

KITCHEN SINK 3
the magazine of everything but

This issue of my sterling all-purpose apazine is published for SFPA and FreFanZine, by Don Markstein, 8208 E. Vista Drive, Scottsdale, Az. 85253, (602) 956-6533, as a sort of celebration of my taking over the Fearless Leadership of the latter apa. It may also be sent around to the RALLY! mailing list; and if, as I strongly expect, I fold RALLY! (again) after #42, it will go toward retiring current subscriptions (that is, assuming none of the said subscribers creeb too strongly, in which case I'll be glad to hold onto the record of their subs and revive them for RALLY!'s inevitable Fourth Incarnation). Backcover by Alan Hutchinson. Demented Turkish Dwarf Press publication #380. This stencil (and maybe the rest) cut Jan. 28, 1979.

The reasons for the probable demise (again) of RALLY! are several. One fairly obvious one is the notoriety generated last summer, when a popular sci-fi author who has many times proven himself capable of generating an enormous amount of publicity, became the very first person ever to take serious exception to something said in RALLY!, or to the flippant style in which it's usually said. That notoriety generated a lot of new subscriptions—but contrary to the rumors going around, I wasn't seeking that sort of fame, and the thought of being obligated to send so many issues to people who may not even like it is not attractive to me. If the notoriety was to serve any useful purpose at all, it would have been in the sale of single copies of the issue in question—then, having seen what was, in most ways, a typical issue, people could decide on an intelligent basis whether or not they want to see more. But ever since IguanaCon, I've been getting dollars in the mail from scores of strangers who want to see what all the fuss was about, and they're bound to be disappointed that there usually isn't any fuss at all. I'd rather have no subscribers at all than a lot of people subscribing for the wrong reason, so I'm leaning strongly toward folding it.

A better reason for wanting out is that my major expenditure of fannish energy, at the moment, is in a different direction. I just became Fearless Leader of FreFanZine, The Only Libertarian Science Fiction Apa In The Entire Friggin' Universe, and I'm putting a lot of effort right now into building it up into a thriving operation. Last summer, FFZ was in what looked very much like a terminal slump. My first mailing will be out in less than a week, and from all indications, it'll probably have about three times as many people contributing as either of the last two did. Putting an apparently dying apa back on its feet takes more energy than starting a new one from scratch—most times I wouldn't even consider it worth doing, but I do like the idea of an apa consisting mostly of anarchists, and operating on anarchist principles, being around. I know I'm capable of performing the miracle, having performed it on another apparently dying apa that I liked a lot about ten years ago, so I took it over. To the detriment of other activities like RALLY!, of course. (If you're interested, or at least curious, I'll be glad to ~~send you a spec copy or two.~~ send you a spec copy or two.)

But the best reason of all is simply that I'm tired of it. And when you're doing something for enjoyment and you get tired of it, it's time to stop. The ideal length of a RALLY! incarnation is a year and a half or so, and this one has just about had that. But fear not. In five years or so, some enterprising young Southern fan with a flippant way of looking at things will see the RALLY! editorship as a power vacuum, and will move to fill it. And the News'N'Chatter Zine With A Southern Accent will be reborn in all its glory. Current subscribers have the option of waiting for that happy day, having their subscriptions filled out with whatever I happen to publish that doesn't have mailing comments in it, or, if they want to wash their hands of the whole affair, getting their money back. Wait until #42, where I'll announce whether it's continuing or folding, and let me know. (If I don't hear from you, I'll make the choice for you, based on whether or not I think you're likely to want to wait.)

On to more interesting topics. I don't suppose any of you have seen a brilliant new sci-fi opus entitled ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOS yet. I have—twice already. And if you haven't, I recommend you put this zine down immediately, rush to wherever it's showing in your area, and report back when you've remedied your lapse.

Back? Good. Then the following may mean something to you. Following the casting of the live-action Uncle Scrooge and the all-duck version of THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (Mitch Thornhill's idea, tho I did most of the casting for it), a few of us at a party the other night started casting ATTACK OF THE KILLER TOMATOES as a Warner Brothers cartoon. The ones everyone agrees on are Yosemite Sam as the newspaper editor, Porky Pig as Mason Dixon, Wile E. Coyote as Sam Smith, Belvedere as Spot, and—especially—Daffy Duck as Ted Swan, the advertising executive.

Less unanimous are votes for Bugs Bunny as the President's Press Secretary, Pepe LePew as Wilbur Finletter, Bugs Bunny as Lois Fairchild, Petunia Pig as Lois Fairchild, Elmer Fudd as Wilbur Finletter, Elmer Fudd as a tomato and others too numerous to remember through the haze that permeated the room and our minds as we dreamed all of this stuff up.

Anybody have any further thoughts on this? Remember, one character can play multiple parts as long as they're not on screen together (for example, there would be no conflict in Bugs playing both Lois Fairchild and the Press Secretary). (Hmm—a thought just struck me that's too good to pass up—how about the Tasmanian Devil as all of the tomatoes?) Let's see if we can't come up with a cast everyone agrees with, as we did for the all-duck cast of THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW. We never did manage that for the live-action Uncle Scrooge movie...

Still on the subject of KILLER TOMATOES, it also occurs to us (me, Curt and Mahala Stubbs, Bruce and Gigi Dane and a few others) that there are some really good costumes in that movie, which might well go over at a con. For example, Curt's idea is to have five or six people all dress up as Sam Smith in various disguises, with himself as Sam Smith disguised as a killer tomato. My favorite costume, tho, would be Wilbur Finletter, but it might take several more viewings before I manage to get all the patches on his chest down pat, and a parachute might be a tad expensive...

Meanwhile, does anybody happen to know the lyrics to "Puberty Love"?

Twice on the last page, you may have noticed, I used the expression "sci-fi". If you're a typical fan, you may already have written your comment about what a lousy excuse for a human being I am for denigrating the hallowed science fiction with that noxious abbreviation. But save your ink—I already know it.

Aside from science fiction fandom, I am also somewhat active in comics fandom. I don't apologize for this, of course—why, I could name some trekkies who also display vestiges of intelligence. I mention it here only for purposes of bringing up my favorite term for comics—funnybooks—and noting that this term is not only accepted among the more mature and intelligent fans—it has even attained wide currency.

Now, we all know that comics fans are fuggheaded, immature little louts. So why is it that they're cool enough to make fun of themselves that way, while we Cosmic Minds act like we're being torn apart by wookiees when somebody says "sci-fi"?

To hell with that. If your comment to me on the last page was "But fans don't like the word 'sci-fi'" you can go fly a kite. I like it, and I'm a fan. So there.

Along the same lines, did anyone else see the WONDER WOMAN episode where she fought crime and evil at a sci-fi con? I understand it was filmed at an actual con, which makes it all the more enjoyable.

Now, I'm sure many of you will object to the depiction of fans therein. I guess I can sort of see your point, but look at it this way—showing them that way will help keep walk-ins from cluttering up our cons, won't it? And anyway—this may be an unpopular statement, but I can't really object to the way Sylvester Grögan was handled in that show. I can cringe at seeing him displayed to millions of viewers, but I can't really object. I've seen too many like him and worse to claim truthfully that fandom is in any way being misrepresented by him.

Having already admitted to being a funnybook freak, I guess I can't damage myself any more in that regard, so I might as well bring up the subject again. Of course, the best funnybooks, in my opinion, are funnybooks—UNCLE SCROOGE, POGO, LITTLE LULU, HERBIE... As a matter of fact, last summer, while all the brouhaha was going on in the back pages of RALLY!, the lead story concerned the rising price of HERBIE comics.

In case anybody is sufficiently Unaware that he doesn't know offhand who Herbie is, you may recall a character that flourished between 10 and 20 years ago who wore blue pants and a white shirt, was enormously fat, ate lollipops, could do anything, and had the most unshakeably phlegmatic attitude this side of the catatonic ward.

In 1958, Richard Hughes, Honcho of the American Comics Group, was producing a line of medium grade sci-fi and fantasy comics. One of his favorite themes was the character with hidden depths—the one that nobody thought was worth anything, but inside he was everything you ever dreamed about being. Such a one appeared in FORBIDDEN WORLDS #76, in a story entitled "Herbie's Quiet Saturday Afternoon". It was about this little fat boy with glasses that nobody would play with, despised by all around him including his father. But when nobody was looking, he talked with the animals in the zoo, had wonderful adventures with aliens, saved the world and did all sorts of neat stuff.

Reader response must have been pretty good, because Herbie was back in a sequel a couple of years later, and back again a year or so after that. By the early 1960s, he was appearing in every other issue of FORBIDDEN WORLDS, with his name in larger type than the title. Then, in '64, he made the move to his own book, where he stayed until shortly before ACG's demise in 1967.

By the time he was appearing regularly, a number of schticks had evolved. For one thing, his everpresent lollipop was perceived as being either the source of his strange powers, or at least the focus through which they were exercised. He had acquired a magic word, "Allega Poop", also associated with the exercise of his powers. His threat, "You want I should bop you with this here lollipop?" appeared in most issues. Fatness became a trademark of his, and was looked on as a desirable attribute. His father had evolved into a top-notch supporting character. The scene of Herbie looking at someone or something that precisely resembled him and thinking "Glad I'm not like that", became a familiar sight. And many others, of course.

It was a thoroughly delightful comic book. But in 1967 it disappeared without a trace. Hughes, who wrote all of the stories under the name "Shane O'Shea", is dead. Ogden Whitney, the master of deadpan humor who drew them, hasn't worked in comics in years; I have no idea where he is now. Nobody even seems to be quite sure who owns the rights to the character, tho DC Comics is a strong possibility.

But kids—even big kids like me—remembered him. And as time went on, the number of fans who had been those kids grew. References to Herbie would appear in fanzines. Gary Brown did an index to all Herbie appearances in Apa-I. The prices on his comics started going up—you can't get a mint copy of #1 for under \$20 anymore. And a nut cult in California, the Herbangelists, started preaching that anything as powerful as Herbie ought to be worshipped.

Which brings me, at last, to the point of this little piece. The Herbangelists have been getting along for years now without a schism, which any respectable religion deserves. And they deserve a schism even more than most, because you see, the very basis of their belief is a baldfaced lie. Back up three paragraphs. Under "schticks", see where I mentioned a "magic word"? Well, I maintain that "Allega Poop" is no mere magic word at all, and that worship of a minor ghod like Herbie is woefully misplaced.

Allega Poop is the name of the ghod to whom Herbie prays!

I regret that my collection, which includes every appearance of the Fat Fury, is in storage right now. I expect to retrieve it shortly, however, and then I shall perform the exhaustive research necessary to prove my claims. Watch for it in the best apas everywhere—including, barring insidious censorship, Herbapa Itself.



As all long-time readers of KITCHEN SINK are aware (and as long as it's been since #2, anybody who was around for a previous issue is a long-time reader), this zine has undertaken an ongoing project of violating its editorial policy in each issue. Since its only editorial policy is "everything but", that means that each issue, in compliance with this ongoing project, is obligated to present a kitchen sink.

This issue's kitchen sink is by Alan Hutchinson, fan cartoonist extraordinaire. Note the sleek, smooth lines of the chrome fixtures...the brilliant white of the porcelain...the outstanding cleanliness of the water, which, with its new miracle detergent can handle twice the grease of ordinary, Brand X water and never leave an ugly residue on your fingernails. Pay no attention to that silly charade in the background. The kitchen sink is what matters.