



Thanks for the newest issue of *Fadeaway*, and the Dan Carroll illo that leads the way. The dino (I guess it's a T. rex) does not seem to be chastised by the boy. In fact, I think he's glancing at another team member.

Trash in this big city is a different matter from your experience. We have to pay for it, but we are encouraged to separate ours into landfill, recycling, and food or yard waste. We only pay for the landfill, and if we have only a little after the other categories are sorted out, we can use a "mini" garbage can and pay a lower rate. This works well for me and Suzle most weeks. (Landfill and composting (food or yard waste) are picked up weekly, while recycling - clean paper, cans, glass, metal, and some plastics - are taken away every other week.)

I admit I've always been baffled by *Buckaroo Banzai*; I've tried to watch it several times, at conventions and homes, and always fallen asleep fairly early in the film. I usually wake up about halfway through or later, and get to see the action-packed finale. A number of my friends have been enthusiastic, mentioning such quirks as the watermelon worked into some machinery in the lab, which *Buckaroo* or one of the band promises to explain later. Naturally, no one ever does.

I'm very surprised there were people who believed your articles about *Grain & Salt Publishing*, especially after your second, longer piece. Did they think book series about kid racketeers and prostitutes could really be published in the United States (or much of anywhere else, for that matter)? The only series that I think is the least credible is the *American Aryans* one, if it was published by a Nazi front organization in the 1930s. Even then, they'd probably be a lot less blatant. I'd also say that D.W. Howard does a good job of getting into the spirit of your hoax.

Like Ken Faig, Jr, I have not heard about China taking library discards, or scanning books into "a massive computer base." I looked in Google, but didn't find anything related to this. I probably didn't try the right combination of words to search on. (I did find stories about the Binhai Library in Tianjin; it was supposed to hold 1.2 million books, but because nearly all the books shown in photos of its unique curving shelves in a five story atrium were actually just photos, the number of books it has is a mystery. None of the stories I looked at said the books were US library discards, or that they were being scanned.)

I think this would be a good time to ask you to take me off your physical mailing list. I'd like to reduce the amount of paper in the house, so in future, could you send me a PDF instead? (I also am on Bill Burns' mailing list of new stuff at [eFanzines.com](http://eFanzines.com), so that's another way I can read each issue.

///I am amazed that *Buckaroo Banzai* has managed to survive at any level, let alone become a minor cult classic. The story is jumbled nonsense, with an incomprehensible plot and no characterization at all. This film must fall into that black hole know as 'High Camp'—material so bad it's good. Good for what, I always wondered? With so much good cinema out there, why the fascination with stuff that is clearly putrid? Beats me. I guess I'm out of step with modern civilization.

The discussion about China taking vast quantities of library discards and scanning them into some kind of huge computer data base was covered a few issues back. There are still tons o'books that libraries large and small, public, university, and private want to get rid of, and there are companies that will take those books off their hands and even provide transportation or pickup.

There are internet book sellers that specialize in ex-library titles, but clearly material that is in bad condition, or is duplicates of duplicates of duplicates of slow selling titles get dumped even there. They wind up in a big warehouse in California where they are loaded onto Chinese ships and go over to China at no cost to the firm handling the trade-off. This is because the US buys quite a lot of things manufactured in China, but since China does not buy a whole lot from us, that means Chinese ships tend to return to China empty, unless they can snag some kind of cargo, usually granting exceedingly cheap rates in the process. China takes it all, books in any condition, fiction, non-fiction, children's books, pamphlets, everything.

I was also amazed to learn recently that China accepts a lot of our plastic trash, including recyclable soda bottles and plastic food containers. For some reason I always assumed that there were plenty of companies recycling that kind of plastic in the US, but apparently there aren't. Tons of

plastic gets compressed into bails and shipped over to China where they turn old plastic into new products.

The reason I learned all this is because in retaliation against Trump's China tariffs, the Chinese government has announced restrictions on the type and quantity of plastic scrap they will accept in the future, specifically, those so-called recyclable soda bottles. There appears to be a minor panic among US trash recycling centers as to what they will do with all that stuff in the future.

Strange times indeed.///

**George Phillis; 48 Hancock Hill Dr', Worcester, MA 01609**

As always, *Fadeaway* was enjoyable. I was puzzled by your trash issues. Oxford appears to have a town dump, er, transfer point, open to the public at many hours, and claiming to take everything you mentioned off your hands. Perhaps the web listings are out of date.

Cover: Bad dog! You ate my good outfielder!

Buckaroo Banzai was a very strange film, though I thought the plot was up to usual stfnal film standards. For example: Forbidden Planet.

The Krell door appears to have been melted, e.g., welded shut. How did the heroes get out? The answer, one proposes is that the heroine happens to know another path. And why did the lab have a 'destroy planet' button?

How did the heroine know this? There is an obvious explanation. And the planet destruction button? There are two obvious explanations.

Grain and Salt--oh, dear. Books fortunately lost forever into the depths of time. The Boy Buccaneers sound suspiciously like The Submarine Boys. Passing though the Kiel canal in a UK submarine in the middle of World War 1 by pretending to be a German submarine was particularly clever and, no, I did not make that up.

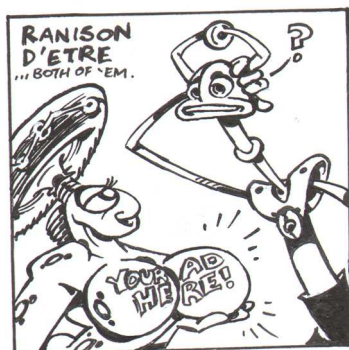
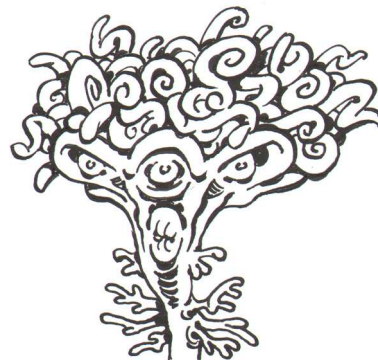
I, for one, am extremely grateful that you were willing to edit *Tightbeam*. Thank you! I have passed N'APA off to Jefferson Swycaffer, and taken on Jon Swartz as a *Tightbeam* Editor, so we are continuing to publish. I'm sorry that the N3F does not offer the sort of support that you wanted for *Tightbeam*.

I did realize, more than a little late, that the N3F does not have a cosplay bureau, even though STFNaI cosplay appears to have been invented by a founding member of the N3F and his apparent girlfriend

///If the town of Oxford still had a working city dump none of my trash disposal problems would exist. However the town dump was closed and capped in the late 1980s, and ever since residents depend on commercial trash haulers to remove their garbage. As I mentioned in the write-up, since I only fill one garbage bag maybe every four or five weeks, paying for this service is ridiculously expensive, hence my need to discover more, uh, creative ways to take care of my accumulation.

Other science fiction films have indeed been burdened by bad science and a series of well neigh unbelievable coincidences to keep the story plot moving, but so far as I'm concerned, nothing in Buckaroo Banzi made sense or ever came together to create a coherent plot. As I say, I absolutely do not understand how this film achieved cult classic status.

Actually I enjoyed most of the Submarine Boys series books, despite the absolutely unbelievable setup that three lads in their mid teens would be building and operating submarines in the period before and during the Great War. Irving Hancock wrote those stories under a house pseudonym and he could always come up with interesting basic plots, even if some of the finer details got glossed over. Hancock was a very prolific writer in the juvenile series book field, and created the science fiction Conquest of America series that has enjoyed far more popularity now than it did when it was originally published.///



**Lloyd Penney; 1706-24 Eva Rd.; Etobicoke, ON CANADA M9C 2B2**

Happy Hallowe'en! Many thanks for *Fadeaway 57*, and what can I say, these t-rexes need to be better trained. Drop it...DROP IT!! More in the next paragraph.

We are part of a very wasteful society, and the 4.4 pounds of trash per person doesn't surprise me. We do try to reduce our footprint, and what we finish using, we try our best to recycle. There are recycle bins at the side of our building, and we have recycle bags in our apartment to keep the recyclables under control. We also compost here. I admit that few people in the building do all this, but there is some measure of recycle with the garbage pickup. We might fill a trash bag in three weeks. I keep reading that this isn't enough, and more people need to recycle, but I expect that we will kill ourselves through apathy and ignorance. We were too stupid to succeed.

Buckaroo Banzai might be a confusing movie, but only if you've seen it in full, which I have not. We all seem to have seen snippets of it, and we know some of the best lines, but while it has become a cult film, that doesn't mean to say that I have to see it.

The local...if Ken Faig couldn't get through a hundred pages of one of the Jemison books, perhaps I don't feel so bad for having not read anything new in the past ten years or so. I am not saying it's bad, but it may be that SF has left me behind in more ways than one. I have a couple of recent books to review, so there's the chance I might get reading again.

Few parents give their kids the initiative to be different and creative. When I told my father I wanted to be a writer, he asked what I intended to do for a living. When I went for a degree in journalism, he flat out refused to help me financially, so I paid for all of my schooling.

I think you'd still be editing *Tightbeam* for the N3F if you were getting much input and feedback from the club members. Even some of the executives didn't seem to understand why you'd want the feedback from readers. This is one of the reasons I write as many letter of comment as I do, to provide at least part of the audience a faned needs when he puts enough creativity into an issue of his fanzine.

My loc... I mention the new *Amazing Stories*, and I offered my services to editor Ira Nayman as a copy editor/proofreader. He's taken me up on it, so I have edited and proofed the basics of the second issue, and I am hopeful, I've made it a better issue. Now to see if people will pay for further issues.

It is indeed Hallowe'en Day, and we were looking for something that might happen over the weekends before and after the actual day. But once again, we are out of luck, and if there were any parties, we were not invited. I expect tonight will be a quiet night.

///Yep, those T-Rex puppies are so damn hard to train. No matter how well fed and attentive they might be, it just seems they are always trying to snap up the occasional stray cat, or dog, or little league team short-stop. What can a pet owner do?

I try to recycle everything I can, including reusing mailing envelopes and any cardboard packing that I might received thru the mail, but sometimes I wonder if it's worth the effort. Refer to a previous page for comments about China's handling of our plastic trash, including recyclable soda bottles and plastic food containers.

If you have never seen Bucakaroo Banzi don't waste a second of your life watching it. It is NOT a good film, or even remotely comprehensible plot-wise. But yes, some of the quotes are memorable.

Uh, that was me, making a reply to Ken Faig saying I have never been able to read even one of the three Kim Jemison novels. Actually, I only tried the first two, and never managed to make it even thru the first hundred pages of either. After that experience I'm sure not going to bother with the third. Clearly somebody likes them, enuf somebodies to give all three books Hugo Awards, but it's garbage so far as I'm concerned.

I hope the new *Amazing Stories* can manage to survive. Things that worry me are the fact that the mag will have both a print and a pixel version, but both of those editions will have to be ordered direct from the publisher. As I understand it there will be no newsstand distribution, altho I suppose the publisher could display and sell material at various SF conventions. I recall a couple of years ago being at a convention where a few mags I had previously believed were only webzines, such as *ClarkSpace*, had a table full of different numbers for sale as print editions. Altho



some webzines have managed to survive for a few years, the attrition rate for most pixel fiction publications is pretty grim.///

**Ray Palm; Boxholder; PO Box 2; Plattsburgh, NY 12901-0002**

ThanX for Fadeaway #57.

Re: Dan Carroll's cover painting called Bad Boy. Once again great work. You mentioned before he wasn't pursuing a professional career. Is it because turning a talent/interest into a job sucks all the fun out of it?

Re: Buckaroo Banzai. I recognized the name David Begelman in your article, he of Indecent Exposure infamy. The guy was a crook, forging actor Cliff Robertson's name on a check. So what happened when Cliff turned the crook in? Begelman was portrayed as the victim while Cliff got blacklisted. Hollywood ethics. Why do people defend a blatant crook? Then again considering present circumstances in this country...

I've never seen Buckaroo Banzai but it sounds like what I called a coke movie ("This is a very confused movie.") A coke movie is one apparently conceived while using cocaine, produced while using cocaine, and usually appreciated while under the influence of coke. Remember when it was snowing in Hollywood? I created the coke movie label after watching the movie "Modern Problems." Regarding this project a IMDb wrote: "Wrought with visible camera equipment, transparent special effects, weird and upsetting continuity errors (including teleportation), and more shots of the boom mic than of [Chevy] Chase himself, Modern Problems is much like a poorly edited home movie." Or one that was possibly created thanks to lines of coke. I think I'm on the right track when considering the demon powder scene in "Modern Problems."

Re: Grain & Salt Publishing: Reminds me of the stories about people seeking an original copy of the Necronomicon (not that stupid modern day paperback) at libraries and through booksellers. This was spontaneous, not a planned joke-hoax like your efforts.

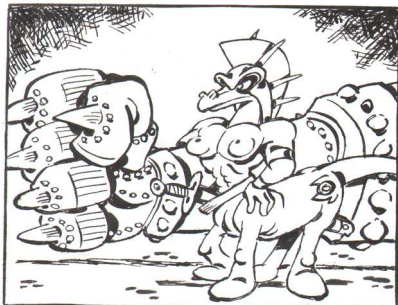
///Dan Carroll is not pursuing a professional career in art because he has a good job in the real world. He is a district manager of a large uniform/industrial laundry outfit that pays good money but also requires him to do a lot of traveling, and also to be the guy who takes care of major problems. He intends to do artwork after he retires, which will not be for another few years.

David Begelman was indeed a big time, long time crook. Most people in Hollywood were prepared to forgive his first (public) criminal actions because as head of MGM studios at the time he was approving, producing and turning out a steady stream of hit movies. Major success allowed most people to forgive little things like forgery, embezzling and a serious drug habit, as long as he was keeping the hit machine fine tuned. Plus he had promised to make good on all the losses for the criminal actions that had come to light at that time.

Then, a few years later, after his winning streak faded and he turned in five or six losers he got booted from his position at MGM and formed his own production/promotion company with new people, specifically to produce the Buckaroo Banzai movie.

In the mid 1990s, when a fresh round of embezzlements, slippery contact negotiations, and other swindles became know, people were not so forgiving. Rather than go to jail he committed suicide. He apparently had a very engaging personality and he knew all the right people in the film industry to get things done for setting up and turning out movies, independent or otherwise. It is almost solely thru his actions that the Buckaroo movie was ever made (not that this is any kind of ringing endorsement, so far as I'm concerned.)

I don't think Buckaroo Banzai can actually be classed as a coke, or druggie movie. The creators of the character/movie worked on it for fourteen years before finally getting the opportunity to put their ideas on film. As I said in my article, I'm sure they themselves knew what the character and the plot were supposed to be about, but they failed completely to pass that information along to the viewing audience who did not have fourteen years of working memories to go with the film that finally emerged.///



**Steve Johnson; Anchorage, Alaska [stevezoo@gmail.com](mailto:stevezoo@gmail.com)**

If you and I lived in the same town, rather than thousands of miles apart, I would gladly mow your lawn in exchange for reading copies of some of those old comics that don't sell. You could even have them back after I added to their load of eye tracks.

Lawn mowing is one of those seasonal activities I do not mind. Each summer, pushing a reel type lawn mower, being careful to overlap my passes, provides weekly continuity with my fifteen year old self. I suppose it helps that my lawn is relatively small (.14 acre less footprint of house, patio, and long driveway).

Regarding garbage: Garbage collection apparently seems expensive, relative to waste produced, just about everywhere. My household hardly ever fills the container picked up each Tuesday morning by the mechanical arm of a truck that may be self-driving ten years from now. The household utility cost that gets my attention, however, is the residential water bill in Anchorage: more than \$90 a month, regardless of how much water a household uses.

The main cost of providing water and sewer in Anchorage is the cost of maintaining the systems for distribution and waste collection. The water utility does not have to pay for water, which the utility obtains from glacier fed lakes. The expensive process of metering usage would not report significant differences between the cost of providing water services to a two person household and a ten person household. In the case of residential waste disposal, my hunch is that the costs of providing services are more evenly divided between the volume-based landfill fees and long term personnel and vehicle operation/maintenance costs.

You may note I did not touch your ethical question about the ethics of secretly adding trash to a neighbor's garbage container. I would not be surprised if garbage collection contracts included fine print outlawing the practice of "sharing" a single waste container with additional households.

"Grain & Salt" was amusing, in the long tradition of fan fiction related to the objects of our collecting activities. The repeated nods to the fictional nature of the G&S publications reminded me of the "imaginary stories" in Superman comics sixty years ago (which of these stories were not imaginary?)

I was also reminded of the mercenary and sordid tradition of forged fake first editions of works by notable authors, described in the case of Thomas Wise by the bibliographers John Carter and Graham Pollard in *An Enquiry Into the Nature of Certain Nineteenth Century Pamphlets* (1934).

I wonder if anyone has ever written and printed fake vintage sf fanzines--other than as alleged reprints.

Back in the sixties and seventies, in a fanzine called *Tales of Torment*, John Stockman wrote about a fictional fanzine called *Victor's Views*. *Victor's Views* was an obvious reference to *Norb's Notes*, published by Charles Reinsel--"Victor Vackie" in *Tales of Torment*. Though I received an issue or two of *Tales of Torment* in the sixties, it was only in the past few years that I was able to appreciate these stories of semi-crazed collectors of comics and books by Edgar Rice Burroughs. *Ramble House* reprinted several of these stories in print and e-pub editions called *The Crack Pot*, edited by Dwight Decker, described at <http://www.ramblehouse.com/crackpot.htm>. Bill Schelly reprinted another story, "Armand the Terrible" in *Comic Fandom Reader* (Hamster, 2002).

I still have a few frankly ratty old comics I purchased from Charles Reinsel in the summer of 1965. That transaction was in person -- we met on the front porch of the house where the late Joe Wehrle, Jr., was then living as a student in Indiana, Pennsylvania. My main memory of that meeting was Reinsel's bitterness toward Jerry Bails, whom Reinsel said received too much credit for his role in comics fandom. Years later--early in the current century--I was genuinely surprised to read, on the [fanac.org](http://fanac.org) website, that Reinsel was convicted of murdering his ex-wife and her new husband in 1986. It was only after I found newspaper confirmation of Reinsel's crimes that I no longer attributed the story to "fake news" planted by one of the numerous fans Reinsel alienated or threatened in the course of his activities in comics and Burroughs fandom and the related world of Postal Diplomacy gaming. It was tough to believe that a fellow hobbyist, even one with an abrasive personality, had the capacity to commit murder.

In this issue of *Fadeaway*, you again mentioned your interest in dime novels. Given that interest, I wondered if you had an opinion about the dime novel inspired works by Paul Guinan and Anina Bennet: one series about a robot named Boilerplate and other series about Frank Reade, Jr. The Frank Reade book incorporate reprints of the original stories. I have read only the Boilerplate book and certainly found it amusing. Of the Frank Reade book, I have seen only the website description. In each case, I was impressed by the technical competence of the graphics. In the Boilerplate book, Guinan and Bennet integrated Boilerplate's activities with historical events in ways similar to George MacDonald Fraser's method in the *Flashman* novels. Unlike *Flashman*, however, *Boilerplate* was not a amorous scoundrel. A Boilerplate webpage is available at

<https://www.bigredhair.com/books/boilerplate/>. The Frank Reade, Jr. page is <https://www.bigredhair.com/books/frank-reade/about/>

///I would love to have somebody mow my lawn. I absolutely loathe the whole process. I've been waiting over forty years for some high school or college kid to knock on my door and offer to mow the lawn for pay. It hasn't happened yet, and I doubt that it ever will at this late date.

There are, of course, various "lawn service" companies that will include lawn mowing as part of their total package. The package is always very expensive, and includes things like fertilizing, chemical weeding, selective landscaping and other add-on items I have absolutely no use for. So I'm stuck with the hateful drudgery of mowing the lawn every summer.

Wow! \$90 a month for city water seems exorbitant. Water services in most towns or cities I've ever lived in are very modest indeed. Where I currently live I have well water, so all I pay is the electricity to operate the pump and the water tanks/heaters. Of course I have very hard water, so every dozen or so years I have to have a new water heater put in, and the cost of that, with a concrete inner lining, sure isn't cheap. But I think over all I come out well ahead of the game by having my own deep well water supply.

My suspicion is that a big chunk of your water charge is probably going to pay off a semi-new city sewage system. I avoid that problem by having a septic tank to take care of my modest sewage runoff. The town would like to get a lot of the town on its new sewer system, but this is so expensive, and takes so long to install that those of us who live well beyond the immediate center of the community are likely never to have to worry about that. Running new sewer lines about a mile and a half down a busy feeder highway from the center of the town outward has taken over two years, and some ungodly amount of money, and is just now being finished up, hopefully before the winter snow and ice arrives.

I don't know if anybody has faked old SF fanzines, but there is a lively business reprinting the early comic book fanzines and passing them off as originals. Some of those early zines sell for good money, with not a lot of copies surviving either, so there is a strong temptation to fill the vacuum with reprint copies. Apparently some collectors don't mind copies, if they are offered as copies and sold at a reasonable price, but there are dealers who have counterfeiting old fanzines down to a minor science, and the copies are easy to pass off to collectors who have never had much experience with mimeographed or dittoed zines.

I used to get *Norb's Notes* and *Tales of Torment* back in the day as trade for my zines. I always thought *Norb's Notes* was a crappy fanzine, a view lots of other people seemed to agree with. John Stockman had a bunch of his faan fiction published there before he started his own mag. Dwight Decker apparently has plans to issue another volume of Stockman faan fiction reprints (with the original illos) in addition to the one he put out a few years back. In Stockman's world everybody is a slimeball and every fan activity ends badly. I have to say, a little of that goes a long way for me.

I am familiar with the husband and wife team of Guinan & Bennet mostly from comic books. I know of their Frank Reade book but have not read it. I've got plenty of original dime novels and weekly titles I haven't gotten around to reading yet to worry about the new recreations.///



**William Breiding; 2507 N. Rita Ave -- #1; Tucson, AZ 85719**

*Fadeaway 57* had an air of whimsy to it. Though for the life of me I don't understand why you would have spent so much time researching a film ("Buckaroo Banzai") that you pretty much were disenchanted with. I somehow managed to never have seen "Buckaroo" even though Peter Weller was one of my favorite genre actors from the 1980s. I was aware of its cult status but never bothered to find out why,

unlike "Tank Girl", which was quite enjoyable, all these years later. (Peter Weller semi-recently directed and starred in a number of episodes of the very well done "Longmire" series, based on Craig Johnson's books, which are quite to my taste.)

I've decided that the entire Grain and Salt saga is a hoax, including your historic context, covering the supposed cause and effect of its original appearance. I'm having a hard time believing that anyone, let alone serious collectors, could have taken it seriously. It was an enjoyable read, and quite amusing. I read only a very few Boy's Own adventures when I was a kid, but as an adult have certainly been aware of them as a distinct genre. I loved the way your book titles became increasingly more outrageous until we come to the penultimate genesis of the American Aryan Brotherhood.

Your adventures in trash disposal was also amusing. A number of times in my life I've been in your position of covertly dumping trash in other people's bins. I've never quite understood why people would get upset if you dump stuff into their cans, but they do, and so we are reduced to skulking about in the middle of the night finding the proper bin in which to dump.

Dan Carroll's painting is great, and a wonderful lead-in to an amusement-filled ish. I will be sure to hit [efanzines.com](http://efanzines.com) to see it in color.

Going back to #56, I'd like to chime in with some of your loccers about appreciating Tom Feller's look at the Hugo nominees. Tom Jackson, a fan originally from Oklahoma, and now living in Ohio, used to joke that I never read any science fiction published after 1966; at the time that was probably actually true, but no longer. I've enjoyed a bunch of 21st century authors and works in recent years. But I have to confess I'd heard of very few of the authors that were vying for the awards in Tom's piece, and from his summations, wasn't moved to say "hey, that sounds interesting!", unlike the leaned Mr. Lerner, who is always interesting. Tom's piece was fascinating, but I'm going to go back to reading Mike Resnick's "Kirinyaga", now, and so far have found to be quite good.

///So far as the Buckaroo Banzai review goes, when I write an article or review of a movie, I try to provide some background info which often helps place the film culturally or in a significant time frame. Also because when reviewing a badly written, incomprehensible mess like Buckaroo Banzai, saying "this is a really stupid, crappy movie!" doesn't even fill a single paragraph, let alone a page.

I had some trouble believing juvenile book collectors people would take the Grain & Salt books seriously myself, but in the 1970s there was still plenty of research being done on obscure book companies and juvenile series books that were rare or even unknown to the general fan. However I thought my full length article would have tipped anyone off, but, no, it didn't. As I said, the biggest shock was seeing want ads for Grain & Salt book titles listed in respected antique and collecting journals like *A.B. Bookman* and *Paper Seller*. After S. W. Howard's follow-up article appeared a lot of people did catch on to the joke, but not all. As mentioned in the issue, I was dealing with the fallout for most of the rest of that year.

Tom Feller's article on the Hugo Award nominees did cause me to go looking for a few books I had never heard of before. The problem these days is that there is way too much good stuff out there for anybody to keep up with. A lot of the shorter material also turns up in internet mags, many of which I have never even heard of before. This is why I am enthusiastic about the policy of recent WorldCons to send out e-book versions of every novel and shorter piece of fiction nominated for the Hugos to anyone who signs on as a full or supporting convention member. The value received is certainly worth the price.///

**Darrell Schweitzer; 6644 Rutland St.; Philadelphia, PA 19149**

Thanks for FADEAWAY #57. I figure I had better do something to justify your sending me the magazine, since I do enjoy it.

So, here is a preliminary comment at least. About BUCKAROO BANZAI. This movie left me profoundly unimpressed when it first came out and I have not seen it since. It struck me as an inept and possibly cynical attempt to deliberately create a cult "midnight movie" along the lines of THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW, which, after all, sold quite a lot of tickets to those who made attending it a way of life. But you can't create a phenomenon like that deliberately. It is a fluke when it happens, which is why it is described as a phenomenon, not as a product. Products are predictable. Phenomena are not.



BUCKAROO BANZAI struck me as merely incoherent, stupid, and badly sound edited. The sound-editing was particularly bad. The background noise was too loud, so often the dialogue became unintelligible. When I saw the movie in a theater, there were perhaps a dozen people there, but five or six in the front row were indeed the sort of fanatical cultists the producers hoped to attract. These people were repeating every line of dialogue, as if they had already memorized the entire film. Perhaps they had. But they were helpful for once, where otherwise that sort of thing could be irritating. They were far easier to understand than the film itself, and functioned as an aural equivalent of subtitles, to help me through what might have otherwise seemed (even more) like gibberish.

By the way, I have encountered one person in real life with almost as wide a range of accomplishments as the title character. Catherine Asaro is not only a many-times nominee for Hugos and Nebulas and a former president of SFWA, but she also has a Ph.D. in chemical physics from Harvard, has worked as a scientist, teaches science and math, and is also a rock musician and dancer. But she's always intelligible.

**Michael Ambrose; Charlton Spotlight; Argo Press; P.O. Box 4201; Austin, TX 78765-4201**

I'm remiss (as always) in acknowledging each fabulous issue of *Fadeaway* that lands in my mailbox, and honestly, I don't know why you haven't dropped me from your mailing list long before now. But I appreciate receiving the zine and hope you will continue it as long as it's fun to do so. In this case, I have at least a half-fast excuse for not replying sooner, since I've undergone cataract surgery the last couple weeks, and it's only now that I can finally see well enough to read the ish and write an e-mail response.

Enjoyed all the offerings. For many years, especially in lean times, I too would seek out clandestine disposition of household trash, but it's gotten harder and harder to do so anymore. A few years ago, we broke down and subscribed to a pickup service. The cost is far out of proportion to the amount of trash we generate, but it beats driving all over town to find an open dumpster. I still recycle all discarded household paper at the office, where there are several large bins for that purpose, and they don't seem to care if you bring in your own.

Not being much of a film buff, I've never seen "Buckaroo Banzai" and probably never will, but I remember the minor stir it created when it came out. Also enjoyed the "scholarly background" on the Grain & Salt book line. I'm reminded of tales of the old days of fandom, when folks would make extensive and tedious inquiries of educational institutions about whether Abdul Alhazred's "Necronomicon" was available for examination, along with the other fabulous tomes referenced by Lovecraft and his circle.

I had a fun time reading the Brad Foster interview in #55. I've seen his work all over the place for so many decades, and have seen the man himself (and introduced myself a few times, though I doubt he'd remember me) at ArmadilloCon over the years, that I feel as though I know him. I'm glad to see he's still active and creative and inspired. I don't know why he never submitted anything to my old SF zine *Argonaut* back in the day (1977-97), which would have been perfect for his work--or why I never solicited anything from him.

As for my current publishing, it's been almost three years since I released a new *Charlton Spotlight*. I'm not sure if I'll ever do another. What with one thing and another, it's gotten steadily more difficult to put the time in to produce the magazine, never mind the mounting expense of printing and distributing the thing. Diamond's orders over the years have followed a steadily declining curve such that their orders don't even come close anymore to meeting more than a small portion of the printing cost. And I'm unwilling to take the magazine down to a more bare-bones level. I'm afraid it's either full color and slick paper, or nothing. However, I do have plans to produce at least one more POD comic book sometime next spring--perhaps the last release from Argo Press.

An aside on old comics sales: A couple of years ago I decided to start dismantling my collection via eBay, starting with the cream. Although eBay selling is certainly a crapshoot, I've found that, particularly for Marvel keys, Overstreet values pretty much go out the window for copies in any condition. The demand for everything else, though, is pretty marginal unless the book is in higher grade. There are simply too many choices, and the buyer pays a lot less to walk in the door than the seller does, so unless you simply enjoy the process of making the odd dollar here and there this way, or aren't too proud to collect a few pennies from Half-Price Books, you're probably better off donating your collection to Goodwill.

Thanks again for a fun read!



///I would not advise anyone to donate their comic collection to Goodwill. For a number of years now Goodwill has had an unofficial/official policy of accepting donations of books, comics, and magazines, then, as soon as the donor has left, promptly dumping all the books and mags into their dumpsters. It is apparently too much work for them to bother sorting, racking and trying to sell printed matter to make it worth their time.

The Salvation Army stores are OK with books, but they also don't seem to know what to do with magazines or comics. My advice has always been to try and interest friends and relatives first, then contact a local, or even a not so local comic book store. These stores will not pay much money for your stuff (mainly because every comic book store I have ever know, including my own when I was still in that business), already has a ton of back issue comics they can't get rid of and often can't even sort thru), but they will offer something, and the comics will eventually go back into the hands of other collectors, rather than being trashed immediately, or read by the uncaring children of relatives and then trashed.

Fans seem to be susceptible to fake books or books that some other source implies are genuine. The request for the assorted tome mentioned by Lovecraft actually resulted in a new Necronomicon book being written and published, including an expensive hardcover edition and a mass market paperback. I sold multiple copies of both back when I was running my retail SF book/comics/game store.

Equally odd to me were the constant flow of people who came into the place looking for a book titled "The Adventures of Luke Skywalker", based on subtitles in the Star Wars movies and the first novel. No such book(s) exist, but even after the subtitle was taken off the reprinted versions of the first Star Wars novels people kept asking for it, and I'm pretty sure a lot of them didn't believe me when I tried to explain that no book(s) under that title ever existed.

Sorry to hear that you are almost ready to give up on the *Charlton Spotlight*. I agree that times are tuff for magazines devoted to comics history or appreciation, and it seems like TwoMorrows Publishing have what is left of that market tied up tight with their selection of titles. Perhaps you could make an arrangement with Bill Schelley to have a Charlton section in one of his magazines, or at least run the occasional article in one the different mags he puts out.///

AND THEM MIKE WROTE---

Of course, you're right about Goodwill's attitude toward donations of printed matter, and it was probably unwise of me to suggest it. In the Austin area there are several smaller Goodwill stores that do stock books fairly heavily (though not necessarily category-organized or even alphabetized). Definitely true of magazines and the like, however, as far as instant discard goes. Maybe some schools would be interested in receiving mags having some educational content, like NatGeo, etc. I dunno.

And true that local comics shops are probably the best places to dispose of comics you can't sell. A few bucks' worth of store credit in lieu of a little cash might be all right. My local shop, Austin Books (one of the best shops in Texas and maybe the country) has deep back issue stock and will always make an offer on back issues, however small. So far I've been trying eBay, but at some point it's just not worth the trouble.

I actually did approach John Morrow a few years ago about sponsoring *Charlton Spotlight*, but he gracefully declined. I decided to soldier on with it for a few more issues anyway, but at this late date, I think it's time for this soldier to retire! I've written numerous Charlton-themed articles for *Back Issue* and *Alter Ego*, but I think I may be through with that as well. Time to rest on my dead end--er, my laurels!

**Jefferson P. Swycaffer; P.O. Box 15373; San Diego CA 92175**

Oopsie, missed issue 56. Clumsy! On to 57! Beautiful Dan Carroll cover, creepy as all hades, but beautiful!

re trash woes, you could always go the "Alice's Restaurant" route and toss it down a ravine somewhere. My papa did that (shame on him!) Lucky he didn't get caught, the way the guy in the song did. A determined



detective could probably have found identifying material. Receipts, etc. Okay, bad plan.

re "Buckaroo Banzai," while I've never seen it, I do know enough about it to be able to tell it "ain't my cuppa." I like a bit more coherence in movies. I don't insist on rationality; "Murder by Death" is my favorite movie ever. And I think that "2001: A Space Odyssey" is the best movie ever made, although it does lack a little in the coherence department. But that's how it is with tastes: we can \*try\* to rationalize them, saying that there are certain rules we want followed, but the ultimate truth is that we like what we like. Lord knows the movie-makers don't know the secret, or else they'd all be successful!

(A friend read a scientific paper once, where a large number of movies were analyzed statistically, and the conclusion was that whether a movie is a success or a flop is very large a matter of random chance. There are no "magic ingredients" that make a movie a winner.)

Fascinating article on the Grain & Salt Publishing Company. If you'd published this in your April edition, I'd think the entire article was a (delightful!) hoax. Even now, I'm not wholly sure! (Poe's Law wins again!) If it's all real, it's astonishing, even including the swerve, at the end, toward Nazi/KKK themed material. If it's all stuff you made up -- then shame on you...and well done!

(New Wave SF author John T. Sladek wrote a book on revisionist astrology, "Arachne Rising," under the pseudonym James Vogh. It was a modest success in the field, and actually had a lasting impact, with some astrologers incorporating his modifications. It was nothing but an elaborate hoax, and Sladek himself described it as the biggest waste of time of his entire life. But he pulled it off, and that's the joy of the art form.)

re Rich Dengrove re Toastmasters, they're a jolly fun organization, and I had a job-sponsored membership for several years. One of their most valuable services is treating the tendency many of us have, in speech, of using "filler" noises, like "uh" and "um" and "y'know" and "I mean." I've become much more sensitive to these in my own speech -- I still use them far too much, but I'm aware of it when it happens! I was listening to one journalist on American Public Media who said "y'know" more than 25 times in a three minute broadcast. Memo: don't do that!

re Tom McGovern re Judge Dredd, Mega-City One, in the Judge Dredd universe, was always a "police state," but the concept was, nominally, that of the "benevolent tyrant." The Judges keep order, brutally, but with the ultimate goal of saving millions of lives. The universe took a nasty twist with the "Democracy" story arc, where the people wanted a return to democratic ownership of the government, and the Judges clamped down, hard, in a brutal fashion that appeared more self-serving than life-saving. Personally, I think these were badly written stories, and betrayed the underlying concept of the JD universe.

(One of the keys to understanding the early Judge Dredd stories is to realize that they're \*funny\*. They're low, broad, violent humor. And the real key to the joke is that everyone \*knows\* it's a joke, except Judge Dredd, who is not only the straight man, but also the "foil," the pompous ass at whose expense the comedy functions. When the stories aren't funny, they fail. It's that simple.)

I enjoyed the art, especially Marc Schirmeister's spot illos and John V. Cody's "Pumpkins are Readers" picture. Mervyn Pumpkinhead would certainly agree!

Plug! I recently discovered Bookbub, a website that lists bargain e-books. Okay, not \*free\* books, like the treasure trove at Project Gutenberg, but stuff that's on sale, stuff that's marked down, stuff that someone is giving a little extra push. It's \*nice\* to find books that would ordinarily go for \$7.99 now going for \$2.99. That means a lot to a poverty-stricken working schlub. Now, be warned, some of the books you'll find on Bookbub are stinkers. But some are true treasures, and, for \$2.99, I'm willing to take a chance! Take a look: you might find something you like!



**Rich Dengrove; 2651 Arlington Drive, #302; Alexandria, VA 22306**

Here to comment on *Fadeaway 57*. Less mishmash, more a phantasmagoria.

Let us start out, appropriately enough, by commenting on the cover. There, a boy warns a Tyrannosaurus Rex "Bad boy!" Bob, would it be healthy? I have a feeling those are the last words that kid would say.

From monsters to just plain trash, we go on to your article on trying to get your trash towed away free. It seems like hard work. Maybe paying for it

would get you out of a lot of complications. For instance, paying the neighbor to let you place your trash with his. .

It sounds like *The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai* was conceived by people who wanted to be 'with it' in the eyes of youth, as opposed to against it. However, they didn't understand what 'with it' meant so they decided to go with the first things that came to mind rather than a coherent plot. On the other hand, I like the quotes from that movie. They show an amazing grasp of the obvious. Especially "In my experience, nothing is ever what it seems to be, but everything is exactly what it is."

You know the film *Buckaroo Banzai* well. More for its puzzling craziness than anything. I know the Grain & Salt Publishing Company well. Its real address was 2651 Arlington Drive, Alexandria, Virginia. Some people say that that area was the Popkins' Farm at the time. However, I know the Grain & Salt Company was here and not in Boston. For one thing, banned in Boston was big at the time. Nothing was ever really banned in the DC area, however. Look at the Congress if you don't believe me. This would be a great area to publish a book series for youth like *The Young Racketeers*, *the Roadhouse Ramblers*, *The Harvey Town Hookers*, *the Boy Anarchists*, *the Young Gun Runners*, and *the American Aryans*. Perfect books for young Americans during the '20s, '30s and '40s.

I end this with one comment--remember the Mencken Bathtub Hoax. In 1917, he felt it would be fun to make up a history of the bathtub. It appeared in the *New York Evening Mail*. The article was utter nonsense. Because of that, Mencken regretted it later when a lot of people started using his 'facts' -- including the authors of reference books. Even after he denounced his hoax, it has continued. The give away is usually that someone will claim that Millard Fillmore was the first President to have a bathtub installed in the White House. Recently, the hoax was repeated in a Kia commercial.

In short, don't be surprised if you find *The Young Racketeers* or *The Harvey Town Hookers* being claimed as portraying the ideal youth in the '30s and '40s..

By the way, I did a little research on this. If I remember correctly, the librarian at the White House told me that Andrew Jackson was the first President to build a bathtub in the White House with running water. I have forgotten who was the first President with a bathtub where you poured the water in.

We go now from natter about hoaxes and bathtubs to reader reaction. The first comment concerns your response to my letter. Whether kids are creative depends on what your definition of creative is. We both agree that kids create ideas that are new to them more often than adults do. However, can that be transferred to adulthood and produce knowledge new to everyone? I presumed yes; you presumed no. For you, they have to have the gumption to persist against adult criticism; and only a few people do. I presumed that it is possible to create an environment where adults use less withering criticism. In short, I decided I wasn't going to be realistic.

From creativity, we go to despotism. Tom McGovern mentions that Judge Dredd, in the comic book 2000 A.D., was a despot since he was cop, judge and executioner in his world. I agree. I gather, however, Dredd acted like a good guy so people were more willing to let his despotism pass. On the other hand, another judge, they couldn't, Judge Caligula. He was a totally corrupt total despot. Why shouldn't he be? He was modeled after the Emperor Caligula in the '70s TV series "I, Claudius." Only he had super technology and smarts. Judge Dredd almost lost when he fought against him.

We go from Judge Dredd to you, Bob. So what have you done? Maybe a few heroics. However, it looks like you have a lot on your plate. I would say that there are only 24 hours in a day, but I have a full plate too, so I have no right to complain. All I can say is where has all the time gone since I retired?

Tom takes a definite stand against Judge Dredd, Lloyd Penney is ambiguous on another subject: inserting Smurfs into the titles of science fiction when Smurfs were the fashion. A friend of my wife's wasn't ambiguous at all. During the Smurf fad, she did an illo of a Smurf hanging from a noose. The caption read "Have a Smurfy Day."

I can't end this zine without commenting on Sheryl Birkhead. She feels the term "Fu Manchu mustache" is out of date. The Smurfs were a fad of the '80s. Fu Manchu is another thing entirely. He has survived, in one form or another, as a villain, since 1911. Twelve years ago I was with a bunch of fellows in their twenties, and they were using software to make their 'persona' for a play station game. One player claimed he was giving himself a "Fu Manchu mustache." Obviously, that young man had heard of the "Fu Manchu mustache." It is very possible. While the most popular Fu Manchu movies were released in the '60s, the cinematic adventures of Doctor Fu Manchu are continuing.

///I wouldn't want a T-Rex for a pet either, but look at all the other weird animals humans adopt as family pets---it's within the range of the possible (or it would be if the monsters were still around).

I think the creators of the Buckaroo Banzai movie were actually trying to create something that would be sensationally cool and appeal to the fanboy base, but I personally think they missed the mark by quite a wide margin. The initial box office returns showed that almost nobody liked the film, yet it has somehow managed to survive anyway, sort of like "Amazon Women On the Moon", and "Plan 9 From Outer Space" managed to survive.

I don't plan on ever retiring. For one thing I've got a warehouse of books, comics, games, video I'm trying to sell to keep me busy for many years to come. But even without it, I have plenty to keep me busy, and I'm glad of it. I've seen too many people retire with no hobby or plan to keep them going, then a year or two later they drop dead from boredom. Not me, thank you.

It is very likely that the Fu Manchu mustache was familiar to people in the west, as a Manchu style mustache, which the illustrators of the assorted Fu Manchu stories simply adopted, since the character was supposed to be a wealthy aristocrat. Clearly these people (and maybe some editors along the way as well) never bothered to actually read those stories, but the popular images of Chinese either with the Manchu style mustache or with the pigtail have endured for a long time.///

## **OUR ESTEEMED ART STAFF & WHERE THEIR WORK MAY BE FOUND HEREIN:**



**STEVE STILES**---Front Cover

**Stephanie Lux**---Back Cover

**Marc Schirmeister**---16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 27, 27, 28

Clip Art From The Internet---15, 29

# **SPACERS!**

WE ARE NOW HIRING

Immediate openings for Pilots, Planet—  
jumpers, Navigators, Mechanics, etc.

- **DOUBLE PAY** for Demolition experts,  
Gunners, & Combat Warriors.
- We offer a high risk operation with  
Unlimited profit potential.
- Clearance Visas & license papers  
**NOT REQUIRED.**

Contact Johnny Credit  
Transgalactic Exploration  
& Salvage co.

