COUNTERCLOCK

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INTRODUCTION

The first three issues of CounterClock will be generously distributed throughout Europe, in the US and to Australia. I also hope to make contact with Japanese sf-fans. At first I considered the titel *Counterclockwise*. Then I decided to let the readers judge for themselves if they find anything *wise* in this fanzine. But time to produce another zine, it is. From 1978 to '85 I wrote most of my fanzines in German language and was fairly successful with it. However - very few compared to the vast number of German speakers, will ever master this tricky language perfectly. I finally gave up. Living in Sweden, my practice of German deteriorated since my main considerations in life shifted. It's just the way it goes. I thought I could resist - until I didn't wish to resist it anymore. Even the pyramids will eventually succumb to erosion.

From 1979 to '89 I wrote many fanzines in Swedish language as well. Until I concluded that all I did was more or less a complete waste of time and paper. It was fun while I did it, but my ability could not keep up with my ambition. And my ambition increased with the insight I got from reading other peoples work. Between 1990 and '95 I was convinced I had nothing of any significance to tell and that *I wasn't good enough.* Not in any language. Then I decided to brush up on my English and put it to some use. That way I could let my German *and* Swedish friends read the same fanzine and I wouldn't have to translate anything. *And* I could make new friends, which I have. I can still be mindnumbingly boring, but I guess that is no excuse not to try. This time I turn to international readers. It has been long due. I've been stuck in the Grand Canyon of Self-Criticism long enough and I feel confident in my ability to give back a small portion of what I have been given in inspiration and encouragement. There will still be German and Swedish readers to this. But the global community of fandom is growing, thanks to Internet most of all, I guess.

I am motivated and inspired by the fanzines that I have received during the past year and encouraged by the people I have been in contact with. So thanks to Pam Wells - *Attitude*, Fiona Anderson - *Babel-On,* Maureen Kincaid Speller - *Snufkin's Bum,* Nicki & Richard Lynch - *Mimosa,* Dave Langford - *Ansible* and very much encouraged by Mike Glyer - *File 770.* Also thanks to Teddy Harvia, Jan Van't Ent and Miki Dennis. To anyone who discovers similarity between this fanzine and Cheryl Morgan's electronic zine EMERALD CITY, I can hereby confirm that I've been reading EmCit with great pleasure and have occasionally been contributing to its contents. So it's no accident that I have some inspiration from her. Cheryl has also kindly been giving me some advice on writing, for which I am grateful. I have also been inspired by Brian Stableford's brilliant stream of thoughts on the art of storytelling and why science fiction is not only useful, but necessary. I heard some of it in Dortmund, but it wasn't until I read a print-out of his Confuse'91-GoH-speech (in Linköping / Sweden) that it sank into my heart and conscious mind.

Having been inspired, motivated or encouraged by the previously mentioned people does of course not indicate that I have achieved their quality in any way. I hope to find a quality of my own, eventually. So, thank you - all of you! I'm sorry I didn't find the time to keep in touch more during 1998. It has been a rough year for me in the second half.

JUniCon 18-20/6 -1999



Among the guests we find Swedish sf-writer Bertil Mårtensson and the most appreciated Swedish artist of sf, fantasy and horror Hans Arnold. From the UK - FGoH: Martin Easterbrook. In Nacka Conference Center outside Stockholm (where also NaSaCon 11 was held in 1990) we launch a convention done by two experienced teams; the people from SFSF (Stockholm and SIGMA TC (Saltsjöbaden). In every way it looks good on paper so far. If we succeed, we may continue our joint efforts, which we possibly do anyway. Details about the program will eventually be accessible at our website (as soon as we get it in plain English -the current text may be of little use to you, except if you can read Swedish. Well, reading it may not be the problem as much as *understanding* it.):

http://www.sigmatc.a.se/junicon

Have a monthly look at it until we get the update...

Attending membership will be approximately 18 ½ GBP (250 SEK) until May 30th 1999 or 22 GBP (300 SEK) at the door.

As we will settle matters of life and death in this issue of CounterClock, we can move on to knocking the Big Bang-theory (and other modern mythology) in the next. And as soon as we have settled all questions of life and death, the eternal, instant, infinite and infinitesimal, omnipresent, non-existent, all-powerful and impotent... Well, as soon as we wrapped up all this larger-than-life mumbo-jumbo we can debate topics of substance and consequence (*such as the further adventures of Ipswich Town in Premier League. They're not there yet - but they're on their way to get back there*). Which I sincerely hope that you'll contribute with. I prefer e-mailed LoC, cause they're so easy to 'cut and paste'. For now the extreme will just have to do! Don't take it too seriously.

But I do enjoy a good philosophical debate about how the future is created today. Every now and then I can throw in some info or reports on events of any consequence in Scandinavia and Northern Europe. That is, events like JUni-Con'99, the BEC 2000 in Bergen, Norway or the ESE 2000 in Darmstadt, Germany.

The future is perhaps not "The Undiscovered Country" that Shakespeare referred to when he let Hamlet contemplate...

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF LONGEVITY OR IMMORTALITY...

During SF-Tage 9 NRW in Dortmund and with the aid of the British sf-writer Brian Stableford, I asked the assembled fans at this program-item to contemplate on the ramifications of their predicament provided they've been blessed (or cursed) with immortality. Brian and I had agreed to disagree on this subject. He was the optimist looking forward to spend eternity with the endless prospect or possibility of learning new things. I was the 300 year old swordless "Highlander", with no heads to chop off, no excitement to look forward to, but with the words of Werner Herzog's NOSFERATU echoing in my mind; *"There is a fate worse than death and it is NOT BEING ABLE TO DIE. To spend an endless number of pointless days."*

I have spent a considerable amount of time, thoughts and research on the idea of *being around* for an indefinite number of years as the average guy. Once I had achieved immortality, there were still an awful lot of other things to go about. I was still the ordinary mediocre person that I am in this scenario. No superhuman strength or psychic powers... just me and eternity. However... eternity is a bloody long time... infact it is beyond my power to imagine what it is like to be alive for that long. I believe that Marvin said something like this (having waited in the carpark for over 576 thousand million years) in The Restaurant at the End of the Universe: *"The first ten million years were the worst. The second ten million years, they were worst too. The third ten million years I didn't enjoy at all. After that I went into a bit of decline. The best conversation I had was about 40 million years ago, with a coffee machine."*
As an immortal, facing eternity, 576,000 million years is nothing. One should perhaps begin and try to imagine a human lifespan and the impact of being around for 80-90 years, which is a lot.
An unavoidable consequence of *being around* is that you physically have to be somewhere at all time and that you will have a memory of being as you were. This may sound so obvious that it doesn't need to be stated - but I wonder if this is taken into account when we read or talk about entities five hundred years of age or more (Perry Rhodan, Nosferatu, Dr.Who, etc). I feel that the fact that someone is a thousand years old or so, only can be dealt with easily for as long as you disregard the full impact of such longevity.

What about memory? If one is burdened with the memory of a thousand years of existence? With some people the memory of real events gets mixed up with events imagined or dreamed of... If we have a limited capacity of remembering, then we're bound to forget a lot if we exist for a thousand years. A colleague asked me to solve Rubik's Cube the other day. 16 years ago I solved it in 58 seconds. Now I needed two hours! Provided that our mind is still clear - what do we remember and how do we remember things at the end of a human lifespan? I think that we choose to forget some events. I believe that a memory has to be exercised, if we wish to keep it. I'm convinced that every intelligent being searches for some kind of *universal epignosis*, a complete knowledge that brings structural harmony to the universe.

With this follows that some things *are* and others things *never can be* considered to be important for an immortal. Note that an immortal basically has to come to terms with eternity, where an imbecillion number of years still approximates an infinitesimal (I have to see immortality as a curse - if death isn't an option). But can our petty concerns end within a human lifespan? What will our ambition become? Ambition is *for the young* people. Coming of considerable age we no longer need to be World Champion of anything, famous or powerful. Wealth always comes in handy *as a tool*. But wealth is also gained, lost and gained over and over again for as long as we are allowed to exist.

To see how well my theories hold up I began to make a number of conclusions about the particulars of the human mind of people who have been around in existence for more than twice as long as I have (with all their faculties intact). Matters such as memory, ambition, curiousity, concern, natural desire and so on. My own dear grandfather has unfortunately a memory disorder (he is now 89) and was unable to provide any answers to my questions.
But I did find two valid 'subjects'. First a freemason and still active bank-advisor (80 years old) and secondly a noble-man and one of Swedens wealthiest men (88 years), both with a clear mind and willing to share their thoughts on life, the universe and everything... (one cannot help but wonder if you really have to be rich to keep your mind clear for a 100 years...) I did find most of my theories confirmed by these two men.

Then I began making up a life where I was born on May 30th in the year 1697. I integrated some of my genealogical studies into this theory. I am well versed in Swedish history of 1697 to 1751. I even know such details as what wallpaper they had and what the weather was like in the summer of 1714.
I could tell you the complete story of my life (in detail) from the year 1700 (where I have my first faint memory). Between 1750 and 1800 (at this time I was an ambassador, living in northern Germany) I accumulated wealth. Most of the years between 1800 and 1900 I spent travelling all over the world. I spent more than 25 years in Japan between 1820 and 1850 (and I have since then almost completely forgotten how to speak Japanese). I spent both World War I and II on Iceland where I was living in solitude and fairly safe from stray bullets, grenades and bombs (because I don't like being shot at and have not yet tested if I can be killed conventionally). I became World Champion in icehockey with the British team in 1936. And I attempted to become the World Chess Champion in 1961 when Michail Tal was the No:1. But I lost! I have always been this mediocre kind of *immortal*. Of course I feel that I could become Chess Champion eventually, but that would probably be out of lack of competitors. But I could never become a World Champion weightlifter or being exceptional in jumping high or far... my body is not equipped for such an enterprise - and it will never be.

300 years... that's just about what I have been able to encompass so far. Basically I came to the same conclusion as Nosferatu (with a hundred years more of experience). We agree upon that there is a fate worse than death...

Another one who agrees is (or was) dime-story-writer and ex-US-marine Barry Sadler whose fictional character Casca or "Casca Rufius Longinus" was the Roman soldier who stabbed Jesus hanging on the cross with his spear. For this misdeed, Casca was cursed to exist as an immortal among us, fighting

as a mercenary in all of our wars and living through every nightmare of mankind. For two thousand years he walks the earth, gets his heart ripped out by the Aztecs, fights with the Vikings and drives a german tank in WWII. He gets killed a number of times, but comes always back to life. And it hurts like hell every single time.

In the Perry Rhodan-series the immortal Atlan spends over 10,000 years on earth, reviewing mankinds progress towards the stars... (a little bit like Sid Meier's "Civilization"). But to avoid getting completely bored by spending too many years with the primitive monkeys that we were (are) he spends sometimes decades (and more) in deep hypersleep. That's kinda cheating, isn't it? But neither Atlan, Perry Rhodan nor any other of the immortals spend much time on nostalgia, melancholy and misanthropy. Somehow they manage to keep busy all of the time with really important things to do.

The happy days of mankind are the empty pages in our history books! *(Napoleon?)*

But then again... none of the immortals in Perry Rhodan is an average kind of person. With Perry Rhodan immortality is a privilege of people being special. You'd have to be a mutant of some kind, a telepath or two-headed firestarter or something like that... None of us, mediocre people, need to worry about longevity or immortality there (except of course that a 200 year life is rather common in his universe 2000 years from now. Immortality is often a prematurely awarded epithet given by entities of limited perception. A fortunate circumstance for the Rhodan-immortals is that they can move among the stars. the average earthly immortal without the conveniency of a hyperdrive is faced with the prospect of being engulfed by a dying, collapsing sun in 7 billion years or so. Genuine immortality will therefore suck immensely if the question of interstellar travel isn't solved until then. And don't be so sure that it will be solved. Okay - so they said that the sound-barrier could never be broken and they were wrong about that. This is no evidence that they are wrong about the speed of light...

And it's not all pit black. Dr.Who, for one, endures longevity with dignity and style. On the other hand, the Doctor is not depicted as what I would consider a "mediocre" person. Let's step over to the contemporary mortal side and have an optimistic look at the prospect of longevity. As Brian Stableford pointed out at SF-Tage science may make this possible *soon*. There is no reason why we should not be able to live for 200-300 years. And as long as death remains an option there is no point in being gloomy about it. We have so much to look forward to. (Why does this argument remind me of a very surprised looking whale?) Where there is life, there is an option. For good and bad. It may be the best of times or the worst of times... Perhaps it is the obligation of every intelligent being to try to make all time *the best of times.*

Fact is that the audience in Dortmund got well split between our point of views and that it turned out to be an interesting debate. Perhaps we can continue or add to this debate in CounterClock? *Do you wish to live forever?* Another question is - have you ever read any credible characterization of an immortal (or someone of extreme longevity)? I haven't!

* * *

(Guess what I'm listening to while writing this. Here's a hint: I'll see you on the Dark Side of the Moon!)

TIME ...to wrap it up?

Ticking away the moments that make up a dull day,
Fritter and waste the hours in an off hand way

Going from one extreme to the other. From a 300 year life to the prospect of imminent (well, almost imminent) death. On December 10th I went to bed with the crazy notion that I would have roughly three years left to live. Next day I woke up with this notion matured to anxiety. I have no idea where it came from. Perhaps from a quick look into the mirror at the poor state of my teeth. It did remind me of mortality, but I wasn't aware that it could rattle my soul. That it could rupture my smooth path of existence and bother me subconsciously the way it obviously did. Suddenly I was convinced that I will be dead in about three years from now. I will celebrate my 42nd birthday in November 2001 - it will be one helluva party. But I wont make it to 43. Dead serious! So a reasonable question to pose myself was: "What am I going to do with the remaining three years?" And the next thing that crossed my mind was; "Write it all down! Write it *all* down!"

Kicking around on a piece of ground in your home town
Waiting for someone or something to show you the way

Life is complex, but when it gets too complicated, it may be a good idea to *discomplicate* it by writing it down and to shape abstract thoughts into...into...uhm Where was I? Abstract thoughts ...or what I sometimes perceive as fragments of ideas. Science has been preoccupated with putting down existence into neat equations so that everything can be explained approximately or exactly. With fractal mathematics we have been able to approximate the nature of creation itself. What a marvellous concept. Let's get on with it. If we finish the job soon, there'll be less questions left to ask. We can have all our answers in a book of equations and formula.

And then one day you find ten years have got behind you
No one told you when to run, you missed the starting gun

The words have been *haunting* me since the day I first understood their meaning. That would be some time in 1974. I wouldn't like the thought of *having missed the starting gun.* They made me consider my choices in life well. I have to know why I'm running and where I'm going. I don't want to regret a chosen path.

December 14th - and my life goes on like before. I wonder if the knowledge of my demise in three years would have altered my way of living drastically, had it been a more real situation or if I, as I do now would have started planning how to go out in "Grand Style". It is for certain that my resources can be depleted almost instantaneously, should I decide for such a course of action. There's still plenty of time left for that. All the things that can be done only once should therefore be considered most carefully. Here I see a flaw in the Japanese warriors philosophy. *Seppuku* or *harakiri* is *the easy way out* and perhaps practiced too soon by young fanatics who haven't learned yet how to handle a defeat. A warrior must expect and be prepared to deal with a defeat. I would like to debate this with some Japanese... Is the *D.I.Y.* method really the honorable way to go or is it just the escape of a coward (so they wouldn't have to deal with reality)?

You run and you run to catch up with the sun, but it's sinking
And racing around to come up behind you again

December 17th - What would be the point in panicking? Whatever there is left to be done, it ought to be done most

thoroughly. It is common, I suppose, that one who is aware of the end, likes to leave things behind in a tidy and orderly fashion. My 42nd birthday-party ought to be the opportunity to *give away* stuff. Now that could prove to be fun. Kind of a "hobbit-birthday-party". However, my computer will be severly out of date by the year 2002.

December 18th - It isn't easy to constantly go around thinking about something fairly unpleasant such as death. These are the kind of things we tend to forget about. If I wish to keep it in mind, I guess that I have to embrace the idea. To see it as a release, something nice. According to my theory about the impact of longevity, the adventure of death should prove to be something really new and interesting. It is a pity that no one yet has truly returned from the Undiscovered Country to tell us what it is like. No one except Jesus, of course - but he never appeared on TV...
December 24th - Can't quite convince myself that this is going to work. Can't convince myself to *fear death*. Would somebody please point a gun at my head?
Perhaps we can travel the universe over, once disembodied... Yes, we may travel the universe over in search of the beautiful. If we do not carry it with us, we find it not.
OK! So I can see that you are not going to buy this. I will just have to make up a more credible story about disappearance from earthly affairs.
The time is gone, the song is over,
Thought I'd something more to say *(Roger Waters, 1972)*

Rebuilding the Time Machine

A couple of years ago I found some old schematics or drawings in an Antique Shop. The old papers roused my curiousity. I could not resist the temptation and bought them right away. These documents turned out to be H.G.Wells' original blueprints for the time machine. Don't ask me how they came to be in Stockholm - I didn't bother investigating their previous owners or whereabouts.

It was quite interesting rebuilding his time machine and it gave me a lot of new insight into the theory of temporal mechanics. Some of the scribblings were extremely difficult to read and I had to guess my way through them. But I guess that I reconstructed all details pretty well. Old Herbert George would have been proud of me. But it appeared that Wells never actually used the machine himself. His notes advised caution and he did send a number of experimental machines, but they all disappeared. The story about Morlocks and the Eloi has obviously just been made up.

So I decided to try a model first and to send a tomato through time. The tomato was sent two minutes into the future and was supposed to reappear on the very same table from which it started. The model and the tomato disappeared, never to be seen again.

I was devastated but I decided to try it again. My experiment had not been a complete failure. After all, the machine had dematerialized and entered the temporal warp, or so I could assume, because it had definitely left my laboratory.

My second model had a potato-passenger. The controls were preset to return the potato to present time plus elapsed time. The second machine vanished also, never to be seen again. So I went back to the drawing board to go through every single component of the time machine one more time. I began to understand why Wells didn't make the trip himself...

Everything should be working. Why the hell didn't the machine return? It should never have left its place in space. It had no means of propulsion for moving in any other dimension than time.

My third passenger was a cucumber. It was destined to spend 3 minutes in the year 2001 and then to return to exactly the same place in time when it left. Well, almost exactly... A fraction of a second was allowed to pass. It was so little that I should not even be able to notice its departure. But I was able to see the machine dematerialize - and for an instant I thought that I had lost the third machine and a rather expensive cucumber to go with it.

But then I heard the machine and the cucumber drop to the floor at the far end of my laboratory. And the cucumber was frozen stiff. Actually, it appeared to be so cold that I didn't dare to touch it right away. I thought it to be prudent to take its temperature first. And it was way below minus twohundred degrees Celsius (Oh yes, I do have quite sophisticated equipment!).

Somehow the time machine did move through space after all. But I could not see how. On my next trip to Moscow, I decided to buy a second-hand Russian space suit. Wells never had this option. Even if he had come to the conclusion that the machine somehow was moving through space... he could not find out for himself. Or he never came to that conclusion.

Getting the space suit was fairly easy compared to deciphering Wells' blueprints. I even got invited to see the Russian Neutrino-Observatory in the Caucasus Mountains. That would have been interesting, but I didn't have the time for this excursion. Not this summer anyway.

Upon my return to Stockholm I got back to work on my time machine. That day CNN had very interesting news for me. A space shuttle crew claimed to have found a tomato drifting in space together with some strange contraption that may be of alien origin. They were not quite sure about its function. But from the description I could tell that it was my first experimental model

Suddenly I realized why the machine had disappeared... Let's for a moment assume that the machine works the way it is supposed to work. And let's for a moment assume that the Sun doesn't move through space either. If I go half a year back in time, the Earth would be on the far side of the Sun, wouldn't it? But the Sun is also in perpetual motion.
Get this:

GALAXY SONG

"From Monty Python's - The Meaning of Life"
Words & music by Eric Idle
Intro:
WHENEVER LIFE GETS YOU DOWN, MRS BROWN,
AND THINGS SEEM HARD OR TOUGH,
AND PEOPLE ARE STUPID, OBNOXIOUS OR DAFT
AND YOU FEEL THAT YOU'VE HAD QUITE ENOUGH...

Just remember that you're standing on a planet that's evolving
And revolving at 900 miles an hour,
That's orbiting at 19 miles a second, so it's reckoned,
A sun that is the source of all our power.
The sun and you and me and all the stars that we can see,
Are moving at a million miles a day
In an outer spiral arm, at 40,000 miles an hour,
Of the Galaxy we call the Milky Way.

Our Galaxy itself contains 100 billion stars
It's 100,000 light years side to side,
It bulges in the middle, 16,000 light years thick
But out by us it's just 3,000 light years wide
We're 30,000 light years from galactic central point,
We go round every 200 million years
And our galaxy is only one of millions of billions
In this amazing and expanding Universe.

The Universe itself keeps on expanding and expanding
In all of the directions it can whiz
As fast as it can go, at the speed of light you know
12 million miles a minute, and that's the fastest speed there is
So remember when you're feeling very small and insecure
How amazingly unlikely is your birth
And pray that there's intelligent life somewhere up in space
Because there's bugger all down here on Earth.

* * *

Perhaps the time machine could be used as a kind of reversed microwave-oven. By sending food into space and then returning it to the moment of dematerialization, the food would be efficiently cooled down. Well, perhaps. But I did have a greater vision than that. And I wanted to see for myself.

The moment I activated the controls on my time machine I knew it was going to be the most memorable trip of my life. So I have been to Montreal, Ottawa, London and to the Eastercon in Manchester. I've gone by bicycle from Stockholm to a nice spot in Germany near the border to France and Luxemburg. I've been writing filksongs in Moscow and I've been FGoH in Dortmund. But this was most certainly above everything else I've ever done. As soon as the time machine entered temporal warp I was separated from the usual three-dimensional universe. I could let the machine hover in zero-time in my laboratory and as I slowly moved the lever forward I passed through walls and everything. Passing through obstacles like a ghost. Unseen and unheard - out of time, beneath time.
A few seconds into the future or into the past - and I was already a million miles away from Earth. As long as I had the proper Earth-time-coordinates, I could always return to the laboratory to exactly the same moment that I left it.
Wonderful! However - since I didn't have the proper equipment, I could not observe much while moving through time. A good telescope could of course have been mounted on the machine. I honestly hadn't thought of that. The empty coldness of space soon became boring and I never came anywhere near enough to another solar system, to get anything of interest to look at.

So I went to see my brother, who is a quite skillful engineer, working for Ericsson and asked him about how we could devise a simple robot that would control the movements of the time machine. It had to be a robot or a computer that would recognize an earthlike planet, take the machine out of temporal warp and take atmoshperic readings of the planet and then return the machine to Earth. And it would need to have some kind of a beacon if it returned, since it would be moving through space with the planet it found, and most probably on a different vector than the one we were moving on. This would also mean that it had to take those atmospheric readings within the blink of an eye - or else that machine would be lost to me, unless the planet had exactly the same vector as Earth (which was most unlikely).

Usually my brother needs a lot of time to get anything done, which doesn't concern his own line of work - but in this case he got exceptionally enthused and had our controldroid ready within two weeks. As the base element of this robot, he used old 486 computers that no one would miss anyway, should they happen to get lost in space and time. And it is amazing, the things you can do with a PC when you install Norton Commander. We sent two machines. One that would scan the future and another that would scan the past. And if a planet ever should pass through exactly the same spot in time where Earth was as they left, the machine would return to me with that data. If machine A and B didn't find anything I could launch C, D and E etc, standing ready, because the Earth, the Solar System, the Milky Way and everything was constantly moving and I just had to find any spot where any planet with breathable atmosphere would pass through the Earths space-time-coordinates. I hope that I'm not getting too technical with you.

Needless to say - I lost 26 machines in this experiment and ran out of letters in the alphabet. It is fortunate that I got so generous sponsors for my project, and selling the patent of the inverted microwave to Ericsson did give me a considerable financial push. They never realized what they got, how it worked - but it worked. In my search for a planet I began to feel like the people on the SETI-project. But a couple of weeks ago, A2, my 27th machine returned. It's beacon told me that it had come down somewhere in the Stockholm archipelago. It was retrieved within a couple of days, but sadly enough - it had been ruined by the water. The data was unreadable. Finally it struck me what a fool I had been. Even if the data would have been readable, I could not have gone to that planet, since the Earth already had moved on. What a futile experiment it had been! I was angry with myself for not realizing this in the first place. Now I know why we have never met a time-traveller before.

If I did go myself - and if I did find another planet, which is unlikely (because space is depressingly empty most of the time), then it would most certainly be a one-way ticket. Who would want to go anywhere on such premises? All this work seem to have been good for nothing. Although time-travelling appears to be possible, it also appears to be absolutely useless unless the machine can move and relate to its relative position in space. This seemed to be an impossible task.

But yesterday a Police Box materialized in my laboratory and guess who came to ask me to quit messing with time!

It appears I have overlooked something...

BEST SF-FILM OF THE 1990's

Everyone is a critic! Help me to name the ten best science fiction-films of this decade! Or perhaps we only need nine. I have the feeling that the next installment in the Star Wars-Saga will be one of the ten. Question is how high it will rank, but I don't see much competition during the years 1990-1998. What do we have to choose from? Well... as far as I'm aware of ...the candidates (of which the vast majority are unlikely to get nominated for anything at all) are:

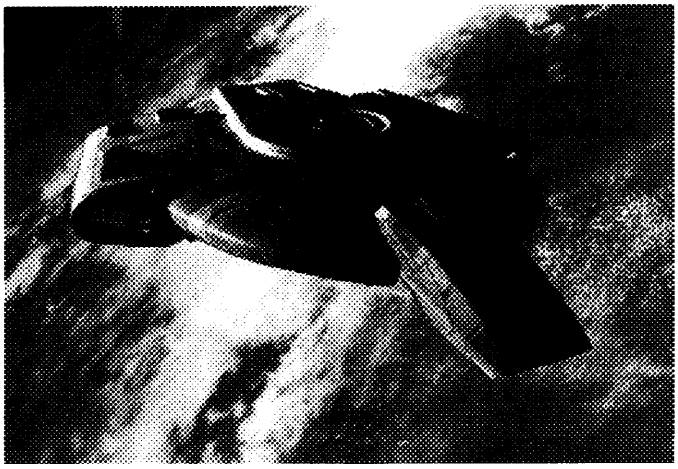
1990: Arena, Back to the Future III, Class of 1999, Dark Angel, Eve of Destruction, Frankenstein Unbound, The Handmaid's Tale, Hardware, Highlander II, Megaville, The Miracle Mile, Moon 44, Predator 2, Robocop 2, Salute of the Jugger, Scanners II: The New Order, Solar Crisis, Spaced Invaders, Total Recall, **1991:** Mutronics: The Movie, Neon City, Scanners III: The Takeover, Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country, Terminator 2: Judgment Day, Tetsuo 2:Body Hammer (Japan), Wedlock, Xtro II, **1992:** Accion Mutante (Spain), Alien 3, Forever Young, Fortress, Freejack, Honey I Blew Up the Kid, Jurassic Park, Lawnmower Man, Memoirs of an Invisible Man, Nemesis, Robocop 3, Universal Soldier, **1993:** Attack of the 50 Foot Woman, Body Snatchers, Demolition Man, The Hidden II, Lifepod, Scanner Cop, **1994:** Highlander 3, Johnny Mnemonic, Puppet Masters, Stargate, Star Trek: Generations, Timecop, **1995:** Invader, Judge Dredd, The Langoliers, Multiplicity, Screamers, Species, 12 Monkeys, Village of the Damned, Virtuosity, Waterworld, White Dwarf, Xtro III, **1996:** The Arrival, Barb Wire, Bombshell, Dr.Who, Escape From L.A, Independence Day, The Island of Dr.Moreau, Mars Attacks!, Star Trek: First Contact, Strange Days, **1997:** Alien 4 : Resurrection, Contact, Event Horizon, The Fifth Element (France), Honey We Shrunk Ourselves, Men in Black, The Postman, Space Truckers, Sphere, Starship Troopers, **1998:** Gattaca, Godzilla, Lost in Space, Species II, Star Trek: Insurrection, Truman Show, **1999:** Star Wars: The Phantom Menace

Did I omit any significant production? I think it is quite a poor selection compared to what the 1980's had to offer. It has been another decade of remakes and sequels. The new and original work has been sfx-blinded. Note also that I don't see asteroids falling on our heads as science fiction. That falls into the category of disaster-movies. Neither Deep Impact, Asteroid or Armageddon would make it into my top ten list anyhow. *When Worlds Collide* said it all back in 1951. Feel free to disagree!

So far I could only decide on six of my top ten... I feel tempted to name Star Trek:First Contact among the top ten, which I see as an indication that it has been a really poor decade (or that my judgment has been seriously clouded). But the 8th Star Trek-installment does have many good moments thanks to Patrick Stewart's and Alice Krige's memorable acting and Jonathan Frakes' competent directing. (I haven't seen the 9th Star Trek film yet). If Star Trek makes it into the top ten of the 1990's - then we might as well throw in Judge Dredd for good measures (a remarkable cartoon-conversion). The 6 that I'm certain about are: 12 Monkeys, Contact, Gattaca - all three have intelligent script and moderate fx, *Best sequel:* Terminator 2:Judgment Day, *Best remake:* Megaville (outdates Alphaville and adds to the substance of the story), *Best experimental:* Bombshell.

You really need to help me with the rest.

A DECADE OF SCI-FI ON TELEVISION



It has been a good decade for sci-fi on television. For the first time since the 60's more sci-fi was produced than ever...

Sci-fi videophiles and sci-fi-mediafans even got their own TV-channel. Because of the Sci-Fi Channel the usage of the abbreviation sci-fi has spread throughout media, much to the dismay of many sf-fans who prefer the abbreviation "sf". But "SF" is also short for Suomi Finland (letters that you will find on every Finnish car) and "Svensk Filmindustri" (or Swedish Film). In Scandinavia the abbreviation SF can easily be confused and mixed up with something else. I really don't care which, but I do recognize that "Sci-Fi" is mostly used in media-context. Let's not upset the sf-fans unnecessarily.

The Sci-Fi Channel has been a goldmine for many collectors of antique sci-fi-shows (such as myself). And the huge numbers of re-runs makes it impossible to "miss" anything that you'd really like to have. I got slightly frustrated when I failed to record Jack Arnold's Tarantula after three transmissions. But I finally got it at the 4th. Hurray! But now the fun appears to be over for Benelux and Scandinavia.

The sci-fi-boom of the 1990's came perhaps mainly because of the unprecedented popularity and ingenuity of Star Trek-The Next Generation. By 1990 ST-TNG went into its third season and soon became the best TV-made sf of all time. Certainly the most popular. Deep Space Nine was launched before Babylon 5, but they both came when sf on TV reached its peak in 1993. There were several attempts of creating other sf-series, none of them closely as successful as the above mentioned. Doorways and Journey to the Center of the Earth (both 1993) - did they ever make it past the pilot episode? VR5 was pure garbage. Excuse me, but I find the pornographic version VR69 vastly superior.

In 1990 six episodes of Space Rangers made it across to the viewers. The show was cancelled although further episodes (so I am told) have been produced - but they were never broad-casted. Why? Jeff Kaake who starred in Space Rangers said in STARLOG; "If Star Trek-TNG is 'classic', then we play Rock'n Roll." Apparently the audience preferred classic.

Harve Bennett really knows how to make it cheap and down-to-earth. The man who gave us the endless bionic shows presented Time Trax to us in 1993. I lost trax of Darien Lambert after the first season. What happened?

Seaquest (1993) had a very promising start, good captains (Roy Scheider and later Michael Ironside) and a lot of good intentions. But it certainly didn't last as long as Voyage to

the Bottom of the Sea. Spielberg's involvment in the series didn't change much. I guess he's not king Midas after all.
Gerry Anderson returned to TV-sf in 1994 with a space-police-story Space Precinct, which I did enjoy a lot. And I think the kids liked it too! Me - I was mostly overthrown by charming actress Simone Bendix and by some really entertaining and unpretentious story-telling. It's a shame they only got to make the first season (24 episodes).



Forget about Gillian Anderson! Danish actress Simone Bendix as Jane Castle in Gerry Anderson's Space Precinct got it all..

Earth 2 (1994-95) had some interesting actors but it soon became boring anyway. It was nice to see Tim Curry in a suiting role again (but he wasn't a regular). Earth 2 seems to have attracted some fans though. Space Above and Beyond came in 1995 - it was war in space. Mainly a yawn, except for the episode "Dear Earth", directed by Winrich Kolbe (1996).
Star Trek - Voyager launched in 1995 and was for the first three years just one Star Trek-series too many. Let me paraphrase Alice Krige, the Borg queen in ST:First Contact: *"They're such noble creatures!"* (Do try to get that tone of voice!) Perhaps Voyager will get an identity of their own... But they're still a long way from home and far from the refreshing innovative spirit of ST-TNG.
Dark Skies (1996) had an entertaining first season. I was so 'impressed' by Jeri Ryan that I almost forgot about Simone Bendix. Gee - now I remember why I enjoy looking at the TV-shows so much...
Outer Limits was an sf-anthology-series in the 60's, which returned in an updated version in 1995. Why not? We got a Twilight Zone-update in the 80's... Among the spin-offs from movies we find Robocop (1994). The series was a lot better than the second sequel. I heard Roland Emmerich and Dean Devlin were upset about Stargate, the tv-series. It will take some time, I guess, before I can have a look at it here in Sweden, so that I can have an opinion of my own.
Did someone say X-files? What's that? Okay - I admit, I'm in the Totally-Hate-X-files-Club (THX-Club). And it is NOT because of Dave Duchovny or Gillian Anderson... I just don't like the thought of putting more crazy ideas into the heads of young and easy-to-influence kids. Some get the misconception that it is science fiction and some additional nutcases are created. And I do like the actor Lance Henriksen, but I just can't enjoy Millennium very much. So I guess it must be a Chris Carter-antipathy. And it just isn't what I consider as sf.
In UK everyone seemed to lament the absence of Dr.Who - so did I. (Some spin-off shows to ease the pain, like Shakedown: The Return of the Sontarans (1994), Auton, P.R.O.B.E and The Stranger.) But Great Britain did have a brilliant mini-series in 1996 with Cold Lazarus. I guess it is alright to call Red Dwarf a mini-series too. Season 3-6 (1990-93) were hilarious. When they returned in 1996 after the long break, the show had lost most of its charme. And I wouldn't blame it on Chloe Annett or on the departure of Chris Barrie. How was the American version? I would like to have a look at it. Speaking of mini-series... Wild Palms which came four years earlier (1992) was also very good. Seems that the concept of mini-series often produces shows worth looking at.

Conclusion: I'd say that this decade has been interesting for videophiles and mediafans. The film-industry has made a leap forward in special effects and taken a step backwards in story-telling. Beyond 2000 I hope that we have oohed and aahed enough over the wonders that can be achieved with a little help of computer technology. Perhaps we're going to see real quality sf some day. Yes, right! I'm dreaming again! We may also amuse ourselves to death...

Gods don't punish evil, they punish ignorance.

(Here I quote myself)

We watched the tragedy unfold. We did as we were told. We bought and sold. It was the greatest show on earth, but then it was over. We oohed and aahed, we drove our racing cars. We ate our last few jars of caviar.
And somewhere out there in the stars, a keen-eyed look-out spied a flickering light. Our last hurrah! And when they found our shadows around the TV sets, they ran down every lead and they repeated every test. They checked out all the data on their lists. And then the alien anthropologists admitted they were still perplexed. But on eliminating every other reason for our sad demise, they logged the only explanation left; "This species has amused itself to death!"

(Roger Waters - Amused to Death, 1992)

So I like Roger's poetry, so what? You should really listen to Amused to Death. And try to catch the lyrics, they're pretty much an accurate analysis of the operation Desert Fox. Except - they were written at least seven years before... (That was during Desert Storm, right!) It doesn't seem to matter how often writers, intellectuals, poets and other peaceloving people doom humanity, protest against war and other bizarre ideas of mankind. The madness goes on. But, hey, *it all makes perfect sense, expressed in dollars, cents, pound, shilling and pence...* It all makes perfect sense.
Somehow it would feel more justified if Saddam would have fought back. This way it appeared more like big bad US-boys and UK-boys were stealing candy-bars from poor little Arab-kids. Smart move to send in the Enterprise, our favourite carrier! It was a sheer joy to hear that the boys finally got to practice on real targets. *Does the recoil remind you of sex?* And in the spirit of present Christmas they decided; "Hey, let's do it a couple of days *before* Ramadan!" How very considerate! I just hope that the Arabs will have the

decensy of dropping the retaliatory bomb on Pentagon the day *before* Christmas Eve. (Apparently it didn't happen.)
Just for the record; "I'm against all kind of war!" But I thought Saddam and Khadaffi were a dying race of madmen. We've seen Idi Amin, Boukassa, Khomeini and Galtieri leave the stage, exchanged for the Spice Girls... and now what?
(CC:s correspondent in Ancient Greece, Sidney W. Hage comment on this: "When Arabs go to war among themselves, they preferably do this during Ramadan." Perhaps they consider it to be a *surprise attack*.)
Saw a picture of Billy Gates and Bill Clinton with the words: "The most powerful man in the world is an American - and his name is William!" I usually grab every opportunity I get to scorn Microsoft... but I have to admit. No Bill, Billy or William has yet done anything that I wouldn't have done... (short of becoming a politician).

1998 - Thank Ghod, it's over!

It didn't look so bad when it began. And the first half year turned out to be one of the best first half years that I ever had. Among the events worth speaking of was SF-Tage in Dortmund and the Eastercon in Manchester. Then I joined two more mail lists, Timebinders and Filk UK. Life was fine and no clouds in the sky. I went to Moscow in June.
The only thing that I had ahead was Trinity - the Eurocon'99 and that was all I needed to worry about (Except for our small relaxacon August 1st-2nd). Then all hell came down over me. At first I didn't notice it...
Timebinders bursted into activity. I expected 300-500 mails to review upon my return from Moscow. Not! It was more like 1300 mails and 4.2 megabyte text. My mailbox was full and mail began bouncing back to the senders. Among the mail was a message from my son (who lives in the south of Sweden), that he wish'd to come and visit me.
The amount of mail distracted me from the real calamity that was heading my way. And I had our relaxacon to think about... Oh yes, and a sudden decision made me change residence at the same time (all this while I was planning to find a job and to move to Moscow).
No wonder that I didn't notice that there was something wrong with my wages from my current employer... First I thought that I was a couple of thousand Swedish Krona short because of my holidays. ...while Russian economy took a dive and plunged into the devils black smear farting hole. (Affecting many of my new found friends over there...)
It took several months to get my wages right... and then the next disaster came. Fortunately, Ipswich Town was doing well, so I didn't go and kill myself right away. But don't ask me how I got the bizarre idea to have only three years left to endure until my final showdown! It's called wishful thinking!
The unwelcomed side-fx were that communication with the Trinity-committee broke down. I'm really sorry about that and I hope that Beluga Post can forgive me. Secondly, my participation in the JUniCon-committee planning has been extremely limited. I'm sorry about that too, but there has not been much damage to it - so I hope to make amends to it soon enough. I'm happy to see that JUniCon is proceeding well anyway. The convention has obviously several engines and engineers. Looking good! Finally - I was hoping to catch up with my mail, which I still haven't. Not nearly to the extent that I wish.
December 18th - Yesterday the final negotiations between the Workers Union and my employer were concluded. The result has not yet been announced... it feels like doomsday. I'm a pessimist, so if the result is negative I will have the satisfaction of knowing that I was right all along. If I was wrong and the outcome is in my favor, then my worrying days are over. The financial situation will be secured and I will have plenty of time to fulfill some of my plans and good intentions. But I just hate it, when I'm right - it would mean that I'll be looking around for other job opportunities *again*. Okay - so I'm not telling you *exactly* what has been going down, but one reason is that I still don't know if I have to praise my boss - or if I wish to roll him in tar and feathers. As far as I know him, he's a coward and will prolong our uncertainty for as long as possible.
December 21st - So I finally got an answer - from the Workers Union. From January 1st in 1999 I will get the money that I asked for. This means a considerable raise and the end to a long struggle. And I will **not** have to look for another job for a while. Phew!

FOOTNOTE

December 24th - Looks like CC will have an equal amount of readers in the US, in Great Britain, Scandinavia, in Germany and in the rest of the world. Nice! But since we already have Ansible (which I strongly recommend to read) we don't need another newszine. Consider this a genzine.

I would really appreciate your Letters of Comment to this fanzine. If nothing else, you can also let me know what happens if you tie a sandwich (with the butter-side up) to the back of a cat and drop the cat from a moderate altitude. Everyone knows that a cat always lands on its feet and that the sandwich always will come down with the buttery side face down. What a delicate dilemma!

B.C.ing U. (again) sooner or later, I hope!

Wolf



I have been a supporter of Ipswich Town for over 20 years now. It will be a project for 1999 to visit Portman Road and see them play.

You get CounterClock because:

- ☐ I really appreciated the fanzine(s) you sent me
- ☐ I hope that you will contribute
- ☐ You have been mentioned, page ___
- ☐ .....told me you'd appreciate a copy
- ☐ This is the best way to annoy you.
- ☐ You deserve it!
- ☐ .....

COUNTERCLOCK

ISSUE 2 FEBRUARY 1999

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INTRODUCTION

Hopefully the second issue of CounterClock is an improvement on the first. Getting started is the main problem, but now that the zine has been launched, I hope to be learning quickly and to get sufficient feedback from readers to feel this is worthwhile. My aim is to make a better, more interesting fanzine with every issue. I hope that you enjoy reading it at least half as much as I enjoy writing it.

January 1st, beginning to work on Issue 2. Got out of bed at 05:00 a.m. Involuntarily - because Traffic Control was fresh out of dispatchers, so I had to get dressed and rush to work. However, now that the question of my salary has been solved it means lots of extra cash for emergency dispatches such as this. Secondly - since January 1st is a holiday, not much will be going on at work and I can spend most of the time writing notes for this issue. Great! Fortune smiles at me today!

I'm looking at the numbers. I can see them, I can read them but it still is a lot like science fiction to me. Since yesterday and for three years to come, we will be living in the years that I've been reading about, years that have been science fiction to me, years that were so distant while 1984 still was many years ahead of me.

The first Perry Rhodan-novel was written in 1961. Scheer & Ernsting predicted a moon-landing for 1971. Reality came ahead fiction in this case, but it's ancient history now that we catch up with Moonbase Alpha. So we don't have a base on the moon. So what? We don't need a base on the moon. And why is that? Because there is no profit in it.

Today is Space 1999 - the sequel... now we finally find out what happened meanwhile on Earth. In the series, the moon has gone out of orbit and was travelling the galaxy (I can't see the moon anyway, because of the clouded sky). And we're back here on Earth... with our computers, mobile telephones, microwaves, DVD, CD, flat screen colour plasma TV, THX, great SFX, multiple Star Treks, clones, AI and fashion.

Next year will be even more the future and the science fiction that I have been looking forward to spend a part of my life in. 25-30 years ago I expected the Earth more or less to be covered by one big Mega-City, I thought we would be able to book a tourist-flight to Mars. Stuff like that. I never really did expect WW III to come along and wipe everything out. And I am convinced the world will not come to an end in the year 2000. No matter what the prophets say, and in the year 2001, we can look back at the Space Odyssey and compare notes with Clarke and Kubrick.

Janne Johansson at *it.kth.se* has noted my dislike for the X-files and suggested the following slogan to this fanzine:

"Read CounterClock - The Truth is in There!" *Somewhere...*

Knocking the Big Bang Theory

(...and other modern mythology) The magazine SCIENCE announced recently, that the most important discovery of 1998 was the fact that the rate with which the Universe was expanding did accelerate. The third most important discovery was that neutrinos infact have mass. I think that this "lesser discovery" in time will have a much greater impact. I believe it is time for an overhaul on the latest redshift-survey. Perhaps the Universe is not expanding after all.

I could never make Big Bang fit into what I sense to be the ultimate truth about the structure of our universe. Somehow the idea that everything began with fireworks doesn't appeal.

Now we know that the neutrino does have a mass. As soon as astronomers who observe the redshift on galaxies, nebula and clusters outside or local cluster take this fact into account, they will have to recalculate. Even if this mass is negligible within our galaxy, it will make a difference over billions of lightyears. Nobody appears to have made a connection between these two discoveries yet. Just wait. They will. There may still be a renaissance for the ideas of Fred Hoyle. He had this rather unique theory of "tired light". Because the light had to cover vast distances, perhaps it could get tired on its way? Now that we know the neutrinos have mass, the idea doesn't seem so far-fetched anymore. Neutrinos can exhaust the Photons, if they have to travel for billions of lightyears. And that could well account for a lot of the discrepancies in the redshift. This idea was voiced by a Swedish amateur astronomer, Hans Vinberg, long before the discovery was made, that neutrinos do have a mass.

The background-radiation was once considered to be a piece of evidence proving the BB theory. But the background-radiation did not behave the way scientists expected. So instead it became yet another confusing fact that doesn't fit into the picture of a BB. The Big Bang Theory should have been replaced years ago.

If we in the spirit of ol' Aristotle assume for a while that our universe doesn't expand. What does it to the image we have created of it? If there is no beginning and no end. If it always has been there and always will be there. I see the Universe as an Eternal Ocean in which matter is born in the form of hydrogen atoms in the vast empty void between galaxies. They get caught by the gravitational pull of a galaxy and adds to its substance. That's how new stars can appear at the rim of the galaxy (such a birth has been observed, but it could not be explained). Eventually there will be a really big black hole created at the center of the galaxy and it will consume all matter in its vicinity. Now we only need to answer one more question. How does energy escape or *evaporate* from the black hole and get thrown back into the void of the Eternal Ocean? Could we be getting back to the belief of a creator? Is a creator necessary? Is it necessary to have an answer or an explanation to every question? If so - why? Some questions don't need to be answered. The only reason that we state those questions is - that they are grammatically possible.

Creation or evolution - or both? Or neither? Of course we'd like to know and do our best to believe. But the vast majority accepts any credible explanation and is unwilling to keep an open mind for alternatives. Why is that? The theory of creation is no longer popular in mundane beliefs. Evolution is now the popular theory to believe in. People like to keep it simple - and simple it surely is, because there is obviously a *force of harmony* in the universe. Star Wars-enthusiasts are

encouraged to *feel the force* and and to *let the force be with us*. And next a *force particle* will be created...

When we point our telescopes towards the stars and have a good look at the universe, we will practically see a still (photograph) of eternity. We have a good theory of what it looks like in motion. But we can't witness the complete birth of a star and its planets and moons and we can't become witness to the evolution on another planet. And until *Project Planetfinder* has reached an advanced stage, we won't be able to see planets in other star systems. The chance of running into other alien life form is even less.
We can always hope for an *Alien Encounter*, but I wouldn't want to bet on it. Certainly, there must be life out there, somewhere. Sadly, however, we will not encounter them in our lifetime. And not our children either. Sorry, guys! I put my money on the statement that we are all alone in the night (in this sector). And I believe that we have to be content with it. I wonder what the general opinion is among my readers.

Male Earthling of 39 solar rotations seeking penpal, preferably within local galactic sector. Answer to: **CoClo02-01**

Another Wild Idea?

While science fiction-fans speculate in a fifth and sixth dimension, Richard Borcherds at the University of Cambridge has earned the highest honor in mathematics by pondering on one of the most complex objects known to mathematics and has discovered spooky connections to the smallest objects imagined by physics. You'll find an article on this in Scientific American, Nov '98. Here we have to deal with 26 dimensions. And the most remarkable thing about this mathematical monster that Borcherd explores is the fact that the coefficients of a very useful tool in maths and physics, the *j* function, are simple sums that match the list of dimensions in which this monster, called *moonshine,* lives.
I will try not to bore you with mathematics more than necessary. I'm not very good at mathematics anyway. But the *Monster simple group* is the largest sporadic finite, simple group known to exist. It represents the symmetries of something, that no one has a clue of yet. This concept may be something a sf-writer could easily get carried away with. In particular someone who supports the *String Theory*. This String Theory appears to be completely explored and only works in a mathematical universe... as far as we can see. 'Now what the blazes is this String Theory?' you might ask. As far as I can grasp it under my limited horizon, it's a theory that likes to reduce the smallest particles to one-dimensional strings. The intersection of the strings, would make their... macrostructure (does this word compute?) three-dimesional. Neat idea - except that it doesn't seem to work on reality. But the Monster simple group itself is something I would like to explore. Somehow it will be woven into the *CounterClock Chainstory*...but it will take a lot of thought...

There are a lot of neat ideas in my head that doesn't seem to work in reality. I noticed this quite recently again, when I came into a discotheque. The music there (at least I think it was supposed to be music) was absolutely awful. So I slipped a note to the DJ and asked him if he could play *Hotstepper* or *Gangsta's Paradies* or suchlike (proud with myself that I could remember any name of a song from the 90's). He shook his head. 'Well, do you have anything that *isn't Techno*?' , because that was what I assumed that he had been playing.
He looked very surprised: 'I haven't been playing any Techno this evening. This is called *Euro-disco!*'
That was when I realized that I'm a complete f---king dinosaur and ought to stay away from these kind of establishments. When you even can't tell the difference between *music styles*. Apart from that... I met a nice French couple, Olivier and Orion (I'm sure I'm spelling her name wrong - but *it did sound like* Orion) and added them to the number of CC-readers. All in all, the discotheque was an excellent exercise in reminding me about the distance between my perception of reality and reality itself. I tend to forget, because I'm in full control of my day-to-day routines. So if reality works for me Monday to Friday, Saturday and Sunday - there appears to be no point in doubting that perception. But once I get outside my usual surroundings and deal with people that I usually avoid - suddenly this *effect* throws me out of Orbit. Try it! There are people who bluntly defy logic. It is fascinating!

Now the sequel to **Rebuilding the Time Machine**, and a tale that has turned into a CounterClock Chainstory.

Teleporting Without Tutorial

Having only limited success with time travels - and strongly being advised against it by the Doctor, I traded Wells' original blueprints for the Time Machine and got myself a pair of Teleport Pods, initially designed by George Langelaan and the first working pair constructed by Seth Brundle (who by mishap perished with his experiment). They were delivered into my laboratory with some difficulty. I had to enlarge the door opening and to install a massive garage door.

I wish it could have been so easy to just "beam them in", but I'm afraid these pods were not quite that advanced.
Compared to Star Trek-transporters, which I have to dismiss as pure fiction, these teleport pods were the dinosaurs of teletransportation. But in comparison to other technology of 1999, they were of course highly sophisticated.
You should be aware of, that conquering space and to become a master of matter-transmission can infact be almost as exhilarating as conquering time. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. We will take this one step at the time. First I had to reassemble the components, which was an exhausting task all by itself. There were loads and loads of wires to connect from the pod to the computer and from computer to pods, pods to generator and computer to other accessories, like keyboard, mouse, scanner, coffee-machine and joypad. Then I had to install the Teleport Pod Program, which was another two hours of work. Huge program! The task was not made any easier by the fact that the manual to the Telepod System was missing. All I can say is that I am quite handy with all technical stuff. If you have read my report on "the Rebuilding of the Time Machine", you can imagine that the Telepods were no more intricate. It cost a lot of working hours, sweat and tears, and a bruise to the big toe on my left foot, but by next morning the pods were humming like little kittens. Getting the final go on all systems I successfully teleported the first object. My wallet. The computer analyzed its texture, composition, fabrication and contents before it delivered the wallet intact into the receiving pod.

They were noisy contraptions, but working just fine! I was amazed. When I looked through the contents of my wallet I found twenty Swedish Krona missing and instead an additional receipt or ticket saying "Thank you, for using Telepod Transport - We hope you had a pleasant journey!"
It must be some kind of bizarre joke by the designer, or by Seth Brundle (who seemed to have had a strange sense of humour, from all that I've heard about him).

I considered my next move thoroughly over a cup of coffee. Since all that was being transfered from one pod to the other had to be pure energy and since the computer was in total control of the rematerialization-process (having a complete matrix for the transported object) and since all that actually was needed, once the computer knew what to reproduce, was energy - I gathered If I added pure energy in one end - the result would be a second wallet in the other. An intriguing thought. I had to try it.
While my stereo blurted out *Thunderstruck* by AC/DC, I doubled the generator output and instructed the computer to reproduce my wallet in the second pod. And it worked!
The second version of my wallet had all the receipts, credit-cards and small change of the first, but no paper money at all. Instead there was a yet another receipt with the words; "It is illegal to use counterfeit - your cash has been confiscated! Thank you for using the Telepod Transport Duplication Option. We hope you'll be able to pay the electricity bill!"
I just hate it when machines are trying to get smart with me. Obviously there was an illwilling bug somewhere in the system.
Who needs money? I could still duplicate food and other necessities. During my experiments with time I used vegetables... this time I would be more daring. I initialized the teleport sequence and placed a fruit basket in one of the pods. The door to the pod was heavy and I had to lean against it while closing it.
I felt a gush of adrenalin when I noticed that the front of my pants got stuck in the door to the pod. The teleport sequence was imminent, the generator was powering up and in the background I could hear Alanis Morissette sing: "*It's like rain on your wedding day. It's a free ride, when you already paid...* " Isn't it ironic, don't you think?
Well, I can tell you one thing. It was *NOT FUNNY!* The door to the pod didn't open until the teleport sequence was over.
The zippers to my pants had disappeared and some of the surrounding fabric with it. One could clearly make out the colour of my underwear. Something had gone terribly wrong. What does happen if you mix fruit and pants at the genetic level? I was afraid to look into the other pod.
I decided to wait until I had changed pants, before I opened the other pod to see the result. Passing the computer I caught a glimpse of the unsettling words blinking on the screen:
"Teleport sequence complete!"

There was no need for apprehension. In the end the experiment didn't turn out so bad after all. The fruit basket still looked very much the same - but the bananas had zippers on them and peaches were dressed in jeans.
I guess it is better to be caught with an open fly than to be caught in the teleport pod with a fly.

Next step would be to experiment with a human subject. But where would I find volunteers? And who would be careless enough to step into the pod? There were no politicians around... and I was fresh out of innocent little sisters and my mother-in-law was unavailable. Besides, she was already being experimented on. Perhaps I could lure in some poor sod from the street. Anyone would do! I decided to go for lunch.
That day no one crossed my path who seemed to be a valid target for teleportation. I considered to ask Janne Johansson or Ahrvid Engholm, but they would undoubtedly ask me a number of difficult questions before they would join me in this venture. In the afternoon I went down to the local pub, to look for someone drunk enough to volunteer. Devious, am I not? However... It didn't quite turn out the way I had expected. I got drunk and finally decided to teleport myself.

Back home in my laboratory I was humming Thunderstruck again while I initiated the teleport sequence and stumbled half dancing into the transmitting pod. I was certainly in the best of moods. "Tick, tick, tick...." the almost silent countdown was all I could hear inside the pod. There was a flash of light and the next thing I noticed was that I was sitting on a fruit basket with squashed jeans-peaches in it.
Another thing that was striking me as odd was the fact that my mind suddenly seemed to be in perfect working condition. There was a huge bottle of beer standing next to the fruit basket and there was a note attached to it with the words; "Alcohol and teleporting doesn't mix! Do not teleport again, while drunk! Thank you for using Telepod Transport - we hope you had a pleasant journey!"

Obviously the telepods have already been tested thoroughly and got several safety-routines installed. The alcohol was separated from my bloodstream, restored to its state of beer and had conveniently been bottled for reconsumption. Neat!
Upon viewing all the files stored in the computer I finally found the manual to the Telepods and produced a copy of it. There was a vast selection of items that have been transported with the telepods already. There were things that I even wouldn't have come to think of myself, such as very elaborate contraptions to get intimate with and for releasing erotic tensions. There was also a broad variety of litterature, recipes for creating the "Freak Show of the Century" and a Tourist Guide with excellent suggestions on where to send the second pod. Most of these suggestions were not suitable for Sweden, since expenses for postage and packing are astronomical in this country for an object the size of these telepods. I might as well buy a ticket, if I don't intend to visit the same place twice.

The Telepod Transport System appears to be completely safe. So far I have had only pleasant experiences with this system and I can recommend it. With some extra energy expenditure, it can also be used for duplication of various items. This report on the Telepod Transport and Duplication System (TTDS), for instance, and the February issue of CounterClock has been produced with it. Now that's what I would call an Enchanted Duplicator! (*Enchanted Replicator* may be more fashionable)
Some critics voiced their concern that the TTDS could be used to duplicate human beings. What's the big news? We've been able to do that since 1993, since the first human embryo was cloned. No need to worry about that now. It's too late!
My next idea was to send one of the pods to London, so that I would be able to attend the monthly gatherings of science fiction-fans at their Thursday pubmeeting. And secondly there's all the filkers getting together monthly on the last

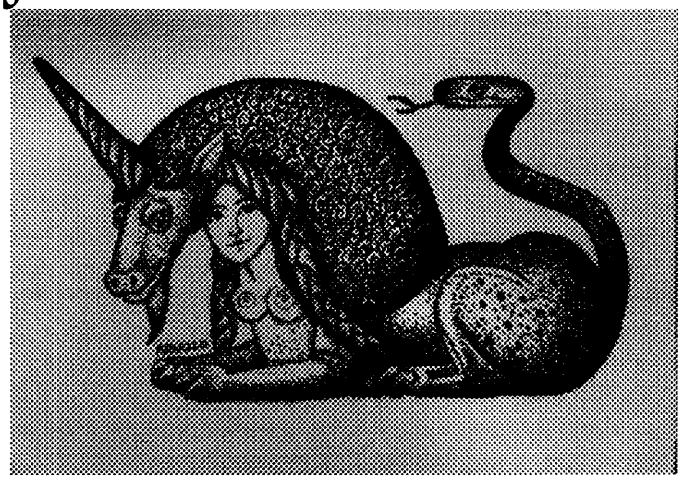
Friday. I would not want to miss either one of these events. So, if you should happen to get this fanzine from me personally, while I'm in London, then you should now have an inkling of the true nature of my mission.

To be continued next issue...

Part 3: "Incredible Inventors Convention"

...which is not the same as:

JUniCon 18-20/6 -1999



The Convention is also the BaltCon of '99. Among the guests we find sf-writer **Bertil Mårtensson** and the appreciated Swedish artist of sf, fantasy and horror **Hans Arnold** (a sample of his artwork above). Our FGoH will be: **Martin Easterbrook.**

In Nacka Conference Center outside Stockholm we launch a convention done by 2 experienced teams that should be able to guarantee a smoothly running con. Members of SFSF (Stockholm) and SIGMA TC (Saltsjöbaden). Details about the program in English will eventually be accessible at our website: **http://www.sigmatc.a.se/junicon**

Attending membership is approx. 18 ½ GBP (250 SEK) until May 30th 1999 or 22 GBP (300 SEK) at the door.

The Committee: Jan Alroth, Åsa Anderbalk, George Bobjörk, Tomas Cronholm, Carolina Gomez-Lagerlöf, Janne Johansson, Eva Norman, Monica Ringheim, Lars-Olov Strandberg, W.von Witting, C-M Zetterling.

Scanning for Distribution Nodes

Eventually it will become too expensive to mail CC to every individual from Sweden. Postage expenses could well become the death of me. I'm therefore on the look-out for agents in the UK and in North America. I'm quite certain that postage expenses can be reduced considerably if each issue is distributed by an agent within your country. Is there anyone out there, who feels up to it? What is the cost for postage within North America? Right now, I'm particularly interested in a Transatlantic agent. But I guess that I soon will be needing a German agent as well. If I'm right, this issue will first be presented at the Thursday pubmeeting in London in February. By then I already hope to have an agent in England.

Married man seeking married woman. Object adultery. Answer with photo to: **CoClo02-02**

Here's the only limerick I've successfully memorized:

The Enterprise girls, so one hears
Chased Spock for several years
His look of disdain
Has spared them great pain
'Cause his prick is as sharp as his ears.

FOOTNOTE

January 4th - most of this issue was written early in January - about the time when the first Issue was distributed. I don't expect many reactions to drop in before the second issue has to be ready. I intend to distribute the second issue from London and near the end of January I don't expect to find as much time for writing. So a "Letters of Comment Column" will be added in future and perhaps a debate on longevity or cosmology may come about. I don't know - I'm trying to keep an open mind and will se where it takes me.

January 7th - Wahoo! Discovered what a kick it is to ride a bicycle to work early in the morning - through the snow, with slush and ice under it. One has to be on his toes all the way, have a firm grip of the steering and be ready for surprises! We get moderate with snow here though. I guess it is less fun in the Chicago-area right now.

I hope you'll all make it through the winter without suffering. I like snow, I like rain, I like sunshine... Not too much of either sort though.

January 11th - I did a lot of rewriting, reediting and spell-checking on the first issue of CounterClock. However, it did not prevent mistakes from slipping through. On page 2, first column, line 3 - it should read SFT-10 NRW and not SFT-9. I don't know where my mind was when I wrote that. Perhaps I was still somewhere in the 18th century.

January 14th - Got my reservation for the trip to London today and am now looking forward to get there. It has been two years since my first trip, and there has been a remarkable developement in between.

B.C.ing U. sooner or later, I hope!

Wolf



The CounterClock Editor perceived by Stefan Kayat

You get CounterClock because:

- ☐ I really appreciated the fanzine(s) you sent me
- ☐ I hope that you will contribute
- ☐ You have been mentioned, page ___
- ☐ .....told me you'd appreciate a copy
- ☐ This is the best way to annoy you.
- ☐ You deserve it!
- ☐ .....

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