



CHALLENGER

# Challenger

Vol 1, No. 1: Fall 1993

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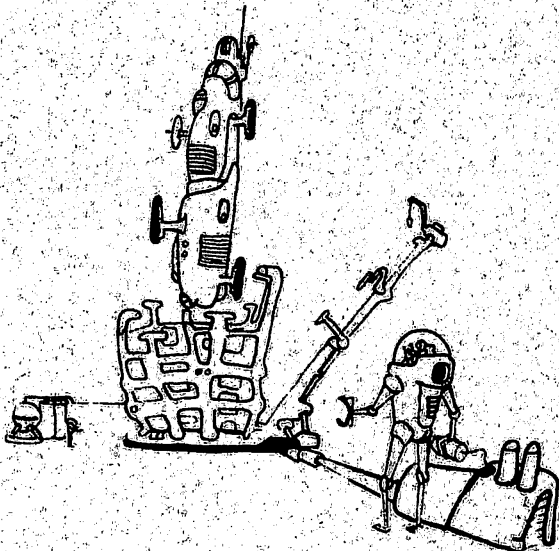
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## CONTENTS

Editorial, <i>GHLIII</i> .....	pg.1
Genuine Imitation Leather Black Vinyl Pants, & other Embarrassments, <i>Gary Robe</i> .....	pg. 2
Instrumentality, Above the Usual Banality, <i>GHLIII</i> .....	pg. 6
The Grimoires, <i>Richard Dengrove</i> .....	pg.8
On the Fly, <i>Lon Atkins</i> .....	pg. 14
St.Louiscon: They Met Me in St. Louis, <i>GHLIII</i> .....	pg. 16
The Day After the World Ended, <i>R.A.Lafferty</i> .....	pg. 24
Cookin' with Fats, <i>Dennis Dolbear</i> .....	pg. 30
The "Al" Side, <i>Alan Hutchinson</i> .....	pg.39
For the Back of the Menu at the Blue Parrot Bar, <i>Donald Walsh</i> ...	pg. 40
Femmefannes We Love .....	pg. 42
War Story .....	pg. 44
To Close, <i>GHLIII</i> .....	pg. 47
Confrancisco Photopage .....	inside bacover

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**GHLIII** press publication # 769

To me the word "oxymoron" always suggested someone suffering from Raptures of the Deep. In actuality, of course, it's a self-contradictory term ... such as "The Adult Male Fan", the target audience for the fanzine you're holding, **Challenger**.

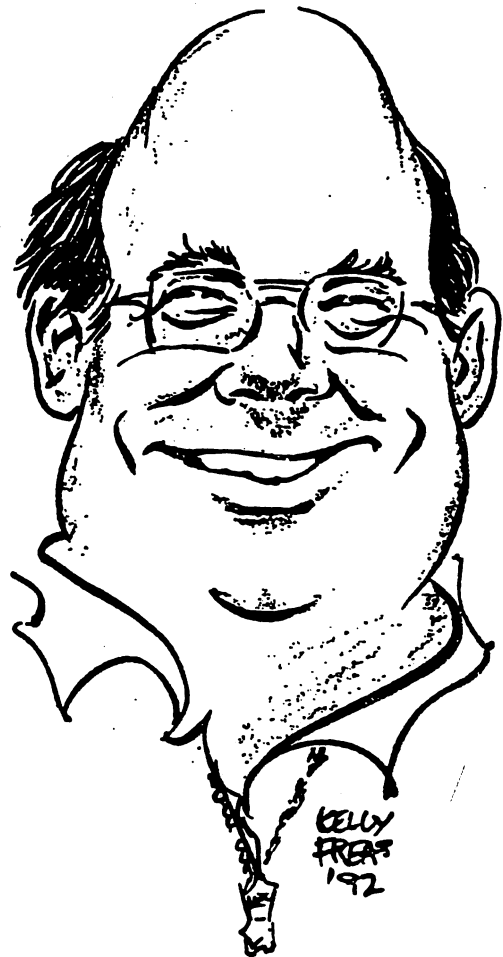
Our times have seen issues founded on gender rise to the foremost attention of our culture. Feminism has been the greatest social force of the past twenty years. New hopes and expectations abound for women in this society ... but what about men? As a man growing into maturity in the past two decades, I've had to handle those new expectations -- the new measure of a man -- in everyday life. But as an SFer, dealing -- not always calmly -- with changing roles, I've found little discussion of that new masculinity in our genre. The new femininity has a horde of SFnal proponents debating its nature and its effect on society; where is the corresponding debate among men? Where do we take the new measure of a fannish man? How about *right here*?

(As if you couldn't tell, the idea for **Challenger** began with **Esquire**, probably the best men's magazine in history.)

Though we're an SF fanzine, we won't restrict ourselves to SF, of course. It'll center on men's interests and outlook, our duty to society and our place in science fiction. I see this fanzine as focusing on travel, collecting, politics, genre fiction, games, films, our relations with the opposite sex, on whatever else men in fandom talk and care about. Are these interests unique to the Y chromosome? Naturally not. But I believe a zine talking about these things from a masculine perspective, not exclusive but *specific* in tone, would be diverting to publish.

Material of interest to the fannish male will include material on the fannish *female*, of course. The section of each zine I think I most look forward to will be a dedication of sorts to a special, and specially wonderful, lady of our genre ... a "Femmefan We Love". For the first few issues, the editorial staff will be making the selections; afterwards, we'll be glad to accept suggestions. The nicest thing about our partners on this planet, after

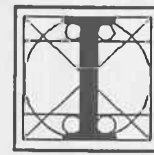
{Cont'd on page 37}



*Gary Robe is a member of two of my apas, KAPA (the noble Kentucky apa) and SFPA (the immortal Southern Fandom Press Alliance). He contributed this piece to the latter, and has graciously allowed **Challenger** reprint rights. (Special thanks to Dick Lynch, who originally wanted it for *Mimosa*.) Want to know what **Challenger** is all about? Read on.*

# GENUINE IMITATION LEATHER BLACK VINYL PANTS, AND OTHER EMBARRASSEMENTS

by  
**GARY R. ROBE**



In the fall of 1984 I was recovering from a divorce which brought upon a certain feeling of resentment for most females, and a need for a second childhood. To these ends I mostly associated with the gang of guys that hung around the two centers of play which were important to my continued sanity: Asgard Games and Rickey Sheppard's Hard To Find Books. The former was a game shop which doubled as living quarters for its owners, and as such was a non-stop playground for everything from D&D to Napoleonic War recreation. Rickey's bookstore was the literary center of the group. The store was highly organized. Used books were on the left hand side of the store, magazines on the right, and comics down the center. Any higher level of organization was simply a coincidence of quantum physics. The bookstore had its charms, however. Since exploring the stacks of books was akin to an archaeological dig, one could browse for hours and take part in the free-ranging conversation between Rickey and various patrons while waiting for somebody to come up with a better idea of how to spend the evening. It was a Friday night in this atmosphere that the stage was set.

Randy Fox was, at that time, a student at Western Kentucky University, as were



many of the Games/Bookstore crowd. Randy was an escapee from the strip mines of Mulenberg County, Kentucky, and was the first of his family to attempt college. Randy brought a certain manic energy to the group since he was spreading his wings in Bowling Green with aspirations of a life in the even bigger city after graduation. At this time, however, Randy was deeply into the hormonal and emotional rush of losing his virginity. At about 9:30 PM, after he left his part time job at the Sears store, he breezed into Hard To Find and announced that tomorrow night there would be a party at his house. His roommate was going home for the weekend, and he was celebrating by trotting his girlfriend Leree (pronounced Le Ray) out before all of us unfortunates who were currently unattached. That being the best offer for entertainment I had for the weekend other than watching the dust bunnies grow in my apartment, I accepted his invitation.

On Saturday afternoon, once again Randy and I hooked up to procure supplies for the night's revel. It was important to enlist my aid in this since Randy was not yet 21. In the late afternoon, we swung by Hard To Find to see if any comics happened to arrive. In killing time around the store, Matt Gore came in with big news. Matt was a graduate student in History, and was therefore closer to my age and temperament than most of the rest of the gang. In the preceding week, Matt had managed to trip over a parking lot concrete bumper and break his leg. This was the first time I'd seen his cast, but he soon had a story that relegated his leg to the back burner. Matt had just come from the Mall where he had found that Chess King had just marked down a rack of *genuine imitation black leather vinyl pants* to \$4.00. Randy and I got the same idea. At \$4.00 a pair of imitation leather pants suddenly became an essential part of a balanced wardrobe. We both chuckled at the thought of the looks we would get at Randy's party that night when we arrived wearing glossy black plastic.

Alas, the anticipation of that night's gathering quickly outstripped its actual excite-

ment value. Randy, in his haste to arrange the party, had invited a bunch of guys, and his girlfriend. There's nothing to put a damper on a party like having one member of the opposite sex in attendance. If it were just guys, we could have watched some skin flicks on the video and had other male bonding fun. If there was anything close to a balance, then some pairing could occur, and some fun could be had. As it was, we were stuck in Randy's apartment on a warm October night with all guys and one girl, who was spoken for. All conversation soon died, and the group resorted to the ultimate in bad party desperation, Trivial Pursuits.

After an hour of this, Leree excused herself, and left Randy looking rather forlorn. I felt like asking Randy if he had any interesting mildew growing in his shower that we might watch to liven things up, but decided that would be too cruel. One by one people bailed out of the stifling situation. The feeling of being trapped in the Saturday Night That Wouldn't End grew when one of the group, Scott, left with an explanation that he had another party to attend. Oh that was *great*. Scott had a better party to go to, but he was leaving us to stew in our black vinyl pants without so much as a "Why don't y'all come along?"

About 15 minutes later our chagrin at Scott increased when he returned and asked Matt if he wanted to leave Randy's and switch to his party. Matt waffled for a couple of minutes, saying that his leg was bothering him, and he didn't want to move. When Scott insisted, Matt agreed, and left us feeling even more left out than before. We decided that what we needed was some female companionship, but none of the girls we knew was answering a phone that night. "At least some folks have found an interesting party," I snarled at Randy.

A few minutes later, Scott and Matt returned again, and this time invited Randy and I to go to this alleged other party. By this time, I had found my way through most of a fifth of rum, and was suspicious of any party that others had already left twice. "Is there lots

of people and talking?" I asked.

"Yeah, there's people and talking," said Scott.

"Is there music and dancing?" I raised the stakes.

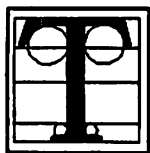
"Yeah, there's music and dancing," confirmed Matt.

"Are there girls and carrying-on?" I went for broke.

"Yeah, there's girls and carrying-on," said Matt.

"Then what are we waiting for?" said Randy and I in unison. I equipped myself by slipping a bottle of cognac into one pocket and a bottle of Wild Turkey into the other pocket of my genuine imitation black leather vinyl pants, and Matt, Randy and I piled into my trusty Mustang that I had dubbed the Millennium Turkey.

The site of the party was not far from Randy's place. As we arrived, I noticed that there was music emanating from the open doors and windows of the house, and that there were several people gathered in the back yard. As we approached, I noticed that half of the revelers in the back yard were girls all dressed in very fancy party outfits. "Lucky I'm wearing these snazzy black pants," I thought to myself. But as we drew nearer to the house, I eyed the girls closer, and suddenly realized that those girls *weren't*. Girls. Oops.



his was one of the monthly gatherings of the Bowling Green gay community. Since BG was far too small and way too conservative to harbor a gay bar, it seems that other arrangements were made. At that point there were two options. We could return to Randy's mildew, or forge into what was obviously an exciting and busy party. One unlike any we had ever attended. We were just drunk enough, curious enough, and otherwise bored enough to go inside.

Our trio firmly backed up to a wall and began to play a game of social chicken. We were all curious, but quite happy to have our comrades there. I stood in the middle as I had the alcohol supply. We passed the bottles and

surveyed the scene. The mood among the three of us was something like "It's not too weird for me yet!" Occasionally someone would come up and say something like, "Lookin' mighty fine in those *tight pants* tonight!" Scott was watching from the other side of the room and would intervene at this point with an exclamation of "They're straight!" The usual response to this was a playful pat on the shoulder and something like, "You'll never know until you try!"

This party was quite a revelation to the intrepid trio of Randy, Matt, and myself. Many of the people I had wondered about being gay were there. Luring us to this party was Scott's way of Coming Out to us, his straight friends. Second, one always wonders what goes on at such a party. As we arrived, the party had not been going on for long, so most of the people there were simply mixing and letting the sexual tension in the crowd rise. It was quite apparent that there was Going To Be Sex as the night wore on, but aside from the couples dancing close, there was little overt action.

As the hour grew later, the scene grew more explicit as the level of fondling and kissing grew, and the level of clothing diminished. At once Matt, Randy and I turned to each other and said, "Let's get outa here!" It was at that precise moment that the police knocked at the front door.

It's interesting what thoughts go through your head at a moment like that. For me it was something like Please God! Don't let me be busted at a gay party in Bowling Green Kentucky while wearing genuinciminationblackleathervinylpants! I'd seen the Warren County KY jail, and it was no place to spend a Saturday evening dressed in Chess King plastic and having consumed the best part of a fifth each of Bacardi, Wild Turkey, and Remy Martin. I liked my face and asshole *as they were*, and had no burning desire to have them rearranged. As visions of that one phone call -- "Hello, Mom? Guess where I am!" -- danced through my head, I heard the cops tell our host -- to keep the noise down. "Thanks, God!" I sighed.

As we took our leave, I noticed that the

police attention on the gathering was not gone. I watched as group entered an auto. The instant the ignition was turned, blue lights came on, and the car's occupants were walking the line. I realized that I myself was in no condition to pass a sobriety test, and neither were my companions. Although it was over a mile to Randy's apartment, a light rain was falling, and Matt's leg was in a cast, we decided that it was an excellent evening for a walk. I spent the night on Randy's couch, and retrieved the Turkey the next morning.

Of course that wasn't the end of it. I had for several years a tradition of eating my Wednesday night supper with my grandmother. Imagine my surprise the next week when in the middle of serving up the masked potatoes my grandmother comes out with "My hairdresser, *Lanny*, told me that he almost met you at a party last Saturday night. What kind of party was that?"

I managed a superhuman effort to keep chewing and remain composed. "It was just a party, Grandma," I said. "Nothing special." I don't think that she totally bought my story, but she let it drop. It was of enough interest for her to repeat the story to my mother -- my mother -- who asked the same question a few months later. It's hard to keep things to yourself in a small town. Besides, I have always been firmly convinced that my parents have implanted a homing device in my body somewhere that lets them know whenever I'm doing something questionable.

That party taught me a few things that I suppose I'd not have ever learned otherwise. First, it taught me that gays are people like me. Some of the people at that party were guys I'd known since sixth grade. After years of work, play, study and gym class together, I might have suspected their sexual orientation, but was never certain. If any of these men were out to lead the straight population into Shameful Acts, they had plenty of chances to try with me, and never did. The feeling I got at that party was much the same as I got at Wreck Beach (a clothing-optional beach in Vancouver). There was some voyeuristic excitement at being there, but mostly I simply felt out of place. Both my walk on that beach and The Party were important to me from the standpoint of firsthand experience of a something I'd heard about, but never known. It's one thing to have a knee-

jerk opinion about something, but an informed opinion carries much more weight.

Secondly, I got a taste of how it feels to be looked upon as a sex object. I have always been nerdy and mostly uninteresting to women, so it was something of a shock to realize that I was in a house with dozens of people who looked at me as a possible sex partner. I admit that I have some amount of sexual reaction to any woman I meet. That response is wired somewhere into the reptilian brainstem at an almost reflexive level. The interesting thing about this situation was that I was aware that many of the guys were looking at me the way I might look at a woman. It was a creepy feeling, and I suddenly had an insight as to how a woman must feel in the midst of a crowd of horny men. There's no way that I can change my reflexive response to an attractive woman, but at least I know how it feels to be on the receiving end of unwanted attention. I hope that in knowing this I can be more considerate in my dealings with women.



inally, that evening told me that fun is where you find it. For all the cultural shocks and discomfort The Party may have caused, it was still way more fun than the night would have been without it. The Party may have been weird and shocking, but I'll never forget it. In this past year I've been exposed to cultures around the world, and I truly believe that the experience of that party allowed me to better cope with unfamiliar situations. Not only that, I am open-minded enough to accept the newness, and find some fun in it. There's too much to see and do in this world to lock yourself into a pattern of comfortable sameness. A new experience may be embarrassing and uncomfortable, but it's hardly ever dull. One just has to be ready to accept something new for what it is, and extract all the fun you can.

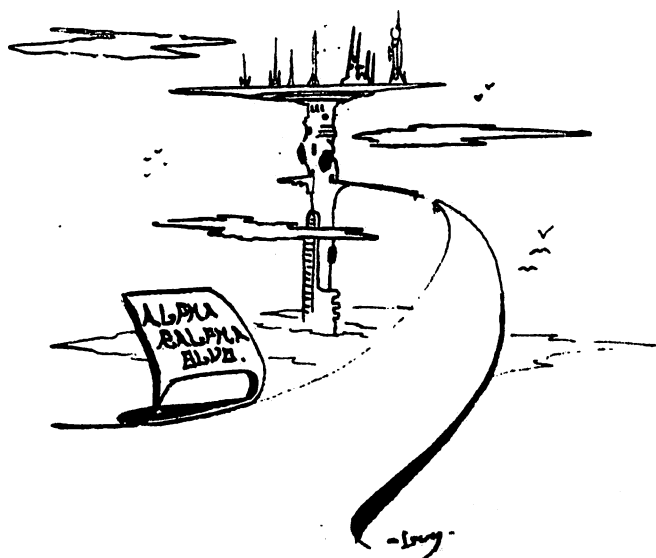
You also need a complete wardrobe. Do any of you need a pair of size 32 Genuine Imitation Black Leather Vinyl Plastic Pants? Mine don't fit anymore.

(Sung to the tune of "Hooray for Hollywood")

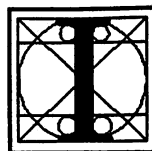
# IN-STRU-MEN-TAL-ITY, Above the Usual *BANality....*

A REVIEW of....

**THE REDISCOVERY of MAN**  
**CORDWAINER SMITH**  
**{NESFA PRESS, P.O. Box 809**  
**FRAMINGHAM MA 07101-0203}**  
**\$24.95**



by Guy H. Lillian III



have a friend who is a real Trekkie. She owns all the Star Trek episodes, all the Pocket Books

pastiches (and daily she works on her own offering to that mythos). Her cheery house is replete with William Shatner mementos, and when I sent her his official portrait as Bacchus, king of the 1987 Mardi Gras krewe, she beamed.

I have nothing against Star Trek and indeed once assayed an attempt at a trekkie novel myself. But I am, at heart, an old-fashioned SF fan, and could not resist the urge to try to *educate* this excellent young woman. "You should read some of the *real* stuff," I told her, and promised to send her what I considered the best. Eventually I did. The Stars My Destination. Camp Concentration. And Norstrilia, by Cordwainer Smith. This last book I particularly recommended, but told her that, for fullest effect, it had to be read in the context of the entire body of Smith's work.

That was difficult. Smith hadn't produced much science fiction, only enough for four paperback volumes. And these were out of print! I resolved to haunt the huckster rooms and ferret them out.

It is now unnecessary.

Forget the regionals they've put on, regularly as Greenwich, and the decades through which they've sustained them. Forget their worldcons, although those enormous events are hailed



for the strumming tightness of their organization, models for that most epic SF gathering. Forget the greats of science fiction who have come from their midst. Forget their baronial power in the haughty world of SMOFs. Forget all of that. The New England Science Fiction Association has -- without it -- justified its existence now and for all time.

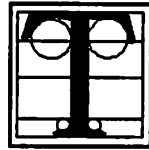
And if that isn't overblown enough, I'll call on C'Mell to help.

**The Rediscovery of Man**, published this summer by the New England Science Fiction Association's NESFA Press, contains the complete short science fiction of Cordwainer Smith, the brilliant pen name of the brilliant Paul Linebarger, diplomat, scholar, novelist, and Christian. Its 671 pages contain work of a beauty and a power rare to our genre -- rare because it is work which does not fear beauty, does not fear human sentiment, sacrifices nothing to any political agenda, yet forwards an unmistakable *moral* perspective of mankind -- one that is demanding, yet fundamentally humane and optimistic. The book is exquisite, well-produced, a treasure ... and as no major publishing house would touch such a project, NESFA deserves the avid applause of fandom for bringing it forth.



Smith's SF production was relatively small: these 33 stories and *Norstrilia*, the magnificent novel published by Ballantine/Del Rey in 1976. (Previously published in two parts by Pyramid, it was denied a Hugo nomination; surely that was why.) Most of the work -- as if I had to tell you -- dealt with a vast, mostly consistent future history, a history with a moral and ethical and political and philosophical goal: the rediscovery of man. Perhaps the most fascinating delight for the reader of this volume -- which should be began at the beginning and followed through to its end, not sampled as one would an ordinary collection -- is to figure out just what it is that Smith means mankind to rediscover. In other words, what he believes to be the central issues of *human-hood*. Through his imagination, humor and towering talent, this theme does not become pompous or tedious or preachy; it reveals itself as joyous (though never insipid), hopeful (though never trivial), and strong (though never pugnacious).

In short, to allow Smith his point of view, mankind is at its best when it cares, when it strives, and when it loves. Smith's philosophy is truly Christian at its most pure. (Overtly so at the end.)



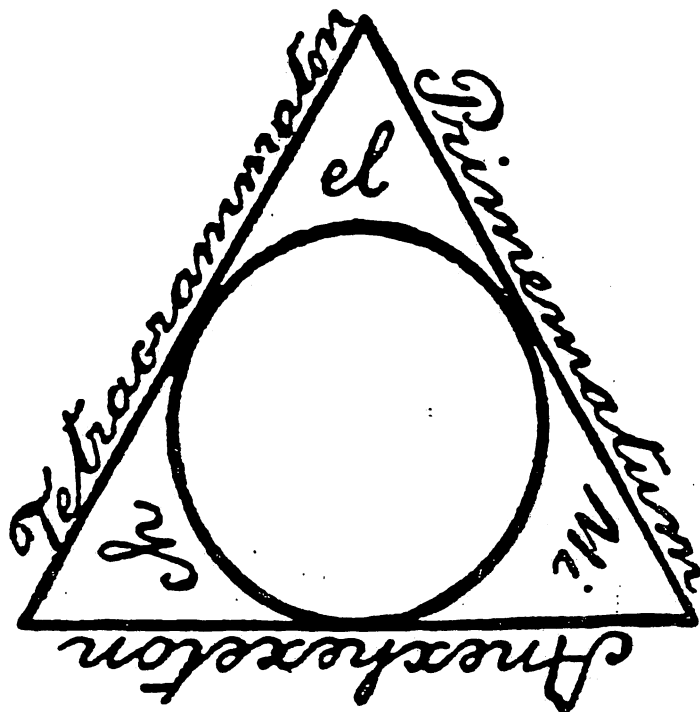
here is so much to exult upon. There is the author's soaring imagination, which carries his characters and readers beyond the crush of gravity -- into the Up-and-Out, into Space<sub>3</sub>, onto Alpha Rapha Boulevard. There is his gift for brave, romantic, heroic characters -- characters possessed of alien physiology, yet blessed with the essence of human excellence. Who will ever forget the Underpeople we meet? D'joan ... Truth ... C'mell? Or the people? Jestocost? Lord Sto Odin? Helen America, "The Lady Who Sailed the Soul" (what a grand, old-fashioned story of truly universal romance)? Rod McBan, for heaven's sakes? There is the intricacy and the *sense* with which Smith's future history unfolds. There is his soaring artistry, the *structure* of his tales, often borrowed from the Chinese. Above all, I think, there is Smith's humor -- sometimes as subtle as a Joycean pun from German, sometimes as gross as "From Gustible's Planet" -- and his hope. Here is a science fiction writer, his work founded not in engineering but in the liberal humanities, whose verdict on our species is affirmative, positive, and *compelling*.

I haven't even mentioned the Instrumentality of Mankind.

This book -- which contains the first publication of "Himself in Anachron", a fine, Hugo-worthy short story originally slated for *The Last Dangerous Visions* -- is a major science fiction event. It merits recognition from worldcon platforms, a plaque, a special Hugo, any bauble we can give it. It has been 14 years since John J. Pierce, who pens an introduction to this volume, brought Smith's short fiction together in paperback form for Del Rey. The books he edited and the rest of the Smith library -- *The Instrumentality of Mankind*, *The Best of Cordwainer Smith*, *Norstrilia* and *Quest of the Three Worlds* -- have become treasured rarities. Now, NESFA, bring us a like hardback of *Norstrilia*. Complete the rediscovery of one of SFkind's great spirits, and immortal talents. ■


Among our interests on the Challenger staff is--how would put it--"outré knowledge." Here Rich Dengrove contributes insight into the most outré knowledge of all...black magic. The illustrations, by the way, are "seals", insignia developed fro the various demons called up by way of

# THE GRIMOIRES



## THE TRIANGLE OF SOLOMON.

by RICHARD A. DENGROVE

hey say "ain't" ain't in the dictionary. It is these days, but another word is not: Grimoire. While it is listed in a supplement to **The Oxford English Dictionary**, it is omitted by most dictionaries. But grimoires were well known only a couple hundred years ago as manuals for conjuring spirits to do people's bidding. They were known and feared, and sometimes craved. If you wished to gain treasure, seduce a woman or exact revenge against an enemy during the late Middle Ages or Renaissance, you often used a grimoire.

The word grimoire has the same origin as the word grammar, and it shows how far these words have traveled: one gaining connotations of evil and wonder and the other evoking boring days in front of a blackboard in elementary school.

The spirits conjured could be those of the stars and planets, a la Arab star magic. Certainly, most of the spirits conjured were controlled with planetary signs, often inscribed on the metal associated with that particular planet. Or, the spirits conjured could be fairies a la the folklore of Europe. Or elves. Or, the spirits conjured could be angels a la Jewish magic. Raphael or Uriel might be called, but any word ending in "el" was fair game. Or, the

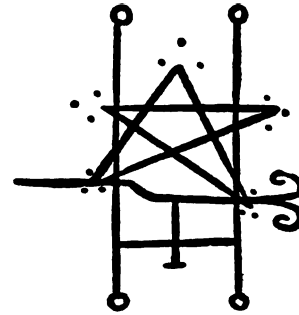
spirits could be elementals: the spirits of the air, water, fire and earth.

Of course, most grimoires used the spirits known as demons or devils. Creatures of Satan summoned by the magician for treasure, seduction, or revenge. So dangerous were they, circles had to be made to protect the magician, and he had to force his demons to sign an agreement, which he used the powers of heaven to implement. If he made one false move, he might lose not only his body, but his soul as well. At least, such was the belief.

Sometimes it is difficult to discern the spirit being conjured. While a famous grimoire, *The Harrowing of Hell*, claims it is conjuring demons, these demons look uneasily like elves. They are little and cute, and include an especially adorable Mephistopheles. Other grimoires conjure guardian angels, such as Lucifer and Satan.

While the magic of Medieval and Renaissance grimoires seems thrown together willy nilly like some mulligan stew, it generally follows the hierarchy set down by the theologians, philosophers and scholars of the time: the demons, spirits of the upper air, are controlled by entities higher than themselves, spiritually, powerwise, and altitudinally. The spirits of the stars ruled the demons as did the spirits of heaven, the Angels and God. This hierarchy is the same as Plato's and Aristotle's with Christian additions and a Christian point of view. There were techniques for the even lower humans to control all of these beings. The grimoires controlled the stars via the magic of the Arabs. And God and the angels via the rites of the Catholic Church and a smattering of lore from the Jewish Cabala.

In addition, these grimoires included some folk magic whose origins are harder to trace. That magic may not belong to a system at all. No system explains why a cock's tongue would chase away demons. None why a cock's crow would do the same. None why a woman would feel pain if her picture or a wax doll of her had been stuck with a needle. None why demons would obey an earthly contract, once



THE SEAL OF ASTAROTH.

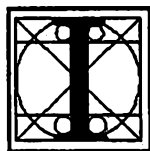
outside the magician's clutches.

The main influence on grimoires was probably the Catholic exorcism. The essence of the grimoire is the same as the essence of exorcism: to cajole demons into doing your bidding. It is true that exorcism and grimoires have different objectives. The objective of exorcism is to cure the ill, usually the mentally ill, while the objective of the grimoire is usually to gain wealth and power for the adept. But they both threatened demons with God and His angels -- and the saints for good measure -- if the demon or demons did not do their bidding.

Also, like the exorcism, the grimoires demanded that wouldbe magicians be purified for the ceremony. They often required the magician to practice temporary celibacy. Strangely, this didn't differ that much from exorcism; that also required temporary celibacy -- of priests supposedly longterm celibate. Also, the grimoires resembled exorcism in requiring ritual washing and the wearing of certain of special garments, and the need to have all things used consecrated to the purpose of the ritual.

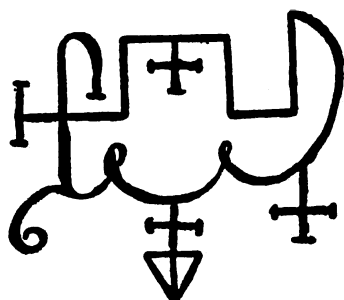
In fact, the grimoires in general borrowed a lot from the Catholic faith. This includes masses, fasts, confessions, psalms, Gospels, and litanies. Also aspersions: some grimoires required the spraying of stolen Holy water and other liquids. Sometimes they required that the Eucharist, the Holy bread and wine, be stolen in order that the grimoire's

ceremony be performed. Sometimes, part of the ceremony took place secretly in a church. Rarely was this for purposes of mocking Christianity, a la Satanism, however; overwhelmingly it was to mobilize the power of the Catholic Church and through it, God, and to force the demons to do the magician's bidding.

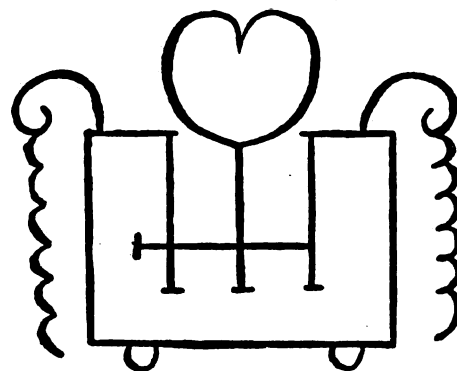


It was the belief in the Middle Ages that a clerical underground existed, which used grimoires and dealt with demons. Certain grimoires, like the 17th Century *The Constitution of Pope Honorius* and the 15th Century *Munich Handbook* basically required a priest to do the ceremony. In the 16th Century, the boastful artist Benvenuto Cellini claimed that he attended a conjuration in the ruins of the Colosseum, conducted by a Sicilian priest. According to court testimony against Gilles de Rais, that powerful 15th century nobleman used an Italian priest, a Father Prelati, to conjure demons. While I regard the trial as notorious, this testimony was among the few credible pieces of evidence presented there. Other trials, at various royal courts, often convicted a friar of doing the actual conjuring for a noblewoman. At all this, the Church did not bat an eye; it had no doubt that such things occurred. On the other hand, a priest caught conjuring demons might find himself on bread and water for life. In fact, the Church probably accused more priests than were actually involved with such activities.

Another ingredient in the grimoire was



THE SEAL OF ANDREALPHUS.



THE SEAL OF VAPULA.

astrological, or astral, magic imported from Arab lands in the 11th, 12th and 13th Centuries. This was still being used many centuries afterward. It fit into the natural hierarchy of the times: stars were more powerful than demons, though less powerful than Angels. In fact, it was often unclear whether the demons were spirits of the stars and planets a la Arab thought, or the spirits of the air above the clouds as the Church would have it. Arab star magic was obtained from books such as the *Picatrix*, which the Spanish King Alfonso the Great had had translated in the 13th Century. Grimoires advised that a spirit be conjured at astrologically propitious times when the right planet was in ascendancy. Incense was often burned during these rituals. As well, medals were made with astrologically correct shapes and materials, and the right signs.

These signs often resembled squiggles. Originally they represented the constellations, and their purpose was the attract the power of the planets and the stars and bring them to bear on the demons. Later, the squiggles lost their astrological meaning. More often than not, they were produced off the top of the magician's head with little rhyme or reason. While there was a Renaissance attempt to re-systematize the squiggles through a technique known as numerical magic squares, it never caught on. The squiggles did, however, resemble something common at the time: the symbols merchants marked their wares with, so that they could be identified no matter what a



porter's native tongue.

Furthermore, the grimoires used the magic of the Jews, especially the names of God and the Angels. The names of God go as far back as the Talmudic (2nd and 3rd centuries). The name possibly pronounced Yahweh goes back even further. Isidore of Seville in the 7th Century introduced ten names of God to Christendom: El, Eloë, Sabboth, Zelioz or Ramathel, Eyel, Adonay, Ya, Tetragrammaton, Saday and Eloym. Other names include Metatron, Agla and Shaddai. But while the Christian magicians knew enough to borrow the names, they were usually ignorant of the Jewish systems for manipulating letters and pronouncing names: e.g., the gematria, temurah, and the notarikon. It is true that, by the 15th Century, some Christian thinkers like Pica Della Mirandola and Reuchlin had learned these systems too, but they were an elite too intellectual to be involved in such trash as grimoires.

Furthermore, the circle in grimoires which was drawn on the ground, and which played a major role in conjuring demons, was of Jewish origin. The historian Josephus records that in the first century a Jewish magician made rain from inside a circle drawn on the ground. Pagans of this era laughed at the need the Jews had for a circle. They did not feel they needed such protection from their gods and their moody messengers, the daemons (from whence the word "demon" came). But the Christians and Jews felt they needed such protection, and the circle became standard.

The Christians, in particular, felt they needed armament against demons; and grimoires like *The Key of Solomon*, and its many progeny, armed their magicians with knives, swords, lancets, and the sacraments of the Church, among many other things.

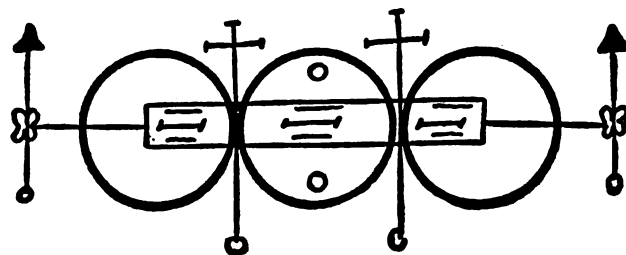
Furthermore, demonic magic is of Jewish origin: the demons are normally demigods the Jews borrowed from the babylonians, the Canaanites and the Syrians. The Old Testament mentions some of the demons later used, like Ashtoreth, or Astaroth. The Jewish

*Testament of Solomon*, written between the First and the Fourth centuries, gives the first written account of demonic magic, however: in a tale about King Solomon, it enumerates demons, and gives their true name, their angelic opponents, and other information needed to control them. Many of the demons here were used in alter grimoires, e.g. Beelzebub or Beelzeboul, Asmodeus, Azazel, Aciel. Also, the Kings of the Directions: Amayon, Gerson, Zymymar, Goap. Kings of the Directions with similar names were still being used in the 17th and 18th Centuries.



however, educated Jewish males, the people who wrote about Jewish magic, did not use demons for the most part. They felt there was no reason why they should use disagreeable demons when they could use pliable angels and a good God to do their bidding. They left demonic magic to women and the ignorant. A few Christian magicians agreed. The 17th Century grimoire, *The Notory Art*, is the most prominent of the grimoires which used angel magic. The *Enchiridion* of Pope Leo goes so far as to use the magic of God himself. On the other hand, most Christian grimoires stuck to demonic magic. The reason was that most Christian magicians doubted that either God or the angels would come if called. Only demons would.

Illogically, the grimoires used angels to cajole the demons into coming.



THE SEAL OF FORNEUS.



ater followers of Plato, the neo-platonists, had some influence. Demons are often elementals, composed of or representing what the world (until the 17th Century) regarded as the four elements: air, fire, water and earth. Neo-platonists of the early Christian era created these spirits, elementals, for each element. Using another system, the 11th Century neo-platonist, Michael Psellos, created the Misophaes, literally the light-haters. These were the lowest demons in his hierarchy, which stretched from those who dwelt in heaven to the misophaes, who dwelt in the deepest depths of the Earth. The misophaes were blind, mute and deaf; and left their human victims blind, mute and deaf.

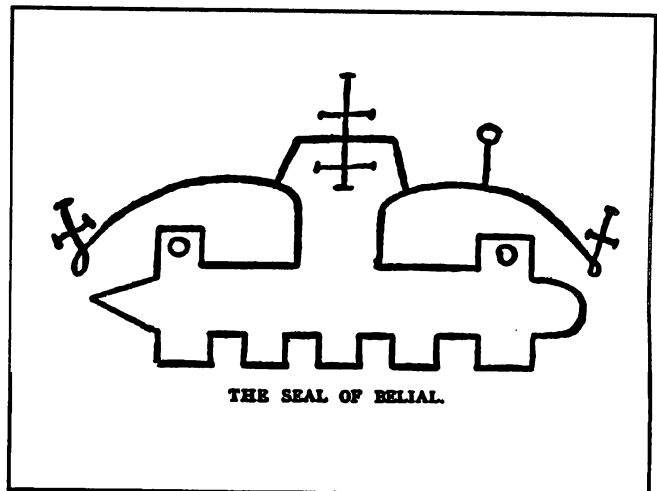
An increase in their status came while they remained a Greek word, a variation of Misophaes -- Mephostopheles, not-lovers-of-light. Under this term they became the sine qua non for the Devil himself, or at least a great prince of Hell. This was done in the original legend of Faust. In the 18th Century, Mephostopheles was transmogrified into Mephistopheles, of Goethe's Faust. And that name has lasted to this day. Some believe this name had a literary origin, others that it originated in the grimoires. I personally favor a literary origin for this demon. "Mephostopheles" appears in the grimoires attributed to Faust, but was not a much-used term. Even Faustian magicians much preferred the demon Aciel, one more closely associated with finding treasure.

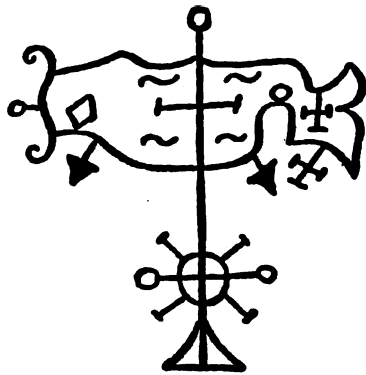
Later, "misophaes" was translated into Latin as lucifage by an Antonio Venitiana del Rabina, probably in the 18th Century. Antonio's Lucifage Rofocale also had a high status, Prime Minister of hell. And the lucifages have been important in ritual magic ever since.

There is another element that is rarely mentioned as an influence, but which plays a great part in the grimoires, the influence of the grimoire writers themselves. These people were educated, but not scholars. They garbled Latin,

botched Greek and Hebrew, and presented an astrology that seems ignorant of the 24-hour day. Also, the writers of grimoires probably made up some of their demons and much of the paraphernalia of magic. Their work would, in turn, be copied by other grimoire writers, who also improvised and botched. I have already told how they made up their astrological and demonological squiggles. Also, the grimoire writers transformed incantations from intelligible languages into an unintelligible mass of gibberish. Christians mistranslated Hebrew, Jews mistranslated Latin. Sometimes, they even failed to copy properly. Waite gave this as the explanation for the completely incomprehensible ending to the *Verus Jesuitarum Libellus*. Also, whole sections of many grimoires were apparently forgotten or misplaced; otherwise, it is difficult to explain their lack of continuity.

What of the people who used the grimoires? Those wouldbe magicians improvised as much as the grimoire writers did. They did this even though the slightest deviation from a grimoire's practice either should have nullified the magic or imperilled his immortal soul. In fact, some foolish 18th Century German practitioners broke every rule in their grimoire. And they succeeded in asphyxiating themselves, more through the agency of charcoal fumes, however, than demons. Cellini's priestly magician, who conjured in the Colosseum, added assafoetida's foul smelling fumes to his ceremony with much





THE SEAL OF CAIM.

more success: he claimed he succeeded in driving off a crowd of unruly demons with it. Improvisation was so much the rule that the 20th century scholar Elizabeth Butler is taken aback when in his account Casanova, the great 18th Century seducer, took care that his ritual accorded with *The Key of Solomon*. She was even more taken aback when he was scared away by a storm, and left the area too quickly to take advantage of a great opportunity for seduction.

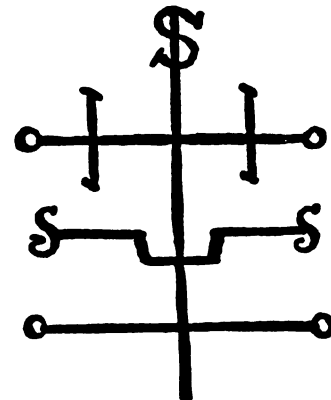


ne influence that was not very great was the influence of Satanism proper. The ritual magicians rarely worshipped the Devil and his minions, as such. Butler can only find one actually Satanic grimoire, the *Wittenberg Hollenzwang*, which dates from the 16th Century. This actually calls for allegiance to the Devil; it did this to exploit Faust's popularity at the time. However, despite its sensationalistic purpose, Butler claims that this grimoire is quite dull.

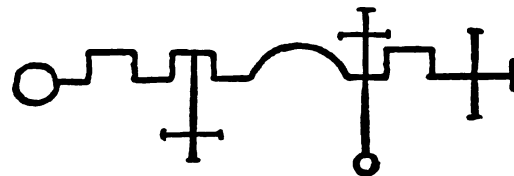
Other grimoires fell far short of this. But, how close of far they came depends on the period. Beginning in the 17th Century some grimoires dared to call their magic black. In fact, one called itself *True Black Magic*. Also, the *Grand Grimoire* instructs the magician in a pact that is somewhat less than one-sided, though quite far from two-sided. In this, it was more daring than older grimoires. God was beginning to lose His grip on men's

imaginations then. However, the magicians of the time could not actually bring themselves to worship the Devil. This magicians before 1500 were far more willing to do. Some grimoires then call for actual sacrifices to the demons: e.g., a bat or a bird called a Hoopoe. Given the nature of these grimoires, we have to say the magician then could worship both God and the Devil, just as those in the 18th Century and after could worship neither.

As you can see, the grimoires lasted into the 17th Century. They did not seem affected by the Enlightenment, which weakened the old cosmic hierarchy elsewhere. Then, with fewer strictures, grimoires flourished more than ever, and many older grimoires are best known from their 18th Century editions. Some very innovative grimoires were produced then as well. The story continues into the 19th Century, too, and to this day. In fact, its history afterward has been so rich, colorful and eccentric it deserves a completely separate article.



THE SEAL OF ANDROMALIUS.



THE SEAL OF ZAGAN.

# ON THE FLY

LON ATKINS reviews James Sallis'  
**The Long-Legged Fly**

Detective novels reappeared in my life during graduate school days in North Carolina. I say "reappeared" because I'd read my way through the mystery shelves of my hometown library. Erle Stanley Gardner, Ellery Queen, Craig Rice and bunches of others. By the time I went to college, I'd exhausted the mystery section and, I thought, the genre.

In Chapel Hill, a fellow grad student recommended a mystery author named Raymond Chandler. I'd never heard the name. "A new writer?" I asked. "No," said my friend, giving me an odd glance, "he's dead. Humphrey Bogart starred in the movies they made from his books."

At the local book store, a marvel with more titles than I'd ever seen in my life except once in Atlanta, I located a paperback edition of *The Big Sleep*. Around midnight, I finished the book. This was more than mystery the way I knew it, with odd characters, suspense, and a puzzle to solve. Raymond Chandler's tale had all of those things, but it dug into the human soul as well. "This is a book about things that really happened, or really could have happened," I thought, but at the same time I knew it was a highly compressed and dramatized presentation. The quality of writing was superb. As



high, or higher, than most of the classics I'd studied in college.

The next morning, I purchased my second Chandler novel, then read my way through his entire published output. I found other fine writers whose work had been absent from the mystery shelves of my hometown library: Dashiell Hammett and James M. Cain, to name two. Thus, as do so many things that make a second appearance in our lives, crime novels came back to me transformed and elevated.

Years later, I recognized that the true dividing line is not between genre and mainstream, but between skillful and ordinary writing. At the time, I was deeply into science fiction, where cries of "we're just as good as ..." echoed from lettercols and fanzines. Listing SF writers who were the "equals" of big name popular authors was a common form of amusement. Apologists for the genre steadfastly defended a separate but equal doctrine, even as a similar social philosophy was falling before the moral fire of the civil rights movement.

In my bookstore, science fiction was segregated from mystery from mainstream. I suppose I saw them as three different kinds of animal. To the extent that they were inbred, perhaps this notion held some truth. Every protocol erected to create an in-group becomes a barrier to entrance.

Beneath their surface differences, books I like to an exceptional degree each have something new to say about life. Oh, it can be an old thing said in a fresh way, such that it illuminates new aspects or ramifications, or puts it in the context of our times. This "insight" is something too complex and alive to define precisely in a string of brittle ciphers, and we lack an emotional calculus.

These exceptional books made me think hard, but they engaged my left brain as well. They transcended the facts. Always, they breathed an aroma of poetry. The prose could be steel-hard and uncompromising, but it commanded emotion.

Chandler was classified a master of the "hard-boiled" school of crime fiction, and how often the point of his work was missed. This was especially clear in the books of innumerable imitators, who imagined his secret to be the grungy,

crooked "mean streets" of Los Angeles.

The first time I read *The Big Sleep*, I knew it was about dreams, about how people are defined by their dreams, driven by their dreams, deceived and saved by their dreams. Nobody in the book, from Arthur Geiger to Harry Jones to Mona Mars, is free from illusions. Even General Sternwood and Norris the butler have their dreams of propriety, vain fantasies in the face of deadly circumstances. And Philip Marlowe is perhaps the biggest dreamer of them all.

A lot has been made about Marlowe's incorruptible morality. He's a twentieth century knight, fighting the dragons and ogres of crime. Commentators ten to stop at this point. They leave the impression that Marlowe receives no substantial compensation for his heroics, other than the satisfaction of virtue as its own reward.

Well, I think Marlowe was feeding his dream, and if it was a vision of rough knighthood, an urban redefinition of the Hemingway code, then it kept him alive and respecting his choices. It's a big mistake to think that Marlowe worked for nothing. His kind of pay is rare treasure, and he stored it up in quantities few of us ever obtain.

The genius of Raymond Chandler lay in linking the hard world in which we all live to the illusions that lie within and nourish us. Stark contrasts between sordid pre-war Los Angeles and the shining behavioral code of Marlowe dramatize Chandler's novels. The melodrama of dreams. Our dreams.

A few months ago I picked up a detective novel by another author I'd never read before, James Sallis. The book was titled *The Long-Legged Fly*. Reflections of Philip Marlowe glittered in the protagonist. A Marlowe changed, as if by carnival mirrors, in the same fashion our world has changed from the middle to the close of this century.

As *The Long-Legged Fly* opens, Lew Griffin prepares to kill a man as a matter of revenge. A knife is his weapon of choice. Soon, we discover that Griffin is a New Orleans detective with an office in the Quarter. The year is 1964. Griffin has a missing person case he works with a desolate, methodical rhythm. His father is dying in Memphis. {Con't pg. 23}

1969 was a great year. So many things happened, so many things came to fruition ... and it felt like most of them happened to me. Even the events that reverberated throughout the entire human species, like the moon landing, seemed to have a unique significance to Guy H. Lillian III. After all, didn't Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin take their stroll on *luna incognita* on my 20th birthday?

It was appropriate, wasn't it, that it was in that year that man set foot on another world ... clumsy yet moving "first words" and all. Look at what was going on. Our country was in turmoil. Abroad, our poor were being slaughtered in our witless attempt to become a colonial power. At home, their communities were exploding in a rage of frustration and isolation and fear. There were places in this country where growing hair past your ears invited being beaten, or, worse. A new sensibility, a new artistry, a counterculture if you will, was rising, to the bemused, often terrified resistance of the old. Most significantly, I think, *2001: A Space Odyssey* had opened, and our field and our country would never be the same. The film was not greeted by unanimous praise. Sneers of "hippy" ran in the pages of *Analog* (though P. Schuyler Miller was no such bigot). The message was lost for most in its medium, either in incomprehensibility or in simplistic drug imagery ... but for some of us, it spoke of the hope and the racial renewal waiting for us in the beyond.

2001 dealt with a signal, a signal sent to the universe that Man was ready to take his place in the Beyond. The year after it opened, in 1969, Man did.

Me too.

Here in the pages of *Challenger* I'm going to reflect on the epic events of 1969, their personal significance at the time and since. Call it a silver salute to my own "annus mirabilis". So much happened. Where to start? Well, dealing as we are with science fiction, let's revisit my first science fiction convention ... where so many things began to come true.

## ST. LOUISCON: They Met Me in St. Louis

by Guy H. Lillian III

So I flew to St. Louis. It was a lovely trip, through skies that had been scoured clear of bad weather by the recent passage of Hurricane Camille, which had forged ashore but short days earlier. I imagined that I could see its path in the forests below me. At the con hotel, I spotted Quinn right away ... and the adventure began.

I was just-turned 20 when I flew to St. Louiscon, and it took more than a Delta jet to get me there. I was a Berkeley college boy living in New Orleans, a suburban kid in a somewhat functional family, and to get to my first convention had to fight parental confusion, fury and hurt ... and borrow money over that. I really didn't know what to expect. Believing the Hugo banquet was something like Methodist church, I thought I needed a new suit, and was saved from the *faux pas* only because the tailors miscut the thing and tried to sell me something better suited to a gorilla than to a skinny college brat.

But it wasn't as if I lacked guides to proper fan etiquette. I was after all a member in good standing of two very different but equally excellent SF clubs. Berkeley's Elves', Gnomes' and Little Men's Science Fiction, Chowder and Marching Society had been tolerating my presence for

two years. On summer vacation I'd joined NOSFA, the New Orleans Science Fiction Association, which was younger, sillier, and, it would turn out, liberating. All of these good folk gave me sage advice and assistance. Foremost among these was Chelsea Quinn Yarbro -- later of Count St. Germain, then of the Little Men -- who promised me a job, crash space, and advice. Quinn it was who stood as a barrier between my neofannish enthusiasm and the inevitable ghastly *faux pas* of my station.

I was geared up to commit some beautes. The first of these involved *autographs*. When I packed for the convention I stacked up more than 50 tomes I wanted inscribed. Eventually I culled these down to about 20 ... but Quinn warned me that she'd better not see me bugging *any* writers for their signatures while I was On the Job.

As a *Foot*. Quinn was working for the SFWA and its Secretary, Anne McCaffrey, running the Press Liaison Room at St. Louiscon. Tom (then "Tommy", and I still call him that, much to his annoyance) Whitmore and I had been appointed her runners, or "Feet", and our job was to fetch interview subjects for any reporters that blundered in. This was an incredible opportunity for a neofan, as it would bring me into contact with every writer at the worldcon ... and I was still new enough to fandom to think that Special. Think of the *autographs*.

Quinn and I met Forry Ackerman, and I told him how Famous Monsters #11, with Godzilla on the cover, had begun the process which brought me to worldcon. We ran into Ellison, wearing an unforgettable green, frilly shirt. I'd met him before -- it's a famous, now-boring story I'll foist on you in a future issue -- and told him how my *real* father had read *Love Ain't Nothing But Sex Misspelled*, and enjoyed it. Harlan swelled. "Nice man!" he said. "Yes," sighed Quinn, "it's good for you." New Orleans fan Dean Sweatman came by,

in his characteristic black outfit, and dragged me to a cheerful, rotund gentleman standing alone in the lobby. He wore a yellow short-sleeved shirt, flapping loose at the waist. "Guy," Dean said, "this is R.A. Lafferty."

Lafferty. *God*. The discovery of his humor and his compassion and his genius and his wit had been the greatest literary happening of the year for me. I had voted for and was cheering for his Past Master for the Hugo -- although, to my disgrace, I didn't believe it would win, and had indeed *bet* against it with other NOSFA members. (My wager was on *Stand on Zanzibar*.) This bet would be of interest later. But I'm proud to say that though I did hit Ray up for an autograph on his Hugo nominee, I didn't commit an even worse breach of etiquette, and shout "You're R.A. Lafferty!" as did several in my presence. I'd seen his photo and knew what kind of Irish elf to expect.

It's hard now to believe how desperate I was to get writers to sign their books. When I met Fritz Leiber -- he really did look like God, and I don't mean Lafferty -- and Clifford Simak, and Robert Silverberg -- who hasn't aged 25 minutes in the 25 years since -- *and* Annie McCaffrey (when Lafferty met her he threw his arms around her and shouted, "The Dragon Lady!"), I hauled out the books. Quinnie threatened to remove my tonsils *through my ears*, but I was not to be restrained. (Neofans are weird. Babbling to Simak for an autograph, I found myself apologizing for my *name*. Maybe that's why my copy of *Way Station* was endorsed to "Bob Lillian".)

Others met writers of personal moment. My great buddy Pat Adkins, an ERB fiend, met Philip Jose Farmer, whose explorations of the Tarzan mythos thrilled and inspired him ... and still do, as his *Lord of the Crooked Paths* trilogy from Ace attests. Pat was present when a reporter approached Quinn and she ordered me to

go fetch "Anyone who looks like a writer!" I looked from Ellison, holding forth to my left, to Lafferty, declaiming to my right ... Pat still remembers my shrug and his laughter.

(I must mention at this juncture that my enthusiasm and excitement became a matter of great delight for my Nawlins pals. It became known that if, whenever they saw me, they pointed their index fingers in my direction and shouted "BANG BANG!", I would promptly -- and very publically -- flop to the floor and play dead. Hey, I was 20; okay?)

All was not play in the SFWA Press Office. At one point Quinn ordered me to "Go wake up Gordie." This was a pleasant assignment, since "Gordie" meant Gordon R. Dickson, and he was another great. I had *lots* of his books on hand. I went up to the proper room and knocked. Waited. Knocked. Waited. Gave up.

"He's not there," I told Quinn.

"Yes he is. You have to knock *loud*."

I returned to the door. Knocked loud. Knocked *very* loud. "Mr. Dickson? Mister *DIICCKKK*son!"

I *kicked* the door. "*MISSSTERRR DIIIICCCCKKKKKKKSSSONN-NN!*"

Finally the door opened a crack. I expected fury and a chewing-out. Instead, the most pleasant face in science fiction, blinking off sleep, smiled and said "Oh, thanks for coming to get me!" Later, I remember Kelly Freas proffering Dickson a quaff of 100-year-old tequila. I just *wonder* if he accepted.

Dickson was SFWA President, and I well remember him being interviewed by on local TV. The most salient question he was asked demonstrated the attitude Sfdom faced in St. Louis. Intoned the reporter, "How do you expect to get people to join in your beliefs?" Dickson blinked. You didn't have to be a telepath to hear his thoughts? "*Huh?*"

This was typical. The subhead on

our newspaper coverage read "Flying saucers?" At one point a reporter -- remember, schmoozing these dopes was my job -- asked me if *Rod Serling* was there. No, I told him ... Serling, while enormously respected, was primarily a TV writer, and this was a literary group. Were *any* science fiction writers there? he asked. I mean, he said, of Serling's calibre. Across the room Lafferty talked with Alan Nourse, and Silverberg chatted with Bob Tucker and Robert Bloch. I pointed them out. Jesus, man, throw a rock. Hmmph, he nodded. "Well, what about *him*?" He pointed at Tom Digby. "What would you call *him*?"

The man was not inquiring into Digby's qualifications as a writer. Tom had shoulder length bushy hair and a full beard, and wore jeans and a tie-dyed tee-shirt. The reporter had a slicked down brush cut and sideburns slashed at earlobe level, a white shirt and a tie. 1969 may have been the height of the counterculture, but Nixon was in the White House and we were a long way from Watergate. "Well, he's from Los Angeles," I said, "so I guess I'd call him an Angeleno."

St. Louiscon, indeed, marked a collision of cultures; in fact, it was a hostile situation, and it got worse. Seems that the Young Americans for Freedom, a right-wing collegiate group, was also convention-ering in St. Louis that weekend. I'd exchanged stares with a few of those well-trimmed, blue-blazered, shades-wearing proto-fascists at the airport. Far from being the disciplined little Nixonettes they were supposed to be, the YAFers behaved like spoiled brats at their conclave. Whilst orating before their group, William F. Buckley was said to have sniffed the pungent aroma of illicit herbs in a state of fiery oxidation, and stormed out of the convention. Word reached municipal authorities that a group in town was a drug-using, hotel-trashing problem ... and guess which group got the blame?

Aw, you did guess.

As a Berkeley boy, only weeks



removed from the incandescence of People's Park -- about which you'll hear in a '94 issue -- I was both inured and sensitive to such troubles. Thus, when a couple of smug thug house detectives tried to close down a party I was at, and the same goombahs hassled me later, when I was doing no more than standing in the doorway to my room, I was in no mind to humbly beg pardon. Instead, I joined others of my hippy ilk, and ran shouting to the figure whom we believed was Our Patron. Yessir: Ellison.

I remember he was sitting in the movie room, with a 10, of course, his pipe enteethed. We flung ourselves about him. "Harlan!" "Harlan!" "Harlan! They're trying to burn us down!" "Help us!" "Help us, Harlan!"

This was Ellison's importance to us back then, and who can blame us? Though he chafed as always within the cloak of his fame, Harlan drew that cloak tightly about him. He was the Star of St. Louiscon, not just its Toastmaster; he overwhelmed panel discussions (including a scheduled debate between Larry Niven and Alexei Panshin, Hugo frontrunner for *Rite of Passage*) and heckled Lester del Rey from the floor, gave a talk called "The Whole Ball of Wax" and flashed that ruffled shirt everywhere. But aside from being a Noise in SF, he was also a true believer, a liberal foe of middle-class oppression; we knew that from *The Glass Teat*. Who else should we run to, the scent of tear gas all but drifting on the wind?

Actually, t'was the con chairman, Ray Fisher, who took on the jackbooted forces of fascism, and I was fortunate enough to see him do it. He was in the lobby, talking -- and I mean *talking* -- with the hotel dicks, a harried St. Louis cop, and a worried little shmo who turned out to be the night manager. From his tone I knew Fisher wasn't bawling apologies for the weirdness of fandom.

"... and I'll go get *United States Congressman* Joe Hensley, a member of this convention, and he'll be on the phone to ..."

The conversation ended with the night manager, his face agleam with sweat, nodding to one of the house detectives, who gave Ray a room key he'd apparently confiscated. Later, I heard the night manager had been fired. Perhaps it was because he capitulated to Ray; I've never heard. In the years since, I *have* heard there was a murder in the hotel during worldcon, but that fans weren't involved. I'm almost surprised we weren't arrested *en masse* anyway. During the masquerade, Digby brushed his hair into his face and appeared as "The Hotel's Idea of Fandom". If he didn't win a prize, he should have.

Ah, I've mentioned the masquerade. What a memorable event. I didn't costume -- too sensible, too dull, too uncreative, too chicken: you decide -- but I did help Quinn Yarbrow into her marvelous Finnish costume; in fact, I took the only photo thereof she actually liked. I also blundered into our room while Astrid Anderson was assembling *her* costume, and retreated hastily. That costume, worn in tandem with one from her mother Karen, made a stir at the masquerade, and is talked about even now: "The Bat and the Bitten".

But as if I needed to tell you, the 'rade itself was mere prelude.

Yes, I was there when poor Rick Norwood -- poor, undeserving Rick Norwood, a friend from NOSFA, a fine mathematician and seriously accomplished fan -- won the Humor award for his portrayal of *Peanuts'* Charlie Brown. Blind without his cheaters, he stepped too far backwards when asked to do so by a photographer, and in falling off the back of the stage, grabbed the hotel's movie screen in desperation and ripped the hell out of it.

It is as clear in mind as today's lunch. There were *three separate rips*. Rip ... rIIIP ... RRRrrrIIIPppppPPPP ... and then Rick was sobbing on the side of the stage, people were calling "Don't cry, Charlie Brown!" and Ellison, who else, had grabbed the microphone and begun collecting money to pay the loathsome hotel for

its mergerbucking movie screen.

You know what happened next. Came the Hugo banquet, still a banquet in those distant days. I came in after the food and found a seat near the front, at Larry Niven's table. Ellison was TM, and after praising the attendees for paying off the ripped screen, announced that the excess funds would be donated to the Clarion SF Writers' Workshop.

Up popped Elliot Shorter and I can hear him still. "Now *just a minute*, Harlan ..."

Shorter was a huge guy, one of SFdom's rare blacks, and while he had nothing against Clarion, he didn't think Ellison should be making the decision about where the donation overflow should go. His crowd wanted to use the bucks for a beer blast/dead dog party, and he made this opinion very clear. A bemused Ellison stood astonished, and the mood turned not just ugly, but *ogly*. To smooth things over, Harlan invited Shorter to come to the dais and join him in telling a joke, but Shorter was p.o.ed and would not budge. Who out there felt as embarrassed for the man as I did, when noble Jack Gaughan, convention Guest of Honor, left his chair to fetch Shorter forward. Up he went. Joke was dumb.

But the moment resounded. The word went out: *Ellison is through in fandom.*

(Before you mock the sentiment, realize that the Hugo he picked up that night, for "The Beast that Shouted Love", was his last for five years. I rather wish Terry Carr's "Dance of the Changer and the Three" had won the short story award instead.)

The Hugos given that night -- by Robert Bloch -- were historic themselves. John Brunner's *Stand on Zanzibar*, most New Wave of novels, took home the big prize, to the heartbreak of Ray Lafferty's New Orleans comrades. I won my bet, but wasn't happy about it. More to my liking was the Hugo to Vaughan Bode as Best

Fan Artist; the brilliant fellow will figure later in this account. 2001 won an obvious Dramatic Presentation honor, and three absent gentlemen named Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins were given a special Hugo "for the best moon landing, ever." Huzzah huzzay! But Lafferty had not won.

I went to a party given by NOSFA. Lafferty was there, and it was clear the dear man was depressed by his loss. "I worried about the Russkie," he said, referring to Alexei Panshin, and his Rite of Passage, "when I should have worried about the limey." I couldn't stand it: I headed downstairs.

Where Vaughan Bode sat, his new Hugo set on the table before him, doing sketches of The Man, various lizards and other Bode characters for ten bucks a throw. (The thought makes stagger my mind. *Ten dollars for a Bode original ...*) I didn't have a tenspot to expend, having had to haul convention money out of my parents with flaming tongs, but I did have *two* bucks ... the two dollars I'd won with



my smart, but regretted, bet. "Hey," I said to Bode, "if I gave you two dollars, would you draw a Hugo for Ray Lafferty?"

Bode did it. You've seen it. He studied his Hugo -- his one-and-only Hugo -- and bent low over the paper. After a moment feeding recognition to his fingers from his brain, he added the portrait of mighty Roadstrum, hero of Space Chantey, to the bargain.

I offered Vaughan the two dollars. He waved my money away. "Can you buy him a drink?" said Bode. It was the way I remembered him seven years later -- that short a time, alas! -- when I heard we'd lost him. Alas, Alas!

I'm told Ray was too down to enjoy the gift, but hey, he *kept* it. Ten years later I copied it for the 1979 New Orleans DeepSouthCon, where Ray was Guest of Honor, and you see it in this issue, now. And at its first post-convention meeting, NOSFA honored my little gesture with a round of applause. (And a fusillade of "BANG BANG"s.)

So now, at long last, this ramble through St. Louiscon leaves the shallow world of *memory* for the expanding universe of *meaning*. Now I'll deal with the Cosmics: sex, death ... and an even more terrible fear.

Sex first.

In a future article I'm going to talk about my attitudes back then, when I suffered from what I call A California Syndrome. Basically, this insanity was a belief that *the personal is subject to the public*. You did what was Cool. You thought what was Cool. Vary from the program and you were social *toast*. This was conformism, of course, pure and simple, although of course we Californians -- especially at Berkeley! -- would have recoiled in horror at the thought. (It hasn't ended, of course. What's the free-speech struggle against P.C. but rejection of conformity for its own sake?) In the sexual context, of paramount importance to one of my age and station, it meant that if you didn't fit the popular idea

of what was attractive, you *weren't*. Never mind that it was a feeling both inhumane and self-fulfilling; it was there and it was deeply believed. In some sour recess of my spirit, I still think it's true.

Others, however, weren't so crazy, and did *not* think so.

It was a mark of pride with me that I did not attend my first science fiction convention as a virgin. I'd shed my most useless possession short weeks before the convention, in the giddy aftermath of Hurricane Camille, and quite normally, in the words of Edgar Pangborn's Davy, thought myself "the damndest stud since Adam." Nevertheless, one or two evocative moments at drive-in movies do not scour clear the imprinted lessons of an embittered lifetime, and so when I became the object of not one but two approaches, I didn't really realize I was being chased myself. Maybe because one of them was a fella.

He came up to me while I was reading a newspaper in the lobby. Struck up a conversation. I knew him, a little, from California fandom, but had heard nothing about his sexuality. Certainly, he was a pleasant guy. (Still is, in fact.) On a conscious level I had no clue what he was really hoping for when he invited me up to his room. But there are other levels than conscious, and I demurred. I wonder when it was that I finally figured out what was going on.

I know I didn't mind. There was no threat, nothing rude; I discovered that I felt no animosity at all towards this perfectly nice fella who was only being himself. It was a lesson ... a lesson I'd absorb, against resentment towards the ladies who had and would, by the dozens, reject my advances. It was also a lesson against having contempt for the lonely of the world ... a lesson I wish some of those ladies had learned.

More confusing, and nerve-wracking in a way, was the second experience. This one involved a beautiful woman.

She was a few years older than me, but since I was only 20 that hardly established her as antique. I remember some

NOSFAns and I were sitting at a lunch counter and she came up, and *somehow* (this was 25 years ago, remember) I ended up walking her back to her overflow hotel. I further remember walking her to her room, and ... that was it. I left. It wasn't until much later that the lady explained to me that she had beckoned me roomwards with an *ulterior motive* ... only to turn her back and find me gone.

Well, hey ... I was 20. I was a boy. I didn't know about these things. Or more precisely, I couldn't imagine them happening to *me*. I couldn't imagine *Life* happening to me. My California Syndrome declared otherwise; I was imperfect, I was not Cool: Life was closed to me. So there was a lesson St. Louiscon had for me, although I was too dumb to know it. Life was a lot more accessible than I, in my craziness, thought.

Now, death.

When I left for the airport for the return trip to New Orleans, it was without trepidation. After all, the journey north had been silken-smooth, and only a few days had elapsed. What could go wrong? Little did I suspect that a fierce weather front had moved in, and our little DC-9 would have to fly right through it ... and that I would never be the same.

The flight began fine. I sat my diary in my lap and wrote about the convention. A tall stewardess served drinks, and I did not have one. But then the clouds outside began to throb and broil, and our feather-weight craft began to toss and heave. And then it leaned *deep* to the right and then *deep* to the left in what I have subsequently learned is called an S-curve. It means they're spotted something *nasty* ahead and are desperate to miss it.

The stews stood against the back of the cabin holding on for dear life. The plane rocked and dipped and bolted and **PLUNGED** ... The tall stewardess smacked the ceiling. I heard a shriek. I smelled sudden urine. The overhead compartments burst open and blankets flew loose. "What was *that*?" I shouted. "Delta's idea of a

*movie*?"

(I really did say that. I'm proud that at the moment when I was closest to anonymous death, what passes for my wit did not desert me.)

The tall stew rushed up the aisle, hand on her lumbar, on her face a grimace of pain. I babbled. I prayed aloud and onto the diary page. I prayed to God for the pilot -- whom I called "brother" -- and for his instincts and reflexes to stay sound. A cloud black as death loomed closer and closer on the horizon. We nosed into the thick of it. I saw lightning. I heard thunder. The plane rattled across the sky like a bird in badminton.

We were *dribbled* down to New Orleans.

Argue with me. Tell me that turbulence is nothing but the substance of the air. Wax poetic and describe it as the breath of the Earth. Tell me to trust the skill of the pilot and the genius of the aircraft designers. Mention smooth flights I've had. Demand that I remember the beautiful vistas of cities at night from the air (particularly Los Angeles, which actually looks lovely that far up). Go ahead.

*Never since have I willingly boarded an airplane.* There's a lesson from St. Louiscon that *took*.

Here's another. It's more subtle by far, but it deals with a terror that has paralyzed me even more dreadfully than my perfectly sensible fear of flight.

I believe I've mentioned that among the writers I first saw at the con was Robert Bloch. Most cheery and accomplished of SF toastmasters, he had presented the Hugos, and I remember him raising his hat with Tucker at the Meet-the-Pros *soiree*. A happy man, I thought. So it was surprising, at a later point in the convention, to spot a man I thought was Robert Bloch in the coffee shop ... a man bent, and harried, and depressed, and worried ... a man whose face was not tanned but pale, lined not with laugh-lines but stress. The man looked just like Robert Bloch. I almost approached him for an autograph. But he seemed

miserable unto the point of *sick*.

It wasn't Bloch, of course. It was a hotel staffer, a man with features resembling the author's: a mere lookalike. How could I ever have mistaken an unknown, thoroughly anonymous being like him for a worldclass horror and SF writer and personality, a man of wicked wit and infectious good humor? Preposterous.

As the years went on I thought a lot about that unhappy man, and his resemblance to the great. He became a personal symbol to me ... a symbol of something dreaded more than the helplessness of flight, more than the uncertainties of love, certainly more than the brutality of conscienceless authority. A fate worse than all.

#### *Mediocrity.*

What separated those two men, so much alike in looks? Bloch was a lively, vibrant genius. This guy was a sullen, sunken ... what? In my mind for years I ranked him a Zero, looked on him with contempt, masked as pity. His figure would have been less terrifying to me holding a scythe, because he came to symbolize the death of all dreams, the souring of all joy.

Only recently, as I've oozed nastily into my own middle age, have I come to see things differently. The main thing I've realized is that I knew nothing then, and know less now, about that man. All my value judgments were imaginings. The only facts I knew were that he looked like Robert Bloch, yet was not. Everything I believed about him were projections based on his expressions. Unimaginably silly. Who knows how he looked at *his* conventions? Perhaps as happy as Bloch did at ours.

Perhaps his life had joys I could not guess. Perhaps he was married and had children who revered him and later, grandchildren who found him marvelous. Maybe he'd been ill that day in 1969 -- most marvelous of years. Maybe he'd gone home to a family that made him smile again. For sure his life -- no matter how small, no matter how large -- was immense beyond my power or authority to judge. Beyond *anyone's* power and authority to judge.■

#### {On the Fly, con't.}

The book isn't about Griffin's hard-to-figure missing person case, it's about Griffin. After fifty pages, we jump to 1970. We'll visit 1984 and 1990 before we finish. We'll encounter more than one kind of missing person.

With Chandler, plots are complex creations pivoting on the dark side of human nature. They're structures of a tangible, near-linear inevitability. In *Fly*, there's no dramatic formula. The plot is metafictional; it's a shadow cast by events. When Lew Griffin does detective work, he's living in metaphors. His life bursts right through those bounds, as Sallis' prose explodes the genre he borrows. The book is a railway car powered by sail, and under a strong gale of surreal creativity it lifts off its tracks to career across the moonlit timescape.

So Lew Griffin dreams. He even finds a way to make his dreams pay. During the latter part of the book, we sense the author joining the narrative as a participant. Not brazenly, and perhaps not as James Sallis. This is more dreaming to make sense of life. Perhaps "bleeding" is a better term. The author drops his blood into the prose. Griffin has been bleeding internally all along. Now he recognizes the fact.

Yet, despite an underlying tone of gloomy grit, this is a book about hope. Griffin learns to accept the hard parts of his life, the parts he can't control or understand (not always the same). He learns to value his own humanity and that of others. He learns the hidden nature of uncertainty. He outlives his anger.]

The book will present a different experience for each reader. It's subtle and allusional. Don't think that means it's not full of hard action and suspense. I urge you to try it for yourself. The hardback was published in 1992 by Carroll & Graf. Copies are probably still available. I hope it gets paperback distribution as well.

I found *The Long-Legged Fly* to be just as fresh an experience in 1992 as was *The Big Sleep* when I read it for the first time in 1965. Detective fiction, in the hands of fine writers, offers an investigation into those most inexhaustible of topics, ourselves and our souls.■

Here we segue into the first of two other series. We open our pages to a working SF professional for his or her non-fictional, personal writing ... and we hail a Mentor. Nothing is more important to a man than the models on which he bases his life. In his inimitable way Ray Lafferty was one of mine. I discovered him in -- when else? -- 1969, when his first three novels, *Space Chantey*, *The Reefs of Earth* and the indescribable *Past Master* were published. I'll never forget my reaction to Lafferty's tale of Thomas More on the golden planet Astrobe. It was as if I'd stumbled into Medjugore. "Ah," I said. "I have found My Boy."

What I meant was that I'd found a writer who -- though a rock-ribbed conservative -- spoke to a scrawny Berkeley hippy used to being generously tear-gassed every spring. I'd found a poetic spirit who invested science fiction with madness and tragedy and laughter. I'd found someone to cheer for. I'd found my Ray of Hope.

I met Ray at St. Louiscon (see elsewhere). - I saw him at MidAmeriCon ('76) and Suncon ('77) and Chicon V ('91), and at most of the DeepSouthCons in between. He is always a comfort to see. But we won't be seeing him at conventions anymore -- at least, none outside of his beloved Tulsa. Hear what he has to tell us:

"The last [convention] I went to was the Worldcon in Chicago. It went fine most of the time, till I had a bad fall. After a day I was around and about again. The day after Labor Day I went to the Airport to come home and I thought I was all right. Then my legs gave out (there are some awfully long walks in O'Hare Airport), so I had to order wheelchairs the rest of the way home. Since then I don't

walk much. On a good day I can hobble around a couple of blocks with my cane. On a less than good day I never go further than the front porch.

"But I've had my share of good conventions ... And as a child I was in a traveling family, and we saw everything in the United States that was worth seeing. And in WWII I saw everything in the South Pacific that was worth seeing, and all of it was worth seeing. And I've loved every mile I ever traveled. And except for my non-good legs I'm in good health for a man coming into his 80th year.

"Luck and love to everybody in New Orleans, or who has ever been there, or is ever going to be there."

Anecdote time: One time when I was at Berkeley a girl I knew -- petite, blonde, pretty, 150% L.A., and if I'm not being redundant, thoroughly charming and adorable -- came up to me in the hallways of our co-op dorm. In tears. Her new roommate had erected a literal and figurative screen between them and that was more than a sweet and naive and very vulnerable little lady could take. The poor kid sobbed, hurt to the quick of her being by the incomprehensible coldness of the world. What could I do for her? I could introduce her to Lafferty.

I sat her down and I showed her a photo of Ray with our great mutual friend, Joe Green. Then I read her the last pages of *Past Master*. Her eyes grew bright again, and a smile of wonderment grew across her lovely face, and she looked at the photograph as she heard his words: "Be quiet. We hope."

She heard him then. You hear him now, in his speech from the 1979 DeepSouthCon here in New Orleans.

*Wa-wa-wa-shingay, Patrick of Tulsa.*

# THE DAY AFTER THE WORLD ENDED

by R.A. LAFFERTY

Notes for a speech  
given at the DeepSouthCon  
New Orleans, July 21, 1979

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I'm going to talk about the peculiar science-fictionish circumstance and condition in which we are living. It is, unfortunately, an overworked theme and situation that has been used hundreds of times and has never been well-handled even once. It is the 'Day After the World Ended' situation, subtitled "Grubbing in the Rubble". It is the business of making out, a little bit, after a total catastrophe has hit. There are possibilities for several good stories in this situation, and I was puzzled for a long time as to why no good ones had ever been written. I myself tried and failed to write some good ones based on this set-up. And only recently have I discovered why plausible fiction cannot be based on this situation.

The reason is that fact precludes fiction. Being inside the situation, we are a little too close to it to see it clearly. Science Fiction has long been babbling about cosmic destructions and the ending of either physical or civilized worlds, but it has all been displaced babble. SF has been carrying on about near-future or far-future destructions, and its mind-set will not allow it to realize that the destruction of our world has already happened in the quite recent past, that today is "The Day After the World Ended". Science Fiction is not alone in failing to understand what has happened. There is an almost impenetrable amnesia that obstructs the examination of the actual catastrophe.

I am speaking literally about a real happening, the end of the world in which we lived till fairly recent years. The destruction of unstructuring of that world, which is still sometimes referred to as "Western Civilization" or "Modern Civilization", happened suddenly, some time in the half century between 1912 and 1962. That world, which was "The World" for a few centuries, is gone. Though it ended quite recently, the amnesia concerning its ending is general. Several historiographers have given the opinion that these amnesias are features common to all "ends of worlds". Nobody now remembers our late world

very clearly, and nobody will remember it clearly in the natural order of things. It can't be recollected because recollection is one of the things it took with it when it went.

Plato once said or wrote "Man is declared to be that creature who is constantly in search of himself. He is a being in search of meaning." But Platonic Declarations don't seem to apply on "The Day After the World Ended". Man is *not* now a being in search of meaning. He does not recollect and he does not reflect. All the looking-glasses were broken in the catastrophe that ended the world.

There is a vague memory that this late world had a large and intricate superstructure on it, and that this came crashing down. There is some dispute as to whether we gained by the sweeping away of a trashy construction or whether we lost a true and valid dimension in the unstructuring of our Old World, and whether we do not now live in Flatland. There is no way to settle this dispute since the old structure cannot be recaptured or analyzed.

There is even some evidence that "Flatlands" are the more usual conditions, and that the worlds with heights and structures are the exceptions. Even if we could go back there, a Time-Machine from Flatland and eyes from Flatland would not be able to see a dimension not contained in Flatland.

\* \* \*

Now we come to the phenomenon or consensus named "Science Fiction". When trying to identify an object, the first question used to be "What is it good for?" But that is a value question, and values are banned under the present condition of things. Other questions that might be asked in trying to determine the function of Science Fiction are "How does it work?" and "What does it do?" An answer to "What does it do?" might be "Sometimes it designs new Worlds". This trait of SF may

be timely because our previous world is destroyed and there is presently a vacuum that can only be filled by a new world.

"Science Fiction" is an awkward survivor in the present environment because there is no "fiction" possible in this present environment, and that shoots half of it. The curious thing known as "prose fiction" was one of the things completely lost in the shipwreck of the old world.

Sometimes we hear about a contractor building a house on a wrong lot. Sometimes we hear about a man plowing a wrong field. Both of these things are hard to un-do. How do you un-plow a field? But we ourselves have been trying to plow a field that isn't there any more, and hasn't been there for between two and seven decades.



Prose fiction was a narrow thing. As a valid force it was found only in Structured Western Civilization (Europe and the Levant, and the Americas and other colonies), and for only about three hundred years: from *Don Quixote* in 1605 to the various "last novels" of the twentieth century. The last British novel may be Arnold Bennett's *Old Wives' Tale* in 1908 or Maugham's *Of Human Bondage* in 1915. Both of them already have strong post-fictional elements mixed in. The last Russian novel was probably Gorki's *The Bystander* in the 1920's, and the last Irish novel may have been O'Flaherty's *The Informer* about the same time. In Germany, Remarque's *All Quiet on the Western Front*, published in 1929, was plainly a post-novel in a post-fictional form. The structured world did not end everywhere at quite the same time. In the United States there was a brilliant "last hurrah" of novels for several decades after the fictional form had disappeared in Europe: and Cozzens' *By Love Possessed*, published in 1957, might still be considered as a valid fictional work.

That special form of fiction, the

Short Story, was of even shorter duration, beginning with Hoffman in Germany and Washington Irving in the United States both writing real short stories from about 1819, and continuing to the *Last Tales* of Isaac Dinesen in 1955.

There are apparent exceptions to all this, but they are only apparent.

The thesis is that prose fiction was a structured form and that it became impossible in a society that had become unstructured, that prose fiction was a reflection of an intricate construct and that it ceased when it no longer had anything to reflect. A shadow simply can't last long after the object that has cast it has disappeared.

Well, if a thing is clearly dead, and yet it seems to walk about, what is it? Maybe it's a Zombie. And we do presently have quite a bit of stuff that might be called zombie-fiction. This is the personal posing and peacock posturing, this is the pornography and gadgetry, this is charades and set-scene formalities. There are pretty good things in the "new journalism" and in the "non-fictional novels". There is plain truculence. But there isn't any fiction any more. There is the lingering smell of fiction in some of the branches of nostalgia. But fiction itself is gone.

--- except misnamed Science Fiction, the exception that proves only the exception. And SF was never a properly-fashioned fiction. It didn't reflect the world it lived in. It has always been more of a pre-world or a post-world campfire story than a defined fiction. But it still walks a little, and it isn't a Zombie in the regular sense.

The ghost of some other fiction might say in truth to Science Fiction, "You're not very good, are you?" But Science Fiction can answer "Maybe not, but I'm alive and you're dead."

\* \* \*

We are now in an unstructured era of post-musical music, post-artistic art, post-fictional fiction, and post-experiential

experience. We are, partly at least, in a post-conscious world. Most of the people seem to prefer to live in this world that has lost a dimension. I don't know whether the condition is permanent or transitory.

We really are marooned. The world really has been chopped off behind us. Just how the old world ended isn't clear. There is a group amnesia that blocks us from the details. It *didn't* end in Armageddon. The two world wars were only minor side-lights to a powerful main catastrophe. The so-called revolutionary movements did not bring anything to an end. The world had already ended. Those things were only the grubbiest of brainless grubblings in the ruins.

There is nothing analogous or allegorical about what I'm saying. I'm talking about the real conditions that prevail in the real present. At the worst, we've lost our last world. At the best, we're between worlds. We're living in Flatland, and we're not even curious about the paradoxes to be found here. Life here in Flatland is like life in a photographic negative. Or it is life in the cellar of a world that has blown away. It is life in a limbo that has taken the irrational form of a Collective Unconscious. And we do not even know whether there is to be found somewhere the clear picture in whose negative we are living, or whether the negative is all there is.

But, for technical reasons, we can't stay here. Somebody has better be remembering fragments of either a past or a future. We can't stay here because the ground we are standing on is sinking.



Well then, does Science Fiction have any place in this post-world world? It seems to be a semi-secret society so confused that it can't even remember its own passwords. And yet it does have cryptic memories and elements that extend back through several worlds. It is a club of antiquarians and it contains a lot of old lore in buried form. It is a pleasant and non-restrictive club to belong to. It provides varied entertainment for its

members. It offers real fun now and then, and fun in the post-world period seems to be more scarce than it was when we still had a world.

With the rest of the marooned persons-and-things, Science Fiction today is trapped in a dismal science-fictionish situation. It is right in the middle of the "Day After the World Ended" plot. But SF turns this into the dullest of themes, and never applies it to the present time when it is really happening. Someday people might want to travel back to this era by some device to see just what it was like between worlds, to see what it was really like in a "dark age". We do not have detailed eyewitness accounts of life in any other of the dark ages. Doubt has even been thrown on the existence of dark ages in the past. And we ourselves today do not consider the present hiatus (or the present death if it proves to be that) as worthy of the attention of Science Fiction.

"Science fiction as Survivor" does carry, in a few sealed ritual jars, some sparks that may kindle fires again, but it is unsure that it is carrying any such things. There is some amnesia or taboo that prevents SF (and the rest of the post-world also) from looking at the present state of things generally.

And the present state of things generally is that we are in the condition of creatures who have just made a traumatic passage out of an old life form, out of a tadpole state, out of a chrysalis stage. Such creatures are dopey. They are half asleep and less than half conscious.

Well, what does happen after the death of a world or a civilization? The historian Toynbee in grubbing into the deaths of twenty-four separate civilizations or worlds that he studied, kept running into the "Phoenix Syndrome", into the "Fire in the Ashes Phenomenon". So far, the Phoenix, the fire-bird that is born out of its own ashes, has been a bigger bird after each rebirth, but maybe not a better one. It may have been as big as it could get during its latest manifestation; and there's a dim

memory that it crashed at the end of that life because it had become so large and unwieldy that it could flop only and could no longer fly.

If the world is reborn Phoenix-like (and it isn't certain or automatic that it will be reborn at all), what form will it take next? No dead form is ever revived. But something entirely unexpected has, so far, been born on each site of an old world after a decent interval of time. Some of these intervals have been several centuries. But others have been only a few decades, and they have been getting shorter. There are no long-lived vacuums in these areas of happenings, but there has never been as wide and deep a vacuum as there is right now.



If one thing is plenty: there is almost total freedom for anyone to do whatever he wishes. There is almost complete liberty of both action and thought. We live in a wide-

open "People's Republic" to end all "People's Republics", and it probably will. But at the same time we are living in rubble and remnant. We are living in a series of cluttered non-governments, but the clutter isn't attached to anything. It is easily moved out of the way.

By every definition, this is Utopia. Of course some of us have always regarded Utopia as a calamity, but most of you have not. In its flexibility and in its wide-open opportunities, our situation offers total Utopia. Anything that you can conceive of, you can do in this non-world. Nothing can stop you except a total bankruptcy of creativity. The seedbed is waiting. All the circumstances stand ready. The fructifying minerals are literally jumping out of the ground.

And nothing grows. And nothing grows. And nothing grows. Well, why doesn't it?

Back to Science Fiction. The "If only" premise is at the beginning of every Science Fiction flight of fancy. But in

actuality we are all at the "If only" nexus right now. All the conditions have come together. All the "If onlies" are more than possible now; they are wide open. They are fulfilled. There are no manacles on anybody or anything; or else they are as easily broken as pieces of thread. But people still hobble about as if they were fettered in hand and foot and mind.

There has never been a place swept as clear of accumulation and super-structure as ours. There's an opportunity here that doesn't come every century, for not every century has the room to be creative. There is the room and the opportunity, but nothing is moving at all.

I'm not proposing right choices or wrong choices. I'm not even pushing transcendence over gosh-awful secularism. I'm saying that we do have choices and opportunities to the extent that nobody has ever had them before. There are fine building stones all around us, whatever ruins they are from. But nobody is building.

The question to be asked of everyone is "If you are not right now making a world, why aren't you?" Group ingenuity, on an unconscious level at first perhaps, and then on a conscious level, *can* bring it about. It can be done by a small elite of only a few million geniuses. Declare yourself to be one of them! You can now set up your own rules for being a genius, and then you can be one. You can set up your own rules for being anything at all.

There *will* be, happily, a new world, a new civilization-culture to follow on the recent termination of the Structured Western World. All it's waiting for is ideas to germinate and a few sparks to kindle. Several of the survivor-groups of the old world-shipwreck have sparking machines, but they may not realize what they are.

But if we can't somehow bring about the sparking, the reanimation trick, then we're really dead.

"Forget the reanimation," some of you say. "What's the matter with the way it is now?"

"Nobody's driving the contraption. That's one thing that's the matter with it."

"That's all right too," some say. "It isn't going anywhere. It doesn't need a driver. We've even taken the wheels off it. We like it that way."

"But even the ruins we are grubbing in are sinking into a slough. We'll be drowned in foul muck if we don't start to move. It's up to our mouths now, and that is why we are babbling and bubbling. Soon it will be over our noses, and we can only hold our breaths for so long."

"That's all right," some still say. "We like the way it tickles our noses. Leave it the way it is."

Well, that's one choice, but it isn't the only one.



Possibly, if we don't drown in the present muck, there will be a new world. As a condition to its coming into being, it will have its new arts, new ideas, new categories of thought, new happinesses. It may even have successors to old musics and fictions and peak experiences and immediacies. It isn't easy to predict what it will be, but it may be no more difficult to build it than to predict it.

When was the last time we had a world? What, judging from its bones and stones lying around, was it like? No, we can't reconstruct it the way it was. All we have is a wide-open opportunity to make something new. A couple of hundred people here, a couple of billion there, working with uneasy brilliance, may come up with a stunning and unpredicted creation. The best way to be in on a new movement or a new world is to be one of the inventors of it.

Here is the condition that prevails in our non-world now. We are all of us characters in a Science Fiction Story named "The Day After the World Ended". Well, more likely it is an animated story or comic strip in which we find ourselves to be the characters. The continuity has now arrived

a "crux point", the make-or-break place where brilliant strokes are called for. Somehow the characters have been given the opportunity of determining what happens next, an opportunity that is absolutely unprecedented,



Meanwhile the calendar is stuck. It comes up "The Day After the World Ended" day after day, year after year. These should be the Green Years.

But, unless you use an inflated way of appraising things, these last few decades have *not* been at all creative. And if nothing grows in the Green Years, what will grow in the dry?

Peoples much less gifted than ourselves have invented worlds in the past and have set them to run for their five or fifteen centuries. But *we* do not make a move yet. There is a large silence occupying the present time. Is it the silence just before a great stirring and banging? Or is a terminal silence?

Well, what does happen now?

Can't any of us characters in this "do-it-yourself" Science Fiction Story come up with any sort of next episode? Would it help to change the name of the story from "The Day After the World Ended" to "The First Day on a New Planet"?

Any character may take any liberty he wishes with this post-world story. It is a game without rules. But apparently he will not be able to climb clear out of the story.

I refrain from saying "The End" to this piece.

It must not end. ■

*Special thanks to Chris Drumm, P.O. Box 445, Polk City IA 50226, (515)984-6749, who originally reprinted this piece. Book collectors are advised to write for Chris' catalog and be prepared to spend money. He doesn't ask for postage but send him a buck or so anyway.*

*New Orleans is justly famous for many reasons. Herewith, Associate Editor Dennis Dolbear takes two of them...Music and Mardi Gras...and melds them into a marvelous memoir.*

cookin'  
with...  
**Fats**  
by Dennis Dolbear

"...Ain't this some shit?"

The speaker was a middle-aged, well dressed black man, one of several. As he spoke he looked towards one of his companions, another black man of about his age: short, stout and dressed in a powder-blue leisure suit and yachtsman's cap, leaning against the side of a late-model Rolls.

"Ain't this something, though?" he repeated. "Wonder if the Beach Boys had to go through this," he snorted.

The short man didn't say anything. The look on his face--disgust and resignation--did the talking for him.

Maybe some detail is in order here. *Where* we were was the access road outside of the world's second largest room, the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, which loomed over us like Everest. *When* was the Saturday before Mardi Gras, and the night of the Krewe of Endymion parade, which very shortly was going to proceed inside of the dome--already we could hear the muffled drums of the leading bands. *How* we had gotten there was explained by what we were leaning on--a brand new Mercedes and a fairly new Rolls Corniche, the latter with an engraved plate that read FATS on the side. *What* we were there for was explained by the massive display tower, 10 stories tall, about 100 feet from us:

**TONIGHT...ENDYMION EXTRA-  
GANZA....FATS DOMINO....BEACH  
BOYS....STEVEN SEGAL.....**

Which also goes something towards explaining *Who*: the short stout black man, with the disgusted look on his face, described earlier was none other than the aforementioned Fats Domino, member of the rock'n'roll hall of fame, seller of 85-million sum-odd records, predecessor of Elvis and Buddy Holly, certified music legend.

Which leaves only *Why*, and that's a story and a half. Why I was there at all was due to my friend Rick Coleman, music journalist, "r&b scholar" (according to *Rolling Stone*-- honest). Rick's tight with the Fat Man, see, and Fats had invited Rick--and sorta invited a guest--to come along and see the show. It was likely to be an impressive one, and I prevailed on Rick to let me come along.

Which led us to the Fat Man's house over on Caffin Avenue in the heart of New Orleans' exclusive Lower Ninth Ward. That's a joke, son...the Lower Ninth Ward is a vast area, some parts slum, some parts merely working class, but none exclusive or even upper-middle class. Fats is rich--no surprise, since his sales during his heyday were in a class with the Beatles or Elvis--but he lives in the Lower Ninth because that's where he grew up and that's where he's most comfortable; his old friends and his old haunts are there. And there he lives, in a double shotgun house that would be indistinguishable from hundreds of other double shotguns along the avenue if it weren't for the gold and black trim with foot-high letters that spell out FD along the front of the house. ( A shotgun, for those of you who aren't familiar with New Orleans' architectural peculiarities, is a house perfectly suited to the long, narrow lots characteristic of the city. It's a house built in a straight line, with one room after another, front to back--if you fired a shotgun through the front door the pellets would go out the back. A double shotgun is exactly what'd you'd expect--two shot-

guns in the same frame.) Fats' family lives directly around the corner (the two lots are joined) in a much larger and more elaborate house, probably the most impressive modern house in the Lower Ninth. But Fats, himself, for personal reasons, lives alone in the modest shotgun double on Caffin, with his elaborate kitchen, musical instruments, and sofa made from the rear end of a '57 El Dorado. It's comfortable middle class, not the over-elaborate luxury we've come to associate with rock stars, which may explain why Fats, unlike most of that breed, is approachable, accessible and friendly.

So Rick and I sat and cooled our heels on the El Dorado sofa and watched Fats's entourage--mostly old friends from the 'hood--get his equipment and clothes ready for the evening's performance. And finally we piled into the vehicles--the Rolls and Merc, both of which Fats parks outside on the street (the local car thieves know better). And that lead our winding way to the Superdome.

And that's where we stopped, and where we began this story. Because outside the Dome, our less-than irresistible force came in contact with a (mentally) immovable object--the mind of a New Orleans Police Department officer. Or, more precisely, several of them. Several who'd been set to guard this approach to the Superdome--which was, in the event, the only omen we could use--and who just weren't going to let us through the barricades because they didn't have orders.

We pleaded. We remonstrated. We sorta-threatened, although that's not a good thing to do with men who carry guns and and who are well known to be reluctant to use them.

And mostly we waited, in a sort of resigned standoff. The policemen behind the barricades weren't moving, and neither were we--we were staying parked out in the middle of the access road that surrounds the Dome like belt. Not that we had anywhere to go--every parking place for miles around



was taken.

And so we stood--Fats and his entourage looking more and more put out, the cops looking more and more stubborn, and me getting alternately bored and nervous--because I could hear, and clearly now, the sounds of the parade as it approached the Superdome from canal Street....and finally, indeed, could see it's leading elements enter the superdome, blocks down the street from where we stood.

Which started me thinking as to whether or not we were going to miss the party inside...and what that party was going to be like.

You see, Endymion is one of many Mardi Gras parading organizations--called "krewes" in a deliberate misspelling--whose activities are at the heart of every Carnival. Endymion isn't the most socially distinguished krewe going--in fact, unlike groups such as Comus and Proteus, which are limited to old families and old money, Endymion is open to just about anyone who can pay the (considerable) expenses, and is mostly composed of what might be called well-off tradesmen--plumbing contractors, carpenters, and the like: blue-collar guys with white-collar incomes.

All of this makes for a somewhat more *declassé* social experience, but there are compensations. The parade is one of the most elaborate in all Carnival: gigantic floats with moving figures, brilliantly lighted and decorated. (And designed by former fan artist Dany Frolich).

And while most krewes end up with a formal society ball, with all the trappings, including society orchestra, presentations, tableaux and excruciating boredom--Endymion is somewhat looser. Oh, they've got the all the ersatz-royalty accoutrements of the older krewes--queen and court, white tie and formal gowns, but the ball---called the Endymion Extravaganza--tends to be more unbuttoned and much looser, featur-

ing a concert by several bands--four in this case, being two unknown local acts, the Beach Boys...and Fats, who at the moment was still waiting to see if those paragons of mulish stupidity, the members of the NOPD, were going to let him in to do his thing inside the dome.

And finally, glory be, it happened. We don't quite know what--just that somewhere, ahead where we could see all the action was, some honcho of the police department must have gotten his head out of his butt long enough to realize what was going on and cleared out little party to proceed--which we did for several blocks, finally halting at the rear entrance to the Dome itself, where I had my first case of sensory overload of the night.

It's a common thing during Mardi Gras, a season of glorious sensual excess in every way, shape and form--sounds, sights, smells. At the vast portal that lead into the Dome interior, the leading elements of Endymion were already proceeding: small floats, automobiles with smiling, waving beauty queens with Pepsodent smiles and silicon tits (accompanied by portly guys in tuxes) men on horseback, and, I swear to God, a phalanx of Shriners in their mini-bikes and lawnmower-engine go-karts. All of this, combined with the roar of machinery and the blare of the marching bands, the rhythmic tramp of feet and the acrid smell of diesel from the buses parked nearby--was overwhelming. I just stood there and soaked it in.

For a few minutes, until Rick and I were approached by a beautiful young woman, dressed in a formal brocade gown and holding a walkie-talkie. "Are you guys with Fats?" she asked. I guess she approached us, since, perhaps being white, we seemed a little less intimidating to her. We responded affirmatively.

"Are you in his band?" she inquired. I shook my head. "He's a writer," I replied; "and I'm...I'm his photographer." Which made sense, since I had Rick's photo bag

around my shoulder.

"Ooohh..." Her eyes widened. "Are you the two from *Rolling Stone*?"

Now, if there's one thing I've learned in practicing law, it's roll with the punches and never correct a misapprehension if it's in your favor...and if you can do so without lying. And so I used maneuver #7--the noncommittal shrug accompanied by the you-guessed-it smile. I had no idea if there were going to be guys from Rolling Stone present, or what they'd look like if there were, but what harm could there be in making hay while the sun shone?

Which brought the expected reaction, which was a combination of cooperation, friendliness, and obsequiousness. Certain institutions do that. Finally, though, she was interested in making a good impression: she realized that there had been a screwup, Fats was more than a bit annoyed, and that this could get into print, and if it did, she'd better make sure she didn't get the blame. So she schmoozed, and I didn't try to stop her--I was idly wondering if I could get a date out of it. I didn't, but it was pleasant enough, and finally we were waved back into our cars--the next and final (short) leg of our journey was beginning.

We slipped behind a high-school marching band and in front of a duke's float and dashed sideways into one of the service tunnels that honeycomb the Dome floor. We proceeded along the tunnels and finally halted in front of an alcove--which, it turns out, lead to the VIP suites for the performers. Inside, it was quieter--but you could still hear the muffled thunder of the parade somewhere outside.

The suites were beautiful...separate rooms for each performer and a large common area. Each artist had his or her name tacked to the door--Fats at one end, and over here...Al Jardine & Mike Love...

Jesus, that brought back memories.

I used to adore the Beach Boys...still do, as a matter of fact, even though they haven't produced any worthwhile new material in a coon's age. But to me, they'll always be part of my youth.

None of the Beach Boys were here yet; they were riding in the parade. But the door was open, and through it, I could see the large portable wardrobes that held their stage and street clothes.

Now, I'm a great admirer, and collector, of Hawaiian shirts, which along with blue jeans, are the great American contributions to couture. I wondered aloud to Rick just what kind of Hawaiian shirts the Beach Boys would have. Exquisite, no doubt.

"One way to find out", I said, and hoping that none of the Beach Boys security goons walked in, I pushed the door open and walked over to Mike Love's wardrobe, reached in and pulled out a particularly magnificent specimen--all tropical flowers and birds of paradise. Yeah, I should've guessed. Rick obligingly photographed me.

We exited that dressing room, feeling like school kids who've gotten away with something, when my eye caught the door on the opposite end of the room:

*Beach Boys Cheerleaders.*

*The Next Day*

DKD: Now, on a scale of one to ten, with ten representing a philosophical ideal of beauty which we will postulate makes Michelle Pfeiffer look like Ernest Borgnine, where do you think the Beach Boys Cheerleaders might rate?

GHLIII: Twenty.

DKD: Quite So.

The door was slightly ajar. I knocked--no response, and I didn't expect one--the cheerleaders were on the float with the band. Did I dare enter? I pushed the door open with the toe of my boot and entered the sanctum sanctorum.

Ah, the lure of the forbidden--my pulse was pounding, my heart sounded like thunder in my ears...I stepped into the middle of the room and absorbed the vibrations...the thoughts of the lovely Beach Boy cheerleaders **changing clothes** in this very room...the wardrobe cases were open...the costumes hanging, jammed into the racks on hangers. A bit of red sequin caught my eye--I reached forward and drew forth a magnificently sequined halter top: and posed for Rick holding it while leering lasciviously, a brutish satyr defiling the temple of the Muses of Rock'n'Roll Dance...



*What Rough Beast, His Hour come Round at last, slouches into the Beach Boys cheerleaders dressing room....naah, it's just your narrator.*

and exited that room as well, again for fear that the wrath of Zeus--in the form of any lurking Beach Boys Band security goons, all of whom resemble Reggie White except much larger, stronger and more aggressive--might precipitately descend upon me.

Since Fats and the rest of his group were still lounging about, I decided to check out the progress of the parade.

One of the remarkable things about the Endymion Extravaganza is that the parade actually comes **inside** the Dome, and threads its way through the formally-attired masses on the floor. I walked onto the floor and again had one of those sensory-overload experiences: the music, the lights like stars in the vast darkness, and most of all, the giant floats--we were through with the small preliminary floats that carry the krewe officers, these were the real things--moving like dinosaurs or battleships through the sea of humanity. Naturally, the spectators were so eager to compete for beads, cups, and other worthless plastic trinkets thrown by the float riders that they casually risked death by pressing right up to the floats as they moved through the crowds. As far as I know, nobody got run over; for which we must, I guess thank Fate, since the crowd's good sense was utterly absent. Also unfortunately absent was the practice--common amongst wymyn at Mardi Gras--of displaying the female mammary appendages in exchange for an extra-generous throw of beads. Must have been the formal gowns.

The floats themselves are beautiful, many double-deckers, all gorgeous with lights and full of moving figures...the members of the krewe lay out a bundle for this stuff. Several of the floats were segmented--that is, two or three normal floats linked together, which made for an interesting time maneuvering through the Dome. After the better part of an hour spent watching the parade, I returned to the dressing rooms, to arrive just in time for a semi-historic moment in rock n' roll history: Fats Domino meets the Beach Boys. The Beach Boys have been around

since Day 2 and Fats before Day 1--ere Elvis was, Fats walked the Earth. The BB's knew Fats well and worshipped him--Al Jardine had actually asked, shyly, if they could meet him! Unfortunately, Fats has a somewhat more circumscribed world view and is a bit hazy on anyone who came after him (almost everybody) : he asked Rick "Rick, the Beach Boys--are they a white group?" *Yeah, Fats, you could put it that way. I think the only whiter group is The Four Freshmen.*

But anyhow: the picture below is a commemoration of this historic meeting between the resplendently-attired Fat Man--the epitome of NO R&B, and the greatest exponents of Califor-nai-ay Beach Music. Lost in this blaze of musical talent was Steven Seagal, action-picture star and supposed former CIA hit man (although Spy viewed the last claim with some skepticism)-- wandering around the suite trying to look macho. Some people were paying him attention--not too many, though. I was having an amusing time discussing Mr. Seagal with some of the Beach Boys band members when I unfortunately missed Fats' exit to the main stage for his performance. I therefore had to find my way backstage myself, promptly lost my way and found myself clambering over catwalks, compressed stadium seating modules and Ghu only knows what else in an attempt to get there. But I managed to avoid death and saw an opening in the backstage curtain. I went through and found myself with a number of others--including Rick--watching backstage while Fats and the band went at it.

And it was wonderful. Offstage, he's mostly a rotund, frequently-not-jolly old black guy. On stage, he's the same rollicking, freewheeling r&b pianist that was one of the great stars of the early rock n' roll era.

*OOOh, baby  
OOOOh-~~whee~~,  
Baby don't you let  
your dog bite me...*

Sure, it's all the same stuff he was doing way back when. Who cares? It's incredible, exhilarating, strong and smooth like good whiskey.

But my position backstage wasn't too good, and my feet hurt from standing for so long, and I looked around for a better vantage point--and found probably the best one in the house, not excluding the King, Queen, and Court of Endymion, who were viewing the performance from a table directly past the footlights. The ceremonies earlier had made use of this large stage-prop castle with a long stair leading up to it--and while people were sitting on the lower steps, nobody was at the top, so I climbed on top of a speaker crate, and shimmied my way up--no mean feat for someone of my bulk. And once I'd scaled to the top, I got another of those sensory-overload moments.

Spread out beneath me was the entire scene, like I was a resident of Olympus: Fats and his band playing, the upturned faces of Krewe's court and guest superstars past the stage, the dark, roiling masses of the krewe members and guests on the wide SuperDome floor (somewhere out there, I later learned, was Dany Frolich, designer of the parade, and John Guidry, chairman of NolaCon II, both friends of my youth); and on the perimeter beyond, the massive floats were drawn in a circle, lights still blinking, looking like they were a mile away, and beyond that, of course, the vast, dark spaces of the Superdome itself. I grooved on the whole scene, man.

Fats finished his exuberant, physical set by pushing his grand piano across the stage with his stomach and exiting to the wild cheers of the crowd. There was to be no pause between acts--the crowd, totally stoked now, probably would've rioted, formal gowns, white tie and all....and the Beach Boys, occupying the other half of the large stage, started immediately.

Another part of my youth--earlier, to tell the truth, than Fats, an appreciation for whom I did not develop until somewhat



*BB's Bruce Johnston & Al Jardine (they're the white guys) chill w/ Fats preconcert*

later in my life--but for me, like I said before, the BB's represent the leading bards of the myth of the American Paradise--i.e., California, a land of sun and ease and top-shelf babes, surfing and muscle cars, everything an adolescent could wish for.

Yeah, I know, maybe we know now that paradise might not, all things considered, have been totally paradisiacal, and is definitely not today, but when the legend outstrips reality, print the legend...and all these years later, they're still printing it, and doing quite well, although, as Rick pointed out, the original members no longer perform the very high harmonies on songs like "Hawaii"--too much wear and tear on the vocal cords. As a show, they were terrific, and the appearance of the Beach Boys cheerleaders were fully up to expectations: dancing, prancing, changing costumes at the drop of a hat, always getting a cheer when they'd run on stage...of course, they excelled at "Be True to Your School," natch: pom poms, cheerleader outfits, doing handstands and back flips.

What impressed me as well, though, was the lengths to which they went to

capture, in their live show, the complex instrumentation of their mid-60's albums, the "Good Vibrations" period: kettledrums, windchimes, an array of objects to produce "found" sounds, and the like. Generally party music, good time rock n' roll, but with a musical depth that is surprising, and comparable to the Beatles of that period. Makes me wish that Brian Wilson had kept growing as an artist instead of going wacko.

The sets of Fats and the BB's were about 50 minutes each. When the BB's were finished, so were we, although the Endymion Extravaganza was far from over: a local band, the Nobles, were to follow and play till the bitter end. Since it was past 2 a.m. by this point, we decided to vacate. However, when we got to the dressing room, we found our escape was going to be a little more involved: Fats had left without us. We had to get a cab back to his house on Caffeine, but still beat him home: he'd undoubtedly followed the usual routine and retired to a local bar with his buddies.

I didn't care. I was blissful. And over



retired to a local bar with his buddies.

I didn't care. I was blissful. And over all of the other images of the eventful night, one took precedence: how, when Fats sat down at the piano in front of the audience, four decades seemed to dissolve like sugar in boiling hot cafe au lait. Once more he's 25, and it's a boiling hot, humid, mosquito-ey New Orleans night and he's playing in a jook joint about the size of your living room, which is packed to the rafters with about four times the number allowed by law...and he's having an *incredible* time, and the music is pure magic: vibrant and rhythmic, and full of the joy of life.

And may all of us be the same when we're in our 60's. ■

*{Editorial, cont'd from page 3}*

all, is their variety, and possibly the most tragic thing about life is that we can't meet all of them.

There are all kinds of things we can talk about. Here in this first issue you'll find articles on magic, memory, mentors, and music; to change the alliteration, you'll also find prose poems (a personal peccadillo) and an unsettling war story. In future issues you'll read about grand fannish journeys and collectors' finest moments (do you collect? what was yours?). There'll be an interview with a pioneering SFer in most issues, I hope. Eventually, there'll be debate in the lettercol, symposia on male ethics -- all *kindsa* stuff.

Our editorial point of view will pay not the slightest attention to anyone's standards of what is Politically Correct. This editor sees the very idea as restrictive and stupid to the point of Evil. But that doesn't mean that a female reader would open an issue and expect to be offended. *Challenger* will be (mainly) by men, about men; men talking to other men as adults. Adult material is sought, and by "adult" we mean "grown-up"; maybe there's a place for the immature, the smarmy, even the sexist -- this editor will never deny his own failings in this area -- but it won't be here. Here in *Challenger* we will talk about what it means to be a man as the millennium approaches, as our partners in the world change their identity, as we ourselves grow older and take on the responsibility for this planet and this species.

And now, onto my favorite topic: *me*.

Every fanzine is a reflection of its editor, and even though I'm not the only person involved with *Challenger*, this publication is my idea. So -- egomaniacal though this may seem -- I thought I'd sully this first issue with a self-introduction.

I'm Guy Lillian, known in my many pompous moments as "Guy H. Lillian III". The "H." stands for Herbert. Sticking me with that horrible name was the only sadistic thing my late father, Guy H. Lillian Jr., ever did. I was born on Moonday (July 20), 1949, in Mojave, California, close by Edwards Air Force Base. My grandparents lived down the street from Chuck Yeager. I'm currently unmarried, and make a disgustingly slim living getting bad guys out of jail and back on the streets where they belong. (I'm a criminal defense lawyer, in other words.) I live in New Orleans, by choice, after trying out Berkeley, California; New York, New York; and Greensboro, North Carolina. Loved them all, but something about New Orleans has made it Home. I've doubled my body weight living here; maybe that's it.

I've had a storied career in Science Fiction fandom, and in a way, *Challenger* is the culmination of that career. You see, a genzine -- a general interest, generally-distributed fanzine -- is about the only thing in fandom I haven't tried. As a kid, I was a prolific comic book letterhack, eventually earning thereby my first job (at DC Comics) and the friendship of my lifelong mentor, Julie Schwartz. I still recall the moment of exquisite discovery when I first saw my name in print -- in issue #133 of *The Flash*. In college, I was an active member of the Bay Area Little Men, to which I was introduced by Poul Anderson and where I met my fannish "mama", the glorious Chelsea Quinn Yarbro. Later, I joined NOSFA, the New Orleans Science Fiction Association, and discovered Fandom for the *Fun* of It. There I met, among others, Dennis Dolbear, my co-editor. NOSFA got me into small-run fanzines (an issue of *Nosfan* I did won me a mention in Schuyler Miller's column in *Analog*) and eventually into *apas*, particularly the Southern Fandom Press Alliance. There I have spent the past 22 years, missing nary a mailing and amassing a ridiculous quantity of contributed pages. SFPA prides itself on producing enormous mailings, and in 1981 I was lucky enough to be the Official Editor who put out our *100th* mailing -- which we believe to be the largest in the history of the hobby. (1,750

pages. Any other contenders?) I won't neglect to mention my near-charter membership in LASFAPA or my enjoyable stints in KAPA, NYAPA, K-a, SAPS, FAPA, RAPS, or Myriad, either. NOSFA was founded with the dream of a New Orleans worldcon in mind, and eventually, after many years, that worldcon came to be. I was publications editor for Nolacon II and produced the '88 worldcon's progress reports and program book, *Let the Good Times Roll*. Designing the book was a New Orleans artist new to fandom, Peggy Ranson -- whose artwork fronts this first *Challenger* and is featured throughout. Nolacon II may have had its problems, but my efforts for it were an untrammelled delight and I have no regrets. It put me onto two Hugo ballots for my fan writing, and nothing detracts from the glow those nominations brought me, even if I placed dead last the second time. (I knew *nothing* about the ballot scandal.)

In personal matters, well, it's been quite a decade. After -- too soon after -- my painful separation, I went to law school and fulfilled a childhood dream. This was vital, of course; but I also spent eight years in therapy, which was probably more important. A lot of territory got covered in that therapeutic trek, a lot of emotional ruins got prodded through and cleaned up, but if I learned one great lesson, it was the simple value of living human beings.

I know that sounds simultaneously trivial and pretentious, but I mean it. Life is utterly, definitively precious. There is nothing more important -- *nothing* -- than human feeling. And most difficult to accept was the simplest idea of all, an idea that sounds like a joke, but has been really tough to handle: *other people matter*. My own pain, my occasional anguish are much easier to get through, keeping this in mind, now that it's more than a homily to me, but a fullblown self-evident truth.

Out of all the moments that led to this simple revelation, two stand out. Actually, they are sequences more than individual moments.

One such sequence involves my work as a public defender. In this job I encounter people who have fouled up mightily. Few are what I would call *crooks*: professionals who have made a living off of crime. Most are rather ordinary or sub-ordinary feebs who, because of some unhappiness they couldn't handle, screwed up -- stole something, hit somebody, entered the Dark Side for the numbness of drugs. I don't judge these people; I defend them, trying to forestall the vengeance of our society, and get them the best possible chance to straighten

themselves out. But occasionally the crime is just too great, and the trial lawyer, during the discovery which is part of the justicial process, ends up holding photographs of murder victims. Those silent faces, as the guy says in *The Seventh Seal*, can be most eloquent.

For what does it tell you when you see a girl with half her face blown away by her boyfriend's deer rifle? Or a street kid who ran into the path of a ricocheting bullet? A McDonald's manager who annoyed a robber enough to provoke a gunshot through the heart? Or toddlers whose yuppie father went insane and decapitated them with a kitchen knife?

These horrors could teach you one of two diametrically opposed lessons. They could assure you of human life's terrifying fragility and bestial meaninglessness. Or they could tell you that life is precious beyond measure, worthy of absolute respect, the most important thing this broad and magnificent universe contains.

I count it a most significant victory over myself that the latter meaning is what now automatically occurs to me. I didn't used to think that way. What changed things? The earlier of those "sequences" I mentioned above helped.

Because who can be cynical when people put their lives on the line -- and sacrifice those lives -- for a wonderful dream? Who can condemn "mundanes", as we fans so often do, when one of those mundanes -- a self-proclaimed ordinary person -- gives her life to make reality out of our genre's fantasies? Who can ignore the transcendent beauty and power and value of an ordinary, common human life when an ordinary, common human life is capable of such exquisite courage, and glorious ambition, of dream, and of sacrifice? If such lives of the common clay, then the common clay is shot through with *diamonds*.

If you don't get not just who, but *what* I'm talking about, well, you'll never understand why I call this fanzine *Challenger*.

Now if that isn't murky enough, I refer you to the contents of this first issue. Thanks for your patience, and I'll harangue you again at the end.

-- GUY H. LILLIAN III



## The "Al" Side

*Alan Hutchinson is either a raving madman or a furshlugginer genius, or both. For more than 20 years, his wit -- and incredible artistic talent -- has graced the great comics apa, K-a, and the Southern Fandom Press Alliance. A superb mimic of artistic styles, he has turned his satiric brilliance upon almost every cartoonist in the business ... with the sort of results you see here. (Al has also published gags in "The New Breed" strip.)*

*Challenger is lucky to know such a craftsman ... and to have his permission to reprint his works. Enjoy.*



*Don Walsh, first president of the New Orleans Science Fiction Association, SF "neo-pro" and host for New Orleans' first Nebula Awards banquets, resides these days in Bangkok, Thailand. Pondering ambitions of owning a bar there, he penned the following*

# FOR THE BACK OF THE MENU AT THE *BLUE PARROT* BAR, BANGKOK, THAILAND

by DONALD J. WALSH, JR.



s you will recall, the denouement of the film classic *Casablanca*

has Richard (Rick) Blaine (played by Humphrey Bogart) and his friend Captain Louis Reynard of the French police (Claude Rains) covering the escape from Vichy-held, German-dominated French Morocco by anti-Nazi resistance leader Victor Lazlo and his lovely wife (Rick's former mistress) played by Paul Henried and Ingrid Bergman. This they accomplished by the expedient of murdering Gestapo chief Major Heinrich Strasser (played by Conrad Veidt). The pair then expressed the intention of departing *Casablanca* and taking up the fight against Hitler.

Rick had by then sold his nightclub, Rick's Cafe Americain, to his rival Ferrara, proprietor of the infamous *Blue Parrot Bar*.

You probably don't realize it, by the events and many of the characters depicted in the film were historical and not fictitious, although in some cases they were distorted by the political rhetoric of the time.

We, the proprietors of the *Blue Parrot Bar* of Bangkok, believe that you would be interested to learn of the circumstances surrounding the later lives of these individuals and espe-

cially in the lineage of the Blue Parrot (which now incorporates Rick's American cafe) from those days in Casablanca to the present in Southeast Asia.

*Richard Blaine*, former gunrunner for the Republican (Communist) side in the Spanish Civil War, later disillusioned romantic and proprietor of a bar/brothel/casino, escaped to France along with his pal Reynard, where they contacted the French Resistance and the OSS. Blaine survived the war intact, and later was recruited into the newly-formed CIA. Because of his intensive experience in North Africa, Spain and Europe, the Agency posted Blaine as station chief in La Paz, Bolivia, where he soon was better known to the man on the street than the local chief of police. He was purged in 1953 before he could be summoned before Senator Joseph McCarthy's hearing on Communist infiltration of the U.S. government, a potential embarrassment to Allen Dulles. Blaine died of lung cancer in 1957 and was survived by his widow, the actress Lauren Bacall.

*Captain Louis Reynard* did not fare well with the Maquis, since unlike Blaine he didn't look Gallic enough, and he failed to produce any Communist Party card. Thus he became the only Frenchman of his generation to lack the distinction of being a *Hero de la Resistance*. In shame and disgrace he stole the papers of a dead SS Sturmbahnfuhrer, waited out the war and then joined the Legion Etrangere, eventually being granted French citizenship. He was captured at Diem Bien Phu, and later served in Algeria, where his skill with electrical methods on prisoners earned him rapid promotion.

Reynard participated in the Legion revolt, was cashiered and joined the OAS. He was kidnapped by the SDECE and turned over to the Mossad, which spirited him to Tel Aviv for trial on war crimes charges against the SS officer he'd been impersonating for two decades. His defense

of mistaken identity was received with incredulous contempt. He was hanged in 1965.

*Victor Lazlo*, the dedicated anti-fascist leader and symbol of the will to resist for millions of gullible Slavs, returned to Prague in 1942 with help from the OSS. He managed to elude Gestapo, Sichierh-einstdiest and Abwehr agents for the remainder of the war, while causing considerable mischief. He often managed to publish as many as one pamphlet a week. After the inevitable victory Lazlo received the usual reward from Stalin's henchmen, reserved for troublesome Czech nationalist mummies. He was marked for liquidation by Department V (SMERSH). He and his lovely wife were caught attempting to board the train to Paris, disguised confusingly enough as Bing Crosby and a tubercular Swedish nun. They were summarily executed.

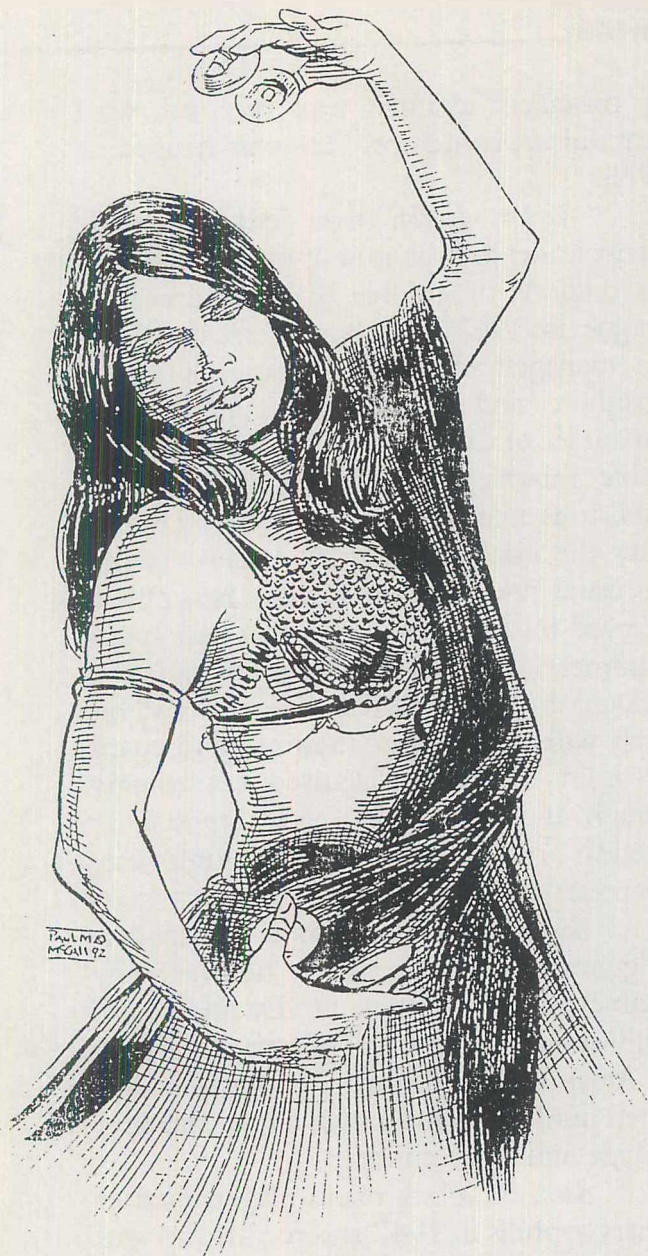
*Sasha*, the Russian bartender, emigrated to America, where he eventually became maitre'd'Hotel at Davidoff's in Hollywood, California. His true identity as an Albanian hermaphrodite was not revealed until his death, much to the shock of his wife and three children.

*Sam*, the black piano player, died of tertiary syphilis in 1947 and for his sins was promptly reincarnated as Billy Joel.

Now we come to the crux of our history. The actual intended hero of Casablanca was *Ferrara*, the pimp and gangster ably portrayed by Sidney Greenstreet, the owner of the original Blue Parrot Bar.

The character portrayed in Casablanca was a thinly-veiled version of Señor Don Sigemund Basil Reilly-Ferriera, an Anglo-Russian-Levantine-Jewish entrepreneur-spy. The slight name change was insisted upon by the film studio's legal department in a vain attempt to avoid litigation. Born in Lisbon in 1910, Ferriera {Cont'd on page 46}





Hey wow, stone groove, fer shure ... here's Mary Ann and her husband **Fred** back in their college days, when Fred was Auburn University's most outspoken foe of the Vietnam War. Ostracized in high school for her support of civil rights, Mary Ann's still a steadfast liberal; "The left stands for justice, the right for oppression," she says. "Nothing I've seen since has changed my mind."

*Here's a feature we cobbled directly from Esquire ... and no apologies. Our ladies are why we live. If you're wondering about the standards for this section, it's simple. These are the*

## FEMMEFANS WE LOVE

**MARY ANN VAN HARTESVELDT** came to her first convention in 1981. She'd been reading SF all her life, but she'd never met other fans until a friend of hers escorted her to a Chattacon -- and promptly deserted her. "She didn't want to introduce me to a famous fan lech," Mary Ann says.

Mary Ann and the alleged sex fiend are now friends, and Mary Ann has done just fine in fandom on her own, thanks. She's part of the wonderful family of Southern SFers that has reinvigorated fandom in the past decade, and has brought her own family into the fray. Warm, beautiful, kind, caring ... she's a femmefan we love.

**Mary Ann** began bellydancing in 1974, shortly after the birth of her daughter, Lillian. She's undulated her way into the hearts of SCA banquets, Southern conventions, and even a production of **Desert Song** in Fargo, North Dakota, in which she played the villainess. (Art by Paul McCall)







Harry Norwood White, a retired polo-playing Air Force lieutenant colonel -- was horrified that his new son-in-law had no gun with which to protect Mary Ann. He gave Fred a snub-nosed .32. Fred still has it ... but points out that it came without bullets and he's never bought any. Mary Ann's family lives in Opelika, Alabama, on land in the family since before the Civil War.

Perhaps the best thing about Mary Ann van Hartesveldt is her kindness ... for she has provided for the future. **Lillian**, her daughter (top left), made her fannish debut winning a convention masquerade on her 7th birthday ... as a Hobbit. She now majors in theatre with a star turn in **South Pacific** behind her.

*Bottom left: Dignity is the byword when the van Hartesveldts attend conventions nowadays. Mary Ann and Fred pose as time travelers from 2071. Fred, a history professor at a Georgia college, recently published a scholarly tome about the 1920 flu pandemic. Mary Ann -- who has a Masters in Counseling -- works as an employment counselor with teenaged girls, and plans a book about *Thomas Alexandre Dumas*, half-black father to the **3 Musketeers** author, a man of prodigious strength, a fearless soldier in Napoleon's ranks, and humane foe of the Terror. "Black children should know about him," she says. "He's a role model they could really use."*

Fandom could use a few hundred thousand more women like Mary Ann. ■



*I began doing funzines in 1969 -- of course, since everything of any import to me began in that year. My first publications were issues of The Barrington Bull, house newspaper of the co-op where I lived during college. Here's a piece I ran there in March, 1971. It's true.*

## WAR STORY

I want to tell you a story about this friend of mine who married my former girlfriend, and who spent some time in Vietnam and who killed a man there. I had just met him three or four days before, but he was already my friend. We were helping his wife, my ex-girlfriend, unload all her stuff from her apartment into their Volkswagen for the trip back to where he had been stationed. Gossip about him had included something nasty about his Vietnam tour. I asked him if he'd ever killed a man there. We were standing out in the dark parking lot outside the apartment where his wife was still packing.

"What? Oh, you mean a gook? Yeah, I killed one. Lemme tell you, it was something."

"So tell me," I said.

"Well, it ..." It was hard for him to get started. "It's those Vietnamese. I'm no racist, man, but I hate those little bastards. When I went over there, I made up my mind: gonna be friends with the Vietnamese. I figure, I'm here to help them save their country, and I'm gonna try as best I can to get along with them. I learned a little bit of the language, went around with the Vietnamese guys I knew, but I learned, man, I learned. Oh, fuck.

You go down the street in Saigon, see, with the shirttail of your fatigues pulled out. That's so they can't see your gun. But the guys who'd steal you blind were wise to that. They come up *Hey numba one gee eye you wanna buy dope?*; you tell'em to beat it, they keep right after you, hands on your watch, beltline, feeling for your wallet *and* to see if you've got a gun, see? *You wanna girl gee eye you wanna girl?*, and if they find out you ain't gotta gun on you, they just pull you into an alley, about four of'em, and it's the knife up under the ribs or a clout on the head. I know about this, see, and so I keep my .45 stuck into my belt *in back*, see, where they don't know you have it."

"So did you blast one of these guys?" I asked.

He fidgeted. "Naw, I didn't know anything then. But that's what told me all about the fucking Vietnamese. I'm *no* racist, man. They taught me. The treachery ... shit!

"I was out in this jeep one day driving between Saigon and a base out about forty miles, with -- uh -- a lieutenant, a sergeant, and this other lieutenant who was a translator for our battalion. He spoke Vietnamese like a native; I didn't know but a couple words. Anyway, the way they have your M-16s in the jeeps is bolted onto the sides of the cab, so the VC couldn't run out and grab them off you while you were parked -- you couldn't have them stolen in Saigon. We were driving about twenty, thirty miles from Saigon, a ways still out from the base, and it's getting late, and we're all hungry. I'm off the main highway, see, driving along, and we come to this little farmhouse in a clearing, this little farmhouse surrounded by rice paddies. I stop the jeep about thirty yards from the front door.

"What the hell are you doing, man?" the lieutenant asks. I tell him to cool it, we'll get something to eat here. The

translator and the sergeant bitch, but 'Naw, naw, I know the Vietnamese, we'll be okay, we'll be okay', and so me, an enlisted man, I get these three guys to come with me into that hut.

"The little gook comes forward, a farmer, he's bowing and scraping, 'Ah, gee eye gee eye,' so goddamn happy to see us, you know? The other guys nudge me, say this is fishy, but I say 'No, come on, everything's cool.' I tell the guy in sign language that we're hungry." He made Eat motions. "And this little Vietnamese, he starts nodding, nodding all the time, and leads us to a table. The translator didn't say a word. Kept absolutely quiet. The farmer's wife is sitting there on the edge of their bed, mats and quilts, and the farmer turns to her and says something in Vietnamese. I didn't understand it, figured he was telling her to get us some food, you know? But the translator sitting next to me, he stiffens up, you know? Freezes. Tenses.

"'Hey man,' he says to me. 'Let's get the hell out of here.'

"Naw man, it's cool!" The wife is shuffling around in the bedcovers, getting something. The three GIs with me are up and heading out the door, dragging me. 'Hey, come on, it's okay,' I keep saying, and the Vietnamese he;s just bowing and smiling. The translator had this real scared look on his face. Finally he just grabs my shoulder really hard and says 'I heard what he said to his wife. He said *Get the gun; I'm gonna kill'em*. Let's get outa here!'

"We're in bad shape, you know, the M-16s are bolted onto the jeep thirty yards away, the wife is still shuffling in those bedclothes, that little gook's bowing and bowing *Ah gee eye, gee eye*, and I crack, man ... everything ... it all rushes up to me, all that *treachery* ... that treachery ...

"And so I pull out my .45 and **BLAM BLAM BLAM BLAM**, *eight times* right in the chest. Hah, I rolled that little



bastard over and over, his wife just sitting there, and the translator and the other guys dragged me out -- it was the only time I've ever gone psychotic. The only time.

"You gotta know, man; you gotta understand. The thievery, the treachery. Your wallet, your watch, *Hey gee eye you wanna chick?*, *Hey gee eye you wanna dope?* It gets to you, man, it gets to all those guys, and you end up, well, I only wish I was at My Lai, and there ain't a soldier in Vietnam who doesn't feel the same way."

And my friend stopped talking as his wife, my ex-girlfriend, came out of her apartment. She smiled a big smile. "All packed!" she announced, perkily. ■

#### *{Blue Parrot, Cont'd}*

was the illegitimate son of Sidney Reilly, ace agent of the British SIS, and the errant teenage daughter of Sir Basil Zaharoff, the Merchant of Death. Young Ferriera soon demonstrated that he had inherited his father's good looks along with his grandfather's character. At 15 he was expelled from his undistinguished prep school for aggravated sodomy. Nevertheless his lineage guaranteed him a certain entree. At age 25 he was made sales agent for North Africa for Vickers and was automatically appointed as station chief for MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service. He amassed a huge fortune by selling spiked Maxims to ignorant Berber chieftains who paid him in stolen gold, prepubescent virgins, and erotically trained sheep. These he put to use in his franchised brothels, of which Casablanca's Blue Parrot was the flagship. In this business he showed a certain flair for marketing. The sign above the entrance to his four-mattress crib over one establishment read "Over One Millions Served". It was later plagiarized by McDonald's.

Ferriera's other major source of revenue was a sophisticated intelligence fabrication effort, employing a staff of multilingual Koreans to grind out bogus political, military, technical and economic trivia for the services of fifteen nations. The Americans proved to be the most credulous and the best-heeled.

In the decades after World War II Ferriera prospered, expanding into Asia and South America. It was an aged, dissipated Ferriera that lost the deed to the Bangkok Blue Parrot to the present owners in a strip mah-jongg game upstairs from a girlie bar in Macao. He originally tried to offer some old letters of

transit to cover the bet, but the winners were not tempted.

And so the Blue Parrot came to Bangkok.

This may be the beginning of a beautiful friendship. ■

## Our Cover Artist

### PEGGISIMO!

In 1987 your editor bopped into the offices of Nolacon II, the World Science Fiction Convention. Chairman John Guidry was already there, and he was not alone. Seated before him was a mass of red hair ... with an *artist* attached.

She worked out of an office down the hall, doing clothing ads for a local department store. She'd always liked science fiction, and when she found out the worldcon would be headquartered practically next door, she decided to see if we needed any help.

That was Peggy Ranson. This summer, at ConFrancisco, the 1993 Worldcon, she won the Hugo.

I suppose it isn't fair to say that we at Nolacon *discovered* Peggy, since after all she was a working professional when she came to us (rather the reverse of the usual fan artist story). However, we *were* the publishers of her first fan work: a Nolacon ad. For the '88 worldcon, she designed two progress reports for the convention and the souvenir book I edited, a rewarding if somewhat decibel-rich partnership, and beautified everything she touched.

Following the convention she entered into the fan artist swing, illustrating many issues of Camille Cazedessus' Fantasy Collector and dozens of other zines. In short order she was a Hugo nominee. Then she was a Hugo nominee again. And again. And now ...

Peggy's drawing time is full, and we were lucky to obtain our front cover -- which originally ran atop the 30th anniversary edition of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance. Whether her schedule never permits her another visit to Challenger is unimportant. Our pride in her accomplishment zings off the roof, as does our love for a great lady.

*Bravo, Peggisimo!* ■

## To Close

And so the first issue of *Challenger* hits the silks. I'm fairly pleased. Almost everything I wanted in this premiere issue actually sits between its staples; the only essential item missing is the tale of the lost *Flashman* story, and next time will do. Expect that second issue around the end of January, yours for a trade, a letter of comment, or three bucks. Cover's already selected: a beautiful Mark Fuels.

We're a bit late with this Fall '93 issue; it was originally supposed to show in the summer. But the computer on which Dennis Dolbear began his splendid layout crashed and burned, at least twice, and we were delayed. Turns out this was fortunate.

Fortunate because we mail while the excellent film *Gettysburg* is in its first release, and thus our cover gains a bit more topicality than it otherwise might have had. Originally done for the 30th anniversary mailing of the Southern Fandom Press Alliance, it's by Hugo-winner *Peggy Ranson*, and I don't suppose anyone needs be told whom it depicts. *Why* is another matter.

Whenever I think of Robert E. Lee, I feel a tinge of *shame*. Let me explain. The guy was *perfect*. He went through West Point without a single demerit, an amazing accomplishment. He utterly exemplified the highest concept of gentlemanliness and decency. He had iron will and iron self-control. He was generous, and brilliant. The great and terrible decisions of his life -- particularly that most great, and most terrible, the decision to join the Confederacy -- were made in obedience to the highest standards of his time. If he had a flaw, it was that he did not share Abraham Lincoln's vision of America as a single nation instead of a collection of independent states; his main loyalty was to Virginia, and his turn to its service instead of the national government's was impossible to avoid. He could do naught else and retain his integrity; he could make no other choice and retain his *honor*. When was the last time any of us made a decision so compelled, so based?

The film of *Gettysburg* pays due homage to his titanic character ... and to the courage of the men who loved and followed him. (And for that matter, to the men who fought them; no one can watch its recreations of the carnage at Little Round Top and Pickett's Charge and be unmoved by the valor of both sides.) From it one can glean the values of the time, and also the effect and purpose of the conflict. From it our national *meaning* was drawn. Lincoln established that in the *Gettysburg Address*: that the aim of the Civil War was not merely the abolition of slavery, although that was an obvious humane and moral necessity. He articulated the purpose of the American experiment: a nation -- *one* nation -- committed to the democratic ideal: *all men are created equal*. These are lessons vital to any solid understanding of this society, this country. Which is why it angered me to see them so casually disparaged recently in the U.S. Senate.

What happened was that a social group of Confederate descendants applied with the government for renewal of a license and an emblem, containing a little-known rebel flag (not the famous Stars & Bars). The act came before the Senate, promoted by the noxious Jesse Helms, and was easily passed. Then Carol Mosely-Braun rose. The Senate's only black member, she tore into the issue, equating the remembrance of the Confederacy with raw racism, a curse on her people. Mindful of their own black constituencies, glutted with the

sudden fervor of the politically corrected, the Senate reacted like a mass of henpecked husbands and rescinded the license.

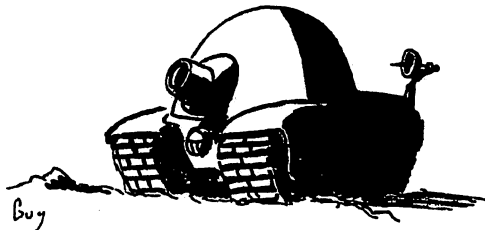
I was reminded of the college administrators who fire professors and expel male students based on unsubstantiated charges of sexual harassment, or violations of campus political correctness. I wrote to a couple of the Senators involved, advancing a hypothetical situation. There's a statue of Lee in the hall of the Congress; what happens if Mosely-Braun spots it one day, and decides *it* offends her? Would they support its removal? No answers.

It's not that silly a question or vapid an issue. What is the aim of P.C., political correctness, and what is its cost? I see its aim as *power*. I see its cost as devastating. What is lost -- what the Senate did, in its quivering exercise -- was accept a philosophy which draws arbitrary lines about what may be admired, about what may be remembered, about what may be thought, what may be said. The tradition and spirit of inquiry is threatened, as is respect, investigation and understanding of the past. We are to filter our very thought through a mesh of contemporary and temporary dogma. It is promoted through a fundamental misunderstanding of the relationships between people and between a society and its past, because it sees both as expressions of *power*, and power only, of manipulation and dominance. Because certain people have felt dominated, we must allow them to dominate others. Because certain groups have felt powerless, we must give them arbitrary control. Because certain blocs imagine their feelings hurt, we are to give *carte blanche* to their desire for vengeance. The rights of any individual in opposition, of course, are expendable in this purpose.

Well, however trivial the above vote is in the great scheme of things -- the Confederate descendents suffered no real harm, of course -- the point is simply that by acceding to political correctness, or whatever movement or philosophy seeking to control human expression, we suffer a fundamental loss. A loss in the capacity of *trust*, which allows that a people confronted with a choice of ideas will not choose one deadly to the rights of others. A loss in our national faith in *good will*, which asserts that people really do care about the general good, and will do their best to protect it. A loss in *the hope for unity and reconciliation*, in our ability as a society to draw together for the greatest purpose mankind has yet created: *justice*.

*Justice through strength and courage*. Does anyone else recognize the corny motto of Captain Midnight's Secret Squadron? It's an idea political correctness would squelch in favor of arbitrary authority, and it's an idea we should not so easily abandon. An idea won with the sacrifice of farmers and factory workers, common human beings, living and dying to give birth to a just nation on the slopes of Little Round Top.

--GHLIII.



# C o n f r a n c i s c o



Top: Connie Willis, Quinn Yarbrow, & Dean Ing oblige the proletariat;  
Above, Dick Lynch, editor of the  
Hugo-winning *Mimosa*; right, Peggy  
Ranson with her own replica of an  
Olds Rocket 88 hood ornament.



