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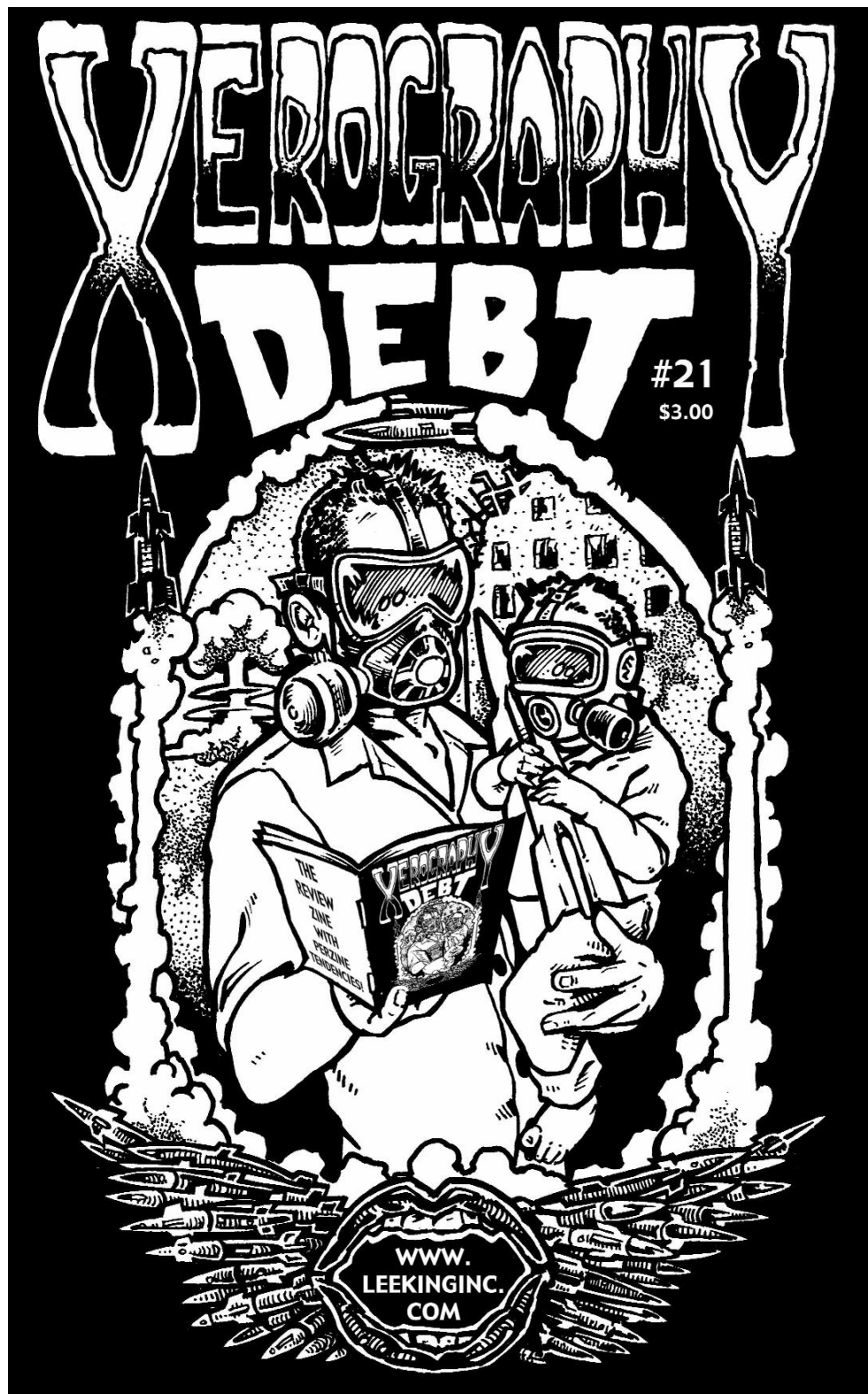
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Davida Gypsy Breier, PO Box 11064, Baltimore, MD 21212

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XEROGRAPHY DEBT

ISSUE #21 MARCH 2007

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(please address mail to Davida, the Post Office is
returning things sent to Xerography Debt.)

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INTRODUCTION

I've been going back and forth about this introduction for a month. As I was working on this issue, I watched as some major distributors of zines went under, IPA (Independent Press Association) and Tower leap to mind. Additionally, a print mainstay, Clamor, dissolved, and Herbivore was forced to reorganize and assess how they would reach their readership. Within a much larger context related to independent publishing, AMS—parent company for Publishers Group West (PGW)—filed for bankruptcy, which in turn endangered all of the independent presses that PGW distributes. Trust me, chances are if you like to read zines you also like to read some of the PGW presses—Seal Press, Soft Skull, 2.13.61, McSweeney's.

How does a 100 million dollar company fit in this discussion with zines? I know it seems like I am reaching, but hear me out—for the majority of the zines you will read about in this issue profit and business economics never enter into the publisher's mind. Print runs are small, and whether or not another issue is produced is down to the desire of the publisher. With regard to zines that are heavily distributed, more money is invested in the printing and shipping, which puts those zines in a more precarious position. Sure, they have more readers, but they then become dependent on the business decisions of others to keep them publishing. Not getting paid by their vendors can shut these presses up in a heartbeat.

And yet I have hope for the state of independent publishing, large and small. Why? For a few reasons. First, I think that the meek shall inherit the earth. And we here at **XD** are meek. A couple years ago, I over-expanded our print run (and still have

many copies moldering in my basement). I scaled back and now print just what I need. I'm cautious about postage and keep the costs down as much as possible. We continue to survive. We don't make a dime, but at the same time it isn't such a financial drain that we have no choice but to give up. Furthermore, the barter economy within the zine community is impervious to the standard debates about capitalism and greedy CEOs, so embrace that and support each other.

Second, I have hope that there will be other people like Clint Johns who will step forward to aid and abet zines. While I was impressed with Clint's support of **XD**, I had no idea the extent of what he was up to behind the scenes at Tower. Please read his column on page 5 for more details. We welcome more dialogue on his column, so please send your letters and emails.

Lastly, the fate of the PGW publishers will soon be in the hands of the bankruptcy court. For a while things looked bleak, but now it appears that there are other options on the horizon. I'm not sure how everything will turn out, but it is my hope that the dolorous gloom will lift and everyone can get back to the business of words.

Davida

PS - On a side note, if you enjoy fiction/literature and a sense of the absurd, give Jasper Fforde's *Tuesday Next* series a try.

BASIC STUFF YOU SHOULD KNOW

If this is your first issue, **XEROGRAPHY DEBT** is a review zine for zine readers by zine writers. It is a hybrid of review zine and personal zine. **XEROGRAPHY DEBT** has its own freestyle approach. It is all about communication, so each reviewer has used the format or style most comfortable to him or her. Also, each reviewer "owns" the zine in a communal sense. We are individual artists and writers coming together to collaborate and help keep small press flourishing.

Do your part by ordering a few zines from the many reviewed here and, if you self-publish, please consider including some reviews in your zine.

XEROGRAPHY DEBT'S reviews are selective. To explain the "system": Some reviewers choose to review zines they have bought or traded with, some review zines that are sent to **XEROGRAPHY DEBT** for review, and some do both. Also, I buy zines at Atomic Books (my local zine store), as well as zine events, so if you see your zine reviewed and you didn't send it in, that might be where I found it. Generally the only reviews you will read in here are "good reviews." Constructive criticism is given, but basically we don't have the time or money to print bad reviews. If you sent your zine in for review and don't see it listed, wait a few months and see if it appears in the following issue. I read and then distribute the zines to the reviewers about two months before the print date. If the reviewer passed on reviewing your zine, it will be sent out again for the next issue. So, each zine gets two shots with two different reviewers. Ultimately, many of the review copies stay in the **XD** archives, but some are donated to zine

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #21

libraries. Occasionally mistakes happen, postal or otherwise, so if you have a question about a zine you sent in for review, please contact Davida at PO Box 11064, Baltimore, MD 21212 or davida@leekinginc.com. **XD** is available for free online or paper copies can be ordered for \$3. If you are reading the online version or downloaded the PDF, don't be shy about sending in a donation.

If you have an event, announcement, or project you would like to share, please get in touch. The lack of paid advertising within these pages is deliberate. Despite reviewing our friends and lovers, we try to be somewhat objective and free to do as we please. Needless to say, this brings up the point of needing some help to keep the machine running...

SPONSORS

We see **XEROGRAPHY DEBT** as the PBS of review zines. It is by us, for us, with no financial incentive - just a dedication to small press. If you have a few spare stamps or dollar bills to help support us and the zine community, it would be most appreciated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ATTENTION SEATTLE ZINESTERS!

The Seattle Public Library (SPL) is starting a trial zine collection at the Central Library. Located in the Teen Section, the collection will feature zines created by younger people in the Pacific Northwest, especially the greater Seattle area. Patrons may read zines in the library or borrow them to enjoy at home.

We encourage local self-publishers to help us broaden our collection by donating their zines, comics, and other self-published literary endeavors to SPL.* Our goal is to create a collection that will represent the amazing variety of zines, comics and other self-published works produced by young people in the Northwest and introduce these often-overlooked publications to a wider audience. By creating a zine collection, we also hope to broaden patrons' opportunities for pleasure reading and self-education through alternative literary forms. We particularly favor zines and comics that are produced by teens and younger adults (13 to 30 year-olds) who are greater Seattle residents.

Please send your zines to: Jennifer Bisson, Teen Librarian c/o Teen Center, Seattle Public Library, 1000 4th Ave 98104, or drop them off at the Teen Center desk located on the 3rd level of the Central Library. If you have any questions or comments about this program, please write to Jennifer at TeenCenter@spl.org

Thank you for your help and please check out your zines and others at the Central Library!

*SPL may not accept zines that do not meet our collection guidelines. If we cannot include your zine in our collection, we will encourage you to donate your creation to Richard Hugo House's Zine Archive & Publishing Project (ZAPP), a non-circulating zine library and workspace in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Seattle. Contact ZAPP at zines@hugohouse.org for more information about their collections.

DO IT IN THE DARK WITH SMILE, HON!

WHAT GOES ON WHEN THE SUN SETS ON MOBTOWN? Send your night-themed

stories, essays, anecdotes, poetry, photography or other artwork to the only zine of, by and about life in Charm City, **SMILE, HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE!**, for an upcoming special issue.

E-mail submissions/queries to: wpt@eightstonepress.com, or write William P. Tandy, Editor, Eight-Stone Press, P.O. Box 11064 Baltimore, Maryland 21212. Deadline: June 1, 2007.

COLUMNS



CLINT
JOHNS

RIP TOWER

JOHNSCLJ@YAHOO.COM

I was the last major zine buyer in America, and you have no idea how strange it is to see those words in black and white. True, there are still some places buying lots of zines—Joe still does wonderful work at Microcosm, Ubiquity is still alive, kicking, and by all accounts generally taking care of business, and there are lots of regional distro types—but there's no outfit anywhere that operates with the kind of freedom that I did. I could bring in as much (or as little) as I wanted of whatever I wanted from wherever I wanted. I ordered punk zines from Hong Kong. I paid tens of thousands of dollars to a series of graffiti artists in Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South America. If I wanted

several hundred copies of a fantasy art zine from Down Under, I got several hundred copies, and no one ever asked me a question about it. Heck, I even printed zines in the Tower Print Shop when the zinesters couldn't afford to print them themselves, or because I liked them, or because I thought they were important. I sent these zines to Tower Records stores all over the country and, for a while, all over the world. And I'll tell you how I did it, too: Tower Records was committed to supporting zines and indy press publications, and no matter how much the company changed over the years, that never did. It also helped that an erratic genius named Doug Biggert laid an incredible foundation back in the 80s, creating a model within which the Mag Division operated on its own to an unprecedented extent, starting the zine distribution warehouse in the back of the first Tower Bookstore and eventually moving it into a real warehouse space, and shipping more than \$10 million worth of zines and magazines every year.

Imagine that.

And now Tower Records is gone, twice bankrupt and ultimately liquidated. What happened? Well, back in the early part of 1998 I was sitting in my office in San Diego (where I was still a regional manager) talking to one of my colleagues when the new issue of *Billboard Magazine* came in. On the cover, a headline announced that Tower had just secured hundreds of millions of dollars to expand by opening a line of credit and selling bonds to private investors. My friend and I looked at each other in horror. After all, by 1998 it was clear that the music industry was set on selling fewer and fewer records, and we had no idea where the money to repay

these loans was going to come from. We could have turned out to be wrong (Tower's upper management could have spent the money wisely, expanding the company carefully and thoughtfully) but we weren't (amazing amounts of money were lost in bad real estate choices, and in overseas markets like Argentina and England, among others). Now fast-forward to 2004. The loans are coming due, music sales are flat or declining, DVD sales are flattening out as the marketplace finally saturates, and the only product lines showing growth are books and magazines... which only account for somewhere in the neighborhood of 5% of Tower's revenue, so the fact that they were doing well wasn't going to be of much help. Tower enters bankruptcy the first.

The company reorganizes, people are laid off, departments shrink. The stores are forced to cut payroll, meaning already poorly-paid employees (including managers) are being asked to do much, much more work than ever before. As you might imagine, some of them become surly. An excruciating game of musical CEOs commences, apparently to coincide with the ongoing game of musical CMOs. The advertising department continues its policy of being mainly interested in its own ideas, many of which seem to have been beamed directly into their brains from outer space. The newest CEO engineers a terrifically fast bankruptcy, from which Tower emerges in less than 30 days; all you have to do is look at a newspaper to see that this is many times faster than most companies, and employees become cautiously optimistic. Unfortunately the bondholders now own 85% of the company, and whatever profit comes in now goes directly to them; they could have

foreclosed and shuttered the company's doors, after all, so they should be reimbursed... and in the absence of raises or any kind of investment in the stores, the next two years are: tense. The new CEO dedicates himself to fostering an atmosphere of paranoia, in-fighting, and pocket-lining. I stay though the Autumn of 2004 and then step down for reasons unrelated to the bankruptcy—but keep the zine buying duties to myself because I'm liked well enough that I can design my own part-time job. I decide to make a change to our zine distribution system that turns out to be good for everyone: we start buying zines outright, without returns, which means people get paid for everything in about 6 weeks with nothing held back against sales. And the system works, too. Tower is still breaking even on zines (and contrary to what some might believe, Tower never did much more than break even on zines, what with all the shipping and handling and paying employees and so on), zine people are getting paid faster, and everything goes well until the summer of 2006.

I'm in Pittsburgh for the summer, far from where the milk finally curdled, when I get the call: no more zines are to be ordered. And not just zines, either; nothing is to be ordered by anyone unless it's new release CDs or DVDs. I tell the Mag Division's crack staff (which means that I told Diana, the office manager) to start calling zines and telling them to hold their shipments back, and to start refusing shipments at the warehouse whenever possible. I figure that this way it's possible that folks'll be out their shipping money, but not out the zines themselves. We even send back some of the zines that were still waiting to be shipped, although the finance people put a

stop to that pretty quickly. Diana begins emailing and calling as many people as we have contact info for, letting them know that they shouldn't ship us anything unless we call and say it's cool. This call will never take place. Tower enters bankruptcy the second in the early part of August. Two months later the company is auctioned off and purchased by a liquidation company.

The good news is that because we were buying zines on a non-returnable basis, and because we turned so many shipments away and caught many zinesters in time, relatively few people got ripped off. The bad news is that shipments that managed to somehow get through between the middle of June and August's bankruptcy declaration have become "unsecured creditors," most of whom have not been paid as of this date. They get to file claims—the deadline was in January—and they might eventually get paid, although I don't know how that process is going to work. This sucks, but I take some small comfort in the fact that when Tower finally went down, it didn't do to the zine community what Fine Print did, or what Desert Moon did, or even what Big Top did (just ask Dan Sinker at **PUNK PLANET** what Big Top did). The damage was in the range of hundreds of dollars, and not thousands, or tens of thousands. And if they somehow do get paid, then even that damage will be undone.

I'm not holding my breath. I'm holding on to that whole "small comfort" thing.

I recently found out that there's one more piece of bad news. Somehow, the accounting people at Tower have decided that some zines actually owe Tower money, and have sent out collection letters. (This is what happens when corporate people finally have at the zine

accounts without someone like me or Diana around). So even though Tower sent me my final paycheck back in October, I found myself in their offices just a couple of weeks ago, arguing about some of these letters. So far it hasn't done any good... but I don't think any more have been sent out.

I was the last major zine buyer in America. It occurs to me that I was probably the last major zine buyer in the world, which is a decidedly strange thing to consider. (It is also sad and depressing, and so are its implications: these are probably subjects for another column somewhere down the line.) When I started writing this, I thought I'd tell the story in as detailed a fashion as I could, but it turned out to be much too long. That's right—this is the short version. With that in mind, I'm going to shut up now, and open the floor to questions. You can send them to me at johnsclj@yahoo.com. If I get a bunch, maybe Davida will publish them in the next issue of **XD**.



JEFF
SOMERS

IT MEANS IT'S WANK

PO BOX 3024, HOBOKEN, NJ 07030
MREDITOR@INNERSWINE.COM
WWW.INNERSWINE.COM

So what does that mean? It means it's wank." - Vic Flange, www.fleshmouth.co.uk [now defunct], describing my zine.

STAY ON THE SCENE, LIKE A ZINE MACHINE

in which Your Humble Correspondent considers the fact that where your zine gets reviewed has some affect on how it is reviewed, and then curls up on your floor and naps for a while

FRIENDS, when you're a poor, starving Zine Publisher, dreaming of your big breakthrough into Zines and the accompanying two-digit paychecks, it might seem like just getting your zine reviewed is reward enough. When you get that first review—maybe four ungrammatical lines in something called *Donkey Punching Your Mother*, maybe eight paragraphs in this very periodical—you show it to everyone you know. All nod and smile, mystified, and immediately forget about it as you make 500 photocopies to mail out to every goddamn English Teacher who ever gave you a "D", which is all of them. After all, good or bad, a review is proof that you created something. It's a record in the Cosmic Library that proves you made a thing, and others—strangers!—read it.

The shines wears off, of course. By review four you're bitter and enraged that no one understands your sense of humor, and you're worried about all the letters from prisoners you're getting. Over time, you begin to realize that some reviews are more equal than others; sometimes a reviewer puts a lot of thought into why they liked or disliked your zine, and sometimes you almost get the feeling they mixed your zine up with someone else's, resulting in a strange review that accuses you of all sorts of things you didn't even know were possible. I mean, any review that closes with a stirring statement that this particular reviewer will never support anyone that eats kittens can probably be ignored, unless your zine happens to be called *I Eat Kittens and I Need Your Support*.

After a while, your appreciation of reviews and their associated value gets more and more refined, until you're like me, the Old Man on the Mountain of zines. When you're the Old Man on the Mountain of zines, no one wants to hang out with you, but you sure do know a lot about getting your zine reviewed. Not much about anything else, but zines? Yeah. Of course, after years of punishing alcohol consumption, I usually can't remember things I've learned. When I do remember something, I have to rush to the desk and write it down immediately, or it will be lost again for some unknowable period of time. Today I remembered this about zine reviews: Where you're being reviewed matters.

This might, to someone who doesn't practice a punishing program of alcohol consumption, seem obvious, but you'd be surprised. People who put out zines tend to generally—though of course not

exclusively—be social pariahs and freaks. We don't put out zines because we feel connected to the world and loved by humanity, we put out zines because we hate you all and have anatomically correct voodoo dolls of everyone we've ever met under the bed. Zines tend to be a little tunnel-visioned, they see the small part of the world they were created to document—a scene, a category of knowledge, the publisher's own sad little life—and ignore everything else. A zine called *Boys Who I Have Kicked in the Balls* probably doesn't have too many articles about the Infield Fly Rule in baseball, and probably does have a lot of articles about kicking boys in the balls, yes? So if you send your zine to *Boys Who I Have Kicked in the Balls*, the review they produce will have a slant towards ball-kicking. This might be obvious, in which the reviewer complains that there is no ball-kicking in your zine and concludes that it has no value, or it might be subtle, wherein the reviewer tries to give you an honest review but can't get past the fact that he or she really likes to see some ball-kicking in the writing, and thus you get some points taken off for its lack.

Or, in a slightly (slightly!) less absurd example, consider a punk zine: The fact that the zine is published by punks or at the very least concerns itself with some form of punk lifestyle and political belief will have an affect on how they perceive and review your zine. Reviews of my own little publication from punk-oriented zines tend to conclude that I am an asshole of biblical proportions, and is it any surprise? You have to know your audience, and when being reviewed your audience is the reviewer, bubba.

This doesn't mean you should direct your

zine only towards people who are already drinking your Kool-Aid—absolutely not. Reviews from various sources, including sources that might be described as hostile or apathetic toward you, are valuable because they give a broader view. I mean, if you send *Boys Who I Have Kicked in the Balls* only to other ball-kicking enthusiasts, you're gonna get a pretty bland spread of reviews—probably fairly technical reviews from people who know all the fine points of ball-kicking and judge you mercilessly on them. Getting some opinions from people who find your hobby and zine to be creepy and needlessly violent, or people who are shocked and dismayed to even discover that such things exist, benefits everyone because it gives you a range of opinions to sort through and gather together into a clearer picture of what your zine is.

On the other hand, if your zine gets into the hands of someone who very obviously is going to hate it on sight for no good reason—holy rollers, say, or boys who have, in fact, been kicked in the balls and have an unreasonably negative reaction to the concept—it's good to know that when you're reading their scathing, profanity-clogged review of your poor zine, which they then mail back to you torn to pieces and smeared with excrement.

Now, if you'll excuse me, I have to nap until someone rescues me from this room. If you'd like to help, you can contact me via the publisher of this zine.

THE REVIEWS



DAVIDA
GYPSY
BREIER

PO BOX 11064, BALTIMORE, MD 21212
WWW.LEEKINGINC.COM
DAVIDA@LEEKINGINC.COM

I can't believe a year has past since Garnet entered the world. I took the break I needed to focus on him, but I'm now able to work on **XD** again while he beats his toys to death in the background. So far he seems to really like zines. I never thought to try and eat them before, I was content to just read them, but as they say the children shall lead. Now dig in...

BEST ZINE EVER #4

A Review of our Favorite Zines of the Year

If you are enjoying this zine you hold in your hands this very minute, chances are **BEST ZINE EVER** is right up your alley. It is an annual "best of" for the zine community. I found out about several zines I had never heard of and the reviewers are top notch.

\$Free, but don't be cheap, send a donation!/32 pages/digest
Greg Beans
PO Box 12409, Portland, OR 97212
www.tugboatpress.com

THE KEN CHRONICLES #1

Many of you may already be familiar with or have heard of the APA **PASSIONS**. Ken was the organizer and upon retiring from

his day job, he also retired from his APA job, and has begun fresh with his new zine **THE KEN CHRONICLES**. Long past the emo-phase one often sees too much of in perzines, Ken talks about what interests him. In this case, it is enjoying retirement, traveling, and shows he's been to recently (Bob Dylan, Joe Jackson, James Gang, Jersey Boys). Ken also spent a long time in the automotive industry and takes *Consumer Reports* to task for its odd ratings system.

\$2/16 pages/full-sized/trades
Ken Bausert
2140 Erma Drive, East Meadows, NY 11554
PassScribe@aol.com

BALTIMORE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY ZINE COLLECTION

I'm lucky enough to live in an area that not only has a zine collection in the public library system, but also people involved at the library who want to share what they learned putting the collection together. This will be of particular interest if you are a librarian (or just a library habitué).

\$/48pages/digest
Todd Krueger
BCPL Collection Development,
320 York Road, Towson, MD 21204
Library located at: 9833 Greenside Dr.,
Cockeysville, MD 21030
www.bcpl.info/zines
bcplzines@gmail.com

THE FUTURE GENERATION #15

Raising Teenagers

The first time I saw China was probably about 5 years ago. She was on stage at a bar in Baltimore wearing what we described amongst ourselves at the time as a Muppet bra. It looked like someone had skinned Kermit and made a brassiere out of him. We wouldn't actually meet until

a few years later. In person she is a bundle of nervous energy. In print she can be damned insightful and brutally honest. She is the 40 year old mother of an 18 year old and she lays out all the truths she has learned, as well as the mistakes made. She sounds like a true veteran of the puberty wars, but grateful they are both now in the land of adulthood. I wouldn't classify this issue as simply a mama-zine, but instead a person-zine.

\$3/66 pages/digest/trades
China Martens
PO Box 4803, Baltimore, MD 21211
china410@hotmail.com

WEIRD OLD AMERICA #1

Postcards from a Ghost Town

Brooklyn has **BROOKLYN!**, Baltimore has **SMILE, HON, YOU'RE IN BALTIMORE!** and now Detroit has **WEIRD OLD AMERICA**. Short stories of bleakness, omnipresent poverty and decay, and also that indomitable spark of life that keeps it all interesting. Gunshots and peacocks, heat waves and snowbanks. Decent storytelling.

\$2 or stamps/32 pages/digest/trades
Rose White
PO Box 6598, New York, NY 10150
Old_weird@yahoo.com

THE JUNIPER #7, fall/winter 2006

For Those About to Farm

Dan is passionate about farming and gardening and wants to share what he learns. "Gardening is about trial and error, but that's the way we like it. We learn best amongst friends and associates, and our gardens will improve as our experience expands." I was at least glad to see that I was not alone in my failure to grow seedlings indoors in the early spring. I was

also encouraged by his luck with marigolds and will likely try some this season. If either of those last two sentences make any sense to you, you'll enjoy **THE JUNIPER**.

\$Free in person, one stamp by mail/
12 pages/digest/trades
Dan Murphy
PO Box 3154, Moscow, ID 83843
Juniperbug.blogspot.com
juniperjournal@hotmail.com

EXTRANJERO #6

I'm 90% certain this issue will be reviewed elsewhere in this issue, but on the off chance it isn't let me just say this is a damn well-written, exuberant, and interesting per-zine. The narrators are an American living in Spain with his Spanish wife. Both traveled the world and bring that edge to their stories.

\$2-3/32 pages/digest/trades
Kris & Lola
Calle Obispo 4 bajo
Plasencia 10600
Caceres, Spain/España

LILLIPUT REVIEW

Wee poetry
Short, but sweet

\$1-3/16 pages/minis/trades
Don Wentworth
282 Main St., Pittsburgh, PA 15201

TIME IS THE PROBLEM #4

Remember back in the day when zinepeople lived for paper mail and practically swooned at the feet of their friendly-neighborhood postal employee? Back before most of us were hardwired to square boxes, like the one I am typing this review on. Jim remembers those days well and his whole issue harkens back to

making those personal connections without pixels being involved. Handwritten, this issue looks at letters Jim has sent and received and where these missives lead him, which included a visit with an English writer whom he admired. If paper mail still brings a smile to your face, get this.

\$3/32 pages/digest/trades
Jim Lowe
PO Box 152, Elizaville, NY 12523

LADY CHURCHILL'S ROSEBUD WRISTLET #17 & #18

I am going to admit something—I am a bit afraid to review fiction these days. It seems like the review should be lengthy, insightful, and offer the kind of analysis I suppose the 18 year-old version of me was capable of writing. Instead, I find myself just wanting to tell you that this is the best-edited fantastical short fiction you're ever likely to find in zines or mainstream publishing and hope that you'll trust me without detailed proof. Gavin's really got his shit together. If you like decent speculative fiction, you'll like this.

\$5US, \$7 Can/60 pages/half-legal
Gavin J. Grant
176 Prospect Ave.
Northampton, MA 01060
www.lcrw.net
info@lcrw.net

THE DVORAK ZINE

Changing the world one keyboard at a time.

I picked up a copy of this at SPX. I love geeky zines by people obsessed with semi-obscure topics. In fact, they are likely my favorite types of zines, so it is no wonder I loved this. We take for granted that the way we type today is just how it is, when we could be typing in different, and

perhaps faster ways. Our modern keyboard, whether you use a typewriter, word processor, or laptop is rooted in a layout that was designed to be inefficient. It used to be that if we typed too fast the keys would get stuck. Inventors overcame that design flaw before cars were all over the roads, but the "qwerty" keyboard persists. Curious about other options? Try the Dvorak method. Recommended.

\$1.50pp/24 pages/digest
Alec Longstreth
www.dvzine.org
(whole zine available online)
DVZine@gmail.com

INVINCIBLE SUMMER #11 / CLUTCH #17

The Fifth Annual Split

Unlike most splits, Nicole and Clutch take alternating pages and describe their daily happenings. Their daily happenings are relatively quiet, but there is something to be said for people willing to open the window into two weeks of their lives. Enjoyed.

\$2-3/32 pages/half-legal
Nicole G: PO Box 12763, Portland, OR 97212
Clutch McB, PO Box 12409, Portland, OR 97212

FOR THE CLERISY/GOOD WORDS FOR READERS # 68 & #69

I've reviewed **FtC** before repeatedly, so let me just say once again, this is always a favorite. Heady, but not Heady, just palatably conversational.

\$2, trade or letter of comment/
12 pages/full-sized
Brant Kresovich
PO Box 404, Getzville, NY 14068-0404
kresovich@hotmail.com
biggestfatporker@yahoo.com

LOWER EAST SIDE LIBRARIAN WINTER SOLSTICE SHOUT OUT 2006

Jenna does an annual per-zine looking at the previous year. 2006 was her first year of marriage and despite still having separate apartments (NYC offers peculiar challenges for newlyweds), there's still a lot of adjusting to do. Intermingled with her journal entries are quotes from books and zines. This also came with a reading log. A pleasant read.

\$1.50/34 pages/digest/trades
Jenna Freedman
521 E 5th St., Apt 1D, New York, NY 10009
leslzine@gmail.com

OPUNTIA 62.1B (September 2006)

This offering details modern day Mail Art, ARCs, and some book and article reviews.

\$3, trade, letter of comment/16 pages/digest
Dale Speirs
Box 6830, Calgary AL T2P 2E7 CANADA

ORGA(NI)SM #2

A Personal Guide to Japan and all Things Japanese

There are two reasons I am reviewing this zine: 1) I enjoyed it greatly and 2) I accidentally dropped it into a plate of saag (I tend to read when I eat given half a chance) and it seemed rude to send it to a reviewer with the bottom 1/2 inch stained green. Gianni is Italian-born, but lives in Japan with his family. He talks about doctor shortages, free things you can do or find in Japan, people watching, and some history lessons about outsiders in Japan. Oh, and of course I loved reading Bobby Tran Dale's "Recollections of a GAYsha." A wonderful dining companion.

\$4, 3IRCs/48 pages/digest/trades
Gianni Simone

3-3-23 Nagatsuta
Midori-ku, Yokohama-shi
226-0027 Kanagawa-ken JAPAN
Jb64jp@yahoo.co.jp

KIMAGURE NA DOWA NO HON
(A storybook of whimsy)

Another Japanese related zine. It is sort of a hybrid of scrapbook, mail art and zine rolled into one. Jennie and Carolee traveled to Japan and gathered and scavenged experiences and scraps of paper. They made an effort to document each day of their trip. A cool idea. The price seemed a tad high, but there is a lot of hand-detailing.

\$5 US/Can/Mex, \$7 World/32 pages/
half-legal

Jennie Hinchcliff and Carolee Gillian
Wheeler

PO Box 170271, San Francisco, CA 94117

www.podpodpost.com

mail@podpodpost.com

NOT MY SMALL DIARY #13 (VOL. 1 AND 2)

OMG, another masterpiece from Delaine. You can go into any bookstore and see shelf after shelf of manga and graphic novels and I have no doubt that Delaine has been offered or will be offered a job designing or editing something similar. Of course, she has something in her hat that makes **NMSD** special—her contributors. I'm amazed at the response she gets, its no wonder she needs to split issues into two volumes. The theme of this set is lucky/unlucky. The contributors take that idea in a multitude of ways. Spiffy!

\$6/160 pages/digest

Delaine Derry Green

1204 Cresthill Road, Birmingham, AL 35213

www.mysmallwebpage.com

Delangel3@hotmail.com

SQUIRRELLY #1

Stories and Comics

Usually when I get a new zine I scan it to see if it is to my taste or if I should send it onto a reviewer who would enjoy it more. I opened the cover and there were all these swanky hand-drawn titles in the "Linoleum Table of Contents." Hmm, looks interesting... then the second page has a cartoon that starts with "Nebula, a midget from Mexico, and her kittens Jesus and Hitler." Surreal, a blend of fiction (maybe), and well-drawn comix. A little expensive, but I enjoyed reading it.

\$4 pp/40 pages/digest

Sue Cargill

5746 N Kenmore, #210, Chicago, IL 60660

awkwardphobic@yahoo.com

PLEASE DON'T FEED THE BEARS

A Vegan Cookbook

Lots of easy, cheap home cooking to be found in these pages. I'm keen to try the chard, peanut, miso soup on page 9 and tofu almongeddonine on page 65. I can easily see this becoming a classic on the shelf, but with all due respect, Demian's Black Masserole may very well be the most disgusting vegan recipe I've ever read. Sauerkraut, a flour sauce/gravy, and tater tots figure into the recipe – uhhhhh... Regardless, this is a solid vegan cookbook.

\$9/156 pages/bound paperback

Abjorn Intonsus

PO Box 14332, Portland, OR 97293

www.microcosmpublishing.com

THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS

A Rock'N'Roll Novel from the World of Zines

Ya'll remember when reviews of **THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS** graced these pages with some regularity?

Well, Wred has collected all those issues into a bound collection (you know, like a book). Theodorable, George, Alexander, Funnybear, and their respective fonts are all back and playing the kind of college rock that leads to adventures and eviction.

\$14/220 pages/bound paperback

Wred Fright

PO Box 770984, Lakewood, OH 44107

www.wredfright.com

wredfright@yahoo.com

TS\$3/66 pages/digest/trades

DREAM WHIP #14

"A glossy catalog from a suicidal travel agent."

I was totally loving this new issue from Bill and was enjoying all his descriptions of traveling by boat (no cruise ships here) to Europe when I misplaced the issue. It is like an inch thick, so I have no idea how I misplaced it! I'm sure it will turn up, but take it from me, if the last 150 pages are as good as the first 200, you'll want to get this. Bill is a traveler and his observations are keen, insightful, and often funny. **DREAM WHIP** ranks up there with **BURN COLLECTOR** as one of my favorite voices in small press.

UPDATE: I found it! Two great quotes: "Maybe the Soviets never devised an effective stain removal technology. Maybe, in the end, that's what finished them off. I mean, it's hard to make a case for a political system that can't get the stains out." and "A big hole in the ground where commuter trains skitter around like fat dumpster rats."

\$9 US, \$12 Can/Mex./343 pages/
bound paperback mini

Bill D. Whip

PO Box 53832, Lubbock, TX 79453

www.microcosmpublishing.com



**ANNE
THALHEIMER**

160 N. MAPLE STREET, FLORENCE, MA 01062
NOTES@SIMONS-ROCK.EDU

I'm here at my computer on the very last day of 2006, in cold (but not snowy) Massachusetts, and these reviews seem a fine thing to do at the end of my year.

I'm still trying to finish up **BOOTY #20**, which is proving so much more difficult than most since I haven't yet found a good way to explain, nicely, why I rejected my art school acceptance. It's sort of the central story of the issue, and while I'd like to be nice, I'd also like to be honest. It's funny how things work out, though—I'm thinking back over this past year and it's been interesting, to say the least. I'm in the new **NOT MY SMALL DIARY** and the just-printed **TREES AND HILLS AND FRIENDS** (www.treesandhills.org), so I'm publishing still (just really slowly). I changed jobs in May, and now I work for a funky fabric e-tailer (if you sew, you probably know us), which has been pretty amazing. I flew into the Grand Canyon in a helicopter, and got both free books and beer within 6 hours of landing in Baltimore in October (where I also got to meet an old pen pal from high school, which was rad!). I saw the Decemberists dressed up like ninjas for Halloween, and I saw an old friend from college twice, in a single week, who I'd not seen since 1995 (you can see him at www.murmerings.com). I've been working on my card commissions—write for details—a fair amount this year (I finished

three, printing in total about 500 cards!), rode 128 miles over 2 days in August & raised nearly \$3,000 for AIDS organizations throughout Massachusetts, and I designed the artwork for my banjo teacher's new CD (he's at www.petersiegel.com). I also curated a CHEAP ART! show where my favorite print got stolen right off the wall! (Really!) What a mad year! I can't wait to see what 2007 brings!

I got a crazy mixed bag of books this time, plus some sent directly to me, so here we go:

RADICAL UPDATES, Vol.1, Issue 1

by R. c/o April
P.O. Box 1932, Olympia, WA 98507
www.RadicalUpdates.org

Free (if you print it from the website), full size, 12 pages, subscriptions only by email but "if you don't have access to email, we can send print issues to your local zine library, infoshop, activist group, or resource center."

If you're looking to get involved in different activist movements, you'll want to have a look, though you'll probably have to go to the website, since it sounds like the bulk of the zine is there, as "letters to the zine are accepted by posting them to the bulletin board available in the website." This zine is a 12-page sampler of the different groups listed on the webpage with a little information about each of the 6 groups. It very much feels like a first issue; the composition's a little basic, and I'm still thinking about the idea of having a zine exist only to advertise a website (it definitely feels like the printed part is not a stand-alone work), but the letter and the description were just so earnest and enthusiastic that I didn't want to dismiss it outright. I'd like to see the zine develop

into something that stands on its own, aside from the website, since there are a lot of very captivating radical zines out there, and the folks involved in this project certainly seem capable and informed.

FOR THE CLERISY / GOOD WORDS FOR READERS

One-shot in celebration of the WWP 2006 (usually published only in odd-numbered months). "Letters will keep you on the mailing list"
c/o Brant Kresovich
PO Box 404, Getzville, NY 14068-0404
Biggestfatporcker@yahoo.com
kresovich@hotmail.com
\$2, 6 pages (but in 10-point type!), full size.

Apparently, the World Wide Party 2006 was on 21 June, and the author celebrated by "by toasting people in the Papernet with Molson's Canadian, a beer with that international dash"—and I couldn't stop chuckling. Great way to start; Brant's writing, like his composition, is very precise and distinctive. It's got the usual stuff; correspondence, film reviews, thoughts about books. Generally a quick read, but I always enjoy it when it comes my way in a pack of **XD** reviews.

POSSUM GARAGE PRESS #3 (Dec 2005), **#4** (Jan 2006), and **#5** (Sept 2006)

c/o Lanyon Studio
8 Winston Avenue, Wilmington, DE 19804
\$2 (1 year subscription \$5; publication irregular), 16 pages, quarter size, trades OK.

It's a poetry zine, sort of, and it's a political zine, sort of, and I don't quite get the possum thing, but it's cool and hand-written and smart, and cute. "We welcome submissions, Possum or human, by U.S. Mail with SASE" and there are lots of interesting drawings (possum and

otherwise), though you'll of course want to have a look before you submit anything. As a side note, as a former Delaware resident myself, I had to laugh at the inclusion of an ad for the Delaware Air National Guard—yes, you guessed it, D.A.N.G. "Dang!" they write, "Dang it all!" in taking the military and GWB to task.

...and the comics:

WORGINK FOR FREE—"An Ocular Binge of Gig Art by Mike Twohig"

...uh, by Mike Twohig
"plus one bonus show review comic"
145 Meadow Farm North
North Chili, NY 14514
\$4 "or equal trade", 50 pages, half-size.
m_twohig@hotmail.com
MikeTwohig.artconspiracy.com

Basically, this zine is a collection of all the flyers and posters that Mike drew over a period of five years to promote various music shows in the area where he lived. They're also arranged chronologically, so it's really cool to be able to see Mike's art develop, become more detailed, and his composition generally clearer with stronger visual flow. In the introduction he states that when he started curating at a local art and music space, and then started booking gigs. It's a one-shot zine, as he states on the inside back cover that he's "published twenty-some zines from 2001-2006" and "most were the drawing/writing experiment 'coldhandsdeadheart'. Of all the items in the zine, I enjoyed the "bonus show review comic" the best, since while the posters aren't technically lacking, I just sometimes couldn't figure out at what I was looking (leaving aside the issue of not knowing the bands). My only technical issue with the zine is that the composition isn't exactly

user-friendly. It's half-size, with the binding across the top, which is, you know, different and cool and great for not having the art fall into the binding. Unfortunately, if you open it up to any given page, the art on the top is upside-down—not a big deal to start, but by the end of the book having to flip the book over at every page was annoying (and seemed easy to fix).

SCRAPPY: {stitches} #1

Niku Arbabi
Please email Niku for orders or order via her livejournal.
msfilms@hotmail.com
vidaliasparkle.livejournal.com
\$4 US, \$4.50 Canada/Mexico, \$6 world (all includes postage), half-size, 34 pages, trades OK if they are craft or mail art zines (email for details)

Niku writes in her description that "**SCRAPPY** is a DIY craft zine. Issue 1, "Stitches" is about sewing—all kinds of DIY sewing projects, plus ideas & information. Projects are accessible to all skill levels. Including toilet paper cozy, cardigan re-fashion, craft apron, concert t-shirt pillow, and more." I was SUPER excited to find this zine in my mailbox because since I took the job at the fabric e-tailer (okay, full disclosure: I work for ReproDepot.com) I've learned a lot about fabric and sewing, but I don't really sew. I mean, I can mend and hem and do basic stuff, but lately I've been trying to learn to make skirts, since they're pretty simple (at least according to the pattern Niku includes, which I am going to try as one of my resolutions for 2007, dang it!). The production's really cute too; **SCRAPPY: {stitches}** is bound with yarn, and there's a hand-cut piece of paper on the cover affixed with photo corners (trust me, it's wicked cute). Her lettering—almost all of

the zine is done by hand—is very clear and easy to read (and it’s totally vivid writing, like her introduction, which just made me all kind of smitten with the whole zine when she writes about getting into sewing because she “wanted a pirate skirt and couldn’t find a cool striped skirt that would fit the more voluptuous figure”), and all the projects are simple and easy to understand (and, unlike many other how-to-sew books out there, don’t require a sewing machine—yay!) so that a total beginner (that’s pretty much me) can try out a project. It’s also nice because she includes a little information about the differences in sewing by hand and sewing with a machine, as well as “helpful stitches” (what they are & how to do ‘em). I really, really love this zine and I can’t wait to see what Niku covers in the next issue.

MY BRAIN HURTS #4, October 2006

by Liz Baillie

no address—just the website:

www.lizbaillie.com

Not for sale, 22 pages, half-size, trades only liz@lizbaillie.com

Issues 1-3 on sale through website for \$3 each (along with t-shirts, patches, and pins).

This comic is a serial story in which the main character (Kate) and a friend of hers (Joey) have to deal with being gay and the homophobia and indifference they both encounter in their daily lives as high school students. The art is precise and Liz has a great knack for including detail—these characters are both punks, and she draws them with such obvious care and affection that you’re completely pulled into the story. It’s serialized, so the brief recap in the beginning of the issue just whetted my appetite for more, of course, since there’s more backstory with Joey (who, in

this issue, is in the hospital after being gay-bashed) and his abusive father, and the issue ends with Kate storming out of school in frustration, deciding to finally stand up for herself. I can’t wait to see what happens next!

ESTRUS COMICS #4,

by MariNaomi

2006

P.O. Box 640811

San Francisco, CA 94164-0811

marinaomi@pobox.com

www.marinaomi.com

\$5, 41 pages, regulation comic-book size, no information about trades (so you should probably ask first)

Professionally printed with a shiny, glossy full-color cover, **ESTRUS COMICS #4** is a swanky-looking book from someone who’s published pretty extensively (I’d seen her piece “Mikey” in **NOT MY SMALL DIARY**) and done autobio work for a number of years. I likes me the autobio, so this was a good fit for me to read; the issue’s made up of 2 parts. The first part is MariNaomi’s very funny stories about her romantic life, titled “Ex-factor: A Romantic Resume” starting from kindergarten. Part 2 is made up of “other stories” including a long narrative about a bizarre and tragic dog mauling case in San Francisco. All in all, I really enjoyed reading this comic; MariNaomi’s got a very bold drawing style that doesn’t use a great deal of white space, but her composition is very clear and her narrative pacing really catchy, and I recommend it (especially looking ahead to Valentine’s Day; her work kind of reminds me a little of Ellen Forney and Nina Paley, both of whom I think produce work that’s just the bee’s knees).

NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS #27 (Oct. 2006)

and **#28** (Nov. 2006)

by Steve Steiner

(for ages 18 and up)

445-½ Randolph Street, Meadville, PA 16335

eat_50_eggs@hotmail.com

#27, published in Oct 2006 is 48 pages and costs \$4, #28, published in Nov 06, is 33 pages and costs \$2. Half size, trades OK.

Steve describes this as “a comic diary” but it’s more than that; in a lot of ways it’s a relationship diary about his long-distance relationship with his “kind-of” girlfriend (“I say ‘kind-of’, he writes in the introduction to #27, “because we live 230 miles apart”) with whom he’s been “together off and on for almost 3 years” but it’s also a diary about his crappy job. His introductions basically spell out the premise; even though he’s been drawing comics since May 2002, they’re mostly stories he does for himself (there’s commentary on the bottom of the page explaining the parts which aren’t readily apparent) and they started out as a way for him to work on his comic-drawing. Issue #28 “is just a continuation of my first perzine, issue #27” he writes, which of course makes me wonder what **NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS** was before it was autobio comics! They’re intentionally unedited, so from time to time you’ll see typos or scratched out words (he composes right to paper without sketching, which you’d think would spell disaster, but there aren’t the problems with visual flow that such a process might yield), and the visual feel of the comics is somewhat rough—it’s a diary, and they’re quickly written comics—but I enjoyed them despite myself. There were certainly a few moments where I winced—it’s weird reading about autobio relationship issues!—and it took me a little while to get

used to the composition (the panels are jagged, and the lettering can sometimes be hard to read), but once I did, I found myself getting totally sucked in. The last note on the back of #28 reads, “As of this writing I still live in Meadville, Pennsylvania. If I had more guts I would move somewhere else in a heartbeat though.” How’s that for a cliffhanger?



**BROOKE
YOUNG**

SLC LIBRARY

210 E 400 SOUTH, SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84111

BYOUNG@SLCPL.ORG

So, most of you know me because I have been working on the zine collection at the Salt Lake City Public Library for almost ten years (man, that makes me feel old and I’m only 25). Working on the zine collection has been one of brightest parts of my career, but like all good things, even this had to come to an end. Now, don’t worry. I’ve left the zine collection in good hands and the collection will continue even with me gone*. If you want your zine to be added to the zine collection at the Salt Lake library the new contact person will be Peter Jones and his email address is pjones@slcpl.org.

(* Ed. Note: Brooke is still at the library, just in a different department.)

CLUTCH 16

Whenever I am trying to convert someone to zines I give them a copy of **CLUTCH**. It doesn’t matter who I give the comic to—

my mom, my dad, the 72 year old librarian I work with, my cheerleading friend—they all instantly get zines and they all love **CLUTCH**. Its like the perfect gateway zine and while my mom might never move on to the hard stuff, she still asks about **CLUTCH** two years after I made her read an issue. This is a beautifully bound set of comics, one a day as a matter of fact, from 2003 when the author was buying a house. Each day is a comic made up of four panels, small vignettes about living in Portland, napping, reading, and seeing your friends. One of my favorite moments is a joke about emo-Hitler which made me giggle.

Clutch McBastard/ Tugboat Press/
PO Box 12409/ Portland, OR 97212/
www.tugboatpress.com

SNAILWELL GAZETTE #1

This zine reads like a crazy sitcom, the kind you used to find on ABC on weekday nights. Did you ever see *Dharma and Greg*? Man, I hated that show. This zine, even though it pushes all of my annoyance buttons (why do people feel the need to describe themselves by what they do or do not eat?) is pretty dang cute. Maggie is a stereotypical hippie who falls in love and marries a stereotypical graduate of the Air Force Academy. They have four kids and live on a military base in England. All this information is provided along with adorable little drawings and a lecture about the evils of coffee stirrers. Besides, anyone who admits they like Ricky Martin and Robbie Williams in a zine is alright with me.

\$2 for 1 issue/\$8 for subscription/
SNAILWELL GAZETTE c/o Uncle Chris/ 174
Delancey St Apt 7R/New York, NY
10002/snailwellgirls@yahoo.com

WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY #9

I kind have a crush with this zine and, like most crushes, it was totally unexpected. The zine is comprised of a bunch of letters written to a girl that were never sent. The letters tell the story of Kurt moving from Indiana to Seattle and all the worry and introspection that accompany such giant life change. The writing is quiet but true, which is hard to do without being pretentious or annoying. Sometimes the letters read a little bit like self-help affirmations, but I didn't find that off-putting for some reason. All in all, **WELCOME TO FLAVOR COUNTRY** is a well done zine about moving.

Kurt Morris/ \$1/ 8820 Store Ave N #301/
Seattle, WA 98103
welcometoflavorcountry@gmail.com
www.myspace.com/welcometoflavorcountry

I REALLY STEPPED IN IT THIS TIME #5

I REALLY STEPPED IN IT THIS TIME is a nice comic zine about Brian's life during the past year. Brian is 25, he likes going to concerts, eating burritos and describing girls as cute. The drawings are a little rough, but they work for the comic and I like the fact that the characters comment on the sketches. I liked seeing Brian in San Francisco eating in the Mission and I thought the maps he drew were a nice touch. My only complaint is that sometimes I had to work hard to read the handwriting, but that is a pretty minor complaint.

Brian Dubin/ 3019 St Paul Street, Apt 2F/
Baltimore, MD 1218/
abrabcadaverr@yahoo.com

JUGULAR VOL 1 #2

Any zine that promises a poster in the center of every issue is talking big. **JUGULAR** is a uber-earnest political zine

from Baltimore. There is an article about the politics of open space and city parks. Another article is about collective living situations which taught me a new word, "self-genre-fication," a word I am not sure I understand. My favorite article was about a music festival that was held in order to help advertise non-profit organizations. The zine is also full of some really great photographs that are worth checking out.

Matt Crocama/\$2/PO Box 153/Linthicum,
MD 21090/the_jugular_zine@yahoo.com



**DAN
TAYLOR**

PO BOX 5531, LUTHERVILLE, MD 21094
WWW.DANTENET.COM
DANTE@DANTENET.COM

Dan Taylor is the editor of **THE HUNGOVER GOURMET**. The brand new issue #10 features articles on competitive eating, multi-tiered burgers, White Castle in Harlem, In-N-Out Burger, pork rinds and more. Single copies are \$3 from PO Box 5531, Lutherville, MD 21094-5531 or order on-line at hungovergourmet.com.

"It's not a fanzine," **MISHAP** editor Ryan reminds us early on in issue #21 of this nicely designed and wide-ranging publication. And he's right. When I think of a fanzine I think of the obsessive movie publications that first introduced me to the world of self-publishing. **MISHAP** aspires to be far more than that and hits more than it misses. In its 52 digest-sized pages you'll

find everything from the typical section of book and zines reviews with punk and political leanings to a series of cartoons about a possum leaving Oregon because he's tired of the abuse. Other features of note include a report from a Death Metal Fest in which the writer confronts one band's singer over their on-stage comments and attire, as well as a straightforward interview with the Finlandian Tolkien metal band Battlelore. I'm probably getting too old and removed from it for **MISHAP**'s screeds about the 'punk' lifestyle but wouldn't hesitate to recommend it for its writing, variety and design. (\$3 or trade to PO Box 5841, Eugene, OR 97405)

KRIMI CORNER, on the other hand, is exactly what a fanzine is all about. Recently launched by Mirek Lipinski, the down and dirty four page publication is focused on "krimis," or German language crime thrillers, based on the writing of Edgar Wallace. The precursor of the Italian "giallo" of the 1970s, the krimi first arrived in the States as part of double bills or Saturday afternoon TV packages. Today, the niche DVD market has given the titles a new life with collectors and fans obsessing over titles like *The Gorilla Gang*, *The Secret of the Red Orchid*, and *Room 13* (in my opinion, one of the genre's best efforts). Lipinski, who also writes about the films at his latarnia.com website provides a brief history of krimis and Wallace and a lengthy review of Retromedia's recent *The Monster of London/The Secret of the Red Orchid* double bill disc. A checklist of all 32 Wallace krimis produced by Rialto rounds out the issue nicely. Given my keen interest in the genre I immediately subscribed to this cool new publication and if you've got any interest in krimis or Eurotrash cinema

you should, too. (Five issues for \$8 from PO Box 2398, NYC, 10009 or PayPal payment to Mirelski@aol.com)

For more on the trash cinema front check out Doug Waltz's **DIVINE EXPLOITATION**, an old school drive-in movie zine even though drive-ins don't exist anymore. (Full disclosure time, Waltz reviews films for my long-running exploitation movie review site at www.dantenet.com.) The publication dives deep into the straight-to-video waters in which I frequently fear to tread, interviewing people I've never heard of like William Hellfire, Michael Raso, Ryli Morgan, Tina Krause and more. Plus, Waltz and his contributors serve up reviews of stuff you'd likely pass by at the local video store, such as *Expendable*, *Living Dead World* and *Snakewoman*, a recent effort from Eurotrash auteur Jess Franco, who's still cranking 'em out. My biggest problem with some horror/trash cinema review sites and reviewers is that it's hard to believe they even like the stuff they're watching. What happened to enjoying trashy flicks that you could sit back and watch with some friends while you downed some high-powered thinking liquor and artery-clogging snacks? Waltz has an obvious love and enthusiasm for the stuff he writes about that comes through loud and clear in the pages of **DIVINE EXPLOITATION**. Fifteen years ago publications like this arrived in my PO Box on a weekly basis. Now I'm lucky to get a handful a year. Help keep publications like this alive and kicking. (\$3 to PO Box 2202, Portage, MI 49081-2202)

This spring my wife and I will welcome a baby into our lives and I've recently been wondering what kind of impact she'll have on, well, every aspect of my life. My

parents were around my age (40) when they had me, but they'd already had four kids. Me? It's an all-new experience and I'm just hoping that I can be the person that I am while I raise a kid who will, hopefully, have all our good traits and a minimum of our bad ones. Zines like **FERTILE GROUND** give me hope on all fronts. Not only is it a zine made by people who have kids, but it's filled with stories about getting kids to listen through humor, gender issues, weaning kids off breast-feeding, enjoying music with your kids, the contrariness of children and much more. You know... real world stuff, not the filtered information you see in mainstream books and magazines. Over the last 20 years I've published about the things that were important to me like horror movies, punk rock, video games, thrifting, fast food, beer and travel. Can a kidzine be far behind? (\$2 or \$8 for a year's worth to Stacey Greenberg, 2084 Court Ave., Memphis, TN 38104)

I've never been to Brooklyn, but Fred Argoff's **BROOKLYN!** (exclamation point his) at least gives me a sense of what I'm missing. I love a good zine that embraces an area, city, neighborhood or town, and Argoff does a great job of translating his love and affection for the area to paper. This issue (#52!) features memories of Coney Island and the magic that it once—and still—holds for visitors, a review of Evan Ginzburg's book about growing up in Brooklyn, and a sequel to issue #32's look at abandonment in the area. The abandonment topic dominates the issue and Argoff presents large photos along with some perspective and history. My only complaint is that some of the photo reproduction doesn't do the buildings justice, but whatdya want for \$2.50? A

definite favorite that I always enjoy reading. You will, too. (\$10 for four issues, cash only to Fred Argoff, Penthouse L, 1170 Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11230-4060.)

In my role as The Hungover Gourmet I field a lot of questions like, "Why don't you enter competitive eatings contests?" and "Why don't you include more recipes in your zine?" The answer to the first one is that I love food too much to treat it like that and the answer to the second is that I don't know why anybody would want the tried and true recipes that I make week after week. I admire Matt Bodette because he doesn't feel that hesitation about sharing his favorite kitchen successes and **EXIT 63 BLUES** is the result. In its 16 pages you'll find dishes for breakfast, dinner and dessert plus his thoughts on "things you need in your kitchen." Not only did reading **EXIT 63 BLUES** inspire me to share more recipes with my readers, but it made me want to try some of his dishes, much more than reading any issue of *Food & Wine* or *Gourmet* does. (\$1 or trade to Matt Bodette, 6466 VT Rt. 12S, Vergennes, VT 05491 or visit exit63blues.blogspot.com for more info)



**DONNY
SMITH**

915 W. 2 ST., BLOOMINGTON, IN 47403
DWANZINE@HOTMAIL.COM

Selam fanzinciler! Kusura bakmayın I'm so out of touch. I don't read anything anymore except assignments and Turkish poetry—and despite two months in Istanbul, no

Turkish zines. And I've got enough material for about 10 issues of **DWAN**, but haven't put one out in ages. Too busy.

Anyway, here are a few zines that managed to drag my attention away from schoolwork for a few minutes:

SWALLOWING THE COBRA'S HEART AND OTHER TRUE TRAVEL TALES by Justin Hall Self-explanatory title. Nicely written. His anger (and weariness) at Singaporean teens' lack of alienation (or is it their utterly complete alienation?), his dumbfoundment at two Christians in the midst of a Hindu ceremony in Malaysia, his encounters with odd foods (including the title food). A cartoon telling a sweet story of gay sex on a boat on the Amazon. \$3 from <http://www.allthumbspress.com/>

EXIT 63 BLUES LUST FOR LISTS #1

Matt describes the zine this way: "I make a list of everything I do. everyday. then I make a zine." Which is accurate. The nice thing is that this very spare list of activities gives all kinds of hints at bigger things. The first day starts, "worked all day." Not surprising. Then a couple days later, "worked all day, mowed hay." And again the next day, "worked all day, mowed hay." (How often does a zine talk about mowing hay?) Then a couple weeks later, "some of my ducks hatched." About a month later, "BAD FIRE AT WORK"—no further details, just "BAD FIRE AT WORK" stuck between "Happy Birthday Melody" and "had a party for Melody." The normal way to tell about your life is to talk at length about the outstanding events (the fires, the parties, the hatchings) and barely mention the things that take up most of our waking life (working all day, watching TV). So this zine is a different representation. (But I still want to hear about those ducks.)

\$1 or trade. Matthew Bodette, 6466 Vt Rt 125, Vergennes VT 05491 USA

FARMER'S DAUGHTER 1

A first issue, still feeling its way, but a good start. A zine about farming. In this issue, marijuana farming (I would call it gardening in this case), niche farming, her parents' farm. The writing's fairly vague, not a lot of details. But I expect that it will improve with each issue.

No price. \$1 or trade? Christine, PO Box 624, Northville MI 48167 USA or mujeralborde@hotmail.com

LISTY

Maria and Androo's lists. Among Maria's "things I said I'd never do, but do": "Care about Paris Hilton"—with "that serene vacant look on her face—like she's either thinking about everything or nothing." Interspersed among the list of "Andrew's farts": picture's of Androo's butt. As an extra bonus: a list of "twenty celebrity encounters" by my sweetie, Mark Hain, who says of one celebrity (whose name I won't mention here), "... there was something completely non-biological about his hair; it was solid and had absolutely no sheen. I don't think it was a toupee. It looked more like his own hair had somehow turned into microstrands of corrugated cardboard." Also, funny critiques of found lists.

No price. \$3 or trade? Maria Listy Goodman, PO Box 303, 2000 NE 42 St, Portland OR 97213 USA or mariasoapy13@yahoo.com

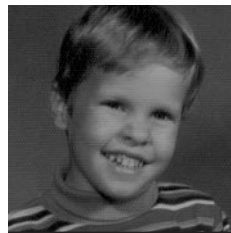
GHOST PINE FANZINE Bees

Didn't have time to read this, but always enjoy **GHOST PINE**. Well-told stories. \$2. Jeff, 114 Canter Blvd, Nepean ON K2G-2M7 CANADA

THE POLISHED KNOB Issue Five

An old zine, from way back in 1994. A homemade porno mag in the style of Boyd McDonald and Straight to Hell. Before the days of webpages and digital cameras, people had to work a lot harder to produce amateur porn. But the results were often hot.

I found my copy while sifting through boring old porno mags at the back of Calamus Bookstore in Boston. I've found similar things at Quimby's in Chicago. See what treasures you can uncover at your local independent bookstore ...



ERIC
LYDEN

224 MORaine ST., BROCKTON, MA 02301
ERICFISHLEGS@AOL.COM

What's up, folks? I noticed something interesting about the last issue of **XD**—4 of the reviewers came from the great state of Massachusetts. Represent, yo. I feel like I should insert some sort of Massachusetts content, sort of like Canadian TV shows are required to include some Canadian content, but I just can't come up with anything clever enough to put here. I really wish I had a new issue done by now, but I don't because I am both slow and somewhat lazy. Anyhow, let's get on with the reviews...

EXIT 63 BLUES—ZEN AND THE ART OF SKATEBOARD RAMP BUILDING

I really like zines like this—they say exactly what they're about in the title and when you open it up you get exactly what

the title promises. This zine tells you exactly how to build a skateboard ramp, no more, no less. Detailed instructions, plenty of diagrams, nicely reproduced photos. Made me want to go out and build a skate ramp except for the fact that I A) don't skateboard and B) about the only thing I learned in junior high shop class was that I should not be allowed anywhere near tools. Still, the teacher liked me because I was one of the only students who didn't spend the majority of his time trying to discreetly figure out how to construct a wooden shiv. A year or 2 after I graduated they discontinued shop in jr. highs due to budget cuts which made me a little sad. I didn't exactly excel, but as far as time killing classes go it was more fun than gym. Anyhow, if you want to build a skateboard ramp or if you just enjoy building things in general and are looking for a good project you could do a lot worse than this zine.

10 pages digest. \$1 or trade to
Matthew Bodette
6466 VT RT 125 Vergennes VT 05491
mystupidlife41@hotmail.com
www.exit63blues.blogspot.com

TRACK MARKS

Looking at the cover and title I was expecting something different from what I got—it has a photo of someone's bare arms and I assumed it was a zine about drugs and got all prepared to read stories about drug addiction and people sifting through their own shit to find the crack they swallowed to hide from the cops. Then I opened it and found it was a zine about trains and... that's good, too. There was a bit too much poetry for my tastes (I'll be honest with ya—one poem is too much poetry for my tastes) but most of the fiction (or fictiony sounding nonfiction) from a

variety of contributors was good though some of it was kind of... writerly? I dunno what the word is, but it felt more like they were trying to write a story as opposed to just telling a story with written words. I dunno if that makes any sense, but this was a good zine.

36 pages digest. They say "for additional copies, send drugs to" but I wouldn't do that if I were you. Instead I'd send a couple bucks or maybe a trade to
Love Bunni Press
2622 Princeton Rd
Cleveland Heights OH 44118
thecoloroftheskyisgreentoday@yahoo.com
radialfloral@yahoo.com
mandy_wieck@yahoo.com

BOGUS RENDITION #7

This is the second train related zine I got in the stack Davida sent me. I thought "Hmm.. that's a little odd. I wonder if it's a coincidence or if Davida thinks I like trains." Then I thought about it—I do kind of like trains. They are my favorite forms of public transportation and trains seem to make for good stories so... hurrah for trains! This zine is actually roughly half train/travel stories and half live music reviews. I admit that I sorta just skimmed the latter though they appeared to be well written and had nice photos attached to them, but you can only read about bands you've never heard of for so long before you get bored. But I really enjoyed all the travel stories including one where the author stumbles across something you rarely see in zines like this—a cop who appeared to be a generally nice guy. Unfortunately he was the second cop the author and his friends encountered and the first cop was "a moron" (a direct quote from the nice cop) who arrested them, but it's still nice to see a good cop every once

in a while in a zine because they usually come off rather poorly. I personally would like to see more train hopping and less music in this zine, but I don't expect the author to listen to me if what he's been doing has been working. Either way, I really liked this zine. Digest. 60 pages.

Send \$3 or a trade to Justin Curtsinger
PO Box 85 Portland ME 04112
www.bogusrendition.com

HOW TO CUT A PROMO VOL. 1

This isn't a zine, it's a DIY DVD. What's it a DVD of, you ask? It's a DVD full of about 2 hours worth of pro wrestling interviews hosted by the Masked Disgruntled Dishwasher. Those of you who know me know that I am quite a pro wrestling fan so a DVD full of wrestling promos... sign me up. Even if you don't like wrestling you should still at least think about checking this out if you're bored or whatever because generally speaking interviews are just as entertaining, often more entertaining, than the actual matches especially to a non fan. I mean, if you don't find yourself entertained by Ric Flair ranting and raving like a lunatic while stripping down to his boxer shorts for roughly 5 minutes then I don't know what to tell you. If you don't get a kick out of a promo from the 70's where the Grand Wizard and someone named Eddie Creechman argue whether or not Eddie cost the Sheik a match (I liked this one because it kind of subtly played into the situation in the middle east with Eddie wearing a big silver star of David and the Grand Wizard apparently representing some middle eastern country) then you have serious emotional issues. If you don't feel Rob Van Dam's passion when he's talking about what ECW meant to him then you're flat out goofy. I like wrestling, I like

wrestling interviews, I like this DVD and these folks also publish zines as well that I haven't seen but would like to.

Send a few bucks or whatever to: Take it or Leave It PO Box 844 Bayard, NM 88023
outlawwriter1976@yahoo.com

MY FAT IRISH ASS #7

I have to admit, this is exactly the kind of thing I wish I was too dignified to find funny. I wish I could look at the 14 pages of doctored filthy Dennis the Menace and Family Circus strips and say "Oh dear. A strip implying that good ol' Mr. Wilson is a pedophile. An unfunny mockery of a deadly serious subject." or "Daddy from Family Circus trolling the internet looking for kiddy porn? Disgraceful." But alas, I am not a better man and as such I find this shit to be hilarious. But I'll be honest with you—I've read past issues of this zine and the non altered comics stuff is usually funnier than this. Here we have a review of a Ray Davies show and other reviews (that sorta doesn't fit with the rest of the content, but that's kind of a minor thing), a comic that I sorta couldn't make heads or tails of, and a kinda funny catalog for "Godless College." But God help me I just can't get enough of these defaced comic strips. Perhaps I need help...

38 pages. full size. Send \$2 to MFIA
PO Box 65391 Washington DC 20035

PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS by Wred Fright

Before I forget, I want to mention this book for a couple of reasons. 1) It's a really good book. The story of a band called the Pornographic Flabbergasted Emus. It was originally serialized in a series of 7 zines. I reviewed one of the zines and... well, that leads to reason 2) On the back cover they list quotes of various reviews the book has

gotten and one of those reviews comes from this very zine. And guess who originally said the quote? That's right. Me. The Big Man himself. Quoted on a book. I realize this is not the most exciting thing in the world, but look at it like this- when was the last time anything you said was quoted on a book cover? I'll bet you're sitting there reading this saying "Never" which kinda proves my point. I'm not gonna say it's the most exciting news in the world, but it's pretty neat.

\$16 ppd to Out Your Backdoor
4686 Meridian Rd Williamston MI 48895
wredfright@yahoo.com
www.wredfright.com

KALEIDOTROPE #1

On first glance I wasn't sure this was my cup of tea. But as I glanced I saw it had an article on the Transformers so I figured if nothing else I should give a quick skimming. And in spite of the fact that Jim Cleveland (the author) didn't care for the Transformers movie (he says it was too violent for his tastes which was kinda the point—no one died on the TV show so in the movie they offed a whole bunch of Transformers. Add to that the minor but very memorable cursing and... how any true fan can dislike the movie is beyond me.) it was an enjoyable read for anyone who grew up with the show. So I read a little more and aside from the poetry (Poetry + Eric = dislike. That was a clumsy was of putting it, but fact is it just ain't my thing) I found it to be a pretty enjoyable read. The fiction was all solid (and I'm trying to think of one story that was a real stand out, but in general it was all good. None of it quite reached "Holy shit, I will never forget this story!" level, but it was all good) and I enjoyed the back page blather where Stuart Crause just sorta goes on

about topics ranging from magnetism to fashion to math. One of the better literary type zines I've seen lately.

44 not quite full size but bigger than half sized pages. No price listed but send a couple bucks at least to Fred Coppersmith
PO Box 25 Carle Place, NY 11514

TALES OF MERE EXISTENCE #3

A comic zine subtitled "The 7 Habits of Highly Negative People" and... yeah, it was good. Most of it is pretty negative—there are comics about being depressed on your birthday, being alone for the holidays and "29 Reasons Not to Expend any Energy Today" which I could relate to, especially the one where he says "I'll work on it as soon as I finish the Motley Crue book" which I got a kick out of just because it's a fucking awesome book and it will suck you right in whether you care anything about Motley Crue or not. Normally I would recommend this zine whole heartedly but... OK, it comes with a DVD which was good and funny and all, but because of the DVD the whole package costs \$12 which is just too much for a zine. If I was in charge I would offer the version with the DVD, but would also offer one for maybe \$5 or so for people who have never seen the zine before and aren't ready to make that much of an investment. As it is... I really enjoyed it, but if you were to ask me whether it's worth \$12... I dunno, man. That's up to you.

28 full size pages with a DVD. Send \$12 to
Lev Yilmaz 430 15th Ave #6
San Francisco CA 94118

ROAM/SPONTANEOUS REACTION 1 + 2

This is a split zine and to be honest I never quite fully got the point of those. Yeah, it's nice to make something with a friend of yours, but at the same time I don't see why you would just go and make 2 separate

zines on your own as opposed to doing one zine together. Then again I've always been a loner and never much cared for working with others so what do I know? Anyhow, half of this zine is **ROAM** which is kind of odd, but I kind of liked it. It's basically drawings made on graph paper along with lists (such as "tangible things I can balance on my head" and "10 things I know about Willie Nelson") it's kind of an odd little read but I found it oddly compelling. As for **SPONTANEOUS REACTION**—in issue 1 it's mostly one or two lines of written words on an otherwise blank page whereas #2 featured what appeared to be poems along with a photo of a little blonde girl which... I dunno. according to the author she's "raking over some song lyrics into new complicated forms" but I honestly could not place any of these lyrics so... maybe it just went over my head.

40 pages digest send \$2 or trade to: Sarah Pearl, 1019 St. Lawrence Dr. Green Bay WI 54311 detweilersarah@hotmail.com

HUMAN WASTE #2

Kinda funny, sorta creepy, a little weird talking about Brent's (hopefully fictionalized) relationship with his neighborhood ice cream man. Some would say this comic is a story about judging books by their covers. Others could see it as an allegory for the current Iraq war. As I skim through it again I find I like it more the second time around. Go figure.

40 pages. digest. Send \$2 and maybe trades to Brent Moore PO Box 7182, Bend OR 97708

NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS 25 and 26

This kind of reminded me of *MAD* or *Cracked* magazines in a way. Comics

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #21

ranging from funny yet dumb to kinda dumb yet sorta funny. Articles such as "How to be a Mad Scientist" and "the Secret World of Amish Strip Clubs" and comics like "Types of People at the Beach" and a recurring character "The Famous Colonel Mactagart." Nothing in this zine will rock your world, but it's all good from start to finish. Well worth a read. Steve says you have to be 18 to order it. I don't think there's anything in there that's that bad, but I guess you should send an age statement anyways.

17 pages digest. Send \$2 or trade to Steve Steiner 445-1/2 Randolph St. Meadville PA 16335 eat_50_eggs@hotmail.com

JELLY CAKES #1-4

Well this here is a pretty interesting experiment. It's basically a zine put together by 5 fictional characters named Hennepin, Maritza, Grasmere, Huguenot & Becky, but it's really all written by a guy by the name of Benjamin Castle. It kind of took me awhile before I caught on that these people weren't real which either tells you that Benjamin's a good writer or I'm not too bright. Let's go with the former, though we can't discount the latter. For the life of me I couldn't figure out why a zine published in MN would have paid ads from places in NYC. But once I caught on I found it to be a really enjoyable read. Upon rereading I find that you can sorta sense that all 5 characters are being written by one person, but by no means is it totally obvious or does it significantly damage the over all effect of the thing. An enjoyable and well written zine. It's unique and I've yet to see anything like it and that alone is enough to recommend it.

Each one is 16 pages. \$1.50 or a trade to

Benjamin Castle, PO Box 581412 Minneapolis MN 55458-1412

KING CAT COMICS #67

OK, if you're not reading this one you're really missing the boat. Each issue of this one features deceptively simple drawings and deceptively simple stories. I also enjoy the letters page and John's "King Cat Top 40" where he lists 40 things he happens to be enjoying at the moment. Parts of it are life affirming, other parts are kind of depressing though... if there's such a thing as "depressing in a good way" then that's what these comics are. It's one of the classics of zinedom. Just order a copy and thank me later.

40 pages digest. Send \$3 to John Porcellino, PO Box 18888 Denver, CO 80218

YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU LI'L DEVIL #1/ FRANK, JOE, & PHIL #1

I put these 2 together because they're published by the same guy. **LI'L DEVIL** focusses on women who are either dressed as devils or are half demon and includes a nicely drawn 1 page comic by Randy's 14 year old daughter. At first I thought it was kinda weird, but as I read more I found it oddly compelling. **FRANK, JOE & PHIL** is a comic by Randy's 13-year-old son Tanner. The kid's not exactly a great artist, but he tries and I have much respect for Randy's trying to get his kids involved in the whole scene. That makes him a top contender for "Cool Dad of the Year" in my book.

Quarter sized. 16-24 pages Each one is \$1 or a trade to Randy Robbins, PO Box 17131 Anaheim, CA 92817

THE OBSERVATION DECK #12

This zine is made by someone in Massachusetts and I must admit that I'm

always rather fond of zines made by people in my home state (speaking of which, I really, really feel bad for you people who don't live here and didn't get to see the wire to wire coverage of the whole *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* Lite Brite bomb "threat." It was just too funny for words, especially the late night newscasts where they tried to explain why they took this threat so seriously. It was ass covering at its finest. I was quite relieved when I saw that the national news was treating it as a joke) Anyhow, this is the "YES" issue which features Laurie and friends of hers talking about things they will always say "yes" to which is a pretty good idea and is pretty entertaining. There's also a 1 page article on "How to Get Over a Love Affair" which I really liked and some other articles which were also good. Recommended

20 pages digest. Send \$1 or trade to L. MacNamara, PO Box 111 Greenfield, MA 01302



**FRAN
MCMILLIAN**

PMB 170. 40 E. MAIN ST., NEWARK, DE 19711
MARYBLD@AOL.COM

Life has been busy, but relatively unexciting and believe me, that's a big relief. I still have a job, although lately I like it less and less. That's good in a strange way, because it keeps me committed to school. With luck, I should be finished by the end of next summer and then I'll be able to do something more fulfilling with my work life.

Otherwise...things have stabilized on the financial front and I finally have a new publication. It's called **DOWN LOW** and is available for \$5.00 or trade. Warning: it is a poem, but it's easy to understand. Trust me...

Now on with the reviews...

CLIP TART 2007

The latest issue of Susan Boren's collage zine focuses on magic and the occult. Besides the usual stunning artwork (8 pages in full color!) and collection of quotes, there are articles dealing with dreams and magickal rituals inspired by the likes of A. Crowley and Austin Spare. I especially enjoyed Derek Caterwaul's *Lust Not After Results*. A nice zine to peruse just before bed. It makes for interesting dreaming.

Susan Boren, PO Box 66512, Austin TX 78766. Price: The fuchsia insert instructs you to "make an appropriate offering" which could be a trade, stamps or cash.

POSSUM GARAGE PRESS #7

It's strange when you get a zine in your zine package that comes from a place less than eight miles from where you live. That said, **POSSUM GARAGE PRESS** is a slim little zine filled with delightful line drawings and some of the world's neatest handwriting. There are several short (and good!) poems as well as a couple of brief articles concerning illegal immigration which cover more sides of the issue than articles ten times their length.

PGP c/o Lanyon Studio, 8 Winston Ave, Wilmington DE 19804 Price: \$2.00 single issue, \$5.00/year. Trades and submissions accepted.

SONGS OF THE LEFTIES #13 (JULY 2006)

This has to be the neatest thing I've gotten

in the mail in some time. This zine is a collection of full-color mailable postcards featuring artwork by K. Crab along with a sheet of her favorite writers of the month. Original and very cool.

K. Crab, Box 1510, Laguna Beach, CA 92652, web: SongsoftheLefties.com, e-mail: info@songsofthelefties.com Price: \$7 US, \$9 Canada & Mexico, \$10 world. Subscription US: \$20 for 4 issues.

PASSIONS #45 (AUGUST 2006)

This is the first issue of this cooperative press association publication I've seen and unfortunately it's the last issue. Darn! I really enjoyed the range of topics in this zine — everything from music to comics to life working in a DOE lab. And it's meaty, too, weighing in at nearly 100 pages, enough for a whole week's worth of bus stop reading pleasure. I am really sorry to see this one go.

For further information contact: Ken Bausert, 2140 Erma Drive, East Meadow, NY 11554-1120.



**PENTHOUSE L, 1170 OCEAN PARKWAY,
BROOKLYN, NY 11230**

Well, look at this, wouldja? It seems like only yesterday when I found a packet of zines for review in my mailbox, and here comes another one! It's true what they say (don't worry about who "they" are. They're there, and that's all you need to know): a reviewer's work is never done. So, let's get

started... [Ed. Note – these reviews should have run last time, but somehow they got misplaced. Sorry Fred! Sorry reviewees!]

OPUNTIA is one of the more literate projects you're going to find. Here's #60, which starts off with a bunch of letters of comment. Just looking at the places they come from tells you how varied the zine is—Seattle, Caceres (that's in Spain), London, Medicine Hat (Alberta, OK?) The featured article is titled *Prosperity Cheques*, evidently inspired by the Province of Alberta issuing "resource rebates" in 2005, but harking back to a scheme in the 1930s that was a lot less popular. If all you want is mindless fluff, don't get it. If you want something for your brain instead, get it.

\$3 cash for a sample copy from Dale Speirs, Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta T2P 2E7, Canada.

You look at the title, **INCENDIARY WORDS**, and you kind of expect something radical, if not actually inflammatory. But...surprise! This is a zine devoted primarily to soccer (or, as the rest of the world outside the United States thinks of the game, football). Vol. VI, No. 21 came out shortly before the 2006 World Cup was decided, which is probably why there wasn't an Italian flag draped across the first page. Your friendly local reviewer, an American whose father remained a Brooklyn Dodger fan all his life, can't get overly excited about soccer, and not in the least because referees waving yellow cards do not appear very authoritative. But, if you live and die by the game, you should probably send for a copy right away.

Merely 50 cents from Steve DeRose at PQRS Ltd., 4821 West Fletcher St. (#2), Chicago IL 60641-5113.

And talk about things working out well! Here I just mentioned the Brooklyn Dodgers in the previous review, and the next zine out of the envelope is **PASSIONS**, with a photo of Ebbets Field right there on the cover. This is a CPA, which stands for Cooperative Press Association (what did you think?) It works on the assumption that everyone has something they're so passionate about—hence the title—they want it committed to paper for the rest of the world to see. You establish membership the CPA, send in your stuff, and it appears in each issue. Simple? Of course! The present issue under consideration, #44, includes the latest installments of *The Issue at Hand* (the passion here being comics), *Travel Notes* (you guessed it; someone is peripatetic), plus quite a bit more.

Get a sample copy for \$3.50 and see how it inspires your own passions. From Ken Bausert, 2140 Erma Dr., East Meadow NY 11554-1120.

P.S. Latebreaking news: Ken Bausert will be giving up the reins at **PASSIONS** following the release of issue #45. For future issues, please contact Arnold Hollander, 1598 Old Mill Rd., Wantagh NY 11793-3237.

Well, I had no choice but to save this one for last. It's one of the most wonderful zines I've ever run across, and trust me, I don't say that lightly. **SNACKBAR CONFIDENTIAL** is nothing less than a paean to some of the more obscure, if not forgotten, images from American media, emphasizing the wild and crazy 1960s. And I refer to advertisements as well as the programs themselves. So here's issue #543 (the editor has a sense of humor), including such gems as Sunred brand

Cherry Humps (this was an actual confection!), Beauty Bug—a hairdryer designed to look like some sort of outlandish insect, an ad for a “live appearance” by characters from *The Planet of the Apes*, a 1969 *TV Guide* listing for the *Mama Cass Hour*, a review of *The Night God Screamed* (1971) and so much more, I can’t possibly list it. It’s like, a trip, man. A groovy, far-out trip. And all for \$2.95. P.O. Box 1359, Huntington NY 11743.

And being inspired by all the words I’ve thrown together, I close this time with a limerick of my own invention. Heaven only knows how it happened, but this popped into my head all of a sudden one day:

There was an old man in the street
Who offered the public a treat
He would sing, he would jump
He would dance, he would bump
But he didn’t smell terribly sweet.

’Til next time, don’t forget to write!



ILYA
ZAYCHIK

4 RIDGECREST DR., W. ROXBURY MA 02132
OTHER.INVESTIGATIONS@GMAIL.COM.

911

by Nicholas Jahr
5½ X 8½; 36 pages; \$5
2005

The Crumpled Press
<http://www.crumpledpress.org/index.html>

The incidents on 9/11 may soon suffer from the ‘Stairway to Heaven’ complex, wherein repeated mention and invocation leads to

insignificance. That is still far off, at least as of 2005, when this short fictional ‘pastiche’ chapbook was produced. The first two pages are recorded phone calls from someone in the second tower to his girlfriend, or wife’s voicemail, before he gets cut off; the next twenty-five calls chronicle, quite convincingly, this woman’s emotional debacle and slow recovery over the next six months. Jahr writes the incoming call number, the date, the time, and the recording that she would hear on every page, before getting to her message, thereby putting into words what we would imagine audio-visually. Repeating it on every page is both comforting and continually unnerving for the reader, and Jahr masterfully walks this tightrope. The names are blacked out like in a declassified military document, which has a stark visual appeal, too. She eventually begins to live with and rely on, that phone recording. The last telephone call is an actual conversation, when the man’s phone is discovered, and her number is called. You might predict what her reaction is, but if you can’t, I won’t ruin it.

CLIMAX

by Jake Johnson
3 X 4¾; 72 pages; \$2
zines@fastworks.com

The cover states: “I had 38 orgasms between July 2nd and August 24th. I wrote about every one of them.” That is perhaps the least interesting part of the zine, though it accounts for 70 of the 72 pages. It’s the preface that raises interesting questions. Johnson deplores self-censorship, so he bares all. He doesn’t even edit, electing to keep it “as raw and real as it could be.” However, he does not reveal his name, which seems an important first step if self-censorship is to

be abolished. More importantly, though, Johnson’s clumsy rebellion doesn’t yield engaging writing; Johnson—and I detect a trace of our own opinions here—is under the mistaken impression that just because something took place, it inherently matters and should be described in excruciating detail. If that is the case, I suspect self-censorship gained a crucial victory with the publication of this zine.

LUNCHING OUT (INVESTIGATIONS NO. 6)

by Daniel Immerwahr & Ariel Ron
5½ X 8½; 48 pages; \$2
2006
dsi5@columbia.edu

In the wide world of zines, Immerwahr’s offerings have tended to follow a more scholarly, or literary, direction, at least in terms of layout and presentation, and in some respects the writing as well. **LUNCHING OUT** in this respect is no different; even the art of KuKula and Refugee lends the pages a disturbingly elegant appeal. The content runs a pretty wide topical gamut, and the pieces are themselves short snippets of thoughts. Most of the subjects and observations are thought-provoking (falsificationism, reflections on *Heart of Darkness*), as expected, but the continuing witty jabs the editors take at each other via footnotes makes it seem like they just discovered both the medium and the function; in other words, it appears immature. Additionally, though the writing itself is very polished, the authors do not appear to filter anything that comes into their heads. This could have both positive and negative effects: in this case, I find it to be the latter, since it means more space devoted to poo, and less space devoted to more interesting discussions. But then in that case, it would become less of a zine. Though both are

identical in style, I would probably recommend **INVESTIGATIONS**, Immerwahr’s previous zine, over **LUNCHING OUT**.

VILLAIN

by Sherwin Tjia
5½ X 8½; 80 pages; \$7
2005
<http://hiplessboy.blogspot.com>
inconsolablecat@hotmail.com

Tjia is a Montréal poet, writer and artist whose work keeps on the lighter, inappropriate side. In this collection, a simple saddle-stitched affair, he tries his hand at hard-boiled detective fiction. He does a pretty good job of concocting a semi-complicated, action-packed plot with a twist. The illustrations feature a scene from the story with a caption. There are six stories here, and I think the best one is ‘The Trouble with Hitler,’ about, predictably, a man who goes back in time to murder Hitler, but ends up sleeping with his mother instead. That one is the most serious and the most edited. The last story, ‘the unlikely girl,’ is not a detective story at all; it’s about an anonymous, and slightly sad, girl who gets lost in movies but always stops them during the climax. The title track is more a thriller, with an FBI agent-turned-killer who stalks his partner and lover across lifetimes. Tjia plans to turn this story into a novel. They’re all very fun to read, but two things stick out: one, the numerous typos, and, more importantly, the self-conscious humor. Sex scenes are introduced with awkward hilarity: “they did it for hours in every position imaginable,” or my favorite, “we partied beyond redemption until dawn.” I am no expert, but I think film noirs of the 30s and 40s would be less clumsy about it, which leads me to believe that **VILLAIN** is something of a parody. This does not

invalidate the collection at all, but the reader should be aware of this perceived tendency, lest she open the book with false expectations.

THE LONG WALK BACK TO MYSELF

Jessica Stein
7 X 7½; 44 pages; \$3
Summer 2006
caprice@riseup.net

The premise of the zine is simple: our hero walks from Brooklyn to Croton-on-Hudson, some 50 miles, for a folk festival. Illustrations of points along the journey, wildlife, scenery, and a hand-drawn map guide us along with the words. Stein's (or Caprice, as she calls herself) epigraph quotes Ani DiFranco, but I detect some traces of Whitman. There are some exciting adventures here; very little of the zine is directly introspective. As it often happens with good writing, however, the plot reveals the various facets of the complex characters and becomes more than just a plot. Caprice slowly, yet directly, sheds her layers, and we find out there is a struggle with depression there. Now every time she is lost, or caught in a storm, or some other misfortune befalls her, it becomes more important for her to succeed, and she of course senses this. Depression can be described as a total lack of direction, when everything you do still makes you feel like you are getting absolutely nowhere, and then the crushing follow up question: why go anywhere? In this reading, Caprice's walk acquires symbolic meaning, hence the title. But I imagine making a zine, too, is something of which to be proud, and may provide a satisfactory defense, if only temporarily, against that emotional stasis. That's why I thought of 'Song of Myself.'



KRIS
MININGER

CALLE OBISPO 4 BAJO, PLASENCIA 10600,
CÁCERES, SPAIN

Hello everyone. Kris here with a little international zine update for you. But first, a quick plug: we (the wife & I) publish the zine **EXTRANJERO** (which means "foreigner" in Spanish) all about our life and adventures here on the Iberian peninsula. The latest issue (#6) is available for trade, donation, or something handmade. Contact us at: Kris & Lola, Calle Obispo 4 bajo, Plasencia, Cáceres, Spain. Now on with the reviews!

JUTCHY-YAYA

The editor, Adam, packs more wisdom and humor into this little 8 page zine than most folks manage to pack into 80. From the introduction which ponders the question "why do supermarket blood plums never taste like the blood plums I remember from my childhood?" to the editor's hardware store adventures in search of stone dust for his water tank, there is never a dull moment here. You also get a poem about leftovers, a hilarious review of Nick Nolte's "acting" in *The Hulk*, and an obituary for a wallet. Unfortunately, the whole thing is over way too fast.

Anyway, it says here that the price is "free" but there is no postal address to send that "free" to. I hate when a zine only has an email address or a website for contact information. (Sigh.) Well, here it is: adamford@labyrinth.net.au. Or check out

www.labyrinth.net.au/~adamford. If it wasn't for the "au" at the end of the email address (and the fact that the editor used the phrase "no worries" on one page) I wouldn't have had the faintest idea that this zine was published in Australia.

SureShot Presents **ORDINARY EYEBALL** (Winter 2006): This is the third time in recent months that I've stumbled upon a zine containing the comics of Australian artist Mandy Ord. I really like the concept behind this zine. The publisher, Mark Selan, devotes each issue of SureShot Presents to promoting the work of a particular Australian artist. This is Mandy's issue and it's called **ORDINARY EYEBALL** because Mandy always portrays herself in her autobiographical comics as only having one eye—a great, big, cyclops-like eye.

There are four comics in here: "Dirty Little Creep" is about an awkward trip to the hair salon; "The Comic Teacher" tells the tale of teaching drawing to a kid from a broken home (quote: "Do ya wanna see the scar from where me mum stabbed me?"); "The Poor Little Thing" is a tale of bedwetting; and "Nana Shower" is a tale of helping her grandmother take a shower. There is a tenderness in Mandy's way of telling a story, a combination of the expressions on the characters' faces and the way she chooses the dialogue, that really took me by surprise. There is also a short interview with Mandy which gives the reader a better sense of what the artist is trying to achieve through her work. I can't recommend this zine enough.

Now, one thing I didn't like about this zine was what I read on the inside back cover. It was a sort of call for submissions for creators of comics looking to participate in

future issues of SureShot Presents. It started off OK. "The idea of SureShot Presents is to produce consistently high quality self-contained sequential art by Australian comic creators... There are very few outlets for creators to publish their work, outside page limited anthologies and periodic web comics... The creators of a particular issue will get 150 copies of their book (half the print run)... The creator owns the material 100%."

So far so good. But then, "Submissions will be assessed on their marketability..." Blech! And then, regarding the creator's responsibilities, "To approach markets and deal with them in a professional manner. To provide sales data to the publisher." Gack! Hey, it's a zine! Keep it down to earth brother! If you're looking to quit your day job and make a living at this you're in the wrong business. Anyway, despite that little gripe I loved this comic. The price is \$4 which you can send to... Apparently this one doesn't have a real address either.

For sales, submission information or feedback send email to:
mark_selan@hotmail.com.

And if you get a chance check out
www.melbournecomics.com/mandyord/

BRAIN CELL FRACTAL

BRAIN CELL FRACTAL's editor, Ryosuke Cohen, first contacted us about 2 years ago in response to a call for submissions we sent out into "The Network" for a mail art project. Ryosuke responded by sending us a bunch of his single page **BRAIN CELL FRACTAL** collages. What Ryosuke does is ask mail artists around the world to send him 150 of something by post; stickers or homemade fake postage stamps seem to be very popular items sent his way. A lot of

folks also send him homemade rubber stamps with which Ryosuke can then make 150 “prints” or “stampings” or whatever the correct term for that is. In the end, each participant gets a stunningly beautiful multi-colored collage (as well as a list of the participants and their addresses—gotta keep that network up and running!) in return.

A couple of months back (I’m going off on a small tangent here) Lola and I gave a weekend workshop on zines and mail art in a small village in the south of Extremadura. When we arrived at the local youth center one of the first things we saw hanging in the hallway was a large poster advertising a mail art performance. There was a large photo of a half-scary, half-crazy looking man on the poster. Above the photo, in great big letters, was the name “RYOSUKE COHEN”. I couldn’t believe it! I looked at the date of the performance. We had missed it by a few months. “He had been here,” I thought, “and he didn’t look us up!”

When we returned home at the end of the weekend I told myself I was going to sit down and write Ryosuke a letter, send him a little mail art creation, and tell him we had seen his poster and were sorry we missed him. But, it turns out that letter never got past the written-in-my-head stage. Well, imagine my excitement when this afternoon the postman delivered a new installment of **BRAIN CELL FRACTAL** - #664. But that’s not all he delivered! Included with this issue was a great essay by Ryosuke (translated into English by Kazumori Murakami) entitled “Mail Art – Networking Art”.

Here’s an excerpt: “Recently, I have observed many signs that make me feel as if Mail Art is drawing to a close, and that

there are many past publications that could be seen as ‘compilations’ of Mail Art. Quite a few predecessors of Mail Art have passed away, including Ray Johnson (USA), the Father of Mail Art, G.A. Cavellini (Italy), Robert Rehfeldt (Germany), G. Deisler (Germany), Robin Crozier (England), Carlo Pittore (USA), and others. This is probably also because exchange by mail in the age of computers is considered primitive, and after the COLD WAR between the East and the West, the necessity of correspondence between those two different worlds has been lost.”

“We don’t have any fixed “ism” in the infinite expanse of the Mail Art Network. Postcards, xeroxes, collages, drawings, photos, CDs, and other forms are sent in by mail, fax, e-mail etc. We are overwhelmed by the diversity of how mail art members think and express themselves. We realize that countless “isms” are mixed together in a state of chaos that is represented in Mail Art. Of course, we don’t copyright our works. Interested in others’ works, we add something to them or combine them together, and then send them back or forward them on to a third party. We occasionally find them changed into pieces with quite an unexpected concept.”

Want to do your part to keep Mail Art alive and ticking? Send 150 stickers, homemade fake postage stamps, or a rubber stamp of your own design to: Ryosuke Cohen, **BRAIN CELL FRACTAL**, 3-76-1-A-613, Yagumokitacho, Moriguchi-city, Osaka 570, JAPAN. (Or, if you’re new to Mail Art, create something handmade along the lines of a collage, postcard, drawing or mixed tape and send it, along with a request for a copy of **BRAIN CELL FRACTAL**, to Ryosuke. You won’t regret it.)

EL INSURGENTE CANTONALÉS

This is a very specialized little zine. How specialized? Well, if you can’t read Spanish and you don’t live in western Spain, in the region of Extremadura in particular, this may not be of very much interest to you. However, I want to mention this zine because the editor who refers to himself as “El Último de los Carlistas” or “The Last of the Carlists” is one very dedicated self publisher. How dedicated? He’s been publishing this little 8 page newsletter on a monthly basis for 16 years. The latest issue (December 2006) is #192.

It’s a humorous, meticulously handwritten, cut n’ paste sort of zine with lots of political commentary on local, as well as global, events. The writing is a bit difficult at times because the editor, for (self?) entertainment purposes tends to write in a rather flamboyant style. Whenever I’m reading an issue of **EL INSURGENTE CANTONALÉS** I have to stop and ask my wife, who speaks Spanish as a first language, several times to explain certain words or phrases. About 50% of the time she has an answer for me. The other 50% of the time she throws up her arms and declares defeat. “I have no idea how to explain that sentence. It’s like something you’d stumble across while reading Don Quixote!”

Think you’re up to the challenge? Send a trade or donation to: El Último de los Carlistas, Calle Santa Florentina 2, 5C, Plasencia 10600, Cáceres, SPAIN.

Funny thing about “The Last Carlist” (I’m off on another tangent…) is that, despite the fact that we live in the same small town out here in the sticks of Extremadura, we’ve never met. I’ve been here over 3 years now, and we’ve been trading zines for a year and a half. Yet we’ve never met face to face. Doesn’t that seem a bit odd?

However, it does say something about the stereotypical personality of a zine publisher, does it not? Until next time, Adios!



JULIE DORN

3455 BLAISDELL AVE. #13,
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55408
JUNIEINGEORGIA@HOTMAIL.COM

Hello, hello from the freezing tundra of Minnesota! With today’s high of negative two degrees, it’s a perfect to day finally finish these zine reviews. This time around I received a slew of zines, and decided to review them all. Pardon my long windedness... Until next time, stay warm, y’all! (3455 Blaisdell Ave #13, Minneapolis, MN 55408, junieingorgia@hotmail.com)

HUMAN WASTE #2 and #2½

Brent Moore
PO Box 7182 Bend, OR 97708
\$2, digest, 40 p.

In the last **XD**, I reviewed **HUMAN WASTE #1**, a visually interesting but depressing zine about Brent, his dead-end job and less than optimistic view of life. Since then, I’m happy to report, that Brent quit his job and moved to a new town. While still steeped in heavy sarcasm and a bleak outlook on most of the human race, both **HW #2** and **#2½** have more clarity and brightness than #1. (Whew!) In **HW #2**, Brent weaves a story about the neighborhood ice cream man, surrounded by rumors of pedophilia. His dark drawings help carry narrative, especially the sad conclusion.

In **HW #2**: The DIY zine, Brent spoofs how-to manuals, with instructions on how to boil water, making trash bag clothing, fart in a public place, write bad poetry (with several examples), and other helpful tips for “hipsters.” While the consistently self-deprecating tone can be a bit much (“that’s a whopping forty cents a minute I was paid to make this shitbomb that you hold in your hand at this moment”), I do appreciate his observations and mockery of scenesters and people in general. I can’t decide if the misanthropy is part of Brent’s style or just something he adds to be funny, or if the zine would be better with less of it. I suspect, though, that Brent’s zines will continue to solidify and improve the more he publishes; hopefully without so much of the “this sucks,” “don’t-buy-this-but-please-buy-this-zine” threads through it.

NIGHT TERROR

Craven Rock
PO Box 20692 Seattle, WA 98102
eavesofass@yahoo.com
\$2, digest, 28 p.

NIGHT TERROR shares the details and frustrations of having night terrors, freaky nightmare-like experiences when the body is unable to transfer into deeper REM sleep. Both Craven and Kinoko, who created the lovely drawings, give personal accounts of suffering with night terrors and fever dreams. While not an in-depth exploration of the topic (there’s not much reliable information out there), and with a writing style that can be a bit rambling, **NT** is an interesting quest for answers about a misunderstood and little documented affliction.

SAD BUT TRUE #37, CIAO BELLE #38, ME, MYSELF AND I #42, and LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUN #43

Peg Leg
magoo7925@hotmail.com
No contact information received
?\$, Mini, 12 p.

I have conflicting feelings about mini zines. They are cute and easy to fit in my pocket. They are succinct. However they usually require no more than a minute to read them cover to cover. To me, minis seem more like a creative outlet or exercise than anything lasting for the reader, which is fine, but something to consider.

SBT includes skull-drawings and lots of truisms (“Not everyone can curl their tongue!”). **MMAI** uses the cut-and-paste-text-over-pictures format with eleven random sentences (“Bare urge to dazzle”). **CB** is all about beauty, with Peg Leg’s personal philosophy (albeit a surface level analysis). **LotMS** contains almanac/atlas type information about Peg Leg’s home state (never revealed explicitly, and I won’t spoil it for you.) If you want a quick read and want to support your fellow zinester, you can email Peg Leg for contact info and prices.

MIRANDA #16

Kate Haas
3510 SE Adler Street Portland, OR 97214
oceanreader@gmail.com
www.mirandazine.com
\$2, digest, 28 p.

You know, I just can’t say it enough. I love **MIRANDA**, and I wriggle a happy dance every time I see an issue in my mailbox. Number sixteen brings tales of a breast cancer scare, the usual Motel of Lost Companions, recipes, book reviews and updates on her life and family. Big

congrats to Kate for her new editing job! (I love it when people get to do what they love for money, instead of drudging through crappy day jobs.) Highly recommended.

PROKIEV : Rivers and Radiators #2 and #3

Prokiev Projects and Publishing
Gerald Prokop
PO Box 8804 Minneapolis, MN 55408
gprokiev@yahoo.com
\$1, smaller than digest, 12-16 p.

In both issues of **PROKIEV**, Gerald describes his life during college and shortly after, when he and his friends formed an art group/gallery/distro called Afuntionul. After graduation, the group disintegrated and Gerald was left with the memories of being part of a collective movement/cliue. Lots of information about his college drinking/coffee shop days, some details of the fall-out as the group fell apart and Gerald’s difficulty/dislike of having to work regular jobs to pay for bills. A decent perzine.

CELEBRITY PETS #3

Ben at Celebrity Pets
PO Box 28211 Fresno, CA 93729
www.myspace.com/celebritypetszine
\$2, digest (with legal-sized paper), 20 p.

Boy, do I feel old and uncool. **CELEBRITY PETS** is chock full of interviews, photos and reviews of bands I have never heard of. Are you a fan of the Pink Spiders, Groovie Ghoulies, Love Equals Death or other bands on the Warped Tour? Then this is the perfect zine for you. (I listened to these bands online—mostly rock/punk by the way.)

Even though the bands were lost on me, I did enjoy the fashion tips by Sarah Valentino, who turned an oversized shirt

into a fun summer tank top! Probably not for everyone, I’m sure folks who dig this music scene would really enjoy **CP**.

WHUDDAFUG #2.5

Anthony Abelaye
PO Box 1567 Fremont, CA 94538-0156
Anthony@whuddafug.com
www.whuddafug.com
\$2, digest, 28 p.

When I read **WHUDDAFUG**, I was having a weird sort of day. I’m trying to filter out my own crabbiness from the actual zine itself for this review. I’ve read sections of **WHUDDAFUG** multiple times, and still haven’t completely made up my mind. Parts of it I really like—he captures the subtle but gut-wrenching contradictions of going home to a place drenched in personal meaning, then realizing that life has moved on and those connections don’t exist anymore. New faces, more bullshit, no magic, and try as you might, you can’t recapture the essence of what once was. Then you feel like an idiot for expecting this location to throw you a ticker-tape parade for coming back, while still desperately wishing the street would crack open and life could return to the way you remembered.

At the same time, Anthony can seem a bit cold and critical. While observing folks on the train or the bar or the street, he bashes strangers for being judgmental, then turns around and judges them back. Also, from his description, he fought with his wife, then took off from her and his kid to visit San Francisco, not telling them where he was, not taking his cell phone, or even telling them when he might return. That’s really shitty. I know that we all have to deal with our personal issues and resolve things from the past, but it’s hard to feel

any sympathy for this guy's emotional reality-slap when he's not very sensitive from the get-go.

He drinks too much. He is both evocative and irritating. I both understand where he's coming from and want to shake him a little. It's a long read—nearly solid text on every page, and stays with you afterward, which I appreciate more than the fluff zines that disappear from my brain seconds after reading them. I also appreciate people willing to share such emotionally loaded topics, letting the reader peer into their psyche with all its imperfections. Like I said, I still haven't made up my mind, but **WHUDDAFUG** is better than many zines out there and worth the cash.

INCENDIARY WORDS : December 2006

Steve DeRose
PQRS Ltd.
4821 Fletcher Street #2
Chicago, IL 60641
iw1206.pudgym29@spamgourmet.com
www.snipurl.com/sdr001
50 cents, 8½ x 11, 9 p.
Quarterly

This unfortunately, is another zine that is lost on me. As written in his description, **IW** contains "soccer news, both known and obscure." I don't know shit about soccer, so truthfully I can't give you much of a review here. This issue includes news about Chicago FIRE, the F.I.F.A. Club World Cup Japan, the US Men's National Team, Chicago STORM and other soccer related tidbits. He seems knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the topic, and it's only fifty cents!! Such a bargain for the soccer lover!!

FRANK, JOE AND PHIL : ISSUE #1 and YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU L'IL DEVIL #1

Narcolepsy Press
PO Box 17131
Anaheim, CA 92817
\$1, quarter-sized, 16-24 p.

Randy Robbins, creator of Narcolepsy Press, returns with the Ultimate Devil Girl Magazine, **YaAYLD**. It's basically pages and pages of devil girl drawings, posters, comics and photos of (usually) pretty, well-endowed women with devil horns (forked tails and wings optional). I really enjoyed the history and highlights of Illyana Rasputin from Marvel Comics, as well as the Devin comics, made by his fourteen year old daughter, Tabby. (Available in both English and Japanese!)

Also available is **FRANK, JOE & PHIL**, a comic about three orphaned brothers, drawn by his thirteen year old son, Tanner. I love it! A whole family of zinesters! A good first issue on both parts.

SHOTS PART 3: An Impressionistic Deconstruction of a life during wartime – brought to you by Poet #24

Found shoved in the front of the Onion display stand, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, January 2007

As I walked into work one day, I noticed this zine. It was hard to miss—the cover photo is an altered Batman group shot with Cheney, Wolfowitz, Rice and Bush as the Penguin, the Riddler, Catwoman and the Joker. There is no contact info, just poetry and lyrics protesting the hypocrisy of our current presidential administration, the war in Iraq and war in general. Does anyone know who Poet 24 is? I'm so intrigued. I love the fact that whoever made **SHOTS** is doing it solely to express their anger, disgust and hope for change—

although I'm dying to know who it is and where to get more issues. If anyone knows, drop me a line.

JOHNNY AMERICA #4

PO Box 44-2001 Lawrence, KS 66044
johnnyamerica@johnnyamerica.net
\$4, digest, 40 p.

Sometime last year, I reviewed **JOHNNY AMERICA #1**, featuring poetry, short fiction and humor. I liked it then and I like it now. Issue #4 is thick and sturdy, with a beautiful cover and hand-sewn spine. The writing is funny, sparse, confusing, poignant, and dense—a little bit of everything. My biggest frustration is that right when I'm hooked on the narrative or character, it ends. Most selections are too short, or a work in progress that we never get to see progress further. Especially compelling is "Hampton Inn Room 306" by Chris Kilgore, about an accountant in Waunakee, Wisconsin on the verge of a life-altering experience, or not. I want more, or at least information on how to get more, if the selection is part of a larger publication. Still, this is fabulous bus reading and much needed evidence that fiction zines can be well-written and entertaining.

HAPPY LONER #3

Iza Bourret
PO Box 71
Succ. B
Quebec QC G1K 7 A1 Canada
\$3 Canada/U.S., \$4
International, digest, 24 p.

HAPPY LONER is a truly enjoyable perzine. Iza identifies with being a happy loner (a solitary person), a term I've never heard before but can relate to in my own life. In addition to a lengthy description of the distinction between the Quirkyalone and

Happy Loner movements, she includes a rant about the hypocrisy of her friends and how sometimes she just doesn't want to deal with people. I hear ya, girl. Recommended.



**CLINT
JOHNS**

JOHNSCLJ@YAHOO.COM

I wonder if I'll ever be able to look at a zine and not think about what would happen if I put it on a shelf in a newsstand somewhere. Probably that's not the best way to review zines (or much of anything, come to that). So here's what I'm going to try to do: I'll talk about each of the zines Davida sent me, offer my opinion of the zine itself, and close with my opinion of what the "mainstream" (that is, those people who would have been wandering past a Tower Records newsstand, except for the events I described elsewhere in this issue) would do if they had the opportunity to check it out, too. Oh, and if you have comments, questions, shouted insults, whispered affections, or just generally want to let me know that you exist, I check email at johnsclj@yahoo.com every so often.

APPLICANT is a vaguely disturbing, quarter-sized little thing. See, what happened was that the "editor," Jesse Reklaw, came across the graduate school applicant files for "the biology department at an Ivy League university," and these files, dating from the late 60s and early 70s, contained lots of photographs of said

applicants. So what Reklaw did was take a bunch of these photos, add some of the faculty commentary from the files, and voilà: **APPLICANT**. In his brief preface, Reklaw mentions that “distributing this material may be immoral,” which probably explains my initial reaction to it. These people’s privacy has been... well, perhaps not invaded, but definitely punctured. The comments are occasionally unkind (“not as physically attractive as some” beneath a woman’s photo), and the presentation documents fashions and hairstyles in a way that borders on mockery (albeit gentle, passive mockery). Having said that, I read the whole damned thing, and then gave it to a grad student I know who read the whole thing, who then gave it to a professor we know who then read the whole thing. **APPLICANT** ably documents the suspect workings of the ivory tower, and operates near the same level that Davy Rothbart’s **FOUND** Magazine does; somehow, though, it feels more “personal,” probably because of the faces staring back at you from the pages. My verdict: I don’t want this in my house, but I do think it’s valuable and should be passed around. Get a copy and leave it in a Starbucks someplace when you’re done with it. If I were still at Tower, I would have bought hundreds of copies of this, and I would have sold them all.

It’s available from the fine folks at Microcosm Publishing, www.microcosmpublishing.com, 5307 N. Minnesota Ave., Portland, OR, 97217, \$2 direct.

OPUNTIA 61.5 is the kind of zine that would have had to be really good for me to pick it up; four typewritten pieces of paper folded in half, stapled and b&w means that its strength has got to be in the writing,

because it sure isn’t in the production. But there is something intriguing going on in the tiny print on the cover: Canadian Dale Spiers, the creator, has a method to his numbering, with zines ending in .1 being review zines, while .2 indicates indices, .3 = apazines (?), and .5 means I’m looking at a perzine here. Very cool. (Okay, I’m kind of a nerd for that kind of minor flourish. Sue me.) The letters section (nearly 25% of the zine) mostly concerns a previous piece Spiers wrote concerning farm life and large animal vets, and confirmed my opinion that swine are the most dangerous animals to work around on the farm. The remainder of the zine has a thoughtful piece on Baptism inspired by Britney Spears, and others on filming a commercial in Alberta, a big rodeo in Alberta, and traffic in Alberta, and it was ALL fascinating to read. Dale writes engagingly and without pretense, and makes you feel as if you’re having a conversation with him; for my money, that’s one of the hallmarks of good writing. I strongly recommend this. I would not have taken many copies for the newsstand, though, since the package requires more work than the average customer is likely to put in; however, copies would definitely move in stores that have regular zine customers.

You can get this from Dale by sending US\$3 (Dale sez, correctly, “what we gain on the exchange rate we lose on the higher postage rate to the USA) to Box 6830, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, T2P 2E7. Cash only.

LIVING FREE #134 is virtually identical in format to **OPUNTIA**, except that it really is a stapled-in-the-top-left-corner kind of thing, which I hate. Doesn’t mean what’s inside isn’t interesting; just means that I

don’t like holding and flipping when I’m looking at a zine, and never have. A lot of this zine is reproduced articles and columns from other places, snippets of news (where, for example, you can now buy Loompanics books, and if you don’t know what those are, google “Loompanics”—it’s worth the time), and letters. It also looks like the zine was pounded out on a miniature typewriter—the font’s pretty small a lot of the time. There are only a couple of items written by the publisher, Jim Stumm, and as a result the overall “feel” of the zine is pretty indistinct; not enough of Jim comes through, beyond the fact that he doesn’t much care for Big Brother. (The “Unclassified Ads” section left me nonplussed—an ad for MEET-A-MATE? Weird.) This is all fine as far as it goes, but this kind of stuff is pretty run-of-the-mill, and if you buy a copy of **PUNK PLANET** or **MRR**, both of which are just a couple of dollars more, you’ll get a lot more bang for your buck. And since you can find both **PP** and **MRR** on most newsstands, I suspect that most people will go for those, and leave this sitting.

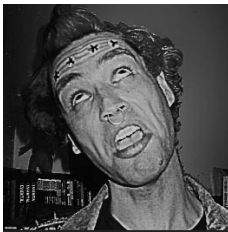
On the front page, in tiny letters, is a relatively large section entitled “Subscription Terms”, which reveals that a copy can be yours merely by sending \$2 to Jim Stumm, Box 29, Hiler Branch, Buffalo, NY, 14223. He also takes checks and money orders if you make them out in his name.

AFTER SCHOOL SPECIAL! A perzine documenting its author’s (Nia King’s) decision to drop out of art school, half-sized without staples but with nifty silvery sparkle string holding the whole thing together. It begins with a short letter Nia wrote to someone named Ashley that

includes this sentence: “Some anarchists really glamorize dropping out, but it’s not all fun and games.” While undoubtedly sincere, the rest of the zine functions at about this depth, and I found it pretty wearing. The writing often seemed self-conscious to me, but it was sincere (there’s that word again). I freely admit that there are things in this zine to which I could not relate in any way—I can’t imagine myself ever “enjoying freegan life, living on dumpstered bagels”—and perhaps that’s the biggest problem I had getting into the zine. I could understand many of Nia’s opinions and reactions, but couldn’t muster much in the way of sympathy for, or interest in, the consequences of her choices; they were her choices, after all. It often felt as if Nia really thought that what she was saying was somehow profound and important, and it doubtless was—to her. Myself, I’ve seen the “I refuse to be the victim of a system I think is screwed up” story so many times, in so many places, that it really has to be something special to move me. I can’t recommend this, and wouldn’t have put it in front of anyone shopping the record store, but I do hope Nia keeps zining. She is sincere, which is a fine line to walk; it either makes you engaging (like Nate Ganglehoff’s **PICK YOUR POISON**, each issue of which is excellent), or it makes people want to avoid you (like, say, an earnest evangelical trying their best to interest you in their faith). I want Nia to fall on the other side of that line next time. If you want to judge for yourself as to which side of the line she fell on this time, email Nia King at tillthebassdrumpops@riseup.net and ask where to send \$1.50 (there was an address, but it wasn’t clear to me that it was for the public).

Which brings me to the easy part of this batch of reviews: **THE INNER SWINE** 12(2). Published for more than a dozen years by Jeff Somers, **TIS** is practically an institution at this point. Jeff's even got a column in this very issue of **XD!** And how's this for a big ol' mess of disclosure? I loved **TIS** the first time I ran across it back in 1998, and over the next eight years I distributed thousands of copies at Tower Records stores all over the world. I helped Jeff publish a collection of **TIS** nonfiction through Tower's print shop called **THE FREAKS ARE WINNING**, and for which I wrote the introduction. Whenever I make it to New York, I try to get together with Jeff and his wife, Danette, and Jeff and I correspond regularly. With that in mind, should I be reviewing **TIS**? Damned straight I should. There aren't many people who know **TIS** better than I do, so I'm especially qualified to judge whether this issue is one of the good ones or not. And I'm happy to report that it is, in fact, one of the good ones. It begins with Jeff's always cool recursive exercise of publishing reviews of **TIS** that other people have written (he would never, ever publish a review of someone else's zine), and proceeds to an entertaining editorial about "the obscurity of existence." The next article, though, is the one I liked best: Jeff tries to start a journal in order to keep the moments of his life from slipping through his fingers into one long, uninterrupted passing moment. The result is a stack of notebooks mostly containing two-word entries: "Work, nada." The rest of the zine riffs on this kind of existential despair with humor and self-effacing insight, and concludes with another story from the Somers Fiction Machine. This is a solid, enjoyable issue of **TIS** from an old pro. Get a copy of this, or better yet, write to Jeff at

mreditor@innerswine.com and order a collection of **TIS** for whatever price he's asking these days. They're worth it. 4 issues for only \$5 if you send that money to PO Box 3024, Hoboken, NJ, 07030. 8 issues for only \$9, and infinite issues (or, say, 120 more issues, at which point Jeff will probably be dead) can be had for the princely sum of \$50.



MATT FAGAN

1573 N. MILWAUKEE AVE., PMB #464
CHICAGO, IL 60622
HADMATTER@HOTMAIL.COM
WWW.GEOCITIES.COM/DEPOTDEVOID/
MENISCUS/INSIDE.HTML

Hello, readers! Matt Fagan here, with another pile of awesome zines and stuff that y'all need to know about. I got a little bogged down right before the deadline and wasn't able to cover quite as much as I'd hoped, so if you sent me something for review and you don't see it here, please don't hate me. I probably just had to move it over into the "next time" stack, and there it will safely remain until, well... next time.

NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS #25-28

digest-sized, 16-48 pp., \$2 or trade
Steve Steiner
445_ Randolph Street Meadville, PA 16335
eat_50_eggs@hotmail.com

Steve sent me four issues of his comic zine, and I was taken with the fun and variety of the total package. Even in a physical sense; these zines have clear, clean reproductions with color

photocopied covers. I wish I'd seen some of the others, so I would know whether **NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS** was one of those zines with an ever-changing format, because the reading experience was a real shake-up about halfway through!

The first two issues (numbers 25 and 26) are fairly polished comic anthologies with some whimsical prose added for good measure. The black-and-white images are enlivened with helpful (but not distracting) gray toning, and the style reminds me of the purposefully childlike illustrations I used to see in kiddie magazines like *Hot Dog!* and *Dynamite!*, seasoned with a healthy dose of *MAD* magazine. In issue 25 are journal-like sequential art narratives, alongside a fun find-the-hidden-pictures game and comics with a more sci-fi or proto-horror feel, and advice on the things you'll need to consider if you decide to become a mad scientist. My favorite article may have been the feature in issue 26, "Get Rich the Easy Way", which is an advice column on how to become a successful gold-digger. An excerpt:

For those of you with a penis, you may need to undergo gender reassignment. The thought of sacrificing your manhood may make you shriek in total horror but it will be necessary. The rewards for becoming a woman far outweigh one tiny snip and the hormone therapy you'll have to endure. Besides... when you are rich you can buy as many penises as you want.

I read all four issues in order, so when I got to number 27 I was a little surprised at the switcheroo. This issue, and the one that follows, are much thicker than the others and are composed entirely of diary comics. Steve is a committed illustrator, and maintaining a sketch journal is a very commendable way of keeping one's skills

on a constant upswing, with the added bonus of creating a record of his own life. As an artist, that's awesome. As a reader, it is often less so, and when I started to read issue 27 I was quietly regretting having not gotten the journal comics out of the way first, so I could finish off with the other ones instead.

Truth be told, though, I found myself getting caught up in the quiet mid-twenties melodrama of Steve's narrative (which really isn't a surprise considering that I really was just reading a stranger's diary. And who doesn't enjoy that?) His style for these journal entries is very different from his other comics. As an illustrator, I enjoyed looking at how he told a visual anecdote, written and drawn entirely in pen, with no pre-drawing or layout of any kind. I don't know if this stuff would be interesting to somebody who doesn't draw, but on a completely voyeuristic level these comics do become rather compelling after a while. And as a service to his readers, at the bottom of each page Steve provides a typed sentence or two that provides a context for the diary comics, explaining who these people are, what was on his mind, or other mitigating factors to help us understand how this scene relates to the part of his life that isn't drawn on the page.

There's a lot of good stuff in **NOBODY CAN EAT 50 EGGS**. I'd recommend contacting Steve via e-mail if you're particular about what you receive, because the "regular" issues (or what I perceived to be the regular issues) are pretty different from the journal issues (which bear the subtitle "The True Adventures of Steve Steiner"). For pure entertainment value I'd definitely go for the former, but if you want a thorough overview or if you're a cartoonist who likes to see the inner workings of

another artist's process, "True Adventures" offers a completely different perspective.

Note: while the page counts on these issues are pretty variable, they all came with forms stating the price of two dollars... except for number 27, which says four dollars. I don't know if this was a mistake or not. Granted, it's the longest issue, but isn't that much longer than the second longest issue, so I don't know. Maybe he got screwed on the printing and is trying to recoup the costs; it happens. I'd ask before I sent money or a trade but, either way, check it out. Even the note he sent me with the zines was written on the back of a really funny picture he drew! It's a nature cartoon about rare species of endangered animals (part of a series), including the astronaut monkey, the white chocolate rhinoceros (the most delicious animal in the world!), and the toothless alligator (which has no teeth but is five times more aggressive than regular alligators).

COUGH #4

digest-size, 14pp., \$1.50 US/\$2 elsewhere, trades maybe

Tina

PO Box 604 Moss Beach, CA 94038

coughzine@yahoo.com

www.coughzine.tk

Generally, when I'm given a zine full of show reviews and band interviews, I sort of grit my eyes and hope it will all be over soon. I never go to shows. I've been listening to the same records for fifteen years and I am unlikely to change, so this sort of zine hardly ever has a single name I recognize or can possibly find the capacity to care about. But **COUGH** was better than that.

I still didn't care about the show and CD reviews (although you might), but the interviews were okay (and short!) and there was plenty of other stuff to keep me entertained. The little sketchbook actually had some decent drawings in it. The cut-and-paste style of the zine was done with care, so the text was never hard to read and the collage was not ugly. Maybe that sounds prissy, but a lot of zines look like they have been cut-and-pasted because some first-time zinester gets it into his head that this is how you're supposed to make a zine, with no regard for the way your readers have to interact with the finished product. Not so with **COUGH**. Maybe they cut-and-paste because it's still the easiest way to do a physical layout, or maybe they do it because that's just the style they like—but either way, these folks care whether or not you read their zine, and they don't screw themselves by making that a challenge. Best of all, though, **COUGH #4** has a DIY section that teaches you how to make your own tattoo gun. Of course, that's a terrible idea, but now I know how so I totally have to do it. Should a guy like me be allowed access to information that teaches me how to make a tattoo gun? Absolutely not! But I thank them all the same.

COUGH comes from the Bay Area, so locals will probably get more out of it than the far-flung masses, but the DIY projects and other stuff make it worthwhile even if you don't live there. This is kind of a classic fanzine format—nothing too personal, you won't learn anything about editor Tina besides her taste in music. But I think most zine readers understand, from this description, the type of publication **COUGH** is, and it's a good representation of the genre. Definitely recommended to fans of DIY/music fanzines.

NATE RELOCATES #1

digest-size, 16 pp., \$2/maybe trades

Nathan

PO Box 51245 Pacific Grove, CA 93950

natnc17@yahoo.com

As I begin this review it occurs to me that every zine I've talked about so far has had a color photocopied cover. I must be some crusty old dinosaur in this industry, still wrapping my zines in crummy colored cardstock with stodgy black toner. The world is moving forward without me once again.

Speaking of moving, that's pretty much the topic of this autobiographical comic zine. First-time zinester Nate uses the various homes he has lived in as structure for telling his life story (presumably a much-abbreviated version, as issue one covers his birth in 1977 up to his college days).

NATE RELOCATES is a breezy read, very conversational in tone. These isn't much depth to the stories—we get only the merest glimpse of each event before moving on—but I'm pretty sure Nate simply drew the comics as he went along, not really planning anything out in advance. The art speaks to that interpretation too: there are many stick figures and very little shading, but it's nice the way Nate embraces the medium and just plows forward to tell his story. This is his first comic, and rather than worry about the form he just does it, because how else are you going to figure it out?

Expect another couple of issues before **NATE RELOCATES** catches up to the present day. I don't know how many dwellings we'll visit along the way, but I hope we get to see them in a little more detail. There were times when I could really sense untold stories, just below the surface. If these comics are (in whole or in

part) created in an off-the-cuff fashion, this would certainly explain the effect and that is the main aspect of this zine that needs to be addressed. I don't think Nate has really decided what kind of overall story he wants to relate, and as a consequence the individual stories have not added up to anything yet. Then again, the real juicy stuff might not show up until issue two, so maybe this issue is just what it takes to get us there.

YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU LI'L DEVIL! #2

¼ size, 20pp., \$1

Randy Robbins

PO Box 17131 Anaheim, CA 92817-7131

In the category of "ultra-specific fanzines" comes **YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU LI'L DEVIL!**, which is devoted entirely to devil girls in all their forms. Features in this issue include the devil girls who represent Red Devil energy drink and the one who kicked off the pre-launch ad campaign for cinnamon Altoids, and there is a short bit about cover-girl Julie Newmar's turn as the devil in an episode of *The Twilight Zone*. Also spotlighted are devil girls on album covers, tattoos, and even four pages of original comics! **YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU LI'L DEVIL!** bills itself as "The Ultimate Devil Girl Magazine" and I don't know if that's strictly true, but it's the only one I've ever seen so I am in no particular position to argue (plus, who knows what kind of forces these people have at their disposal to exact furious vengeance upon me?) If you have a special place in your heart for sexy ladies wearing plastic horns, then you can't possibly go wrong with this zine.

KID VICIOUS DOUBLE FEATURE

digest-size, 16pp., no listed price (but more information follows below)

Adam White and Matt Black
mojomechanix.com
webcomicsnation.com/syndicate/mojo
syndicate.comics@gmail.com
I met Adam and Matt in Portland, Oregon last October while I was peddling zines at the Stumptown Comics convention. I received this issue, along with an anthology comic called **WHITE NOISE**, when I traded some stuff with Adam. Even though there's no price on here, I'm reviewing it because it's awesome, and because it was published in the spring of 2006 so the contact information is probably more up-to-date than the other one.

As the title suggests, **KID VICIOUS DOUBLE FEATURE** contains two comics, both written by Adam and illustrated by Matt. The star of these tales is Li'l Timmy Smithers, an imaginative and almost fearless lad who seems to keep finding himself in the most perilous of predicaments.

In the first tale, "Give Me Convenience or Give Me Death", Timmy ventures to the Monsta Mart in search of an ingredient he needs to build a construction kit out of the back of his comic book. But the store is filled with terrors in all shapes and sizes, and Li'l Timmy will be lucky just to make it out alive! The artwork combines the gruesome carnage of EC Comics with the bendy cartoon reality of something like "Calvin & Hobbes", and the result is both gross and funny. Matt is a highly-skilled illustrator whose pictures bring multiple layers to the story, and both of these guys seem to enjoy playing in the mind of a pre-adolescent. They clearly know what it's like in there.

The backup story sees Li'l Timmy elated to discover that school has been canceled, thanks to an invasion of Earth by inter-

dimensional vampire manta-rays. What could be a leisurely day in front of the television turns into a gory adventure when Timmy decides that it would be more fun to go outside and save America. Thanks, Timmy!

You might need to check out a couple of web sites to find these guys and see what they have available, but it'll be worth the effort. **WHITE NOISE** was good too, and I saw a few of their other zines at the show so I know that the high quality of this comic isn't just a fluke.

MEAN ZINE SUBMARINE #1

¼ size, 28 pp., \$1 in person or \$2 in the mail (trades maybe, if it's something Herbie would like)

Herbie Meyer, c/o Christoph Meyer
PO Box 106 Danville, OH 43014
twineman.com

Christoph Meyer quickly became a household name among zinesters with his perzine **28 PAGES LOVINGLY BOUND WITH TWINE**, and who hasn't read about the antics of his wee son Herbie? Well Herbie himself, now five years old, is making his first foray into zine-making (with parental assistance, of course).

MEAN ZINE SUBMARINE is full of Herbie's cool drawings of airplanes and buildings and stuff, with descriptive stories typed by Christoph since Herbie can't write so well on his own. There's also a reproduction of the fan letter that Herbie sent to the author/illustrator of his favorite children's books, and the personal response he got back (with an original drawing and everything! How awesome is that!?)

One thing I like about reviewing for **XEROGRAPHY DEBT** is that sometimes I get to offer encouragement and advice to young writers who are just starting to use

zines as a way to express themselves. Well, I can safely say that Herbie is the youngest zinester I've ever had the pleasure of reviewing, and he's doing a fine job. But honestly, I don't think he needs any encouragement from me. Herbie is full of ideas and he has a great dad who is always willing to foster that creativity, so I have no doubt that we'll be seeing a lot more from the young Mr. Meyer in the future.

SOUNDS OF YOUR NAME

Oversized (7x10), 336 pp., \$15

by Nate Powell

Microcosm Publishing
5307 N. Minnesota Ave. Portland, OR 97217
marc@microcosmpublishing.com
microcosmpublishing.com

This massive tome collects several years' worth of comics, weaving stories both brief and epic, from the happily mundane to the soul-crushingly cosmic. Many of these works have been previously published in Nate's own zines and in others', some are appearing here for the first time, but all of them come together to deliver the indelible message that Nate Powell is a force to be reckoned with.

Even in all their unique glory, some artists are fairly easy to categorize and describe to a reader who has never seen the drawings, but I struggle to find the right words to express how delightful this book was to look at. These pictures are intricate and rich with detail, finding emotion not just in well-rendered faces but in postures, furniture, the shadows on the floor and the crosshatching on a distant wall. There is no lazy framing here, no quick-cut transitions. Never have establishing shots been so complex and lovingly bleak.

I'm not sure if Nate ever works in color, but

this is a guy who truly understands how to make black-and-white line drawings come to life. He has no need for color, for gray tone, for anything but the white of the page and the black of the ink to bring out all the depth that exists in the real world. There are times when so little white space is left on the page that his characters seem to be surfacing from out of its depths, but so skilful is his inkwork that those unilluminated areas are somehow suggested in the background, unseen but always known.

The stories in this book come in many forms and many sizes, but the voice behind them is consistent. It is the voice of Nate's examined youth, an author using comics to explore himself both literally and metaphorically, and it carries through all of these pages. Most importantly, he recognizes that the images are the true stars of the stories, and he allows them dominance, the freedom to wordlessly explain themselves and to carry the narrative on their ample shoulders. The comics are so good that they practically read themselves. If you've run across his work elsewhere—or even if you haven't—you really ought to track down a copy of this book. You can order it directly from Microcosm Publishing, or it's being distributed by AK Press. It's a little on the spendy side compared to most stuff reviewed in **XD**, but the book is huge and actually quite cheap compared to graphic novels of similar size. And, you know, it's worth fifteen bucks because the pictures are so damn great.



MAYNARD
WELSTAND

C/O PERSIAN SLIPPER
PO BOX 66303, BALTIMORE, MD 21239-6303

INNER SWINE

\$2, 60 p. (a freakin' bargain)

Jeff Somers

P.O. Box 3024 Hoboken, NJ 07030

www.innerswine.com

I reviewed Vol. 12, issue 3, September 2006 Jeff Somers is my hero. I am not just saying that to kiss his ass. It's true. Jeff has written a fantastically fun zine for hundreds of years. It's consistently good, engaging, makes you think about modern life and manhood in a different way. Our culture is kind of man-hostile. Men have lost their place. They don't have The Club to dine, smoke and drink in; they can't smoke cigars in public; they are losing the lock on the executive washroom, and the golf course. The armed forces are co-ed. The only place a man can be a man is in the Men's room or the Navy SEALs. Men are expected to be strong, yet sensitive, a big earner, yet not threatened if the little woman brings home a bigger paycheck. And of course, women expect a man to be a lover, father, brother, best friend, sex toy, and handyman. What's a guy to do? Men can't cry. No wonder so many men are moving home into Mom's basement.

But Jeff makes you remember what manhood is all about. It's about getting in touch with the Inner Swine; sniffing someone's butt; sizing up a guy and

thinking, "I could take him down if I had to." It's about spilling your beer, belching, scratching the boys, sticking your hand down your pants and smiling with relief at the end of a day. If you are a guy, you'll read his zine and say, "YES!" If you are a female reader, you'll read his zine and say, "Oh, so they're all like that."

In any event, **INNER SWINE**, with its candor; personal view; and social commentary, is entertaining and thought-provoking. Jeff is a cool dude; he's going places. It could be one day soon he'll say goodbye to the land of Zines and be a "real" writer. Or he could end up in the morgue from the booze. Any which way, he'll have left a magnificent legacy in the form of **THE INNER SWINE**.

THE CIA MAKES SCIENCE FICTION UNEXCITING, #4

\$1.50, 31 pages

Abner Smith

P.O. Box 14332 Portland, OR 97293

www.microcosm.com

FBI assassination of Puerto Rican independence leader, Filiberto Ojeda Rios in September 2005 is described in this densely packed zine. Intensely interesting and leaves the reader in a state of cognitive dissonance. Is this true? Zine's weakness is lack of authoritative sources for the facts presented, but if the powers-that-be don't wish us to know, then these will be scarce. There is the rub for conspiracy theory.

Upshot is that the US has sought to manipulate and control the government of Puerto Rico. Not a hard sell given our current adventure in Iraq. The problem is that there isn't oil in Puerto Rico, so why would we bother with them? According to the zine, the FBI's motive for killing Rios is

apparently to recover the 7.2 million dollars Rios stole, Robin Hood style. But does the FBI do international assassination? I thought that was the CIA's bailiwick. My lack of shock is a sign of the times. My blasé response to this zine was just as disturbing as its content.

THE MEDIA WHORE: FEMINIST LITERATURE REVIEW

\$2, 29 pages.

Randie Farmelant

12 B Wolcott St Madden, MA 02148

www.mediawhorezine.com

Essays and reviews on literature focused on gender identity. Emphasis is on gender-bender and lesbian experience. Reviews are well-written, particularly on the truth behind the Mommy Wars and Fresh Lipstick. High caliber literary discussion. Essays include feminist Sci Fi and a look at gender-identity in lesbian young adult fiction.

YOU'RE AN ANGEL, YOU 'LIL DEVIL, #1

\$1, 24 pages

Randy Robbins

P.O. Box 17131 Anaheim, CA 92817-7131

Print only

Amusing array of devil girls. If you are uninitiated, these are pictures of nearly naked or scantily clad, buxom gals with horns and tails. Stylized images are probably derived from the pinups of the 1940s and 50s. They are a celebration of femininity; they portray women as feisty, full-figured, and powerfully, playfully sexual creatures. Randy has an amazing array of images in all styles packed into this little zine. He also has a nicely done essay on Illyana Rasputin: ultimate devil girl. The piece is an exploration of characters from Marvel comics. A fun read.

POLAROID-CELLULOID, #1

\$2.00, 52 pages

912 Iredell St. Durham, NC 27705

www.freewebs.com/vidaliasparkle

msfilms@hotmail.com

Ever wonder what other folks do on the job? Fun and interesting peek into diverse careers of working women such as music camp councilor; filmmaking; land-surveying; and zine archiving. Essays go into nitty-gritty of how jobs are done. Kate Bernstein on her film, *Ladies Room*, describes her filmmaking techniques. Also worth a look is True adventures of a land surveyor by Krista Schreiber. And of course, check out Zine archivist extraordinaire by Amy Leigh.

IN BETWEEN ZINE, #2

\$2.00, 22 pages.

James N. Dawson

P.O. Box 613 Redwood Valley, CA 95470

Visually, this zine is challenging to read, but yowza! It's worth every strained eye muscle. Content is engaging, intelligent and conversational. Includes personal life details about the zine author; amusing story behind the production of zine; truly great reviews of oddball films that you may not be able to actually track down; truly great reviews of oddball books; hilarious essays (my fave is Let's hear it for the big A—a wonderfully cynical solution for marriage); some extremely accessible poetry limited to only 1 page for the verse averse; and correspondence with the zine author. This latter section was so excellent, I must expound on some points. Venerable creator of **DWELLING PORTABLY**, Bert Davis, wrote a great letter discussing politics, economics and social forces. His discussion of abortion alone is worth the 2 bucks. He manages to

summarize the whole issue in a fabulous 360 degree viewpoint that highlights the lose-lose situation anyone who has had an abortion finds herself in, and the intellectual as well as biological reproductive burden women carry.

This zine's content is at a high level of intellectual sophistication that I found challenging and mentally delicious.



**STEPHANIE
HOLMES**

3005 GLEN RAE, AUSTIN, TX 78702
OURGIRLSUNDAY@YAHOO.COM

It is good to know that not everyone is sucked into blogging and video games. My mailbox has welcomed spanking new offerings from young zinesters. The news is great and is a sign that a new generation of zinesters is preparing to launch. This sort of upward motion resembles living life in Austin these days. I'm starting my second semester of graduate school, learning a new gig at *The Texas Observer*, and finding that life might just be better than the brochure. I'm looking for mail artists, with political interests and Texas ties, who want to talk about their art for an *Observer* story. Mail or E-mail me if you want to participate in an interview and share some of your art for potential replication in the publication.

YOU LIVE FOR THE FIGHT WHEN THAT'S ALL YOU'VE GOT #1 (Feb. 2006) available from Ciara Xterra, 20 Evergreen St. #1 Jamaica Plain, MA 02130, \$2 anywhere in

the world, pre-arranged trade only. Half digest. Web: www.papertraildistro.com.

S-P-I-N-S-T-E-R is tattooed across her knuckles. She's got heartbreak, happiness, an accordion, and a zine distro. **YOU LIVE FOR THE FIGHT WHEN THAT'S ALL YOU'VE GOT** is a perzine that tells her story. She's trying to be happy but struggling with a past that includes recurrences of depression. "I'm learning to let go of everything & let it come to me organically," Ciara writes as she begins to unravel a tale that travels from Boston to Minneapolis before returning to life as a Bostonian again. Some might call it moving in circles but others may call it a wake-up call that defines home and acceptance. This zine was a series of wake-up calls and self-discoveries that add up to a healthy dose of self-acceptance that carries no guarantees. I was happy when this zine arrived in my mailbox; it is one of the best I've received in months. It's an engaging, cut and paste zine that is easy on the eyes and a nice read to boot. Recommended.

FRANK, JOE & PHIL #1 (2006) available from Narcolepsy Press Comic, P.O. Box 17131, Anaheim, CA 92817-7131, \$1. Pocket-size zine.

This light-hearted comic tells the tale of how three brothers **FRANK, JOE, & PHIL** come together after the death of their parents. I'm not sure where this new zinester came up with the storyline and all of its caveats, but you can tell it took some time and thought to bring it together. I look forward to reading future installments about this surprising band of boys.

POSSUM GARAGE PRESS #6 (October 2006) available from Possum Garage Press, c/o Lanyon Studio, 8 Winston Ave.,

Wilmington, DE 19804, \$2 single issue, \$5 1-year subscription. 24 pages, pocket size.

POSSUM GARAGE PRESS is a poetry and lit zine that aims at focusing on political topics. The zine does a good job at capturing a lot of color, tidbits and remembrances from daily life. It will be interesting to see how the zine grows as the writers change and develop their craft.

THE OBSERVATION DECK available from L. McNamara, P.O. Box 1111, Greenfield, MA 01302, no price listed, 19 pages, digest.

The opening pages of **THE OBSERVATION DECK** rivals the need for morning coffee. One story titled "The Hunt" challenges urban legends about one girl's late 1970's confession concerning a love of dogs and bologna. The story line is a memoir that is engaging enough for you to ask is that fact or fiction. After that cheeky entry, the zine takes a bizarre turn toward PG, polling people about their favorite or most memorable pets, providing animal facts and safety tips.

THOUGHTWORM #13 available from Sean Stewart, 3600 Buena Vista Ave., Baltimore, MD 21211, \$3, digest, e-mail sean@thoughtworm.com. 48 p.p.

Sean Stewart is one of my favorite zinesters, and this being said, he'll tell you that **THOUGHTWORM #13** is a step before his departure from the zine's traditional digest format. As a fan, this news is equally understandable as technology favors the cost and streamlined convenience of online publications; however, the proposed switch is bittersweet because there's something comforting about carrying writing this good to cafes and diners around town. The story wakes up in Baltimore to the sounds

of new life, brave tasks, and the reciprocal tax of waiting for implements like jobs and new friends. It ends with some resolve almost leaving us curious for more yet equally refreshed that the puzzle pieces are falling into place. "...It feels excellent to walk out of your place of employment on a Monday morning immediately after arriving. There is a lightening of the step, an extra surge of oxygen to the brain, a freeing of the soul," he wrote in his journal near the close of this installment. After so much change and a potential departure from **THOUGHTWORM** as we know it, I can only hope that the charged feeling is not too far away from Stewart as **THOUGHTWORM** turns 11, beginning another cycle of 10. Recommended.

TROLL POCKET #1 available from Christian Walker, 9903 Santa Monica Blvd. #245, Beverly Hills, CA 90212, trades and comments welcome. Digest. 16 p.p.

Christian Walker takes us on part of his holiday through Los Angeles, Northern California and the Bay Area, noting astronomical housing costs, the plasticity of LA, and a goodbye to mom and pop businesses in Northern California with a sober sentiment that is reminiscent of Joan Didion. I was a little unsure of what to think of this zine when I first got it, but Walker makes some interesting observations about the changing landscape of American life. He's open to trades and it might be worth your time to give it a try.



MIRIAM
DESHARNAIS

PO BOX 4803, BALTIMORE MD 21211
MDESHARN@YAHOO.COM

Welcome to the Confessional Corner. In the year it has taken me to review some of these items, whole 'nother issues have come out and people most likely thought I'd just tucked their zines away in a secret place never to be reviewed or seen again. I took an issue off of reviewing and failed to pass stuff on to anyone else, mostly cause I liked what I was reading and wanted to review it myself—something I have done before but swore I'd avoid, cause I know it's rude. To quote everyone's favorite newly single pop star, "Oops! I did it again!" So, Kris and Christoph know that you have my sincere apology for the slowness, and all others, know that your stuff has now been passed on to more responsible hands, though possibly too late for this issue, since again, I suck. Sorry.

In other news, though I write here in totally unofficial capacity I do happen to know that the library where I work sure could use some excellent zines for our collection. Visit www.bcpl.info/zines for more info. If you live in the Baltimore area or are passing through, please, please come visit us and tell everyone you know that we exist and need zine and comics fans like you to keep us viable by checking stuff out. Best wishes to all!

EXTRANJERO # 5

A copy of the latest issue (#6) is available for a modest amount of US \$ or a trade.

#5 may still be available too.

Kris & Lola

Calle Obispo 4 Bajo

Plasencia 10600

Caceres, Spain

Ok, onward and upward! I'd been hearing good things about **EXTRANJERO** for a super long time and it didn't disappoint me. In fact it was a favorite zine I read this year. For those of you who don't already know, Kris is an American living in Spain with his wife, Lola. She often co-writes (amusingly) but this issue is mostly by Kris.

This issue covers sneaky Portuguese waiters, a report on the London Anarchist Book Fair, and descriptions of daily life in Cacares, including such things as the greasy churros everyone eats and a rundown of local businesses that have English names. There is also a reprint of a travel journal from **MESH HAT** zine, some funny literal translations of idioms by Lola ("I'm more lost than a fart in the countryside") a Tarzan joke in Spanish, and letters and snippets of history on everything from Franco to Fluxus.

Even stories of mundane stuff like getting a haircut are very well written and funny. After finding a new barber Kris writes: "I could barely contain my excitement. FOUR EUROS! Marcello, that no good thief, charges six! When Lola got home from work I said, 'You'll never guess what I found today?' 'Let me guess. Another copy shop? Woohoo! Party in my pants!'" Another special treat is an old postcard to Lola, (a different Lola) that shows how social awkwardness is nothing new!

EXTRANJERO is something I will recommend to people who are new to

zines and long-time readers alike. It's just an easy, fun read. It's hard enough to write something that's candid and personal while still maintaining a sense of the reader—to do all this while being funny and informative is remarkable. Bring on issues six and seven!

WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION

162 pgs, perfect bound (by hand!)

and embellished throughout, \$20

Christoph Meyer

POB 106 Danville, OH 43014

www.twineman.com

If you are a **28 PAGES LOVINGLY BOUND WITH TWINE** fan you are in for a treat because Christoph has written a book. In typical obsessive/impressive fashion he didn't write a book then just let that be that, No, not Christoph—each of the 2016 copies are handmade, meaning he cut and pasted the layout for each page, had it offset printed, then stamped, glued in, highlighted, embossed, silkscreened on, and otherwise gussied up many, many pages of his book, repeating the process 2016 times. Holy Mackerel!

Now all this effort would seem kind of wasted and sad if the book itself weren't interesting. But rest easy, gentle reader, 'cause it is. Though not hugely different, except in size, from a regular issue of **28 PAGES, WHAT I DID ON MY SUMMER VACATION** benefits from the fact that Christoph knows just about how much detail to include in his stories. Therefore, as with the Harry Potter series, added page length doesn't really make for a much slower read. By this I don't mean to imply that there is any lack of mundane detail, (uh, pissing incidents and more than one bowel movement are included) but that Mr. Meyer keeps his sharing level set on

entertaining, rather than cringingly personal.

So what's it all about? A family vacation cross-country by train, punctuated by other types of recreation, both urban and rural. On the train we meet favorite and least favorite workers and fellow passengers, wonder if a certain rap mogul really is on board and pass by amusing graffiti. In Oregon there is a Zine Symposium to attend, an enviably nice pause at a cabin in wooded splendor and more stories and speculation about the people Christoph meets and hears stories of from others. Since I myself am embarrassingly negligent when it comes to answering mail, I was calmed to read about the moment at the Symposium wherein Christoph comes face to face with a lovely person he accidentally shafted, mail-wise.

I think what's nice about hearing about all the details of this family trip is that the writer finds what's funny or interesting, or bizarre or sad about whatever situation he's in. He's an observer, but also very actively engaged with the world. Now I sound like a kindergarten teacher writing Christoph's progress report. Christoph does not like cleaning up his blocks but excels at stamping activities and creative writing.

Although I totally get why the price tag is so steep, that may hinder some from buying. Maybe you could arrange some sort of really good trade or request it through Inter-Library Loan from your (ahem) local public library. But get your hands on this and share it, possibly aloud, with others.

GLOSSOLALIA #8

32 pgs, spot colored cover, possible trade or \$3

Sarah Contrary

1732 N. Alberta Portland OR 97217

sarahmcontrary@gmail.com

First off, this is a really nice looking zine: the front and back cover are both just gorgeously drawn by Heidi Tucker and Robin Corbo, respectively. Though I had to re-bind it with string for my library's collection because it was buckling, it was initially bound with a piece of bike tubing.

This is the story of Sarah's mostly solo biking/camping trip in Western Europe. In Germany, Sarah deals with a flasher, Canadian frat boys, mosquito infested campgrounds and grocery stores scarily overstocked with pickled pork products. During her trip through six countries she meets kind people and harsh ones, gets lost, gets tired and lonely, becomes excited or scared and is both moved by beauty and overwhelmed by annoyances. Although she admits to initially being hard on herself for not making more connections or having a somehow different experience, Sarah concludes at the end that she did what she could.

The few comics that are interspersed help break up a fair amount of text that is all in the same general format. Despite some sameness of tone throughout, I appreciate that her writing sticks to concrete experience and doesn't just get her readers lost in her head. Also it's refreshing that this is not a generic punk travelogue where the narrator meets people across the world that mirror her friends in Portland. Being actually alienated is kind of universal, y'know?

When Sarah meets up with French family

members and other friends near the end of her trip the happiness she describes is all the more interesting and fun to read about knowing that she faced something more daunting than any bad accommodations or language barriers—being all alone and sometimes freaked out, but still doing what she set out to do.

AND THEN ONE DAY SKETCHBOOK

Perfect bound, 100 pgs, \$8

Ryan Clayton

POB 15552 San Diego CA 92175

www.elephantateater.com

Although I admire anyone with the perseverance to do an illustrated journal, this just wasn't really my bag. Ryan's writing in his daily entries is fine and the art is clear and well-designed, but I just never became invested in anything that happened.

It also bugged me that it was so squeaky clean. I get not wanting to embarrass one's self with overly personal details (especially if one's parents are reading) but why draw "censored" bars over your own work? This bills itself as an "all-ages comic" but unless there is a sudden demand for reading material about plumbing repairs and grad school amongst the pre-teen set, I'm not sure why it needs to be.

Left me wanting more, but I wouldn't be surprised if the format of the previous issues (more straight-up comics, less journal) might work better for me.

THE TRUE HEART

24 pgs, screen printed cover, possible trade or \$X

Hilary Florido

the_paper_mouse@yahoo.com

http://thepapermouse.deviantart.com/

When my only real complaint about a comic is that I wanted it to be longer, that's good. This brief tale is about a boy who lives in a sort of jungle-y, tiki setting. After a campfire story about a mysterious figure in the woods, Patia is a bit scared to be left alone at the campsite. But while he's alone he encounters the mystery face to face—and nothing is quite as expected.

The artistic style is fresh—somewhere between old Saturday morning comics and *Love and Rockets*. I liked it even better on a second reading.

HEY, 4-EYES! VOLUME 2

81 pgs, \$11.00 + \$1.50 shipping

Paypal to robyn@un-pop.com

Ed. by Robyn Chapman

www.myspace.com/hey4eyes

I know people have reviewed this here before, but I just got around to reading it and thought it was pretty great! One of the most satisfying and nicely put together compilation zines I've ever seen, **HEY 4-EYES** includes comics, interviews, essays and trading cards all in praise of spectacles and glasses-wearing. The awesome cover by Aaron Renier gives a taste of his great comic inside and I was delighted to see the endpapers were by BB&PPINC, whom I love. Also, I had never previously heard of couples' glasses and thought the comic about them was sweet.

In styles that are funny and informative, the various artists and writers examine the fashion, the meaning, and the mystique behind the frames. Also included: Wesley Allsbrook, Andrew Arnold, Rita Badalamenti, Leela Corman, Robyn Chapman, Nicole Georges, Eve Englezos and Josh Moutray, Sam Gaskin, Damien Jay, Cole Johnson, Aaron Krolkowski, Aaron Mew, Kelli Nelson, Liz Prince, Aaron

Renier, Jeff Sharp, Aaron Shive, Kazimir Strzepak, Sean Tejaratchi, and Josie Whitmore.

THE DVORAK ZINE

PHASE 7 #003

PHASE 7 #10

PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS #2

SCARS

Various sizes and prices - on the site

Paypal to alec@alec-longstreth.com

Alec Longstreth

http://alec-longstreth.com/

Since last year's Small Press Expo I'd been hearing good things about this Longstreth fellow. This time around I picked up a whole stack of comics by him. I'm about halfway through and so far I have truly enjoyed each one. I know I'm reviewing the work, not the person, but Alec is such an insanely nice guy and his sense of humor and warmth really permeate everything he does. In addition he's figured out a way to synthesize different types of comics shorthand with his own personal style. This guy could write about the most boring subject in the world and I'd still find it entertaining.

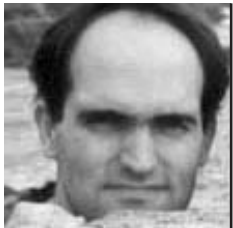
THE DVORAK ZINE is about retraining yourself as a typist so that you no longer use the QWERTY UIOP keyboard. It includes lots of fascinating typing history and has Alec's trademark uber-enthusiasm, which got even this "hunt and pecking" reader jazzed about trying Dvorak. **PHASE 7 #3** is about a cross country road trip and **#10** is about how comics changed Alec's life. **PEOPLE, PLACES, THINGS #2** is just a well drawn glimpse into life from Longstreth's point of view. **SCARS** is a catalogue of the scars on Alec's body accompanied by funny stories of how he got each one. All are highly recommended.

A LATE FREEZE

Danica Novgorodoff
48 pgs, full color, \$6.50
danica.novgorodoff@aya.yale.edu
www.danicanovgorodoff.com/

Man, this comic is the joint. It is seriously epic for something so short and just absolutely freaking gorgeously done. Although you may have picked up on the fact that I read and liked many things lately, this touched me like nothing else for its pure imagination and pretty much flawless execution. I can't believe it's only \$6.50!

A LATE FREEZE is a near-wordless love story between a robot and a bear. The lovers, along with a frog they rescue, and eventually with their child, must face the cruelties and dangers human dominance brings to the borderlands between forest and society where they live. Dark, satirical humor mixes with both genuinely scary moments and peaceful interludes in an unpredictable and original way. The end hits its haunting but sweet final notes with a cautiously optimistic grace.



**GAVIN J.
GRANT**

176 PROSPECT AVE.,
NORTHAMPTON, MA 01060
WWW.LCRW.NET; INFO@LCRW.NET

Gavin J. Grant runs an indie press, Small Beer Press (smallbeerpress.com), and puts out a twice annual zine, **LADY CHURCHILL'S ROSEBUD WRISTLET** (lcrw.net/lcrw), from Northampton, MA. He

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #21

recommends Kim Stanley Robinson's recent novel *Sixty Days and Counting* as well as that book. You know! That one, it was on the radio and it was about.... Bugger. Can't remember the title. Go ask your local indie bookseller and they'll get it for you. It really was a good read.

OTHER INVESTIGATIONS

No.1, \$4, half-letter, 47pp. c/o Ilya Zaychik, 4 Ridgecrest Dr., West Roxbury, MA 02132 stationaery.com/

Really interesting well-designed and put together nonfiction zine featuring work from two artists, Michele Ramirez (dark woodcuts of figures in groups) and LauraLee Gulledge (self-portraits, somewhat cartoony in line but more serious in subject). The texts are all on the shorter side. Celia Lisset Alvarez's "Sin Embargo: An Attempt at Self-(Re)Interpretation" is an involving piece on the writer's Cuban identification and her changing attitude towards the media and the public in recent years. "The Final Gurgle of the Western Mind", is a short, thoughtful, and thought-provoking piece on the question of the dumbing down of Western society, not just in recent years, but over the last couple of centuries. Are we now too dumb to ask the right questions? Are the bread and circuses distracting us? Will you remember today's scandal about such-and-such celebrity next year or will you be successfully drawn into another similar case? Keep an eye on this zine.

UNDERGROUND SCREAMS

No.1+2, Free (donations accepted), quarter-letter, 16pp.
undergroundscreeams@gmail.com
undergroundscreeams.com

Two small issues of poetry, art ganked and

occasionally reworked from the net, and so on. Love the format—it comes in a brown paper bag so there's an illicit thrill to opening the zine. Seems like a worthy project (it's here to give the kids space for their voices) and is open to submissions.

AUTOMATIC ROBOTICS

No.2, \$4, half-letter, 88pp. Damon Belanger, PO Box 311, Belmont, CA 94002 damonbelanger.com

Lots of surrealist art from many artists with quite the range in styles. Surreal like the stuff they post on BoingBoing, not Lenora Carrington or Remedios Varo. The writers here are having mainly not the best of times. One writer's bio warns you to be nice to him if you meet him in case he writes about you. But you're reading **XD**, of course you'll be nice to him. And besides, you'd write about him and then there'd be a slow, old-fashioned years-in-the-making mail-art war! Phew.

KALEIDOTROPE

No.1, \$4, half-legal, 44pp. Fred Coppersmith, PO Box 25, Carle Place, NY 11514 kaleidotrope@gmail.com

First issue of a new science fiction leaning lit zine that will be familiar to readers of **ELECTRIC VELOCIPEDA** or **FLYTRAP**. It's not up there with those two yet, but these are early days and Fred shows a good amount of enthusiasm putting this together and getting it out there. The Horoscopes were a nice addition, i.e. "Leo: You have an active imagination and a keen imagination, so it will be all the more sad when that pack of rabid wolves finally get to you." It's the "finally" in there that gets me. All those years avoiding the wolves only to be brought down at last. Ach.



**KATHY
MOSELEY**

1573 N. MILWAUKEE AVE., #403
CHICAGO, IL 60622
SEMIBOLD@EARTHLINK.NET

February was a rough month. My beloved cat Chloe died at the age of 19. For an old kitty she was in pretty good health until just the last few months. She was the first pet I ever had, and she lived with me for 18 years, so it's been quite an adjustment, not having her around. (That's her in my reviewer photo.)

So I think it was some kind of fate that brought a copy of **GIRL W/CAT #1** to my door, just when I needed it most.

This zine tells the story of Iza and her cat Malenikiy, his sudden unexpected death, and the grief process she went through afterwards. I had only just read this zine the weekend before I ended up at the vet with Chloe, having to make the decision to let her go. I found myself going through a lot of the same emotions that Iza did—missing all the little rituals she had with him, not wanting to wash her clothes because then all his little cat hairs would be gone. Even though my cat's death was not as unexpected as Malenikiy's, it's still something you can never really be prepared for. If you've ever lost an animal friend, or have an animal friend that you really love, you will understand this zine.

36 pages, digest size. No price listed, but it's worth a dollar or two.

Iza Bourret
PO Box #71
Succursale B
Quebec, QC G1K 7A1 Canada

CHUMPIRE #183

This issue starts out with two pages of reviews of shows, and ends with two pages of record, zine and book reviews. But the real meat of this issue is right in the middle: Greg's unexpected relationship with a woman. Unexpected in that he is gay, and had never before had sex with a woman. I won't spoil the ending for you (it does end, but not too unpleasantly). Greg is still in search of that elusive relationship, which I very much identified with. "Clicking" with someone like that (male or female) isn't something that happens every day for him, and hopefully it won't be another 35 years before the next one comes along. Good reading, definitely worth a stamp.

12 pages, quarter size.

1 stamp or trade.

Greg Knowles

PO Box 27 Annville, PA 17093-0027

chumpire@gmail.com

DREAM WHIP #14 is one of the best things I have read in a long time. More of a book than zine, it clocks in at 300+ pages, but it's also small enough to fit in your coat pocket. Bill writes about his adventures in careful block printing, punctuated with the occasional drawing. Most of his illustrations are delicate, lonely-looking buildings or signs or some architectural detail from his travels. But there are also some very cute little cartoons. But for the most part, this issue of **DREAM WHIP** covers Bill's travels over the last few years, and he has been *everywhere*: All through the Southwest and California, Chicago, Montreal, Liverpool, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Naples, and probably lots of other places I've forgotten about. For me, the most interesting section was his trip across the Atlantic Ocean as the only "civilian" on a freight ship. I'm not sure what the circumstances were that led to that, but it was great reading. I have to quote this whole chunk here, because this

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #21

pretty much summarizes what I adore about Bill's writing:

"My cabin has a bed and a couch and a coffee table that's bolted to the floor. Those bolts worry me. They mean there are days on this ship when the furniture needs bolting down. I slept on the couch last night. Maybe out of habit. Maybe because I'm more comfortable on couches. [. . .] I consider sleeping on the couch every night, like I'm couch surfing across the Atlantic Ocean. That's a couch surfer's dream, after all: catching a ride on some couch that'll take you around the world, like some slacker Magellan, mooching a circumnavigation."

Yeah, it's all that good. Order this now.

336 pages plus index, 4 1/4" x 5 1/2"

\$9 US, \$12 to Canada and Mexico.

Bill Brown

PO Box 53832 Lubbock, TX 79453

dreamwhip@gmail.com

Also available from Microcosm Publishing, microcosmpublishing.com

FOR THE CLERISY—GOOD WORDS FOR READERS VOL. 14, #69

The expatriate life is the theme for this particular issue. Brant discusses everything from *Heart of Darkness* to *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, to a Charlie Chan novel. His areas of interest are far-reaching and the sheer volume of his reading is amazing. On the back cover he lists every book he read in 2006—129 books! He says, "it's not much if one commits to read every day, watches little TV, and reads undemanding genre fiction."

I read for at least two hours a day (commuting time) and I get through maybe 30 books a year, if I'm lucky. I must be slower than I thought. So if you like to read, and you like to read about reading, order up a copy. It's always good.

18 pages, full size.

Trade, letter, or \$2 cash.

Brant Kresovich

PO Box 404 Getzville, NY 14068-0404

biggestfatporker@yahoo.com

WE LOVE MAIL!

Send us some. We might print it and make you famous.

XD c/o Davida Gypsy Breier, PO Box 11064, Baltimore, MD 21212

or Davida@leekinginc.com

"I loved your intro to your reviews in #20. My kid would occasionally beam me as well with his toys and it hurt. No one ever talks about mom abuse but it is pretty pervasive." Laura Mc./**THE OBSERVATION DECK**

Ed. - Garnet's throwing arm has only gotten more accurate as time goes by, but it is the biting that is even worse than the hitting. He's worse than a big puppy! But puppies don't a) laugh manically after biting, b) cry after biting you because you yelped in pain, c) both a and b.

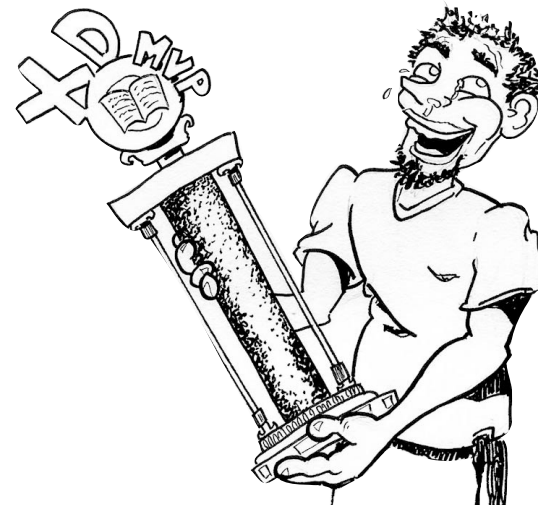
Thanks for the new **XEROGRAPHY DEBT!** A review in it reminded me that Sean Stewart is now in the Baltimore area. He's a cool dude, and it looks like your area might be shaping up to be the zine mecca of the east coast (Portland of course seems to be its west coast counterpart, and probably the zine capital of the USA at the moment).

Wred Fright/**THE PORNOGRAPHIC FLABBERGASTED EMUS**

Ed. - I hear that you now have to do a zine to be granted residency in Portland these days. As for Baltimore being the east coast zine mecca... I think we're still playing second fiddle to Brooklyn, but that may change as people have to work 4 jobs to afford housing up there.

By the way, I got the new **XD** and **SMILE HON** in the mail the other day. I don't know what you did to convince Matt Fagan to contribute 10 pages worth of reviews, but you should keep it up. With that and his cover he's easily MVP of the issue.

Eric Lyden/**FISH WITH LEGS**



**IF YOU WANT YOUR ZINE CONSIDERED FOR REVIEW,
PLEASE SEND IT TO ONE OF THESE FINE FOLKS:**

Please don't send more than two copies of your zine in for review. You can get a sense of each reviewer's tastes by reading their reviews in this issue and decide who might best appreciate your zine. Also, please indicate that the zine is being sent for review and enclose the info sheet on the following page.

Anne Thalheimer (Booty)

160 North Maple St., Florence, MA 01062
motes@simons-rock.edu

I would prefer feminist-ey stuff. I like auto-bio and comix, but will read just about everything aside from weirdo porn zines. No prisoner mail either, please.

Dan Taylor (The Hungover Gourmet)

PO Box 5531, Lutherville MD 21094
editor@hungovergourmet.com

David Gypsy Breier (Leeking Ink)

PO Box 11064, Baltimore, MD 21212
David@leekinginc.com

Fran McMillian (Etidorhpa)

40 East Main St., PMB 170
Newark, DE 19711
marybld@aol.com

Lit zines, perzines, artzines.

Gavin Grant (Lady Churchill's Rosebud Wristlet)

176 Prospect Ave.
Northampton, MA 01060
info@lcrw.net

Literary, perzine, political, cooking, etc!

Ilya Zaychik (Other Investigations)

4 Ridgecrest Dr., W. Roxbury MA 02132
other.investigations@gmail.com

XEROGRAPHY DEBT #21

Eric Lyden (Fish With Legs)

224 Moraine St., Brockton, MA 02301
ericfishlegs@aol.com

Per zines, comic zines, anything that seems to have any sort of sense of humor. No poetry zines! I'm also not too into political zines, but I can appreciate them when they're well done.

Julie Dorn (Junie in Georgia)

3455 Blaisdell Ave. #13,
Minneapolis, MN 55408
junieingeorgia@hotmail.com

Perzines, comics, zines with obscure or unusual themes.

Kathy Moseley (SemiBold)

1573 N. Milwaukee Ave PMB #403
Chicago, IL 60622
semibold@earthlink.net

I love a good perzine! (But I'm not averse to zines about art, travel, DIY and pop culture in general.)

Matt Fagan (Meniscus)

1573 N Milwaukee Ave PMB #464
Chicago, IL 60622
hadmatter@hotmail.com

Stephanie Holmes

3005 Glen Rae, Austin, TX 78702
ourgirlsunday@yahoo.com
I like cooking zines, perzines, travel zines, activist zines, parenting zines and comic zines.

Kris Mininger (Extranjero)

Calle Obispo 4 Bajo,
Plasencia 10600,
Cáceres, Spain

PLEASE REVIEW MY ZINE...

Title:

Issue #/Date:

Contact name:

Address:

e-mail:

website:

price: \$__US/ \$__Can/Mex / \$__World

trades: yes / no / maybe

size:

page count:

description:

Please copy or cut out and attach to your zine (really, it helps)