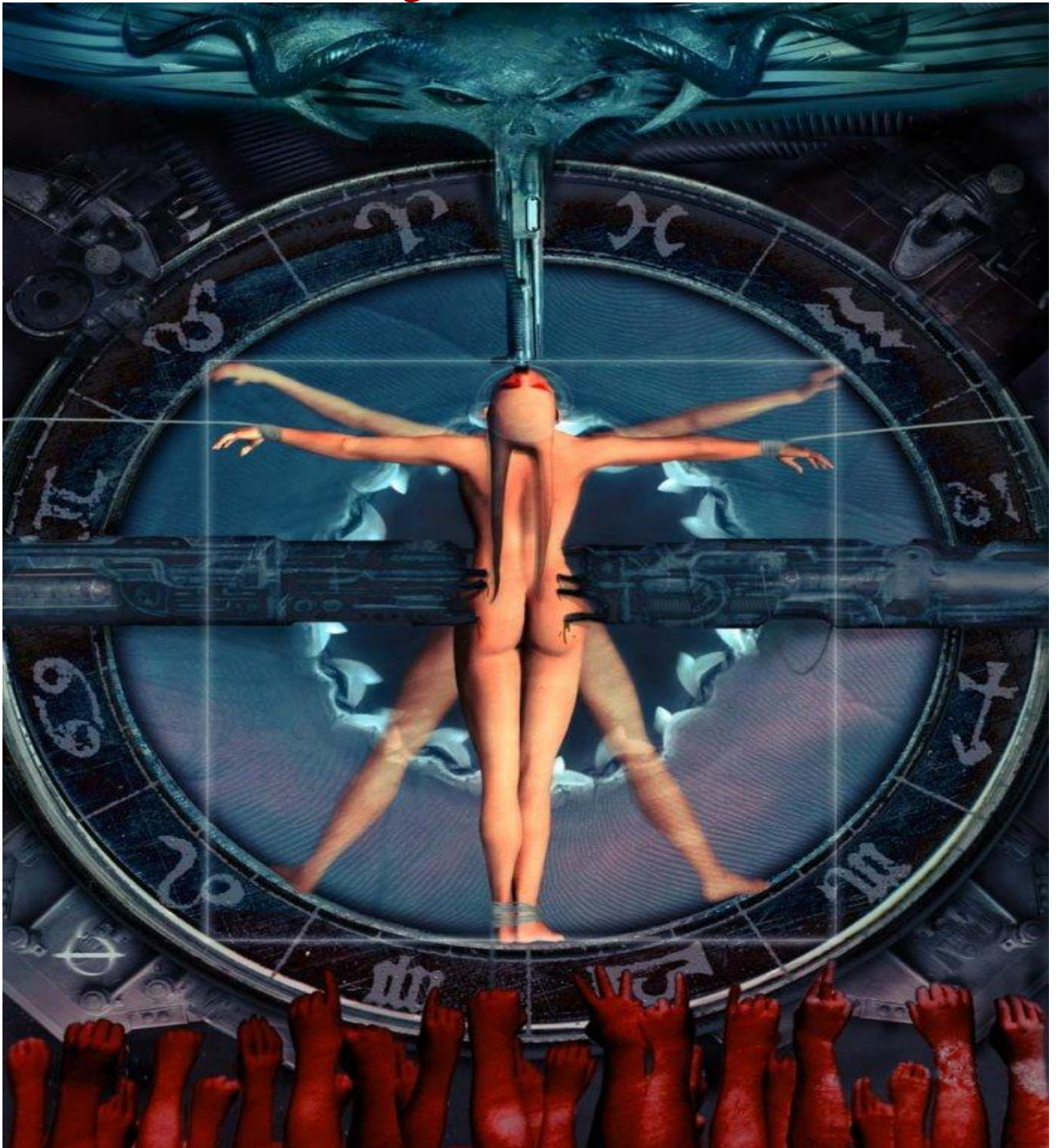


In A Prior Lifetime #9



March, 2006

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An e-zine from John Purcell
3744 Marielene Circle
College Station, TX
77845



cover art by Oliver Wetter

Send e-mails to: jpurcell54@earthlink.net

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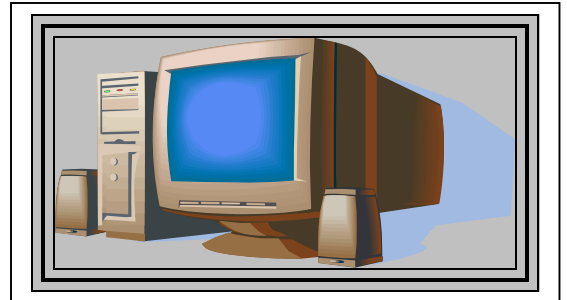
Bemused Natterings

Can somebody here please answer a burning question for me? Here it is:

When did my house go so crazy high tech?

Of course, this *is* a rhetorical question, but the point is that a few weeks ago after the Geek Squad left our house (the guy set us up with wireless Internet capability), it suddenly hit me - my family is the modern Stone Age 21st century family! Let me give you a run-down of the technology we have acquired so far this millennium to explain why I feel this way.

My wife and I just bought from Best Buy - on sale, with rebates, too, naturally - a new Compaq computer with 1 GB memory, 200 GB hard drive, DVD + R/W, multi-USB port, spiffy stereo speakers, and all sorts of other electronic doodads that I don't understand because our needs were too much for our old Gateway2000 ME to handle. That



one has now had its brain lobotomized and moved lock, stock, and disk drive to Daniel's room so that he can have it to play computer games on and do his off-line school work (no Internet for Dan, who is 10 years old). In his room, Daniel also has his own color television hooked up to cable, a VCR, a Nintendo 64 game system, a PS2, *and* a GameCube, besides a wealth of hand-held electronic games. He also has a portable CD player with headphones and my old portable two-cassette/radio player. It has gotten to the point that all Dan has to do is go into his room, close the door, and be invisible for days at a stretch, surfacing only to eat and use the bathroom. (Son? I have no son... You must be mistaken...)

The same thing literally goes for the girls. Now, Josie and Penny share the biggest bedroom in the house. Since Penny's boyfriend gave her a Compaq laptop computer for this Christmas just past, the IBM computer *she* got for Christmas, 2004 from my friend Joe, who works for IBM in Rochester, Minnesota, now goes to Josie, which, naturally, is set up with the Internet in their room (this has now been moved over onto Josie's desk). You follow all that, folks? She's 15 years old now, and can sort-of be trusted to use the Internet, supposedly for school work, but mostly for Livejournaling and My Face Book. (Ick! I don't approve of either site, and have set up an honor code system with her so that Valerie and I have access to monitor her time and content on them.) Penny, on the other hand, is usually accessible - that is, when she's not talking on the phone or via her laptop (Instant Messengering, naturally) to Eric when he's at school attending U.T.-Arlington. When he's back in town on weekends... Well, that's another installment for this section of this fanzine. Also in the girls' room are the following other electronics: a CD player, VCR/DVD player, telephone, Ipod, portable CD players (with headphones), plus each girl has her own cell phone (with *only* one

headphone/mike set to share), and other stuff I'm sure I am forgetting. I will have to take inventory someday soon for insurance purposes. God help us all should the power go out when one of them is in the shower. (Yeah, that's right. They have a full bathroom, too.)

As for us parental units, we each have our own cell phones, cable television in the living room and our bedroom, regular telephone by the computer station (separate lines: one for phone, one for Internet), a DVD player, VCR player, a 3-disc CD music system (with cassette and radio, too), plus a good old-fashioned, triple-decker stereo system with turntable, dual cassette player (capable of continuous play and recording from the turntable and radio), and AM/FM radio. This system has equalizer and balance controls, too. Oh, yes. We also have a regular phone in our bedroom. Gotta have that so we can listen in on Josie's phone calls and yell at her to get off the damn phone so we can call in drug prescriptions and maybe some of *OUR* friends!

For those of you keeping track, that's 4 computers (3 PC's, 1 laptop), all but one of which have Internet capability (and we're wireless, to boot), 2 printers (ours has scanner/fax capabilities, too), 4 rooms with cable television (there is another color television out in the garage that I haven't spliced into the main cable line yet), 3 rooms with regular telephones (2 of which are cordless), 4 cell phones, 3 VCR's, 2 DVD players, 3 stereo systems of some sort or other, 3 game systems, 3 portable CD players (with headsets), and five electric toothbrushes. Keep in mind that all of this does *not* take into consideration all of my guitars, amplifier + DOD effects box, 4-track recorder, and the assorted paraphernalia that goes with my music gear.

Have I forgotten anything? Probably. But my brain is beginning to hurt as I think about all this electronica we have in our house. And I am positive that there are families out there - could *you*, my gentle reader, be one of them? - who have even *more* electronica scattered throughout their homes. This is really beginning to frighten me the more I think about it.

But what I am *really* afraid of is when we get to the point of installing cable TV in the doghouse out back. *That* is when I know we're in deep shit. Literally.



DUST FROM THE ATTIC REDUX

This particular installment is not so much as another fannish reminiscence, but rather a brief series of corrections and additions to the previous installments about Lee Pelton.

In reviewing the installments of my tribute series of articles about my friend, the late Minneapolis fan Lee Pelton, I realized that I was woefully inconsistent in Lee's years of birth and death. The dates given in the final installment were correct: born December 19, 1949, died on December 29, 1994. He was 45 years old.

Additionally, Lee co-edited *Rune* with Carol Kennedy from 1978 to 1980. I had said '77-'79, which may be technically correct, but the tribute articles in *Rune 85* gave the other dates, so I will defer to those dates for consistency.

Also, I mentioned in one installment that I had worked under Steven Brust as an operations subdepartment head; that was for Minicon 20 in the year 1985. It was the following year, 1986, that I lived in Los Angeles, then moved back to Minneapolis in the Spring of 1987. I also need to add the name of Page Ringstrom to the film committee of Minicon 13 in 1978; she was not on the committee the following years.

What else? Lee was 24 at the time of Minicon 7, not 26, which I wrote in the 3rd issue; and John Stanley was involved in the production of "Where No Goon Has Gone Before". Again, my thanks go to the editors of *Rune 85* for publishing the memorials written by Carol Kennedy, Giovanna Fregni, Nate Bucklin, John Stanley, and Jeanne Mealy.

////////////////////////////////////

So what is forthcoming in future installments of this column? A couple are in the works:

First up, probably next issue, is a reprint from *This House #15* (Spring, 1989) entitled "On Writing Fanhistory" by Garth Spencer. I have procured his permission to edit and re-run it. Also, I have begun researching the history of the Texas A&M University sf club, Cepheid Variable; Gary Mattingly and Brad Foster have already indicated their willingness to help since they were members of the club that runs Aggiecon. With any kind of luck, I will get more info from club officials at the next convention, a mere 10 days from now. The history of Cepheid Variable will probably appear a few months down the road.

So that's the poop and nothing but the poop. And now for something a little bit different:

Con Report: The 59th Annual TCCTA Convention

Part of the job description when you're a college teacher is that there are certain hoops you must jump through to maintain your billing in the higher education circus. These hoops include the old "publish or perish" requirement; professional development (take additional coursework); attend conferences and symposiums; and present at one of these conferences every year or two. Well, so far I'm doing pretty well with these: I am now a published professional in my field (co-authored an article in the *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics* and wrote a chapter for an e-book, *Rethinking the American High School*), continually attend workshops to stay current on developments, and attend conferences. I haven't presented a paper yet, but that's forthcoming in the next year. All of this, naturally, goes on my Vita, which means future college and university employers will cream in their pants over this info. They literally love this stuff. It's all politics, but that's not what I'm on about here.

Recently - last month, to be exact - I had the pleasure to attend the 59th annual Texas Community College Teacher's Association Convention, this year held at the Westin Galleria Hotel in Houston, a mere hour and a half drive away from home. Since I am now a card-carrying member of the association, my employer, Blinn College, paid for my registration, and gave me an expense report so that I would be reimbursed for meals and travel. This, I like. Combined, Blinn paid \$132.92 for these things. The least I can do in return is write up a con report. Not that *they'll* ever see it, but hey - I'm out of practice.

What really made me feel important was when the lady at the registration booth asked for my name, pulled out my card, and said, "Yes, Mr. Purcell. Your school has paid for your registration. Here's your badge and information packet. Have a great weekend." Yeah, this was pretty cool.



The Westin Galleria Hotel, Houston, Texas

Since I am sure none of you folks will really be interested in the panels I attended, I won't bore you with all of the sordid details. Suffice to say that I found them interesting - when you're paid to go to one of these conferences, you make sure you take in what's going on in your particular field - especially the late Friday morning presentation and discussion, "It Takes a Campus to Teach a Writer" by Dr. Elaine P. Maimon from the University of Alaska, Anchorage. She made some very

important observations, such as writing - rhetorical argument, to be exact - requires a cross-disciplinary approach in order to hit on student interests and strengths. I have long felt this way, and it was reaffirming to hear the invited guest speaker saying these things. Dr. Maimon led an interesting Q&A discussion after her presentation. After introducing myself to her afterwards - gotta schmooze at these things, don'tcha know - I went to lunch.

The Galleria in Downtown Houston, Texas, is a pretty cool place to wander. If you have never been there before (like me), I recommend taking a wander sometime if you are ever in Houston. Besides the two-towered hotel (the Westin Galleria and Westin Oaks) at one end of the massive enclosed shopping mall, the layout of the Galleria is like a gigantic glass enclosed T-intersection with a couple hundred shops lining the corridors. The Galleria is not as large as the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, but it's still a good size. In the main hall is a 45-foot high fountain/waterfall from which water squirted down from the ceiling; not a steady stream like most waterfalls, it really did squirt water at two second intervals, causing jets of water to splash in the pool on the bottom level of the fountain. Pretty cool. There is also an ice skating rink in the Galleria, but I didn't go there.



If you're hungry, there are lots of places to eat and drink, just don't do so at the Daily Grill unless you have plenty of cash. It is a tad pricey. I ate lunch there on Friday, and for \$9.95 I did get a sizeable French dip sandwich with a big pile of shoestring fries, but I limited myself to one Budweiser since that one beer cost a whopping \$4!

No thanks, but I can buy a whole 12-pack of Busch or Milwaukee's Best for \$4 back home. Still, it was a tasty sandwich and filled me up.

The Friday afternoon session was notable mostly for the "huckster room", where dozens of publishers and education-related businesses hawked their wares. Wandering through gave me a good feel of some of the latest publishing trends - new rhetorical readers are wanted - and assessment and tracking software is really getting pretty damn cool. I saw a demonstration by one company representative who showed me how to use a really neat variation of WebCT to give, receive, track, comment on, and evaluate writing assignments that is quite beyond the current WebCT Vista program being used at Texas A&M University and Blinn College. Pretty cool stuff. One publisher, Norton, will be sending me a spec copy of their newest rhetorical reader to my office at Blinn. Ghosh whow! Free books! Man, I *really* like going to these things!

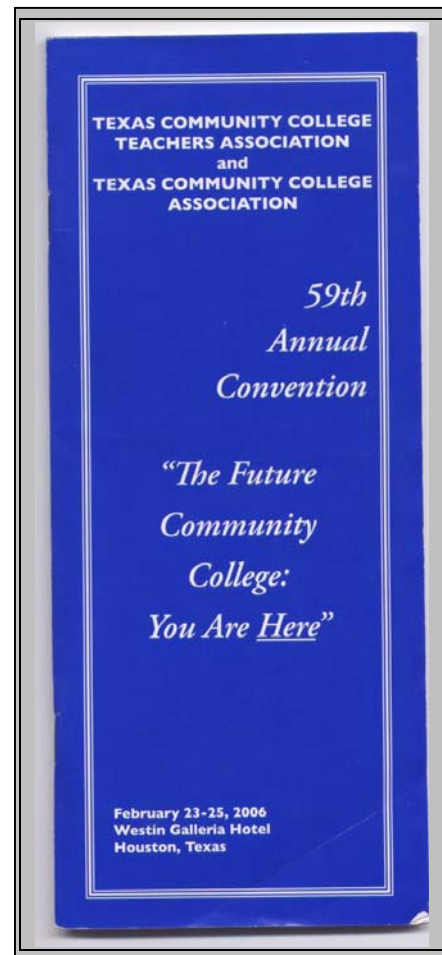
The drive home Friday was uneventful except for dealing with early rush hour traffic; I still made good time. I had decided to bypass the raffle, cash bar and live entertainment for simply getting home. Chances are the "live entertainment" was some sort of piano lounge act. No thanks. Then on Saturday morning I drove back down in a steady drizzle - sometimes going in and out of a downpour (which is typical in this part of Texas) - without any problems, and got a great, close up parking spot in the garage next to the hotel side of the mall.

Of the two days that I attended, Saturday morning was probably the more fannish. After the 9:15 panel, I grabbed a cup of coffee and wandered off towards where the 10:45 panel was to be held, discovering that the conference room one over to the right was a "Stress Relief" seminar. Translation: massage therapy. While listening to one therapist describing how you can stretch and do certain exercises while sitting at your desk, another therapist had a table set up where you could get a back and neck rub. Not only that, but just outside the room was a TV-VCR cart showing *naked people* (towel draped, of course) getting "stress relief" on video! Yep - full body massage. It gave me the chance to partake of a long-term con tradition of mine: people watching. It was very amusing to watch the reactions of stodgy old-fart teachers coming out of their maximum sercon panels, glancing over at the screen, and then reacting with a "Whoa!" type of expression on their faces. Most of them shook their heads, only a couple smiled, but none of them stopped to watch for longer than three seconds. I mean, come on, nothing was being shown, but some of the facial reactions were choice. I enjoyed the floor show while waiting for my next panel.

Figuring I'd have some slow time Saturday, I had downloaded and printed out a hard copy of Earl Kemp's *el* #24 to read. It was an interesting dichotomy to read that reprint of rich brown's story "Two of a Kind" while listening to Dr. Glenn talking about the challenges we face in our class rooms, such as students coming from troubled, single parent homes beset with violence. There I was, nodding in agreement at appropriate times, then went back to reading rich's story, which had lines like, "Make her suck his cock!" Good panel.

Once the Saturday morning session was done, the conference was over, so I wandered the mall once more, stopping in at Hot Topic, one of my all-time favorite stores. They always have the coolest stuff in there. Since I was in a navy pin-stripe suit, blue denim shirt, and a red power tie, I looked a little out of place, but I noticed that lovely young ladies were eye-balling me as I wandered the mall. Which just goes to prove that ZZ Top is right: "every girl goes crazy 'bout a sharp-dressed man."

And so it ended. Once I finished up a quick lunch at Shanghai Joe's, a very reasonably priced and tasty Chinese fast food joint, I headed homeward. Overall, it was worth the jaunt down the highway to Houston, and I considered the weekend a warm-up to my next big event, Aggiecon 37 coming up March 23 to 26, 2006. I am really looking forward to it for two reasons: first, it's the first real sf con I've bought membership into since Minicon 27 (Easter, 1992), and it's also right after my birthday (March 22); but secondly, and most importantly, Steven Brust is the writer guest of honor. Yeah. An old friend of mine from Minn-stf whom I haven't seen in fourteen years is the pro GoH. Can't wait to write up *that* con report.



Fanzine reviews

Those of us in fanzine fandom have lately been discussing the graying of fandom. While this is true - a sad fact reflected in the growth of what Peter Sullivan labeled "obitfandom" in a recent lettercolumn of *Vegas Fandom Weekly* - there are a handful of new fans who are pubbing and loccing zines, thereby keeping The Cause alive and well. Peter is one of them; he's become a staple in the letter columns of numerous fanzines. Another letterhack has also emerged as a fan publishing giant, and that is the Bay Area's Chris Garcia.

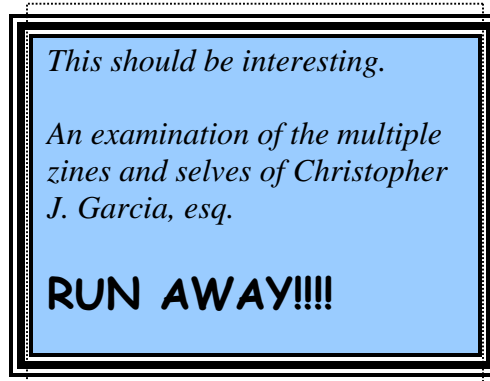
So why do Arnie Katz and I label Chris a "fan publishing giant," a term usually reserved for the long-term efforts of fan editors, writers, and publishers? Well, it's very simple: Chris is friggin' *Prolific*. Note the capital "P" there.

See this image? This is *exactly* how many of us envision Chris Garcia. Frank Wu has done a wonderful job here. Plus, this is a sterling example of the kind of humor that Chris has. But the main thing is, this guy has literally cranked out dozens of zines over



the last year. His zines include *The Drink Tank* (69 issues and counting), *Claim s Department* (7 issues), various special zines, plus he co-edits *Science Fiction/San Francisco*, writes a column for David Burton's *Catchpenny Gazette*, reviews movies and books for other zines, is a member of FAPA, and has just recently been named the President of the N3F. This is one busy guy. Add into all this the piles of locs he writes, and is there any question why some of us Old Pharts wonder if he has cloned himself 15 times over?

The main point I want to make here is that Chris Garcia has a definite love and enthusiasm for the fanzine genre. One look at one of his zines - the latest *Drink Tank* (#69) for example - reveals a lot of his character.



The contents of the 69th issue are all about sex. (Well, what did you expect from a zine that reaches that particular number?) Most of the pieces are short, with a two-column format, large font size and style, very cleanly laid out with photographs and assorted artwork gathered from the Internet and submissions. It's a good zine, a fun one to read a hard copy of while sitting in the bathroom. Previous theme issues of *Drink Tank* have included Inventions and silent movies, to say nothing of his "100" issue; the 64th issue (100 in base 8) was composed of pieces of exactly 100 words apiece. He wanted to have an even hundred of these pieces, but fell short of the mark. Even so, there was a lot of variety in topic covered therein.

Chris has surrounded himself with a *Drink Tank* coterie that includes Judith and SaBean Morel, M Lloyd, Mike Swan, Frank Wu, all of whom contribute to the style and attitude of the zine. Definitely fun stuff, and all of this leaves ample room and subject matter for a collection of loc writers that usually includes Eric Mayer, Lloyd Penney, myself, and others who join the fray from time to time. The end result is an always interesting and lively zine.

His prolific nature resulted in Chris receiving 10 votes in last year's Fan Hugo balloting. I am not surprised; if you write and pub a lot, your name is out there for people to remember when it comes time to nominate and vote. Besides, I do like his chatty style. The fact that he also works at a most cool place, the computer museum in San Jose (I believe; correct me if I'm wrong, Chris) gives him the time to write and pub zines at a rapid fire pace. Ghu only knows how much he'd crank out if Chris was unemployed.

Chris Garcia has made a name for himself in fandom in a relatively short time. The fact that he is also young - 32(?) years old - is a good sign for fanzine fandom, a subgroup of Fandom that is graying around its collective receding margins. I really enjoy Chris's enthusiasm, infectious joy in writing, and his creative spellings and grammatical structures are all part of his persona. If you haven't checked out the plethora of Garcia zines on efanazines.com, I recommend you do so now. You won't be disappointed.



Frank Michael Lewecke © 2000

From the Hinterlands

Let's get right into things with a much needed wrap-up to my lengthy, yet fannish, memorial to Lee Pelton, concluded in the last issue.

R Lorraine Tutihasi writes:

Dear John,

Here's what I know about what happened to Lee. He apparently caught AIDS during some medical procedure involving a blood transfusion. It took the medical establishment so long to diagnose him that it was too late to treat him. (Remember this was before the various AIDS cocktails that are available today.) Lee was hopping mad about this. Towards the end, he was so angry that he was speaking to very few people. By the time I found out what had happened, he refused to speak to me when I phoned him at the hospital.

--

Lorraine Tutihasi

You know, I can imagine Lee being supremely ticked off at that. It would have been right in character. Thank you, Lorraine for sharing this information with me and my readers.

From across the Big Pond came the following fine electronic epistle from one of Brit-fandom's brightest new stars...

Peter Sullivan writes:

Hmm. Is your "I'm an English teacher, not a mechanic" either a conscious or an unconscious borrowing of Dr. McCoy's "I'm a doctor, not a..." which had many variants during the original series of Star Trek? My personal favourite was "I'm a doctor, not an escalator!" Proving that absolutely everything is on the internet these days, I even managed to find a semi-definitive list of them at:

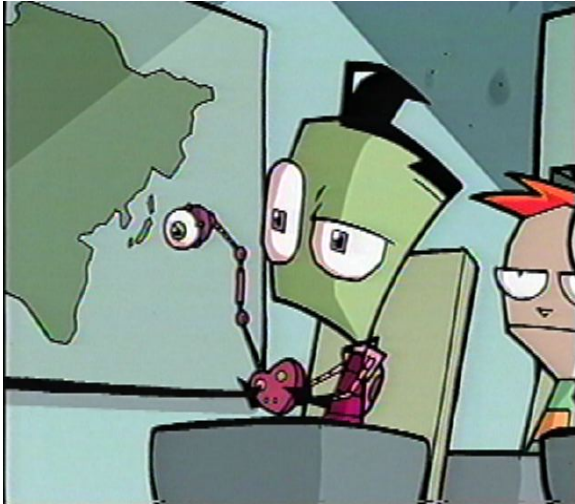
http://memory-alpha.org/en/wiki/I'm_a_doctor,_not_a...



Interesting to read your thoughts on Post-Modernism. Permit me to share a related paradigm with you. (Does that sound suitably academic?) In health (and, for all I know, other professional disciplines), people talk about good nurses, good doctors or good whatever being "Reflective Practitioners." In that they don't just "do," they reflect on what they have done, try to put it into a conceptual framework, think about how they could improve it for the future, and so on. To me, science fiction fans are a classic example of "Reflective Practitioner" thinking taken to, or even arguably beyond, the limit. We write fanzeen articles. We also write fanzeen articles about why we write fanzeen articles. I've not yet seen an article about why we write articles about writing fanzeen articles, but I'm sure there are some out there.

If you want to look at this negatively, you can say that we are all so full of analysing our own self-importance that we can easily fall into the trap you mention, of going all serconnish about ourselves. But, from the

positive point of view, the dialogue that we enter into with SF writers also exists amongst ourselves as well. It's like being at a 24/7/365 version of one of those killer tutorial groups, where whenever anyone says anything, someone else (originally just the tutorial leader, but eventually everyone's at it) will say "What do you mean by that?" Maybe that's what's really meant by FIAWOL...



The idea of doing a supplement to the main zeen has been done several times in postal games fandom. Usually it happened that an editor would find they had too many games, and not enough time to write the non-games, general chat, portion of the zeen. So the games would get farmed out to their own subsidiary publication, and the non-games chat would stay in the main zeen. Which would typically then get slower and slower, until eventually disappearing altogether.

The main exception to this was one zeen that did it the other way, and kept the games in the main zeen, with the chat in the subsidiary publication - which, in another nod to *Star Trek*, was called Captain's Log Supplemental.

Hey, I claim at the very least co-creator credit for the phrase "Lloyd Penney-style loc"! ***And so you shall. It doesn't bother me at all to spread the wealth --- or is that to shoulder the blame?***

Interesting to see Lloyd mention that "Sometimes, I'm the only written response those zeens get." Probably a classic example of this is San Fransisco/Science Fiction, where he and I seem to have developed by accident almost an informal rota as to who gets to be the sole LoC each issue. To be fair, I suspect that the editors of SF/SF get much of their feedback and egoboo from in-person communication, which isn't really an option for either Lloyd (Toronto) or me (England).

I've not really "done" sports since leaving school, where I was a pretty abysmal field hockey player. Actually, I was pretty abysmal at pretty much any sport you care to name, but at least in field hockey I had a good time at being abysmal. I have to say that, whilst there may not be quite as many fights as in ice hockey, it can still be a fairly vicious sport. People don't realise that the hockey scenes in the St. Trinian's films were meant to be documentaries, not comedy.

--
Peter Sullivan

Peter, it is really kind of funny to watch my spell-checker go completely bonkers over your British spelling of the English language. But I'll gladly put up with that so long as you write locs. Thank you!

Eric Mayer writes:

As an English major myself I am also no handyman. I did once replace my car's headlight. Got a great view of powerlines and the upper branches of trees while driving down the road afterwards too. Much better than I ever did before. I also replaced a light switch without electrocuting myself or burning the house down. However, I can talk about fandom.

Interesting piece on Fandom and post-modernism. Although I don't know anything about post-modernism, the article did start a few neurons parking. For one thing, I don't like the term Core Fandom. Partly it's just my nature -- as soon as someone proposes a group, I automatically see myself on the outside. (And I do think people often invent groups as much to exclude people as to

include them) Aside from that, the only definitions I've ever seen for "core fandom" or "fanzine fandom" or "faanish fandom" or whatever you want to call it invariably boil down to circumlocutions for "Me and my friends/people of whom I approve" which, of course, doesn't constitute a definition. Such "definitions" invariably contain value judgments misidentified as objective criteria. Then too, "Core Fandom" is just ugly sounding.

The other aspect of your discussion which elicits a comment is Heinlein's oft mentioned labelling of fans as time-binders, which has always struck me as nonsense. I read Korzybski -- Manhood of Humanity and Science and Sanity -- and found his writing clumsy, clunky, and alternately compelling and crankish. He had a lot of terrific insights, particularly as regards the way we mess ourselves up by not recognizing our need to abstract everything around us in order to function. His ideas about time-binding are not (I think) as original or interesting, but are very true. However, I didn't understand them as anything that that could meaningfully be applied to sf fans.

Time-binding refers not to individual propensities but to an innate human ability that animals don't possess. So to say that fans are time-binders means nothing. All humans are time-binders.

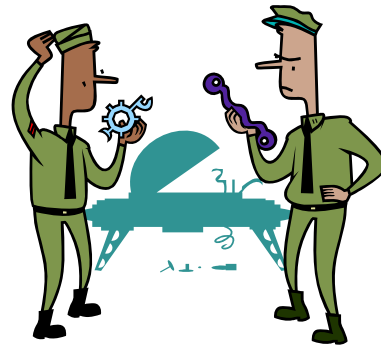
What I thought Korzybski meant was that since humans can record what they learn, each generation doesn't start from scratch. Animals have to rely on whatever instincts they come equipped with and what they can learn during their own brief lives, while humans accumulate their learning and knowledge century after century. We have at our disposal not just what we can learn in our lifetimes but what all men have learned in all the lifetimes ever lived.

But the point of time-binding is how it allows humans to advance. You don't have to reinvent the wheel. You've already got the wheel when you arrive, so you can start right in on the internal combustion engine. Time-binding is about how the accumulation of knowledge from the past allows us to move into the future. It isn't about having a particular interest in the past, or having a

desire to accumulate artifacts or a familiarity with history or even a respect for it.

So far as some fans like to dwell on fanhistory or emulate what fans have done in the past, or judge current fandom and fan works by what was done in the past, that is exactly the opposite of what Korzybski had in mind. Time-binders are not spending all their time gazing down at the good old days, they are up on the shoulders of the good old days climbing toward the future.

Mind you, what fandom would be evolving toward, I can't say. It's not some kind of civilization. Really, the whole concept of time-binding, as applied to fandom, doesn't seem to fit and I've always found it puzzling that Heinlein said that.



Great Ghu! You've got me pontificating on Fandom! Argghhh! ***Gotcha! And I am glad you are because you make so many good points. In terms of educational theory, fans scaffold: we build upon prior experience and knowledge. Maybe this is the essence of time-binding.***

About your series on Lee Pelton...why don't you compile the articles, and maybe add photos or comments, and put it up on, what is it, Fandom.org? It'd be a permanent tribute then. ***I don't think I will do this, since I consider my zine to be a fitting place for this series to repose.***

As for frequent zines...I have yet to figure out the difference between a very frequent small fanzine and a blog, except that the blog is more convenient, more in line with internet use, but -- alas -- a big alas (and maybe even an alack) -- not really fandom.

And, as you point out, one of the great things about fans is how they'll take an interest in anything so long as the stuff is stuck in something the editor/writer calls a fanzine!

Which is probably a whole other topic -- defining a group by its lack of definition as to what the group is "about."

--
Eric

I think fanzine fans relish being a subset all to themselves, but yet enjoy "fandom at large" at the same time. We are about ourselves, and continually redefine ourselves in the process. It's not that we lack a definition of who and what we are, it is just that fanzine fandom at this moment is undergoing an important change-over in its means of communication, so we're mulling it over..

And with that in mind, here's a loc from one of the Next Generation of fanzine fandom.

Chris Garcia writes:

Deconstructionist theory would say that this LoC is entirely inappropriate, but we'll over look that just this time.

I am not handy, though I often come up with idiotic solutions that somehow pan out. Case in point, the dripping faucet at Gen's place. It would drip, and at time slowly run, until the day I rubberbanded it to the neck of the faucet itself and that stopped it. That's as handy as I get.

I've lost a couple of good friends to AIDS, though no one for almost a decade. My first girlfriend was one of them, and that was a tough pill to swallow. She was a wonderful girl, I think she barely made it to 20. Of course, like most women I've been involved with, she spent a portion of her life as a junkie and probably contracted it sometime around the age of 13. Sadly, I only saw her twice in the final three years of her life. She had almost as good an attitude as my Dad does now. "Hey Chris, welcome to my Death Bed." She greeted me with the last time I saw her. She passed away in 1992. I'd like

to think that she was the dark side of my pal SaBean. The two of them had very similar paths, but SaBean has been both lucky and protected. ***I am glad to hear this about SaBean; her writings in Drink Tank help me come to understand her special place in your life.***

I'm certainly a post-modernist. I'm so self-referential that I can't write in the third person without feeling a sense of irony. I also ooze pastiche and positively vomit deflective theory. Of course, I do talk about science fiction in my fanzine, though not as often as I think I should. Hmmm...maybe I'll do a science fiction issue, or to be more post-modern a science fiction fanzine about science fiction fanzines. Nah, that'll never play...

You mention *el*, my favourite fanzine that regularly appears. Literally a few minutes before IAPL was posted, the newest *el* was posted, and a couple of hours later, I had my LoC off to Earl. Great stuff, especially for the articles this issue about Evan Hunter.

Another really strong issue John, and I can't wait to see *And Furthermore*.... I might start doing a commentary zine on *The Drink Tank* called *The Think Bank*, but at the rate I do things, it would have to come out every fifteen minutes.

Chris

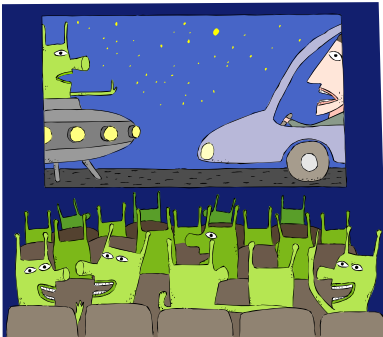
As if all of us in fanzine fandom aren't already falling way behind in loccing your zines. For some odd reason, I have a very bad feeling about this...

Here's a new voice to my loccol, but a most welcome addition.

Ted White writes:

My job here at Beta Court Reporting is such that work comes in spurts, and right now I have nothing to do, so I spend my time reading the fanzines on efanzines. I've read earlier issues of IN A PRIOR LIFETIME, and I even wrote a brief LoC on one of them, but I wrote it as I am this one, in Word at work,

to put on a floppy and bring home to post to you, and my earlier LoC had some sort of file error which resulted in my being unable to open the file from the floppy -- either at home or back here at work. So that one never made it to you. No loss; it was short and so forgettable that I've totally forgotten it. Onwards to #8:



One of the things I'm noticing about many of the fanzines or efanzines is that they seem to draw upon a common pool of LoCcers, centering around Lloyd Penney, Chris Garcia and Eric Mayer. It doesn't seem to matter which fanzine I'm reading, there those three are, nattering on about their daily lives. Of the three, Eric writes the best and Chris has the most enthusiasm. I've never found very much of interest in Lloyd's LoCs, but he certainly does pound them out.

I envy people with the latest power tools, but mine are old and well-used: a (corded) drill and a circular saw. I've done a lot of carpentry over the years (extensive house remodeling, lotsa shelves), and those tools plus a hammer, a carpenter's square and a tape measure pretty much do the job. I've replaced toilets and done a limited amount of plumbing, but I draw the line at anything that requires a blowtorch. Back when I was an Aspiring Author and living in New York City I supported myself "between checks" by doing carpentry and light remodeling. My biggest job was a psychiatrist's office on Park Avenue in Manhattan. I also built custom shelving for the apartments of Terry Carr, Andy Porter and Arnie Katz.

I can't comment on your memories of Lee Pelton. There are several reasons. The

primary reason is that I was not fortunate enough to know Lee, and thus have no opinions of my own or anything I can add. Beyond that, this is an intensely personal topic and one which does not lend itself to critical comments of any sort. But I'm glad you wrote it. I was enlightened and I hope you feel better for having written it. **Yes, I do feel better. This is something that I have been meaning to do for many years, and it feels good to get it out of my system.**

I notice that you've changed the proportions of the pulp covers you reprinted, making them taller and narrower. Why? **I'm a rookie at this copy/paste thing. Slap the cuffs on, I'm guilty, GUILTY!**

Your piece on post-modernism seems to promise more than it delivers. What, exactly, are you actually saying here? That those of us in "core fandom" are "timebinders"? Aside from the fresh vocabulary in which you state this, is this in any respect a new thought?

For as long as I've been a fan (55 years!) there has been this dichotomy between those fans who were timebinders and those who were not. For me it's a no-brainer. From the moment I discovered fandom I was fascinated by the events which had preceded that moment. To me it was like joining this huge extended family and listening to all the stories the older fans were telling. I sat literally at Bob Tucker's feet and listened to his stories about '30s and '40s fandom. By the time I met Art Widner (returned to fandom after decades of gafiation) I actually knew the backgrounds for the stories he told, although they mostly took place when I was literally a toddler -- or before I was born. I attend Art's slideshows with much pleasure.

On the other hand, there are those fans for whom "fanhistory" is an oxymoron, and whose interest in fandom does not extend one month prior to the time they found it. Unfortunately, once you go beyond "core fandom," this is the predominant attitude.

I am firmly of the belief that Core Fandom takes great delight in reviewing, knowing, and relating its own history. It is unfortunate, as you say, that there are indeed some fans whose sole knowledge of their "fandom" is only of recent

vintage. In my mind, the old fan writing material is just as much fun as the new fan writing material. Ghu forgive us for the media fans who view fanzine fandom as irrelevant since it has little or nothing to do with Star Wars, Star Trek, Stargate: SG, Atlantis, Firefly, or whatever's the hit du jour.

I'm delighted to see you reviewing fanzines. I'd like to see more of this -- of fanzines talking about other fanzines. It's part of what creates the sense of community in fanzines. ***I totally agree. This is why I'm doing zine reviews.***

In talking about the progression in the methods used to duplicate and disseminate fanzines, though, I think you give short shrift to those "twilltone rags." I *liked* twilltone fanzines. I liked their warmth, informality of presentation, and *fannishness*. And I don't think that the use of twilltone, or typer-typed stencils, or hand-stenciled art had any deleterious effect on the *content* of those fanzines. ***Agreed. I liked twilltone fmz too!***

Speaking of hand-stenciling art, it was an *artform* in and of itself, and the best art-stencilers had recognizable styles of their own. I consider myself, in the '50s and '60s, to have been one of the best, and my friend Terry Carr was every bit as good. So also were many of the actual fanartists who stenciled their own work -- Steve Stiles and Dan Steffan, notably. ***I have always loved the work of these two whackos. Fun stuff.***

So nowadays people can cop art off the internet, use a wider variety of type styles, and produce fanzines which look typeset. So what? That's a *superficial* change which has little or no effect on *content*.

And some of that art has not "reproduced" well. There's a Shelby Vick piece in the latest VFW which is almost impossible to make out -- had it been mimeographed I'd have said it was badly stenciled or underinked. I don't know what caused this effect in an e-fanzine, but I suspect it was badly scanned. And your cover on this issue was obviously the result of blowing a low-res pic up so big that the pixilation is obvious.



Yeah, enlarging that photo to full-page size resulted in a distinct loss of picture resolution. As I experiment more I'll hopefully get better at this sort of thing. Such as the above illo. Nice resolution, eh wot?

In your lettercol Lloyd Penney remarks on my fanzine reviews in such a way that I wonder if a few words or a line were accidentally omitted. "Ted was positive and negative here and there, but at least they were those damned KTF reviews that gave no benefit to anyone." Huh?

I thought at first he was referring to my reviews posted on efanzines.com -- which were originally written for publication in several clubzines in the US and Canada, to introduce fanzines to clubfans. (I gave the column up when I realized it was a failure in achieving that goal.) But those were not "KTF" ("Kill The Fuckers!") reviews. The very opposite.

My guess is that these are the fmz reviews Lloyd was talking about. I have viewed those reviews, and I didn't think they were vicious at all; critical, yes, but in a constructive sense. Faneds can sometimes have thin skins; I've been that way before, I will admit. We have to be self-critical to a point in order to improve.

I guess he must be referring to my reviews of more than a decade ago in HABAKKUK. In my first column I trashed Guy Lillian's CHALLENGER #1. This so twisted Lillian's knickers that he slandered me in the next

four or five issues of his zine (calling for my imprisonment and wishing he could be the prosecutor!) and refused to print any letters defending me -- returning mine with a few insulting scribbles on the bottom. But most of my reviews in that column were more positive. As far as I'm concerned, they "gave benefit." At the very least, I hope they were enjoyable to read.

What amazed me then was the reaction of some fans which boiled down to, "He put all that *work* into his fanzine. How dare you *criticize* it?" (This was also Guy Lillian's reaction.) Apparently these people belong to the club whose motto is "It's All Good." Pointing out the shabbiness of the emperor's clothing is a no-no. Suggesting that higher standards (of writing, of thinking) might be striven for, that the status quo is not perfection, is baaad. There is an egalitarian point of view which says that we're all equal and our fanac is all equal. This point of view abhors egoboo polls, or indeed anything which suggests that A is better or worse than B. And I think it lowers the overall quality of fanac wherever it prevails. **Seems to me that it's all up to the individual to either improve or not. Speaking for myself, I'm trying to improve, but then again, it's now a matter of professional attitude since I've become a "feelthy pro" in the academic world. There is nothing wrong with trying to do better. Then again, there is nothing wrong with simply communicating via fanzines with other fans. It truly all depends on what the faned/fanwriter wants to get out of the effort.**

I don't know about other people, but I can tell you why *I* don't write about SF for fanzines any more: I have neither read nor written it for more than 20 years. I have moved on. Maybe editing SF for 15 years has something to do with it. Maybe reading 36,000 slushpile manuscripts at F&SF did me in. All I know is, I can't read SF for pleasure any more. I probably read 80% of all the SF published in the '50s, and perhaps 50% of all the SF before that. That will have to suffice. These days I read mysteries. What can I say? More enjoyable.

In any event, I enjoy your fanzine, John, and I look forward to future issues.

All best,
Ted

Thank you, Ted, for the kind words. My recent fun reading stack has included the Brother Cadfael Mysteries of Ellis Peters, The Pirate Hunter by Richard Zacks, and Ellis Island to Ebbets Field by Peter Levine. I am almost done reading The Song of Rhiannon, too, by Evangeline Walton, for a bit of fantasy on the side. All of these are most enjoyable, to boot.

Hey, a late addition to the loccol just plunked into my e-mailbox, and a welcome addition it is.

Lloyd Penney writes:

Way behind I am, with *IAPL* and with *and furthermore*. I'll get *IAPL 8* done right now and get to the rest RSN.

I don't fix many things around our place. My father was a terrible teacher when it came to carpentry or plumbing, so we kinda gave up on each other. I never watched *Home Improvement*, but I'm sure I'd be the perfect Tim Allen if I was ever to attempt any major repairs.



I think I have in my collection the last 15 to 20 issues of *Rune*, and after hearing from Mike Wallis how busy Minneapolis fandom was, it seems what

still goes on there is but a shadow of what was. I'd like nothing better than to see another issue of *Rune*, but I don't know if anyone there now would want to.

The Post-Modernist Fan...yes, we take ourselves too seriously, and wind up escaping up our own rectums. Time-binding is a fine thing, for it's good to know where you've come from, and why we all do the things we do. I am not sure we predict our own future all that well, or follow might well be future technology. We read a very liberal literature, yet can be very conservative when it comes to new tech. We look towards the future, but dwell in our own past. I'd prefer the paper fanzine, but given reduced disposable incomes, and the rising costs of everything, I see how .pdfing zines solves the problem. We are collectors by nature, and .pdfing zines eliminates the ability to collect zines, unless you'd prefer to print them yourself. We don't embrace new tech all that much...I surprised a friend by proclaiming that I was LJ-free. With my journalistic training, I would prefer to write for an audience. I hope I have some audience by writing for letter columns. *You do, and we appreciate your letters. Writing locs was a sign of reader courtesy, and helps maintain a healthy bond between faned, writer, and readers.*

I feel that with so many millions of people writing their weblogs on Blogger, LiveJournal or any other website that supports those weblogs, who on earth could be reading them? If I wrote for my own blog, who would I be writing for? If I was to produce a new zine (and I was on the brink of producing a national

newszine for Canadian fandom), I would continue with a .pdfed version. Even in this technological age, humans have not had much of an upgrade over the last 40 years, and we still tend to read at the beginning and read linearly until the end. That's why webzines are a little difficult to read, while .pdfs at least cater to that linear tendency.

The local...no problem with cramming a couple of my locs together. (I'm going to do a Penney-style loc for And Furthermore.) Mike Wallis' Susan was Susan Madison, very nice young lady, tolerant of fandom, but not tolerant of some of Mike's friends. Susan and I got along very well, but Susan did not share Mike's enthusiasm for fanac, and she left him a few years after they got together. Mike is now married, living in Silicon Valley, and he's found The Lord. Trufen.net will show you my latest audio project, a fan film called Bastards of Kirk. Thanks to my Scottish descent, I shall be playing a certain chief engineer with an over-the-top accent. I will be seen in profile only, but you'll definitely hear me. Bobby Hull played with the Winnipeg Jets, and Howe played with the Hartford Whalers. Bless you for your good thoughts re my locs. *You are most welcome, and I remember Susan Madison very well. Mike, Susan, and I wandered around Virginia back in September of 1981 (I believe) with Leslie David. A Good Time was had by all, and I still have some of the pictures to prove it.*

Why don't we discuss science fiction? I was warned many years ago that eventually, fans get to the point where real life and fanac take them away from what brought them into fandom in the

first place, science fiction stories. Guilty as charged. I am still job-hunting, even though I work evenings, and there are so many fanzines to deal with, and I am on several convention committees, too. (That will change shortly, though. We're retiring after 25 years of con-running.)

I'm going to wind this up...I have signage to make, badges to design, print and cut, for Ad Astra and Corflu, which is in Toronto this year, and we also have work to do for the LA Worldcon, which

we hope to attend. Take care, and I'll get to the other zines as soon as time allows.

Yours,

Lloyd Penney.

Sir, you are too, too busy for this sort of thing. Methinks it's time for you to slow down and sip the blog. Since you and Yvonne are retiring from official con-running, I sure hope that the two of you will begin enjoying things a bit more at a slower pace.

I Also Heard From

David Burton, Leslie David, Brad Foster, Fred Levy Haskell, Arnie Katz, Earl Kemp, Gary Mattingly, DavE Romm, and Garth Spencer.

Fanzines received

so to speak, since last issue:

In no particular order - *Feline Mewsings* #23, *Drink Tank* #66,67,68,69; *Vegas Fandom Weekly* #65,66,67; *Science Fiction/San Francisco* #17; *Catchpenny Gazette* #15; *el* #24; *Royal Swiss Navy Gazette* #14; *Hard Science Tales* #10; *The Glitter City Gigolos* #2; *A Propos de Rien* #273; *Peregrine Nations* 5.3; *Gasworks* #1; *The Banksonian* #9; *Taboo Opinions* #86.

Some Closing Thoughts

A few nights ago, I was flipping through the Ace doubled issues of my old zines, *This House* #15 and *Bangweulu* #6 (Spring, 1989), and started making notes of the names of contributors, reflecting on the Changing of the Guard that I have noted in my current incarnation in fanzine fandom. In that old issue, there were only two articles written by other people: Denny Lien and Garth Spencer. The listing of artists was much more extensive: Ken Fletcher, Larry Brommer, Reed Waller, Al Sirois, Steven Fox, Brad W. Foster, Bob Lee, Lorraine Tutihasi, Ruth Odren, Amy Harlib, Lawrence Juliano, and Teddy Harvia.

But it was the listing of loc writers that really got me to thinking: Harry Warner, Jr., David Langford, Chester Cuthbert, Eric Mayer, David D'Amassa, Linda Bushyager, Mike Glicksohn, Milt Stevens, Walt Willis, Bob Lichtman, Buck Coulson, Roy Tackett, Ted White, and Sally Syrjala.

If I went further back, there would a ton more. Some of these names are still finding their way into my zine, but a lot of them are gone now, either voluntarily or otherwise.

Does this make me sad? No, not really. It just gets me to thinking of the Changing of the Guard in what Arnie Katz and others have called Core Fandom. Change is inevitable, and I don't mind it happening. It's just that at times I wish these good folks were still around to enjoy the show. There's a lot of good stufh being produced nowadays, and it makes me feel good to see some fine, fine material in my chosen hobby field.

So rather than feeling sorry or maudlin about the graying of fandom and such, I say let's enjoy it all while we're here. It's time to blast off into the future of fanzine fandom. Fasten safety belts, please.

