

CLEAR ETHER

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(AND I'M BACK) × 2

What? The Prodigal Fan makes two NYUSFS meetings in a row? Yes, it should happen. Besides the Constellation collation, yours truly will be hitching up to New York (OI' NYC) for a couple of days, then flying back from Brooklyn. And one of those days is Thursday, September 9, a usual meeting day. It also turns out to be a Jewish New Year, so it looks like I won't be seeing some of my old friends that day. Ah, *just* like Old Times.

FRESHLY OLD NEWS

Short of acquiring a comment-writing computer programme, it looks like I may never catch up on back comments. The last batch I remember from last winter had a lot telling me how cruel and mean I was demanding comments from other zines. Hah! We'll see how much response this commentless zine racks up (**line those turned cheeks up, gang**) as opposed to the next, hopefully bulging-with-them zine.

While I'm devouring the latest Worldcon disty to find out what I missed, here's what you missed.

Myself I'm working more at nearly everything. More typesetting, (for more money for everything else), more semi-pro publications (**SNLA#2** is out, **NL12** is at the printer's, **Smart Set** goes on), but fewer fanpubbing, as you may have noticed, more writing (besides the book, I now have a Counter-Economic column in *Claustrophobia*, "Agorist Science." Sample copies available in my Con hotel room. And more activism (there's a War coming; **NL** predicted it two years ago, heh, heh). My personal life got mildly interesting last November but it was just more experience chalking.

Fannishly, I faded out of pubbing until last month, getting in a zine for *Frefanzine* and now this for *APA-v*. **NL12** has a pretty high SF quotient: Friedman, Koman, Neils Smith & Schulman, Geis, McElroy [report on her first pro pubbing], and you might throw in Jeff Riggensbach and Robert Anton Wilson). I made LosCon last November, LepreCon, WesterCon (San

MY FANNISH WAYS

Jose), and now Worldcon. I was asked to be Fan GoH at the 1984 CopperCon (Phoenix regional, weekend after Worldcon), and I hope all you LACon attendees will stop off in Phoenix on the way home to keep it going. There will be a Deader Dog Party (Dead Crane IV Party?) at the Anarchovillage between Cons; we're also planning a "Pre-WorldCon Party" there to mingle with early arrivals.

Then I'm working on a Charter or Group flight with Phoenix fans to Melbourne in 1985 (they won, didn't they?)...but enough about me; what've *you* been up to?

Elsewhere in Southern California, other NYUSFS expatriates fare as follows:

Bob Cohen joined yet another cult and is living in an ashram. **Vic Koman** moved to Palos Verdes with a fine new woman, sold two "John Cleve" Spaceways novels (*Jonuta Rising* is just out; why don't you all rush to buy it, tell friends, and make the publishers wonder what the hell is so good about *this* one?), is pitching two more he's written, and plans to go full-time pro this year. **J. Neil Schulman** saw *Alongside Night* make paperback, *The Rainbow Cadenza* make hard-cover, and *All The King's Horses* make screen treatment (he's back in Long Beach completing it). **Andy Thornton** continues to compute and is now playing with his sailing ship and his new synthesizer.

Hugo Fever—Comin' Alive?

I'm particularly proud of having read all the Novel nominees this year (well, almost, I finished *Courtship Rite* by Donald Kingsbury as I wrote this), a feat I had not accomplished for a decade. Ah, those hallowed, ivy-encrusted days at NYU when I had all that time for fannies commitment. This throwback to earlier reading habits was appropriate for the year the Old Masters came back (The Once And Future Pros?) for another (if not last) hurrah. In order of my subjective value, then:

WHAT NO MAN WAS MEANT TO KNOW!

Friday by Robert A. Heinlein. A counter-economic heroine! (*cream*) As always, Heinlein is Mr. Science Fiction. *What weak period?!*

Foundation's Edge by Isaac Asimov. A dead heat for first; I can't believe anyone could still write the Grand Old Stuff *a la* 1940s! I felt a rising excitement as layer after layer of honest-to-Ghu *plot* was deftly placed. O.K., minus one point for his unlibertarian politics; I forgot about it until after I'd rushed to climax.

The Pride of Chanur by C.J. Cherryh. I'm already thinking of her as an Old Master (Mistress?); for what it's worth, she's the first female pro to pull it off. In particular, I enjoy her realistic portrayal of space *commerce* and the uselessness to blatant destructiveness of government and politics to space development. I suspect that it's large implicit in her thinking at this point, but even if she's driven to portray this by force of logic, *vive sa logique!* This was not bad, but I'm still hot for Morgaine Frosthair and the *Downbelow Station/Merchanter's Luck* series and it's *hot* (female) battleship captain.

Courtship Rite by Donald Kingsbury got a vote above No Award simply because, to be fair, I hadn't read it in time for the deadline. But I did get to it soon after, and I need not have worried, it surprised me and earned its nomination after all. Kingsbury is a Frank-Herbert-level stf pro and *CR* is comparable to *Dune* in plot complexity and levels of conspiracy and counter-conspiracy. He may even surpass Herbert in the consistency and credibility of his postulated planet and derived society. I guessed the origin of the society from earlier readings of similar situations, but, maybe he appeals to the gnostic in me, I liked the feeling of being one or two-up on the uninformed readers. I'll watch for his future stuff and check out the earlier.

2010 by Arthur C. Clarke failed to be a disappointment because I had such low expectations. **2001** the film was *atrocious*; I saw it wide-screen in 1968 during a trainstop in Winnipeg and felt let down all the way to Wisconsin. This sequel had plot, made sense, and made me feel I didn't waste my time reading it, so I voted it just above **No Award**.

The Book of The New Sun by Gene Wolfe. I'm not voting for *Sword of the Lictor* above **N.A.** until I've read *Citadel of the Autarch*. It's to Wolfe's benefit; he would lose hands down anyway. Next year, the entire Book of the New Sun should be on the ballot, or *Citadel* as a stand-in, and will be voted on accordingly. He still may win me over, since he does have a plot and possibly a point. But, Ghu, does he plod and get bogged down in ornamental writing. I won't begrudge his fetish for archaicisms since I slip into neo-Victorianisms myself, but I wish he would cut the lush detail (which is lost on low-observant types such as myself) and *move*.

Other Awards *Blade Runner* was best SF Dramatic Presentation of 1983 just as *Return of the Jedi* is for 1984. Nothing else is in remote contention. And Phil

Dick died proud, as he should have.

Best Fanzine—*Science Fiction Review* and *Local*. Why else would all the pipsqueak second-handers conspiring to kick them off the ballot? Semi-honorary mention to *File 770*.

Best Fanwriter I voted for **Arthur Hlavaty**, since is One Of Us (both of my "us-es"), but **Dick Geis** is so great as ever. Both appear in **NL** semi-regular (Arthur, where's your article?).

Best Fan Artist **Alexis Gilliland** (another **NL** contributor) of course.

I didn't get novellas read, I don't take short fiction seriously, and I'm too weak on Art Appreciation fairly judge Pro Art (nobody mightily turned me off vote *against*). **Best Pro Editor**, James Baen of **T** wasn't on the ballot so screw the rest.

I'm more than a little worried about the Hugo next year. The Old Masters shot their wads. The unrecognized young masters remain unrecognized so doubt *Nagasaki Vector* (L. Neil Smith) and *Rainbow Cadenza* (J. Neil Schulman) will make it nomination. Unless something pops up in the next four months, it looks like *New Sun/Citadel* will wa away with it without a serious challenger. What have overlooked?

My Annual Bitch About L.F.S.

Actually, I'm not sure the Libertarian Futur Society will survive Michael Grossberg's sudden fadition (working on the *Indianapolis News* now). What can you say about the fannishness of someone leaving Austin just as it's about to win a NASFiC? Ghu knows what will happen at the Prometheus Award Ceremony at ConStellation—I haven't been informed.

One nice thing I *can* say about LFS: Victoria Var is a far better editrix of *Prometheus* than LFS has deserved so far. (What great taste! Reprinting my **CLEAR ETHER!** Attacks on the Space Program).

Assuming LFS is worth saving, will anyone care enough to do so? Consider that most libertarians will have their time filled next year fighting the War. Tu in next year.

NEXT ISSUE

I shall keep in touch. I have finally (*swallow) decided it's more important to get some zine in rather than put it off until all are properly commented. (Some of you may find yourself *improperly* commenting to.) Yes, I have seen the Light (*of the Enchant Duplicator*) and have Reformed (or is it Orthodoxed NYUSFS?). I can't comment on last disty (since haven't received the last two) so I'll . . .

Phoenix in 1987!

Phoenix in 1986 (Westercor)