

Souf'paw

Number Eight, for the 204th mailing of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, from Richard Brandt, 4740 N Mesa #108, El Paso TX 79912 USA, e-mail: rbrandt1@elp.rr.com, or on the Web at <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/8720/>

Ladies and Gentlemen, Henry Lee and the One-Eyed Drifters

I see our governor, the Hon. George Bush Jr., has decided to commute the death sentence of Henry Lee Lucas. There are those who may see a tinge of hypocrisy after the self-same George let a woman fry after claiming to have found Jesus and mended her ways, but this latest action is only fair in light of the more than reasonable doubt that Henry Lee actually committed the crime.

Even though Henry Lee confessed to this particular murder, he later retracted his confession, as he did in the case of some three hundred murders he confessed to over a several year period, confessions which became more and more bizarre, eventually including tales of Satan worship and cannibalism, as if one serial killer taking credit for three hundred deaths wasn't outlandish enough. In fact, although no one doubts that Henry Lee killed two people--his mother, and his girlfriend--there's reasonable doubt that he ever killed *any* stranger that he picked up while cruising the highways, his supposed *modus operandi*. As in the case which brought him the death sentence, he was never able to lead the authorities to a body, or to the exact murder scene, without prompting. As in this case, his first statement was incredibly vague and sketchy; details were only filled in after he'd had extensive debriefing by the police investigating the case. As in this case, his story was full of holes and contradictions: Supposedly he murdered the woman in Oklahoma, then drove all night to a particular county in Texas just so he could drop the body in a culvert there and, eventually, stand trial there. Most tellingly, in this particular case, he was cashing a paycheck for a roofing job in Jacksonville, Florida, twelve hours after he supposedly committed the crime in Texas, calling for a feat of superhuman driving which just might barely be possible if one didn't stop for such niceties as, for instance, gas.

One would be tempted to assume that this is one of several hundred cases which the authorities leapt on as a chance to close a troublesome murder case without the necessity of having to track down an actual murderer. (This is, after all, the same state that nearly fried Randall Dale Adams based on a tissue of lies and conjecture, simply because the most-likely-actual culprit was too young to be tried for the death penalty.) I'm a little

more likely to believe so, simply because Henry Lee was nearly tried on a similar case in El Paso.

Seems Henry confessed to the rape-murder of an elderly woman here in town, and our district attorney at the time, Steve Simmons, proudly claimed that he was going to get the one ironclad conviction on Henry Lee, and put a rest to this "false confession" story once and for all. Unfortunately, certain troubling elements of the story came to light in the media. For one, the case had been assigned to an El Paso police sergeant who was a relative of the victim--rather disturbing, especially as it developed that family members and the family gardener were possibly implicated. In fact it developed that the gardener had given a confession to the police in Juarez. The investigating officer said he discounted the confession because he'd seen it elicited with a cattle prod to the genitals... Most important, it turned out that semen samples from the victim's panties didn't match Henry Lee's blood type, so there wasn't even any physical evidence to connect him to the crime.

(In fact, as a reporter at the time, I can tell you that this was not the only case of an elderly woman being found raped and murdered under similar circumstances; if this was truly the work of a serial killer, one would have to establish Henry Lee's presence in El Paso on more than one occasion, and as I recall there was difficulty proving Henry Lee was even in town on this one instance.)

District Judge Brunson Moore gave the D.A.'s office a severe tongue-lashing for wasting a couple of million dollars' of the taxpayer's money when he dismissed this one.

So Henry Lee is alive tonight. Don't fret, likely he's not the only murderer in Texas one can say that of; at least unlike them, Henry Lee isn't walking around free....

Yet More Comments on the 202nd Mailing

Spiritus Mundi (Lillian): Ah, nice to see El Paso's Thunderbird still remembered. Nigh brings a tear to my eye, it does...Don't know if Michael Shaara was a fan, but he'd been an SF writer for many years before he wrote *The Killer Angels*. Interesting story: as I recall he suffered a brain hemorrhage, came out of it with little memory of his previous life, and after recovering did not go back to writing science fiction but instead turned out the Pulitzer-winning *Angels*. (You leave out another Pulitzer winner, T.S. Stribling, who wrote "The Green Splotches.")

Yo' "Dancin' Dancin' Dancin'" song was by "Disco Tex and his Sexolettes," although it turned out to be a stage name for fact Monty Rock III (if that *was* his real name), a perpetual talentless guest on the old Merv Griffin show. It was his one hit, but he was no wonder.

Pie in the Face (J. Copeland): Dilbert strips are available on the Web so I guess you could cancel the *Camera* altogether. Of course they show up two weeks stale so timing would be critical...

Twygdrasil (Dengrove): "...*running the gambit of emotions*"? Oh Rich.

rasff isn't a closed chat group; it's a Usenet newsgroup (rec.arts.sf.fandom), and as such it's open to anyone who wants to post a message to it. Whether the regulars there will accept you with open arms is another matter entirely, but one entirely dependent on what you post. (A while back the group was inundated with messages enthusiastically plugging a vanity-published novel of dubious quality, posted by a great number of authors who turned out to be almost entirely pseudonyms for the author and her agent. These messages were not warmly received.)

Trivial Pursuits (Gelb): Re yct Irvin: For that matter, DUFF has sent winners over here whose fanzine activity is marginal, or at least who were best known for activities more associated with convention fandom. Don't recall the same applying to TAFF in recent years, although candidates have certainly tried.

The Sphere (Markstein): Remind me not to drop by your house for dinner on Arbor Day.

Dick Lupoff wrote such a mystery--*The Comic Book Killer*. I haven't got around to reading it yet, but I've heard mixed reactions.

Tennessee Trash (Robe): Your success with the Concave art show brings back fond memories of AmigoCon 9, a con not much bigger than yours that did \$3200 in art sales under similar circumstances. But Good Lord, Son, you run yourself ragged.

Guilty Pleasures (Ackerman): "*Howard and I spent an afternoon pouring over bathroom fixtures...*" Oh Eve. Next you'll tell us you had to go over the books.

Interestingly enough, Harry Warner's plumber found the toilet in one of his bathrooms was also an antique model of some value. As we say in these instances: "You've been sitting on a gold mine!"

Tyndallite (Metcalf): The allusion to the former Confederacy is one reason some of the F.A.C.T. group (co-sponsors of our Westercon bid) were against also bidding for a DeepSouthCon to be held the same place and weekend. Another is that two "scouts" were sent to a DeepSouthCon and, it not being their kind of convention, didn't have a good time. (As soon as we won the Worldcon bid they quit both committees, which frankly left me more than a little chagrined.)

Oblio (Brown): Re yct Ned: If those retina-scan machines had been adopted by ATMs to verify my identity, I could have been seriously inconvenienced for a while.

This Is "I Messed Up..." (weber): Re your checking account horror story: I Feel Your Pain if you know what I mean and I think you do....

SFPAZine (Wells): Agree with you about Robert Forster, and about the Oscars in general for that matter...

Yngvi Is A Louse (Weisskopf): Even the movie tie-in edition of *Martians, Go Home!* didn't do well? (Why yes I am catching up with mcs, also; why do you ask?)

Comments on the 203rd Mailing

Refinement for Efficiency's Sake (Copeland et pal): More than I really wanted to know about the SFPA ballot-counting and less than I already knew about SFPA, but mighty impressive nevertheless.

It Goes on the Shelf (Brooks): *Bad Ronald* was made into an ABC Movie-of-the-Week back in the 1970s; never did get around to seeing it though. I doubt much of the elaborate-fantasy-world bit would make it onto the screen but you never know.

You got one of those lifetime subscriptions to *Fantasy and Science Fiction*? You bastard! Actually I bought one of the 1960 issues and saw that they had been selling lifetime subs for *forty* dollars—~~and a mule~~ For months after this discovery I chided my parents for not having had better foresight than to buy a gift subscription for my three-year-old self.

That movie of *The High Crusade* was directed by Roland Emmerich, who went on to direct *Stargate* and *Independence Day*. These latter, to be fair, have plenty of crackling humorous dialogue and slam-bang action to make them an enjoyable sit-through, but one might be surprised to learn Herr Emmerich had any contact with the literature of science fiction beforehand; *Stargate* could have been written by someone whose entirety of book learning came from perusing Erich von Daniken, *Independence Day* from a steady diet of Whitley Strieber. Still, either Roland had some glancing knowledge of Poul Anderson or he just happened to have the script dropped in his lap.

An Island in the Moon (William Blake): Ha ha. That Scipio Africanus. What a card.

Seasons (B. Hughes): One bit of auctorial "face-saving" I've always admired was in *Forbidden Planet*, when the dying ship doctor's last words are "monsters...monsters from the Id!" Our hero is totally nonplussed so he goes to Dr. Morbius to find out what the heck his dead friend was on about. Oh yeah, sure, we say to ourselves in the meantime, like none of these folks outside of a dead doctor have ever heard of the Id.

"Id, Id, Id!" Morbius snaps impatiently. "It's an *archaic* term.."

Aha! So this is how they pander to the cognoscenti while allowing Morbius to explain the concept of the Id to the unwashed. It's an *archaic* term; that's why no one except a couple of specialists are familiar with it. It's a small thing, but I was impressed that the screenwriter (Cyril Hume) went that extra measure not to insult anyone's intelligence.

And thanks for the **1976 Deep South Convention Program**; collecting these things is one of my secret passions.

The Lawyer of Tenth Court South (Frierson): Can you help someone in Texas divorce someone in Seattle that she hasn't seen in ten years?

(Title Goes Here) (Lynchae): Richard Brandt **IS** God, in *LoneStarCon 2: Judgment Day!* (You *do* recall that according to *Terminator 2*, the world was gonna go up in the grand conflagration during Labor Day weekend, 1997?)

This Is Not a Minazine (R. Lynch): Enjoyed your trip report as usual. The most exotic traveling I'm looking at is the company flying me to Cabo San Lucas to give a fifteen-minute presentation at a customer meeting, and I don't even know if *that* will come off. Sure would like to get more use out of this passport I bought when I stood for TAFF.

But speak for yourself--this American would as soon watch dog sled racing as those other televised spectacles...

My mother sang with a band when she was in high school. She was keen to accompany the band when they went on tour, but her folks nixed the idea. Perhaps my affinity for jazz comes from her, but I never kept up with any instrument but the harmonica.

Offline Reader (Koch): I can sympathize with your dad. Michelle, I'm sure, sympathizes with you.

Do you really have trouble keeping Aspirin on the shelves?

Spiritus Mundi (Lillian): Don't know if Ulrika got that much support from LASFS, simply because I don't know how much she's associated with them in recent years (and how much interest they have in TAFF these days, either); I got the impression she garnered most of her support from her Internet pals on the *rec.arts.sf.fandom* newsgroup.

Didn't Sternbach only win two Hugos? Why doesn't Whelan quit? He could have hung it up after tying Freas's record... One danger of assuming someone will keep winning due to momentum is that all of a sudden they run out of steam: Maitz beat Whelan a couple of times, then Bob Eggleton stood up and took his place in the box. Of course now Bob could be running on momentum alone...

When the Olympics allowed professional basketball players to compete, I was infuriated, recalling Jim Thorpe having his medal revoked (even if eventually restored) for having

played a little semipro ball. The whole ideal of amateur athletics was irrevocably discarded; who *cares*, or is *surprised*, if the members of the "Dream Team" can blow a team from Slovakia off the court?

What, Kline in *A Fish Called Wanda* wasn't hammy enough for you?

Michelle is a furr piece out, herself.

Hey, I can help you get *Challenger* up on a website, and set you up for the webspace accounts to host it on. You don't even have to restrict it to "selections," assuming you post the text as text and only scan the artwork and graphics, rather than (God forbid) scanning each page as a graphic file. You can easily acquire 11MB of free webspace, which is more than enough to get you started. Each issue can be its own directory, with each article a separate "page" linked by a table of contents (or in fact each page could be a separate "page," as some webmasters are intrepid enough to arrange it).

Twgdrasil (Dengrove): That was *Klinger*. Shows how much your brother knows.

I am shocked, shocked I tell you, at your suggestion that one could build a mega-site spanning several free Web servers....In any case, since I wrote, Geocities has expanded their webspace for homesteaders to 11MB; I think Xoom started that off, and now it's on its way becoming the standard free-space allotment. So you're certainly right, one can more easily than ever accumulate twenty or thirty megs--certainly far more than most of us will ever use.

The Sphere (Markstein): Aw, HTML is sinfully easy. (If someone like me can figure it out...) Any of the decent Web tutorials will get you cranking out the basics in no time.

Peter Pan and Merry (Schlosser): I remember in high school I had to give a report on Albania, which I pretty much rewrote straight out of the 1957 World Book, then left the paper at home and had to recite it from memory. Thank goodness it was a short entry. (Small country.)