



eFNAC 18

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Published more or less monthly by John Foyster, PO Box 3086, Rundle Mall, Adelaide, South Australia, AUSTRALIA 5000 (but foyster@senet.com.au is better.)

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Cover photo by Yvonne Rousseau

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Oops!

This issue is a little later than I had planned, and in order to get it out at least *nearly* in January I have cut short the main item, and omitted the letters altogether. The letters are much appreciated, by the way, and will appear in the next issue.

I think I have a wonderful excuse for the delay, but you may not agree: I had another spell in hospital. Only a few days, but something that definitely upsets the schedule for a monthly fanzine.

Recently Robert Lichtman has published a list of the fanzines he received in 2001 and, given the status of his own fanzine (no issue in 2001, I point out harshly) I found it alarming that so few fanzines appeared, well, “regularly”. It seems to me that the desirable publishing frequency of fanzines has something in common with the desirable frequency of public transport, and while I can appreciate the impact of costs, and the desire for fanzine perfection, much is lost when there is a distinct lack of continuity. I try to show up on your computer once a month, and besides, now that I have started the monthly series of covers from

fifty years in the past, there will be problems if I fall behind.

And about the covers: as I suspected, the old geezers amongst the eFNAC readership get all misty-eyed about the magazines of their youth, while the younger generation is much less impressed. Since one of the great things about fandom is the intergenerational nature of us all, this is an interesting demarcation between us: I wonder at what age the cut-off occurs? (Since I wasn't reading science fiction 50 years ago, and I get nostalgic about the covers, I know that the covers probably work for some people younger than I am – something that isn't hard to do.)

The hospital stay was caused by another of the attacks that put me in hospital for seven weeks last year. I had had the view that given my health now I wouldn't survive another such attack, and so it wasn't worth worrying about dealing with the problem, but now it looks as though the problem can be managed with a bit of planning. Damn! Too many things to think about.

But there was a big plus this time. I came around from the attack after only about three

hours, so I know much more about the immediate impact on my brain (being unconscious for two weeks last year would clearly have wiped out any memories I had of that attack).

Just as was the case last year, the attack began with a loss of language (spoken and written – though last year I didn't try any writing, this year I was writing an email to Dave Langford when, halfway through a sentence, I found myself lost for words, in a serious way). I also had some physical malfunctions, but could walk and so on (memo to self: if this happens again, get moving quickly!). But three hours after I had recovered, the hospital staff were not sure whether or not to keep me in hospital – that's how minor the attack was. But I am glad they kept me there, since I am still (two days out of hospital) a little unsteady.

What was interesting is that because I recovered consciousness so quickly, I still had some language problems, which Yvonne Rousseau explored. We looked mainly at my written language, since the spoken language was fairly simple to discuss.

I tried writing (printing) simple words, and we found that there were odd gaps – some words I could write easily, while others were much more difficult (and in fact I had to give up): for example, I could not spell “Yvonne”, whereas words like “cat” were easy and words like “banana” were achievable with a little bit of work (i.e. if I made a mistake I could correct it).

We therefore moved to a more logical structure, the numerical digits, which proved to be a good move. I could not write “1” or “2”, but I then reeled off “3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8” before not being able to write “9”. Then I wrote “10”. But at this point of course I stopped: I could recognize that a part of what I had just written was in fact “1”. So I went back to try to write “1”, of which I eventually made a very rough copy.

Phew! I suppose we should have gone on experimenting with what I could and could not write, but by this time I was a bit tired

I do hope the editorial of the February issue is a little less medical in its orientation!

John Foyster, 3 February 2002



I have an interest in my Foyster ancestors (the name being relatively uncommon). So when a “W. S. Foyster” showed up on the WWW I wrote to the page owner to get more info, since the name was not familiar to me. He was the husband of Grace Foyster, I was told, and they ran an art studio in England in the 1930s or thereabouts.

Not quite, I replied: W S Foyster is Winnifred Sutton Foyster, Grace’s sister. There were four sisters in all, grand-daughters of my great-grand-father’s brother Joseph.

This illustration is from a book I’ve not been able to date, STAR TALES (published by Renwick of Otley), but the 1930s looks about right. The Wiltshire bookseller who sold it to me says that Grace did some of the other illustrations, but I can’t

spot her signature.

I guess being an illustrator of children’s books doesn’t bring lasting fame, but to be regarded as collectible while one’s sex is unknown seems to me to be pushing lack of recognition a little too far!

eFanzine Reviews

John Foyster

What is an e-fanzine? At the beginning of 2002, the word is applied to a great array of "products" that in some cases have very little in common with one another.

- Since most fanzines nowadays are produced using word-processing packages or their host computers, in one sense the product just before it is printed could be termed an "e-fanzine". Such an e-fanzine differs from the traditional fanzine only in that the responsibility for printing the fanzine (and the cost of doing so) is transferred from producer to reader/consumer. Postage cost could be retained by the producer as part of

an internet connection. (Such an approach allows the inexpensive distribution of archived fanzines.)

- A second form of e-fanzine is one in which the producer makes use of some technology (e.g. coloured illustrations) that probably would not have been used had the cost been borne by the producer, but which otherwise has the same production process (i.e. a paper-oriented fanzine).
- A third form is one in which the e-fanzine makes some concessions to the medium of transmission (and indeed may not be designed ever to take the printed form).
- The fourth and final form is one in which the reader is able to interact, to a greater or lesser extent, with the content provided by the producer.

This review column will attempt to cover examples from each of the above varieties, each of which claims (more or less, though not always directly, to be an e-fanzine). My choice includes, partly I suppose by chance, formats including Acrobat's PDF, HTML, and Microsoft Word.

It Goes On The Shelf

No.23 October 2001

Published at The Sign of the Purple Mouth by Ned Brooks

4817 Dean Lane, Lilburn GA 30047-4720
nedbrooks@sprynet.com

Website -

<http://home.sprynet.com/~nedbrooks/home.htm>

IGOTS appears to me to be, within limits, a reasonable compromise between a paper fanzine and an e-zine. Although I have no doubt that most readers see IGOTS in its original paper form, the transformation to HTML, in my view enhances the fanzine.

IGOTS is, after all, a book-collector's diary, more or less, and any division of the

contents into "pages" leads to artificial distinctions for the reader that do not actually convey any information. Other than that the number of lines now exceeds the capacity of the page. There are three illustrations to break up the otherwise non-stop paragraphs of prose that are, in the HTML form of IGOTS, an interruption because they are (in two cases, anyway) designed for the portrait, and are therefore fully able to be appreciated only by zooming the pages out to a magnification of about 50%, making the text unreadable (at least at my age).

Otherwise, the structure of the transformation to HTML is trouble-free. Just as web diaries can often be easily appreciated, so the origin of IGOTS makes it able to be appreciated, for different qualities, in HTML form.

As for the content - well, I guess this depends on the extent to which you find yourself interested in the kinds of books Ned describes and comments upon. Because his taste is so eclectic, I find a substantial proportion of the contents of most issues of IGOTS inviting, and Ned's comments, because

of the selectivity of the contents, usually reveal an appreciation of the works describe.

Only problem in IGOTS? Occasionally the HTML transformation gets confused between Roman, italic, and bold. But it doesn't get in the way too often!

THE ROYAL SWISS NAVY GAZETTE #7,

December 2001

from Garth Spencer, P.O. Box 15335, V.M.P.O.,
Vancouver, B.C. CANADA V6B 5B1; email
hrothgar@vcn.bc.ca.

Here we go with a personalzine in HTML form that does make a minor technical advance over IGOTS: there's a contents link that, unfortunately, is a one-way street (i.e. there's no way back to the list of contents at the end of each piece other than the "what a drag" method).

Otherwise, the HTML version runs straight through without any breaks - okay when most of it is written by the editor, but the letterhacks in the letter-column surely

deserved at least to have that section of TRSNG start on a new "page".

I find this an odd fanzine to write about. Except for the letter-column, the editor writes it all, and the pieces Garth writes somehow don't hang together. (In his fanzine review column, this would mean referring to such a fanzine as yet to be evaluated.)

Thus, for example, the introductory section about recent events in Garth's life handled his recent firing in ways that were unclear to me. He seemed to be saying that he couldn't understand how to do his job, after four years, but this is something *I* couldn't understand - maybe I have had very different experiences, but in the past if staff I have hired couldn't understand their (highly technical) job within a month or two, I would have had their managers on the mat, calling for an explanation. Leaving an employee uncertain about what his job entailed for four years - phew! At least Garth has taken the time to give us his reaction to his firing, and his thinking about "what he wants to do when he grows up" (these are not his words, but as it happens, at

60 I find myself contemplating a career change, so perhaps I read too much into his musings).

There's a fair chunk of stuff about Canadian sf conventions. This was heavy going for me, since most of the names were unknown. For example, take this parenthetical remark from a brief report on VCON 26 / CANVENTION 2001: ("Any floor show that features Don DeBrandt in bush clothes and stilts, catching Klingons with a butterfly net, has to be entertaining."). For more reasons than can be fitted on this page my response would be "not to me"! (Unless there were sufficient references to Vladimir Nabokov, which I suspect there were not.)

The lettercol included stuff mostly from people I've not heard of who are writing about a continuing conversation the earlier parts of which I have not seen or heard. Al Macintyre has a widely-ranging LoC to which I could find only one component to which I could respond: Al wondered about how companies could put in bids that were much lower than his company knows are possible. In my line of work, loss-leading is becoming quite popular, though as it happen this is easy to follow up with

bankruptcy: like Al I don't write bids that cannot generate at least a small margin of profit.

I was surprised to see a piece about terrorism (following 9/11) largely because this has surely now been worked to death. I guess everyone wants his say. A piece on Internet humour would have been appealing to me if I hadn't recently had, by golly, a note from Bill Gates himself (see next illo). The finishing section is the fanzine reviews that I have already mentioned: notes rather than reviews, but sometimes useful.

FRINGE

"Forget Reality!" Inkstained Nerdy Girl
Exclaims

Issue 8 - August 2001

Fionna O'Sullivan

199 Charlotte Quay Dock, Ringsend, Dublin 4,
or fringe_sf@ireland.com

Another HTML zine, another personalzine. Perhaps there is a pattern I ought to be more aware of. But FRINGE is (or was - no issues on the website than this one in August) is

INTER-OFFICE ENVELOPE	
TO	TO
1 Richard BRANSON	15
2 LEE KWAN YEW.	16
3 George W Bush	17
4 Nelson Mandela	18
5 Kim Dae Jung	19
6 Aung San Suu Kyi	20
7 PJ KEATING	21
8 Bill Gates	22
9 JOHN FOYSTER	23
10	24
11	25
12	26
13	27
14	28

IMPORTANT: BEFORE CANCELLING LAST ENTRY, MAKE SURE ENVELOPE IS EMPTY.

interesting to me in the sense that its contents are a combination of the two fanzines reviewed above.

This, however, looks as though any paper version is of much lower status, and the description "personalzine" is a little inaccurate: this is mostly notations about sf novels, following some notes about absences of employment (plainly a common theme in 2001).

I couldn't see myself enjoying a fanzine largely consisting of reviews of skiffy works, but as I got into it I was delighted to discover that Fiona O'Sullivan appeared to be a person of taste and discrimination, not to mention someone that has taste similar to my own. Starting by comparing Blish's A CASE OF CONSCIENCE more than favourably with a modern sf novel with a similar theme, she then goes on to discuss GODEL ESCHER BACH in which she demonstrates that Alan Turing might have had to revise his famous test with this sharp observation: "The Turing test: can you tell that a computer program's conversation is not from a human. Anybody who has had the misfortune to spend much

time in AOL chatrooms will realise that many humans don't actually pass this test, and I reckon at least two Big Brother contestants would fail miserably."

After that some of the reviews are a little too brief - and they really constitute observations rather than reviews. Fionna does ask some questions about Gregory Benford's *TIMESCAPE* (I suspect that the only person likely to admire this novel more than I do is the author - sorry Greg). I suspect some of Fionna's questions might be easily resolved if she equated "Gordon Bernstein" quite firmly with "Gregory Benford". This would help to explain the evolution of Ian Petersen as an utter shit if Greg were working on a composite character who embodied much of the professional unpleasantness you do have to put up with in his line of work. And as I know from my own experience, many of those of us who are aliens are amazed at the inability of locals to notice the pervasive, indeed overwhelming, stench of class consciousness in English culture.

Phew! Far too many books to digest in one sitting. But if other issues of *FRINGE* are

as lively as this one then I guess I will have to download a few more.

The next set of fanzines are all considered in their "PDF" format, although most of them will have a paper "first edition".

ARGENTUS (1)

is irregularly published by Steven H Silver. All submissions, letters or other correspondence should be directed to him at 707 Sapling Lane, Deerfield, IL 60015-3969 or e-mailed to shsilver@sfsite.com.

Issues of *ARGENTUS* are available for \$3.00 or "the usual." The *Argentus* website can be found at <http://www.sfsite.com/~silverag/argentus.html>

Like most PDF 'zines discussed here this was very hard on the eyes. *ARGENTUS* runs to 37 pages, so I *could* print it out, which many readers of this piece will make the result "more readable". Hmph! An A4 paper version of *ARGENTUS* reduces the font size to about 80% of what it is on this minimum-size screen I have. Thus, in practical terms, the type-size is

greater in electronic version as opposed to a paper version. Of course the resolution is greater on paper, but how the overall combination works probably depends on the reader (or certainly the reader's eyesight).

Some technical stuff to start with: ARGENTUS uses about 15 "fonts" (with a bit of substitution - sometimes in PDF documents fonts intended to be used are replaced by Adobe MM fonts if the correct fonts are not embedded in the PDF document or otherwise available, and with a mixture of Type 1 and TrueType fonts). This does boost the size of the PDF file somewhat with, one can probably say, limited benefits. Is that amount of variety necessary for the paper version? That's not up to me to say.

But there's also variety in the contents! David Truesdale's survey of the current science fiction magazines starts promisingly, but it is truncated without warning, at least for this reader. The piece is introduced as dealing with the current magazines and with the magazines contained therein, but while the published article does include a discussion of circulation figures (and why they are the way they are) it

scarcely lives up to the author's claim in the final column that "This cursory examination of the state of the professional short story magazine market began with a demarcation between the magazines, and the fiction contained therein..." There really has been no discussion of the fiction in the magazines, and the remainder of the column provides us with warning for the baby science fiction writer about how difficult it is to break into the professional market. Alarming.

And more so when the next article is by someone who aspires to write what I would unfairly call MZB knock-offs. Am I to be stuck forever in this fanzine with advice for amateur writers? Is Steven H Silver, Hugo nominee, the very model of a future science fiction fan?

Maybe so, but the remainder of the contents vary across a wider range. And the problem with one issue of a fanzine - unless one knows a good deal about the editor (which in my case is not so) - is that the contents can be confusing. And so, after this heavy dose of sf writing oriented material we move directly into what has become almost the epitome of the mundane world: WHO WANTS TO BE A

MILLIONAIRE and its impact upon a fan. Interesting, but no more relevant and interesting than the kind of article you find in the magazines in a doctor's waiting room.

Michael Andaluz's method of getting "heavy" garbage removed seems likely to be effective (spiking it) and one can appreciate the problem he is addressing. Here in Australia the problem seems (at least in my experience) less likely to need radical solutions - but I may be wrong. [Indeed, he added parenthetically, within 24 hours of writing the above a neighbour dumped a large selection of Brother printers and photocopiers (and also lesser items) in the hope that it might be removed...]

Then, in the middle of all this light-hearted stuff, Steven Silver spends a page discussing 9/11. It seemed a sensible piece, and also covered some aspects I had not known about - the closing of tall buildings in other US cities in a knee-jerk reaction. But perhaps writing about current events in an irregular fanzine is not a model to be followed assiduously whenever the editor *thinks* the current events warrant it.

Tom Whitmore has what is really a filler plugging *ConJose* - a convention that it looks as though I will miss - but I doubt it really tells us much, and it is followed by another slack-jawed report on a visit to the Kennedy Space Center, augmented by footnotes in a typeface small enough to deter all but the goggle-eyed.

At last the main theme for the 'zine merges, with Mike Resnick's round-up of African movies followed by mock reviews of mock movies. My knowledge of Africa is very limited (working in central areas of South Africa, with a distinct lack of emphasis on the Great White Hunter), but nevertheless I did find this a fascinating read, even though I didn't find myself always agreeing. But I would have given MISTER JOHNSON a higher ranking than Resnick gave it.

The final piece seems like a great idea gone wrong: take some skiffy works, imagine that they have been made into movies, and provide reviews of those movies. In most cases I could handle the notion of movies being out of those SF works. The next step, of looking at the possible cast list, seemed a much larger task, and by the time some of the reviewers

were specifying who the producer was I was much out of my depth (much less the role played by the producer's brother-in-law). Some jokes there no doubt, but the promised *next* mock feature, con reports for Minneapolis in '73, seems much more promising and accessible. I hope Marc Ortlieb and Leigh Edmonds are asked to contribute.

An unsettled, and perhaps unsettling, fanzine.

Corflatch

Considered as a Helix Of Semi-Precious Stones

Corflatch Considered as a Helix of Semi-Precious Stones is written and perhaps edited by Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur Blvd., PMB 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107).
Email: Crossfire@aol.com. Published August 1, 2000.

Well, there's not a lot I want to say about this. It has been designed as a paper fanzine, with the PDF format (only 9 fonts, and only a couple of them being Adobe MM substitutes) being an afterthought. Arnie Katz is one of only two or three active fanwriters who can bring alive a convention in such a way that non-attendees can *almost* experience the whole thing. But in addition, Arnie garlands his writing with sociological speculation - chapter 9 is given over to such musings - without being dead serious. And the report is balanced by the immediately following section of fannish chit-chat. If the Hugoes really still belonged to us then Arnie Katz would be nominated every year.

GLOSS

This is the second serendipitous though not entirely serene issue of GLOSS, the fanzine that doesn't fade even after repeated washings. This issue features Victor Gonzalez on the TAFF trail, Lilian Edwards picking nits and hits out of the Nova award shortlist, Dave Hicks dragooned into delivering the goods on <plokta.con>, Ylva Spångberg seeing if feminism goes down any better in a Swedish accent

(down,boys!),Andy Hooper with some zine reviews that would have been hot off the press if the editors had pulled their collective fingers out sooner (out of what?one wonders?Corflu?blog?)and,er,lots and lotsa letters.Gloss is 100% fanzine,additive free and biodegradable,but may contain nuts (at least two,to be honest).Send letters,art and articles to Lilian Edwards <L.Edwards@ed.ac.uk>,39 Viewforth,Edinburgh,EH10 4EJ,UK;or to (NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS)Victor Gonzalez <squib@galaxy-7.net>,9238 4th Ave.SW,Seattle,WA,98106,USA.Published Nov.10,2000,in Edinburgh and Seattle.

Pretty specific, this one. From a (certainly PDF) design point of view this is efficiently designed, with only a single typeface with a few variations. The sans-serif typeface chosen (Usherwood) works well across the whole range of weights (except for the minuscule size used for the parts of a fanzine we never use, and which I have imitated above in revenge).

This restriction in variation occurs in the contents as well; while half the contents consists of highly readable short pieces. Editor Edwards draws our attention to Ylva Spangberg's short piece (a focus I strongly support), but the bulk of the fanzine deals with one topic: Ted White's piece about Ardis

Waters in *SQUIB 5*, Lilian's commentary in *GLOSS 1*, and the various further responses in this issue. Lilian (correctly in my view) identifies the issue as a generational/pomo one. The problem with the discussion is that it is genuinely contingent.

Let me illustrate with an example from some other work I am currently doing. Late in the nineteenth century the received wisdom (at least amongst the WMs) was that females were mentally inferior to males (hysterical, for example). So amongst feminists the major political struggle was to establish that in mental achievements females were no different from males. For most of twentieth century that battle had been won, and the underlying assumption was that the "mental powers" of females and males could be treated as the same. But in the late twentieth century evidence become strong that the notion that the "mental powers" of females and males were the same was wrong, with females being more accomplished than males in ways valued by most of society (including males). Thus at the lowest level the balance has swung from heterogeneity to homogeneity back to

heterogeneity. Such generational changes are hard for individuals to cope with, simply because individuals are normally "behind the times".

Patterns like this are to be discerned in the dialogue between Lilian and her critics - but I do not wholly side with Lilian, especially in remarks such as: "*I didn't and don't dispute the facts that were originally printed in **Squib** : so why were all these people doggedly writing in to tell me more and more facts about Ardis's life and loves?*". The words in *SQUIB* (and in *GLOSS 2*) are "facts" only in the sense that there are multiple pieces of paper with those words that are attributed to someone. But my non-pomo perspective intrudes here, and this is not helpful. But it is safe to say *GLOSS 2* will be an historical document in terms of its capacity to establish the relevance of particular kinds of discourse.

JACKPOT 5

This is **Jackpot #5**, January 2001. Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur Blvd., PMB 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107) is the editor, writer and enigma-in-residence..

Well, okay, so Arnie has also produced # 6 - but this one will do just fine for a review. This one has three basic typefaces and a total of about 11 variations: BellMT is replaced by Adobe Serif MM (I make these notes because the consequence is that the electronic version has an appearance different from the paper version, forcing completists to acquire both...)

This issue reads as though there is a continuum of thinking underlying it. Some parts are hard to follow (the extreme sports/wrestling component leaves me completely cold) but there is adequate variation amongst the bits that I can cope with.

Arnie even makes the spam he receives readable, in a longish piece that is part survey, part diary. I wonder what he would have done with the Nigerian banking scam and its descendants, which is what I get most of the time these days. (This is probably because my email system scoops out weird addresses, but leaves behind "real" names.)

In several places Arnie writes about electronic fanzines - but I remain unconvinced that designing a full-colour portrait format publication will ultimately be regarded as an

electronic fanzine. However Arnie has, as at the time of publication, begun to move towards the notion of distributing JACKPOT! only to people willing to reveal their identities (using the kind of password system that Bill Bowers and I still use). I still regard JACKPOT! as a "regular" fanzine that is distributed electronically and printed out by the recipient (or more commonly, the recipient's employer, allowing fandom to be subsidised by the mundane world).

Despite the effort that goes into JACKPOT! Arnie still remains troubled by the standard cry of e-zine publishers - "where are the letters of comment?"). I suspect that there is a conservation law in fanac, and that mailing lists, chatrooms and newsgroups have absorbed the bulk of what used to be available for letter hacking...

NO AWARD

A Fanzine

by

Marty Cantor

voted fandom's Resident Curmudgeon in a poll conducted in *Twink*

Address: 11825 Gilmore Street #105, North Hollywood, CA 91606, USA

Telephone number: (818) 761-9401

Edresses: louishoohah@netzero.net
martyhoohah@netzero.net

Well, indeed. Despite what I say, watch what I do. I actually read the paper version before reading the electronic (PDF) version. (The PDF version runs to a dozen fonts, mostly standard variations on standard typefaces. Because of the size of the whole ezine, Marty has split the PDF into two files. In my own case, this would make it possible to throw away the file that didn't interest me.)

What almost happened was that I found myself with a fanzine that didn't interest me (but I was wrong!). Introducing NO AWARD 10 is a Marc Schirmeister cartoon cover that doesn't seem to me to be up to his best work (but then I am influenced by the subject matter), followed by Thom Digby's study of the word "Plergb". Although Thom Digby has one of the most original minds to infest LASFS,

even he has a bad day at the office, and this doodle from the past is one of those sub-teen jokes that can be tolerated in (somewhat less than) moderation, it sets the standard for NO AWARD 10 since Marty keeps the joke going throughout the issue. It accordingly took me a couple of months to bring myself to read the rest of NO AWARD 10 - and the rest of it was a different story.

Anyway, the difference between the print and PDF form of the fanzine is that, as Marty says, colorised, and just like old movies that have been similarly treated, doesn't gain much from the process. The use of colour is restricted to borders and solid-colour backgrounds, so that the colorisation is minimal.

But once you get past the PLERGB nonsense, NO AWARD 10 is, as I have said, a very different business. Earl Kemp's recollections of his battles - there's scarcely any other word to use - with Robert A. Heinlein in the 1960s is compelling reading. Earl's return to active fanning is part of the continuing benefits we have had from the ageing process, as oldies return to their earlier hobbies. In the case of Earl Kemp we are doubly blessed, since

Earl knows where a lot of bodies are buried. (And of course, in the electronic form we have the continuous activity of Jack Williamson, who writes with such clarity about the events of seventy years ago!)

One aspect of Earl Kemp's writing about these long-gone days that ought to be favourably noticed is the fact that he rarely "remembers" conversations from far in the past. Fan memoirs all too often are constructed around "verbatim" recollections, and this is a trap Earl avoids. This is a Year's Best piece.

Like Earl Kemp's memory, Len Moffatt's continuing story of the Outlanders (in LA) stretches back far in time. But somewhere between Len and Marty the ball got dropped. While the *content* of Len's piece is fascinating, the organisation of the information is not what it could have been. Over two and a half pages we have (a) some introductory material about the Outlanders, (b) a self-contained story about the *1950 Fan Directory*, and (c) a trailing-off component that is mostly about Len's later fan activity. Each of these components is enjoyable, but I have a feeling that if they were distributed, instead, as three separate pieces,

the reader would avoid the sense of roller-coaster construction that seems to underlie the present arrangement.

The next few items need not detain us quite so long. Ed Green writes about the LA Riots and his National Guard activity in a way that is of no relevance to fandom and may very well be of interest only to Ed and Marty. And then Milt Stevens, so often a thoughtful reviewer, tells us the plot line of a George R R Martin novel for *four consecutive pages*; the last time I can remember anything so excruciating was 1956 when someone wrote to me describing the plot of *The African Queen* in about ten hand-written pages.

The last piece is a fanzine review column in which Joseph T Major deals with *Niekas*: I wonder what number it was, and when it was published? (I make this point because the reviewer summarises the fanzine's ambience as "mustiness"; surely this is a risky remark when you have failed to identify the age of the item you are referring to in any way until the top of the second column?) Although he doesn't mention it in this issue, Marty has noted his use of *Microsoft Publisher* in preparing NO

AWARD (in the letter-column, for example), and the dangers of doing this for layout purposes are demonstrated here, with codes being used rather than the appearance they are intended to stand for (e.g "H. G. Wells=s AThe Iron Landclads@"). Annoying stuff!

A reviewer is allowed his own perceptions of the content, and Major is uninhibited in telling us how just about every part of *Niekas* could be improved. The final paragraph, however, goes beyond this, announcing a philosophy I find hard to agree with: that fans, and by extension, fanzines, should be all things to all fen, and that specialised interest implies fossilisation.

The letter-column very clearly demonstrates the readers' interest in NO AWARD as a continuing a particular kind of fanzine. It does come up with good pieces, and probably every issue has something for everyone.

Three of a kind...

The next three fanzines have a few things in common, so the discussion will wander a little between the three.

Peregrine Nations I, April 2001

Peregrine Nations is a zine written (the first ish, at least) and published by J.G. Stinson, P.O. Box 430314, Big Pine Key, FL 33043-0314 USA. On the Internet: tropicsf@aol.com (please use *Peregrine Nations* in the subject line so I don't delete your msg. as spam).

Sardine Tin Gods I

January 2001
Erika Maria Lacey
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Rain on Cherry Blossoms I

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Three fanzines – perzines - all published for the first time in 2001, all available on the web, which illustrate some aspects of breadth of science fiction fandom.

Let me start with PN. There 14 fonts in this one, although almost all of the content is in Times. There are some aspects of *Peregrine Nations* that make it unusual, although they are perhaps linked. The editor's first fanzine has been closely preceded by a first convention (late 1999, report in this issue), and that follows soon after the discovery of fandom (1997) - well, NFFF. But Jan says she has been reading SF for over 30 years: I wonder whether there have been many “fans” who found “fandom” only after so many years of reading the stuff.

Although it seems that this zine has been made possible through the miracle of "electronic format", in fact PN seems to me much more like a paper fanzine that is also distributed in electronic (PDF) format - not that there's anything wrong with that.

Next, let me introduce ROCB. Eloise Beltz-Decker has been "active" in fandom longer than Jan Stinson, but has been reading SF for a rather shorter period. She's also attended rather more conventions. This is a first fanzine and in the PDF version seems to use about 7 fonts (but I can't tell accurately).

Erika Maria Lacey in her STG (yet another first fanzine [I'm not counting apazines for anyone, by the way], has about 9 fonts but there's something I can't quite check up on about her Times). Erika probably has about as much convention experience as Jan.

These three fanzines have quite a lot in common: naturally enough, an introduction to their to date life and earlier fanac because each of them is a first fanzine, and I have stripped a few facts out of those introductions. And there's also an enthusiasm for fandom and fanzine publishing that conceals any signs of

the "old fan and tired" syndrome which plagues so many of us - but I wonder how long that will last: regrettably, in each case there appears likely to be a respectable interval before a second issue is published.

But now for the special features of each fanzine.

Getting past the personal introduction (well managed in each of these three fanzines) I found myself stumbling through the next page of Jan Stinson's fanzine: not so much for a less-than-exciting piece about a TV program I have been lucky enough to avoid, but a filler at the bottom of the page about collecting. Jan writes:

"It appears to me that the years 1970 to 1980 in fandom haven't been well-preserved in terms of articles written and published about what went on then."

And she goes on to ask the old geezers to contribute articles, either original or reprints, for publication in PN or other publications. Is it just me, or is it reasonable to doubt that that decade should be singled out for special attention? Fandom, or at least the part of it I know about, has always celebrated its past, and worthwhile bits from the 1970s are sure to

reappear. And reanalysis of what happened when is also common enough. Jan does want to focus on articles by women, but I would have thought that a longer think piece might have given this notion a better introduction.

Jan also writes entertainingly about her first convention. But my impression may be uncharacteristic: I went to a lot of SF conventions before there were any “pro” authors in attendance. I suspect that those of us in Australia who got involved in fandom in the 1960s have the same experience and therefore see Jan’s report as exhibiting an excessive sensawunda . Entertaining, though.

The book reviews are of the kind of books I have nothing to do with, making it hard to say anything other than that although there are hints as why one should bother with the 432nd trilogy of this kind, they are not exactly overwhelmingly persuasive.

The issue finishes with some fanzine reviews that showed more personality than some of the earlier stuff: Jan manages to get across more than just a summary of the contents.

ROCB 1 has been generally praised since its recent appearance. In general, I go along with that evaluation, but there is one aspect of ROCB that is disappointing: it consists of short pieces, giving the reader less opportunity to get to know the writer/editor. There is compensation in the precision with which Eloise writes, but I hope that later issues will include longer pieces. But this may not be so, for Eloise succinctly describes (on page 2) the economic/technical questions faced by fanzine editors in this new millennium.

You know you are getting on in years when a new fan talks about reading her *grandmother’s* collection of *Analog*. And that’s what Eloise does in one of several autobiographical articles. And then when the fan starts explaining likes (or more accurately, dislikes) in fiction – then there’s something strange going on. No wonder some reviewers have already expressed very positive feelings about ROCB – you definitely want to read more.

I also feel strongly, and in much the same way, about Erika Lacey’s fanzine. STG is quite brief, but it begins to reveal something about

the editor, who begins her autobiographical “Introduction” with “I’ve had an interesting life:”

No kidding! Erika spent 11 years of her childhood on board a yacht, visiting at least 30 countries in that time. Given the magnitude of that exercise, I don’t think it surprising that I would want to know more about her childhood than the three pages she gives here. I guess there isn’t much more to tell about the time her father was offered 50 camels for her in the Sudan, but at one point Erika describes Greece as less friendly than Turkey – what makes her write that, I wonder? It would be wonderful if future issues of STG gave more details of some incidents in her life.

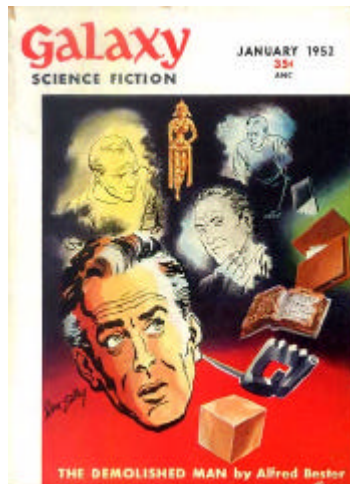
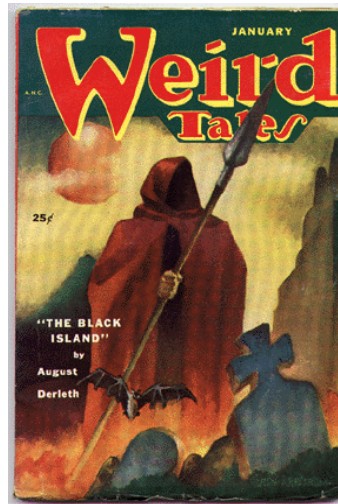
But it isn’t all about travel and the like: there’s a piece about electronic music (though not the kind that interests me) that at least carries the reader through to the end, and also a shorter piece about Damien Broderick’s *The White Abacus* (see, it is really a science fiction fanzine).

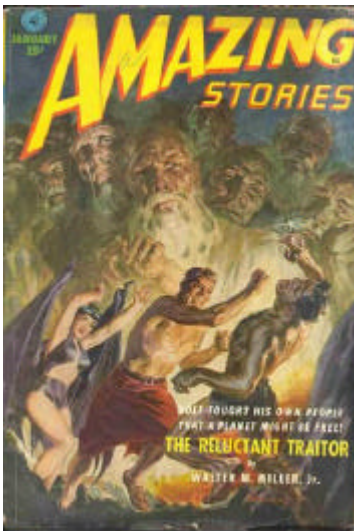
All of it is well written and, with luck, future issues will develop some of the themes introduced here.

These three fanzines from neoish female fans are encouraging. Those of us who worry about encouraging new fans need not worry too much when we have years like 2001. What’s more, the way the editors of these three fanzines came into “fandom” differed quite significantly. They did so at different ages and consequently in differing social circumstances. Science fiction continues to have appeal to a range of personality types, although there must be some social glue that binds us together.

I had hoped to include reviews of a rather larger number of fanzines here, to try to catch up, but the circumstances outlined in the editorial make that unwise. I’ll have to try to catch up with fanzine reviews next time around.

But I do want to make a note here about Cheryl Morgan’s *Emerald City* which, although it seems to me to focus too exclusively upon science fiction, nevertheless seems to have solved the “frequency” problem that I mentioned in the editorial and also, to a substantial extent, the problems of publishing in the electronic age. Enough!





***Fifty Years Ago
In Science Fiction:
January 1952***