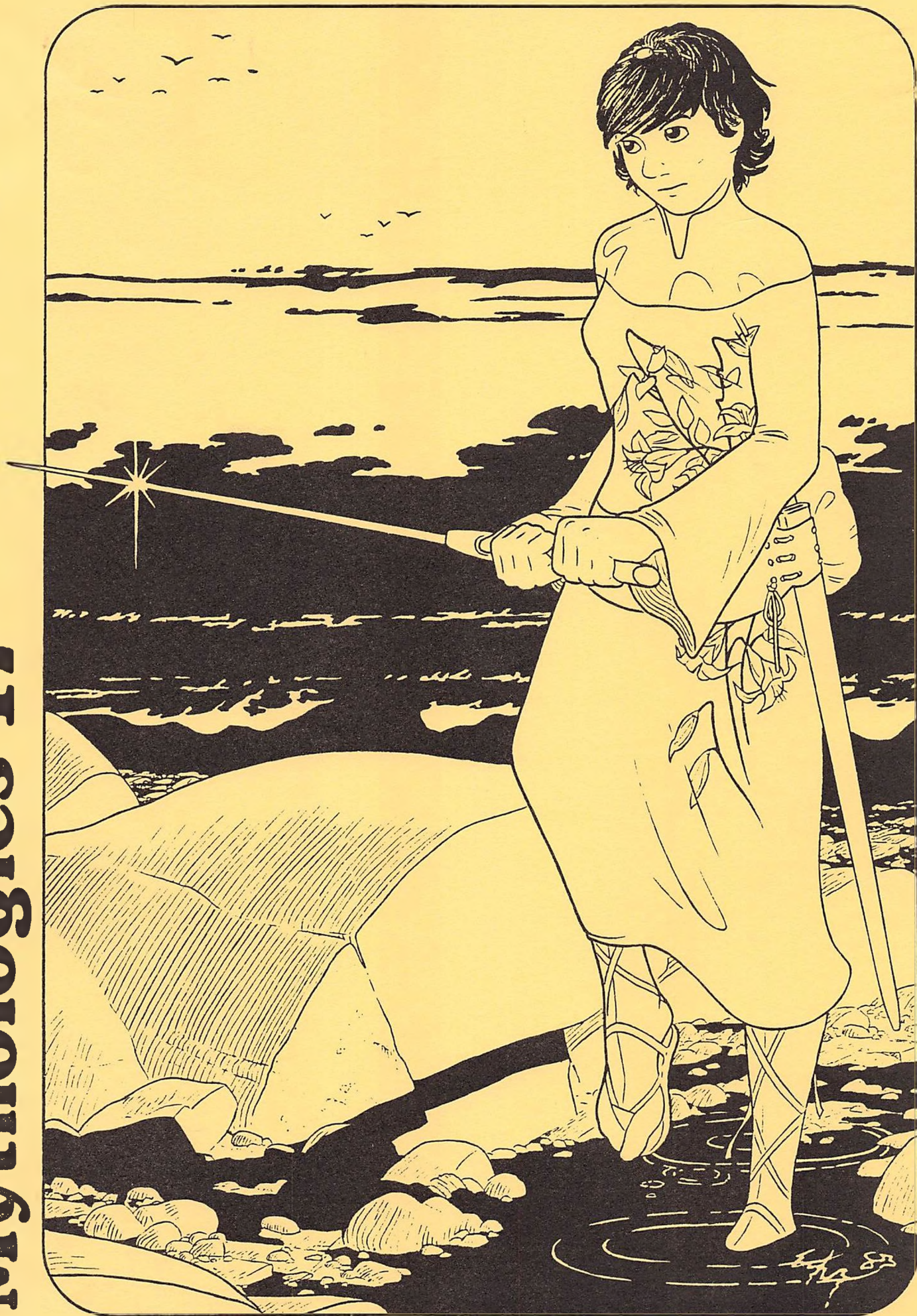
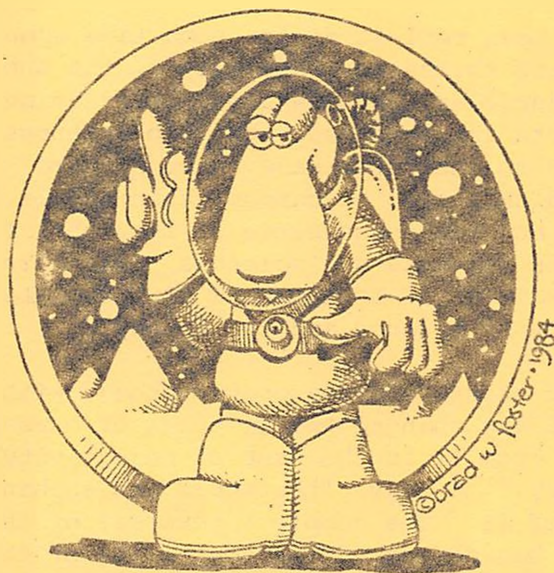


# Mythologies 17





# MYTHOLOGIES 17



Edited by Don D'Amassa, 323 Dodge Street, East Providence, RI 02914

Repro by Sheila D'Amassa

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# MYTH

I had been reflecting for some time upon the tendency of humans to attempt to distance themselves from nature, the subjective world of emotion, and similar imponderables, and was considering doing a MYTH on the subject of the split between the arts and sciences, the "two cultures" of C.P. Snow. This would have tied in nicely to the difference between "hard" and "soft" science fiction as well. I picked up a book at random, thinking it might have something to do with the subject, and the consequence of that choice was that this is not about the split between the arts and sciences, but instead deals with alternate realities. The book was THE RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE WORLD by Morris Berman, whose field is the history of science and technology.

Berman starts off reasonably enough with a discussion of how the scientific method has changed how we think of ourselves and our world, setting ourselves apart from it in the name of objectivity. "For more than 99 percent of human history," he says, "the world was enchanted and man saw himself as an integral part of it. The complete reversal of this perception in a mere four hundred years or so has destroyed the continuity of the human experience and the integrity of the human psyche." I didn't balk at this statement, strong though it is. I am willing to accept that, had we not become so enamored of technology, that we might have had as a culture a more satisfying evolution as a society, less indebted to material goods, though certainly less sophisticated and in some ways less comfortable than our own.

Berman contends that Bacon and Newton changed the course of human history because they altered the thrust of human inquiry. Instead of asking "Why?" they wanted to know "How?". Berman feels that this was instrumental in setting all of human development upon the wrong path, a path foredoomed to failure. We do not, for example, ask why a prism breaks light up into primary colors, we ask how it happens. Anything that is not measurable, we deem irrelevant. As a society we stopped caring whether a particular property of existence was beneficial or harmful to the world and emphasized an insistence on pragmatism. Does it work?

Despite the colorful rhetoric I was able to stay with Berman, dismissing his occasional extreme statement as metaphorical. I was even able to nod my head in affirmation in his discussion of the invention of time and money, methods of measuring human endeavor. Even admission to heaven could be purchased at one time. Unquestionably, the birth of science caused earlier values to be largely overthrown. "Modern consciousness thus regards the thinking of previous ages not simply as other legitimate forms of consciousness, but as misguided world views that we have happily outgrown."

Still nothing to quarrel with particularly. But what begins to emerge at this point, in Berman's discussion of alchemy, is another matter entirely. There was, he says, an interaction between the conscious and unconscious minds in those days. Alchemy really worked, but on a mystical level that - while absolutely valid and true to the alchemist - is impossible for modern man to understand because of our narrow view of reality. Transmutation of metals DID occur, but on a psychic rather than material level.



I was, perhaps understandably, a bit nonplused. Was Berman being metaphorical on a level too sophisticated for my feeble understanding? I read further and discovered that, according to Berman, at one time all matter possessed individual "minds", internal forces that directed their existence. "It is not merely the case that men conceived of matter as possessing mind in those days, but rather that in those days, matter DID possess mind." Now I am not a complete rationalist. I can accept the fact that dreams and visions are, on some level, "real", just as "real" as the objective world we all think we share. I am even willing to accept that, as a culture, we are in some fashion neurotic, perhaps even psychotic. But when Berman says that "Newton did not discover gravity, he INVENTED it" I come to a screeching halt.

Newton was fascinated with the occult, studied it, never completely disbelieved it. For various reasons (Berman says because of political pressures) Newton turned to a more objective, observable explanation for the behavior of objects and forces. Berman is probably correct when he says that Newton was an important contributor to the turning away from spiritual and metaphysical concerns to more practical ones. But now we began to part company. Berman uses the term "participating consciousness" to describe the interaction between man and environment, stating quite explicitly that the human unconscious actually helped to mold the way forces and matter behaved. But Newton gave birth to a narrow minded predictive creed that forever, perhaps, stunted our gestalt growth.

"Modern science and technology are based not only on a hostile attitude toward the environment, but on the repression of the body and the unconscious; and unless these can be recovered, unless participating consciousness can be restored in a way that is scientifically (or at least rationally) credible and not merely a relapse into naive animism, then what it means to be a human being will forever be lost." Science, he contends, is a faith, not a method of discovering "truth". He eschews the reality of scientific truth. "The facts that science finds are merely that -- facts that SCIENCE finds; they possess no meaning in and of themselves."

Berman becomes, to be blunt, increasingly flaky from this point on. He insists that, until the mathematics were invented that described the fall of projectiles, projectiles fell at different rates and different angles in different parts of the world. He refers to quantum mechanics to refute the scientific method, on the assumption that since he can point to something not presently measured to the nth degree of accuracy, that nothing can be precisely measured, nor precisely described, therefore everything science knows is wrong. The Firesign Theatre would love him. He uses the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle in the same argument. Since we cannot be sure whether the act of measuring has actually affected the measurements, we cannot be sure of ANYTHING we have measured.

The ego did not exist until the scientific method became prominent. Ego and eros, the pleasure of the body, were in conflict, and Newton is responsible therefore for our repressed sexual lives. We also lost power to control the non-human world, and can now only bludgeon it into submission. He refers to rain dancers, saying they invited the rain clouds to participate in their dance, and that was how they made rain. When their dancing failed, it was only because the clouds, having a mind of their own, chose not to participate. Now we seed the clouds, which is tantamount to metaphysical rape, and the result has been "noise, pollution, and the potential disruption of the ozone layer."

By now Berman was far beyond my ability to suspend my disbelief, although it might have made a good work of fiction. (In fact, Susan Cooper's MANDRAKE is a



fine fictional rendering of this general idea.) But I call a halt when someone tells me that in the real world, light does not split up into various wavelengths, that it does so in a laboratory only because we want it to. Berman ends his book with the kitchen sink syndrome, a wild mix of ESP, Freudian dream analysis, and wishful thinking.

Extending Berman's reasoning, the world was flat until people thought it was round, another interesting idea for fiction but not with any application for our world. As a science fiction reader, I was struck with this vision of an alien culture expanding toward Earth, one with radically different ideas of the nature of reality. When they reached the limits of human expansion, there would be two different realities operating. Which would persevere?

Having completed Berman's book, it was only natural that I turned to Julian Jaynes' best seller, THE ORIGIN OF CONSCIOUSNESS IN THE BREAKDOWN OF THE BICAMERAL MIND. Put very simply, Jaynes says that until comparatively recently (about 1300 BC) humanity was not self aware, but performed as a bunch of mindless creatures, instinct rather than consciousness predominating.

His book opens with some interesting speculations about consciousness -- what it is, what it isn't. He seems to define it as an active, minute-by-minute awareness and concentration. A musician thoroughly lost in his work is no longer conscious. He points to the superiority of unconscious learning (reflexes) in some situations, and theorizes that all primitive learning was of this type.

Indeed all learning on a conscious level is metaphorical. "A theory is thus a metaphor between a model and data. And understanding in science is the feeling of similarity between complicated data and a familiar model." Therefore, everything that is learned is a modified version of something which people already know. One half of the brain, which became known to primitive humans as the "gods", would analyze each new situation metaphorically and communicate the results to the other side, which took action. This communication was interpreted as actual spoken words, a la Joan of Arc. Jaynes therefore assumes that consciousness could not possibly predate the invention of human language, because that was the instrumentality of communication between the half of the brain that dealt with the world and the half that understood it.

"In fact men and women were not conscious as are we, were not responsible for their actions, and therefore cannot be given the credit or blame for anything that was done over the vast millennia of time; that instead each person had a part of his nervous system which was divine, by which he was ordered about like any slave, a voice or voices which indeed were what we call volition and empowered what they commanded and were related to the hallucinated voices of others in a carefully established hierarchy.: Jaynes never explains who established this hierarchy; it was apparently accomplished by some instinctual unconscious organizational process by the members of each society.

Jaynes provides some rationale for his conclusions. Given the split brain which he posits (some elements of which are quite valid). it is logical to assume that language had to precede self awareness. He assumes that language arose when humans began to shelter in dark caves, because visual cues were no longer visible. Even the advent of literature did not mean that people were not just acting out a volitionless, instinctual behavior pattern. Jaynes analyzes THE ILIAD and points out that there is no evidence of self-awareness because the word "will" is never mentioned. Mark Keller pointed out that, using the same reasoning, you could conclude that the ancient Greeks were all color blind, since there is no mention



of colors either. But Jaynes insists that "the epic itself was neither consciously composed nor consciously remembered, but was successively and creatively changed with no more awareness than a pianist has of his improvisation."

During stress, the old linkages reassert themselves and we can once more hear the voices of the "gods". This results in schizophrenia, religious visions, etc. Jaynes himself, he tells us, was spoken to audibly by a deceased relative, or actually by the quiescent side of his brain using the relative's voice. This also explains why there was no concept of luck prior to 1300 BC; everything was programmed by the "gods". There could be no luck because the unconscious humans could not imagine a new concept until it was explained to them by their "gods".

So what caused the breakdown of the bicameral mind? Written language arose, confining the god's word to something concrete. Climactic changes caused the interaction of different cultures, and a conflict between the rules set up by one god and those established by another. In the bicameral mind, "volition, planning, initiative is organized with no consciousness whatever and then "told" to the individual." And how do we know when it broke down. Well, the Assyrian Empire was the "first" case in human history where there is evidence of cruelty, an action that could not exist among unconscious beings.

One more book tied itself into my research, THE AQUARIAN CONSPIRACY by Marilyn Ferguson. Ferguson sees, or thinks she sees, the next step in human evolution taking place in our world right now. We are switching, she says, from left brain dominance to a more balanced way of thinking. With the left brain dictating our world view, we are inhibited from detecting patterns, wholeness, and are therefore unable to deal well with emotionality and creativity. But there is a growing network of organizations in the world, unconscious individually of their role in the master plan, which is causing a break with the old patterns of thought. "Only through a new mind can humanity remake itself, and the potential for such a new mind is national."

This unconscious conspiracy has no leaders, no manifesto. Isolated individuals have always been able to step across to the next stage in human evolution -- the creative geniuses of history, but only in this era of modern communications are we likely to achieve a gestalt breakthrough and permanently alter human history. We are moving toward what de Chardin called the Omega Point, a time in which we experience species wide consciousness. Ferguson believes that "if enough individuals discover new capacities in themselves, they will naturally conspire to create a world hospitable to human imagination, growth, and cooperation."

Just as with the works of Berman and Jaynes, there are some interesting and useful sections of the book. She discusses the four methods of allowing change in our belief systems -- by exception, anomalies within our overall beliefs, by increments, gradual transformation of what we believe, by pendulum, an extreme change, or by paradigm, the resolution of internal conflicts of belief. She characterizes these as follows:

1. I'm right, except that...
2. I was almost right; now I am right.
3. I was wrong, but now I'm right.
4. I was partially right, and now I am more partially right.

Her discussion of research into problems of people who have suffered separation of the two halves of the brain is fascinating, and recapitulates much mentioned by Jaynes as well. "For example, the split-brain patient cannot tell the



experimenter the name of an object known only to the mute right hemisphere." I find this particular area fascinating, the disparity in abilities between the left half of the brain, which generally controls speech, and the right half, which generates emotional inflection. Ferguson likens the left brain to snapshots and the right to movies; she says that the left deals with past events while the right responds to novelty.

The conspiracy she believes to be emerging is a loose coalition among encounter groups and various organizations. Augmentation of the degree of communication between the sides of the brain is achieved through meditation, yoga, biofeedback, listening to music, hypnosis, consciousness raising activities such as seminars, EST, Silva mind control, and physical exhilaration. She describes the process of evolving into the new mental state as follows:

There are a number of different entry points, usually the result of something unsettling happening in one's life, something which arouses a state of receptivity to new ideas. Experimentation with hallucinogenic drugs is one possible entry point. There follows a period of exploration where the individual tries to discover the implications of this change in perspective. The third stage is integration, the process of accepting the new beliefs. This period is characterized by alternating periods of exhilaration and loneliness, pleasure at discovering a new truth, and disappointment and frustration at not being able to share it with others. The final stage is conspiracy, acting upon one's new beliefs in an attempt to change society, usually by joining with like minded individuals.

Eventually, says Ferguson, we will re-integrate our entire society. The dividing of human activities into arts and sciences is an artificial imposition by the left brain. Evolution, she feels, is not a smooth process. She subscribes to punctuationalism, the belief that evolution occurs in spurts, the result of stresses in the environment. "The American experiment was consciously conceived as a momentous step in the evolution of the species." We are now on the verge of the next step.

I'd like to believe Ferguson is right, but frankly the whole thing strikes me as just so much wishful thinking. Just as Berman dismisses inconsistencies as evidence that reality was different in ages past, just as Jaynes only uses the evidence which supports his theory, so too Ferguson interprets her observation in terms of what she wants the result to be, not what the result actually is. The process by which these books evolve is fascinating, however, and I solicit suggestions for other works of the same nature. Meanwhile, I shall sit here and dig out books by Carlos Castaneda and perhaps part two of this essay shall appear next time.

. . . . .  
"With over 50 foreign cars already on sale here. the Japanese auto industry isn't likely to carve out a big slice of the US market for itself."

---BUSINESS WEEK in 1958

"TV won't be able to hold on to any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night."

---Daryl F. Zanuck, 1946

"My imagination refuses to see any sort of submarine doing anything but suffocating its crew and foundering at sea."

---H.G. Wells, 1902



# CRITICAL MASS

We continue looking at some of the newer writers in the SF genre with:

## NANCY KRESS

If Nancy Kress is known to most readers, it is for her two fantasy novels, *PRINCE OF MORNING BELLS* and *THE GOLDEN GROVE*. The first is an interesting fantasy quest novel, with a young princess searching for the heart of the world, accompanied by an enchanted prince in the form of a dog. Although a bit uneven, it was remarkably original in many of its details, and the characterization was far superior to most stories of its type. The second novel was even more ambitious, a tale of compulsion and obsession on a magical isle whose economy is wholly dependent upon the weave of magical spiders. If Nancy Kress were to be remembered for these two works alone, she would probably be labelled a promising writer who never hit her stride.

Her short stories, on the other hand, are predominantly science fiction, and generally of exceptionally high quality. "A Delicate Shade of Kipney", her first published story, is a touching and effective treatment of shipwrecked colonists battling over the relative merits of tradition and innovation. The more subtle points of developing a credible character are illustrated in "Against a Crooked Stile". A young boy's relationship with his abusive father are strangely affected by the currents of power that pass by his house.

Three minor stories appeared early in her career as well. "Pigs Have Wings" is an amusing but slight piece about a man who becomes much more credible after a brief glimpse of a mermaid. "Shadows on the Cave Wall" shows us a universal archetypal book, but does little with the theme. "Casey's Empire" is a gimmick story about aliens.

On the other hand, "With the Original Cast" was one of the best short stories of 1981. A method is developed whereby people can learn whom their previous incarnations were. The present version of the real Joan of Arc is located, and agrees to star in a play about her earlier life, but she is such a poor actress that the play is endangered as a work of art. The characters are extremely well developed, particularly considering the length of the story, and the plot is developed thoroughly, logically, and economically.

An almost equally good story on a similar theme is "Talp Hunt". A woman who undergoes a process that allows her to remember her earlier lives has difficulty in keeping her various identities straight, wandering off into the wilderness with her children, who struggle to comprehend what is happening within their mother's mind.



Her originality shows through in "A Little Matter of Timing". Carnivals feature peekback shows to allow glimpses of the past, until the appearance of a new ability, forepeeking. It's a quite clever story, as is "Green Thumb", wherein a mentally disturbed man who hates plants tortures them, and is ultimately asphyxiated when he cuts off all of their light in an act of vegetable cruelty. Despite the plot summary, this is not a funny story. "Night Win" is one of several stories lately to feature dream therapy, and Kress draws her characters well this time, but has only a mediocre plot. "Borovsky's Hollow Woman" (in collaboration with Jeff Duntemann) is the last straight SF story to appear as of this writing. A self-aware computerized spacesuit becomes involved in the growing hostility between two construction workers in space. It's a fine story, and I hope Kress stays active in non-fantasy fiction.

The two most recent stories, however, are both fantasies, and both good ones. "Explanations, Inc" is a magic shop clone, but this time the variation is that the property offered is accurate, documented answers to any possible question. The results are not quite what the protagonist expects, however. "Ten Thousand Pictures, One Word" is a variation of Wilde's Dorian Gray, handled with great skill. Kress is almost certainly going to be a significant writer, but whether of fantasy, science fiction, both, or neither, remains to be seen.

#### ALLISON TELLURE

Allison Tellure's initial story, "Yes, Virginia", was a minor attempt at rationalizing Santa Claus that disappeared without a trace into the piles of unreprinted short stories. It deserved to disappear. But her next four, a series of stories about an alien species, deserved better.

"Lord of All It Surveys" introduced a being which reproduces by fission, and creates its own race by dividing itself. To overcome boredom, it begins to conduct wars against its children, eventually exterminating them. Characterization is almost non-existent, and the story was actually too long for its theme, particularly the long period of establishing the situation in the first half. But Tellure followed it up with "Skysinger", which shows what happens to a single child that somehow survived the extermination, established contact with a land dwelling race that worships the sea creature, and begins to think about carrying the war against its ancestor.

"Green Eyed Lady, Laughing Lady" is told from the point of view of one of the land dwelling creatures, a priestess who managed to form an almost friendly bond with her god. The story is a bit of a let down when considered on its own, but it does set up the situation for the concluding story, "Low Midnight", the best in the series.

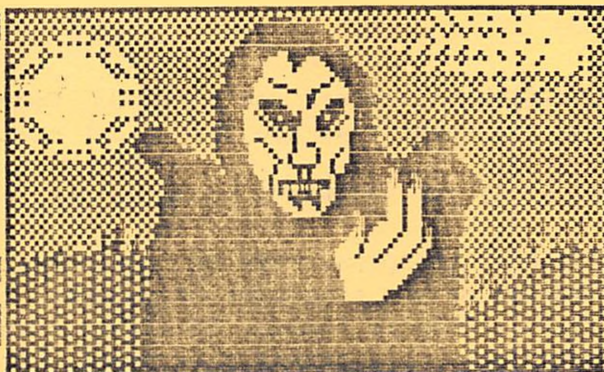
Having organized the land dwellers into a fighting force, the god sets off with a flotilla to combat the now gigantic creature that dominates the world's ocean. The culmination of the battle gives rise to a new type of culture for the entire planet. Tellure has plotted this story well, and it works, but the entire series suffers from the lack of a character with whom to properly empathize. Her strongest point is the inventiveness of her construction of the interplay between the original creature and its offspring. If that inventiveness can be matched with more polished writing skills, Tellure may emerge as a writer to watch.

.....  
"I think there's a world market for about five computers."

---Thomas Watson, IBM Chairman, 1943



# CHASTLY GTALES



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GONE TO BE SNAKES NOW by Neal Bell, Popular Library, 1974

"How I came, thought Walter, to be entombed with the Borg, you shall never know. Then added, in fairness, or care, and felt colder, as his pupils grew larger and larger and still brought in nothing. Not a glinting scale or the wink or a slitted eye or the wet, slimy shine of stalactites like borgy teeth in a mouth unborgy in being cold, damp, endless and leading nowhere."

A TICKET TO NOWHERE by Don Becher, Vega Books, 1966

"The planet Saturn has been in existence for many millions of years. People lived there long before our Earth was formed. This explains their advanced stage of life as compared to ours. It seems that the people of Saturn are one of the leading planets in space travel. As such they keep a close eye of the planets around them. You might say they act as a police force for the entire universe."

"The heads of all the governments got together and formed one central rule of control. They united all the people of Saturn as one. It took well over a hundred years till finally there was but one language spoken on the planet."

FIVE FOR INFINITY by Thomas Barker, Major Books, 1976

"For the present, we'll assume we've discovered the factual existence of a light barrier...Before we slow this ship down below the speed of light, I think we had better get Rog to provide some blackout eyeshades."

"Steve, we stole this ship to conduct scientific missions instead of the inane plan to just find another planet for the powers that be to louse up. We promise to contact you again on this same channel when our first mission is completed."

"This mission just does not connote with an easy life and probably never will."

BLACK STAR CHRONICLES by D.J. Arneson and Tony Tallarico, Watermill, 1981

"Imperator Incus, self-proclaimed ruler of all Discovered Space, would strike again. Soon!"

"It's no wonder it accelerates so fast...all of its armament has been stripped... It'll be different coming back with a load of ex-prisoners from the Black Star prison domes...Coming back you won't be any faster than an old-fashioned garbage dumper."



"UFO five points off the port bow, Commander. The space radarman called a warning from his station at the very front of the flight deck."

FLIGHT OF THE SANDPIPER by Jacob Benjamin, Laura Books, 1979

"You see, there was this Dr. Moses Vaitar, an Israeli, who about four years ago stumbled on the emanation of powerful rays from solars when they reached maximum output...they're totally invisible except for a faint gray haze that doesn't always show up...anyway they repel. Dr Vaitar had to find a fancy word to suit the scientists, but he himself called it...the 'shove factor'. And it shoves against other invisibles, mostly gases....We're not about to disappear into the maw of a super nova. I do suggest we put down the secondary shields though. They get bright."

"Neil felt better then, no- because Mike voiced new thoughts, but because he'd underlined some old ones that long time spacers sometimes forgot to keep in mind. Sure, any space flight had a lot of trust in it. Those who didn't have that trust spent some sleepless nights; but even those who did sometimes overlooked the power of whatever had created them. That power had put a habitable Earth in the solar system. Might there not be one also in Andromeda?"

VENUS DEVELOPMENT by David Begamini, Popular Library, 1976

"Priests and rabbis liberally discoursed about the rights of man and God. Biologists spoke of the possibility of exactly doubling the resources of prior life experience. Psychologists predicted an upsurge in mass morale...Economists, more cautiously, pointed out that the geological resources of Venus might force the oil-producing nations to take a lower profile."

"Even with coherent microwave you can't economically send back oil energy from Venus."

"My God, you're going to plan t Venus in one of the Lagrangian points...Know any other way to get a permanently stable orbit?...But it's not permanently stable unless the other Lagrangian point has something in it..."That's where we'll be putting Mars or Mercury some day."

"The magnetic field of Venus, created by her spin, interacted with the magnetic field of the sun, and with the wind of charged particles from the sun, to correct a wobble in the Venus spin and convert the energy thereof back into propulsive thrust.

Gradually, cumulatively, these little extra maternal squeezes speeded Venus on her way out of the solar plasma, and by the end of the tenth week astronomers on earth knew that she would scarcely graze the four million mile zone of dangerous tidal effects."

"Venus veered by a ten millionth of a microsecond of trajectory and flattened her orbit, pulling ahead of earth and drawing earth forward at the same time. As a result the port cities of the world had to withstand only six foot tidal waves and earth's year was lengthened by only 8.6 deci-seconds. Venus coasted ahead toward a resting -- a braking by tides and frontal solar wind pressure -- which could be perfectly calculated as at the Lagrangian point, 188 million miles ahead."

"On Venus we hope to induce the human contagion to mutate, so that it will survive benignly and see the outcome of time, the apotheosis of the universe."



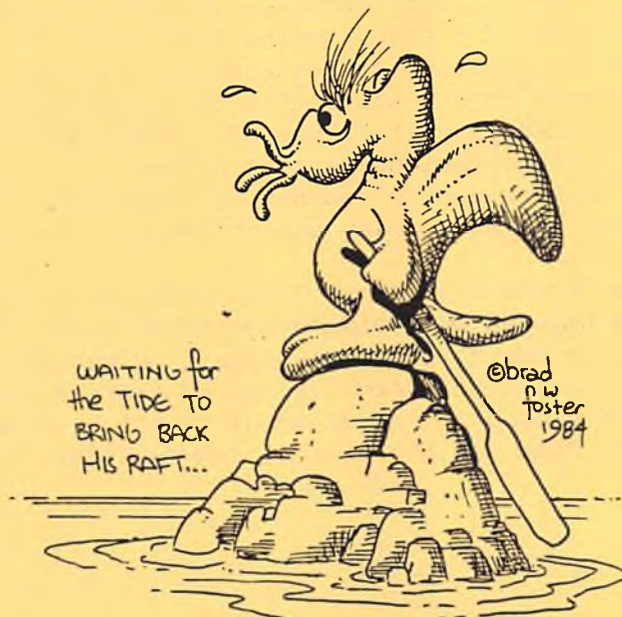
# Play Along with yourself

A lot has happened to the world of videogames since last I wrote this column. Intellivision was sold by Mattel to Interphase, which appears to have gone belly up already. Vectrex has been discontinued. Atari has discontinued the 5200 system, retained the 2600, and is introducing the 7800. Game software has gone bust (I recently bought a cartridge for \$4.97 and it had a \$5.00 mail in rebate.), the number of videogame magazines has declined and those that survive are largely computer game oriented now. Several of the software companies appear to have gone under as well. Nevertheless, even at its reduced level, videogaming is a major leisure time activity.

This time I want to talk briefly about hardware. The Atari 2600 was the pioneer, of course, and I wore one completely out before the new systems became available. It is incredibly inexpensive now -- as low as \$29.99. It still had the best controlling systems as far as I'm concerned - offering joysticks, paddle controllers, keyboard controllers, and hybrids. Atari's hardware had a habit of breaking easily and often, because the contact inside is a small piece of fragile plastic. Wico produces much sturdier versions, although they are considerably more expensive.

The big advantage of the Atari is the wide number of games available, at least two hundred different cartridges. The graphics are, for the most part, primitive, and the sports games are generally far from realistic, but the sheer variety of cartridges is overwhelming. There was at one time a supercharger available from

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another manufacturer which improved the graphics immensely, but it is now discontinued. I bought mine for \$5.00 at a closeout sale, along with six tapes. They are all superior versions of other games, and I'm rather sorry they flopped.

Intellivision has always been my favorite system, even though they can only handle a few dozen games and are now out of business in any case. They combined keypad, joystick, and paddle into a single controller, and permanently attached them to the machine, which is its major drawback, since you cannot replace them if one breaks. The Intellivision II was a more compact version of the original machine, but I am told the tolerances were different and some cartridges wouldn't fit into the entry slot. A voice synthesizer was produced for the Intellivision, and sold originally for \$75 (I bought mine for \$9.00). Only four cartridges came out to use it, however, and it really only figures significantly in two of them. The few Intellivisions still available sell for as low as \$49.99.

Colecovision is now under \$100 too. In some ways, this is the most versatile system. It has combination controllers, but they are replaceable. The graphics are unquestionable the most impressive of the three. They also offer a wide variety of supplementary equipment, an Atari 2600 adaptor, steering wheel and gas peddle module, a roller-trac ball module, and a fancier hand held controller that is so complex I have still to master it. The problem with Colecovision is that most of the software produced so far is incredibly unimaginative, either versions of popular and monotonous arcade games, or complex sports games that are so difficult to master, they are not particularly interesting to play. I still think the best games were produced by Intellivision, and mourn its passing.

I have managed to talk myself into buying additional cartridges for all three systems since last issue. Intellivision games are being marked down fast, so I've concentrated there. Their version of HOCKEY is not up to the quality of their other sports adaptations, but is acceptable. ROULETTE is just as boring as it is in real life. Their TENNIS adaptation is, however, excellent, even better than the Activision version for the Atari. This should definitely be on your must list.

Another really excellent cartridge is BUMP 'N' JUMP, a driving game in which your car scrolls up a field, avoiding or bumping other cars in order to cause them to crash but escaping collisions with guardrails yourself, and periodically jumping your car over obstacles. The graphics on this are very good, the game is addictive, and it will certainly be one of my favorites.

HAPPY TRAILS was somewhat disappointing, essentially just another variant of LOCOMOTIVE. You control blocks of a maze, moving them about to create a safe route for your character as he picks up stolen loot and pursues a bank robber. Very ho hum. Interphase, which bought the rights to Intellivision and then disappeared, put out two cartridges that I know of. SEWER SAM is a tunnel adventure, wherein you must shoot various nasties before they reach you. Very tedious. BLOCKADE RUNNER is a spaceship journey variation that would be really excellent if there were not already so many variations out for the Atari.

Speaking of the Atari, one of the best games I've found for it is TUNNEL RUNNER, a maze adventure that even trapped anti-videogamer Chris Couch when he visited recently. You move through a series of mazes, seen from eye level, looking for a key to the exit while avoiding various animated nasties that pursue you. Lots of variations, lots of challenge, exceptional graphics, highly playable. It's one of the best things done for the limited 2600 system.



A modified maze adventure is PRIVATE EYE, although the maze in this case is a large city. The graphics are good on this one as well, and the concept is cute, but I found that it bored me almost immediately. RETURN OF THE JEDI is another that would have been much better if it had not been done so many times before. You pilot your spaceship through transient holes in a forcescreen and then try to blow up the Deathstar while avoiding enemy ships and a powerful ray weapon from the target itself. Another one with exceptional graphics for the 2600 however.

SUBTERRANEA is a horizontal shoot em up adventure, something like DEFENDER. It's ok, but nothing special. Neither is SOLAR FOX, although I play it quite often still. You are faced with succeeding patterns of dots and must cross each one with your ship in order to reach the next pattern, while enemies from around the edges fire at you. STRATEGY X is a very cheap, very bad tank battle game from Konami, a Japanese manufacturer, and I don't recommend it.

For the Colecovision, I bought only two. I now have their version of RIVER RAID, one of the best Atari cartridges. It's slightly more graphically pleasing, but I enjoy playing it on the 2600 more thoroughly. I also have SUPER COBRA, which is so close to COSMIC AVENGER, a horizontally scrolling adventure, shoot em up, that I'm surprised there was no lawsuit.

Certainly my rate of acquisition of new games has declined, and I have removed about half of the ones I own to storage. I still spend quite a few hours a week playing games, but the number of different cartridges grows steadily smaller. The manufacturers of these games are going to have to start thinking of novel approaches rather than enhanced graphics, I suspect, because prettier variations of the same games will not continue to sell.

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#### BYPASSING TIME AND SPACE WITH ISABELLA FIGHOLLER

Isabella Figholler was briefly stationed on a planet that was noted for its flowers. Virtually the entire economy was geared to the floral industry in some fashion. Wars were fought over possession of lands where particular plants could be grown. Duels were fought over the relative merits of this or that coloration. Flowers were the chief export, or their seeds, the publishing industry promoted various aspects of horticulture, and the entire culture was unhealthily obsessed with that single subject.

Isabella was quartered with an elderly lady whose house was surrounded by four rock gardens, one devoted to marigolds, one to roses, one to chrysanthemums, and one to a mutated daisy. While she was visiting, however, disaster struck. One of the highly sophisticated grounds maintenance robots developed a defect and suddenly began sandblasting the gardens. Isabella was awakened by the clamor, descended, and was able to deactivate the machine after only one garden was stricken. Unfortunately, it now consisted of bare ground and shiny rocks.

Her hostess was incoherent with grief and anger, accused Isabella of having changed the robot's programming herself in an act of spite because she did not have such beautiful flowers on her home world. Isabella immediately drew back in anger and turned to pack her bags and depart. On her way out, however, she felt compelled to insist upon her innocence. "Madam," she said furiously, "I never pumiced you a rose garden."

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"Airplanes are interesting toys, but of no military value." Marshal Foch, 1911



# MANAGING

The company for which I work was recently returned to private ownership as the result of a leverage buyout by one member of management and two of his relatives. One of the relatives is a silent partner, but he recently sent several copies of a book to us, because he thought it was something that we should read. Innocently they gave me one of the copies and asked for my reaction to it. Had they been fans, they would have known that was like waving a red flag in front of my eyes--a week later they had a 4000 word response.

The world of business management seems to overlap very little with fandom. I'm not really certain why that should be, since it's a fairly lucrative field, and most fans seem to be of above average intelligence. Below average in common sense, perhaps. Nevertheless, the few times I have written about business matters, there has been at least some response that seems to indicate business and economic life are almost an alien world to most fans, even the enlightened readers of MYTHOLOGIES. So I'm going to present a slightly modified version of that memo here. Those not interested, please feel free to skip on to some other portion of this fanzine.

The book, RESTORING OUR COMPETITIVE EDGE, by Hayes & Wheelwright, contends that US business firms are losing their pre-eminence in world markets because of a number of shortcomings in management style and technique. These fall largely into the following categories:

1. Failure to properly utilize personnel within management.
2. Lack of capital investment as an ongoing policy.
3. Conflict and confusion among marketing, finance, and manufacturing.
4. Profit goals through manipulation of numbers, vertical integration, etc. instead of through increased productivity.
5. Resistance to change in a time of rapid change.
6. Lack of systematic long term planning.
7. Failure to use manufacturing as an active tool in market strategy.

In general, their approach is strategic rather than tactical, perhaps because their backgrounds are both strictly academic, with no practical experience whatsoever. They deal with macroeconomic structures and ideal situations rather than relating these things to the day by day operation of a manufacturing concern. Their intended audience appears to be corporate planners on a large scale rather than middle managers or even the operators of small to medium businesses. They also spend a lot of time pointing out problems (some of which SHOULD be obvious) but not with how to go about solving them.

For example, let's examine the issue of profit through creative accounting rather than increased productivity. There is no question that the role of the entrepreneur in business is changing and that most of the advances in industry are going to be refinements rather than broad new offensives. But as Hayes & Wheelwright say, a great deal of effort is expended in improving appearances



rather than improving reality.

The American Production and Inventory Control Society, for example, publishes a large volume of professional papers each year. Inevitably, there are a dozen or so new variations of the Economic Order Quantity formula for calculating production run sizes. Unfortunately, while it may be mathematically true that a run size should be 2474 instead of 2389, and it may be an interesting intellectual exercise to discover this fact, it is also true that this kind of refinement is totally irrelevant to 99.9999% of the production situations to which it might be applied.

EOQ formulas assume that we know our costs precisely, but overheads, the cost of paperwork, even actual raw material prices are based on standards which, even if they were absolutely correct at the time they were first developed, change daily but most companies only update standard costs once per year. Accurate manipulation of inaccurate data does not yield an accurate result. Put APICS will undoubtedly continue to publish these papers.

When our company was a part of Lenox, the corporate vice president in charge of this division used to place a great deal of emphasis on the "Factory Output" figure, assuming that it was an accurate measure of productivity. But in any given month, a substantial percentage of that output consisted of imported items received and transferred to finished goods, even though we failed to contribute anything to their manufacture. We could also inflate and deflate the figure simply by transferring raw materials back and forth between raw materials and work in process ON PAPER, even if the materials themselves never moved at all.

Hayes & Wheelwright are talking out of both sides of their mouths. In their discussion of capacity cushions, they present a simple formula for calculating the depth of the cushion. They follow this with an explanation of the shortcomings of the formula. Clearly it is impossible to precisely calculate the cost of producing one additional piece, particularly in a company where that piece might be either an ice tong or a coffee urn. Even if you could nail down the most opportunity cost, the direct costs would still only be estimates.

Ultimately they tell us that the formula is only meant to illustrate that there is a relationship between increased productivity and the cost of increasing it. The formulations for computing this are almost as varied as the EOQ formula described earlier. But the authors then fall into the same trap, providing an even more elaborate formula as an alternative. If the formula is only meant to illustrate general relationships, why spend the time to present and discuss it in even more excruciating detail?

If the readers of this book do not already know that in general terms we must balance set-up costs vs inventory carrying costs, safety stock and rapid delivery vs inventory cost and the risk of obsolescence, cost of capital investment vs improved efficiencies, they are unlikely to spend the time to work their way through its sometimes turgid prose in any case. Certainly they are unlikely to undergo economic revelation through examination of formulae of geometric demand growth with a dozen variables. Achieving an extra decimal point in an "educated guess" is an academic rather than pragmatic exercise.

On the other hand, the authors are right on the mark in their general remarks about the confusion about the role of manufacturing within most organizations and the tension and misunderstanding that exists among manufacturing, finance, and marketing. Their examples of common areas of misunderstanding can be found even among us enlightened people at this facility.



The word "planning" has taken on unpleasant connotations in our society in any case, particularly on a national or governmental level. Planned economies are equated with communist or socialist societies. Instead we assume that when a new area of economic exploitation opens up, it is more advantageous to have far too many producers initially and wait for them to shake down to the few best fit to survive. Unfortunately, there are drawbacks as well as advantages to this system.

For one thing, the "fittest" companies are not always those which best suit the consumer's needs, particularly in these days of manufactured demand. Take the videogame industry, for example. Initially there were five major game systems from five different producers: Atari, Intellivision, Coleco, Vectrex, and Odyssey, along with a few minor competitors. Games for one system were not compatible with other systems, newer hardware within the same system could not always use the software for earlier versions. A multitude of software companies flooded the market with cheap imitations of major producer games.

The market passed its saturation point. Only Atari and Coleco had the financial backing to survive when profits dried up, even though Vectrex and Intellivision were in many ways superior products. Owners of outmoded systems discovered that, once their hardware stopped working, they possessed a large, expensive collection of software that could not be used. The waste of resources is obvious.

The US government is unlikely to engage in the kind of national industrial planning that is evident in Japan, and for that and other reasons, there is inadequate long range planning within the business community. With the average executive changing employers every few years, what incentive is there to be concerned with long range plans which will not yield benefits until after he or she has departed? It is more advantageous to achieve short term improvements and move on before the shortsightedness of their actions becomes evident. Let the successor deal with them. The "Kangaroo Theory" of career advancement is based upon knowing when to jump to a new job.

The relationship between long range planning and capital investment should be self-evident, but there has been a shift in the nature of the importance of capital. Capital is no longer the commodity in short supply. Galbraith (in THE NEW INDUSTRIAL STATE) describes the evolution of economic forces. Under the feudal system, free land was in short supply. As the Industrial Revolution took hold, capital was in short supply and replaced land as the commodity of scarcity. But with the onset of scientific management under Taylor and others, and particularly with the growing importance of information management, trained and motivated personnel have become the dominant factor. It is people who are now in short supply, or at least people with the training and ability to make management decisions. Capital investment or the lack thereof has a significant impact on some industries (steel production, for example) but an even more important consideration is investing in the people who can make accurate decisions regarding the investment in and use of capital equipment and processes.

Peter Drucker (TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT AND SOCIETY) pointed out that the traditional entrepreneur is no longer a viable force in the business world. Management is increasingly a team rather than individual effort. He defines long range planning in this context as "the continuous process of making present entrepreneurial (risk-taking) decisions systematically and with the best possible knowledge of their futurity, organizing systematically the efforts needed to carry out these decisions against the expectations through organized systematic feedback." Hayes & Wheelwright would probably not argue with this, but while their discussion supports the view that long range planning is inadequate, they largely



ignore the question of developing the ability to integrate short term decisions in the long term plan. It is not enough to invest in state-of-the-art equipment. The correct equipment must be acquired at the correct time to fit in with the long term movement of the company within the marketplace.

Drucker's arguments are directly to this point. He observed that "most businessmen still believe that these decisions are made by 'top men'...but this reflects yesterday's rather than today's reality, let alone that of tomorrow...The business enterprise of today is no longer an organization in which there are a handful of 'bosses' at the top who make all the decisions while the 'workers' carry out orders. It is primarily an organization of professionals of highly specialized knowledge exercising autonomous, responsible judgment."

I know of a local business, for example, where the sole proprietor insists on making every significant and many insignificant decisions involving his business, even though it has increased in size and complexity beyond the capacity of a single individual to handle the diversity of problems that occur on a day to day basis. The result has been a continuous turnover of people in top management positions, either fired for exercising individual judgment or resigning because they could not deal with the frustration. Robert Townsend (UP THE ORGANIZATION) correctly points out that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level within an organization, not the highest.

Hayes & Wheelwright refer to Servan-Schrieber's book, THE AMERICAN CHALLENGE, which stressed that management style as practiced in the US is much more flexible, enthusiastic, and effective than that of Europe. Servan-Schrieber spends most of his book insisting that technology, resources, and capital investment are not the strong points of US business, that European industry is in some ways ahead of us in these areas, but that the personnel resources and the utilization of those resources in this country is far superior. Nevertheless, the bulk of Hayes & Wheelwright deals with capital questions, not with management style.

It is ironic that while we tend to think of the faceless masses of Asia, and the rigidity of their society, their business atmosphere is actually less depersonalizing than our own. The Japanese manager makes a point of involving all of his employees in the well being of the organization as a whole, rather than viewing labor as just another commodity to be bought and sold. It is also ironic that in a country that prides itself on rugged individualism, the typical citizen belongs to half a dozen social, professional, or political organizations. We are the greatest "joiners" in the world.

The move to a more flexible, involving management style is not always smooth. For one thing, when more and more people have to be consulted in order to reach a decision, each decision takes longer to make. Many managers find it difficult to deal with this structure because they are used to an authoritarian, hierarchical pattern. The domineering, nasty individual does have an advantage. A Brandeis study concluded that "supercritical people really do give the impression that they're smarter" even if they are not. The study went on to say that "ruthless critics are seen as insightful but mean, brilliant but cruel... On the other hand, those who have something positive to say are considered to be undiscerning but affable, plodding but friendly." This fuels the authoritarian personality and makes it that much more difficult to achieve change.

The authoritarian personality needs to operate in a hierarchical system with clearly defined lines of authority, an orderly, predictable arrangement of jobs, clear and detailed job descriptions, sanctions against dissent. This satisfies



the dominance-submission needs of authoritarianism. The authoritarian is loyal to his or her superior, and demands the same from subordinates as a prerogative of office, rather than something to be earned.

European industry is at least as authoritarian as is our own. On this point, there is parity. Where the US is potentially a much stronger competitor is that our society at least gives lip service to an egalitarianism that is unknown in Europe. German industrialists view imported labor as a commodity: they are unlikely to consider training these people for middle management positions. Nor are women generally a significant factor in the European business community. Changing laws and social standards in this country are at least theoretically setting the stage for a full integration of our business world, so that talented people from any background will be able to participate.

Potentiality and actuality are not the same. A study conducted by Rensselaer-Polytech this year showed that a female's chances for promotion are related to her given name. The least likely women to get a management job offer were named Cheryl, Jennifer, Michelle, and Dawn. Those most likely were named Ethel, Myrtle, Mildred, and Esther. Nor are names the only factor that leads to misuse of personnel resources. In *THE ANDROGYNOUS MANAGER*, Alice Sargent concluded that "There is evidenced that organizations encourage women to remain in a dependent, passive role. In one study, a researcher asked people to evaluate the actions of a male manager who moved quickly to solve a problem. Men and women alike rated him effective. But when the researcher changed the manager to a woman, people said the manager was too directive and too pushy. In another study, a woman manager who helped an employee solve problems at home was rated high for showing consideration. But a male manager doing the same thing was described as wishy-washy."

Some corporations seem to have an unofficial policy against promotion from within, which even further hampers the opportunity to develop people with long term commitments to the company. Robert Townsend commented upon this as well. "Most managements complain about the lack of able people and go outside to fill key positions. Nonsense. Nobody inside an organization ever looks ready to move to a bigger job. I use the rule of 50 percent. Try to find somebody inside the company with a record of success (in any area) and with an appetite for the job. If he looks like 50 percent of what you need, give him the job. In six months he'll have grown the other 50 percent and everybody will be satisfied."

Hayes & Wheelwright DO comment on the excess mobility of our society. When an individual is changing jobs and/or companies every three years, he or she never has the opportunity to learn one job thoroughly, has no long term commitment to the company or department, and is unlikely to think in terms of lengthy programs. This person measures success in terms of advancement and salary rather than in accomplishments. There is a tendency to "go with the flow", "not rock the boat", and to adopt "safe" opinions. Robert Presthus did an impressive study of the psychology of the individual within an organization twenty years ago (*THE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIETY*) in which he predicted a diminishment in the effectiveness of the American business community. Among other things, he pointed out that "in many sectors, personal and ideological conventionality have become prerequisites for jobs that once required only technical skill and adequate performance." Just this past week a manager whom I know personally told me that when he dealt with Republicans he was for Reagan, and when he dealt with Democrats he was for Mondale. When I asked him whom he was going to vote for, his reply was, "The same as you."



Increasing fears about job security strengthen the drive to conformity. Many managers become jealous of their own prerogatives, have secret systems to get their work done which they guard from peers and subordinates alike. Some are afraid to be outside of the company premises for fear that they will be upstaged by rivals from within their own department or without. The fact is that your subordinates SHOULD have their eyes on your job. If they don't, they're probably not doing their own.

The increased complexity and specialization of managerial activity is not without its drawbacks either. "Specialists disturb the equilibrium of the organization by fighting among themselves about resources and recognition. (Presthus). As activities within the organization become more specialized, individual managers are less able to understand the problems of other departments, and conflict results. This is given rise to the need for "management generalists", people with broadly based backgrounds in manufacturing, finance, and marketing.

One of the more pertinent quotes from Hayes & Wheelwright addresses this point. "The management training programs and organizational structures adopted by Japanese companies add to their flexibility. Broadly trained managers who operate without rigid job definitions in a mutually cooperative environment communicate better and find it easier to make the adjustments necessary during periods of rapid change."

The difficulty is not that we don't know what the problems are. I doubt there are many businessmen in this country who don't realize that capital investment and research and technology are the keys to future competitiveness. Getting people to change the way they operate is the major stumbling block, and it is one that the authors don't address at all. Servan-Schrieber said that the single strongest advantage of US business is that we have comparatively decentralized decision making. Japan is already even more decentralized in its management than are we. If we don't watch out, Europe will pass us by as well.

A parting shot at the discussion of Japanese management methods. The specre hovering over US management of late has been the increasing effectiveness of Japanese large scale manufacturing techniques, particularly "Just-In-Time" inventory management. It is largely forgotten that JIT is an invention of US management, jused more effectively in Japan because of certain other advantages. Toyota's "Kanban" or Zero Inventory system works because Toyota ties in a small number (less than 100) suppliers to its own production system, all of whom are located geographically convenient to their production facility. General Motors must deal with almost 3000 vendors, scattered across the country and the world, most of whom deal with more than one customer. Seen in those terms, Toyota is not the great managerial braintrust that it is often portrayed as being.

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The following is taken from BOARDROOM REPORTS:

"Using the wrong product name can be a disaster in foreign countries. The Chinese characters pronounced "Coca Cola" mean BITE THE WAX TADPOLE. In Spanish, Chevrolet's "Nova" means IT DOESN'T GO and Ford's "Fiera" means UGLY OLD WOMAN. The word "gift", used in many product names, is German for POISON."

"By 1980 all power (electric, atomic, solar) is likely to be virtually costless."

---Henry Luce, 1956

"1930 will be a spendid employment year." ---US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, 1929



# ELIZABETH events

STRANGE FRUIT (reprinted from WILD FENNEL edited by Pauline Palmer, 1975)

My grandparents on my father's side were immigrants who came originally from a farming region near Naples. They settled in Esmond, Rhode Island, in a predominantly Italian neighborhood, and adjusted the area to their own inclinations rather than their behavior to the environment. Although it was a typical suburban home, they planted fruit trees, cultivated a large plot of land as a garden, and kept a variety of livestock, particularly chickens. As a very young child, I occasionally was brought to visit my grandparents, but the language barrier and the basic difference in our lifestyles was sufficient to keep us rather far apart. I was, however, captivated by the garden, long rows of corn that towered over me, neat lines of carrots, beans, radishes, onions, and tomatoes -- particularly tomatoes.

There were two areas I stayed away from entirely. The first was my grandmother's canning basement. I was only cajoled down into that dark, moist basement a single time, and I have a vague recollection of apparently endless rows of canned foodstuffs, tomato sauce, whole tomatoes, peppers, etc. It was all acrawl with insect life, ants, centipedes, spiders, and more loathesome creatures and my single visit gives me cold shudders to this day.

Neither did I like the hen house. The first few times we visited, my grandfather would take me out there to peek under the hens and steal an egg or two. The puffy little near-mothers would squawk a bit, sometimes following us about with an incessant angry cackling. My mischievous nature was captivated by my grandfather's ability to sneak eggs out almost without the setting hen realizing what was going on. But on the fourth or fifth visit, my grandmother decided that we were all going to stay for a fresh chicken dinner.

As it happened, I was playing outside with my younger cousin at the time. I suspect he was four and I would have been five, almost six years old. My grandmother disappeared into the chicken house, only to emerge a few minutes later with a squawking bundle of feathers held firmly by the feet. She crossed the yard to the stump where we were playing, draped the chicken across it, and chopped the head neatly off with a single blow of a broad bladed knife. Tossing the still flopping chicken aside, she admonished us to watch where it went, then vanished into the house.

My cousin was obviously inured to the sight of a headless, blood spurting chicken running hither and thither about the yard for the several minutes necessary for its life energy to run down. I wasn't. I took it calmly enough, never had nightmares or anything of that sort, but I never ventured into the henhouse again.



All of which brings us to my visit a couple of years later. We had moved out of Rhode Island, and visits to my grandparents had become considerably less frequent. I was in school now, considerably more in possession of my wits, but still rather nervous about the visit. Several of my other cousins had by now had the same experience, some with rather hysterical reactions, so steps had been taken to prevent exposing us any further to the basic facts of life and food.

Since several of my relatives were going to be visiting at the same time, my grandmother was planning a large chicken dinner. Before we arrived, she gathered six plump birds from the henhouse, methodically wrung their necks, then hung them from a big fruit tree beside the kitchen. Presumably this allowed them to flop about as much as they desired without getting blood all over the yard, and without making it necessary for her to hunt for the grisly remains when their death throes had concluded. She had just finished plucking the last of them when we arrived, and they still dangled in the breeze as we piled out of the car.

Everything went well that day, the meal was excellent, and no one -- least of all myself -- realized that I had been victim of a grossly incorrect interpretation of what was going on. The following Monday morning, I found myself in school, facing the duty of sharing my weekend's activities with the assembled second grade. So with serious demeanor and great detail, I described my grandmother's wonderful chicken tree, on which she grew chickens without feathers, that tasted just like real chickens, but which did not have to be killed.

I often wondered years later what interpretations my own son put on things he saw in his early year-. It was probably an entirely different world from the one I lived in.

BUT YOU ALREADY SAW THAT! from "Learning to Live in Lawton" originally published in GRANFALLOON, edited by Linda Bushyager, 1971.

One of the first things I had to do when the Army transferred me to Ft Sill, Oklahoma, was to register my car. Knowing the propensity of bureaucrats, I assembled the following documents: car registration from home state, drivers license, military identification card, insurance policy, insurance policy holder card, ownership papers, Sheila's license, her ID, a list of relevant numbers such as motor serial number, year and make of carburetor, previous year's registration, birth certificate, social security cards, temporary registration sticker, orders assigning me to Ft Sill, promotion orders, certificate of auto inspection, and a few other odds and ends. Then I very carefully drove up to the little building where such nefarious activities are conducted. A sign struck my eye. I wiped my eye and found no injury, so I proceeded to read the sign:

"To register your POV (privately owned vehicle) follow these simple steps:

1. Take three copies of the pink IBM card. On the first, fill in blocks 1,2,3 and 8. On the second, fill in blocks 4,5,7 and 9. On the third, fill in no blocks but sign on line 3. DO NOT SIGN ON LINE 4, MARKED SIGNATURE!!! Use black ink only.
2. Take one set of blue IBM cards. These are made with carbons already in them. Use a black ballpoint pen and press down firmly. Fill in all items.
3. Take one copy of USAFACFS Form 32, "Application for Registration of POV." Do not fill in unless block 3 of the first pink card you filled out is over \$1300. Do not fill in block 7 unless block 9 of the second pink IBM card you filled out corresponds EXACTLY to block 2a of the blue set.



4. Take 9 copies of USAFACFS Form 1344. Fill out all odd-numbered blocks plus numbers 1,3 and 5. Do not sign. You must sign this in the presence of the registry clerk.
5. Take one paper clip and attach the blue set to your drivers license and registration. Set them aside.
6. Use a second paper clip to attach your insurance policy, notification of date of expiration of insurance policy, and bill of sale.
7. Use a third paperclip to attach USAFACFS Form 32 ON TOP of USAFACFS Form 1344.
8. Check all entries for completeness, then take all forms, plus other documentation, to the clerk at the appropriate booth.

Well, it only took forty minutes to fill in all the various forms, and I had all the proper documents, so I soon filed inside and was faced by four booths. I found the one marked Second Class Citizens E6 and below for those with social security numbers ending in even digits. The line was short, I was second, so it was only 48 minutes before I reached the counter and thrust my documentation forward. A bored looking WAC corporal gathered them up.

As I looked on with dismay, so help me, she threw away all nine copies of USAFACFS Form 1344 which I had so laboriously filled out. "They're obsolete." It figured. "Here, fill out these new ones." Yes, indeed, the Army had replaced USAFACFS Form 1344 with USAFACFS Form 1455. Said forms were not, it goes without saying, available at the entrance.

Cursing silently, I began filling out forms. And wouldn't you know, in the middle of the ninth, my pen ran out. I groped around in my pockets. Another pen! But this was a felt tip.

"No, it has to be a ballpoint."

"Well, could I borrow one, Miss?"

"Corporal."

"Could I borrow one, Corporal?"

"Mine's a Bic. It only writes blue." I said something unmilitary and the man behind me in line (who had forethoughtedly carried with him a folding chair) loaned me his. "I never come into one of these places without a chair and a dozen black ballpoint pens," he told me.

Twenty minutes later, I braved her wrath again. "Here you are," I said.

She shuffled papers a while. "Let's see your ID." I showed it. "You married?" I confessed. "Wife's ID." I handed it over. "Wife's license." I handed. "Marriage certificate." I gulped. "That's all right," she said. "Just send us a photostat within thirty days or your registration is revoked." I waited. "Do you have an extension certificate on your insurance?" I thought.

"Yes, it's right here. See? Starkweather and Shepley renews your insurance policy."

"Yes," she said. "But when does it expire?"

"When I stop paying or die."



"You don't understand. I need an actual stated date for this form. The form won't go through the computer without a date."

I accepted the logic of this statement. "I have it in here somewhere," I said, indicating the three inches of documents I still held. "Couldn't you continue to process me while I look for it?"

"I suppose."

I shuffled paper, occasionally handing her documents as she called for them, stalling, because although I didn't have her stupid certificate with a date, I did have a wristwatch and an idea. It was almost quitting time. The man behind me had long since given up for the day.

Finally she handed me back a variety of documents and picked up a yellow bumper sticker. "Now, just that date of expiration and you can have this."

"But I showed it to you already."

For the first time, she was ruffled. "No you didn't."

"Sure I did. Remember? Just after you asked for the last five digits of my motor number and just before you asked me for the color of my eyes."

She blinked. "But..."

I forged on. "It was 31 May 1972. Right?"

"Actually, no, I..."

"It was at the bottom of a page. I can find it again for you if you like. It'll only take a few minutes."

She glanced at the clock. "It's quitting time."

"Gee, I'm sorry. I won't keep you any longer than I have to. Here it is." I handed her my insurance policy. She set down the bumper sticker to pick it up. I picked up the sticker and shuffled into my wad of papers.

"I don't see any date," she muttered.

"I'm sorry. I guess that isn't the right one after all. Let me look again."

"I have to close this window."

"But I don't want to get you into trouble for issuing this to me," I waved the yellow sticker, "for not getting all the information." She glared at me.

"I didn't..." "Maybe I left it in the car," I said. "I'll be right back." But when I came back a few minutes later, the window was closed. But the sticker was in my hand and soon after was on my car...

You just have to know how to speak the language.

"I don't need bodyguards."

---Jimmy Hoffa, 1975



# THE NEW PULPS

I confess to a sneaking fondness for the old pulp adventure magazines. I have avidly bought and read each and every paperback reprint of the melodramatic adventures of Secret Agent X, Dr Death, the Spider, Operator Five, Dusty Ayres and his Battle Birds, G8 and His Battle Aces, and everything else I could find. There was an optimism in this crudely written, chauvinistic literature that is appealing in a masochistic sort of way. But with the death of the pulp era, the pulp adventure hero gave way to more realistic successors. Or did he?

The pulp adventure - whether mystery, war, sports, western, or whatever - was characterized by a two-fisted, relatively unsophisticated hero. The villains were always obvious and no one shed a tear when one of them perished. The women were unabashed sex objects, even the occasional villainess intent upon seducing the hero on her way to world domination. There was a casual disregard for verisimilitude, logical development of plot, and an emphasis on melodrama, and frequently superscience -- usually very very bad superscience. But have the pulp heroes all disappeared? No way.

Paperback houses have revived the pulp hero with a vengeance. There are any number of detective-crime series, usually with the protagonist's nickname -- the Terminator, the Destroyer, the Executioner, the Penetrator. There is even a recent Doc Savage clone being published under the label, "The Viking Cypher". There are western heroes, such as Lobo, and pure science fiction series such as the Richard Blade books, Balzan of the Cat People, and others. Many of these series are sold by Lyle Kenyon Engel, who establishes the main plotline and pseudonym, then jobs the individual volumes out to different writers, many of them familiar names in the SF field, like Gerard Conway, Roland Green, Robert Lory, Ray Nelson, Ron Goulart, and others. Even the series not overtly SF often lapse over into the genre.

One of the few series which appears to be written exclusively by a single author is The Death Merchant. It features an unchanging character in a long (over 60 volumes to date) series of adventures, each subject to a strict formula, with a large volume of blood and carnage, a tough hero who always triumphs, and a cast of villains with no saving grace whatsoever.

Richard Camellion is the Death Merchant, originally a hit man for a prominent MAFIA family. The first novel was probably not meant as the springboard for a series, but its sequel, OPERATION OVERKILL, altered his background dramatically and set the tone for the rest of the series. Now Camellion is a secret operative for the US government, one of those shadowy agents whose existence can never be acknowledged because he must work outside the confines of constitutional law in order to safeguard his homeland. In this adventure, the Joint Chiefs of Staff are in league with a billionaire industrialist in a plot to assassinate the President and seize control of the government. Camellion disguises himself by means of pills which turn him black (bad science fiction, needless to say) and infiltrates the magnate's fortress in order to foil his plot.



Super science is a major ingredient in the next adventure, THE PSYCHOTRON PLOT. The Russians have established a secret base in Egypt where they can experiment with an apparatus that telepathically hypnotizes entire populations. Camellion singlehandedly destroys this base, but the machine is entirely forgotten in time for the next adventure, THE CHINESE CONSPIRACY, another attribute of the pulp adventure. In this adventure, Red Chinese agents kidnap a scientist who has built a working anti-gravity device and installed it in a spaceship that can travel in excess of the speed of light. Needless to say, the rescue is successful, and the spaceship is conveniently forgotten in time for the next adventure.

The mutated virus which might wipe out mankind is in the hands of a demented Caribbean dictator in SATAN STRIKE, but our hero arrives in the nick of time. He is also able to infiltrate Albania after a group of exiled Nazis take over the entire country and prepare to launch a nuclear war during which they can reunite Germany. The author, Joseph Rosenberger, then began producing a steady stream of formula adventures, many of which were simply rather violent versions of standard spy plots, but many of which were marginally or even overtly science fiction.

In THE BILLIONAIRE MISSION, for example, another magnate has possession of a machine which can read personal auras. Camellion foils him as well, but not until after the White House is totally destroyed. In THE LASER WAR, the bad guys build a gigantic superweapon that projects a cone of destruction five hundred feet in width, planning to use it to dominate the world. Nazi fugitives hiding in Brazil surface in THE MATO GROSSO HORROR, armed with a special drug that enables them to control hundreds of minds by remote control in their efforts to kill the pesky American.

Camellion must not only face mutated humans in INVASION OF THE CLONES but must also defeat in combat a squad of supersoldiers cloned from himself and brought to full maturity and training within a matter of days. Russian scientists are shocked in THE ZEMLYA EXPEDITION when they learn that within twenty years the Earth is going to shift on its axis. They build a secret underground city in the Arctic from which they expect to be able to rule the world after the tipover, but Camellion is able to destroy the entire base as well as get the facts back to the US. Which promptly forgets the entire problem in time for the next adventure.

In ARMAGEDDON USA right wing fanatics explode an atomic bomb in the Gulf of Mexico as a warning of retribution if their demands for domination of the US are not met. Having triumphed again, Camellion is then off to India to explore a tomb of alien creatures shipwrecked on our world. The tomb is equipped with anti-gravity, cold light, and a mental telepathy machine, all devices which Camellion discovered or stole in earlier volumes and subsequently forgot. But the alien tomb is such a good idea that he discovers another one in POLE STAR SECRET, but this time there are live aliens as well.

Rosenberger thought about space increasingly for the next several volumes. In THE ENIGMA PROJECT, the US launches satellites equipped with city destroying laser beams and a new weapon which projects a beam of paralysis. Another satellite, this one armed with a functioning particle beam weapon, crashes in the jungle in THE SURINAM AFFAIR. The aliens return in SHAMBHALA STRIKE- this time in a base under Tibet. They reveal that, in addition to possessing telepathy and enormously long lifespans, they can and do induce artificial mutations in human stock. A second alien race shows up as well, and Camellion learns that humans were



originally brought to Earth from breeding farms on Mars. Ancient astronauts indeed.

Rosenberger discovered invisibility next, featuring invisible submarines in OPERATION MIND MURDER and THE BERMUDA TRIANGLE ACTION, and other invisible items in THE BURNING BLUE DEATH and BLUEPRINT INVISIBILITY. In this last, he also treats us to a case of spontaneous human combustion. The aura reader appears again in DEADLY MANHUNT.

The Russians are back again in ISLAND OF THE DAMNED, this time tapping the collective unconscious of mankind (appropriately enough) as well as reading the minds of cadavers. There are stolen atomic bombs in THE RIM OF FIRE CONSPIRACY and THE FOURTH REICH, another adventure story device that has been horribly overdone. The inventor of a psychic amplifier is kidnapped by Russians in THE PSIONICS WAR.

The superscience became a bit more restrained after that, but THE HELLBOME THEFT features hand held atomic bombs in the hands of Libya. Drugs with unknown properties are Rosenberger's subject in THE INCA FILE. By now, of course, the author is running out of countries in which Camellion might have an adventure. It is to be hoped that he doesn't wind up adventuring in space. An aircraft that is right out of a Frank Paul painting is the object of saboteurs in THE FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX.

THE JUDAS SCROLLS are the writings of Judas Iscariot, instrumental in a plot to destroy the influence of the Vatican. A super computer is developed by the US but the only man who understands it is kidnapped by the Russians in THE SILICON VALLEY CONNECTION. Revolutionary new neurotoxins that can bring the world to its collective knees appear in THE BURMA PROBE and APOCALYPSE USA. Immortality is within reach in THE METHUSELAH FACTOR. And the series continues even now.

Great science fiction they are not. Mediocre science fiction they are not. They aren't even particularly good spy adventures. They are, however, very typical of the tough action fiction that reigned in the days of Doc Savage and The Shadow. Although the humor, such as it is, generally hovers at the level of crude jokes and alliterative pejoratives, there is one short bit that I do treasure.

In one of the adventures, Camellion is being hunted through a giant warehouse by several score professional killers. In order to cover his tracks and cause general confusion, he starts a fire which quickly spreads throughout the building. The bad guys go into a panic, running back and forth, bumping into Camellion and one another, unable to distinguish good guys from bad. Suddenly Camellion is possessed by the urge to rear back and shout "Theatre!" in the crowded fire.

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#### Corollaries to Murphy's Law & Others

Friends come and go but enemies accumulate.

When in doubt, mumble. When in trouble, delegate.

The other line always moves faster.

Nature always sides with the hidden flaw.

An ounce of image is worth a pound of performance.



# ELABORATE LIES

## FRIENDSHIP

BRETT COX .....

I think that one of the reasons people have trouble forming and maintaining friendships might not be fear of rejection so much as fear of disappointment. You touched on this when you said that "I tend to set impossibly high standards for people even though I don't come near to living up to them myself." So do I, and I don't think we're the only ones. Whenever I become friends with someone, I tend to automatically expect them to adhere to the same rigid standards I set for myself (I know that sounds pretentious but I'm trying to be honest), and as a result I'm often disappointed. There've been precious few people I've gotten close to who haven't bitterly disappointed me at one time or another, and as a result I went through a period of being reluctant to get close to anyone. Being rejected is painful, but in many ways being let down by someone in whom you have an emotional investment is just as painful. What I finally had to accept is the regrettable but inescapable fact that human beings are flawed and therefore bound to screw up at one time or another. This doesn't mean you have to (or should) forgive everything, but as you pointed out, you have to expect people -- even your friends -- to make mistakes.

Another thing that I think often causes confusion and disappointment in friendships is simply on what basis they're established. Most friendships seem to begin because a) two people happen to be in the same place at the same time, or b) two people discover they have the same interests and desires. The first of these is often the case with children. When I was in elementary and primary school, my "best friend" was the kid who lived next door to me, and when he moved to another part of town and I transferred to another school, the "friendship" died. And it happens with adults as well. One of my closest present day friends insists that the only reason people ever become friends is because of this kind of propinquity, and once they become physically separated, the friendship ends. I don't believe this, but I think a lot of people do, consciously or unconsciously.

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The opposite side of the coin is people coming together because of shared interests, of which SF fans are an excellent example. But this isn't enough either. How many of us have gotten incredibly tight with someone because we both thought that STAR TREK lives, or that Farlan Ellison was the last American hero, or whatever, only to find that's all we had to bind us? There was a time in my life when all of my friends and acquaintances were fans who lived elsewhere, and the closest friend of all was one whose tastes and opinions in books, music, movies, politics, etc was almost identical to mine. But once we both started enjoying a more active existence in the mundane world, we drifted apart, and I haven't heard from him in several years.

The truth, it seems to me, is that friendship is every bit as much a "leap of faith" as getting married or believing in God. I became involved with a person whom I consider my best friend as a result of the two factors I mentioned earlier-- we were both English majors at the same college; we both liked SF; and we both wanted to write. But as we've gotten older I've found that there are as many differences as similarities between us in terms of taste and interests and personality. Yet our friendship has deepened. If a true bond is there, it really doesn't matter what either party thinks about anything.

As for male-female friendships being stymied by the pressures of sex, well, just as sad is the opposite situation of a sexual/romantic relationship being stymied by friendship. I've never had any trouble forming friendships with women, and I'm convinced that this is why I often had difficulties forming romantic/sexual relationships. Too many women (and men too I suppose) seem to think that you can be friends or lovers but never both. Which results all too often in both kinds of relationship being short circuited.

((You lost me toward the end there. I cannot imagine a lasting romantic relationship that did not have friendship at its base. The person you consider your lover damned well had better be your best friend as well.)))

JOY HIBBERT.....

A penfriend confided in me a wish to be married so as not to be lonely. What can I say to persuade him that it is as easy (if not easier) to be lonely in a marriage than out of it. As a single person, he is at least entitled to go out and find company, but our society demands that a married couple be everything to each other. Even if the actual relationship is perfect, there are going to be times when one of the couple is going to be too ill, depressed, or tired to be good company. or simply times when he/she is at work or similar.

I think friendship is embarrassing because it can strike at any time, and can't be locked away. You meet a nice man, fall in love, get married. Then that's it. Until one of you dies, or unless you split up, you are seen as being in love with that man. people put stereotypes around you, and that's that. Finished. Forever you are his and he is yours...Friendship is different. You can have lots of friends. It's all very uncertain and threatening. There's also the point about friendship with people other than your partner being a form of infidelity. A couple should be everything to one another. if one of you feels the need for friends then there's something wrong. Friends can make unexpected demands upon you, and friendship needs to be worked at. There's a lot of inertia in marriage.

One of the sadnesses of friendship is the fact that if the other person won't put it into words, you can never be certain of how they feel. I suffer from this quite a lot, liking a person deeply, yet never knowing how they feel in return. There's a young man I've been friends with, in my opinion, for three years. I never knew whether he felt the same, or whether I was just a sort of fannish



acquaintance. Then he moved to a place of his own, had a phone put in, and who was the first person he chose to call on his new phone? That's right. Me.

Why is it so threatening to walk up to someone and ask to be their friend? Well, it's difficult to walk up to a person you're sexually attracted to and try to make your feelings known, and a potential friend is worse. If you're rebuffed by a sexually attractive person, you can defend yourself by telling yourself that (s)he is just a body and there are plenty more. To ask someone to be your friend involves admitting that you like them as a person, as a unique individual, and if you are rebuffed, there can be no defense. I do have friends of the opposite sex, however, I also have an open marriage, so it is not necessary for me to worry about these friendships remaining platonic, though they often do.

Men often make friendships to forge alliances, and as women move into the business world, this will become more true of women. This is what these feminist magazines which are actually into putting women in "male" jobs (thus making them less human) call "networking". One such magazine over here, COSMOPOLITAN, believes that men are often more successful in business because on their way up they make connections and exchange favors which become a network in time. Women do not do this (this ties in with the mentor problem mentioned later in your zine) for various reasons including the fact that if they're polite to a man people will gossip (and he may well become a sexual nuisance) and few people in business are female.

Speaking of sexual differences in friendships reminds me of a documentary I saw last year. In it, groups of children were borrowed and told to wait in a room and play. They were told they would be asked some questions later. They were put in the room, which contained a lot of toys, in groups of two boys or two girls. The results were clear. The boy pair said hello, exchanged names, one of them said, "Do you want to play table football?", the other said, "Yes, what color do you want?", and the conversation never got more personal than that. The girls said hello, exchanged names, decided what to play, and before many minutes had passed were telling each other all sorts of things, where they went to school, one mentioned being afraid of going back to school now that she had braces on her teeth, the other said she was sure it'd be ok, and so on. If things are like this at that age (about 7) it's surprising men ever make friends at all.

One more recent problem with making friends is the high visibility of homosexuality. People will no longer assume that someone's feelings are platonic just because (s)he is a member of the same sex.

DAVE ROWLEY.....

I doubt if I ever have truly had a friend. My past seems to be littered with people I knew for a few years then drifted away from. I don't know if it's something to do with me in particular or people in general. I once upset the applecart at work. A workmate asked if I was going on a drinking holiday with the rest of them. I said I would rather spend the money going to a convention and meeting my friends from around the country than going to Austria with them. "But we're your friends, aren't we?" "No, you're my workmates and that's different." I ended up having to point out that workmates are like siblings, someone you are stuck with and have no choice about.

((Of course working with someone doesn't rule out the possibility of friendship, but rivalries, the hierarchical structure, and such make it difficult.)))



JEANNE MEALY.....

It was cheering to read that Al Sirois' best friend is himself, that he knows it. When I think of the number of people who travel the world (physically and figuratively) trying to escape themselves, it's remarkable to find someone willing to speak out in this way. I also appreciated that his definition of maturity is "recognizing when to let the drawbridge down". Ain't it the truth. I see a need for someone to come around and talk to people about the "little things" we all wonder about. Like when do we let that drawbridge down, how do we know if we're grown up, what is right and what is wrong...if only to tell us that we each have to decide, that we can try to share guidelines amongst ourselves (which may just be the answers).

ERIC LINDSAY.....

The trouble with words like "friend" is that everyone uses them, but few try to fit their use to a hard definition. I think Lewis Carroll had a character mention this point about the meaning of words. Obviously, most uses of "friend" would be more meaningfully covered by acquaintance or something equally subdued. When talking of such a topic, we probably should define our terms, or at least be aware of the problems of definition.

I don't believe that friendship is a desirable goal, at least in many present societies. At least, the societies would not think so. A friend is someone whom, if they were in trouble for breaking the law, you would protect (an obviously undesirable characteristic). A friend is someone for whom you will ignore some business commitment (obviously undesirable). With so much personal information spreading through organizational hands, our friends, lovers, and families are increasingly hostages for our conforming to social norms. Since friends will support those who don't conform, this is again undesirable. Increasingly, friendship is seen as irrelevant to our social life -- rapid movement in society is seen as natural despite the uprooting of friendships. It is assumed that any group of random acquaintances can replace any other group. I suggest that the only people for whom this can be really so are those who are fundamentally shallow in their relationships. Or those who see others only as symbols to be manipulated. Manipulation is obviously the important element, where friendship is selected on the basis of social climbing or professional advantage. It is also obviously unstable, since the friends will be dropped when they can no longer confer advantage.

JEAN WEBER.....

I was delighted to see your article on friends, since it seems so few fanzines talk about relationships seriously these days. It's certainly true that the word "friend" seems to cover a lot of variations, but I can't recall people not wanting to talk about friendships per se. Maybe this has to do with a sort of prior selection of people I talk to. Certainly I would approach few of my workmates to ask their opinion, but the exceptions are people I have no trouble being open with. But then I am also the person who approaches interesting men and asks them out/propositions them/etc. It took me some years to overcome a fear of rejection, but I can't recall having to overcome societal conditioning that the female should wait to be asked.

I quite agree that friendship (like love) can't be assumed; it should be explicitly stated. More misery in interpersonal relationships is perpetrated by assumptions than anything else I can think of. Yes, it can be scary to admit friendship or love, and I've felt the terrors often myself. But it's worse to not know how another feels. I can recall not wanting to ask someone how he felt



about me, us, the future--for fear of getting the answer I didn't want to hear. Ignorance allowed me to pretend all was well. Reason eventually prevailed. I knew intellectually that if he didn't feel about me the way I hoped, I was better off knowing about it so I could deal with it. Surprise! Once I asked, I learned the answer I wanted to hear (on some issues). (On others we negotiated a mutually acceptable solution to a no-win situation.)

Others do not have the power to hurt me, emotionally anyway. I can hurt myself with my reaction to what they say or do. Others can use their knowledge about me to hurt me financially, but that's not what I think you were talking about. These days I think women's friendships may often be of the alliance variety, like men's, especially if the women are single. We help each other for practical reasons and build up a network of contacts and debts to tide us over catastrophes. I can't say whether friendships of this nature are more rewarding emotionally than are men's, but I suspect it's true. I don't feel especially close to my several women friends, but I do feel (a) comfortable admitting my weaknesses -- they won't blab and embarrass me to others, (b) a mutual willingness to help in a practical sense especially if one of us is injured, etc. But if one of us were to move, I doubt we'd keep in touch over the years. We'd replace each other with substitutes.

LEE PELTON.....

I am uncertain how to talk about the definition of friendship, and the uncomfortable nature of admitting same. Most of what you said from personal observation or gleaned from books, makes sense to me, as do many of the things said at the parents' forum. Why indeed is it easy to express friendship to some and virtually impossible to others, though the feelings are almost identical?

When I recently left the state of my birth to move to Chicago, I found some of the leave takings traumatic and others to be as easy as water racing down a gutter. Two friends, both male, have been as close to me as you can possibly get, deleting sexual overtones. When I left, one I felt very comfortable giving a hug goodbye, while saying goodbye to the other had us both standing awkwardly on a sidewalk, rapidly running out of things to say, both of us unable to convey how much our friendship had meant to each other. Why? I can only think of the evolution both friendships had taken as a possible answer. John and I talked about many things, many of them personal, dealing with emotions and the struggle to handle life's shortcomings with as sure a hand as possible. We often played devil's advocate to each other, and often served as sounding boards as we sought to understand where we were, and what we were doing to improve things. Steve, on the other hand, was one to joke with, explore mutual interests in sports, movies, music, humor, and my dependence upon his technical knowledge when it came to buying new audio/visual equipment. Steve and I rarely, if ever, spoke to each other about emotional areas. I knew somehow that he would be uncomfortable discussing it, and left the subject alone when talking to him. Both were very adept mechanically, while I'm rudimentary at best. When things broke down, I KNEW John would come over and fix it, regardless of the time of day.

I miss them both a great deal but how come one gets a hug and one doesn't? Is hugging a more personal thing than a handshake between close friends?

The feminist friend you mention is perhaps dead-on with her observations, but then isn't friendship an amalgamation of many different motivations? Don't we choose to hang around those who like us in turn, respect us for whatever



qualities we have that we personally think are our best? A manipulative personality will always choose being with those whom he/she can manipulate best. That's almost natural selection. A friend once observed that everyone is manipulative to some degree. I found her logic flawless. Few people can exist in a vacuum consisting of work, home, and tv with the mandatory ride to work. We will always be gravitating toward people we think will like us and make us feel welcome.

RICHARD BRANDT.....

I can't help noticing the emphasis on the vulnerability to which friendship makes one open, in the letters this time around, and I think this is another reason for the strengths of friendship in fanzine fandom. At least in days when many fans knew each other solely through fanzines and lettercolumns, you could say anything about yourself to a fellow fan...and know that you literally would not ever have to look him or her in the face. No wonder there's so much openness in personalzines. I know that I myself have written things to fanzines that I would not even want my own family to read. (I don't even like Monica to see my locs until they're in print.) After all, what's the most traumatic thing that can happen if you anger or disgust a fane? You'll get dropped from his mailing list (or hers). You won't have to work with that person, or live with that person. The two of you won't have to studiously avoid eye contact if you find yourselves in the same room. This whole situation has some aspects of analysis, but the most appropriate analogy seems to be the confessional.

((I have to agree with you there. Writing to what is essentially a faceless mass, it is easier sometimes to say things. It is also easier to hide important issues inside more convoluted arguments. Fandom is very much a psychological crutch for many people. You can, however, cause a bit more furor than just being dropped from the mailing list. One fane threatened to bomb my house, and another wrote to tell me he was flying in from California for the express purpose of breaking my nose. He never did show up, though.)))

ALYSON L. ABRAMOWITZ.....

I don't find the commonness of friendships among immediate neighbors and co-workers as indicative of their shallowness. You might make a good case for neighbors, since the only obvious thing we have in common is a similar preference in where to live with possible similarities in social class, allowing one to afford particular neighborhoods. Not terribly good bases for friendship unless coincidence allows for some overlapping interests.

But a co-worker situation is rather different. For one thing, certain professions tend to attract like-minded people. I know my own tends to attract people with curiosity who are into science and reading. A very large percentage like SF and folk dancing. These aren't enough things to make a friendship, but shared interests tend to be where friendships start. People with shared interests have a tendency (with large, obvious exceptions) to have compatible personalities. Combine that with contact for 40+ hours per week and is it surprising that co-workers become friends?

((I think I disagree slightly. Spending that much time with people isn't always conducive to friendship. It might well make you long for novel company. There are people I work with whom I enjoy seeing socially as well, but I would not want to see them frequently socially, and I suspect they feel the same.)))



SUE ANDERSON.....

I have to comment on Ernest Heramia's letter. He's quite a good writer. I like the metaphor of a good friendship as a full grown tree -- you can hang a hammock on it. Of COURSE we get something from our friends -- amusement, wisdom, rides, snogging, ice cream. With any luck we can give our friends something as well.

JOEL ROSENBERG.....

The distinction between "trust" and "rely on" is a key one; I wish I'd pointed it out. Expecting that a friend won't deliberately hurt you isn't the same as expecting that he will meet that train on time.

The big problem with friendships with members of another gender is the matter of sex. What can make things difficult isn't the barrier of gender or of other people's expectations (particularly for those of us who are SF fans, readers, or writers, or some combination -- if we aren't used to being thought of as weird, we haven't been paying close enough attention) -- it's that rhinoceros in the corner, the question of whether or not the people involved are going to be sleeping with each other.

Back in my college days, I saw a lot of games flowing from that question --- not always nice ones: men using quasi-platonic friendships as a way of getting a woman into bed, and then abandoning the friendship...women cultivating quasi-platonic friendships with men they new were sexually attracted to them apparently for the payoff of slapping the poor fool down when he made an advance.

Seems to me that the most satisfying friendships, if often transitory ones (then again, most college friendships are transitory) happened when both parties implicitly agreed either "Yes, eventually, probably", "No, but no hard feelings," or "Who knows, maybe?" in the beginning and stuck by it. Sort of like legal contracts; they seem to work best when they don't have to be renegotiated.

My own experience in the six or so years that I've been married is that it's now easier to become casual friends with women, simply because I am, and describe myself as, a happily-married, monogamous man. Nobody involved, including me, has to worry about any side-issues.

((The games that you describe don't seem relevant, since those really weren't friendships, although I'm sure they accurately describe relationships. I think that the reason sex figures so prominently in many cross gender relationships is because everyone, including the participants, thinks it's inevitable. I know some attractive women, some of whom I think very highly of. But even if I were single, the relationship would have to be totally different before I could get romantically or sexually involved with them. I just don't understand how that can be such an important aspect of every pair of people of different gender who want to be friends.)))

EDD VICK.....

My definition of friend does differ from yours in one major respect: I would not call someone a friend that I was not pretty sure would call me a friend as well. It isn't that I wait to call them friends through fear of rejection, but when I find someone is a strongly potential friend, I do start calling them a friend in their presence. I doubt that a one way friendship can exist. True friendship like true love requires two people -- all else is only puppy friendship.



I believe another bar to friendship besides the ones you mentioned is technological advances. Once upon a time many hands were needed to help one person, as in house raising. Now many jobs can be handled by a very few professionals with the right machiner.

ADRIENNE FEIN.....

Some people are better than others at being friends, and this for many reasons such as inborn talent/personality, effort, or simply circumstances. Some people seem naturally to be interested in other people, to find human beings in general likable and interesting. (I suspect these people have happier lives than others, because sincere interest and liking is an attractive quality; others respond to these friendly people in a more friendly way, and so the friendly ones live in a more friendly world.) Some people are naturally more inclined to offer help they seem born with more empathy. Some people seem more approachable than others. On the other hand, if a person wants to, I think to some extent it is possible to develop these qualities.

My sister says a friend is someone you can call at 3:00 am to cry on their shoulders, but since you're a friend of theirs too, you think twice and don't actually do it.

I begin to think that a component of a lot of my friendships is playing amateur shrink for each other. To some extent, I think "friend" means someone who has an ability to do that. That implies all sorts of things such as insight into human nature to understand problems, sympathy/empathy/willingness to listen, some objectivity and self-knowledge to be able to analyze the situation and not just react or protect one's own feelings. And I think the most important talent of all may be knowing when to shut up and not analyze, but only offer a hug.

Gabrielle Burton discusses friendship and community in the chapter on sisterhood in I'M RUNNING AWAY FROM HOME BUT I'M NOT ALLOWED TO CROSS THE STREET. She says we don't take time to form friendships and nurture/nourish them.

I think it was MS (maybe REDBOOK or McCALL'S) had a good article about what one woman's friendship with another meant to her...this was a few years ago. I also dimly recall a woman who was an editor...commenting on professional "friendships". She got frequent supper invitations from a writer to whom she gave assignments--until she switched jobs. More recently I noticed an article box with some fascinating additions to your comments on differences between the sexes when it comes to friendship.

(Box to "Psychologist's Journal" in LADIES HOME JOURNAL, Feb, 1984)

"Girls and boys tend to define friendship differently, according to Kathryn Black, psychology professor at Purdue University. For boys, a friend seems to be a pal or buddy--someone to share activities with. For girls, it's someone to confide in or share secrets with. These differences often continue on into adulthood. Men don't always understand what women mean by being 'close'. Says Dr Black, To a man being close may simply mean sharing a game of tennis while to a woman it implies a certain intimacy."

((Your first point, that people who like people tend to be liked, is true up to a point. But there is a conflict when people are too likable. Personal attitudes and the ability to get along with others are just as important in many roles as



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are technical knowledge, energy, etc. But things become complicated when personal rivalries and neuroses interfere. Let me cite a specific case. I was looking for a replacement for a position in my department that required tact and an ability to wheedle people rather than stand head to head and batter them into submission, but which also required a degree of stubbornness. There was no one in the company with the technical training I needed, and the evolving nature of the job meant that going outside would be just as chancy as choosing someone from within the organization. I eventually talked someone into taking the job who was universally liked, seemed to have the abilities I wanted, and whom I thought I could personally work with minimal friction. Lo and behold, as soon as she was promoted, she began to develop enemies, and as she has increased the prestige of her position, the number and intensity has increased. Some people resent her because they report to her, others because they have to deal with her rather than through someone in a more prestigious position, and some just because of jealousy. She appears to me to have just as friendly a personality as she ever did, but add success, and you're inevitably going to have enemies.)))

UPDATES

MIKE BRACKEN.....

The arrival of MYTHOLOGIES in today's mail is the latest and probably not the last in a series of time-bending events that have happened this summer. It's almost enough to make me consider another issue of KNIGHTS.

In April I was fired from a job I hated (the work was okay; the hours and the people were distasteful) and I've spent the summer doing a number of things I didn't have the time or the opportunity to do while I was employed full-time (and full time meant 50+ hours many weeks, and a variety of weekend work days).

Karin and I applied for and were readmitted to Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville. We'd dropped out about seven years ago when we decided to get married. I've run into people I knew in college and haven't seen in years; I attended Archon 8 last weekend for no apparent reason (after all, nobody seems to remember my name) and ran into two people I hadn't had any contact with for five years or more; and I've actually read a few science fiction magazines the past few months (after about four years of almost total abstention from sf/fantasy reading of any kind). I have two sons now: Ryan (age 4) and Ian (7 months). We live in a mobile home only a few miles from the modular place I lived in when I went to college.

And I write like hell trying to keep all the pieces together. You see, in the past few years I've become a somewhat dirty, but not quite filthy, pro. I've got 170+ sales to my credit--some fiction, some poetry, some non-fiction, a lot of short humor. The checks come in now and then from the "creative writing" and some advertising design and ad writing brings in a few more bucks.

This summer, thanks in part to being fired, I've written and sold a variety of things--had a confession published in July, a mystery short story in August, sold another mystery, and I have a horror story scheduled to appear in one of Charlie Grant's anthologies later this year (probably one of my best stories--keep your eye out for it: "Of Memories Dying" in MIDNIGHT from Tor Books).

((If you bring back KNIGHTS, I'll be happy to contribute to it. If I can throw off the weight of inertia, anyone can.)))



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JEANNE MEALY.....

Do you know of someone named Mary George? She's from Rhode Island, has been living here with Dennis (?) for a few years, and just moved back home. I know it's stretching coincidence, but why not?

((There used to be a local semi-fan named Mary Martin, who went off to Texas after marrying Bill Pride, and she sort of disappeared after that. I suppose it's remotely possible that she remarried and moved again, but I doubt it.)))

SHERYL BIRKHEAD.....

About the most interesting thing I've been doing lately is trying to catch an escaped cockateel. The idiot bird didn't know what a cat was and was almost a snack before it had the sense to glide slowly up to the telephone wire. I've seen it around three times and called a friend to ask what it was and then how to catch it. Naturally since then I haven't seen it, but I dutifully go out each day and run around the yard like a nut calling "pretty bird, pretty bird"-- when even the most myopic of vision shows there isn't any kind of a bird in sight. I haven't progressed beyond the thought of trapping the bird, like what does one do with a bird in a house with four cats and one dog. Of course the CATS know what to do, but that isn't quite what I had in mind.

ROBERT J. WHITAKER.....

I find myself in the same sort of position as Larry Downes. I have tended to read less in recent times in the science fiction field; my reasons are different. I'm still a fan, but I've gotten involved with practicing yoga and various forms of exercise in order to combat a painful back condition resulting from my job in the post office. It's taken a while and much of the pain is gone, but I continue the two hours a day routine of concentrating and stretching and lifting weights in order to end the problem. I still read science fiction and fantasy, but I no longer have the time to zip through a book in two days in my spare time. I often spend a week, two weeks on a single book. And I alternate between reading science fiction and mainstream novels because I often want something other than a "sense of wonder" (and very often that is all that a novel of SF has to offer, and it gets to be not quite enough for me). I tend to like fans more than "ordinary people" as the diversity of interests found in most of them makes fans more interesting than mundanes. So I remain a fan.

I should be getting married in October, on the 31st. The same week, if things go well, I should be in New Haven, Connecticut. A transfer in the post office is being worked on, so I might get out of Delaware after all.

I injured my back as indicated. I was involved in two auto accidents within five weeks, one of them giving me a knee injury which didn't help my back injury any, as some folks saw me using a cane for a period of time at Noreascon. One car was totalled, turning itself over and slamming into a phone pole, leaving me dazed and more painful than before. If I had been wearing a seatbelt, I would have been killed, as the steering wheel of the vehicle was smashed into the seat (I had tumbled over into the passenger side and hurt my arm).

One day that same year the chemical plant behind the post office blew up, and threatened to explode again and level all buildings within five miles. The post office was a mile away. The plant made poly-propylene plastics. I also gave up smoking pot because it was turning me into an asshole. I spent five weeks on tranquilizers in order to get off the substance. I have a personality which is



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inclined to addiction and have to be careful of myself.

I became allergic to all foods containing soy, and soybean byproducts including chicken, pig, and cow. I'm on an awkward seafood only diet.

There's lots more, but this is beginning to turn into a "let's top this" contest. Despite all of this, I remain a cheerfully optimistic sort of person (with some dashes of ironic interjection). The yogic disciplines I have engaged in have altered my perspective. Someone else with my frame of problems and a different mind set might sit around and wait to die.

CHRIS SHERMAN.....

Thank you for sending a copy of MYTHOLOGIES. It's the first fanzine I've seen and/or read besides SFC and LOCUS for several years. As usual, MYTH had a very comfortable feel about it--a nice way to re-touch fandom from this immense distance.

I've joined the ranks of Published Authors. This year has seen three books, college level "computer science" texts published by John Wiley & Sons, that were written quickly and primarily for money. Next year I hope to publish a more serious work on the language Modula-2, and a guide to interactive videodiscs for educators. I'm currently a graduate student at Stanford, pursuing an oblique sort of goal that combines computer science, education, psychology, etc. My primary interest is in computer-controlled/enhanced videodiscs, and to a lesser degree educational software. It was interesting to note how many of your readers are involved in similar fields.

This year I'm working with several people in a genre we call "Artificial Reality". We're trying to create environments that require participatory involvement by one or more humans with a variety of technological toys (computers, stereos, video equipment, holograms). Each environment is "blank" at the beginning, with a tremendous amount of "interactive" potential. The participant can more or less decide whether they want to create a fiction, non-fiction, or hybrid experience, whether to sit back and absorb, fully control the experience, or work with the machines to shape and change information or the presentation of sensory experiences...In short, a multi-sensory video game that has the potential to be game/learning experience/creative endeavor/etc. Needless to say we're just scratching the surface of the possible -- but in many ways it's sfictional, and often more satisfying than reading much of what is currently published.

Do you know who is currently running Apa50, and do you have Roger Sween's address?

((Roger Sween is at 1854 Spruce Drive, Red Wing, MN 55066. He gets MYTHOLOGIES, but I have not yet been able to coax a letter out of him.)))

ALYSON L. ABRAMOWITZ.....

I really enjoyed reading about what had happened to people over the last six years. It HAS been a long time. Six years ago I was living in Pittsburgh, finishing up a long awaited degree. Since then I've moved cross country to Boston, become a safely middle classed computer programmer. Got involved with connecting computers together with networks, which led to Network Architecture and helping to create International Standards. The latter has me doing a fair amount of travel, including Switzerland, Denmark, and England this year.



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((As an update of my own update, I was recently asked if I would be willing to add Advertising Manager to my current title of Materials Manager, and my assistant has also had the company store added to her duties, so my department is swelling across traditional lines. I am now involved in manufacturing, finance, and marketing. We spent this past couple of weeks developing a new production issue release system, writing a radio ad, laying out two newspaper ads, running a display table at a local exposition, developing budgets, setting up sub-contract arrangements with a couple of major manufacturers who cannot keep up with their own demand, creating a pricing policy for the company store, etc. It certainly makes for a varied job.)))

## VIDEO GAMES

ERIC LINDSAY.....

I have to say that I think video games are the greatest time waster the world has ever seen, however I did buy one of the Vectrex gadgets, when a chain store had reduced them to \$99. I've played only the game that came with it, Minestorm, which is fun, but not staggeringly well done. I claim that the reason I bought the Vectrex was because it includes a vector display screen (for those interested, vector displays have traditionally been included in somewhat expensive computer graphics terminals, unlike the raster displays, which work like a TV, used by most home computers). For those even more interested, the Vectrex contains a 6809 microprocessor, 2732 memory chip, a couple of 2114 RAM memory chips, and a sound generator chip.

((VECTREX is now out of business. You can buy the unit locally for under \$50 US and the games for under \$5. I don't know how that corresponds with the Australian dollar. Sure, video games are time wasters, but most people don't manage their time very well in any case. I play video games compulsively, but it doesn't stop me from working more than a full time job, reading virtually all of the SF that comes out, publishing MYTHOLOGIES, writing and selling articles and book reviews, collecting records and making hundreds of hours of tapes, watching movies, having parties, etc. Video games are no more inherently time wasting, than, say, pushing tiny pieces of cardboard around boards of hex squares, or watching television, or going out drinking and dancing, or any of several million other time wasters. To each his or her own.)))

DAVE ROWLEY.....

I enjoyed reading the reviews of video game cartridges. The only system I'm familiar with is Atari, everything else seems to have suffered marketing problems and been left behind. LASER BLAST was fun for the first hour, but I found it to be a bore once the knack of the game had been acquired. SPACE INVADERS is boring; I much prefer MISSILE COMMAND. Is this latter game to prepare us for the "unreality" of nuclear war? Sacrifice Manchester to protect Birmingham and London? The ADVENTURE cartridge took a bit longer to master, and when we had killed the dragons, we would try odd things like using the bridge to get into the battlements. But beware, it's easy to get stuck there. Then there was the trick of shutting dragons inside the golden castle. If you let a dragon chase you and you trap yourself in the lefthand corner of the gate, the dragon will run past you and stay inside (most times). You also forgot to mention the helicopter in SUPERMAN. It can aid or hinder you. My cousin managed to complete the game in 1½ minutes thanks to that kindly copter.



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((In ADVENTURE, there is a secret room in the black castle maze that can only be entered with the bridge. In that room, a black dot can be picked up and carried out. If you carry the black dot to the green room (the one with a dark black vertical line on the left hand side of the screen, a hole will open up in the line. If you then place any two magical objects in front of the hole, and then carry the black dot into the hole, a secret message appears.)))

## THE DONS

JIM MANN.....

Mostly I agree with you, at least to the extent that most of the books you chose would be among my choices. A few scattered comments:

-I was glad to see THE ORPHAN and THE CAPTIVE on the list. Both are good, overlooked books. I didn't think, however, that THE BEAST was as good as the other two.

-You seem to like David Gerrold much more than I do. I found THE MAN WHO FOLDED HIMSELF, for example, to be a tedious copy of "All You Zombies".

-You didn't choose one of my favorite books of last year, THE VOID CAPTAIN'S TALE, which I consider Spinrad's best novel. Then again, those you did pick were very good. (I love THE SNARKOUT BOYS.) You also didn't choose another of my recent favorites, this from a few years ago, TIMESCAPE.

((I'm not sure how I left TIMESCAPE off. It's one of my favorites as well. Remember that the novels were the best of the year. There are many novels left off the list from one year which would have easily displaced books from other years.)))

DAVID D'AMMASSA.....

For the year 1982 you gave a Don award to a book entitled THE SNARKOUT BOYS AND THE AVOCADO OF DOOM. No book by this title exists, however, a book with a similar title may be the one you're thinking of. THE SNARKOUT BOYS AND THE AVOCADO OF DEATH. I know this is a human error and to err is human. To cure the habit of slipping up, we have invented the err conditioner.

ROY TACKETT.....

THE SNARKOUT BOYS AND THE AVOCADO OF DOOM by D. Manus Pinkwater??? D'Amassa, you jest. There ain't no such book. The most amazing thing about the books you select from the past ten years is how few of them I have read. Do you really consider Stephen King's stuff as science fiction? Fantasy, surely.

((Actually, I understand a second SNARKOUT adventure has been published, but have yet to see a copy. Some of King's books are pure SF. FIRESTARTER is about a pyrotic, a pure psi story, as is CARRIE, about a young girl with PK. THE STAND starts off as SF, but ends with supernatural elements. THE GUNSLINGER is SF. THE DEAD ZONE is about precognition, but there's nothing supernatural or fantastic in it. Even THE SHINING could almost be called SF. Despite the movie, the book is not about a haunted hotel. The book makes it quite evident that some of the ghosts are of people still alive, and that there is a different force at work here, perhaps an altered form of reality where what we think of as non-sentient can be sentient, much as the world itself becomes sentient in Susan Cooper's MANDRAKE or Sheckley's short story, the name of which I cannot recall.)))



BEN INDICK.....

Is there really a SNARKOUT BOYS? Your taste remains catholic, and your sheer voracity for the printed word is awe-inspiring. Do you do as much (or any) non-fantasy reading? In "even earlier honorable mentions" you did omit GULLIVER'S TRAVELS. Gotta be fair. I am forced to admit that recently I tried rereading Heinlein's early "Future History" stories. It was a saddening experience. Truth is they were imaginative but lousy writing. I would not dare reread my old favorites UNIVERSE and "Goldfish Bowl". Alas too for what age does to us, a fair amount of my enchantment with Jack Vance's DYING EARTH frittered away when I reread some of it (to discover why his recent stuff seemed less miraculous.

((Approximately 40% of my reading is outside the SF and fantasy fields. We have a substantial library of mystery fiction, contemporary fiction, and non-fiction. I read quite a lot of non-fiction, though not always from cover to cover. I also read a lot of books about management techniques, production control, and assorted business matters, and a lot of magazine articles and technical papers.

I do a lot of rereading. Heinlein didn't drop as far for me as for you, although he did drop. Some authors come out better. I recently reread all of Delany, Avram Davidson, and Arthur Clarke, for example. Delany came out about as I expected (very high) but the individual works that I enjoyed the most were not the same. Davidson came across as much better than I remembered, although his newer stuff is not as appealing. Clarke came across as expected almost to the story.)))

BRETT COX.....

The DONS were interesting and a bit surprising in terms of the books you omitted--TIMESCAPE, THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, and AND CHAOS DIED, to name three, as well as the unfamiliar titles. What, pray tell, is THE SNARKOUT BOYS? One minor factual quibble. THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS was, I believe, published in 1966, not 1965. At least that's the year for which it won the Hugo.

((TIMESCAPE should have been included. See note to Jim Mann. While I greatly admire many works by LeGuin and Russ, the two you named are not my favorites. SNARKOUT is an ostensible young people's story, paperback from Signet, that cannot be described. MOON was published as a serial for 1965 and 1966, and I allotted it to 1965, unlike the Hugo committee))

#### GHASTLY TALES

SUE ANDERSON.....

W. Lambert III could take lessons from my employer. One quote of the weak(minded) is from a letter to a customer who has made some three tries at getting her watch fixed by the store's watch repair department. It's broken again and she has sent it back again. Quote: "...the watch is here and we will try once again to solve the dilemma. At this point in time there's no explanation, but again, I'm going to make sure in my own way that I will check the watch to hopefully eliminate repetition of apparently what occurred before. Our man says the watch was okay when it left, but obviously something is amiss here, and we don't have an explanation for it...But hopefully one more time we'll be able to overcome the problem and then you can have the watch and it will be working satisfactorily."



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The point here is not that this was put into English before being sent, but rather that six years ago it would have gone out in just this form. Progress...

RICHARD BRANDT.....

I'm sure you'll have an endless supply of GHASTLY TALES. They're useful for compiling a shopping list, let me tell you. On my vacation to the Deep South this month, I picked up a couple of genuine Badger Books by Captain W.E. Johns...KINGS OF SPACE, SPIDERS ON MARS, or some such...haven't read them yet. Thanks to you, I've also added "John Muller's" DAY OF THE BEASTS to my collection. Have I mentioned I have several works of Fanthorpe in hardcover? Including Pel Torro's GALAXY 666? Arcadia House's American editions, but what the heck.

((I have several Arcadia editions as well as about 50 of the Badger- Books. The only W.E. Johns titles I have are recent British reprints.)))

BRETT COX.....

GHASTLY TALES is, of course, hilarious, and I hope you continue it as a regular feature. I think my favorite all-time bad line is from an Edgar Rice Burroughs novel whose title I can't remember: "She was hideous and ugly." Interestingly enough, I was quoted that line by none other than James Dickey, Poet in Residence down here at the University of South Carolina and also a big ERB fan.

((To say nothing of being author of DELIVERANCE, which coincidentally my son is currently reading.)))

#### FICTION

JEANNE MEALY.....

I'm sure that Steve Sikora got dozens of responses to his question (does reading breed asocial animals). I wish I had a time machine to go back and check. I actually had trouble learning to read, which may have been caused by my eyes going bad and needing glasses by third grade. Whether I turned to compulsive, hermit-like reading to curry more of the rewards tossed my way, or if I did because I was having trouble handling myself, the world and my family...I don't know. I do know that I hid behind the label of "shy" for too many years. The siren call of the imagination beckons to all, whether they choose to respond and how they do or not. Kids love making things up, having things made up for them -- the whole world is a fantasy, where anything is possible until the rules are learned. Have you ever seen a startled kid blink, then accept what happens? I believe we're seeing the boundaries of possibilities pressing outward at that moment. As long as we continue to fan that spark of belief (even if it's coated with rational skepticism and experience that may claim otherwise), I feel anything is possible.

On the other hand, I have encountered children to whom acting out stories and fantasies was strange. They got into it just fine (with a little help) after a little while. I can easily imagine no one helping kids who aren't initially inclined to make up stories and play-act, and they turn to a less active playground...where THEIR imagination is the breath that inflates the players. It doesn't take much to check books out from the library, to turn pages, to find places to be alone with wondrous tales of derring-do, more mature relatings ("he kissed her." --oh, wow!) with more finesse than the reader can muster at the moment. Even if the family does encourage (or tolerate) childish plays and tales



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of imagination, having them all written presents another element of excitement-- someone who knows more wrote this, and maybe I'll learn something by reading it. I remember scanning many stories and books, looking for useful skills, ideas and ploys that I could transfer to my own bag of tricks. (With five brothers and sisters, heaven knows I needed some.)

DAVID PALTER.....

I do want to comment upon Steve Sikora's hypothesis that "reading breeds asocial animals", and that we all have impaired social functioning as a result of our childhood immersal in SF instead of the neighborhood kiddies. This theory is familiar to me, as my parents also subscribed to it and made herculean efforts during my unhappy childhood to discourage me from my supposedly excessive reading. My father at one point threatened to burn my entire book collection, although he didn't, possibly because he realized that I would very likely be inspired to follow his example and burn the entire house down -- what's good for the library must be good for other possessions as well. I recall one occasion when my parents threw me out of the house so that I would have to do something other than reading; they were terribly disappointed to later discover that I merely went to the local library and read there, instead of engaging in the normal and wholesome childhood activities of Brooklyn, such as stealing hubcaps, assaulting other children, drawing graffiti on walls, etc.

But in fact I'm quite certain that my avid reading of SF did not in any way contribute to the difficulties I had in associating with my fellow children (or later in life, with my fellow adults). No, I didn't associate with these people only because they were not worth associating with, being largely a bunch of fools and lunatics. If I had been deprived of the pleasure of reading the only result would have been to make life more boring. I would never have considered normal socializing as a reasonable substitute in the absence of books. Instead I probably would have just become catatonic, the easiest way to escape from an utterly boring environment. Suicide would also have been a great temptation, and in fact was a great temptation even with the limited access that I had to reading matter. The one truly surprising thing in my life so far is that I am still living -- at no time during my childhood did I ever expect to see the ripe old age of 32.

((Like you, I had little interest in most of the things kids were supposed to find interesting. Sports was rarely of interest, I was not at the time fond of music, and hanging around did nothing for me. I also was pretty contemptuous of most people, and still probably am. The key word is "most". Selectivity is fine, in fact, the opposite is the problem. But there is a danger in retreating too completely from the world. There ARE good, interesting people around, but sometimes it takes some work to find them, and some times their interests are totally different than our own. Reading does not cause social maladjustment, but it sometimes shows that there is a problem, either with the individual or with his or her environment.)))

BRETT COX.....

I enjoyed CRITICAL MASS and am glad you're still keeping up with the field because I'm not. (I'm an English major, I don't have time to read.) I still subscribe to F&SF, read the Wollheim & Carr Best of the Year anthologies, and dip into some original anthologies now and then, but there are still a whole lot of new people out there I don't know anything about. This really hit home when I saw in PW that David Brin's STARTIDE RISING had won the Nebula this year, and I realized that I'd never heard of Brin or his novel.



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Before leaving the subject of books, what did you think of PET SEMATARY? I finally read it this past summer and loved it -- I'd rank it with "SALEMS LOT and THE DEAD ZONE as one of King's best works.

((Sheila thinks THE DEAD ZONE is his best. I still hold out for THE SHINING. I thought PET SEMATARY was about in the middle, above FIRESTARTER and CUJO, about even with CHRISTINE. The collaboration with Straub, THE TALISMAN, is boring.)))

## BUSINESS

ROY TACKETT.....

Why be confused with the case of Nelson and Frank and John (wasn't that a pop song in the sixties)? Fairness is what counts, isn't it? If the workers are satisfied, then management should be happy. Saved the company \$41.

Speaking of which, I heard a most peculiar newsstory on Morning Edition a few days ago. It appears that companies may be losing the right to fire workers. Something about the necessity of job security and all that rot. You can hire me and I can quit but if you fire me I'll sue. Peculiar. According to the story there are 1500 such cases pending in Detroit with several hundred more in California and other odd parts of the country.

Well, hell, even as a blue-collar worker I don't think I approve of that sort of thing. Something is getting awry in the process. Are we coming up with some sort of capitalistic socialism where every worker is entitled to a job whether a job exists for him or not? That bears thinking about.

((But you see, only two of the three workers were right, and the odd man out was probably right.

The news story doesn't surprise me. Japan has had a policy of no firing for years, and they have found ways to make it work, but I'm not sure it can be done in our economy. I believe in Unions, because I think there has to be a counterweight to management (and also because it provides a structure within which to deal with workers). The problem arises when either side of the seesaw is exerting disproportionate pressure. I know a local company with an international reputation that is in danger of closing because the Union there has strangled the company (not that the management is particularly good either). For example, they recently decided to move a table from one part of a department to another in order to increase productivity. There are only two members of the Union authorized to move furniture, and one of them was on a medical leave of absence. They could not move the table until he returned. If they had, there would have been an immediate Union walkout. They happen to be a competitor of ours, so I'm amused, but it indicates a problem that infects some Unions. They will drive their employers out of business rather than compromise. As an aside, the president of this union, which has about 400 members, has his own office inside the factory, wears a white shirt and tie, and never does any labor whatsoever.)))

SHERYL BIRKHEAD.....

Before I get back to classes this fall, I THINK I'll have a chance to see what happens in an office all-of-one-sex when one-of-the-opposite-sex is hired. My summer job has been all female for at least six years, I'm told; the first male is being hired to start in September. It will be interesting to see what happens. The top dog (I refuse to call her the top female dog) is about as disagreeable a



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person (not just female) as I have met and takes great glee in tearing down any and every one as often as she can and frequently for fabricated or minute reasons. It will be an interesting "contest" for many reasons -- male entering a currently female domain. He is also a recent graduate (from her alma mater no less) and comes in at somewhere between third and fourth on the totem pole (pecking order) with clout over approximately eight others. I have only mumbled at him in passing, but I got the distinct impression his experience has been academic and not practical, which means he will always be having to ask someone else how to do things until he gets settled into the routine. If he asks a lower down, he may feel that he is slumming. If he asks a higher up (anyone up to the top dog will be nice about it) he may get a terse unhelpful reply. My own personal opinion is that this "lady" would take great glee in destroying a new graduate piece by bloody little piece.

((If it ends up as a battle of personalities, the genders may not be significant. There are strong and weak men and women. If he feels as though he is slumming, he's got a problem in any case. I've always made it a point to be able to do the jobs of everyone who works for me (not as well, certainly, but at least enough to get by and understand the problems). I spent three Saturdays rearranging and restocking our factory store when it was transferred into my department, I do all of my own typing and filing, I've been a set up man and shipper in the shipping department, I've done the timekeeping, and I've run the purchasing office. Anyone who feels that he or she is slumming in asking help, advice, or information from the people he is managing, shouldn't be managing.)))

JOY' HIBBERT.....

It looks as if there are "for now" solutions (always try to have a mixture of the sexes in any job, so the females have a male example of how much they should be getting), but I'm bothered by your apparent inability to see the possibility for change. You say "ideally...we treat every employee the same" then go on to explain why you can't without any indication that this is not necessarily permanent. If we ever live in a feminist utopia would you say "we can't treat people equally"? What I'm getting at, I think, is that there's no acknowledgment of the fact that these reasons for discrimination are not "always-has-been-always-will-be". Things have improved a lot lately, they might improve some more.

((Sure, and pigs might fly too. I don't mean to be flip, but it just is not likely that any of us are going to see a feminist, humanist, or any other kind of utopia. I agree with some reservations that the job situation for women has improved in recent years, at least within some industries, and that this will have a cumulative effect that will bring even more improvement. But the fact is that barring a major alteration of the human personality, sex is going to be a major problem in the working environment. There are going to be illicit affairs, there is going to be pressure applied by bosses for sexual favors, promotions of subordinates of the opposite sex are going to give rise to rumors, and jealous spouses are going to figure in the thinking of executives -- particularly male-- when they hire, fire, and promote. Even worse, there is still a prevalent feeling among US males (at least) and many US females as well that women just do not belong in executive positions. Geraldine Ferraro notwithstanding, people often do not want to look to a woman for leadership. Or decision making.)))

ADRIENNE FEIN.....

It might have been untactful of Cindy to tell Travis she did not want to stay a supervisor. It MIGHT possibly be useful to her if this was pointed out to her;



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it's a good idea to avoid stepping on people's corns. Then again, Travis is doing worse than a lapse of tact. If Andy is lucky, maybe someone over him will quietly comment a few times, "remarkable how we never hear anything about Andy's department -- he must be a whiz at settling problems before anyone else even has time to notice them."

((Not only did I point this out to Cindy, she also is on the mailing list for MYTHOLOGIES, so she knows everything you know. An update on the situation. Because of a substantial increase in my responsibilities, "Cindy" has had to take over many of the duties that used to involve me. As a result, Travis is now forced to deal with her on a wider basis than ever before. He does not like it, makes no secret of it, and is becoming a real pain in the ass. I don't know how much of his resentment is because she is female, and how much is because he looks upon it as a diminishment of his own position to have to deal through a supervisor where he formerly dealt through a manager. In either case, I just don't have the time to handle these things, and he's going to have to adjust to the situation.)))

JOEL ROSENBERG.....

Interestingly enough, the male/female power shift is working both ways. The empowerment of women with equal pay legislation and enforcement, societal protection from sexual harassment and so forth has been the big story, but there's another factor going on, pushing the power relationships in the opposite direction. With the shortage of possible longterm male partners available to baby boomer women, I think we're seeing and will be seeing men of my generation take more and more advantage socially, in much the same way as women (well, they were girls, then) used to, back when I was in high school, 10 those many years ago.

The law of supply and demand works everywhere...although I'm sure that the ticking of the biological clock won't be quite as influential on women's behavior as pubescent hormones were on the boys' (for one thing, despite the general tendencies that we've been unintentionally breeding for for a few million years, by no means all women want to settle down with a single mate and have children), but the changes are happening.

One quick example: It used to be that personal ads were almost exclusively a habit of desperate males (some years ago, I read an article by some fellow who had tried answering some of the personals written by women; all of the women he contacted turned out to be high-priced hookers except for one reporter -- who was running the ad in order to research an article on the men who answer personals); a quick scan of the latest NEW YORK MAGAZINE shows that that just isn't so any more -- and all of these people are clearly upscale, judging by the ad costs.

JIM MANN.....

Yes, taking notes of conferences does give you power. I've been using that to my advantage for a couple of years now. The publications group in which I work (as a writer/editor) has little power to enforce its decisions. Therefore, when I'm in a meeting with a client, I like to take notes so that I can later emphasize points that support our position. Also, I can bring up points that I want to establish, get them agreed to (or at least not disagreed with), and when they are included in the notes of the conference, they become project policy. Likewise, I can de-emphasize points I strongly disagree with.

I also have no objection to making the working environment uncomfortable -- if I think it will accomplish something. Unfortunately, at least in my position, making



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a superior uncomfortable about sexism wouldn't accomplish anything. First of all, my direct supervision isn't sexist. Second, if I go higher it will either be ignored or, worse, it will be counterproductive. Many confirmed sexists only become more so when people try to make them uncomfortable.

## RAPE

RICHARD BRANDT.....

I don't have much argument with your rape editorial, but I have something to add (including some choice comments on certain feminists of our acquaintance, so stay tuned). It seems one reason for the way aggression against women so often takes a sexual form is the continual emphasis in our culture on women as sex objects. That is certainly a trite phrasing, but you only have to look at movies from the Golden Age of Tinseltown for evidence. I'm talking romantic comedy here, not the deep dramatic stuff. How many films show us the delicate female as some frigid, frustrated type in a business suit and glasses? An unattractive hairdo as well.

Now as we have all learned from our studies of celluloid and video, all it takes is for Miss Priss to be broached once (forcibly if necessary) by Mister Right, and she will have an insatiable desire henceforth for all that mush stuff. She will also conclude that men really aren't so bad after all, Joe Stud in particular.

For that matter, who can forget Rhett Butler carting Scarlett up the stairs in GONE WITH THE WIND? And her waking up the next morning with that fabled "inner glow"? Now you know he didn't bring her upstairs to tuck her in and bring her a hot toddy.

Which brings me to a pet peeve: the double standard of many feminists on the subject of pornography. You know how feminists denounce "pornography", even the mild PLAYBOY stuff, as degrading to women, but particularly the raw S&M, because it incites aggression against women? As it happens, many of these same feminists are avid readers of "bodice rippers". The trashy paperbacks like LOVE'S FIERY FLAME, the central incident of which is always the violent rape of the heroine by some scalawag?

Femmes will say, shucks, those are just frivolous fantasies that we don't take seriously or anything; the idea of being taken halfway against your will is a fun fantasy...which opens up the possibility that pornography that panders to males' fantasies should be okay too. Can you honestly believe all this stuff can be floating around in our culture without leading many folks to believe that, in their heart of hearts, women really do want to be sex objects...no matter how they object? That they want to be taken, or at least won't really mind after they've had time to dwell on it?

((While I was attending Michigan State, a member of the student government caused an uproar when he was quoted as saying that what most feminists needed was some "therapeutic rape". I am also uneasy with feminist over-reaction to pornography. The kind of sexual stereotyping that you mention seems to me far more relevant to rape than S&M books, and the infringement on the right to write, publish, and read what you want makes me uneasy as well. I have some pornography in my collection; there are quite a number of SF titles. Some of it is pretty raunchy, almost all of it is poorly written, and I certainly wouldn't recommend it to anyone. But I would take violent offense if the government ordered me to destroy it.)))



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CATHERINE DOYLE.....

I once read, long ago and heaven only knows where, that the Israeli cabinet was considering a curfew for women because too many of them were getting raped. Luckily (?) for the women of Israel, Golda Meir was prime minister at the time. She suggested that the real solution might be locking up the male population. Shock, horror, disgust -- needless to say the subject was dead from that moment on.

I saw an Ann Landers column recently in which three "leading members" of a Canadian community had raped a 13 year old child and made her pregnant. The first judge gave them probation, the second a few months in jail. I fail to see how someone who rapes a 13 year old girl can still be considered a leading member of the community. Leading them to what?

I bet that at least one woman you know has been at least forced to have sex during a date. I don't think it's something anyone would want to come out and admit, given the feeling that you were "asking" for it and you're unclean afterwards.

Rape isn't the popular publishing topic it was in the 70s. AIDS, child abuse, and the nuclear freeze seem to be today's hot topics. Libraries would probably be a better place to start; we have any number of books listed in our card catalog.

MARK M. KELLER.....

The (Big Dan's) case did indeed get caught up in the swirl of ethnic feuds among newly arrived Portuguese residents and the older population of New Bedford. You heard the radio talk shows in New Bedford and Taunton, where many of the callers were of self-proclaimed Portuguese descent. These callers loudly stated that the woman was bad and wicked for going into bars where men gathered, and that she deserved what happened to her. Defending the rapists became a matter of ethnic pride.

But what you missed perhaps were the callers to some of the other talk shows, who demanded that the men be found guilty and thrown into prison for fifty years with no parole. Some demanded that the men be executed. A few callers followed up with the suggestion that all new immigrants be rounded up and sent back to their countries of origin. Some talk show hosts encouraged this kind of call, so they got many of them. Other hosts cut off such calls, which discouraged them.

It was this kind of recurring nativism, barely removed from the Ku Klux Klan approach, that led to most of the street marches: a sort of lashback protest. The national TV shows missed the point, as usual; they said nothing about all the vicious radio calls about "animals who can't be assimilated into American life". But they did show thousands of people out marching in the streets. What is a viewer in Colorado or Kansas to conclude? That the marchers were out there in favor of rape. The language barrier didn't help either.

Why such rigid attitudes in the first place? Consider that even with half the Fall River population listed as "Portuguese descent", you have two very different groups: the Old and the New, and they must be distinguished. The Old come from descendants of sailors and fishermen and mill workers who came to New England from Portugal and the Islands during the 19th century. Their grandchildren grew up in New England as American kids, speaking English, rooting for the Boston Red Sox, absorbing the values of America. They may have learned the Portuguese language as an act of filial piety, and felt themselves as somehow part of a great worldwide



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Lusitanian civilization.

The Immigration Bill of 1924 was designed by Congress to shut off the flow of new migrants from southern Europe, and it did. The 1920s and 1930s and 1940s saw very few new arrivals from Portugal. Those already here had an increasingly vague and dreamy vision of what the old country was like, based on the fading memories of grandparents. The habits and customs of the Old Country grew quainter and less applicable to life in America.

Then came changes in the law -- opening of the immigration gates -- and a whole wave of New Immigrants arrived. They met the relatives they knew only from infrequent letters, and crowded into their houses while looking for work in the wonderful land of America.

These New immigrants mostly did not speak English, mostly kept the habits and customs of their own villages back home: became an ingrown community. They knew the reality of 1970s Portugal (they had come here to get away from that reality) and their stories didn't quite mesh with the dream-tales of the lovely Old Country told by grandparents fifty years removed from the poverty and harshness.

So there were really two groups in southern New England, where an outsider would see only one group. The woman who walked into Big Dan's was a descendant of the Old immigrants, fully Americanized. The men in the bar were unhappy members of the new immigrants, having more than a bit of trouble trying to fit into the depressed economy of the 1980s. They judged the woman by the archaic rules of their birthplace.

Is this justification? Not at all. The jury found them guilty, and properly so. But maybe you can begin to grasp some of the anger and passion that came out in those marches, and why defending a gang of rapists could be transmuted in some people's eyes into defending the honor of Lusitanian culture and maintaining a threatened tradition.

Very odd way to defend tradition, you may say: gang rape on a table. But those who feel put upon can always discover a way to justify their actions and make them seem righteous.

Second point, Joel Rosenberg's comment that people seeking alimony might be prosecuted under state anti-prostitution laws. Don't forget, Joel, that the District Attorney has huge discretion over which laws to enforce. I can't see that case being pushed very hard.

The REDUCTIO AD ABSURDAM of that sort of thing I would attribute to a couple of Libertarian bikers I met in 1968. At the time I was doing gardening for a pseudo-commune in Vermont, across the line from Dartmouth College. The group ran a free school for faculty kids. One day two motorcycles roll into the yard; man and woman dismount and introduce themselves. Seems they've taken the works of Ayn Rand very seriously and are trying to live the authentic Objectivist and Libertarian lifestyle. Could they stay with us for a few days?

That was no trouble. But the couple insisted that they wouldn't accept any free lunches; it was against their religion. What they got, they would pay for, in cash or services. Since they had no cash, we would have to accept services. (No IOUs,



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either. Borrowing is a sign of weakness.)

Fine. They could wash dishes, or weed the garden, or whatever. The man paid for one meal by singing some folksongs accompanied by guitar: figured 30 minutes of song should cover the cost of the meal. What was fascinating was, they paid each other for services, too. She cut his hair: noted as \$4 he owed her. He greased the clutch on her motorcycle: noted as \$6 she owed him. They balanced the books once a week. Okay, we asked the obvious question. Since they slept together, who paid whom for sex?

They answered seriously. At the start of their life on the road, the one who got the most fun from sex would pay the one who got less fun. This varied with special requests and kinky stuff. Sometimes he had more fun, sometimes she did. But they found that too many times nobody could figure out who had gotten more pleasure. (Where is the prophet Tiresias when we need him?) Kind of adds resonance to that male line: "Did you come, honey?" Sex couldn't be a free good. Oh no, nothing was free -- that way lies socialism. So they decided that the pleasure levels were equal, and therefore it was fair exchange, and the books balanced.

((Yes, I recognize that the conflict between generations exists. I work in a predominantly Portuguese environment, and have employees from both waves of immigration on my staff. Yes, it was the newer community that reacted, for the most part, with street marches, and yes it was largely incited by radio talk shows in New Bedford and Fall River. But the fact remains that, regardless of what culture was involved, the concept that a woman deserved to be raped is repugnant, should be repugnant in Portugal as well (probably is), and even outside the Portuguese community, there was a strong feeling for the men as victims.)))

GENE WOLFE.....

I'm anxious to see the letters you get on your rape issue; you could not have picked a touchier subject. My only comment is that both rape itself and the Big Dan case represent broader problems than you seem to realize.

You discuss only female rape, but it may well be that there are more male than female victims. Rape of males by females is rare of course, though it does occur. Rape of males by other males is extremely common; but because most of it takes place in various all-male environments, little notice is taken.

The attitude of the Portuguese immigrants toward the Big Dan case is perfectly understandable. They wish to live in America, but they do not wish to become Americans -- that is, to adopt American attitudes. You feel they are acting illogically because all the defendants and the victim and the prosecutor were Portuguese. But it is precisely the fact that those involved were Portuguese that makes them act as they do. They feel the rape should be judged by Portuguese standards; and (quite correctly) they see the law's insistence on judging it by American standards as an attack upon the right they claim to remain Portuguese in America.

((Unfortunately, I came across no discussions of male rape in my research. If I had investigated the literature pertaining to the penal system, I probably would have done so. Maybe next time. I could have picked an even thornier topic -- abortion, but refrained from doing so (and will continue to refrain from doing so). I suspect that abortion is the single most emotional topic in our society, one that neither side can be non-emotional about because it is essentially an emotional issue.)))



ARTHUR D. HLAVATY.....

Your essay on rape leads me to suspect that perhaps I should read AGAINST OUR WILL after all. I had thought that the horrible-example quote about rape being something all men consciously do to all women ~~is/was/isn't~~ was typical of the book, but now you've shown me that there's more to it than that.

Another example of a book being judged by a small part of it comes up in your reply to me. Nena and George O'Neill wrote OPEN MARRIAGE to describe a general approach to marriage which included being honest with one's partner, not taking traditional sex roles for granted, having separate interests, and IF BOTH PARTNERS WANTED IT, having outside sexual affairs and not keeping it secret from each other. Most people fastened on that last part as what "open marriage" should mean. I'm used to using "open marriage" to mean the kind of marriage where the partners can have separate interests (though ideally there shouldn't have to be a special word for that), and saying, "sexually open marriage" if that's the specific kind I mean.

((I never would have thought a special term for a marriage with separate interests was necessary. I don't think it's possible to have a successful marriage without some separate interests.)))

WAYNE HOOKS.....

THE BIG DAN CASE helps to illustrate the power of the press. As you said, race was not an issue, yet the press made it an issue, ruined several peoples' lives and upheld a constitutional principle -- to listen to their arguments. The same arguments were made in California in the nursery school molestation case when the networks wanted to televise the children's testimony. It appears we are becoming a nation of spectators avidly watching fact and fiction, making no distinction between the two. Hence, interpretations of facts are presented as facts. I suppose the spectacle of our Presidential race proves this.

At times we find the media turn the world upside down. Not to fully argue the case here, I watched the SPORTS ILLUSTRATED/Pam Parsons case. SPORTS ILLUSTRATED reported that Pam Parsons, women's basketball coach at the University of South Carolina, took sexual advantage of her players. In court, she had to prove not only that the report was not true, she had to prove that SPORTS ILLUSTRATED acted recklessly and with malice. Since our court system presumes innocence, the burden of proof rested on Parsons. However, SPORTS ILLUSTRATED had tried and convicted her in their pages.

This is an issue of the Big Dan case which I have not seen fully discussed. Maybe that is because the press decides not only which stories are presented, but the "slant" of each story? Participant news cloaked by objectivity.

((I said race should not be an issue, not that it wasn't one. And I don't think the press was responsible in this case. The racial issue was raised, if anything, by the talk shows, which are entertainment, not news reporting.

As to the Parsons case, there is another side to the slander/libel case. You can be found guilty of slander even if you tell the truth. The key factor is malice. If you tell me confidentially that you are gay, and I decide I don't like you and tell your employer that you're a closet gay, I have slandered you and can be sued successfully. Parsons' problem is that she is a public figure, and therefore fair game. The General Westmoreland case should be fascinating.)))



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BRIAN EARL BROWN.....

We had a case similar to the Big Dan case about two years ago. A woman at one of the local universities claimed that seven men had raped her in their dorm. The case was taken to one judge and he threw it out saying there wasn't enough evidence that a rape had taken place. This caused considerable furor and the case was presented to another judge and taken to trial. The jury acquitted the students, though, seemingly because they didn't feel that the woman had been under duress. During the incident she had been escorted to the restroom, passed a security guard, and hadn't tried to escape. It sounds a lot like the jury assumed that if a woman isn't kicking and screaming every second of the rape then she "really wanted it".

I suppose you've read about the Upjohn Pharmaceuticals heir in Kalamazoo who was convicted of rape and the judge was going to give him a mild sentence in return for a massive donation to set up a rape counselling center. This sounded too much like buying one's way out of justice. Then he was given the choice of prison or treatment with depo-provera (spelling?), which would cause a kind of chemical castration. This leads to the question raised in WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE, whether castration prevents a repeat act of rape. Are rapists simply oversexed, or is it something else?

I'm not sure I understand the point where Brownmiller contends that Dean Allen Corll is not as well remembered as other mass murderers because he attacked men. I see no surprise to the notion that people -- men -- remember mass murderers of women because men are brought up with the idea that it's their duty to protect women. Thus they would find violence against women particularly horrific and memorable. But is Brownmiller saying that mass murderers like Jack the Ripper are "folk heroes" because they attacked women?

There is, I think, a reason why Brownmiller says that rape "is a conscious process of intimidation by which ALL MEN keep ALL WOMEN in a state of fear." The natural tendency is to say, "well, I don't know about others, but I don't try to intimidate women." But so much of interpersonal relationships are determined by one's fears. Denice doesn't want to take walks after dark for fear of being mugged. This even though the streets are well lighted and this is a fairly quiet, residential area. It's not a place where one is likely to be mugged. Denice even went so far as to ask me to take out all my credit cards once when we were just walking a couple of blocks to a drug store during the day. Her fear of being mugged has limited the number of things that she will do. The same is true with rape. The fact that anybody might turn into a rapist, that any woman may be violated, colors their lives and limits the things they will do. I would argue with Brownmiller that this is a conscious process, because I think most men would never think of raping or threatening a woman.

((Yes, Brownmiller contends that Jack the Ripper is a folk hero. Certainly there is a powerful sexual symbol at work here. Just as vampires are somehow sexy, so too is Jack the Ripper. Rape is sometimes sexually motivated, but I think the exercise of power is what fascinates the rapist. That's why there is male rape, rape of old women and very young children, etc. I can accept the possibility that all women are consciously intimidated by the possibility of rape. I know people who have the same type of fears as you describe. But I quarrel with the idea that ALL men consciously use rape or its possibility as a weapon of intimidation. In retrospect, I wonder if what Brownmiller meant was that the class "all men" are intimidating the class "all women". That might be more valid.



BRETT COX.....

Your essay on rape struck home with me for two reasons: my current girlfriend and an ex-girlfriend. The former was attacked last winter while jogging and would undoubtedly have been raped had she not put her red belt in karate (along with a fortuitously placed rock) to use against her assailant. The latter was raped at gunpoint when she was sixteen, and at age 29 still suffers significant psychological scarring from the event. The rape was never reported at the urging of her parents who, respectable folk that they were, didn't want their good name dragged through the mud. They also implied that it was at least partially her fault for not resisting.

I particularly appreciated what you wrote concerning A CLOCKWORK ORANGE. One of the reasons that remains one of my favorite films is that in certain respects it's the ultimate exercise in aesthetic distance, presenting a protagonist with whom we cannot empathize and events we cannot approve of, yet keeping us fascinated every step of the way.

JEANNE MEALY.....

This subject reminds me of a heated discussion I had with a man in his 50s, who had several school age daughters and a wife, all of whom he loved to the utmost. This occurred back in 1977 or 1978 when a woman sued her husband for rape within their marriage. My co-worker maintained strongly that such a thing was impossible. He felt that she should have been able to communicate that she wasn't interested, and that he should have paid attention. If force was a part of their relationship and she was an unwilling participant, she should have gotten OUT. He would not admit that women could have mixed feelings, or that communications could get so screwed up that "no" could seem to be "yes". Over and over he stated that if they're MARRIED, sex is part of the agreement -- and I maintained that not everyone is as reasonable as he seemed to be in responding to his wife. He stated that rape is impossible within marriage.

JOEL ROSENBERG.....

Way back when, when I was reading Brownmiller and ran across that claim that rape "is a conscious process...", I threw that lousy book across the room, breaking its spine -- which later did little to endear me with the local library that I'd borrowed it from. (I REALLY blew up over Robin Morgan's definition of rape, which I'm not going to repeat here; unless you run across it yourself, you'd think me a liar.) I wrote her a letter c/o her publisher, but it was clearly too shrill to evoke any rational response. Then again, given that she's capable of committing such idiocy to print, I'm not sure that any rational response could have been evoked.

One of the troubles with such nonsense is that it casts the rest of her book -- which was obviously well researched and much of which may have been well thought out -- into the category of crank literature.

One thing -- I think it was from Brownmiller, although I may well be mistaken -- still sticks with me, though. Generally, society seems to view rape as an attack on a woman's virtue, not on her body. I've yet to hear of the rape of a prostitute being prosecuted, although I beg to doubt that no prostitute is ever raped. Which is why there was so little sympathy in so many quarters for the victim in the Big Dan affair -- she was seen as having little to no virtue to lose. Fortunately for the sake of justice, both the local prosecutor and the jury thought otherwise.



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As far as blaming the woman goes, I think there's a case for it, in an indirect way that doesn't excuse the rapists at all. I'd like to use the analogy of a burglar.

If you're going on vacation, you really ought to make it seem as though your house or apartment is still occupied -- have a timer on your lights, shut off paper and milk deliveries, etc. If you don't do all that, and if your place is burglarized while you're gone, that doesn't mean the burglar was within his or her rights. But it does mean that you haven't taken appropriate precautions and are, in a sense, at fault

It seems to me that a woman who went into a place like Big Dan's was being unnecessarily cavalier with her own safety. Her financial situation may have forced her to live in a lousy, crime ridden neighborhood; it didn't force her to go into a sleazy bar. Does this mean that she deserved what she got? No, of course not. Could she have prevented it by a little bit of forethought? Perhaps.

((Sorry, I don't at all agree with your closing point. You seem to be relegating women to a kind of second class status. Since they can be raped, they shouldn't go into places where the incidence of rape is high. I don't see any reason why any individual should have any trepidation about going into a place of business, any place of business, simply because she is female rather than male. The warning that single women shouldn't hang their underwear out to dry may well be designed to protect against rape, but the effect of telling women that they are somehow different, more desirable victims, causes psychological damage in its own right. I don't like the idea, and while I understand the point you are trying to make, I still reject it.)))

ADRIENNE FEIN.....

Your point about the lack of materials about rape is a good one; this has been noticed by others before you. One of my main reference books is RAPE: THE FIRST SOURCEBOOK FOR WOMEN by New York Radical Feminists, edited by Mureen Connell and Cassandra Wilson (a Plume Book from New American Library). It's about ten years old and some of the specifics are a bit dated.

I would also recommend Medea & Thompsn's AGAINST RAPE. I would take Brownmiller with a grain of salt. Let's say that I think she backs up some of her assertions better than others. The overall tone of the SOURCEBOOK does suggest rape as seen as part of the overall structure of sexism, but I think the anthology gives a more rounded viewpoint than any book by a single author.

Actually I have a very odd viewpoint. I think that a woman's past sexual history may well be relevant. If a woman has a history of enjoying voluntary sex, and suddenly reports one man as a rapist, it would seem that this would tend to indicate he must have actually done something quite different from the others, such as using force.

I think that bit about how difficult it is for a jury to convict on one woman's word is straight bullshit. The reason is not because juries have it hard. I've seen some fraud cases in which one had to guess how six or seven people were thinking, and whether they intended wrongdoing. I've seen robbery or murder cases which depended essentially on the word of one person. If a woman's word is good enough to convict a mugger or a murderer, if one male witnesses' word is good enough, then a woman's word is equally good about rape.



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The situation doesn't change just because the crime is rape instead of murder, assault, spitting on the sidewalk, or anything else. Unless it changes because male jurors feel rape is one crime they might commit themselves. I would assume no one would want to be responsible for sentencing an innocent person to prison for murder or anything else. Yet the point seems to be raised in a unique way with regard to rape cases.

I'd say something like: rape is a process of intimidation which at least some men use on at least a semi-conscious basis, to try to keep at least most women in fear most of the time. An unfortunate effect is that many women are, if not afraid, at least wary of all men until they are proven innocent. It's not that women think all men are rapists; it's that there often are no way of telling which are and which aren't. In fact some studies (those which show rapists to be typical of the population rather than different) would suggest that almost any man is a potential rapist, particularly under certain circumstances. Of course the Milgram experiments would seem to indicate that damn near any human being is a potential murderer, so that may be a comment about human nature more than a comment about men.

I do wonder, considering the statistics about how many rapes take place in women's homes, about employers who don't like to hire women for work at night because it isn't safe for them to be leaving work at night. This might be simple ignorance of crime statistics upon the part of the employers. It might be a semi-conscious plot to keep women out of certain lines of work.

As to whether a woman can "deserve" to be raped: there is a classic decision based on the time some workers were repairing a sidewalk and didn't fence it off or put up warning signs. A drunk came walking along, fell in the hole, and was injured. Did the accident happen because of the drunk's negligence? The judge ruled that a drunken person has as much right to a smooth sidewalk as anyone else (and indeed has more need of it). I'd say that if equality before the law is to have much meaning, even people who do stupid and/or risky things are entitled to the same legal protection as anyone else (and they probably have more need of it too).

((I am quite sure that the kind of inequities you mention exist, but I still see where it would be much more difficult to convict a rapist on a single woman's charge, in the absence of any other evidence. I would be reluctant to convict a murderer for that matter on the basis of a single person's testimony, in the absence of other evidence. The nature of a rape often makes other evidence almost impossible to create. In many cases, the decision not to convict a rapist may well be as you say, but I can certainly see cases where a jury might believe that a rape occurred, but fail to convict because there was insufficient proof.)))

ED ROM.....

The essence of the problem, I feel, is the strongly felt, though largely subconscious, hostility toward the opposite sex that exists among a significant part of the population, both male and female. Rape is the most visible manifestation of this problem, because frustrated and angry males are more likely to act out violently and overtly. But women are not the only victims -- look for instance at the excessively high divorce rate. Some of those divorces have to be the fault of the wives.

I believe that the rate of rape and sex crime is objectively higher now than it was at one time, that this whole phenomenon is not merely the result of improved



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reportage. The question that this faces us with is one of cause. Why?

I think that it is largely the fault of the mass media. For the first time in history we have a popular culture that is not completely based on the accumulated folk wisdom of centuries, but is rather the result of images pushed at the masses by a comparatively small group -- those who control the mass media, especially television. We are constantly being told subliminally that if we buy this and that we will have wild and ecstatic sex lives. Of course, this only happens for a very few people, no doubt those who are least susceptible to all this.

There is also the fact that we as a society are in transition from the traditional Judeo-Christian system of values to -- what? Under the old system, it was acceptable for men to undergo a certain degree of sexual frustration because, after all, sex outside of marriage was a sin. This is no longer true, but we still have some unfortunate hangovers from those times, such as the notion that a man who doesn't is no good and neither is a woman who does. In this society whose media are constantly reminding us of the desirability of sex, many women still feel that they have to say "no" whether they feel that way or not -- and this may be appropriate, because there is still a large segment of society that looks down on "loose women".

No wonder so much sexual violence is going on; we have a set of conditions guaranteed to make large numbers of men feel powerless on terms of what they think they want. I have no idea of what can be done, though I think the extreme feminist position as brought forth by Brownmiller is counterproductive. As far as the Big Dan's case goes, I think that the mass media behaved in a swinish fashion. It's doubtful that the real truth will ever come out; the stories were so different that somebody has to be lying, or deluded, or both. Maybe they're all lying.

((Of course they're all lying. The damning statements were made by the defendants themselves. Even if their version was true, they were guilty of rape. The studies I have seen don't indicate any change in the rate of rape, and frankly your charge that the media are responsible is too grossly oversimplified. Certainly they contribute to the climate of sexuality, but I still don't believe that rape is a matter of sex at all, but a matter of power, and I don't think you can blame that on the media any more than on any other instrumentality of human endeavor. As a matter of fact, I thought that the local media made a good effort at reporting things fairly, for the most part. There was considerable public discussion of the advisability of using the victim's name, and some news people felt one way and some felt the other. The live coverage of the trial was what the public wanted, and it is silly to blame the media for pandering to public taste. They didn't create that taste; they satisfied it.)))

AL SIROIS.....

One or two of the rape statistics surprised (and dismayed) me, particularly that which states that at least 60% of all rapes occur on dates. That's horrendous. You know, in a way, it's almost like a situation in a Philip Dick book, wherein "reality" is a mask over something other. Or one is reminded that in Burroughs' Tarzan novels, the Ape Man was occasionally described as "shucking off the thin veneer of civilization". It's as if we were a civilization of werewolves who show their true colors only at night or when alone. Such statistics contribute to the erosion of altruism and/or idealism and promote a cynical attitude. As far as I know none of my women friends/acquaintances have been raped...but I know of at least two who were sexually abused as children, which is pretty nearly the same



thing. All of this makes me yearn for the good old days of the future when rape no longer exists. I once wrote a story about a rapist who, for his crimes, was forced to undergo a sex change operation. Then I contrived to have HIM raped.

MAIA COWAN.....

One small correction: In Michigan, and I believe also in Ohio, there are laws to protect a rape victim from having her sex life questioned in court. Other states have doubtless passed similar legislation.

Like you, I doubt that rape is a conscious process of intimidation by all men. However, whether the intention is deliberately to repress women's freedom of behavior and self-confidence or not, it certainly has that effect. Several years ago, a co-worker was raped. Learning about this affected every woman in the office -- we lost our sense of security, and it took a long time before our lives were as safe and comfortable as they had been before. Ellen Goodman has written an excellent essay on the subject. Merely bringing girls up (necessarily) to fear strangers, to avoid going out after dark, to be nervous when going anywhere alone, etc., limits their lives and puts them at a disadvantage. The fear of rape is perhaps far more damaging than rape itself, since this fear affects even those who are never in real danger at any time in their lives.

I've long wondered about the "reasoning" expressed in situations analogous to the Big Dan case. There seems to be a perverse logic that, since a woman is "inviting" it, a man is in no way responsible for what reaction he makes to the stimulus. Let's think about this for a moment. The conclusion seems to be that men are doing things to women that women don't want them to do, but at the same time the women are controlling the men's behavior. The way out of this contradiction is that women are all crazy anyway and really WANT to be harmed. Uh-huh.

This could be related to attitudes I've observed on a lesser scale and read about in surveys about "date rape" and such. It isn't so much that the offenders are consciously deciding to do something to a woman against her will, to express hostility, or punish what they think is too much female assertiveness. They just don't stop to think that a woman HAS a will. It surprises them greatly to be told that the woman doesn't want them doing what they're doing, whether it's giving her a backrub at a convention party, or trying to pick her up, or forcing sex on her after a date. (I've had people come up -- always men -- and expect a hug from me because they've seen me giving hugs to my friends; never mind that I've never laid eyes on these creatures before!) It's not so much hostility against women as a total lack of empathy, of awareness of them as sentient beings with control over what happens to them. Or even an opinion on the subject.

The underlying belief seems to be that men have no responsibility to control their actions. A friend of mine had EIGHT YEAR OLD BOYS tell her that the solution is to have an 8:00 PM curfew for women; they were contemptuous of the notion that since it's men committing crimes, maybe they, not their victims, should be restricted. I've also known situations where girls started taking self-defense lessons, but stopped after their boyfriends objected to their increasing strength and self-confidence. They (the boys) were threatened by the shift in the perceived balance of power. And therein lies a possible reason, if not for rape itself, then for why it's so difficult to do anything to change the tradition of rape. It also affects all those men who would never, ever, consider committing a rape. The only way to force rape-minded men to change their attitudes is for women to become more dangerous. (This isn't really putting the burden on the victim. Let's



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face it, rapists are pretty selfish individuals, so we're not going to make them stop by simply persuading them that it's not a nice thing to do. We have to make the risks greater than the rewards. In the case of date rape, education may work, but it's more likely that a change in behavior by women will draw their attention better than a lecture on the subject.) And THAT will affect their relations with all men, and will probably be seen as a loss of relative power by men. A woman who could give an attacker hell will also be less inclined to meekly take a boss' orders, or always agree with her husband, or...So any change that would make women safer from attack will be resisted by the people around them, including other women, who prefer to think they're "protected" rather than protect themselves.

I do agree with Brownmiller's thesis that rape isn't just a crime -- it's a social institution, defining how men and women may behave (and obviously the social restrictions on rape are far different from the legal, as the Big Dan case shows, even other women will countenance it under the most amazing circumstances) to each other and in almost every situation. The question is not "How do we stop rapists?" but "How do we change society top to bottom so that attitudes and behaviors no longer permit rape to happen?"

((Supporting what you say, I know of a man who would not even show his teenage daughter how to change a tire on her car, on the basis that it was not appropriate work for a young lady and if she had a flat, she should call her father for help. I suspect the real reason is much as you say; he did not want to concede power and/or competence to his daughter, although I'm sure this was not a conscious consideration on his part. When a woman visibly controls power, she is likely to be considered a genuine threat. Even in a management atmosphere (or perhaps I should say especially in a management atmosphere) a woman is not considered promotable unless she is outspoken, but is considered pushy unless she is. The same person who will in one case comment that a woman in middle management should "come out of her shell" will in another context complain that a woman in middle management "doesn't know her place". I have heard males in very high positions of authority complain that there are too many women in such and such an organization and it therefore cannot be worth the time to investigate, or resist having women attend management meetings because it might cause the men to be less willing to speak openly (Can't swear in front of the ladies, you know, or have a fight that might disturb their vulnerable emotional balance.) It is frequently quite frustrating, and there really isn't much that can be done to change these attitudes in people who have held them for thirty years.)))

JIM MANN.....

I was dismayed by some of the statistics on rape in your editorial, particularly a) the percentage the police ignore and b) the percentage of college students who think that forced sex may be permissible under some circumstances. I think that the two are related and result from what seems to be an all too common attitude that at times rape "isn't really" rape. This attitude seems to be a part of our culture, and even those of us who are appalled by rape can succumb to it. Look at GONE WITH THE WIND. How many people really thought that Rhett Butler was doing something wrong? Most people cheered (perhaps quietly) for him. Why? Well, it wasn't really a rape, etc. It is in part this attitude that leads to statistics like those you quoted.

I was really disgusted by the protests during and after the Big Dan trial. Unfortunately, the "They're only being persecuted because they're \_\_\_\_" is a common one.



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It's probably a part of the great American obsession for finding conspiracies/ hidden motives behind everything. In this case I think the protests harmed the Portugese community in that they were perceived as condoning rape. This seemed to be true in large part because, although they claimed prejudice, they never showed any evidence of it. Instead, the protests were all of the form, "They're on trial because they're Portugese, and she shouldn't have been in that bar anyway."

((There were some spokespeople who insisted that they were not condoning the rape, but simply pointing out that the men could not receive a fair trial because of the prejudice against the Portugese community. I happen to think they were, for the most part, wrong, and there certainly were clearly prejudicial things coming out of the woodwork. But defending the defendants never struck me as being in the best interests of the Portugese immigrant community.)))

DAVID PALTER.....

I had previously heard about the Big Dan rape case but had not followed it all that closely. I am rather startled to hear about the massive support evidenced in your community for the right of men to commit rape in bars. Well, we do live in a democracy of sorts and prevalent moral standards of a community must be consulted. I think that an equitable arrangement would be to enact a statute by which it would be legal for anybody, singly or in groups, to rape any woman entering a bar in any community having a substantial population of Portugese descent, providing only that a conspicuous sign be posted at the entrance to any such bar, which is to read: "Warning -- this bar is frequented by Portugese men. Any woman entering will be raped."

Here in Hollywood where the population is of somewhat different character, it might be more appropriate to post a similar warning about boys under the age of eighteen. Homosexual rape does occur -- and in fact is considered routine and unavoidable in our nation's prisons -- hence it is not necessarily as obvious as you may think, that although you are writing about the subject of rape, you have no first hand experience of it. However let me also observe that in general heterosexual men are far more likely to commit rape than are homosexual men. That's why it is dangerous to allow straight men to have a role in bringing up children; I favor legislation requiring all school teachers to be gay. (Or at least eunuchs, presumably the safest choice of all.) Most of all children should never be exposed to the influence of the unspeakable Portugese, mad rapists that they are. To cut down on the presumably universal incidence of child abuse from Portugese families, all Portugese should be sterilized. This would, of course, also greatly help in dealing with the overpopulation problem.

An additional benefit of the sterilization of the Portugese is that although they may still rape any women they can get hold of, at least such rapes will no longer be a cause of unwanted pregnancies. Speaking of which, if the lady who was gang raped should happen to give birth nine months following this escapade, it would be most appropriate to have the baby stuffed and mounted on the wall of Big Dan's as a perpetual trophy of the great pool table impregnation. This could also start a fashion, leading to the appearance of stuffed babies on bar walls all over the country (except in gay bars, of course.)

((One of the defendants was quoted as saying that he could not understand why he had been arrested because this was a free country and he could do anything he wanted to. I don't even know how to begin to deal with that kind of obliqueness.



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Your comment about teachers as eunuchs struck a chord as well. (Some might say that, intellectually, they already are.) In my brief stint of teaching in Michigan, I was cautioned repeatedly that if I felt a student needed a conference after school, or extra tutoring, I could only do so if it was a male student. Otherwise, I had to recommend her to a female teacher. If I was driving home in a snowstorm and saw a male student, I could give him a ride, but I could not do the same for a female, even if she were accompanied by a male student.

The Big Dan case left a permanent distaste in my mouth. Among other things, I know of a supposedly highly educated man who made a special trip to Fall River so that he could have his picture taken in front of Big Dan's (which is now a bakery thrift store or some such thing, incidentally.)))

## MISCELLANEOUS

BRIAN EARL BROWN.....

I'm curious about your cover. It is, of course, very well done, as one has come to expect from Brad Foster. The question is, who is that man in the upper box, the one who's repeated on the first page? Is it you? The only time I've ever seen you was in 1978 at Autoclave 3 and you weren't wearing a beard then, and you also didn't look as round in the face as this. So I don't think it's you but why else use the same sketch twice in one issue?

I'm as much impressed with your listing of the Dons as by your perseverance in making a listing for so many years and your ability to sort so many books into their proper year of appearance. How do you even know which books appeared in 1945, let alone which books were the best of the lot?

((No, the cover wasn't me. Sheila reduced the original art on a copier and that segment appeared to lend itself to the first page, which is where I always try to include a small piece of artwork. I am not crazy about interior art, as I have said many times before, not because I don't like it, but because the extra work involved slows up production, because it steals space better used for words, and because my hands shake and pasting up electrostencils can, in one hour, make me irritable for days.

I have lists of everything. My library is indexed by author (including every short story and where it was reprinted), by publisher, by year of publication, and by sub-genre and quality level. I also have some subsidiary lists for things that interest me. I'm a compulsive lister and, I hasten to add, none of this is on computer. Yet, anyway.)))

SUE ANDERSON.....

Ernest Heramia's letter on ethnic/racial insults. There is a term in jewelers' lingo: "gypsy set". Refers, as I understand it, to a ring mounting which is made in such a way as to conceal the lower part of the stone -- diamond, whatever. The idea is that with a mounting like this it is easy to persuade the sucker that he's getting a bigger diamond than is actually there -- you can set in a stone with no bottom half and say, "see how big around it is?" This has become a technical term over the years -- well, semi-technical. There are other types of mountings: "illusion set", which I think has a mirror finish metal around the diamond, and "miracle set", which has mirror faces and small diamonds set next to a larger stone to make it look bigger. (Both these descriptions are in the "something like that"



accuracy range.) "Illusion" set is an honest way of putting it, "miracle" set is obviously advertising hype, and "gypsy" set is an ethnic slur. Now what? I know. Let's mount a campaign to replace the term "gypsy set" with "Van Scoy Mounting"... Ah, Don, you don't listen to the radio. You're missing so much...

((Actually I have heard many of Tommy Van Scoy's ads for cut rate diamonds. I don't miss nearly as much as people sometimes think I do. I'm just selective about what I admit to.)))

BRETT COX.....

"The Hunchback and the Amputee" and "Wandering" were both hilarious. I was particularly struck (sorry) by David's piece. I wish I'd been able to come up with lines like "It looked like death with a hangover" when I was twelve.

((David, who is now thirteen, had no choice. You don't grow up in a house with 35,000 books and not pick up reading, and a love of reading frequently turns into an urge to write. Now if he would just stop growing. He's passed five foot ten already and is stealing all of my good sweaters.)))

JEANNE MEALY.....

Has anyone ever suggested that a social skills seminar be part of a convention? To be successful, it would have to be phrased differently -- maybe even printed within a daily newsletter or something. It's apparent that many fans could use a little assistance in handling the varied social situations that arise at cons, yet I've only seen a few panels for neo-fans that attempted to spell out both the more acceptable and unacceptable behaviors possible. (People can behave almost any way they choose, but whether they achieve success is a big question. They may want short-term attention, but what they want in the long run is validation of their personal value -- and getting a few "oooh"s and "aaahhh"s while wearing a costume will not do that.) The panel for neo-fans (which I attended to hear just what someone thought would be useful) DID contain a factual, humorous approach to handling many events, from meeting authors to trying to get conversations going with possible friends. I wish more people had attended it. I know -- not everyone is going to believe the suggestions could apply to them, or will be able to polish their techniques quickly. At least it would be available for those who CAN pay attention, and practice makes perfect (would you believe "better"?).

((I believe there was one at some convention about ten years ago which I attended but this kind of approach does not work well in large groups, and the type of small seminar that is needed is beyond the ability of most cons to coordinate. It's not entirely within their purview anyway. How many qualified psychologists/discussion leaders are there? Small discussion type seminars strike me as a very effective method of dealing with this kind of problem for most people, but I don't hold out much hope for them becoming an institution at cons. Most people need them in a lot wider a variety of social situations than a convention in any case. Adjusting them to problems with interactions in their daily lives is more important than their actions at a convention. I agree with you though that it would be nice if something like that could be set up regularly to ease people into the flow of a convention, but I do not foresee it happening. Fanzine fans work some of their problems out in print, but even that is no substitute for face to face encounters (I should talk. I've been to maybe a dozen conventions in 20 years of fandom). Organize one, why don't you? Conventions are always looking for new programming ideas.)))



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EDD VICK.....

Leonard Cohen is an odd choice of epigrammists for this particular issue (yes, I realize that the reason you used the quote was that it included your zine's title) in that I'm enough of a Cohen reader/listener to remember that he never - that I remember - wrote of friendship. His purview was poetry of love, death and honor.

((You have it backward. The title of my .zine comes from the Cohen quote, which is why the lettercolumn is "elaborate lies". The quote sums up what I feel about "reality", i.e. we all believe a different set of things, and each is its own set of lies we tell ourselves. And Cohen did write of friendship. See the novel, BEAUTIFUL LOSERS.)))

LEE PELTON.....

WANDERING. Gad what a dork pizzle of a story. I haven't read anything with such detail since Sheckley's MINDSWAP with dialogue like, "Give me one for my baby and one for the road." It reminded me of Sarducci's "Find the Pope in the Pizza" contest. Droll, very droll. And funny. I wonder how many I missed? Do we get answers next ish?

((No, there are no answers, only more questions. )))

MAIA COWAN.....

Regarding your response to Arthur Hlavaty: Most of the time "open marriage" does mean the freedom to have sexual partners outside the marriage. But some people use it to mean different things, all the way down to "may have friends other than one's spouse". Alas, there are married couples who never do anything except together (if one doesn't want to go to a party, then the other cannot go), and are only friends with other couples -- she with the wife, he with the husband...I had someone express utter bewilderment that I was taking a weekend trip and my husband was staying home because he didn't want to go. Not disapproval, just incomprehension that my marriage didn't mean complete togetherness.

((As I sit here typing this, Sheila is at a major dog show event in Philadelphia, has been there since Thursday, and will not be back until late Monday. I don't care for dog shows, and she is not nearly as fond of SF cons as I am, so we frequently go separately. There has to be a number of things you don't have in common in a marriage as well as the things which you do share.)))

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#### PEOPLE WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THIS ISSUE

ALYSON L. ABRAMOWITZ, 10 Pine Ridge Road, Arlington, MA 02174  
 SUE ANDERSON, 12 Summit Street, East Providence, RI 02914  
 SHERYL BIRKHEAD, 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20760  
 RICHARD BRANDT, 322 Limonite Circle, El Paso, TX 79932  
 MIKE BRACKEN, E 30 Lot 32, Glen Carbon, IL 62034  
 BRIAN EARL BROWN, 20101 W. Chicago #201, Detroit, MI 48228  
 MAIA COWAN, 652 Cranbrook Road #3, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48013  
 BRETT COX, 16 Forest Avenue, Tabor City, NC 28463  
 DAVID D'AMASSA, 323 Dodge Street, East Providence, RI 02914  
 CATHERINE DOYLE, University of Houston, Downtown Library, One Main Street, Houston, TX 77002



ADRIENNE FEIN, 26 Oakwood Avenue, White Plains, NY 10605  
BRAD FOSTER, 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving, TX 75038  
JOY HIBBERT, 11 Rutland Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5JG, UK  
ARTHUR D. HLAVATY, 819 W. Markham Avenue, Durham, NC 27701  
WAYNE HOOKS, Rt 4 Box 677, Nichols, SC 29581  
BEN INDICK, 428 Sagamore Avenue, Teaneck, NJ 07666  
MARK M. KELLER, 184 Rochambeau, Providence, RI 02906  
ERIC LINDSAY, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia  
JIM MANN, 87A Pearl Street, Newton, MA 02158  
JEANNE MEALY, 2633 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408  
DAVID PALTER, 1811 Tamarind Avenue # 218, Hollywood, CA 90028  
LEE PELTON, 1032 N. Winchester, Chicago, IL 60622  
ED ROM, PO Box 685, Mankato, MN 56002  
JOEL ROSENBERG, 1477 Chapel St, Apt B4, New Haven, CT 06511  
DAVE ROWLEY, 11 Rutland Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5JG, UK  
CHRIS SHERMAN, 842 Coleman #9, Menlo Park, CA 94025  
AL SIROIS, Box J12, 258 Park St, New Haven, CT 06511  
ROY TACKETT, 915 Green Valley Road NW, Albuquerque, NM 87107  
EDD VICK, 1605 Darr #106, Irving, TX 75061  
JEAN WEBER, (I don't have her address,  
but c/o Lindsay above should work)  
ROBERT J. WHITAKER, PO Box 7709, Newark,  
DE 19711  
GENE WOLFE, Box 69, Barrington, IL 60010

And particular thanks to Sheila who will  
run this off for me.

Apologies to anyone I missed, as was the  
case last time with Ruth Shields &  
Monica Krause.

WAHF: David Singer, Jeff Smith (both of  
them in fact), Gil Gaier, Leah Zeldes,  
Cy Chauvin, Harry Andruschak, Brad  
Foster, Ira Thornhill, Michael Bishop,  
Allen Beatty, and Taral.

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Willowdale Ave, Willowdale,

Ontario N2W 5B4, Canada

