

number eleven january 2002

*An interim edition while I get the
main deal going*

A Word (or two) to the Fore

This interim issue, which I'm going to count as a full issue of my fanzine, is done "on the fly", so to speak — I'm working on it at a location that does not afford me all the amenities I have at home, such as my scanner, previously typed in text files, or the like.

Nonetheless, this is not going to be an insuperable problem, since I'm going to have this thing done and out the door very soon now.

In the meantime, I'm just going to go on at a reasonable (I hope) length about subjects near and dear to my heart, and comments about things that have happened, that should happen, and that may never happen.

Come to think of it, isn't that just like always?

Shredded paper packaging material!

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Write or Die

To borrow the title and concept of a column from a favorite place on the Web, I have figured out (to some extent) why I do what I do.

Or, to quote Paul Henried's character in the movie *Casablanca*, "You might as well ask why we breathe. If we quit breathing, we die."

This has never been a settling prospect for me to consider. I have always written, ever since I can remember... but the writing process itself has never been a focus. It's always been about the results... finish the term paper, wrap up the story, close out the holiday greeting sheet.

It's only been recently that I have realized that the entire process, from nurturing the idea to the final layout on paper, is the part about which I want (or have) to speak today.

I write because I must... because I have no real choice

in the matter. The plots, ideas, and characters come to me, and if I don't put them down, they leak out over whatever else I'm working on, including my life in general.

That can get very messy.

As it stands, the cheaper alternative to plugging me in to Detroit Edison is for me to write. There haven't been many objections... that I know of.

Form Follows Function...

I went to film school back when I was in my twenties. I've been getting back into it lately, writing screenplays and studying up on animation. I find that flexing the writing muscles on a different form, such as the screenplay, is like a cat sharpening its claws on whatever piece of upholstery you don't want them near... it keeps you flexible.

Because of the requirements and limitations of the form, writing the screenplay, especially the version known as the "selling script" or "spec script" (from being written "on speculation"), is a much bigger challenge in many respects than straight prose.

A screenplay is dialogue and description. That's it. The description tells what will be seen on the screen, and the dialogue tells what will be heard.

The interior monologues, the florid descriptive passages, the long stretches of expository paragraphs... all these have no place in the screenplay.

And neither, surprisingly to some, do camera directions, descriptions of what the audience should see and when... the consensus of all the Hollywood professionals I've found in my researching is that camera directions will merely annoy the director, since he will ignore them anyway.

They are also seen as the mark of a novice, somebody who doesn't know the Right Way to Do Things. (As opposed to fiction writing, or non-fiction writing, for that matter, in screenwriting there is a Right Way.)

There are times, it seems, that learning the rules, *and following them*, is definitely in your best interests.

The Legal Things

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Your mileage may vary. Have a safe and happy 2K2.

What's Going On

In late July of last year, my uncle, who is the closest thing to a father I've ever had, died as a result of cancer that spread to his brain.

He was 81 years old, a decorated veteran of World War II, a thirty-year veteran of the Post Awful, and a dear, sweet man.

He could also be a callous, manipulative sonofagun.

There are those who would say that I can't have loved the man if I say anything negative about him.

I didn't hate the man because of his faults, but I did love him in spite of them.

I have more to say, but I'll hold it until another time, I think.

The events of 11 September have had immense effects on all of us... but I wonder, and tremble a bit at, what the effects will be on our community of fandom.

Will travel delays and restrictions, as well as the economy, curtail the ability of fans to merrily romp off with cheeky abandon to a Worldcon at the last moment?

Will the international makeup of fandom attract the attention and suspicions of Attorney General Ashcroft and the Justice Department?

Will the Worldcon as an institution survive further into this century?

My response to these issues is summed up thusly:

Your guess is as good as mine.

I suppose you're wondering why I brought all this up, then. Why would I bother worrying about things I have little or no control over?

My therapist has been asking me the same question. And the anti-depressant meds do help.

As I write this, it's a full week into 2K2, and the changeover from national currencies to the Euro is well under way.

Some pundits see this as a blatant bastardization of Europe, welding countries together that had no reason to be together, trying to form by economic coercion what military force had not accomplished since the days of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire.

Others say it's a belated recognition that the economies of the countries of the European Union have become so interdependent that a single monetary system has become mandatory for the economic structure of Europe as a whole.

Whichever set of pundits you listen to, this much is plain... the franc, the peseta, the guilder, the deutschmark, the drachma, and the other individual national currencies are headed for the history books.

There they will join the denarius, the talent, the piece of eight, and the Susan B. Anthony dollar as currencies that are no longer in use.

Whether this development will strengthen or destroy the economy of Europe remains to be seen.

Doesn't it always?

Before deciding to get this issue done as quickly as possible, I had another issue of the fillerzine I've come up with, *Vamp Till Ready*, almost set to go. I decided not to use it, mainly because I think that you, the readers, deserve at least something out under this title.

(Am I fooling myself? Quite likely. But it works in getting *something* out the door.)

Be that as it may, and it may well be, this ish is still going out... even though it has no artwork, no letter column, and very few of

the other things that I've put in my zines in the past.

I suppose I'll live... but that only strengthens my determination to do better next time. (Morning-after resolve?)

What's The Plan?

As of the time I write this, here are the places either Megan and I or I plan to be within the foreseeable future.

Please note: All plans subject to change without notice.

January 18-20, 2002

Astronomical ConFusion, Warren, MI (Local con)

August 28—September 1, 2003

Torcon 3, Toronto, ON (Worldcon)

September 2—6, 2004

Noreascon IV, Boston, MA (Worldcon)



Almost the last word...

This should be counted (if you do such things) as a complete issue of my fanzine; that's how Im counting it.

I may end up putting out another copy of *Vamp Till Ready* soon, or I may not; it's go-

ing to depend entirely on how soon I can get the next issue, which will be #12, out the door.



WAHF

Murray Moore, Henry & Letha Welch, Howard DeVore, Roger & Pat Sims, Marty Cantor, Robert Lichtman, Jae Leslie Adams, and a cast of thousands...



That's a wrap, people!

