

and furthermore... #9



JUNE 27, 2006

cutbacks, the light at the end of the tunnel has been temporarily turned off.”

Truth be told, there is indeed a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel we’re slowly plodding through. See, I got an emergency teaching gig at North Harris Community College two weeks ago; the original teacher for ENGL 2332, Survey of Western Literature I, suddenly left for a full-time job in another state, so the Dean of the Humanities Department met with the students, telling them, “We’re trying to find a teacher for your class. With luck, we’ll have someone for you next Tuesday evening.”

And so, with a flourish of trumpets and a rousing, “Heigh-oh, silver! Here I come to save the day!”, yours truly was the guy in the white hat galloping in on a white steed around the bend at the last minute. It’s a fair drive to get to – 89.4 miles one way from home to the campus – but it’s a win-win situation for all involved: the students get a teacher who actually enjoys teaching (and knows the material, too; a big plus), I get a paycheck for the rest of the summer, and the dean and department heads get to breathe a big sigh of relief, showering me with thank yous and plaudits for coming to their rescue.

Ah, shucks, ma-am; ‘tweren’t nuthin’ special. (Dean Harrison is a woman, and man, have I made points with her by being her Knight in Shining Armour. Mayhaps I can parlay this into a full-time gig this fall.)

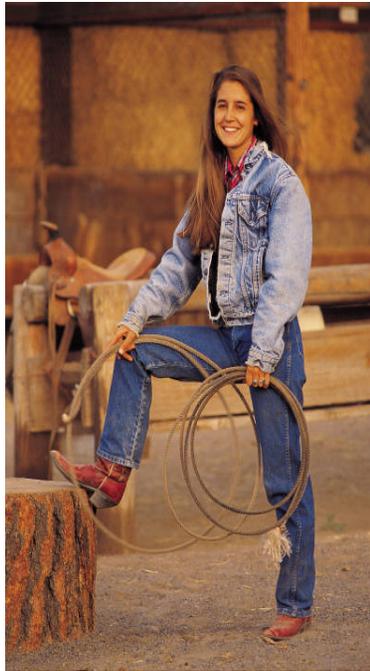
Plus, Steve Sansom (English department head) has now given me a class for second summer session, making my paychecks

even bigger starting in mid-July. Saints be praised, and thank you, Lord, for providing! I have never taught British Literature II before, but I’ve taken this kind of malarkey before, so at least I know the material. So be it. I’ll teach anything for a steady paycheck.



hear ye, hear ye!
'tis the lettercolumneth, you wretched rat
cum-suckers!

*I really don't mean it. Got carried away with the semi-Medieval motif of the zine. But I do have a loc to copy-paste in here from **Chris Garcia**, who is from the Western Edge of the Realm, out by the boundless sea.*



It just keeps rollin'! [He's referring to the zine, not the ocean.]

First off, CorFlu Lone Star would have been a good name, though I like Quire as well. I might just start referring to it as QuireFlu. I've never let anything like official naming get in the way of me calling something something else (see: 2006 TorFlu). [I know what you mean. Quire is a suitably fannish reference, so it works splendidly, but I think Texas Lone Star would have been fine, too. 🌿]

A Cowgirl choir is a fine thing...if they are the hot cowgirls you find in places like, oh, I don't know, the

pages of *The Drink Tank!* [Or the Dallas Cowboy cheerleading squad. Oof-dah!] Of course, any of those choir girls shown

would give meaning to the term 15'll get you twenty. [I haven't counted the number of girls in the picture, but I believe there are at least 15 of them. Or 24, which sounds like a fannish number.]

That's one nasty lookin' bug! Do I have to worry about those when I come out for QuireFlu? Am I going to be attacked like so many B-Movie heroes? I just wanna know so I can pack accordingly. [Don't worry about the bugs. They're nocturnal critters and are found usually in grassy plains, not in big cities like Austin. If you want, I'll catch another and bring it along.]

It's been in the 80s here, which is far too hot for a man of my body type. Evelyn is enjoying the temps and has been singing Aloha-hoy over and over again. It's kinda freaky. I've been going to the movies and stopping by work because there's free air-conditioning for me there! [No question in my mind that air conditioning is one of mankind's better inventions. Now what they should do is dome the entire southwestern part of the country, or control the climate through some technological/chemical wizardry... HEY! This has been proposed before in various sf stories.]

Sounds like tough times financially. I often have those (I call them the weeks after I make Student Loan payments). I've had really bad periods (like when I had to sell my Robert Motherwell piece to make rent) and some really, really bad periods (I put in my check after paying rent and I was still a grand over-drawn). Delivering phone books is something that I've never thought of but you better believe the next time I'm in a scrape for cash I'll do it. Sounds like that route would be equitable to the one delivering in Riverside County, CA.

language and culture, and the story is set in a Siberian work camp. The author, Daniel Hood, recreated the dismal setting and outlook of the inmates very well, which is important for this tale.



Weird Tales #339 (April, 2006) was a disappointment. Don't get me wrong; I am very happy to see this grand old mag back on the shelves, but the best story in this issue was the reprint of a Fitz-James O'Brien story, "The Lost Room", first written in the 1850s. Too many of this issue's stories fell back on the old ploy of *deus ex machina*-style endings that yank something out of the blue at the end, which the reader is completely unprepared

for in the rest of the story. This is poor writing, and I am astonished that the editors let it fly. I have never liked this kind of stuff before. A word of advice to George Scithers, the main editor: DON'T ACCEPT THESE STORIES! Even if the intent is to recreate the atmosphere and style of classic *Weird Tales* stories of the past, the best way to achieve this is keep the features ("The Eyrie", for example), include a classic reprint each issue, but please maintain a higher standard for original "horror" tales. Yeesh!

To be fair here, though, a story that works well is Ian Watson's and Roberto Quaglia's "The Grave of My Beloved," which explores the concept of a virtual cemetery and what happens if one does not keep up with the maintenance costs of your loved one's "grave." An interesting concept executed well.

Asimov's Science Fiction (April/May, 2006) was more than a mere disappointment; it was an insult to the words "science fiction" in its title. I counted four stories in here that are more fantasy than science fiction and would be more at home in *Realms of Fantasy* or *Fantasy & Science Fiction* than in *Asimov's*. (Even though I have the May issue of *F&SF* on my "to be read" shelf, I haven't gotten around to it yet.) Even invoking Arthur C. Clarke's maxim that science of the far future will seem more like magic than science, as a reader, when I pick up a copy of *Asimov's Science Fiction* magazine (note the emphasis, kind editor), I expect to read **SCIENCE FICTION**.

Am I asking too much here? Gee, I hope not.

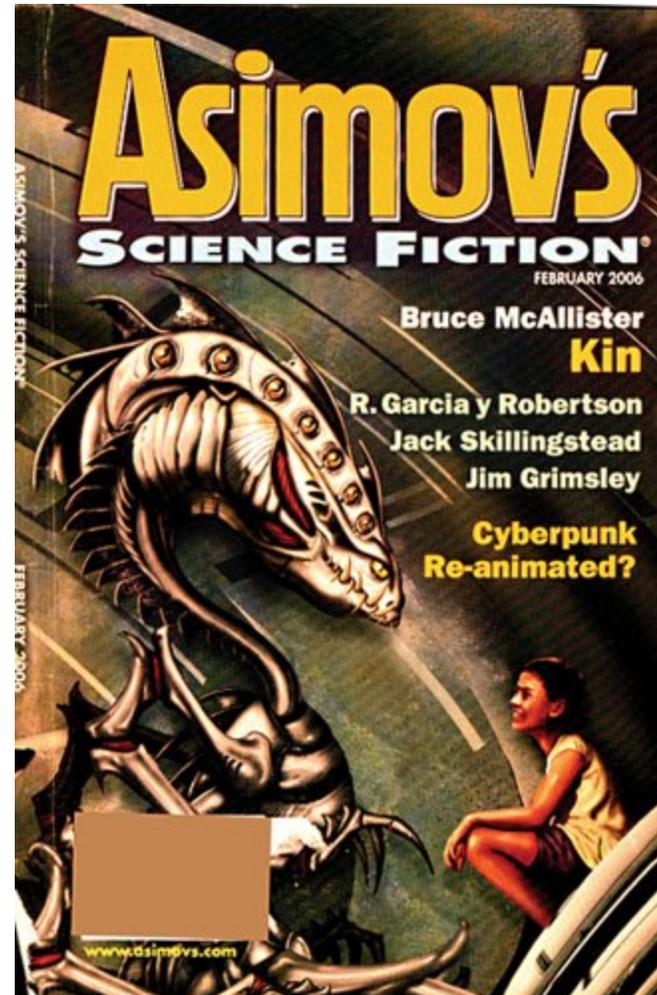
Now it is time to be fair for *Asimov's*. My favorite story in this double issue is "Datacide" by Steve Bein, which asks the interesting question, "If you pull the plug on an Artificial Intelligence unit that has sentience, is that considered murder?" For that matter, can you accuse A.I. of committing murder? There are other ramifications explored, which good science fiction should do, and that is why I particularly enjoyed this story. Even Robert Silverberg's story, "Hanosz Prime Goes to Old Earth," doesn't do anything for me, and Silverberg has long been one of my favorite SF writers. Well, sometimes the good ones produce an off story.

So there's a recap of my brief foray into the pages of recent pro-zine issues. I enjoy reading science fiction and fantasy, but unless a magazine incorporates both genres within its pages, I believe a magazine that says "Science Fiction" in its title should be faithful to the term. Please don't blur the lines more than they are already. My aging eyes can't stand the strain.

Thus endeth my rant. Until next time, I remain your humble and obedient servant*,

John Purcell

*YHOS was a great fanzine.



Before I forget something sort-of important.



I really want to thank Bill Burns for the wonderful service that he has been rendering to the cause of fanzine fandom. In recent months there has been a wide-spread discussion throughout Core Fandom, Fanzine Fandom, or what-ever Fandom you want to call it, about how the Internet has radically transformed our hobby group.

It is my opinion that we may be on the cusp of a fanzine renaissance. By this I mean that long-time fans who haven't pubbed in years will resume doing so because the Internet has so dramatically reduced the distribution costs of zines. What I have done at times is to print out a dozen or so issues of *In A Prior Lifetime* and this zippy little addendum zine so that I would have some ready for mailing to fans around the world who don't have access to a computer. It only makes sense to me to do this; if I didn't, I would be sorely remiss for not being sensitive to my readers' needs.

So let's welcome the challenges of the future direction of our hobby group. Speaking for myself, I have been having a totally wonderful time pubbing, loccing, and writing for other zines. It's a fun hobby, and I do hope the rest of you have been enjoying it as much as I.