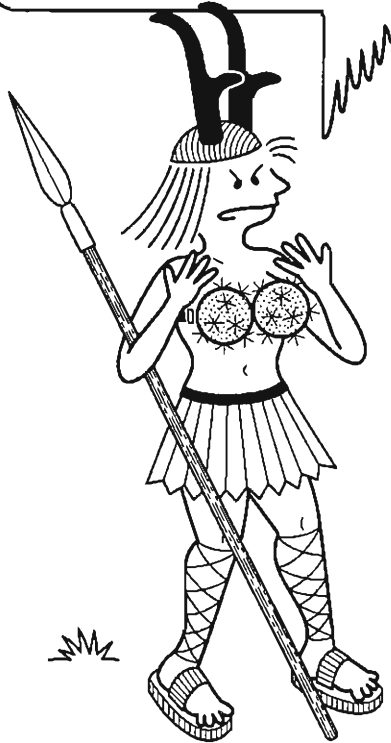


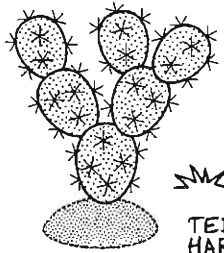
OPUNTIA

48.1B

He told me he could tell if it was cold with just one look at my chest.



Did you chill him with one look?



TEDDY HARVIA

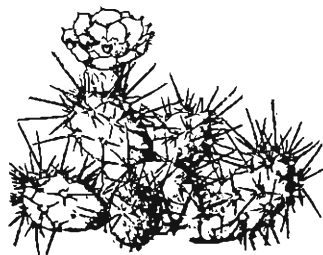
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OPUNTIA is published by Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. It is available for \$3 cash for a one-time sample copy, trade for your zine, or letter of comment. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada as the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount. US\$ banknotes are acceptable in Canada at par value; what we gain on the exchange rate we lose on the higher postage rate to USA. Do not send mint USA stamps as they are not valid for postage outside USA and I don't collect them.

Whole-numbered OPUNTIA's are sercon, x.1 issues are reviewzines, x.2 issues are indexes, and x.5 issues are perzines.

COVER ART CREDIT: Teddy Harvia, 12341 Band Box Place, Dallas, Texas 75244-7001

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Chuck Stake, Ailbhe Darcy, Sheryl Birkhead, Lois Klassen, Ryosuke Cohen, Justin Chatwin, Tom Hendricks, Chester Cuthbert, Frederic Gramazio, Noel Arnaud, Anna Banana, John Held Jr, Babynous Cult



[Editor's
remarks
in square
brackets]

FROM: Ken Faig Jr

2001-06-19

2311 Swainwood Drive

Glenview, Illinois 60025-2741

Buying and selling used magazines through the mail has always involved controversy. H.P. Lovecraft helped his young collector friend R.H. Barlow compile a dossier about the questionable practices of one early fan-dealer. Substitutions and undelivered merchandise were problems from the beginning. Even in the early 1930s, the first few years of WEIRD TALES were hard to find, so it doesn't surprise me that copies command astronomical prices now.

Over the years I encountered very few problems with SF and fantasy mail-order dealers. I wish someone would do a history of these dealers; I think it would be an interesting work.

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

2001-07-26

squabbles online about what did and didn't happen, and who did what to who, so the best fanhistories are those that one fan takes time to research and put on paper. Squabbles come later, but like history books, people see these fanhistories in print and accept them as they are.

The idea of a fanzine lending library seems to have more of a background in the Pacific Northwest than anywhere else. Garth Spencer had a similar fanzine lounge at V-Con when we were there in May 2000, but only a small group ever took advantage of it. Any time there's fanzine programming at conventions in Toronto, it's usually about the thick fiction zines that media SF fans produce. I bring samples of OPUNTIA, FILE 770, MIMOSA, CHALLENGER, etcetera, and a few of the people who attended those panels said with all assuredness that the zines I brought for display weren't real SF zines.

One question we should ask is what kind of events should go into a fanhistory. Do we go for simple lists, like the Worldcons or particular awards, and give specific examples of any items of infamy that happened at each Worldcon? Or do we go for great stories and folk tales from conventions, parties, or clubs? Context is subjective, and there may not be much context to go by. Canadian fanhistory has only had a few champions over time because our numbers have never been that great, and our geography keeps us apart. If there were several times our numbers, Canfan history would have been kept in a much more linear and complete state.

[Sadly, the media barbarians and punk rockers have no knowledge of what went on before. A few may know that SF zines date back to the 1930s, but almost none know that modern zines flowered circa the late 1800s. I like to tell punk rockers that the original riot grrrls were the apazine publishers of the late 1800s like Edith Minter, who published zines and traveled to conventions as unescorted teenage girls at a time when to do so was not only rare and daring but possibly dangerous.]

I could disagree with some of the stereotypes about fandom, but for a group that brags about its liberal literature and viewpoint, it is surprisingly conservative, stodgy, and set in its ways. When I wind up dwelling on how bad fans can be, I do remember how good they can be, how many of them are good friends, and that the percentage of bad apples in the bunch is probably the same as the general population. Fans aren't slans, they're just folks.

Fanhistory tends to be subjective, and ten fans will tell ten different stories on any one event. There are enough petty

FROM: Carolyn Clowes
547 Dover Road
Louisville, Kentucky 40206

2001-07-01

-4-

Re: THE LANGUAGES OF PAO. Sounds to me like what you'd get is New York, with everyone talking but no one who could translate the directions to the Statue of Liberty. Or a department store in Québec. I think language is one of those gut issues that pushes more buttons than we like to admit. There are "English only" movements here, as if Americans actually spoke it, and fierce battles over bilingual education. We just don't want to be forced to learn anything new, like a foreign language. I like Canada's do-them-both approach.

[The language wars in Canada arise from compulsory laws, not opposition to languages per se. Alberta has long taught French in schools, but westerners object to compulsory bilingualism since French is not even the second language here (it's about sixth or seventh and still declining). The Québec language police are unpopular not because they enforce French as the primary language but because they prohibit other languages on signs and public exposures. Until recently, the second languages on the Canadian prairies were Ukrainian and German, but in recent years Cantonese and Mandarin have come to dominate. Calgary's second language is now Cantonese.]

Game Over -- You Win

Mundanes	Sci-fi	Fans	Slans
0	26	26	26
0	52	52	52
0	78	78	78
0	104	104	104

OK



FROM: Milt Stevens
6325 Keystone Street
Simi Valley, California 93063

2001-07-13

I suspect condemning fan history for being trivial is like condemning microbiology for dealing with things that are so damned small. Of course, fandom is trivial in the sense of determining the fate of Western Civilization. If we were ever to

appreciate how truly insignificant we are as individuals, we would undoubtedly rush lemminglike to the nearest ocean and jump in. However, there's more to life than determining the fate of Western Civilization. If something is interesting, who cares whether it is important or not?

All history begins with chronicles, the simple listing of events. If you want to go beyond chronicles, you have to assemble data. Historians commonly find data already assembled for them. However, if you want to do something on the social history of the Hittite Empire, you may have to go out and dig up your own data. I doubt you can really ever have too much data, so it isn't going to do any harm that fanhistorical types are still collecting it.

One of the earliest attempts at fanhistory is also one of the most comprehensive, the idea of numbered fandoms. The very concept reflects that fans have always tended to the grandiose. In this case, applying Arnold Toynbee's model of history to our microcosm. I don't know what current historians think of Toynbee's theory. To my tastes, they seemed to work sort of with Western Civilization, and require increasing amounts of gerrymandering as you move to other civilizations.

If you can accept that the focal point fanzine takes the place of the universal state and the universal church in Toynbee's model, then everything runs along pretty well for awhile. Then comes the dire

deeds of Seventh Fandom, or possibly Seventh Fandom, or maybe late Sixth Fandom. At that point the model broke down, and I haven't seen anybody seriously try to apply the numbered fandoms idea in several decades. This in itself is an important detail. Fandom was no longer a singular, cohesive, linear sort of a thing. It was splitting into several different things which were existing at the same time.

While there are endless debates and nit-picking, the general outlines of fanhistory are pretty well known. This knowledge influences fandom on a daily basis. If we are going to screw up, at least we don't want to repeat the screw-ups of our predecessors. One may doubt the significance of AH SWEET IDIOCY, but it is a grand catalogue of how not to do things in fandom.

Some have said that history is the history of war. Fanhistory can easily become the history of feuds. We've had feuds to preserve fan funds, feuds to protect fandom from vile menace, and feuds for pure cussedness. When it comes to being belligerent, fans are almost as bad as the people who really are in charge of the world.

FROM: Harry Warner Jr
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

2001-07-12

I share the distrust about memory as a source of history. I've been criticized because I used fanzines, correspondence, and other printed sources to obtain material for my two fanhistory books. Between the first and second editions of A WEALTH OF FABLE, I suffered untold miseries from fans who wanted to be helpful and insisted that such contemporary sources were not to be trusted like their memories of what had happened thirty and forty years ago, usually involving matters of which they had no firsthand knowledge but just hearsay.

-6-

The notion that SF somehow had a confidence in science as a wonderful thing early in the 1900s is obviously unfounded in the reality of those times. SF in the 1920s and 1930s was so consistent in using scientific advancements as an element of horror and danger that Ray van Houten founded the Pro-Science movement in an effort to bring sanity into SF's attitude toward future science. This was the time when the mad scientist became as ubiquitous a cliché in SF as the busty babe versus the BEM. We were inundated with stories about coming wars in which secret weapons, newly invented weapons of mass destruction, a new world war resulting in the vanishing of civilization were everywhere. The Orson Welles dramatization of Martians bringing advanced science to Earth and using it to slaughter humanity was mistaken for reality by many radio listeners because they'd encountered a similar idea so often in magazines, books, and Sunday newspaper supplements. Actual scientific advances were fought by many elements of the public, like the importance of vaccination against smallpox and pasteurization of milk. It hasn't changed much, even though most of the anti-science SF now reaches most people via television and movie theatres rather than in pulp magazines.

I heard from two co-publishers of a famous fanzine that I had written incorrectly about it in the first edition; each said the other had done most of the work on that fanzine. Another fan told me that HORIZONS, which I've published regularly since the late 1930s, had been replaced as the oldest one-editor fanzine with continuous publication by another whose first issue had appeared in the 1950s. One letter seeking to correct my mistakes gave one version of an episode on its second page and a third page gave another version wildly different from the first.

[I published HISTORY OF THE CALGARY PHILATELIC SOCIETY in 1992, based on club minutes and documents. I learned to ignore I-was-there assertions after finding that the people quoting from memory celebrated the wrong year for the CPS's 40th anniversary because they used memory instead of looking it up.]

ZINE LISTINGS

by Dale Speirs

[The Usual means \$2 or \$3 cash, trade for your zine, or letter of comment on a previous issue. Americans: please don't send cheques for small amounts to Canada or overseas (the bank fee to cash them is usually more than the amount) or mint USA stamps (which are not valid for postage outside USA). US\$ banknotes are acceptable around the world.]

Aztec Blue #4 (The Usual from Murray Moore, 1065 Henley Road, Mississauga, Ontario L4Y 1C8) SF genzine with convention reports, a tribute to Douglas Adams, and letters of comment.

Challenger #14 (The Usual from Guy Lillian, Box 53092, New Orleans, Louisiana 70153-3092) Doorstop-sized zine of 112 pages, with accounts of jury duty, convention reports, SF artists, and lots of letters of comment. Not to mention Guy's photos of Mardi Gras, the New Orleans equivalent of the Calgary Stampede, except Calgary cowgirls don't flash their breasts in public, the costumes in New Orleans aren't as silly as Calgary petro-executives dressed up as cowboys, and it's warmer and more humid down there.

FOSFAX #203 (The Usual from The Falls of the Ohio SF&F Association, Box 37281, Louisville, Kentucky 40233-7281) Famous (or infamous) for its did not/did too combat ranging from

the editorial section to the extended letters of comment, with the greatest emotions raised over local USA politics. However it should not be overlooked that this clubzine carries substantial book reviews and convention reports. Not just SF but also many history and mystery book reviews. 74 pages of microprint make it a full evening's reading even for speed readers.

Murderous Signs #3 (The Usual from Grant Wilkins, Box 53106, Ottawa, Ontario K1N 1C5) The back half of this issue is poetry; the front half is an account of the Canadian Magazine Publishers Association. The CMPA is a small-press distributor, but this firsthand experience of them is not encouraging.

Sugar Needle #15 (The Usual from Phlox Icona, 1174 - 2 Briarcliff Road, Atlanta, Georgia 30306) Odd-format zine devoted to candy. This issue reviews the posh stuff, sold as luxury, as well as various strange types of candy from foreign countries. The chocolate penguins (dark chocolate for the body, white chocolate for the belly, almond for the wings, lemon filling) should be a best seller in the Linux crowd.

Probe #113 (The Usual from Science Fiction South Africa, Box 781401, Sandton 2146, South Africa) SF clubzine which has always run a large amount of South African fiction. Also club news and reviews, as well as an interesting proposal to host a Worldcon in 2020.

Wabe #3 (The Usual from Jan Leslie Adams, 621 Spruce Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53715) Trip reports, from sailing on a tourist schooner to touring Britain, as well as fan fund commentary and letters of comment.

The Accidental Fanzine #2 (The Usual from Christina Lake, 12 Hatherly Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, England) Ice cream in Massachusetts, hot springs in Mexico, insect recipes, zine reviews, and letters of comment.

The Cosmology Of The Babynous Cult #2 and #3 (Zine or mail art Usual from Babynous, 110 ½ State Avenue, Bremerton, Washington 98337) Photos and found images with added commentary that may or may not be true. Unusual 4.25 x 11 formatted zine.

Erg #154 (The Usual from Terry Jeeves, 56 Red Scar Drive, Scarborough, North Yorkshire YO12 5RQ, England) This issue starts off with a look back at early British SF fanzines from the 1930s to 1950s. Also a brief summary of the V bombers, why electric cars still can't sell, and miscellaneous items.

The Knarley Knews #87 to #88 (The Usual from Henry Welch, 1525 - 16 Avenue, Grafton, Wisconsin 53024-2017) SF genzine, with accounts of life on a river bank, hauntings, reviews, and letters of comment. Welch also has his annual compilation of

credit card offers received in the mail, the year 2000 total being US\$3.3 million from 49 unique offers.

Musea #98 (The Usual from Tom Hendricks, 4000 Hawthorne #5, Dallas, Texas 75219) Revolutionary art or art revolutions, with news and notes. The major article in this issue is about visual illiteracy, the inability to draw or express oneself through art. That is not to say we must all be Rembrandts, but few people these days draw or understand visual observation.

Anna Banana's Bulletin #7 (Mail art Usual from Anna Banana, RR 22, 3747 Highway 101, Roberts Creek, British Columbia V0N 2W2) Single-sheet letter substitute keeping us up to date about her goings-on in life, including performance art, new mail art shows, and the final chapter in her trademark dispute (the company that tried to highjack her name for a television series went bankrupt).

Plokta #22 to #23 (The Usual from Alison Scott, 24 St. Mary Road, Walthamstow, London E17 9RG, England) SF fanzine, with articles about a artist caught out plagiarizing SF paperback covers, a convention report that doesn't mention the actual convention itself, working as a postal temp during the Christmas rush, and the psychology of sentient locomotives.

Ethel The Aardvark #95 to #97 (The Usual from Melbourne Science Fiction Club, Box 212, World Trade Centre, Melbourne, Victoria 3005) Clubzine with news, notes, reviews, convention reports, and letters of comment.

The New Port News #196 to #197 (The Usual from Ned Brooks, 4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn, Georgia 30047-4720) Apazine with commentary on a wide variety of subjects.

Anarchy And Architecture #2 (The Usual from Bernie Klassen, Box 9, Site 1, RR 1, Legal, Alberta T0G 1L0) Starts off with a What-I-Did-On-My-Vacation report by a Lotuslander who visited Bernie and Paula at their market garden and enjoyed himself by stoop labour picking vegetables. Bernie then provides levity by discussing juggling and collecting old photographs of unknown people.

Fake Emperor V2 (Mail art Usual from John Held Jr, Box 410837, San Francisco, California 94141) Collagezine, a collaboration between John Held Jr and the Japanese mail artist Keiichi Nakamura.

Head #3 (The Usual from Doug Bell and Christina Lake, 12 Hatherly Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8QA, England) Thoughts on some movies, convention reports, shopping for comics in Belgium, petrol blockades, and letters of comment.

Mr. Peebody's Soiled Trousers #9 (US\$2 from Jason Koivu, Box 931333, Los Angeles, California 90093) Perzine, largely taken up in this issue with an account of a long-distance move.

Forty Two #6 and #7 (The Usual from Mark Strickert, 2100 West Commonwealth Avenue, Fullerton, California 92833) Life as a public transit advocate (they had a meeting to set the agenda for the next meeting), radio taping (tape trading is declining due to homogenized commercial stations), apahacking, and letters of comment.

A Reader's Guide To The Underground Press #15 (US\$5 from PMB 2386, 537 Jones Street, San Francisco, California 94102) Hundreds of zine listings, news and events in zinedom, letters of comment, and selected reprints. This is the long-needed successor to FACTSHEET FIVE. It serves to introduce newbies to the Papernet, or expand your existing trading list. Well recommended as a starting node in the Papernet.

Alpha Eridani Calling #1 (The Usual from Graham Stone, Box 4440, Sydney 1044, Australia) Apazine, with commentary on sociological changes in Australia over the past decades. The main portion of this issue is an essay on H.G. Well's visit to that country in 1938, and how he managed to briefly stir up the country before it went back to sleep.

For The Clerisy V8#42 to #43 (The Usual from Brant Kresovich, Box 404, Getzville, New York 14068) Numerous reviews, especially political, cultural, and military history, and not the usual superficial plot summaries but rather extended and thoughtful commentary. Also radio days memories, and letters of comment.

Revolution 21 #2 (The Usual from Justin Chatwin, 602 Bloor Street West #3, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1K4) This nicely produced zine covers the independent theatre and film scene in Canada, something that doesn't get a lot of press. Starting off is an interview with film producer Ruba Nadda, whose production company is a family enterprise, with her sisters not only acting but taking turns running the camera and doing other backstage jobs. There is an interesting article on why Canada has such difficulty in sustaining its own culture, with a different explanation than the usual Hollywood juggernaut dumping its product below cost across the border. Also various reviews and a short script. Marring this zine somewhat are the space filler Internet downloads, such as fake dumb laws, and lack of proofreading for frequent their/there, due/do, know/now errors.

Through Fractured Eyes #1 (The Usual from Keith Walker, 6 Vine Street, Greaves, Lancaster LA1 4UF, England) SF perzine, with a convention report, commentary on girl C&W singers, airline hell, and the escorts business.

Spunk #4 (US\$1 from Violet Jones, Box 55336, Hayward, California 94545) One of those rare zines that dares to differ from the standard 8.5 x 11, staple-in-the-top-left-corner zine. This is a pocket-sized back-to-back double in the style of the old Ace Doubles, and is stitched with thread for its binding. One half is poetry, the other half is commentary and reviews, including some thoughtful essays on the state of modern zinedom.

Tortoise #11 (The Usual from Sue Jones, Flat 5, 32/33 Castle Street, Shrewsbury SY1 2BQ, England) The theme of this issue is music (with a brief side trip about a leaky roof). Articles on avant-garde dissonance, the theremin, and why writing about music is like dancing about architecture.

File 770 #138 (US\$8 for five issues, from Mike Glycer, 705 Valley View Avenue, Monrovia, California 91016) Newszine of SF fandom, with convention reports, awards lists, obituaries, who's in court and who's courting, and letters of comment.

Southern Fandom Confederation Bulletin V7#9 (The Usual from Julie Wall, 470 Ridge Road, Birmingham, Alabama 35206-2816) Newszine of SF clubs in southern USA, with convention reports, a checklist of southern SF&F authors, zine and convention listings, and letters of comment.

Word Play #4 (The Usual from Alden Scott Crow, Box 445, Clements, California 95227) Devoted to words and their meanings. This issue has discussion from the readership about useage of 'snarky', 'yuppers', and 'Salisbury steak', as well as miscellaneous commentary on a variety of topics.

The Thought #124 to #125 (US\$3 from Ronald Tobin, Box 10760, Glendale, Arizona 85318-0760) Libertarian to anarchist, with articles such as a defence of lawyers, stoicism, Stanislaw Lem's SF novels, some fiction, legal drugs such as steroids, political voting versus market voting, and much else.

Warp #51 (The Usual from Montreal SF and Fantasy Association, Box 1186, Place du Parc, Montreal, Quebec H2W 2P4) SF clubzine of a very active and vigourous group of fans. Lots of news and notes, convention reports, and letters of comment.

Twink #21 to #22 (The Usual from E.B. Frohvet, 4716 Dorsey Hall Drive #506, Ellicott City, Maryland 21042) SF fanzine, with articles on the jewelry of fantasy, repackaged books under new titles, reviews, and letters of comment.

Vanamonde #388 to 412 (The Usual from John Hertz, 236 South Coronado Street, #409, Los Angeles, California 90057) A single-sheet apazine, published weekly so the cumulative effect is the

same size as a monthly or quarterly zine. Wide variety of comments and notes, convention reports, and miscellany.

This Here #8 (The Usual from Nic Farey, Box 178, St. Leonard, Maryland 20685) Perzine with accounts of house troubles, reviews of music, wrestling shows, and lots of letters of comment.

The Whirligig #3 (The Usual from Frank Marcopolos, 4809 Avenue N #117, Brooklyn, New York 11234) Literary zine of short stories and poetry.

MAIL ART LISTINGS.

1st Jeju International Mail Art Show: (Ki-Ho Park (Mail art), Jeju Culture and Art Foundation, 7F(Bokkang B/D) 1065-4 Edo 2-dong, Jeju City, Jeju-do, 690-825, South Korea) We hereby invite you to participate in the 1st Jeju International Mail Art Show. Theme is Peace Island. Jeju Island is located south of the South Korean mainland. It is also known as Peace Island, since its summit meeting between Korean former President Roh Tae Woo and Gorbachev a couple of years ago that contributed to eased tensions in the Far East area. Many celebrities of the world have visited the island since then.

Jeju Island is planning

to be an International Free City like Hong Kong, with no visa, no tariff, etcetera, and it will host some World Cup soccer games of FIFA in 2002. Towards this spirit of internationalism, Jeju Culture and Art Foundation is organizing the Jeju International Mail Art Show to bring the mail art network to the attention of the island's population. Duration October 18 to 27, 2001. Deadline for submission is September 20, 2001. No entry fee, no jury, no returns. All works will be exhibited. Documentation (catalogue) provided to all contributors.

Erik Satie: (Jean Hugues, 46 Rue de Gesvres, 60000 Beauvais, France) Do you like his music? That French composer was born in Honfleur in 1866. He worked with the greatest; Picasso, Picabia, Braque, Cocteau, Rene Clair. He influenced artists as prestigious as Debussy, Ravel, or Stravinsky. In his most famous creations, you can find 'Les Gymnopedies', 'Les Gnossiennes'. Please send me your mail art in A4 sheet size (21 cm x 30 cm), Any technique allowed.

The Working Life: (Ginger Mason, Box 39168, Vancouver, British Columbia V6R 1G0) Show me/tell me about your work. Is it a means to an end? Does it give you pleasure? Are you doing the work you want to do? Does your vision match your reality? Free medium, documentation to all. Deadline February 2002.

Think Here: (Jose Roberto Sechi, Av. M29, N° 2183, Jd. Sao Joao, Rio Claro SP - 13505 - 410, Brazil) Mail art magazine. Drawing, design, painting, engraving, gluing, rubber stamp, writing, poetry, visual poetry, photograph, etc.. In black and white, please, maximum 13 cm x 7 cm (horizontal format). Theme free, no return, no jury, no deadline, documentation to every 18 participants.

Abstract in Black & White: (G. Simons Graveuse, 26-28 Rue de la Metairie, 1082 Bruxelles, Belgium) Maximum dimension A4. Deadline is end of 2001. Free medium, exhibition and documentation to all.

I Hear My Tree: (G. Simons Graveuse, 26-28 Rue de la Metairie, 1082 Bruxelles, Belgium) Maximum dimension A4. Deadline is end of 2001. Free medium, exhibition and documentation to all.

Stampzine: (Picasso Gaglione, 5033 North Mozart Street, Chicago, Illinois 60625) STAMPZINE is edited and published by Picasso Gaglione and friends. It is an assembling collection of rubber stamp art, featuring the handstamped works of international artists. To contribute, send 75 handstamped copies of 8.5 x 11 rubber stamp artwork. All contributors will receive a free copy.

The Tree Of Poetry: (dott.ssa Tiziana Baracchi, Via Cavallotti, 83-B, 30171 Venezia-Mestre, Italy) The Tree of Poetry is a very uncommon species of plant; it is an American maple which is in Venezia-Mestre in 83/B Cavallotti Street, Itinerari '80 Centre. Giancarlo Da Lio dedicated this tree to poetry in a lot of artistic performances. Below its fronds, sheets with verses, in plastic envelopes to preserve from rain, hang down. The poets read their lines in the shade of the tree. Painters and sculptors put their works on walls and grass. Itinerari '80 is an artistic movement; from different trends many excellent artists gather strength around Giancarlo Da Lio. Moreover, as well as they work, they must manage their work making use of everything and everywhere. Well, it is necessary to show works not only in the official galleries, but above all in the alternative art spaces: where people go and come, on the road, in the shops, in the gardens too; so the Tree of Poetry was born and is growing. Do you want to send your mail art or mail poesy?

Photo Exchange: (Scott Garinger, Box 321, El Segundo, California 90245-0321) Will trade photographs, any subject.

Mani Art: (Pascal Lenoir, 11 Ruelle de Champagne, 60680 Grand Fresnoy, France) 60 copies of 15 cm x 21 cm artwork or 60 postcards. No black-and-white photocopies. Leave 1 cm margin on longest side. Nicely bound volume of mail art assembling, with the postcards slipped into a pocket. Addresses

of the contributors are included as part of the usual "doc to all".

Collage d'aujourd'hui: (Dianne Bertrand, Art terre, 9109 Deschambault, Saint Leonard, Québec, H1R 2C6) Mail art collage.

Brain Cell Fractal: (Ryosuke Cohen, 3-76-I-A-613, Yagumokitacho, Moriguchi-City, Osaka 570, Japan) Send 150 stickers or some other type of small mail art image. These are collated into a collage on an 11" x 17" poster, and a copy sent back to each contributor, along with a list of names and addresses of those participating.

Artist Trading Cards: (Chuck Stake, 736 - 5 Street NW, Calgary, Alberta T2N 1P9, Canada) ATCs are works of art created on 64 mm x 89 mm card stock. They are the same size as hockey trading cards, but the similarity stops here. Cards may depict anything, be 2-D or 3-D, they may be original, a series, an edition, or a multiple. Cards are signed on the back by the artist and, if necessary, an edition number is included. ATCs are paintings, drawings, collages, photographs, rubberstamp works, mixed-media, etchings, found images, recycled works of art, assemblages, etcetera. The only stipulation is that the card fits in the standard plastic sheets that hockey cards are normally stored within.

Review of **Jean Baudrillard And The Psychogeography Of Nudism** by Stewart Home (Sabotage Editions, 2001) Available for L4.75 from the author, BM Senior, London WC1N 3XX, England. This is a collection of Home's short writings which have appeared in various underground zines, art magazines, and other scattered sources.

But First, A Reviewer's Digression.

I always enjoy reading Home, as he deftly punctures what I like to refer to as Pretentious Drivelism, one of the earliest forms of globalization, which predates the multinational megacorporations. Pretentious Drivelism is the ideology bubbling up where the academic jargon of university professors flows into a confluence with the verbal diarrhoea of art critics, the soothing sales patter of gallery auctioneers, and the semi-coherent gargles of state-funded layabouts who have learned to milk the grants system.

Pretentious Drivelism is seen in the flesh along any city's art gallery row, where pairs of high-income couples slum in alternative art spaces, and thrill to bad performance art. It exists in the hypocrisy of people who protest against the despoiling of old-growth forests by publishing chapbooks of agonizing poetry that makes one regret the advent of universal literacy. It is found

in the suburbs where blue box recyclables are carefully sorted, then loaded onto an SUV and driven to a recycling bin. It lives in the dance club scene, where ravers and punks scream in rage against the megacorporations, while consuming cigarettes and booze produced by said megacorporations and wearing advertising on their clothes. Pretentious Drivelism is the whirlpool where the left-wing anarchists meet the right-wing anarchists on the far side, and, as they bob about on the wreckage of their life rafts, argue about whose philosophy is better, while ignoring the passing steamships that might take them to shore. Pretentious Drivelism was a global force long before NAFTA, WTO, WPC, and all those other alphabet agencies no one ever heard of before the Battle in Seattle. Its cultural forces spread over art galleries worldwide decades ago. The abstract spatters of paint on canvas in a Calgary art gallery are interchangeable with the spatters of New York City or London. Government cultural agencies have subsidized countless tons of poetry chapbooks in dozens of languages. The unread verbiage is mercifully forgotten whether it first appeared in English in Canada or in French in Belgium or in German in Austria.

In Saunters Mr. Home, With A Cheerful Grin On His Face.

Most reviews of the underground art/anarchist/culture scene give one the impression of vast forces pushing invisibly on society. A

People's Congress issues a manifesto from some imperial meeting hall, and sets in motion a chain of events that will diverge society from its predestined path. The reality, as Home constantly points out, is that the People's Congress manifestos are issued by three losers who can't get laid, meeting in the basement of a secondhand bookstore specializing in tatty paperbacks, and totally ignored by society.

Home covers the club scenes, where he learns that foot fetish fans don't really care about the label on your gym shoes, so you don't have to shell out for fancy Nikes when a house-brand pair will do. He also learns not to lecture on artistic philosophy when girls are attracted by his Doc Martens in the mistaken belief he is into rough trade. A good way to go home alone.

Home's essays and book reviews, collected as they are from various points in time and space on the Papernet, must necessarily seem randomized when read all at once, and are best enjoyed as a pick up-and-put down type of book to be read as chance presents itself. He discusses, for example, those who invest in revolution, always wanting to be in the avant garde and get their names mentioned in the art magazines. Funnier yet than those people are the ones who always get in on the current trend too late, posturing against road-building in London while everyone else is buying plane tickets to Seattle.

GREAT MOMENTS IN AERONAUTICAL LUNACY

Review of **Avrocar: Canada's Flying Saucer** by Bill Zuk (Boston Mills Press, 2001, ISBN 1-55046-359-4). One of the most prominent icons, and most painful, in Canadian history, right up there with the beaver, maple syrup, and the Bluenose schooner, is the Avro Arrow fighter jet. It was the most advanced fighter in the world in its time, a delta-wing plane designed in Canada for Canada. The Diefenbaker government got cold feet at the cost of it and cancelled it in 1959 after only a few prototypes were built. The cancellation not only destroyed its manufacturer, A.V. Roe Canada (usually known as Avro Canada), but destroyed the entire Canadian aviation manufacturing industry. At the time, Canada was a world leader in aircraft design, but today it is at best a minor manufacturer of commuter jets.

Avro Canada is best known for the Avro Arrow, and lesser so for its Avro Jetliner, the world's second jet passenger aircraft. The latter also met an ignominious cancellation, ironically because the money being spent on it was diverted to the Arrow. After the death of the Arrow, Avro Canada struggled on for a few more years scrounging up research contracts here and there before finally dying of terminal desultoriness. One of those contracts is the subject of this coffee-table book, the Avrocar.

The Avrocar started out as an intent to design a flying saucer capable of vertical liftoff, then forward flight at supersonic speeds. Along the way it mutated into a ground-effect army transport, the prototype of the hovercraft. The ground effect is the ability of downward-directed air flow to support a vehicle on a cushion of air; all hovercraft use it. In fact, had Avro Canada followed up on its ground effect research, the hovercraft could have been in production in Canada years before the British took the honours with the world's first commercial hovercraft. But Avro Canada was so fixated on building a flying saucer that they overlooked the chance to build something that actually worked.

The Avrocar was a disk-shaped aircraft with turbine-driven fans sending air through ducts exiting underneath and around the edges of the craft. The prototypes were extremely noisy, and the cockpit got so hot that some of the dials on the instrument panel turned brown. It never worked at any height above where the ground effect discontinued. Nonetheless, its chief designer and moving force, John Frost, managed to interest both the U.S. Air Force and the U.S. Army in funding the prototypes. Frost led his research team in the ultimately futile project. One of his associates was Gerald Bull, the inventor of the Supergun (designed to fire a satellite into orbit) and who, decades later, was assassinated by Israel for helping Iraq build a Supergun.

Despite its continual failure to approach its design specifications, the Avrocar had a remarkable longevity. Peter G. Kappus, an aeronautical engineer prominent in VTOL aircraft, later remarked that: *"The Avrocar program is a classic example of what can happen if a hungry contractor with a good engineering team meets an Armed Forces organization with R&D funds to spend ... A very important catalyzer in this process is a smooth, highly persuasive inventor/promoter and an energetic military project officer with inadequate technical background but high enthusiasm for unorthodox novelties; in this case, undoubtedly intrigued by flying saucer lore."* [page 87].

This book is unnecessarily padded out with histories of the Avro Arrow, flying wings, and VTOL aircraft. This material could have been condensed to a few pages, enough to fill in the background of the aviation industry's avant garde and provide the setting for the Avrocar. Other than that, the book is a fascinating read, and profusely illustrated. Ultimately, it saddens the reader by demonstrating how Canada threw its future away. Today the aerospace industry is a branch plant economy producing commuter jets and, its only major contribution to space travel, the Canadarm used in the American space shuttle and Canadarm 2, on the International Space Station. What might have been?