



Tarriel Cell

The Newsletter of the Organized Response to Avon's Call

Volume 2, Issue 4

August 1989

Avon: Loner or Lunatic?

Was Avon really crazy when he pulled the trigger?

By Pat Elrod

I got a letter today from a fledgling *Blake's 7* fan who states: "From what I've heard of the fourth season, it doesn't seem to have much to recommend it. Watching Avon go crazy has not ranked high on my list of things to do." Okay, I can agree to a point — the last season did have some howlers — but it also had some of the most unforgettable episodes as well, and discussions of Avon's insanity still fills reams of paper in fanzines and newsletters.

"Avon was crazy, going insane, is a psycho." You name it, such summations are merely convenient labels that hardly explain the complexities of the changes of his character. Terry Nation holds that he was simply stressed out, and I agree.

The fourth season really begins with *Terminal*. As far as he knows Blake is dead and he certainly knows the destruction of the *Liberator* is a direct result of his actions. He has lost a major round to Servalan, which alone is enough to make anyone nervy, and within the space of a few hours Cally is also dead. She was a stabilizing influence, not just for Avon but for the rest of the crew, their conscience if you will. Whether he showed it or not, her death certainly had to be an especially harsh blow in a long series of disasters.

Then comes *Rescue* with Dorian's pet monster. Let's not overlook the importance of this episode to Avon's psyche. Here is the man who totally eschews sentiment, demands privacy and actively keeps people at a distance. In those final moments as the *gestalt* is forming, all of Avon's most important barriers are being ripped away and his precious self-identity is merging with the others. Though he held out the longest (Vila gave the gun to him, not Tarrant), would any of us have been left unphased after such an experience?

I believe this was the turning point for the character, and if not the true beginning of his breakdown, certainly a major contributing factor to the process. After *Rescue* he subtly and not so subtly isolated himself from the others. The crumbling of his protective internal walls shook him badly; his defense was to build back up again stronger than ever, and to emotionally distance himself from people. In light of this, his actions in *Star Drive* and *Headhunter* are more easily understood.

The most visible signs of trouble came in the last two minutes of *Gold*. Once again he'd risked everything in a scheme to get some kind of security, only to lose it all to Servalan and bad luck. His laughter is chilling, of course, but one may also liken it to the last straw cracking the camel's back.

Then came *Orbit*. The freeing calm taking over Avon's face in the last few minutes was utterly electrifying. What had been an interesting space opera had changed into something far more important and devastating, at least for me. Avon was stepping

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Sheelagh Wells Video In Works

Makeup tape set for late '89 or early '90

Makeup designer Sheelagh Wells recently announced plans for a proposed fantasy-science fiction makeup video for possible release in late 1989 or early 1990.

The video would demonstrate various makeup techniques using characters from series such as *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who* and *Star Trek*, as well as new characters created especially for the video.

Fans of British television will recognize Wells' work from the numerous BBC series she has worked on, such as *Blake's*

7, *Miss Marple*, *EastEnders* and *The Hot Shoe Show*. She has also been a mainstay of American science fiction conventions over the last few years (including *Necronomicon in Tampa October 20-22 — Ed.*). The video is an extension of her appearances at these conventions, combining Wells' love of teaching with her expertise in fantasy makeup.

Anyone interested in receiving further news on the video is invited to contact *Space Rat Press, 10 Hall Court, Park Ridge NJ 07656*. Suggestions for the video regarding format, subject matter and so forth, are also being solicited through the above address.

The Prodigal Returns, and Wonders Why He Did

By Eumenidis

I've been away from fandom a very long time, and in the year since I joined ORAC I haven't been very active, partially because of undependable transportation, but mostly because what I heard from active friends and acquaintances and read in the newsletter and zines didn't inspire me.

The last time I was a fan was in the late '60s, when everyone was taking sides on their pet issues; I've seen my share of spite and malice, personal self-aggrandizement, emotional immaturity, delusions of grandeur, pettiness, factionalism, and I've seen supposed allies literally come to blows over trivia. But I have never seen such general or extreme bad manners than since I returned to fandom — and I say that who am not exactly the Minister of Protocol.

I don't know all the details of the controversies currently swirling around in fandom, and quite frankly, I don't care. There are obviously some valid issues involved, but as far as I can see, they're not being addressed; the real reasons for the foofaraw are lack of perspective, fragile, bloated egos, narrowness of mind, meanness of spirit, intolerance, disrespect for and

indifference to the feelings of others, spitefulness, and such dazzlingly bad manners. Fandom makes the Dallas City Council look like the paragon of politesse.

I've twice mentioned the manners, or rather the lack thereof, in fandom. Now I'll make my point, which is that much of the difficulties in fandom could be reduced or avoided entirely if fans would practice some very basic courtesies. For instance: not calling other fans names, thinking before you speak, not carrying tales, not interrupting other fans during meetings, and when you disagree with another fan, discussing the issue, not the other fan's character, intelligence or habits. It's not necessary to give a damn about the other person; it's highly probable he doesn't give a damn about you, either. But when you have a common goal with someone you loathe the sight of, such as organizing a con, publishing a newsletter or zine, or getting *Blake's 7* back on the air, it is necessary to avoid hurting your adversary's feelings in order to avoid spending your time and his in retaliatory games against each other; it might be enjoyable for the two of you, perhaps even for the spectators, but it won't get *Blake's 7* back on the air.

If we all made an effort to practice only slightly better manners we would have more time and energy to spend on our goals, and might increase our chances of achieving them.*

Blake's Back, In A Big Way

*KERA to air six episodes during August drive;
ORAC to add \$100 to members' total contributions*

By Joe Isham

Blake's 7 returns to the Dallas/Fort Worth airwaves in August with the first seven episodes of the series to be aired during KERA's August pledge drive.

The first two episodes of the series, *The Way Back* and *Space Fall*, air August 4 at 11:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m. These episodes will not be pledged.

Episodes three and four, *Cygnus Alpha* and *Time Squad*, will air August 11 at 11:10 p.m. and 12:15 a.m. Episodes five and six, *The Web* and *Seek-Locate-Destroy*, will air August 18 at 11:40 p.m. and 12:45 a.m.

ORAC volunteers will be needed at Channel 13 those nights and Saturday nights, August 5 and 12, for *Doctor Who* pledge nights. To volunteer, sign up at an ORAC meeting or contact Sandy Williams at 214-521-7017 or Mark and Pat Elrod at 817-737-0774.

Blake's 7 will resume its normal weekly time slot Friday, August 25, at 11 p.m.

Other PBS stations adding *Blake's 7* to their schedules include WHA Madison WI and KPBS San Diego. KPBS' airing of the series is partially underwritten by the San Diego *Blake's 7* club, Blake's Revels.

A collection will be taken from ORAC members working the pledge drive each of the four scheduled nights; this collection will go toward renewing ORAC's membership in KERA. The club joined the station during last August pledge drive with a donation of \$155.

ORAC members voted July 9 to add \$100 from the club treasury to the amount donated by club members working the four pledge nights. A check will be presented to KERA during a pledge break on August 18.*

ORAC (*Organized Response to Avon's Call*) is a *Blake's 7* fan organization based in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Annual membership dues are \$10 which entitles you to a membership card, access to ORAC functions and a year's worth of *Tarriel Cell*.

Officers: (well, at least the outgoing set) *President*, Sandy Williams, 214-521-7017. *Vice President*, Joe Isham, 214-231-7064. *Secretary*, Kathy Pryor, 214-255-2364. *Treasurer*, Jean Lusky, 214-596-1572. *Archivist*, Teri Casillas, 214-790-0394. *Peacekeeper*, Mark Elrod, 817-737-4778.

Newsletter contributions may be sent to the address below, or via modem (write for details).

Editor: Joe Isham. Production Assistant: Mary Brooks.

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Avon: Loner or Lunatic?...

into the darkness, but from his point of view all his actions were logical and necessary for his survival. He's not totally gone, though; as soon as he'd reasoned things out about the plastic block, he'd seized it as the solution. If he'd gone totally 'round the bend he might have continued to look for Vila, who obviously weighed less than the block and once dead would have been easier to manhandle out the door.

And now I come to *Blake* and its famous or infamous ending. By now most fans are convinced of Avon's madness, but for some reason, the others are still with him. Is it out of habit, or is the hazard pay too good to resist? Questions of loyalty and friendship aside, perhaps they knew they had a better chance with Avon (and Orac) than without him. They were willing to trust this so-called "psycho" one more time. By questioning Avon's sanity, one may as well question the judgment and intelligence of this group of people with their highly developed instincts for survival.

We all like to think he might have behaved differently if he'd had more time to consider, or decided not to listen to Tarrant, or if Blake had given him a straight answer. The ending would not have been half as effective or powerful then, nor inspired

so much controversy and feeling.

Avon had been put through the wringer physically and emotionally. He went through a number of harrowing situations in a very short span of time with hardly a breather. How many of us have had similar phases of failure and frustration? You want to escape, if only for a moment, but cannot; circumstances demand you continue and problems pile up one on the other until it's like trying to shovel water with a pitchfork. Thinking becomes too much of a chore and you make illogical, even self-destructive decisions in an effort to maintain some illusion of control. Does this mean you've gone psychotic, or are you just stressed out and in need of a break? Avon never had that luxury. The many dangerous and far too recent situations he'd been involved in had geared his expectations for failure.

Was he really crazy when he pulled the trigger? I don't believe so. We've all had lapses in judgment; we're all capable of mistakes. Considering the hard knocks of his past, those three final shots were inevitable — his last act, striking back at a universe beyond his control.

The smile we see with its implicit irony is the smile of a man who finally understands it all. •

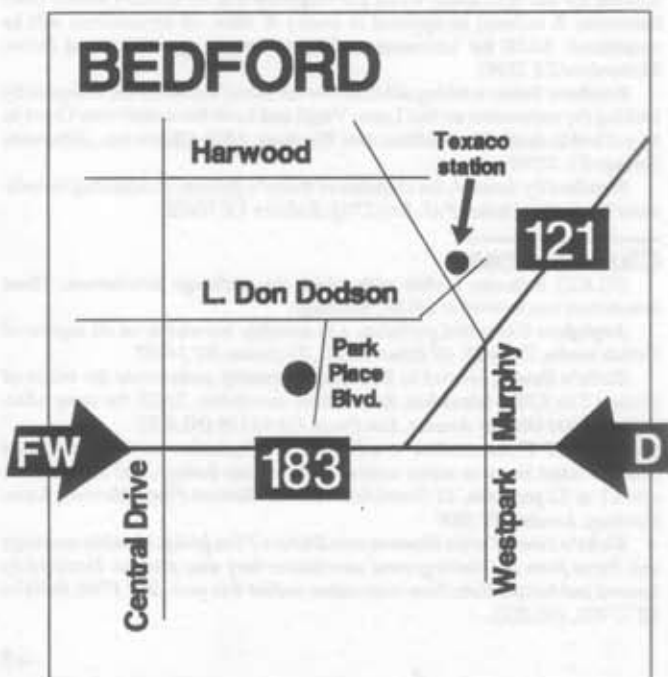
Forward Scan

August 18

KERA pledge drive. See page 2 for details.

September 10

ORAC meeting at Claridge House Apartments, 2001 Park Place Blvd. in Bedford, 6:30. See the map below.



September 15

Deadline for submissions for the next issue of *Tarriel Cell*.

October 8

ORAC meeting at Alamo Cafe, 10819 Composite Drive at the end of Restaurant Row in Dallas, 6:30. See the map below.



Peripherals

Fanzines: Available

Avon On-Line (B7). Issue 1 \$7.75. Issue 2 \$10. *Blake's Barf Bag Zine* also available; SASE for pricing. (Checks to P.N. Elrod) *Avon On-Line*, 4800 Kilpatrick Avenue, Fort Worth TX 76107

Bizarro Zine (B7). Issue 2 \$12. (note new address) Leah Rosenthal, 1402 Allison Ave., Altamonte Springs FL 32701

Blake Bunch (B7). \$10. Inverted A, 401 Forrest Hill, Grand Prairie TX 75051

Brother of Shadows... and Son of the Light (B7 novel). \$25. (Checks to Joy Harrison) *Osiris Publications*, 8928 N. Olcott Ave., Morton Grove IL 60053

Crossed Computers On Line (DW). Clubzine of Rochester United Whovians. \$12. (Checks to E. Michael Whitmore) *Ed Ventures, Ink.*, 294 Milford St. #25, Rochester NY 14615

Eleventh Sector (B7). Issue 2 \$7. Inquire as to availability of issue 1. (Checks to Diana Dougherty) *Permanent Press, P.O. Box 2245, Los Gatos CA 95051*

Fear (B7). Third season novel. \$10. *Teddy Bear Press*, 216 Witherspoon St., Princeton NJ 08542

Gambit 4 (B7). \$15. *Jean Graham, Peacock Press*, 5417 Streamview Dr., San Diego CA 92105

Gateway to Time (DW/B7). Issue #5 now available; SASE for info. P.O. Box 733, St. Louis MO 63188

Inverted Blake (B7). \$10. Inverted A, 401 Forrest Hill, Grand Prairie TX 75051

Longbow (ROS). Issue 1 \$12.50. Issue 2 \$18. Issue 3 \$18. (Checks to Sue Rutherford) *Celtic Hart Press*, 2611 Rockbrook Drive, Plano TX 75074

Mirage (B7). \$10. *Jean Graham*, 5417 Streamview Drive, San Diego CA 92105

Monkeefilks (DW/B7). \$3. (Checks to Renae Ransdorf) 6530 Rowan, Houston TX 77074

Mosaic (multimedia genzine). C\$5 + postage. *Madona Skaff*, 2105 Thistle Crescent, Ottawa ON K1H 5P4

Our Favorite Things (multimedia). SASE for availability of issue #2. Issue #3 \$9.15. Issue 4 \$9.65. *Elan Press, P.O. Box 615, Macedon NY 14502*

Plain Man's Guide to Alien Invasions (B7). Clubzine of Liberation. \$12. P.O. Box 06491, Chicago IL 60606

Portals (multimedia). Issue 4 \$4.50. Issue 5 \$6. Issue 6 \$8. Accepting submissions for issue 7. *MaryAnn Johanson*, 623 Old Town Road, Port Jefferson Station NY 11776

Possible Impossibilities (general). \$3 per issue or \$10 per year. *Privateer Publishing*, 7735 Osceola St., Westminster CO 80030

Potpourri (multimedia letterzine). Issues 1 and 2 \$1.90. Issue 3 \$2.65. Also accepting submissions for future issues. *G.M. Fields*, 5959 Bissonet #36, Houston TX 77081

Probability Square (B7). \$15. *Laura Virgil, Gambit Press*, 2207 Gaylord Drive, Dallas TX 75227

Resources (B7). \$8. *Aino, P.O. Box 2055, Colorado Springs CO 80901*

Restal's Rules of Order (B7). Coloring book (1) with 58 pictures by 10 different artists. Crayons not included. \$3. (Checks to Helen Woolverton) *Two Renegade Rocks from Princeton*, 38 Montague Ave., Trenton NJ 08628

Ring of Deceit (ST). \$7. *Empire Books, P.O. Box 625, Murray KY 42071*

Songs of the Seven (B7 filk). Issue 1 \$6. Reservations for issue 2 \$2 + SASE. (Checks to Adrian Morgan) *Xenon Press*, 530 W. Aldine #304, Chicago IL 60657

Southern Seven (B7). Limited reprint of issue 1 \$18. Issue 3 \$19. Issue 4 \$21. Reservations for issue 5 \$5 + SASE. *Ann Wortham*, 1402 Allison Ave., Altamonte Springs FL 32701

Standard by Several (B7). Clubzine of Blake's Several. Issue 1 \$5.50. Issue 2 \$7. Soliciting submissions for issue #3. *Blake's Several, P.O. Box 1766, Bellaire TX 77402*

Syzygy IV (multimedia). Clubzine of S.T.A.R. San Diego. \$11. *Pearl Sticker*, 4604 Glacier Ave., San Diego CA 92120

The Seven Live On (B7). Issues 1 and 2 \$15 each. Seeking submissions for issue 3. *Bearly Spaced Press*, 24 Cynthia Road, Seekonk MA 02771

Time Remembered (B7/DW). \$12. *Renee L. Grove, P.O. Box 694, Norcross GA 30091*

Time Winds (DW). Issue 18 \$12. Issue 20 \$15. SASE for information on issue 19 reprint. (Checks to Susan M. Garrett) *142 Sunvalley Drive, Toms River NJ 08753*

Trust, Like The Soul (B7). \$6. *Empire Books, P.O. Box 625, Murray KY 42071*

Voices from the Present (B7). Issue 1 \$5. Information on issue 2 SASE. *Patricia Russo*, 341 73rd Street, North Bergen NJ 07047

Audio and Video Tapes

Rebellion Convention: Federation Follies 2.5 is the combined fan cabaret/costume contest from Rebellion convention this January. Who are the Daleks really afraid of? What's the real relationship between Avon and Servalan? Is Elvis alive? Is there a market for failed revolutionaries? Also, *The Repertory Company of the Dinner Theatre from Hell* star in *The Corridors of Doom*. \$7 in VHS or Beta. *Blake's Several, P.O. Box 1766, Bellaire TX 77402*

Voice from the Past (B7 filk). 60-minute cassette with 13 filks. A\$18. *Narrelle Harris*, 3161 Elizabeth Street, South Perth 6151 WA, Australia

Fanzines: Seeking Submissions

Auron Control is seeking stories, artwork, filks and poems for its debut issue. No slash please. *Melissa Brown*, 8 New Fitchburg Road, West Townsend MA 01474

Banzai is seeking submissions from *Doctor Who*, *Blake's 7*, *Buckaroo Banzai*, or anything else. *Jeff Morris*, 1614 Grant Road, Webster Groves MO 63119

Blake's Barf Bag Zine 2 is seeking items with a taste for the terrible, or just terrible taste. From each contributor: at least three filks, poems or short-short stories or any combination; your pen name to protect yourself and your real name so the editor can blackmail you later. *P.N. Elrod*, 4800 Kilpatrick Avenue, Fort Worth TX 76107

Fantasia III is accepting submissions for this general SF/fantasy zine. *Melissa Brown*, 8 New Fitchburg Road, West Townsend MA 01474

Galactic Home Companion is looking for stories, artwork, poetry, artwork, filks and artwork from multi-media universes for future issues. *Galactic Home Companion, P.O. Box 791362, Dallas, TX 75379*

Malodour Command seeks submissions for a B7 zine dedicated to the episode *Orbit*. *Signe Hovde*, 2941 Fish Hatchery Rd. #109, Madison WI 53713

Orbit seeks submissions for a new *Blake's 7* genzine. *Laura Peck, P.O. Box 292, College Park MD 20740*

Patterns of Time is looking for artwork, stories, poetry and filks that fit its overall theme: What if Blake and company had been born in the real past or real present? For example, what if Blake had been born in colonial America? Avon in ancient Rome? Get the idea? (No "before the fall of Atlantis" stories, please!) *Theresa Buffaloe, Shadow Productions, Rt. 3 Box 632, Bay Minette AL 36507*

Rumours of Death is seeking stories, art, poetry, and filks from the average fan for a fanzine devoted to showing people what's in the imaginations of their fellow fans. *Robert A. Smith*, 2604 Ave. N, Plano TX 75074

Shadow Imaginings is now accepting submissions of *Blake's 7* stories and artwork for our next issue. While our emphasis will be on short stories (both humorous & serious) as opposed to poetry & filks, all submissions will be considered. SASE for information. *Shadow Imaginings*, 106 Island Drive, Richardson TX 75081

Southern Seven is taking submissions for future issues. Annie is especially looking for cartoonists so that Laura Virgil and Leah Rosenthal won't have to be worked to death. No deadline. *Ann Wortham*, 1402 Allison Ave., Altamonte Springs FL 32701

Standard by Several, the clubzine of Blake's Several, is soliciting submissions for its third issue. *P.O. Box 1766, Bellaire TX 77402*

Club Notices

(NLEX) indicates a club with which we exchange newsletters. These newsletters can be read at ORAC meetings.

Anglofans Unlimited publishes a bi-monthly newsletter on all aspects of British media. Dues \$5. *49 Edmonds St., Rochester NY 14607*

Blake's Revels, located in San Diego, recently underwrote the return of *Blake's 7* to KPBS television. *Revel Times* newsletter. SASE for more information. *4604 Glacier Avenue, San Diego CA 92120 (NLEX)*

Blake's 7 Welcomittee is a *Blake's 7* information service. Newsletter contains latest news on series actors, club and zine listings, and merchandise ads. £1 or \$2 per issue. *43 Brooksbank House, Retreat Place, Morning Lane, Hackney, London E9 6RN*

Blake's Several is the Houston area *Blake's 7* fan group. Monthly meetings and *Notes from the Underground* newsletter; they also produce *Standard by Several* and hosted Rebellion convention earlier this year. *Box 1766, Bellaire TX 77402. (NLEX)*

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Event Queue

Necronomicon

- October 20-22, 1989

Location: Tampa, Florida. **Memberships:** \$15 until 9/15, \$20 thereafter. **Guests:** Sheelagh Wells, George Alec Effinger, Tom Kidd. *P.O. Box 2076, Riverview FL 33569*

Brits in Space

- November 10-12, 1989

Location: St. Louis, Missouri. **Memberships:** \$40 until 9/15, \$45 thereafter. **Guests:** Michael Keating (invited). *P.O. Box 220057, Kirkwood MO 63122*

British Fanta-Sea Cruise

- January 7-14, 1990

Location: Multi-day Caribbean cruise. **Memberships:** SASE for information. **Guests:** Jacqueline Pearce, others TBA. *Omnicon, 1632 Van Buren St., Hollywood FL 33020*

Mostly Eastly Con

- January 12-15, 1990

Location: Newark, New Jersey. **Memberships:** \$30 until 9/15, \$35 until 12/25, payable to Poison Pen Press. *Joyce Yasner, 140 Cadman West, Apt. 21H, Brooklyn NY 11201*

ORAC '90

Peripherals...

Cygnus Alphans are the Philadelphia area *Blake's 7* fan group. Produce high quality monthly newsletter, *Liberator's Log*. Dues \$6. (note new address) #223, Linden Hill Apts., Lindenwold NJ 08021 (NLEX)

Horizon is the British *Blake's 7* Appreciation Society, published *Horizon* newsletter and lots more. Dues by air mail £15.50, surface mail £8.75. SAE and \$1 for more info and price list. *Juliette Christuski, 461 Park West, Edgware Road, London W2 2QZ*

Liberation is Chicago's newest and most enthusiastic *Blake's 7* fan club, formed after last year's Scorpio con. Good quality newsletter *Liberation*; also publish letterzine. Dues \$8. *P.O. Box 06491, Chicago IL 60606* (NLEX)

Liberator Atlanta follows *Blake's 7* in Georgia and the Southeast. Meets monthly and publishes *Xenon Signals*. Dues \$5. *P.O. Box 694, Norcross GA 30091* (NLEX)

Patrexes of the Panopticon follows *Doctor Who*, *Blake's 7*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* and *The Tripods*. Dues \$6. *John Trowbridge, 20 Woodbury Way, Syosset NY 11791*

Paul Darrow Appreciation Society (PDAS) is a newsletter club dedicated to following the career of Paul Darrow. Dues \$8. Quarterly newsletter, *Aspects*. *PDAS, 1415 Madrone Lane, Davis CA 95616* (NLEX)

Pressure Point is an expanded quarterly newsletter/letterzine designed to keep you in touch with what's happening in *Blake's 7* fandom. Dues \$9. *Pat Nussman, 6020 Westchester Park Dr. #T-2, College Park MD 20740*

Prydonians of Prynceton is the largest *Doctor Who/Blake's 7* fan club east of the Mississippi. *Prydonian Renegade* often beats the "majors" with new *Doctor Who* news. Dues \$8. *P.O. Box 3194, Princeton NJ 08543* (NLEX)

Serendipity is a *Doctor Who/Blake's 7* club working to return the two programs to the airwaves in Oklahoma. Meetings are held at the Moore Public Library. *Carol Myers, 405-799-7405*

Sopron Alliance, "the lava lamp of *Blake's 7* fandom," is entering its second year of uncontrolled lunacy in the New York area. Hilarious newsletter, *On the Rocks*. Dues \$8 (checks to Linda DeSantis). *P.O. Box 103, Oakland Gardens Station, Bayside NY 11364* (NLEX)

- March 3-4, 1990

Location: San Francisco, California. **Memberships:** \$35 until 8/15, \$40 until 11/15, \$45 thereafter. **Guests:** Terry Nation, Sally Knyvette, Brian Croucher. *1131 Landing Lane, Millbrae CA 94030*

Space City

- April 28-29, 1990

Location: Christleton, Cheshire. **Memberships:** £15 for one day, £28 for two days. **Guests:** Paul Darrow, Janet Lees Price, Michael Keating, Jan Chappell, Sally Knyvette, Peter Tuddenham. Enclose 4 SAE's. *Sue Christian, 14, The Carters, Copy Farm, Netherton, Merseyside L30 7QW*

Orbit

- August 3-5, 1990

Location: Newark, New Jersey. **Memberships:** \$35 until 9/30, \$40 until 2/28/90, \$45 until 7/14/90. **Guests:** Paul Darrow, Michael Keating. *Down/Safe Productions, Inc., JAF Box 8138, New York NY 10116*

SomaCon 2.0

- September 8-9, 1990

Location: Schiller Park (Chicago), Illinois. **Memberships:** \$25 until 12/31/89; \$30 thereafter. *Virginia Skroch, c/o Liberation, P.O. Box 06491, Chicago IL 60606-0491*

South Eastern New England Whovians is a very low-key *Doctor Who* and *Blake's 7* fan club in Connecticut. No budget, no dues, but SASE's for newsletter, *Who-Ha*. *Mike Dempsey, 1552 Glasgo Road, Box 99, Voluntown CT 06384* (NLEX)

Unearthly Children is the southeast Pennsylvania *Doctor Who* and *Blake's 7* club. Dues \$6. Monthly newsletter, *Children's Page*. *P.O. Box 642, Richboro PA 18954*

Bulletin Boards: Local

FIAWOL. Irving. 214-790-6472 (free call from Arlington and Mid-Cities, dial all 10 digits). 2400 baud. Discussions on British TV, *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who*, comics, movies, and all aspects of fandom. Official upload point for modem submissions to *Tarriel Cell*; E-mail to Sysop for information.

Renaissance BBS. Arlington. Metro 817-467-7322 (free call from Dallas, dial all 10 digits). 1200 baud. Conferences for area fan clubs, other fannish discussion areas.

Whovian Beta. Irving. 214-790-0754 (free call from Arlington and Mid-Cities, dial all 10 digits). 2400 baud. National *Doctor Who* and British TV echoes with conversations around the country.

Bulletin Boards: National

Brain Storm. Chicago. 312-983-6435. *Blake's 7* discussion area, among others.

Gallifrey BBS. Orlando. 407-678-5546.

Liberator BBS. Chicago. 312-748-4025. *Blake's 7*, *Doctor Who*, *Star Trek*, British TV, other SF/fantasy areas.

Magratha BBS. Phoenix. 602-833-9216. 1200 baud. *Doctor Who*, *Star Trek*, other video and fannish discussion areas.

TARDIS BBS. Heightstown NJ. 609-448-1361. 9600 baud. Official board of Prydonians of Prynceton.

Trix II. Chicago. 312-761-7887. Home of national *Blake's 7* echo.

Communiqués

Fellow Fans:

I received my copy of *Tarriell Cell* today and read the reactions to my reviews in the April issue.

Thanks to P.N. Elrod for pointing out a couple of things I missed; I was either reading too fast, or too much time had elapsed between reading *Avon: On-Line* and writing the review.

I'm puzzled by the *Hellhound* contingent's emphasis on the popularity of the cycle. What's the point? Popularity is no gauge of worth — Shakespeare wasn't the most popular playwright of his day. I'm disturbed, however, by the interjection of yet more personality politics into *Blake's 7* fandom, and by what seems to be an attempt to make an issue of a non-issue, i.e., one review of one piece of fanlit by one reviewer in one fan publication.

Miss Virgil states that I "did not... allow the reader the opportunity to make up his/her own mind... by not including ordering information." No, I didn't include ordering information in my *Hellhound* review; I didn't include it for *Avon: On-Line* either, an oversight I'll rectify in future reviews. I wasn't aware, however, that failure to do so constituted forbidding fans to think for themselves — or that reviewers controlled fans' minds.

As for the charge of bias: I made no secret of the fact that

***"What messages... are
being transmitted by
having Avon's grandson
assume the surname of a
great-grandfather who all
but stretched his sons out
on an altar and sacrificed
them to the Great God
Ego?"***

Hellhound hit my buttons on the issue of child abuse, and with the outcome of the Steinburg case (eight years for beating a child to death), I can't say the charge breaks my heart. I also read *Hellhound* at least five times before concluding I couldn't stomach it.

That anything goes in fanlit is one school of thought; I belong to the school that whatever was shown in the series was the way it happened, and that fanlit should adhere to that "reality."

Mrs. Larkin's complaints are contradictory. She complains that I infer her and her co-author's views from the story cycle, then states that hers are "obviously very different," inferring mine from my review. I did not infer her or her co-author's views, merely the views that were coming across in the story

cycle. She writes a long dissertation defining an opinion and stating that those expressed in a review are merely those of the reviewer — things I'd thought so obvious as not to require stating — then goes on to say she finds it ironic that I judge the characters in *Hellhound*, when by definition a review, amateur or professional, is a judgment. As for the position of *Hellhound*: the story cycle is extremely partisan, but the characters presented sympathetically are often little different — by their own standards — from those presented unsympathetically. How different, for instance, was Jeanine Orly from Avon's mother, Sarah?

Concerning the points Mrs. Larkin brings up: my inference that Avon would forgive his father's prenatal abandonment and assume his surname was incorrect, which I've since discovered. I stand corrected; however, the principle remains the same. She herself raises the issue of "living in a society where you are considered 'less than human.'" What does she think takes place in situations of child abuse and/or neglect? What messages does she think are being transmitted by having Avon's grandson assume the surname of a great-grandfather who all but stretched his sons out on an altar and sacrificed them to the Great God Ego? Or having a boy show no resentment toward a mother who apparently made no attempt to defend him from an abusive stepfather? Or having that boy admire a teacher who didn't lift a finger to help him? Perhaps I am taking this matter too seriously — but I think not.

As for Avon's mother never being described as a servant: the word used was "drudge"; if that is not a synonym for "servant" I'd be interested to learn what it is. I've also yet to see a passage presenting Servalan's administrative and military prowess rather than using the "feminine wiles" of manipulation and sex. The claim that *Hellhound* has "no great artistic pretensions" is contradicted by the other claim that the characters in the cycle don't represent the authors' views. Creating characters that fully realized is difficult for "serious" writers; to claim that *Hellhound* has done it suggests very great artistic pretensions indeed.

I don't object to the borrowings, blending an projection of contemporary attitudes, mores, fashion etc. *per se*, just the amount of it.

I don't judge *Hellhound* by the same standards as "serious literature" (and where did the idea come from that "serious literature" wasn't intended to be read for pleasure?). I closed my review "amateur status does not excuse careless craftsmanship." I criticized careless crafting; a piece of literature doesn't have to be "serious" to strive for excellence; *Hellhound* does not strive.

Considering how prevalent child abuse is, it's difficult to see how I could be elitist. As for condescension — it seems to me I regard fanlit, and by extension *Hellhound*, with more respect than Mrs. Larkin does.

As for the "critical acclaim" of other reviewers: I call it as I see it, not as anyone else sees it; and in fact how anyone else sees it is irrelevant. I'm sorry Mrs. Larkin's feelings were hurt, but in case she missed it, *Hellhound* offended me.

Eumenidis
June 9, 1989