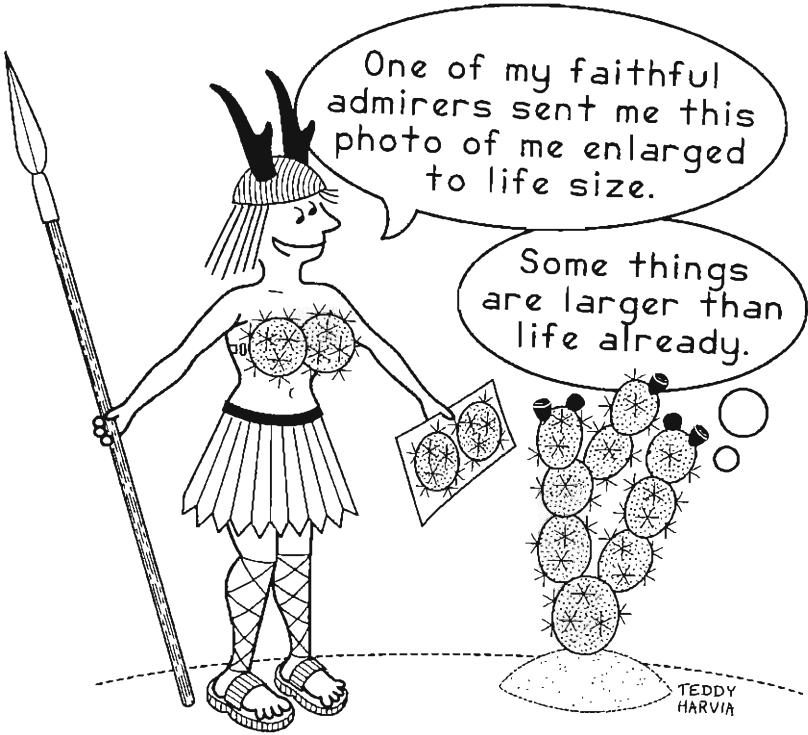
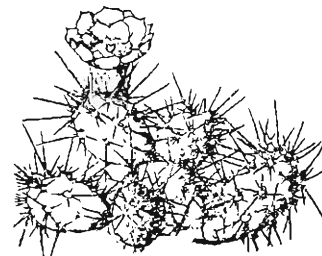


# OPUNTIA 41.1A



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[Editor's remarks  
in square brackets]

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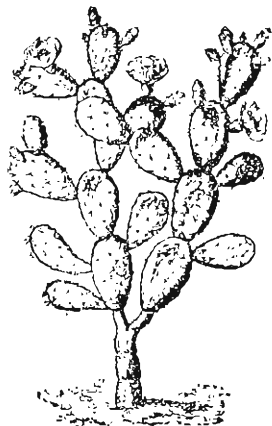
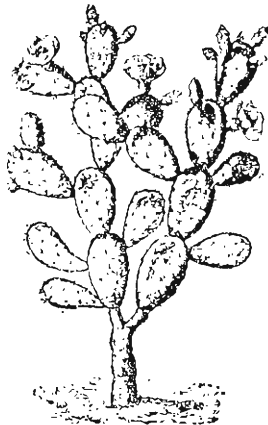
**ART CREDIT:** Cover art by Teddy Harvia, 701 Regency Drive, Hurst, Texas 76054-2307.

FROM: Harry Andruschak  
Box 5309  
Torrance, California 90510

1998-10-25

As far as indexes go, I remember quite well that there used to be an APA-I, and apa [amateur press association] of nothing but indexes. I have no idea if it is still around. I assume most indexes nowadays would be published and stored on the World Wide Web.

[I checked the 1997-98 NEW MOON DIRECTORY, a listing of hundreds of apas, and APA-I is indeed reported. It is an index of comics, though. Incidentally, for anyone who wants to get involved with apas, NEW MOON is excellent as a starting point. Available for US\$6 from Eric Watts, 346 Carpenter Drive #51, Atlanta, Georgia 30328-5030.]



FROM: Lloyd Penney 1998-11-01  
1706 - 24 Eva Road  
Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 2B2

Scott Crow's inquiries into the oral history of science fiction is a valid one. I know of the Science Fiction Oral History Association (SFOHA) in Ann Arbor, Michigan. I don't have an address for it but like everything else these days, it probably has a Website. I cannot remember who runs it but there is some kind of presentation at one of the three annual major Detroit conventions. I think SFOHA not only tapes, but transcribes in an effort to keep stories and anecdotes for future fans. I can only hope they will be interested in such a thing.

FROM: Janine Stinson 1998-11-05  
Box 430314  
Big Pine Key, Florida 33043-0314

Joseph Major wrote " ... the main SF magazines only publish established writers, as do the many original anthologies." F&SF, ASIMOV'S, and ANALOG do publish stories by new writers who are also fans of SF. It would seem that fandom still has a place in the SF magazines, though it may not look or sound like the fandom of several decades ago. As for the original anthologies, their editors also have bought stories from writers whose careers

are just starting. Maybe the newer writers don't go to conventions much but they're still SF fans, and that's where it all started, right?

FROM: Ned Brooks 1998-10-28  
4817 Dean Lane  
Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720

THE PAISLEY ROCKETEERS sounds like something worth getting. I didn't know anyone had ever seriously used aquajet rockets for flight, though we had one where I worked that would accelerate a heavy steel carriage to 300 mph for testing landing gear and tires. It was stopped by a surplus aircraft-carrier arresting gear. The water is in an enormous steel bottle and is pressurized with compressed air. The back of the carriage has a steel duct which turns the water jet 180 degrees.

FROM: Garth Spencer 1998-10-19  
Box 15335  
Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5B1

Fanzine fans have maintained a belief for decades that there are focal-point fanzines that those in the know read, or that most of them read. There is even a list on-line of mainstream fanzine focal-point zines.

FROM: Anna Makolkin  
99 Howar Street, #214  
Toronto, Ontario M4X 1K1

1998-09-12

A small-press fair in Toronto: Frankfurt Book Fair it was not. No Nobel Prize-winning celebrities, not even Canadian literary luminaries attended this semi-annual Toronto event. "Yes, we do have cultural events", admitted one Torontonionian, "but we do not have cultural life". Regrettably the small book fair on September 12, 1998, was another proof of culture being pushed aside and ignored by the majority who could consume it. On a hot September day, most of those who produce cultural objects and those who could afford to consume them left Toronto for a day of communion with nature. The Trinity-St. Paul's Church on Bloor Street provided an air-proof hall with sealed windows and coffee for 25 cents. Tables for books were \$10 each. Then everything took its own sale course, just like any other sale, depending upon the entrepreneurial spirit of the sellers. One book seller placed a lizard on his books, another displayed her tattooed tummy, and another reduced the price of his creation to 25 cents.

Most of the sellers were dressed in dark black or Toronto's favoured washed gray. Almost like grave diggers in Hamlet, or attending the funeral of a close relative who did not leave any inheritance. Around lunchtime, when the hall felt like a gas chamber, an expert on modern happiness, Mark Kingwell, with an

unhappy face, entered incognito, also in a washed gray. He inspected the book tables and quickly left the array of the literary flea market objects.

-4-

The prize for participation in this event was instant publication of poems, epigrams, and cartoons at the end of this tiring day. Nobody counted or published the profits made, if any. A book table, with a chance to display thoughts, images, feelings, or lack of any was a chance to demonstrate the sad state of our Canadian cultural affairs. On the other hand, considering that the overwhelming majority of the participants in this fair are not only on the outer fringe of the CanLit, but to a variable degree are far beyond it, even such a meager opportunity to disseminate their work is better than no opportunity at all.

FROM: Rodney Leighton  
R.R. 3

1998-10-29

Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia B0K 1V0

The term 'sheets' [for wrestling zines] comes from two sources. One is that early versions of pro wrestling zines were nothing more than one or two sheets of paper, sometimes stapled but more often not and thus became 'sheets'. The other version is that some of the pros in the business hated these newsletters and zines, and labeled them 'dirtsheets'. Which was, truthfully, a fairly accurate

assessment, especially for some of them. That was shortened to simply 'sheets'. It was considered an insult by some and is still, to some extent, considered an insult. Dave Meltzer, who does a weekly 16-page newszine, considers it a real insult to call the WRESTLING OBSERVER NEWSLETTER a sheet.

There is a real decline in wrestling zines. In the 1980s and very early 1990s there were a considerable number of them. About 1989 or so I counted 22 wrestling publications that I was reading and there were another dozen I knew of that I didn't get. These days I see about 5 and am aware of another 4 or 5, but that's about it.

FROM: Harry Warner Jr 1998-10-29  
423 Summit Avenue  
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Oral histories are fine as long as nobody puts absolute faith in them. Just talking about the past, instead of looking things up and verifying memories, is apt to be more entertaining but less accurate than histories written down on paper. If my suspicion is just, practically all history may be the oral type within a decade or two. I'm convinced that voices rather than keyboards will be the principal operating method for computers before too much longer, as the general public becomes less and less capable of typing and reading information for computer transmission.

[Although voice recognition software will be useful for the handicapped and in private offices, I don't believe it will become widespread. Receptionists in waiting rooms, dispatchers in noisy loading docks, and foremen such as myself who have labourers walking in and out of their offices will not want eavesdroppers. It is also easier to type while talking on the phone about something unrelated. Who wants to work in an open-plan office where numerous co-workers are talking continuously? I suspect voice recognition will fail against the desire of people to do their business privately.]

FROM: Karen Johnson 1998-11-29  
35 Mariana Avenue  
South Croydon, Victoria 3136, Australia

I thought about doing an index for *THE CAPTAIN'S LOG* to celebrate the 250th issue of that magazine but the more I thought about it, the more it seemed like an insurmountable task. Where do you start, and how do you know what to include and what to leave out?

[Start at the beginning. Include what you think is important and omit the trivia. But, as I have discovered while doing *SUBJECT INDEX TO CANADIAN ZINES*, the hardest part is setting up logical headings. My index is up to about 45 pages of 8-point type.

When I finish doing my collection, I will be surprised if it is under 100 pages. Insurmountable? I index one or two issues a day on the average, so in a year will do about 500 issues (allowing for holidays and weekend trips). The index of a thousand zines begins with a single page.]

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Doug Holland, Susan Poe, John Hertz, John Held Jr, Chester Cuthbert, Scott Crow, Buck Coulson, Joseph Major, Sheryl Birkhead, Henry Welch, William Breiding, Alison Scott (opuntia candy, it was delicious!)

**ZINE LISTINGS**

by Dale Speirs

FAPA #245 (Details from Robert Lichtman, Box 30, Glen Ellen, California 95442) The Fantasy Amateur Press Association is now in its 61st year. Membership is limited to 65 zinesters but there are usually one or two vacancies at any given moment, so don't be shy about hustling a letter of enquiry to Lichtman. This bundle contains 34 zines totalling 308 pages. As one might expect from such a multiplicity of authors, subjects cover everything under the sun, plus a bit of SF as well. An easy way to distribute your zine and get commentary from others. Apas are not only for zine distro, they are also for mailing comments, the feedback from the others about your work, just as you comment on theirs.

Membership in FAPA is US\$15, plus certain zine publishing qualifications.

ANGRY THOREAUAN #22 (US\$5 from Randall Tin-ear, Box 3478, Hollywood, California 90078) Slick cover with colour inside but still a rowdy punkzine at heart. Music and zine reviews as a matter of course, but the real reading is in the articles. There are diary entries on the underground life in Los Angeles. A ghostly interview with Albert Speer, who discusses the 400,000 seat Nuremberg Stadium in counterpoint to the Hollywood Bowl: "Goering was wide enough to be a hanger for his own Luftwaffe aircraft ... " [but wasn't the inspiration for the Hollywood Bowl]. Mistress MoniQue continues her series on life as a phone sex operator.

PLOKTA #12 (The Usual from Alison Scott, 42 Tower Hamlets Road, Walthamstow, London E17 4RH, England) When I saw the front cover, a photo of a Britfan gowned and flashing a leg, I thought to myself that she was the ugliest woman I've ever seen, even taking into account what some English femmefans look like. Fortunately for my peace of mind, the colophon advised that it was a male fan done up in drag as a laugh for an SF convention. And the other one on the next page was even uglier. Averting my eyes, I turned to the interior text and found easier going reading the convention reports, an analysis of Hong Kong martial-arts movies and why women should watch them (muscles), and the

results of a scavenger hunt that demonstrated there are almost as many 8" floppies still around as 8-track cartridges.

8-TRACK MIND #96 (US\$3 from Russ Forster, Box 14402, Chicago, Illinois 60614-0402) And a neat segue into the world of 8-track cartridges, now become collectibles. The usual letter column, but the content is in the transcribed radio show and interview about the world of 8-tracks.

BRAIN CELL #415 (Available for mail art from Ryosuke Cohen, 3-76-1-A-613, Yagumokitacho, Moriguchi-City, Osaka 570, Japan) Not a zine but a mail art assembling in the form of an 11x17 poster. Send in 100 stickers, rubber stamp, or some other type of mail art and Cohen will assemble them with others as a poster collage. Quite colourful, a rainbow of work from around the world.

FABLES OF IRISH FANDOM #1 (US\$5 or L2 from Ken Cheslin, 29 Kestrel Road, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 2PH, England) A reprint anthology of humorous stories of Irish SF fandom back in the 1950s. John Berry turns molehills into mountains in the best story-telling tradition, where facts are not allowed to interfere with the narrative. You don't have to be an SF fan to appreciate these stories about a small group of zinesters who knew how to make their own fun in those days.

BROKEN PENCIL #8 (\$4.95 at newsagents or from Box 203, Station P, Toronto, Ontario M5S 2S7) Canadian equivalent to FACTSHEET FIVE, with zine reviews arranged geographically and zine fair news. Some reprints of zine articles, but of uneven quality. One of them was a rant against the Canlitcrit crowd and about the subsidy troubles from the government culture vultures. I agreed with that last bit, as I have no sympathy for the small-press magazines that live and die by Canada Council grants. He who pays the piper, calls the tune. I consider BROKEN PENCIL to serve a useful purpose in introducing people to zines. Since it is distributed at newsagents, it can reach readers who had no idea that zines exist and people actually publish their own magazines without grants.

THE LAZY WRITER V2#2 (\$4.95 at newsagents or from Box 977, Station F, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2N9) A Canada Council subsidized small-press magazine, the Canadian equivalent of WRITERS' DIGEST. Reviewed here because it has an introductory article on amateur press associations (apas). Garbled, starting apa history with SF fans in the 1960s instead of ayjays in the 1800s, but it reaches writers who had no idea that apas exist and people can distro their zines without using commercial firms. The article makes the point that amateur writers wanting feedback on their stories and articles can get it in an apa.

AS THE CROW FLIES #1 (The Usual from Frank Denton, 14654 - 8 Avenue SW, Seattle Washington 98166-1953) Thin 4-page perzine with comments on India, and raising their 10-year-old granddaughter who came into their custody.

MORE THAN MEETS THE EAR #7 (The Usual from Carol and Ken Faig, 2311 Swainwood Drive, Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741) A 4-page apazine about Edith Minter, who published zines in the late 1800s/early 1900s. I've been thinking that she could be an inspiration to modern-day Riot Grrls if only they knew of her. It was more daring for a young woman to publish a zine and travel to amateur journalist conventions a century ago than it is for a young woman to be a punk rocker today.

THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE #3 (The Usual from Garth Spencer, Box 15335, Vancouver, British Columbia V6B 5B1) A random miscellany on his fannish life, fanzine reviews, and letters. Elsewhere in the on-going con-running discussion is a comparison of SF cons with computer and games conventions by Al Macintyre. He makes a good point about why computer and stamp shows tend to be better run; they are high-security, high-demand events for which malfeasance won't just be a matter of bad reviews in fanzines but lawsuits. Even an average local stamp show will have \$1,000,000 in stamp exhibits and dealer stock, and computer expositors expect more than a few electrical cords for their booths. Also conversational threads between various

people about zines, fanzines, and why things aren't what they used to be. One interesting comment in the thread was that punkzines et al are at about the stage where SF fanzines were in the 1950s.

ERG #143 (The Usual from Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, Yorkshire YO12 5RQ) Nostalgic looks at those small ads in the old pulp magazines, fighting one's way through the slush piles in editorial offices, aircars, and a diatribe against fox hunting. There is a speculative article on what would have happened had electric arc lights become the standard method of lighting before radios were invented. The broadband interference of arc lights would have meant that anyone experimenting with radio would have heard nothing but static, and further experiments into radio, television, and radar would have been stillborn.

BIBLIOZINE #63 (Mail art Usual from John Held Jr, Box 410837, San Francisco, California 94141) Single-sheet reviewzine that deals with one or two books in the avant-garde art world. This time around a consideration of a book on DIY culture in underground Britain (which sounded interesting enough that I special-ordered a copy from Chapters) and a biography of art critic Clement Greenberg.

OUT OF THE KAJE #2 (The Usual from Karen Johnson, 35 Mariana Avenue, South Croydon, Victoria 3136, Australia)



Perzine that ranges from collectibles to Calvin & Hobbes, plus letters and reviews. The main piece of this issue is what happened after a local gas processing plant blew up, leaving an urban population to freeze in the dark and providing a foreshadowing of what might happen with the Y2K problem.

LETTERSUB #19 (The Usual from Terry Hornsby, 66 Johns Avenue, Lofthouse, Wakefield WF3 3LU, England) Perzine about a rather dysfunctional family and job situation. Also letters, newspaper clippings, and reviews.

STARFIRE #9 (The Usual from William Breiding, Box 2322, Tucson, Arizona 85702) Abortion theology, a love lost in the midst of politics, how to plant a Plague Garden, and urban archaeology with marbles.

RE:ACTION #8 (US\$1 from Neoist Alliance, BM Senior, London WC1 3XX, England) Calendars are on everyone's minds lately as the millennium approaches, but the religious fanatics who had expected to dominate the field are having difficulty making themselves heard over the noise about Y2K. Meanwhile, this zine plugs yet another chronometric system, the Modern Khemetic Calendar, which puts us at year 399. From there the lead article goes to Scottish calendars and the history of New Year's Day. Elsewhere is much ado about nothing, which is to say anarchist internal feuds.

WRESTLING THEN AND NOW #105 (US\$2 from Evan Ginzburg, Box 640471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing, New York 11364) Comments from retired wrestlers about how things aren't what they used to be, autograph hunters, reminiscing by one of the pioneer Negro wrestlers, and an open letter by the ex-wife of an alcoholic wrestler.

TYPOGRAPUNX #Gg (The Usual from 15 Churchville Road, #115-163, Bel Air, Maryland 21814) A zine devoted to typography in the modern world. An on-going glossary of terms, an article on the use of white space that starts off with a blank page, and the annoyances of Website design which demonstrate that cut-and-paste is still easier with scissors and gluestick than HTML.

CRIFANAC #9 (The Usual from Ken Forman, 7215 Nordic Lights Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89119) SF fanzine fan news and notes, letters, fan funds, and thoughts on criticizing zines without discouraging neos.

THE KNARLEY KNEWS #72 (The Usual from Henry Welch, 1525 - 16 Avenue, Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2071) Genzine of SFish news, a tour of the Kellogg's cereal museum (not worth it), trip reports, and lots of letters.

FOSFAX #193 (The Usual from The Falls of the Ohio SF and Fantasy Association, Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233) Nominally a clubzine but de facto a freewheeling letterzine with 84 pages of microprint. This doorstep-sized zine has lots of book reviews, con reports, and commentary on events of the day, mostly American politics. The letters are not quite as repetitious as they used to be, as Bill and Monica have distracted loccers from the tired debates about abortion and gun control. The winsome twosome are quite suitable for an SF zine like FOSFAX, as the events seem like some implausible alternative history.

CHALLENGER #8 (The Usual from Guy Lillian, Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153-3092) Another doorstep zine, not microprint but thick enough at 108 pages. This is a genzine published by an SF fan who also earns his living as a lawyer. One of the articles deals with the decline and fall of a drug-addicted client who digs herself in deeper with each crime and finally gets put away for a long stretch. More cheerfully, there are convention reports, illustrated with well-screened photos, miscellaneous essays, and lengthy review and letter columns.

FLIPSIDE #115 (\$4.25 at newsagents or from Box 60790, Pasadena, California 91116) Slick-cover punkzine with colour throughout. Lots of band interviews and scene reports, music reviews, zine reviews, and columns. The analysis of the hows and whys of record collecting is fascinating.

BANANA WINGS #12 (The Usual from Claire Brialey, 26 Northampton Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 7HA, England) Starts off with the author's mother phoning him to ask if he could remember where his father's Smurfs might be, which query is used to illustrate thoughts on what happens to unwanted books. From there, on to articles about shopping, music's effects on emotions, infiltrating Fortean conventions, lengthy pieces discussing fanzine fandom with all the earnest seriousness of a graduate student, and lots of letters.

PROPER BOSKONIAN #44 (The Usual from New England SF Association, Box 809, Framingham, Massachusetts 01701) Clubzine with comic strips, a short story, letters, news and notes, and extended convention reports.

PROBE #105 (The Usual from Science Fiction South Africa, Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa) Nicely-produced clubzine in card cover, digest-size, with the best cover art of any zine. News and notes of SFdom in South Africa, reviews, and letters. The major portion of this zine is, as always, fiction.

FILE 770 #126 (US\$8 for five issues from Mike Glycer, 705 Valley View Avenue, Monrovia, California 91016) Newszine of SF fandom, with emphasis on WorldCons. Also covers some other SF cons, and the usual letters.

THE WORDSMITH ECLECTIC COLLECTOR #5 (US\$1 from Vince Nowell, Box 1258, Simi Valley, California 93062) Combination dealer catalogue and fanhistory magazine. Fandom nostalgia, accounts of WEIRD TALES and AMAZING magazines (which seem harder to kill than Star Trek sequels), a building in Los Angeles based on an SF novel, and the Roswell nonsense.

GRAMMAR Q AND A #13 (Stamps or IRCs from Misti and Scott Crow, Box 445, Clements, California 95227) A single-sheet zine that answers questions about the vexations of the English language. This time around the subjects are apostrophes (my pet peeve is writing "1800's" instead of "1800s" to indicate years), quotation marks, square brackets, shall versus will, and forfeit versus forfeited.

OBSCURE PUBLICATIONS #44 (US\$1 from Jim Romenesko, 45 Albert Street South, St. Paul, Minnesota 55105) Newszine about zinedom, this time with heavy emphasis on the end of FACTSHEET FIVE. Selected comments from other zine editors basically assure everyone all around that the death of FF is not the end of zinedom. But we knew that already. Also a report on the misfortunes of Jim Goad, arrested after a spat with his girlfriend. What would have been a minor incident ended up in him being detained in custody on serious charges after she 'helped' police by showing them his ANSWER ME! zines, which do not make pleasant reading. A warning to the wise: *Littera scripta manet* is

not just an obscure phrase those Latin pundits like to quote. Anyone who publishes material like Goad (or Mike Diana, to name another) would be wise to use a pseudonym and box number. You just never know when those words might come back to haunt you.

FIRST THURSDAY #21 (The Usual from Murray Moore, 2118 Russett Road, Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1C1) A single-sheet newszine of Toronto fandom's monthly pub meeting. Tommy Ferguson imported this idea from Britain, and even after he returned to Europe the pub meetings are still going on. This issue has local news and notes, including an obituary for John Millard, who died 1998-11-28 at age 82. He was Chairman of the 1973 WorldCon in Toronto, active in support of the Merrill SF library, and Honourary Chairman of the Toronto in '03 bid.

SUGAR NEEDLE #7 (The Usual from Phlox, 1174-2 Briarcliff, Atlanta, Georgia 30306) A zine devoted to confectionary addicts. This issue is on the theme of nuts, with many regional nut-based candies spotlighted. Handwritten because the computer printer was down, but quite readable.

BARMAID #4 (The Usual from Yvonne Rowse, Evergreen, Halls Farm Lane, Trimply, Worcestershire DY12 1NP) Perzine of a barmaid who reads SF, with a report on Novacon, music, and Nescafe formula.

INFILTRATION #11 (\$2 from Box 66069, Town Centre P.O., Pickering, Ontario L1V 6P7) An underground zine in the truest sense of the word, being a newszine for those who explore storm sewers. Like any hacker group they have slang terms (a ball buster is a sewer with a wide stream of water flowing down the middle, such that you have to straddle it with one foot on each dry side). This nicely-printed digest has accounts of exploring drains in three countries, with trips through the drains of Melbourne, Toronto, and Minneapolis. Like computer hackers, these concrete cavers use pseudonyms for protection from authorities, have get-togethers in the underground vaults, map the systems and trade info, use social engineering on Sewers Dept. staff to get maps, and enjoy the thrill of doing something illicit. A fascinating look at a hobby I never knew existed.

FIGHT THE WHITE (The Usual from Anthony Rayson, 27009 South Egyptian Trail, Monee, Illinois 60449) A chapbook of essays, speeches, and diatribes against racism in the USA. Much emphasis on community actions and groups working to eliminate racism.

AMUSING YOURSELF TO DEATH #13 (US\$4 from Ruel Gaviola, Box 91934, Santa Barbara, California 93190) Thick reviewzine with 50 pages of zine reviews. The reviews are a bit more than the capsule quickies that FACTSHEET FIVE was famous for. Gaviola seems to be smart enough to avoid the fatal

flaw which killed off F.F., that of trying to be a focal-point reviewzine for the entire Papernet. In addition to the reviews, there are interviews with zinesters (one of whom edits INFILTRATION) and coverage of zine fairs.

CONTRACT V10#6 (The Usual from John Mansfield, 516 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0G2) Newszine about SF conventions. Starts off with a cautionary tale on financing a WorldCon, written by a Baltimore con-runner. Also a suggested timeline for convention planning, news and notes (Trek cons aren't drawing like they used to), and a calendar of forthcoming cons.

BEER CAN REVIEW #1 (US\$1 from Box 1076, Georgetown, Kentucky 40324) Thin reviewzine in awkward folded poster format. Rates zines according to how many cans of beer it took to finish reading it.

IN SITIO #10 (US\$3 from Robert J. Verloop, Herengracht 94, 2312 LG Leiden, Netherlands) An account of riding a bus in Peshawar without the expected cliches, why football and elections are inter-related in Columbia, Scott Crow provides case stories from his time as a police/fire newspaper reporter, Arctic rivalry between scientists launching weather balloons, comics, and stories from around the world.

ZINE GUIDE #2 (US\$8 from Box 5467, Evanston, Illinois 60204) Slick cover, 190 pages, in the same format as FACTSHEET FIVE. With the death of F.F., zinesters who do not understand that the Papernet does not have a centre are casting about looking for a new focal point reviewzine. This one seems to be the logical successor. Thousands of zine listings (not reviews, as the contents of each zine issue are listed without editorial comment). Listed in alphabetical order by title, a much better system than attempting to categorize zines by subject like F.F. or by geographical region as does BROKEN PENCIL. While many zines are obviously on one subject, say SF or punk music, most defy categorization, and to jam one into a single category is to overlook that it may be of interest to zinesters in other categories. Geographical classification of zines defies the basic principle of the Papernet. Zines are international, not local. The alphabetical listing by ZINE GUIDE puts disassociated titles together and increases serendipity. This allows the reader to make connections that would otherwise not happen. ZINE GUIDE also has four keyword indexes by band (since most zines are musiczines), persons, subject/place, and record label, for those who are searching for a specific topic, which I suspect in 99% of the cases is to see if they were mentioned. There are listings of favourite zines, and zine centres of North America, both suspect given the distributed nature of zines. In the latter list, I am prepared to believe that Berkeley, California is the #1 zine centre, but Laval, Quebec, as #18 and Louisville, Kentucky, as #19?

## BOOKS WHAT I DONE READ

Compton Mackenzie's book WHISKY GALORE (Penguin, various editions) was first published in 1947 and remains in print as a favourite. It is a humorous novel about the inhabitants of Great Todday and Little Todday, a pair of islands off the Scottish coast. World War Two has afflicted the islanders with bureaucrats, shortages, and sons gone away to war. The worst of the war troubles has hit the islands badly, when the supply of whisky runs out. The action of the novel begins when a merchant ship strands on a reef off the islands. It is carrying 50,000 cases of best whisky for America, to help pay for the war. Smuggling is one of the traditional occupations of the islanders, along with livestock and peat cutting, so the whisky is soon salvaged and hidden about the two Toddays. What follows then is the bumbling mainland officials trying to stir up their bureaucratic superior officers before all the whisky vanishes. Mixed in are the romances of two young couples trying to get their marriages done in the face of obstinate parents and the war, in that order. An enjoyable period piece of both the war and the now-vanished way of life of the Gaelic islanders.

PROPHETS FOR THE END OF TIME by Marcos Donnelly (Baen 1998, ISBN 0-671-57775-1) is an End Times novel of mild humour and an interesting twist on the Book of Revelation.

God hasn't been seen since the 17th Century, and His angels rather miss him. They decide to bring him running by basically trashing His works and starting the Apocalypse early. The rules must be obeyed though, in order to bring in the End Times, and thus require two human prophets. The lucky stiffs are a Catholic evangelist Clayton Pinkes, and a management consultant Henri Elobert. As with any large organization, the Heavenly Host tend to deal with crises by re-organizing and instituting quality control. A number of archangels are working at cross-purposes with each other, and the mortal humans aren't entirely on side either. Pinkes is wracked by fear that God does not believe in him. Elobert has a brilliant intellect but is so sociopathic that some of the archangels are nervous near him. In the finale, the End Times are aborted, a Third Testament is written, and God send His apologies for absence. The plot avoids the easy ruts into which fantasies tend to fall. At several points in this novel, the reader expects close conformity to the events of Revelation, and is pleasantly surprised by new variations.

**THE CURSE OF THE GIANT HOGWEED** by Charlotte Macleod (Avon 1985) is a paperback I only picked up because I collect horticultural fiction, a genre not as small as you might think. Usually any fantasy or SF involving plants as a prime plot motivator does so by making them monsters, almost always ambulatory. This novel is no exception, but from a horticultural point of view is annoying because the hogweeds in question only

appear briefly at the beginning and end. The major part of the novel involves our agriculturist heros suddenly transported to an ancient Welsh kingdom where everyone speaks in bad dialect of no historical veracity. (Macleod, like most people, thinks that 'ye' was pronounced 'yee'; it is a corruption of the thorn, a letter that looked like a 'y' with a vertical bar and which stood for the 'th' sound.) After what is basically the plot of Connecticut Yankees in a Welsh king's court, the heros return whence they came, the hogweed disappears, and it was all just a dream. The book reads well but does not linger as a great piece of writing.

**OUT-TAKES** is a 1998 anthology of essays by Stewart Home and friends/enemies (L3.75 from Sabotage Editions, BM Senior, London WC1N 3XX, England). Some of the essays discuss the infamous Art Strike of 1990-93, now starting to recede far enough into history that essayists are venturing to analyze it. Others topics range back and forth between punk rock and anarchists. I have to wonder why any secret police ever worried about anarchists, when the latter have always been willing to take each other out of action at no expense to outsiders. Some good KTF reviews; in describing performance artists Istvan Kantor and Boris Nieslony, Home writes "*A hundred years ago, spending an afternoon watching the lunatics at the Bedlam madhouse was considered top class entertainment. Kantor and Nieslony are a poor substitute for this.*" The esoteric arts scene and anarchist

feuds of Europe would be boring but for Stewart Home's genial writing, akin to a serial killer's cheerful grin as he fillets his latest victim.

There have been dozens of philatelic novels and hundreds of short stories involving stamps or some other aspect of philately. Almost always these are mystery stories, where stamps are a valuable item stolen or wanted, or where they provide an important clue because a postmark or stamp variety identifies a forgery or date of a crime. The stories could just as well have used jewellery or antiquities in place of the stamps, therefore the stamps are not a vital element.

LONELY HEARTS is a different kind of philatelic novel. It is a romance in the usual mass-market paperback tradition (Love Spell Books 1998, ISBN 0-505-52256-X), written by Annie Kimberlin. The plot involves a young woman, Sylvie Taylor, who operates a home business as a rubber stamp artist, and as a hobby is involved in mail art. Her letter carrier Ray Novino is rather grumpy about this, as he has to deliver the weird stuff sent by mail artists to Sylvie. She falls for him not just figuratively, as her dog knocks over a ladder while she was up on the house roof, leaving her stranded up there. Ray happens to come along, delivering the latest batch of mail art for her, and helps her off the roof. Unfortunately she slips coming down, lands on top of Ray, and puts him on sick leave with a sprained ankle.

As he recuperates, she tries to make amends, starting with rubber stamp art and mail art, supplying home cooking and ankle remedies, and just being a nuisance. The course of true love never runs smooth, naturally. He likes plain white envelopes because the address is easy to read. She likes the unexpected and exotic, such as envelopes addressed with a rebus. Both have their own hurts from earlier life, which hold them back from commitment. His life is neat and orderly, everything sorted in order just like his daily load of letters. Her life is chaotic, and occasionally seems to have no logic to it, just like a batch of mail art.

The novel progresses over 300 pages before arriving at a satisfactory conclusion. Sylvie and Ray (and her poodle Jean-Luc) clash and separate, regret and reconcile, and finally reach togetherness. Ray always wanted to travel but could never afford it, being a foster child from the wrong side of the tracks. As a letter carrier he gets to see mail from around the world and experiences a vicarious form of travel. As a stamp collector, he can sort out stamps into his collection and muse on their points of origin. Sylvie has fun with her mail art, getting surprises from her friends around the world and expressing herself with rubber stamps. A fairly standard romance, but interesting for a stamp collector or mail artist to read because of the numerous postal references.

## WORLDCON-THOUGHTS, FROM THE PRAIRIES

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Oh, to be in Toronto,  
When the WorldCon's there,  
And whoever wakes in Toronto  
Sees, in 2003, well aware,  
That the lowest boughs and brushwood sheaf  
Round the convention centre are in full leaf,  
While the fans sing in the hotel bar,  
In Toronto, 2003!

That's the wise con-runner  
Who does each WorldCon thrice over  
Lest you should think he never could recapture  
The first fine Torcon rapture.

To support Toronto's bid to host the 2003 World Science Fiction Convention, send C\$20.03 or US\$15 to: Toronto in '03, Box 3, Station A, Toronto, Ontario, M5W 1A2.

