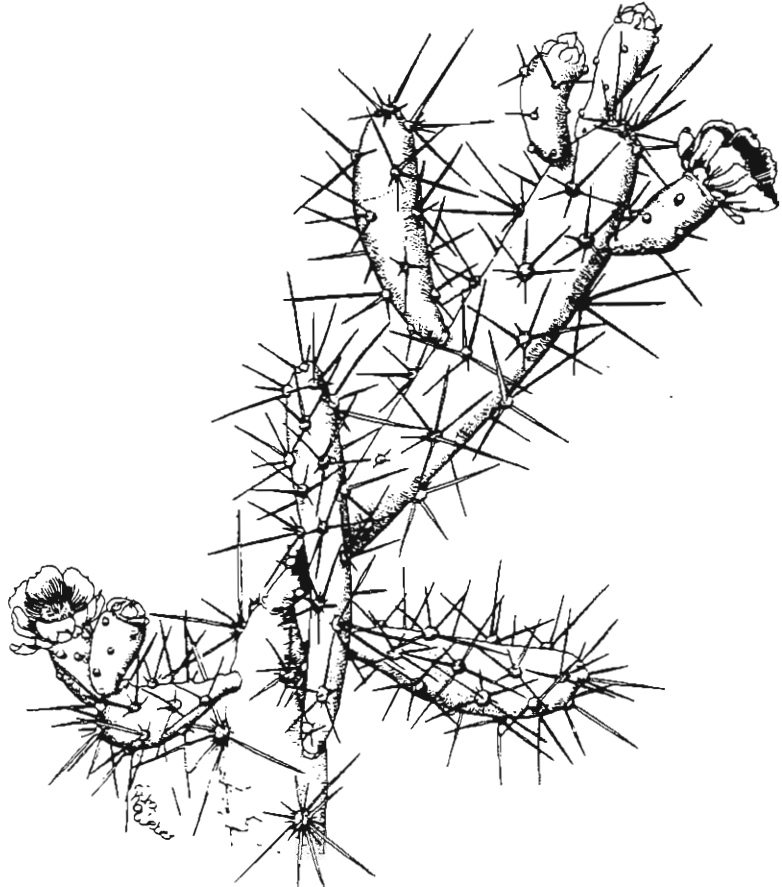


OPUNTIA

27.1



OPUNTIA #27.1

February 1996

ISSN 1183-2703

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 a letter of comment on a previous issue.

COVER ART: Opuntia aurantiaca, by Rita Weber, from the 1983 book PLANT INVADERS, published by the Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation, Cape Town, South Africa.

ZINE LISTINGS
by Dale Speirs

[Unless otherwise stated, most zines can be had for The Usual, which means \$3 cash, trade for your zine, art, or letter of comment. It is better to see a copy of the zine before sending a contribution of work, to ensure it is appropriate.]

ATTITUDE #6 (The Usual from Michael Abbott, 102 William Smith Close, Cambridge CB1 3QF, England. Zine trades send three copies as this one is published by a collective.) 64 pages from a group that intend both a zine and a oneshot convention under the same title. In this issue, a number of reports on the 1995 WorldCon at Glasgow. Peter Crump takes a fresh look at SF and defines "sense of wonder" with an equation that makes sense. He also establishes a new category "anti-SF", to go beside SF and non-SF. Anti-SF actively destroys SF; the usual suspects of Trekkies and Star Wars are brought in as examples.

CHIMNEYVILLE ALMANAC #5 (The Usual from Johnny Lowe, 1152 West 24 Street, #1, San Pedro, California 90731) A lengthy interview concerning a comic book store owner who got busted for the usual obscenity reasons, and a long section of locs. The concluding pages are Lowe's own comic strips of a multichannel universe: "... and President Clinton reiterated today that she has no idea where her husband is."

TIMEBYTES (US\$15/£10 from Christina Lake, 12 Hatherley Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, England) This is a two-volume fanthology issued for the 1995 WorldCon in Glasgow, the first concentrating on fanhistory and the second on faannish life. The time period covered goes from the 1987 WorldCon to present date. What with the 1987 event being hijacked by Scientologists, and Brit fandom going into a slump over the next few years, this is not the sort of thing to recommend to a bright-eyed neofan not yet disillusioned by contact with actual BNF or SMOF fans. However, those who adhere to Toynbee and Kondratieff modes of thought will be nodding wisely and thinking that yes, it all fits in to the grand pattern. The fanhistory volume covers the decline and recovery of British fandom, with an account of the sea-changes in fanzine and con-running fandom. The second volume, on fannish life and "Wither Internet?", is not quite an orgy of Thatcher-bashing and life on the dole, relieved at intervals by speculation and wild surmise on what computers have wrought.

SPACE CADET #4 (The Usual from R. Graeme Cameron, 1855 West 2nd Avenue, Apt. 110, Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 1J1) Perzine of Canada's leading authority on bad SF movies, the kind that invite audience participation at SF con video rooms. This time around, "Angry Red Planet" suffers. Cameron continues the diary of his grandfather's service in WWI, an account that should be required reading for those who think war is glamorous or honourable. Trench life was something else.

BARDIC RUNES #12 (\$4 from Michael McKenny, 424 Cambridge Street South, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 4H5) This is a fictionzine specializing in sword-and sorcery. The story I liked was Ellen Benefield's account of feuding tavern owners, one of whom tries to destroy the other with a skunk ghost.

THE RELUCTANT FAMULUS #41 (The Usual from Tom Sadler, 422 West Maple Avenue, Adrian, Michigan 49221-1627) A genzine, with accounts of RAF life during WW2, Internet disappointments, rat hunting, reviews, and locs. A minor gripe (two pages long) from the Editor, who is not happy with lack of return on supporting memberships to fanzine cons. For those not familiar with SF conventions, a supporting membership is a discount price for those who will not be attending but would like to get a copy of the programme book and be eligible to vote for awards that may be given out at the con. The two annual fanzine cons Corflu and Ditto are relaxed to the point of being a casual gathering in the bar. All very well, but someone who paid \$10 for a supporting membership expects more than just a receipt.

THE KNARLEY KNEWS #53 and #54 (The Usual from Henry Welch, 1525 - 16 Avenue, Grafton, Wisconsin 53024) The 1995 WorldCon is the main subject, at least nominally, of these two issues. #53 is an account of the Welch family in Britain, touring Scotland and Ireland with two small children en route to the Glasgow WorldCon. Castle-spotting, tartan tamfoolery, and bad British cooking. Little Kyle was at the 1994 WorldCon in Winnipeg, so if the trend can be maintained, Kyle will be able to claim lifetime attendance at WorldCons. In Britain, there is apparently only about ten channels on cable television, but the quality is just as bad. #54 is mostly locs, some reviews, and the tragedy of the computer losing the mailing list.

WARP #36 (The Usual from Montréal SF&F Association, Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec H2W 2P4) Clubzine of a mostly media SF club, although in this issue John Dupuis puts up a spirited argument against common statements that there is no good SF being published today. A bit about literary SF, a conreport on Glasgow, but mostly media SF and compilations of Hollywood press releases. Canfandom news of the Montréal-Ottawa axis is gloomy, with clubs folding and cons collapsing due to financial problems. The Montréal Doctor Who fanclub died when its president moved to Toronto, illustrating a point made by Robert Runté and Garth Spencer in their various fanhistory discussions about the viability of SF clubs.

ADVENTURES OF AN UNEMPLOYED ENTOMOLOGIST #5 (US\$2 or zine trade from Box 3026, Worcester, Massachusetts 01613-3026) The title pretty much sums up the content of this perzine. This issue covers the editor's trip to California for a job interview, combined with family visits while she was out there. Also a look-in at a performance of the Alloy Orchestra, a band which uses unusual percussion devices such as scrap metal, playing them at showings of silent movies.

BUSSWARBLE #26 (The Usual from Michael Hailstone, 14 Cecil Road, Blackheath, New South Wales 2785, Australia) Drought, rain, the Warragamba Dam. An installment on his trip to Bolivia and Peru.

SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN V6#2 (The Usual from Tom Feller, Box 13626, Jackson, Mississippi 39236-3626) Clubzine with convention reports, con lists, apa lists, club lists. A good source to find contacts in the American sunbelt.

WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE #48 (The Usual from Jean Weber, 7 Nicoll Avenue, Ryde, New South Wales 2112, Australia) Diary notes, locs, book reviews, and the Sex Dance.

SHODDY GOODS #4 (US\$1 from Box 160150, St. Louis, Missouri 63116) At first glance this appears to be a punkzine with the usual aimless photocopy collages and band reports. A steadier look reveals a zine whose essayists put some content into their writing, and the collages are detournement as it should be done, with a sense of purpose rather than slapping it together because mail artists will accept anything.

First up is a two-page detourned layout "If An Airplane Carrying Sulfuric Acid Crashed On My House, Then I Would Do This:", a straight-faced compilation that takes every Safety Officer's advice and makes a farce of it without actually distorting it. Throughout this zine are various clip art pieces in a more routine mode of detournement, matched to adjacent articles by adding captions as required. It's nice to see that some people haven't forgotten that art is more effective if it actually communicates something.

The band reports are, again, in a routine mode, notwithstanding the one report about the band that left their drummer behind at a rest stop and had to double back several hours before they finally found him. I was startled to see the local band news column headlined "Cowtown Beat", as Cowtown is Calgary's nickname and I didn't think there were two places with the same moniker. There are a few diatribes about Mexico (where my Safety Officer is on vacation even as I type this) and racism, but the most interesting essays I found were on some home truths that not all punkers would like to have discussed in a public place. But before that, this.

One thing that distinguishes the punk rock followers from, say, Pink Floyd fans, is that punk places greater emphasis on the do-it-yourself philosophy of life. Rather than simply consuming by buying albums, going to major-label band concerts, and idolizing whomever Hollywood tells them to, punk rock is intended to be a

celebration of life on the fringes, where you make your own entertainment. Granted it does not always work in actual practice, but science fiction fans can hardly criticize, what with the Trekkies buying up whatever Paramount sells them. In theory though, punk rock is an attempt to develop a culture where you form your own bands, stage your own concerts, or publish a zine. Most people only see the peculiar costumes and loud bands; that there is a complete culture to go with the crowd is not even thought of.

In this issue, Ezra Claverie writes: "What urges the people of DIY land to do punk for punk's sake? I often hear people on the scene laud it for the communication it makes possible, enabling vegan A to tell vegan B how upsetting factory farms are, anarchist circle A to tell anarchist circle B how completely fucked up the cops are for busting Food Not Bombs ... I do wish for an open acknowledgement that an unspoken commandment of the DIY culture is to preach to the converted ... We need to realize this, and talk about it, so we can move on and see what we're really capable of. ... the noise terror played by the average political punk/HC band (scary to the tender pop sensibilities of the average top 40 listener) is one of the greatest barriers preventing the meaningful dissemination of the ideas expressed by said bands. By using a medium that alienates unfamiliar audiences, we are placing the gag on our own mouths. ... many concepts basic to the DIY underground will remain foreign to the mainstream of popular music. ... There is no physical law that make radicalism and popularity mutually exclusive. Some punks seem to overlook this, distrusting bands solely on the basis of the size of their audience (as if dusty obscurity was a noble end in itself) ...".

Following on is a pseudonymous writer who answers the common complaint "I can't make out the lyrics" with the observation that churches preach love and peace in clear and precise terms, yet the congregations still

[continued next page]

go out afterward and commit adultery, steal, and hate others because of their skin colour. "Clarity of a message's delivery does not guarantee understanding or acceptance. Punk song lyrics are usually unintelligible because of a poor sound system, poor singer, or purposely unintelligible for artistic or stylistic reasons. Some may reason that if the message of punk is not socially acceptable, why should the music be?"

Well indeed. To interject my point of view, I would suggest that while clear communication does not ensure clear understanding, it certainly improves the chances of this happening. By jumping back to the point made by Clavierie about DIYers preaching to the choir, let us continue on with the pseudonymous writer from above as he discusses why ministers preach to the converted. "If you only consume you will always have to find something new or novel to distract you from your misery or boredom. When you create you give something of yourself to the community you are a part of. You gain knowledge and experience that you can't get from watching videos or buying a recording. You shed some of your dependence on others, and strengthen yourself and your community. As a bonus, you are no longer relying on the companies of the world and their government lackeys for entertainment, which is also likely to support their world view. ... does your culture and entertainment require commercial validation to exist and be real? ... Until society and government changes, obscurity and 'failure' are the ends of any individuals that challenge the foundations of the current society. Without their efforts however resistance would be impossible, or less likely."

Without changing too many words, the quotes above can be applied to science fiction fandom, or to zinedom from its beginnings in the late 1800s to today. We may not bring down any governments but avocational subcultures (if I may borrow a phrase from Prof. Robert Runté) can help us bypass them.

The final essay summing up punk culture is by Jason Useless, his last before hitting the road to Florida. As he writes: "Anyhow, I come not to bury punk but to praise it. ... Now, to be sure, creating your own culture is a political act, on the same level as making your own clothes or riding a bike instead of using a car. But punk is not a mass political movement ... only a narrow sliver of population is going to aesthetically enjoy the fruits of punk culture. If you believe, as I do, that punk in the 90s means DIY and DIY only, that number gets even smaller. ... And it's equally stupid to expect punk to transform society, although there's certainly nothing wrong with working within a cultural movement to spread the ideals of a political movement."

DRIFT #78 (\$1? from C.F. Kennedy, Box 40, 90 Shuter Street, Toronto, Ontario M5B 2K6) Mail art, zine reviews, locs. The latter two are intermixed in a smooth flow of commentary. Also some thoughts on the myth of writer's block, and a commentary of life at a mission.

TRASH BARREL (The Usual from Donald Franson, 6543 Babcock Avenue, North Hollywood, California 91606-2308) Single-sheet listing of zines and one-shots, useful for neos looking to build up a mailing list.

THE KNARLEY KNEWS #55 (The Usual from Henry Welch, 1525 - 16 Avenue, Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2017) Genzine of family news, book reviews, and lots of locs following on the previous issue's Glasgow WorldCon report.

PHILOSOPY #1 (The Usual from Alexander Slate, 8603 Shallow Ridge Drive, San Antonio, Texas 78239-4022) Once unto the breach from an experienced zine editor. Starts off with some articles on definitions of philosophy and theology, then to book reviews.

GEGENSCHEIN #72 (The Usual from Eric Lindsay, 7 Nicoll Avenue, Ryde, New South Wales 2112, Australia) Mostly book reviews and a few locs, also trip reports to an SF con in Tasmania.

CHALLENGER #3 (The Usual from Guy Lillian, Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153-3092) A 97-page genzine. Spelunking, valentine cards, American politics, court cases, witch hunts, a 30-page trip report to London, the television show "Northern Exposure", and locs. In a more tragic vein, an account of Harry B. Moore, who was an SF fan of note in the 1950s. He became paranoid and reclusive in his final years, and let his home go to ruin. As a result, a valuable library and art collection was lost by indifference.

That London trip report was by Dennis Dolbear and was scanned into Lillian's computer. The initial results of that scan are detailed in an article "A Fart Of A Fiendish Scheme", with such gems as "I caned Linda at her office" (instead of calling her). 'British' was turned by the scanner into 'fetish', and Lillian regrets not having kept the statement "Tiownl o'P ;exool ... Ficnd w's)ut a Fax", which almost makes sense if you think on it too long. 'Napoleon' became 'Nab Allen', and the Houses of Parliament were altered to 'Llouses of Partuafflnt', which sounds like the Welsh legislature. Dolbear tells us "After fubshinX3, we walked down Victoria strut toward the shames"; one hopes he used condoms.

DEROGATORY REFERENCE #81 (The Usual from Arthur Hlavaty, 206 Valentine Street, Yonkers, New York 10704) A perzine; life as a freelance writer, pets, books, a consideration of the Bible as an Ace Double.

ON SPEC #23 (\$6 from Box 4727, Edmonton, Alberta, T6E 5G6) Canada's prozine, sort of 2/3 ASIMOV'S and 1/3 ANALOG. Excellent artwork.

MARKTIME AUDIOZINE #1 (US\$2 from Mark Strickert, Box 59851, Schaumburg, Illinois 60159) Much like the paper zine of the same name but on a cassette instead. This was recorded while Strickert was driving the back roads of Oklahoma; the sound quality is quite good. He has a number of trainspotting hobbies about which he talks of in this tape. He is on the back roads as part of his attempt to visit every county in the USA. Related to that are visits to baseball games, radio taping, bus systems of various cities, and map collecting. Tends to be a bit dry, with too much cataloging of places and not enough about them, such as the baseball game he saw that had four pitchers in one inning against as many batters from the other team.

ANGRY THOREAUJAN #15 (US\$5 from Box 2246, Anaheim, California 92814) Colour cover semiprozine of punk rock. A California emphasis on band and music reviews, but also enough to attract the interest of outlanders. Rants, interviews, phone sex, O.J. of course, and zine reviews. Last issue was slagging Disneyland, this time Fox Television takes a hit.

FILE 770 #111 (US\$2.50 from Mike Glycer, Box 1056, Sierra Madre, California 91025) Newszine of SF fandom. This issue reports on the Glasgow WorldCon, with some miscellaneous news and locs.

FOSFAX #178 (The Usual from Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281) 62 pages of American politics, lots of SF reviews, lots of non-SF reviews. Heinlein, the end of WW2 and the atomic bomb, the Glasgow WorldCon, even the latest Québec referendum was noticed. The O.J. acquittal gets a look-in, but there is greater emphasis on the disasters at Waco and Ruby Ridge. 28 pages of locs; the abortion debate seems to be trickling out but there is a new surge of argument about private militias to fill the space.

BIBLIOZINE #41 (US\$1 from John Held Jr., Box 410837, San Francisco, California 94141-0837) Single-sheet reviewzine specializing in mail art items. Frequent.

CONTRACT V8#1 (The Usual from John Mansfield, 321 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 2B9) A listing of Canadian SF conventions, plus news of fandom. The CUFF rules are printed herein, a ConAdian wrapup report, a number of brief con reports and advice sessions. The more interesting bits of news includes the end of the Creation cons in Canada, as they failed to declare to Her Majesty the correct value of Trek merchandise they were importing and got nailed by Customs with a 6-digit fine. Cathy Mayo reports on Intercon 95, a slickly produced commercial SF con in Kamloops, B.C., on the weekend of October 13-15, 1995. This was an X-FILE and UFO-naut event in the same style as the Creation cons. Apparently well-organized if you overlook the fact that the facilities were scattered from one side of town to the other, and reasonable value for a media fan with no idea of what a real SF con should be. But, only 200 attending, for an event that anticipated 2000 to show up. Two reasons: Kamloops is a town too small to support a large group of fans, and outlanders were not about to drive through the mountains in middle October.

IT GOES ON THE SHELF #15 (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Street, Newport News, Virginia 23605) Reviews of older books and explorations into the nooks and crannies of the literary world. A good place to start if all those bestsellers are boring you and you'd like to find something off the main highway.

SANE #4(\$2? from Lindsay Cox, Box 55, Surrey Hills North 3127, Victoria, Australia) Rodney Leighton forwarded this zine. Strange photos, accounts of scams in foreign places, fiction, and a transcript of a police interrogation that should convince anyone to stay on the straight and narrow.

WILD HEIRS #12 and #12.5 (The Usual from Arnie Katz, 330 South Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, Nevada 89107) From an enthusiastic editorial collective, who start off #12 with a conversation thread on various subjects. Elsewhere, Arnie Katz classifies fan feuds into seven types from personal animosity to civil war, Rob Hansen on the etymology of certain naughty words (I will never again be able to hook up a trailer to a pintle hitch on my truck without grinning), and various other articles. I think the prize piece, one that deserves to be reprinted in a fanthology, is Mark Kernes' excellent account of his experiences with sleep apnea. If you've been sleeping long hours but still are tired and yawning by day, and constantly feeling exhausted, this is a must-read article. #12.5 is faanish fiction.

FTT #19 (The Usual from Judith Harna and Joseph Nicholas, 15 Jansons Road, South Tottenham, London N15 4JU, England) An account of visitors passing through the Jansons Road manor en route to the Glasgow WorldCon, a how-to report on setting up an environment information centre in Bath, thoughts on cultural stasis, and locs.

ERG #132 (The Usual from Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, England) The story of the Soggies, some rather interesting cartoon characters that Jeeves drew and sold professionally for a number of years. Also, where are the aliens?, new and old rocketships, and locs.

GLOBAL MAIL (US\$3 from Box 410837, San Francisco, California 94141) A requestzine with 800+ requests from people wanting contributors for mail art projects and zines to various causes political or otherwise. This is an excellent place to start if you are wanting to make connections with the Papernet. Recommended.

APPARATCHIK #51 (US\$3 from Andy Hooper, 4228 Francis Avenue North, #103, Seattle, Washington 98103) Frequent zine, this issue on Las Vegas fandom, sunken ships.

OBSCURER #33 (US\$2 from Jim Romenesko, 1305 Grand Avenue, #101, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105) Reviewzine that looks at a few zines in detail, rather than numerous capsule reviews. This time around, after noting his address change, a look at Mr. Apology. In real life he was Allan Bridge, who ran a free confessional telephone service in Manhattan. One could call in, apologize for whatever was on the conscience. Bridge later used extracts of the apologies for his zine APOLOGY. Alas, he was killed recently in a scuba diving accident. Elsewhere, a look at whether one should take advertising from the big corporations, illustrated by the case of Viking Penguin's culture clash with JAZZ FLAVORED COFFEE.

EYEBALLS IN THE SKY #10 (The Usual from Tony Berry, 55 Seymour Road, Oldbury, Warley, West Midlands B69 4EP, England) Genzine with personal accounts ranging from life in Egypt, sperm banks, living in New York City and sex.

THYME #107/AUSTRALIAN SF NEWS #67/ARTYCHOKE #14 (The Usual from Alan Stewart, Box 227, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 3005, Australia) Three zines bound as one. THYME covers fan news, book reviews, con reports, and locs. One loc was Brad Foster replying to a complaint by Hugo-winner Dave Langford that the 1994 Hugos were too difficult to fit in the luggage. Foster mentioned that the award (a rocketship on a maple leaf plaque) was designed to be easily disassembled for the luggage. Foster was hoping to have a spot of fun with airport security when they X-rayed his luggage and saw the metal rocket: "But when I got there, they were totally uninterested. I found out two other awards had already gone through before me for the same flight. Always wondered what kind of conspiracy theories would be floating around had something happened to that flight, and among the wreckage they'd found three silver 'bomb rockets'!". ARTYCHOKE continues on with the "Space-Time Buccaneers" saga, always something I look forward to reading.

LITTLE FREE PRESS #133 (The Usual from Ernest Mann, 301 SE 11th Street, Lot 218, Little Falls, Minnesota 56345) A very frequent zine, almost weekly judging by the rate at which I get it. Deals with economics and how to get out of wage slavery. While I agree with the ideals, I don't anticipate economic utopia in my lifetime. There are just too many people absolutely convinced that they have to have a television set, and who judge success by their possessions. There is no need to explain wage slavery by a conspiracy of the rich; no one was ever in debt except by living beyond their means. Possibly the only exception would be the need for a mortgage on a house, but once that is paid off, then you are free. To pay rent, says Mann. "... we sign into indentured slavery for life".

PROBE #98 (The Usual from SFSA, Box 781401, Sandton, 2146, South Africa) Very nicely produced clubzine in the digest size with card covers. Roberto Schima does the wraparound cover art; if better known outside South Africa, Schima could be a serious candidate for an art Hugo. This zine also contains a number of short stories by South Africans, as well as the usual reviews and locs.

GREEN STUFF #1 (The Usual from Murray Moore, 377 Manly Street, Midland, Ontario L4R 3E2) A FAPazine, titled so by reason of being printed by mimeograph in green ink on white paper. Starts off with connectedness, then to zine titles, and on to diary notes.

PINKETTE #15b (The Usual from Karen Pender-Gunn, Box 567, Blackburn, Victoria 3130, Australia) Mostly newspaper clippings intermixed with travel diary extracts.

BCSFZINE #273 (\$24 per year from WCSFA, c/o 110 - 1855 West 2nd Avenue, Vancouver, British Columbia V6J 1J1) Monthly clubzine with locs, news, and reprints from old issues.

People publish zines for many and varied reasons. They may do so for life or, more commonly, for a few years and then gaffiate. Normally we never hear from them after gaffiation, but recently one book was published by Pagan Kennedy (St. Martin's, 1995) about her six years in zinedom and why she left.

Kennedy published a perzine in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. She reprints all the issues in her book 'ZINE, together with new material introducing each issue and explaining the background of how it was produced. Kennedy was in and out of university graduate programs as a fiction writer. For real life, she was a freelance writer in the usual copyediting rut while waiting to get her first novel published. She lived in a shared house with other slackers, worried about her hair, experienced the death of her father, and had some medical problems. In short, the type of perzine material one might see anywhere.

Kennedy worked her way out of inferiority complexes by developing and using an alterego in the pages of her zine to say and do the things she never had the courage to do face-to-face. It was an unconscious flowering into adulthood and when she felt she had arrived she left the zine behind. From glasses and boyish haircuts (in her 20s, she was constantly mistaken for a high school student) to a more sophisticated look made possible by contact lenses and long hair, we see her evolve by trial and error. At the time her zines were being published, this evolution was slow enough that readers may not have noticed it. It is visible in the book, as one reads through six years in a few hours. Her zine issues are printed in facsimile as they were first published. Sometimes she hid the pain behind jocular stories about buying a car, but for the most part: " ... I remember those years as mostly happy, suffused with the candy-color glow of a Saturday

morning cartoon. A time when all that mattered was adventure. A time when art could still save my life."

Although zines still have plenty of life yet, the Net is now the popular staging point for would-be zinesters. I have no doubt that many people will use e-zines as a staging point in life, just as with the Papernet. This is not to imply, however, that everyone publishing a zine is doing so for psychotherapy. Some of us have an agenda, political or literary. Some of us do it as a pleasant hobby. Sharyn McCrumb never understood that last point. She published two books, BIMBOS OF THE DEATH SUN and ZOMBIES OF THE GENE POOL. The first was a viciously accurate portrayal of an SF convention, and the latter a thinly disguised account of First Fandom zine publishers. Although she got the descriptions and behaviour of fans correct, McCrumb failed in her interpretation of what fandom was about, mainly because she seemed unable to understand that for most people fandom was just a hobby, not a way of life. She condemned costumers, for example, because they didn't put their talents to use running a dress shop. Using this logic, anyone who grows a garden should be selling crops down at the farmer's market. Not every zine publisher wants to publish a novel or compete with Time Warner.

Fanzines have been studied by Fredric Wertham, a psychiatrist involved in the repression of 1950s comics because of their 'unhealthy' content. His book THE WORLD OF FANZINES (Southern Illinois University Press, 1973) is a pleasant surprise for those who expect condemnation of zines. In his analysis of zines, he comes out in favour of them, as a means of expression and communication. He found them an antidote to the conformity of modern life, although not for a moment did he think zines could be significant as a counterforce or remedy to mundane society. He viewed them as a good reminder that the fringe serves a useful purpose outside the control of mass-market media.

JESUS IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Milton Rokeach was a psychiatrist who did an experiment at Ypsilanti State Hospital, Michigan. He brought together three lost souls, Joseph, Clyde, and Leon, each of whom believed he was God/Jesus/Holy Ghost. Rokeach was researching the problem of identity, how people develop and hold onto beliefs. His book *THE THREE CHRISTS OF YPSILANTI* (Knopf, 1964) details the results of that experiment, when three immovable objects collided in a universe that allows only one. Rokeach's hypotheses were: 1) Not all beliefs a person holds are of equal importance; beliefs range from peripheral to central. 2) The more central a belief, the more it will resist change. 3) If a central belief is somehow changed, the repercussions in the rest of the system will be wide, far wider than those produced by change in peripheral belief.

Rokeach mentions the *CANDID CAMERA* show, which upset central beliefs with stunts. Disturbing to the innocent parties involved, but relieved after short duration when the hoax was revealed. But what happens if beliefs are disrupted for a long period of time?

The three Christs were brought together in one ward and met daily. At their first meeting, they disputed with each other over who was the real Christ. All three eventually rationalized the others as the crazy ones or some other reason. Clyde said Joseph and Leon were not really alive and were kept going by machines. When asked where the machines were, he said they were on the right side of their stomachs. Joseph unbuttoned his shirt and gave permission for Clyde to feel for the machine. Clyde couldn't find it, and said it must have slipped down where it couldn't be felt.

In the early days of their contact, there was initial violence but it quickly dissipated and was not serious.

Once they realized that confrontation would not shake each other's delusional identities, they handled the matter by denial. As meetings continued in group therapy, the men avoided the subject of who was Christ, in order to get along with each other. Privately, each continued to think he was Christ and acted accordingly, whether in statements to hospital staff or writing letters to President Eisenhower and Prime Minister Diefenbaker.

Says Rokeach: "... even when a summit of three is composed of paranoid men, deadlocked over the ultimate in human contradiction, they prefer to seek ways to live with one another in peace rather than destroy one another."

Delusional beliefs reject outside authority, so ordinary psychoanalysis cannot work. Rokeach was unsuccessful in changing any of the trio's central beliefs, although some of their peripheral beliefs were modified, such as what name Leon chose to go by. Rokeach felt that part of the problem was that the men had spent too many years in the 'back wards', where they were essentially warehoused and lucky to have an interview with a doctor once a year. The loneliness and isolation in back wards would have reinforced their problems.

If they were deluded, they were not completely insane in every aspect of life, and could understand much of what was going on around them as long as it did not disrupt their central belief. Leon once remarked to Rokeach: "... people who bring patients together to have one abuse the other ... is not sound psychological reasoning ...". They tried to avoid the abuse. Given the chance to run their own meetings, they did quite well on their own. The minutes they kept showed a wide range of topics discussed, but no matter how much they were provoked, they tried to keep their delusion intact. It was the central belief. They were willing to change their behaviour if it required only a change in peripheral belief, but the centre was held at all costs.

In a secondhand bookstore I saw a hardcover by Sandy Stewart entitled A PICTORIAL HISTORY OF RADIO IN CANADA (Gage, 1975). A most interesting history.

Canada was the pioneer of radio. The first trans-Atlantic Morse code was transmitted by Marconi to Newfoundland in 1901. The first human voice sent over radio was that of a Canadian, Reginald Fessenden, who transmitted a Christmas programme in 1906 from Brant Rock, Massachusetts. Typically, as is still true now, he had to go to the States because he could not obtain support at home. Radio got its first big boost with the sinking of the Titanic. Charles Ellsworth, a 17-year-old telegrapher, picked up the distress call of the ship at station MCE in Cape Race, Newfoundland and relayed the messages south to the mainland. The world's first commercial radio station was Montréal's XWA, later CFCF, which broadcast a programme in 1919 and began the first scheduled broadcast on May 20, 1920.

But, as has happened too often in Canadian history, a failure of nerve occurred, and the momentum shifted to the USA. The Canadian government was indifferent and timid in allocating frequencies and in letting new stations experiment. Churches owned many of the original stations, and spent much of their time attacking each other or mixing in politics. One of the larger networks was owned by the Jehovah Witnesses, who libelled Roman Catholics continuously. The Canadian National Railway owned a network that was deliberately high-class: "The man-on-the-street opinion was not regarded as worthwhile, and radio was viewed mainly as a medium for the country's experts and professors.". Not surprisingly, Canadians therefore preferred to listen to Jack Benny or Charlie McCarthy. There were some Canadian shows to be sure, such as "Don Messer's Jubilee", which went for decades on both radio and television

(for non-Canadians, let me explain that this was something like Lawrence Welk with folk music of the Atlantic provinces mixed in). Local radio stations were cheap imitations of American programmes. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation didn't have a news service until we entered the war in 1939. Its main news presenter during WW2 was Lorne Greene, popularly known as The Voice Of Doom, although Americans and younger Canadians only knew him as the boss of the Bonanza ranch in the television series.

The golden age of American radio was from the 1930s to the early 1950s, but Canadian radio was badly retarded, and did not bloom until the postwar decade of 1944 to 1954. It was then that a flood of drama and comedy made in Canada for Canadians reached its peak.

Hockey games were first broadcast in 1923. They became a national favourite partly because of American network indifference to Saturday night programming. American audiences were more likely to go out on a date that night, whereas Canadians tended to stay home. The American networks therefore ran their poorer shows then, which could not compete against "Hockey Night In Canada" which to this very day is still the highest-rated show, albeit now on television. One tradition of H.N.I.C. is that after the game, three stars are selected from the players and honoured. I had never thought about why this was so until I read Stewart's remark that this originated because an early sponsor was 3-Star Gasoline.

As with American radio, television killed Canadian radio. It was not a swift clean kill but a long dying, finally ending about 1964 with only a whimper. Canada did have the advantage that CBC Radio Canada kept going with programme radio, but commercial radio went the same way as it did Stateside. CBC kept quality commercial-free programming alive and even today acts as a bulwark against the cultural imperialists.

CJSW 90.9 FM

I've quit listening to commercial radio stations. Commercial radio isn't just dying; it is dead. A Calgary station that used to be Top 40 is now continuous elevator music. No DJs, no news, just a technician keeping an eye on the tape. The last 'alternative' station switched to Vera Lynn and infomercials, unable to attract advertising for the new-music format. All the commercial stations run advertisements almost entirely during the morning and afternoon traffic peaks, since commuters are the only market left for radio. Some stations try to make a virtue of this and promote commercial-free music, hoping listeners won't make the connection. All that's left is CBC Radio Canada and local student radio stations.

I do tape comedy shows off CBC FM English (which is non-commercial) but by and large only listen to music on CJSW, the University of Calgary student radio. They have several programs of techno music that I tape, but I also enjoy listening to them for the enthusiastic if naive announcers.

They are not as polished as commercial DJs, but neither are they constantly talking with insincere chat. There is no yapping over the intro of a song, no patter, no station IDs every two minutes. CJSW presumes you know where your radio is set, and that you can find out the weather by looking out the window or dialling Environment Canada's recorded message. The announcers apologize for the absence of the regular chap: "Rob didn't make it here tonight because he had to study for an exam". And over a period of weeks, one can trace the spread of influenza through the entire CJSW staff, because they keep giving it to each other via the headsets or control panel switches. Two DJs broadcasting from a rave speculate on why the laser light displays keep failing halfway through the show. Their conclusion is that the equipment was borrowed from a local store,

and what else would you expect from floor demonstration models?

Elsewhere, Ashley is indignant at her partner, who can't do a request because he mistakenly gave away the CD. Undaunted, he then tries to read out the request dedication anyway, but can't make out the handwriting. "This goes out to Jacques Somebody-Or-Other ... ". There is trouble getting the next song played; Ashley suggests he push that button over there. Nothing happens, and in the distant background we hear the technician shouting "Track 5! Track 5!".

CJSW is genuine programme radio, as opposed to commercial stations which advertise 'programmes' which are simply the same mixture of songs and ads, but with a different DJ. On CJSW, mornings tend to be jazz and alternative news, with lots of punk rock later in the day. Evenings are techno or eclectic. Saturday and Sunday mornings are a series of ethnic programmes. Advertisements are few and far between, and are related to the shows, not spots for car dealers or retailers. The station does an annual fund raiser, and operates on \$50,000 a year with volunteer labour.

There are several techno shows on CJSW. "Radiant ST-8", the second word pronounced 'state', does house/rave music. It is for dancing, with beats of 150 per minute or more. Tends to be monotonous after a while. Another show "DNA D-Vision" does techno but features conversations with local musicians, including that favourite standby here: "Is there a Calgary scene, and why not?". Most seem to agree that Calgary bands just don't publicize themselves enough by going on tour across Canada and USA. My preference for taping is a show "Translucent Dreams", which specializes in ambient music, basically a type of techno except you can't dance to it. Popular in chillout rooms at raves.

Years ago I made a choice that I would standardize my music collection on cassette tapes. This was in the heyday of vinyl LPs, which, I suppose, certainly dates me for any Generation Xers reading this. I didn't like vinyl because it was too heavy to move around during my frequent changes of address as a university student and because the records wore out too fast and lost sound quality. Cassettes were the obvious choice of the future, and since then I have built a collection of several hundred.

I refused to buy CDs on the grounds that they were to prove another 8-track system. Not that I saw them coming back in the early 1970s, anymore than anyone else did. Throughout the 1980s, my decision to stick to cassettes only was no problem. Vinyl faded out and CDs replaced them. It was all over bar the shouting. Cassettes continued on their way undisturbed. Even in the early 1990s, I felt secure. But in the last two years, I noticed cassettes dwindling away, and began to feel disquiet. Now it has become noticeable, and I expect that in a few years I will only be able to buy blank tapes for recording off the radio.

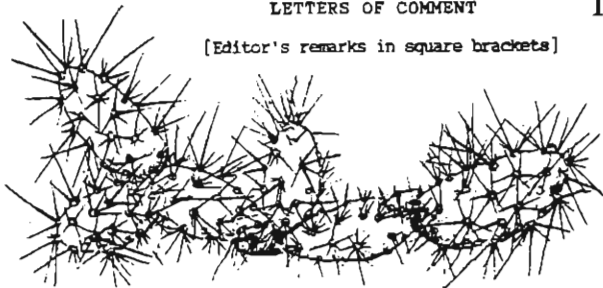
This left me in the peculiar position of not listening to either the primitive means (vinyl) or advanced means (CD) of communicating music. This came home in recent times as bands issued only CDs, one of whom was Toledo Speedway, whose drummer worked for me as a parks labourer. Two of my assistant foreman are trying to get their own band going even as I type this; no name for it as yet. Details to follow when available. The name for Toledo Speedway was chosen, as related to me by the drummer, while sitting at a café counter. Next to the counter was one of those weigh-yourself scales, manufactured by the Toledo corporation. The name of the scale was the Speedweigh model. As good as any a

place to get a name. With the sea change in the world economy and the difficulty that Gen Xers have in finding permanent, decent-paying jobs, our seasonal crews are made up increasingly of school leavers or graduated university students who simply cannot get any other work, no matter how well qualified. If you ever come across an easy-listening band called Misty, tell the lead vocalist that her old boss Dale said hello. I did have a PhD in English Literature running a mowing machine but he didn't come back a few seasons ago. Must have got work somewhere, although I doubt it was any academic job. Once you miss out as a PhD who failed to get a professorial position or even a sessional lecturer, it's a long way down.

Having received a vinyl compilation in the mail called CANADIAN RELICS, I was a bit nonplussed. Certainly I am a bit of a relic in not having either a record player or a CD player. Since I can't review the music, I'll have to confine myself to the liner notes. No price given for the vinyl but I'm guessing that \$5 will get a copy from Horrifying Circus Music, Box 78069, Vancouver, British Columbia V5N 5W1. Five tracks from as many bands on this 7". Rock music, just in case you might think you were getting folk songs. Liner notes by the bands themselves, including the interesting story of whatever happened to Chad Allen. This chap is the Flying Dutchman of Canadian music, having the knack of leaving bands just before they became famous, such as the Guess Who. After hosting a Winnipeg kiddies show, he is now apparently in Vancouver, still only a trivia question.

Vinyl has been making a modest comeback, and is a favourite of punk bands. There is still argument about the sound quality difference between CDs and vinyls. Nobody seems to discuss cassettes with the same emotion in defending vinyl, but I'm sure that time will come.

[Editor's remarks in square brackets]



FROM: Harry Warner Jr. 1995-11-23
 423 Summit Avenue
 Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

If I understand correctly what mail art is, I think SF fandom had at least a small role in the pioneering of it. Some fans back in the 1950s and 1960s went to great pains to make the envelopes in which they mailed fanzines appear attractive or funny or distinctive through illustrations and elaborate calligraphy. This practice went on the decline later on, and it's rarely seen when fanzines arrive nowadays. Perhaps the decline of the mimeograph caused its fading because copiers may not do a good job when manila envelopes are fed into them instead of plain paper. I've always kept all fanzines that arrive in their original wrappers or envelopes, except for the occasional publication that is so tightly packed that it disintegrates its covering during removal from it. So I may have one of the best collections of this subdivision of fanzine creativity anywhere. I have always believed that light is the biggest factor in the senility of fanzine paper. My system reduces the illumination fanzines get in storage.

[UNDER THE OZONE HOLE and THINGUMYBOB are two modern zines that occasionally use mail art envelopes.]

FROM: Walt Willis 1995-11-25
 32 Warren Road
 Donaghadee, Northern Ireland BT21 OPD

Your reference to mail art reminds me of the time when [my wife] Madeleine, on holiday with her relatives in Kilkenny, asked me to mail her her tennis racket. It is my recollection that I just tied a label to it and handed it in as a parcel. I may have been influenced by reading about a firm which marketed reconditioned typewriters and stopped crating them up for consignment by rail on account of the amount of damage they suffered. Instead they just took to consigning them to the railway quite naked except for a label. They found the apparent vulnerability of the typewriter was its own protection; where a crate might be roughly handled, an unprotected typewriter was looked after.

FROM: John Stegenga 1995-11-27
 Chief, Legal Deposit Office
 National Library of Canada
 395 Wellington Street
 Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N4

We are writing to inform you about changes to the National Library Act and the National Library Book Deposit Regulations that have just recently come into effect and that apply to all types of publications released for distribution or sale in Canada. Since its creation in 1953, the National Library of Canada has endeavoured to build a comprehensive collection of Canadian publications to serve the information needs of all Canadians.

[continued next page]

This national collection has become a record of what has been published, produced, or created in Canada. One of the principal means by which this specialised collection is built is legal deposit, the mandate for which is found in the National Library Act. Under the provisions of the Act and the National Library Book Deposit Regulations (1995), all publishers in Canada are required to send copies of their newly released publications to be added to this national permanent collection in order to preserve them for Canadians present and future.

Under the provisions of the amended Act, effective April 25, 1995, publishers are now required to deposit with the National Library two copies of all new publications, except those that fall under a category that is partially or totally exempted in the Regulations. The provision in the Act that used to permit the deposit of just one copy of a publication if its retail value exceeded \$50 has been eliminated. In its place there have been new exemption criteria added to the Regulations that are linked to the methods used to produce the publication and to the total number of copies produced. Publishers are no longer required to deposit publications that are essentially artistic productions, each copy of which is individually hand-crafted. The revised regulations also provide for the deposit of just one copy of a publication if the total number of copies produced is less than 101. If fewer than four copies are produced there is no requirement to deposit.

Legal deposit is the most important instrument the National Library has to help ensure the development of a comprehensive collection of Canadian publications. The collection serves as a valuable national resource documenting our heritage and preserving it for future generations. The collection also serves as the basis for the compilation of CANADIANA, Canada's national bibliography.

FROM: Susan Zuege 1995-11-30
W.63 N.14262 Washington Avenue, Apt. 88
Cedarburg, Wisconsin 53012-3016

Like you, I'm computerless. However, finances aren't the only reason that I don't own a computer. I simply feel more comfortable with a pen and paper, writing everything down in my own hand. I like crossing out words and phrases that don't work and scribbling all over the paper at odd angles and in different directions. I enjoy drawing arrows across the pages to indicate where I want to place certain lines and paragraphs. It's so much more active, fun, and creative for me to work in this manner instead of entering, deleting, and editing on a keyboard and screen.

C.F. Kennedy's report on Canzine was good. It sounds like it was a fun and friendly event. It must be great to be able to see so many zines at one time and to meet the people who create them.

FROM: Ken Faig Jr. 1995-12-3
2311 Swainwood Drive
Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741

To a certain extent, I think it is regrettable that the philosophy epitomized in sayings like "It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan" seems to be on the wane. It's erroneous to scorn those who make their living from writing, but I don't think it's erroneous to be proud of being an amateur writer or publisher, howsoever humble one's products might be. I am sure many an amateur writer has felt the same pride in seeing his work in print as Tolstoy felt when he held a copy of WAR AND PEACE. I don't think we should deny the amateur his pleasure despite the fact that he did not write WAR AND PEACE.

FROM: Chuck Welch
 Box 370
 Etna, New Hampshire 03750

1995-12-4

Great to have the ETERNAL NETWORK review in your zine. Thanks! I too was/am a philatelist. Thing is, philately and mail art have mixed through the relatively new medium of artistamps. Successful new forms that were spawned, nurtured, and evolved in the mailstream are many, and certainly zines are in that creative spawning. In the early 1970s there were numerous zine titles; many were dadazines. The term 'zines' originated with mail artists. I have well over 300 mail art zine titles from the early 1970s and 1980s, so I'm often perplexed by Gunderloy's claim to zine fame and his arrogance in ignoring the huge historical contribution mail art made to the evolution of the present zine scene.

Zines, artistamps, and artists' books all had their birth in mail art and Fluxus art. Now that artistamps are in galleries, the form and its 'mail artists' are distancing themselves from mail art. I could see the trend as early as 1983 when I discussed such issues with Canadian copier artist/performance artist Michael Bidner, who was the creator of the neologism 'artistamp'. Successful creative forms nearly always distance themselves from the underground over time. I think mail art as snail mail will calcify before the end of this decade. The future of mail art is e-mail art. Many artists hate the idea because e-mail isn't as tactile. They miss the point entirely; mail art is and always was about art as communication. Mail art is about process as concept and content. When it stops being that, it will be commodified.

You will find a lot of information about mail art interacting with the Internet in mail art's first website, The Electronic Museum of Mail Art. I'm sure you've found the new e-zine culture on various sites.

Check out my website; there's a lot more info about mail art. [Address as follows.]
<http://www.dartmouth.edu/pages/user/cjkid/EMMA>

FROM: Rodney Leighton
 R.R. 3
 Pugwash, Nova Scotia B0K 1L0

1995-11-28

Calling BROKEN PENCIL the Canadian version of FACTSHEET FIVE is more than a little ludicrous. It might be comparable to some of the very early editions that Mike Gunderloy did ...

[It's still in the learning phase. I've mentioned before that BROKEN PENCIL's insistence on listing a publisher and a 'creator', then, in most cases, saying "no known publisher" is annoying. But there is no other review-zine at Canadian newsagents to bring in new people, as opposed to the plentitude of zines preaching to the choir.]

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Chester Cuthbert, Harry Andruschak, Michael McKenny, Robert Lichtman, Ben Schilling, Buck Coulson, Joseph Major, Sheryl Birkhead, Murray Moore, Mark Strickert, Henry Welch, Karen Pender-Gunn, Ernest Mann, Terry Jeeves, Bridget Hardcastle, Brant Kresovich, Drop Pop Girl, John Held Jr., John Thiel