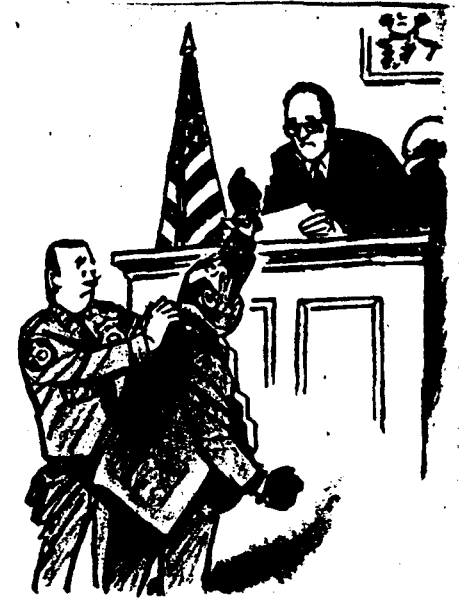


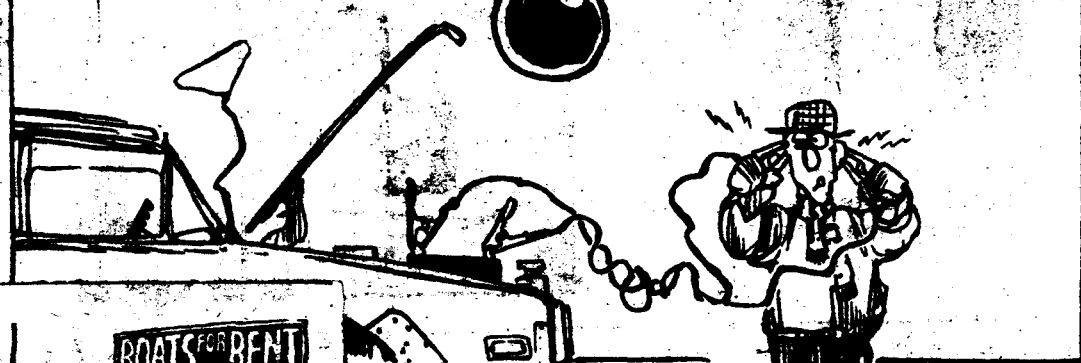
ITALIAN CARS DON'T START → 35  
 Politicians begin to worry about the homeless → 32  
 Cat insists on sleeping on your bed with you. → 25  
 Politicians begin to talk about the homeless → 15  
**YOU PLAN VACATION IN MEXICO** → 5  
 Cat insists on sleeping in your bed with you → 5  
**YOU PLAN VACATION IN MEXICO** → 5  
 AMERICAN CARS DON'T START → -5  
 Politicians actually do something about the homeless → -5  
 Cat insists on sleeping in your pajamas with you → -15  
**YOU PLAN A 2-WEEK HOT TUB** → -25  
 JAPANESE CARS DON'T START → -25  
**YOUR KIDS CALL HOME FROM COLLEGE** → -30  
 OF THE WORLD...

40 ← CALIFORNIANS SHIVER UNCONTROLLABLY, MINNESOTANS GO SWIMMING  
 ← WATER FREEZES  
 30 ← You can see your breath.  
 ← BOSTON WATER FREEZES  
 20 ← CALIFORNIANS WEEP PITIABLY, MINNESOTANS EAT ICE CREAM  
 ← You can hear your breath.  
 ← N.Y. CITY WATER FREEZES  
 10 ← TOO COLD TO SNOW  
 ← YOU NEED JUMPER CABLES TO GET THE CAR GOING  
 0 ← TOO COLD TO SKATE  
 ← You can cut your breath and use it to build an igloo  
 -10 ← TOO COLD TO THINK  
 ← YOU NEED JUMPER CABLES TO GET THE DRIVER GOING  
 -20 ← THE MIGHTY MONONGAHELA FREEZES  
 -30 ← CALIFORNIANS DISAPPEAR, MINNESOTANS BUTTON TOP BUT...



"I take the Iran-contra defense — I wouldn't have had to break any laws if your stupid laws had fit in with what I wanted to do."

land had fathered a child in an adulterous relationship. Those in charge of his campaign gathered in shock and consternation. Finally someone whose name unfortunately has not been recorded spoke up:  
 "From what I hear, Mr. Cleveland has shown high character and great capacity in public life, but that in private life his conduct has been open to question, while, on the other hand, Mr. Blaine in public life has been weak and dishonest while he seems to have been an admirable husband and father. The conclusion I draw is that we should elect Mr. Cleveland to the public office, which he is admirably qualified to fill, and remand Mr. Blaine to the private life he is so eminently fitted to adorn" ("Biography of Theodore Roosevelt," by Henry Pringle, 1931).  
 This the country did.  
**ROBERT ANDERSON**  
 New York, Nov. 11, 1987



**To the Editor:**  
 Apropos of the Hart, Ginsburg et al furor: Yesterday, doing some research, I came across the following:  
 In 1884 Grover Cleveland and James Blaine were competing candidates for the Presidency. During the campaign it was revealed that Cleve-

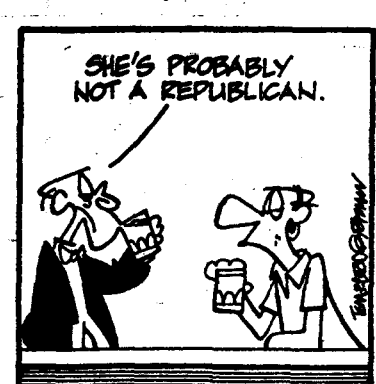
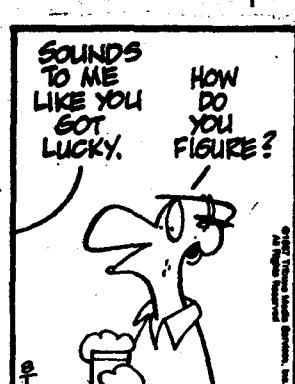
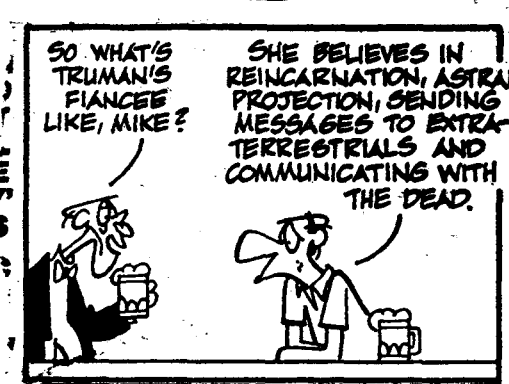
Jim and Tammy Bakker canceled a national tour when advance sales for their show in Denver totaled 23 tickets.

**BEST PERFORMANCE IN AN UNANIMATED FEATURE**  
 Lt. Col. Oliver North's Iran-Contra testimony.



"... They're bitin' out by the No. 5 buoy. Go out past 'Bailey's Rocks' — there'll be a bunch of maidens hootin' and hollerin' for you to come closer — don't do it! Just keep goin' straight until you reach the buoy..."

Bronx DA Mario Merola died of a stroke Oct. 27. That didn't stop him from winning re-election to a four-year term the next week.



HELLO, FRIENDS—YOU ALL KNOW WHO I AM—I STARTED OUT THIS JOB WITH A HANDFUL OF CHOCOLATE ECONOMIC THEORIES THAT PLUNGED YOU ALL INTO THE WORST RECESSION IN FIFTY YEARS! OH, YES! AND, I MIGHT ADD, WE PLUNGED YOUR GOVERNMENT INTO DEBT SO DEEP YOU MAY NEVER GET OUT!

**YAAAAAY!**



YES, THAT WAS ME, FRIENDS! THE SAME GUY THAT'S DROOLING TO GET YOU ALL INVOLVED IN A HOPELESS CENTRAL AMERICAN WAR YOU DON'T WANT? THAT'S RIGHT!

**YIPPEEEEE!**  
**WAAHOOOO!**



Brooklyn's best teacher wants me to write current events reports every week, and I never see good news.

Melanie Lewis, age 9  
PS 241

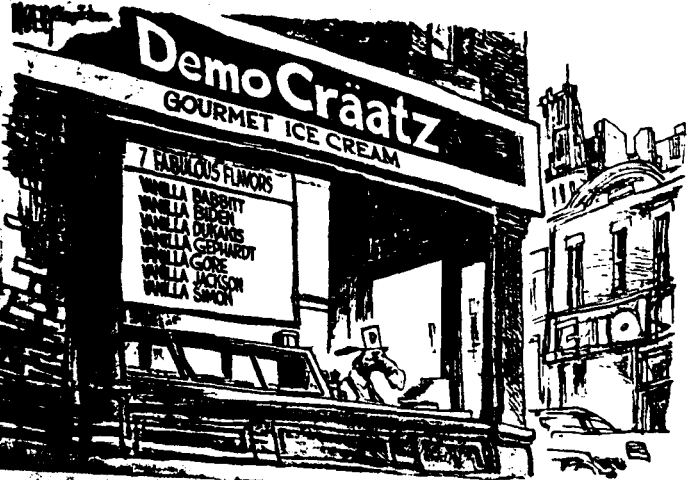
AND NOW, I'VE JUST THROWN AWAY SWEEPING PROVISIONS OF REAL, IN-THE-GROUND NUCLEAR WEAPONS RATHER THAN GIVE UP A WHOLE SCENE OF SPACE WEAPONS THAT DON'T EVEN EXIST!

**WAAHOOOO!**



SOMETIMES I WONDER MYSELF HOW I DO IT—

**WHOOPEEE!**  
**YEEHAWWWW!**  
**WAAHOOOO!**



RACIAL SENSITIVITY, 1987.

YOU KNOW HOWARD, I THINK ONE OF MY PROGEST LESBACES IS GOING TO BE IN CIVIL RIGHTS!

I OPPOSED THE VOTING RIGHTS BILL, GUTTED APPROPRIATE ACTION, SUPPORTED TAX INCREASES FOR SENIORS COLLEGE, ALL BUT DISMANTLED THE CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION.

...ALL WITHOUT A WHIFF OF SCANDAL!

YES, SIR, THEY CAN'T TAKE THAT AWAY FROM YOU!

BUT FOR A REAL PIECE OF WORK, LET'S GO TO ARIZONA!

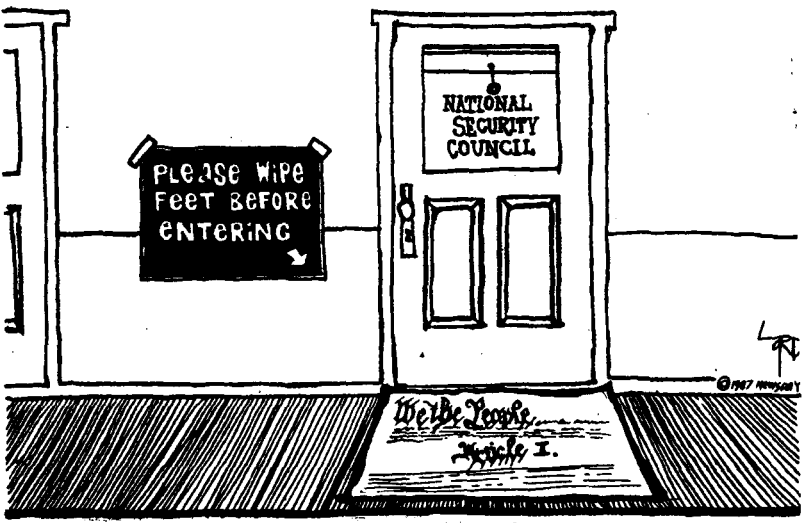
GOVERNOR, SAY A FEW WORDS TO—

MY! HAVI A CUTE LITTLE PICTANARY!

**ANOTHER FINE MESS**

Lt. Col. Oliver North gave a riveting performance in July at the Iran-Contra hearings and became an overnight celeb, spawning off "Olliemania" T-shirts, dolls,

buttons, stickers and books. Hollywood scrambled for the movie rights and Pocket Books went into overdrive to publish his complete testimony, with a huge first printing. The star flickered fast, though.



OH, WHICH DEMOCRAT ARE WE ENDORSING FOR PRESIDENT?

LET ME BACK UP... WHICH DEMOCRATS HAVE WE EVER HEARD OF?



I REFUSE TO ENTER A SPUDS MACKENZIE LOOK-ALIKE CONTEST!

Colonel North's fame was fleeting in the world of dolls. So John Lee Hudson and his wife, Shana, San Francisco business consultants, plan to take the heads off their unsold North dolls and replace them with Mikhail S. Gorbachev heads. The colonel's Marine uniform will be replaced by a Gorbachevian Italian suit, covering a bit of added stuffing. Price: \$19.95.

**BITCH, BITCH, BITCH**

Bud Light bow-wow Spuds MacKenzie—everyone's favorite pit-bull playboy—shocked hard-drinking fans when they learned he was actually a she—and pregnant to boot.

**THEIR CUP RUNNETH OVER**

Jim and Tammy Bakker were newsmakers but, let's face it, they kept us entertained all year. In between being exposed and deposed, they tried begging for cash, making a record and doing a concert. All of which shows that maybe Tammy spent too much time working on her makeup.

HOW'S YOUR CAMPAIGN FOR PRESIDENT GOIN', CONGRESSMAN MELMAC?

JUST FINE, CITIZEN, JUST FINE.

OUT CHASIN' DELEGATE VOTES ON THOSE IOWA FARMS, HUH...?

WHY, YES... HOW'D YOU KNOW?

YOU FORGOT TO WIPE YOUR FEET.

I HAVE TO GO TO THE BATHROOM.

**NOW!** IN HYPERSPACE? ARE YOU CRAZY??

Washington — President Ronald Reagan contradicted most economists and recent efforts of his own administration yesterday by saying that the nation's huge trade deficit and the massive amount of foreign capital entering the country are "not necessarily signs of weakness," but could, in fact, represent "a sign of strength."

**Who could tell?**

American Cyanamid fessed up to spewing pollutants at its Linden, N.J. plant and will fork over a \$900,000 fine.



## THE HEXED HEXACON

For several years, the annual Hexacon in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has been a relaxicon much enjoyed by eastern fans, who have this opportunity to recover from the pressures of the holiday season, renew acquaintances, and pig out on that delicious Pennsylvania Dutch cooking. Until this year, Hexacons have been held at a motel with- in Lancaster itself, conveniently located to the downtown area. However, that place has apparently closed, and in 1988 we went to a place a little north of Lancaster, called the Shawnee Lancaster.

While the staff was very friendly and helpful and, as was frequently necessary, apologetic, the physical arrangements were uncomfortable. The motel consisted of three separated buildings, not even joined by closed arcades. That sort of thing may be pleasant in summer if it doesn't rain too much, but at the end of the worst storm so far this winter it was a chilly nuisance. (Attendance was down, probably because people weren't sure about the roads. We found the going difficult until we got away from the metropolitan area.) In addition, we found the heater in our room gave us a blast of cool air, and on Sunday morning the water stopped flowing. The hucksters' room was in a great barn of a building, ill lit and ill heated, and usually used for indoor tennis. A "heated" swimming pool was swimmable, but not really as warm as a swimming pool ought to be in January.

Ben Bova, the guest of honor, did not attend, probably because of uncertainties about the weather. (It prevented me from asking him when he was going to jump ship on the "Star Wars" weapons sytem, as some of its other advocates already have.) As is my usual custom, I didn't attend any of the functions, but spent most of the time talking with people in the consuite, and in other suites grouped around the hucksters' room and swimming pool. On Saturday I got into an enjoyable game of En Garde, a role-playing game published by Game Designers' Workshop of Bloomington, Illinois, in which the players are neither heroes, wizards, nor spacemen, but valiant, hard-drinking, wench-chasing swordsmen modeled after Falstaff, d'Artagnan, or Cyrano. My own character, though merely the younger son of a petty tradesman, got himself a battle-field commission in the Royal Marines. I may be opening a postal game of En Garde in my war-gaming fanzine EMPIRE soon; write for details if you're interested and if I can work out a suitable system for postal play.

Perdita and I are more or less trying to keep to diets, so we passed up the motel's \$13 buffet on Friday evening. This sentenced us to the bar, where we had overdone hamburgers and underdone service. Fortunately, we ate early, so we did not have to put up with the ghastly din that erupted from the place on weekend evenings. Maybe there is some sense to the far-flung arrangement of the motel.

Saturday we took a vacation from the diet at Miller's, a Pennsylvania Dutch restaurant east of Lancaster where Hexacon people have often gone in the past. But Steve Hartman later informed me that he had found an even better one, in the cave of a former brewery. (Before refrigeration, a necessity for a brewery was an underground cave, natural or artificial, in which a constant cool temperature could be maintained.) If we go to the 1989 Hexacon, a decision I have not yet made for reasons to be discussed later, I am going to look into Steve's suggestion.

The hucksters' room was the center of Hexacon socializing, though some also went on in the consuite, which was upstairs and overlooked the hucksters. I bought quite a few books, as did Perdita; one, Justin Lefber's The Sword and the Eye, reads like a self-conscious imitation of the works of Eric Rücker Eddison; even some proper names are duplicated. I also bought at Nancy Lebovitz's button shop a button for Perdita that precisely expresses her view and that of others with the same circadian rhythm: "Good Morning is a Contradiction in Terms". I also made a special order - across the bottom half of the button will be three crosses, the largest in the middle. Above them will be the words: "Beam Me Up, Scotty".

Later on in the evening, fans started swimming in their usual costume - videlicet, nothing. Despite concern about appearances, I eventually joined them. As it turned

(continued on p. 12)

## GETTING CAUGH UP

DAGON, an amateur journal of commentary on science, science-fiction, fantasy, comic art, and other topics, is published every third Saturday by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, New York 11226-5302. It circulates through APA-Q, an amateur press association which is collated at this same address and frequency. The copy count of APA-Q is 35. You are invited to contribute either by sending in 35 copies, or by sending me the material on a Gestetner (9-hole) stencil; I can print it for 2¢ per copy per sheet. I can mail you your copy of APA-Q if you send a few dollars for postage and the 15¢ envelope. The present state of postage and printing accounts appears elsewhere in this issue as "The Ministry of Finance".

The next collation of APA-Q will 'take place' on Saturday 13 February 1988. At present I cannot commit myself on whether I will need help to put it together, as that is a four-day weekend that will take many people out of town. If you think you might be able to come over and help with the collating, give me a call first to find out when on that weekend it will be, or whether I may just do it myself. My phone numbers are 718-693-1579 (home, with an answering machine) or 718-780-5180 (office). The next collation after that will be on Saturday 5 March, and that will probably be one in which help will be wanted that afternoon.

APA-Qover #274 (Blackman): For reasons best known to themselves, Sherlock Holmes enthusiasts have settled on a date in early January as his birthday, which makes this qover particularly appropriate.

Blancmange #194 (Blackman): The story that Richard Nixon wanted to cancel the 1972 presidential elections was a bit stronger than a rumor; it was first broken in the Newhouse chain of newspapers, which then included the Staten Island Advance. The disorders accompanying the 1968 election convinced President Nixon that things would be even worse for 1972. The premature revelation of the plan caused it to be dumped. It probably was, in any case, nothing more than a few ideas that got brainstormed around the Oval Office by the advisers who later were jettisoned during the Watergate affair.

When I was in my first year as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago in 1949-50, there was a fad among the students on my dorm floor of posting mock advertisements, sometimes with science-fictional overtones. One of the students posted an ad claiming that, thanks to his time machine, he had for sale the results of the presidential elections of 1952, 1956, 1960, 1964, 1968, and 1972, and the insurrection of 1973. And, sure enough, we had in 1973 about the closest thing to an insurrection that our staid and legalistic country is capable of mounting.

The real joke about those "Hire Veterans" advertisements lies in the advertisement that was often posted next to it on the subway. While one advertisement urged young people to join the armed forces and learn a skill, the other desperately pleaded with employers to give jobs to veterans. Let us hope that the lesson of this juxtaposition sank in. Now there is even a more dramatic presentation on the subways. From time to time, somebody who is blind or wheel-chair bound will come through subway cars, rattling a tin cup and saying that he is a Vietnam veteran. With any luck, this will get a few 19-year-olds thinking about where they will be ten years hence if they enlist in the armed forces.

Apparently your prediction is going to come true sooner than you think. ("Wait till tv makes Vietnam as 'fun' as being a POW of the Nazis.") There is a movie, just out, which is apparently a comic drama of Vietnam. As for POW movies, Stalag 17 and The Colditz Story makes a Nazi POW camp seem like an exceedingly strict boys' school.

My comments about Darrel Schweitzer were based on his letter to Science Fiction Review, joining the bitter attack on John Brunner's belief that the United States and the Soviet Union could live in peace with each other. I wonder how these Rambos feel, now that their beloved President has apparently run out on a delusion he once shared with them.

Yes, "LBJ created/expanded social programs Goldwater wouldn't have" - and then cut them back severely when it seemed that the money was needed for conquering Vietnam.

The implosion device that the Rosenbergs allegedly gave to the Soviet Union, and for which they were executed, later turned out to have been patented in Switzerland in 1941 for an entirely different purpose. The trial and execution of the Rosenbergs had almost a ritual aspect to it: a tribal secret had been revealed, and so the witch doctors scented out a couple of scapegoats and they were ritually put to death. As with most rituals, facts played a relatively minor role. For nearly two millenia, Christians have believed that Miriam bat-Amram got away with something for which the girl in the next village would have been severely condemned if she'd claimed it for her inexplicable baby. Ritual 2, Facts 0.

How To...In 9 Easy Lessons (Del Grande): Okay, so Ronald Reagan was an officer in the U. S. armed forces. This makes him the eighth such president in a row. Other nations are ruled by an officers' corps; we seem to be ruled by a reserve officers' corps.

British elections have always had "deposits", though I had thought that the deposit was forfeited if the candidate did not get 12 1/2% of the vote. - Maybe they changed it. The payment of a fee, refundable if the candidate gets above a stated percentage of the vote, may be preferable to our method of nominating petitions. In recent years there has been a great deal of trouble and expense about carefully vetting thousands and thousands of signatures on dubious petitions. Furthermore, if you sign a petition for a candidate, your signature just sits there in the state capital until somebody decides that the candidate was a subversive and goes ransacking the petitions for names of his or her supporters. But if you contribute \$20 towards the deposit, nobody will know who you are.

(This is not a mare's nest. During the 1950s, nominating petitions stored in Albany since the 1930s were searched for the names signed to nominating petitions of Communist candidates. For four years in the 1930s, the Communist Party was a regularly recognized political party with a guaranteed ballot line in this state.)

The last separate air mail rate for domestic mail in this country was 13¢ an ounce, at a time when, I believe, surface rates were 6¢ or 8¢. The 31¢ rate was for overseas mail, which is now 44¢ a half ounce for most of the world.

Presumably your line "What do I know about global politics? I'm a physicist" is intended to come back at me for mentioning your work in a weapons shop, or possibly my incompetence as a scientist to criticize public policy. I've heard it before. Over 20 years ago, the then President of Brooklyn College called me into his office and gave me a severe tongue-lashing over a letter I'd put into the campus newspaper, criticizing the mayoral candidacy of William F. Buckley. He made the point that, as a scientist, I was not competent to criticize anyone politically. Would you care to follow up on that interesting line of argument?

"Peace is preferable to war - but at what price?" If you think the price of peace is high, consider the price of war.

And no, I am not interested in a truce. As a person involved in the manufacture of weapons, you ought to be damned well ashamed of yourself.

Quant Suff! #176 (Malay): One game which is good for kids and at the same time challenging for adults is Sorry. We played it a lot with the girls when they were young, and I suppose that Anthony will soon be ready for it. As for Couch Potatoes, I think they may not outlast Yuppies by very much. In fact, considering all the electronic gear that they buy, the Yuppie and the Couch Potato may simply be the active and dormant forms of the same organism.

Untitled Overture #2 (Desmond): Yours is the first printer I've run across that has a gray ribbon.

Bill Rotsler's "Venus, Extra Bold, Extended" advertisement for the display type face of that name did indeed get published, but many years ago, and I don't know where.

There are some topics on which a fully formal debate with re-

buttals and a moderator could enliven and inform a s-f convention. However, there are some topics which are beyond discussion, and positions whose advo-

This is

O At  
P Great  
E Intervals  
R This  
A Appears  
T To  
I Inflame  
O Optic  
N Nerves

# 1474

cacy endangers rather than informs us. I don't think I need to go into detail, to regular readers of DAGON, as to what these topics and positions are.

(How's this for a scenario? Jim Baen is telling a s-f convention about how wonderful it is to have nuclear weapons, and how it would be desirable to drop them on Moscow. I slip out of the room, find a hotel security guard, and tell him that there's a man raving about killing millions and millions of people, and suggest that he see whether the man might be dangerous. Considering the recent vogue for mass murder, you can write the next paragraph of the scenario yourself.)

I am still looking for scripts of Free Amazons of Gor, Housewives of Gor, Slave Boys of Gor, Buckets of Gor, and all the other interesting parodies I hear about. Lots of people know about them, a few have promised me copies of one or more, and none have delivered.

The problem is not that Oliver North is a Marine. It is, that the Marines are Oliver Norths.

Sacred Locomotive Flies was written by Dick Lupoff. It was not one of his more felicitous efforts.

I don't have a copy of "Pack of Cards" a/k/a "The Poor Man's Bible". As for "Eskimo Nell", so many requests have come in that I might put it into ANAKREON #37 on 1 February even without a tune to it. Footnotes will cite minor differences between the version I have, and the excerpts quoted by De Camp and Pratt in The Incomplete Enchanter.

You seem to be the only APA-Q member who appreciates the craziness of this whole mania about Official State Muffins. When politicians do things like this, I feel that here is a class of people whose minds work so vastly different from mine that there is no possibility of communication - something like the tunnel-dwellers in Stanley Weinbaum's "A Martian Odyssey". So I simply prefer to have nothing to do with them.

One of the Hornblower imitations was active not in the Napoleonic but in the Crimean War, terrain that has not been extensively worked over by historical novelists. That's odd, because it should be a natural - a grand alliance of once mutually hostile nations against an Evil Empire in Russia.

In my opinion, SPI's Frigate is a better game than Avalon-Hill's Wooden Ships & Iron Men. It is less complicated to play, and seems to me to lose nothing in authenticity because of it. For several years I ran postal games of Frigate in EMPIRE.

While I still think there are a number of good points in Berges' application of the 30-year-cycle to s-f, I also appreciate your quote from Malzberg:

"Science fiction is an insular field; there has never been a point in its history in America where one powerfully placed editor could not, within a short time and for the short term, wreak change simply through using his power to buy one kind of story and reject another."

Malzberg obviously has the notorious racist John W. Campbell in mind here. During the 1940s and 1950s, you just had to read a Campbell editorial, and you knew what would be the theme of the lead story three or four issues hence. But by the late 1950s the steam was running out of Campbell's self-propelled bandwagon, even though he was still paying the best rates in the field. He kept on burbling his beliefs about dianetics, mind-reading, and race all through the 1960s, but s-f readers were by then going elsewhere for new ideas. If you and Malzberg had Campbell in mind, this decline in his influence during the progressive 1960s supports rather than invalidates Berges' idea.

I haven't read Luttwak's The Pentagon and the Art of War but I did read his earlier book Coup d'Etat (Knopf, 1968). The book is a totally amoral guide to planning and executing coups d'etat, the method by which a majority of the world's nations seem to be governed. Luttwak sticks to tactical details; if he discusses public policy, it is in terms of the immediate need of the coup leaders to assure the support of some influential faction. (For example, the coup leaders ought to plan or to oppose land reform, depending upon whether peasant rebels or landowners are more capable of giving them effective support.) Luttwak seems even willing to plan coups d'etat in

the United States of America. Two decades later this may not be simply an intellectual exercise. Unless the armed forces are taken firmly in hand first, I am convinced that the day will come when they will refuse to accept a newly elected president, and forcibly prevent him or her from taking office.

What outcome did you ever get from your "muffin letters" to politicians? If they fall for it, try again with the suggestion I made in the last DAGON: Lobby for the selection of an Official State Lizard. (After all, lizards contain more protein than muffins do.)

I sometimes save new year's predictions - however, by the end of the year, when the time comes to laugh at them, they have either been lost or thrown out. Which, I guess, is what the makes of predictions count on. Sometime around 1944 or 1945, John W. Campbell in an editorial predicted that television would never come into widespread use in the way that radio has. (There are, presently under our roof, four functioning television sets.)

Right now, I do not consider particularly defensible your assertion that Afghans and Irish would not rather kill one another than do anything else. After all, if the Soviet Union were not currently killing Afghans, they'd simply have to do the job themselves. For that matter, there seems to be a belt from Libya to Afghanistan, including Cyprus, where murder is the dominating concern of most of the local inhabitants. The only proper American response is a complete withdrawal of all Americans, and all American capital, from the afflicted region until the population level gets so low that the epidemic can no longer maintain itself.

NEVER Bluff a Librarian #51 (Burwasser): I hadn't known SuperSCRIPSIT was so versatile. However, I don't suppose it can do the edh and the thorn.

Well, if it can snow heavily in El Paso, I guess a West Kingdom Herald can know his business. Stranger things have happened.

There was a recent story about not only a pit bull attack, but what precipitated it. The dog's owner had an epileptic attack and fell on it. Fortunately, it seems she will live, but it was touch and go for a while.

As far back as the late 1960s, SPI was trying, sometimes successfully, to get Pentagon contracts to design war games for training field officers. I supported this activity, on the grounds that it drained away from the armed forces money that otherwise might be used to make killing more effective. Professional war-game designers usually acted rather superior about armed forces attempts to train people with games.

I like your analogy about Bork's explanations.

If America is "too much like Vienna just before the Nazi Takeover" (a thing whose 50th anniversary is coming up in 49 days) "except for the Southern Fundamentalists" - well, I don't admit the exception. Austria had the equivalent - right-wing Catholics, whose political arm was the Social Christian Party. A succession of Social Christian dictators, who were anti-Nazi simply because they wanted to keep the goodies for themselves, destroyed democracy in the First Republic until there was no public will to resist a Nazi takeover. In crushing the Socialists by force of arms in 1934, the Social Christians crushed the only people who would have fought against the Nazi takeover in 1938.

I think we'll get two "American Catholic Churches" splitting off from Rome. One will look back to the Good Old Days of Pope Pius XII and reject any compromises made with the 20th century by his successors, while the other will reject the present pope's efforts to tighten up what they consider to be the Johannine excesses. The former group already exists; it's called the Catholic Orthodox Church and thinks that Pope John Paul II is a Communist agent.

I have heard tantalizingly little about Christian Reductionists in the local press. Can you elucidate?

I gather from your description of it that "Cranes Over Hiroshima" has the same relation to nuclear war that "Strange Fruit" does to racial bigotry. If that is the case, wait'll Barefoot Gen gets to American movie screens.

DAGON #364 (me): The book about CIA drug-smuggling is Leslie Cockburn's Out of Control (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1937). It was reviewed in the New York Times Book

Review of 3 January 1988. Cockburn tells the details in the bungled CIA assassination attempt in 1984 against Eden "Zero" Gomez, who was then being advertised in this country as the great democratic hope against the evil Nicaraguans. Ms. Cockburn has talked to people who know where the bodies are buried, and who helped bury some of them. She answers the questions that were not even asked in the "Iran-Contra Probe" of 1987.

Since then, an even more shadowy figure than Lieutenant Criminal North has surfaced in Central America. He is a British adventurer named David Walker, whose name is an odd reminder of the notorious William Walker. David Walker apparently runs the "off-the-shelf", "self-financing" guerrilla operation that Casey and North dreamed of founding. According to a story in the New York Daily News of 3 January 1988, Walker has been doing such chores for the U. S. government and have in the past decade "left their fingerprints on undercover actions in Afghanistan...played an important role in protecting pro-Western Arabs; trained Sri Lankan troops to fight Tamil guerrillas, and lent a hand in covert U. S. activities in Central America." He is apparently now in the employ of General Secord's "Enterprise", running people, weapons, and drugs in and out of Nicaragua. In July 1983 the Red Army killed six Britons in Afghanistan, all of whom belonged to Walker's outfit, "KMS Ltd." Twelve KMS men have diplomatic immunity as employees of the Saudi embassy in Washington. (Lars-Erik Nelson, New York Daily News, 4 January 1988) Apparently nobody is capable of doing anything about this, and Walker's name and men have been rigorously protected by the "Iran-Contra" investigators.

If the names of David Walker and John Hull bulk large in the press during the present year, you will know that the press and television are meeting their responsibilities to the public. But don't bet the farm on it.

The farewell to the Rivendell Bookshop is now more or less being scheduled for the afternoon/evening of Saturday 30 January. A "Great Wall" expedition to Chinatown is planned afterwards, though I plan to speak up for the excellent Polish and Ukrainian restaurants in the immediate neighborhood.

My proposal to make the chuckwalla the Official State Lizard of New York has met with opposition from some sorehead who points out that the chuckwalla does not live in New York. Well, the bluebird is the state bird of New York, and it doesn't live in this state either. The grizzly bear is the state animal of California, and none live wild there. I'm not going to let the mere absence of chuckwallas stop this campaign.

Since the last DAGON came out, Ollie jokes have been not replaced, but supplemented, by candidate jokes. Many of them were being told at Hexacon, for which see my report elsewhere in this issue.

SerCon, V. 2, #9 (Phillips): To judge from your characterization of the Society for Creative Anachronism as "sword-jocks and prom queens", the long-standing conflict between the SCA factions of "Lovers" and "Fighters" has been won by the latter. I can remember when SCA events including period dances, scenes from period plays ranging from mystery plays to Shakespeare, and performances by jesters and flyters. Helas!

#### THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

If you currently have been receiving APA-Q by mail from me, or if I do your printing (see p. 4), the balance of your account as of today appears in the space to the right. This includes costs for mailing today's issue. Accounts which fall into arrears will be suspended. Presently susperied accounts are:

Vinnie Bertilucci	-76¢	Dana Hudes	-28¢
Andre Bridget	-72¢	Mark Keller	-86¢
Shelby Bush	-\$5.98	Ted Pauls	-39¢
Liz Ensley	-37¢	Joyce Scrivner	-75¢
John Hartzell	-79¢	Peter G. Trei	-73¢



## LORD PETER VIEWS THE NEW YEAR

## Another Chronological Problem in the Detective Novels of Dorothy L. Sayers

In the last DAGON I took up an apparent contradiction between the dates in which the first two Lord Peter novels of Dorothy L. Sayers, Whose Body? and Clouds of Witness, took place. I have extended this inquiry to the other nine Lord Peter novels, and have come up with another problem - apparently two different accounts are given of where Lord Peter spent the last day of 1929 and the first day of 1930.

As background, let us find what information we can about the dates, from internal evidence, of these eleven novels:

<u>Title</u>	<u>Publication Date</u>	<u>Time of the Narrative</u>	<u>Evidence</u>
Whose Body?	1923	November 1920	See DAGON #364
Clouds of Witness	1926	October 1926??	See DAGON #364
Unnatural Death	1927	Spring 1927	Dates on Miss Climpson's letters
The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club	1928	November 1927	General Fentiman's body found on Armistice Day* - a weekday, not a Sunday as it was in 1928
Strong Poison	1930	December 1929- January 1930	Dates on Miss Climpson's letters.
The Five Red Herrings	1931	A week in the latter part of August	This is all the information in the book, but 1930 seems to be the only available year
Have His Carcase	1932	Thursday 18 June to Wednesday 8 July	Dates given in text; 1931 is the only such year between 1925 and 1936
Murder Must Advertise	1933	Spring 1932	A list of "Tuesdays of the previous year" begins 7 January
The Nine Tailors	1934	December 1929- December 1930	It is established that Monday met Dacton on Monday 30 December, which can only be 1929
Gaudy Night	1935	1935	The author's introduction
Busman's Honeymoon	1937	October 1935	Peter and Harriet were married on Tuesday 8 October

Readers will note that I have taken no note of the short stories. This is because, with the exceptions of "The Haunted Policemen" and the posthumously published "Talboys", none of the short stories deal with events that refer to, or are referred to by, any of the novels or the other short stories. Nor do many of them include much material that could be a help in dating them - again with these same exceptions.

\* - This is the holiday, if that's the word I want, which is now called "Veterans' Day". The change makes sense, as those who observe the day are opposed to armistices, but want to create lots and lots more veterans.

The introduction by Lord Peter's disreputable Uncle Paul gives the birth of Peter's and Harriet's first son as 1936. In "Talboys" Lord Peter is stated to be 52, which would make its year 1942; by then they have two more sons.

The overlap in time between Strong Poison and The Nine Tailors is quite clear. To the best of my knowledge, only one commentator has tried to sort out Lord Peter's actions in the 30-day period during which he runs down the evidence that clears Harriet Vane of the charge of poisoning her ex-lover, and makes his first visit to the village of Fenchurch St. Paul, where he participates in a record feat of change-ringing. Dawson Gaillard, in Dorothy L. Sayers (1981, Frederick Ungar, N. Y.) observes that in Strong Poison Lord Peter spent Christmas with his family at Denver, and presumes that his auto accident on New Year's Eve at Fenchurch St. Paul took place while he was on his way back to London. (p. 80) Yet The Nine Tailors contains information and a map which makes this hypothesis unlikely. When his Daimler comes to grief, Lord Peter is on his way to Walbeach to visit friends, and is heading east, thus away from London. ("Walbeach" is later established to be on the coast of Lincolnshire, and probably owes much to Wisbeach, where Sayers' father was a Church of England rector through most of her childhood.) Once the night's change-ringing is over, and the Daimler repaired, he continues on to the east on 1 January.

We therefore have this tentative chronology:

- Sat. 7 Dec.: Jury hung in Harriet Vane's trial.  
 Sun. 8 Dec.: Lord Peter enters the planning session for the second trial.\*  
 Mon. 9 Dec.: Lord Peter visits Harriet Vane in prison.  
 Sun. 15 Dec.: Lord Peter visits Miss Climpson and Chief Detective-Inspector Parker to discuss next steps in the case.\*\*  
 Mon. 16 Dec.: Lord Peter visits the victim's father and publisher, and Harriet's agent.  
 Tues. 17 Dec.: Lord Peter visits Harriet Vane in prison, Mr. Urquhart's home and office, and, in the evening, accompanied by Marjorie Phelps, members of the pro-Vane and anti-Vane factions in Bohemia. Meanwhile, Bunter elicits information from Mr. Urquhart's servants. During the next few days he makes some investigations which cannot be dated precisely, and then leaves to spend Christmas with his family at Duke's Denver.  
 Wed. 25 Dec.: On the night of 25-26 Dec., Peter learns that Freddie Arbutnot intends to marry Rachel Levy, and that his sister Mary will accept if Parker proposes to her. Here, incidentally, Lady Mary is said to be older than Lord Peter, contradicting information given in Clouds of Witness, where she is 5 years younger. If she is younger, she'd 34 by now, which is a long time for as good a catch as a duke's daughter to go unmarried.  
 25-29 Dec.: Miss Murchison and Mr. Rumm are called to Lord Peter's aid; he is definitely placed in London by these actions. Lord Peter becomes increasingly distraught over his apparent inability to help Harriet Vane.  
 Mon. 30 Dec.: Lord Peter considers breaking his mirror, thinks better of it, and confines himself to sending Miss Climpson to Westmorland\*\*\* She arrives by train late that night. That same evening, Potty Peake sees Will Thoday and a stranger in the church at Fenchurch St. Paul. Parker is persuaded by Lord Peter that his proposal to Lady Mary will be favorably received.  
 Tues. 31 Dec.: Lord Peter, with Bunter, sets out to drive to Walbeach and runs his

(continued on p. 12)

- \* - The day is said to be a Sunday, and since the 15th is pre-empted, it then has to be the 8th. The next day Lord Peter visits Harriet in prison for their first meeting.  
 \*\* - We are specifically told that this took place on the 15th, and are left to wonder why, with time pressing, Lord Peter lets most of a week go by before taking these steps.  
 \*\*\* - You will search a modern map of England in vain for this county, which was merged ... with Cumberland a few years ago to form Cumbria.

## I'LL SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAPERS

## XLIX. Nakazawa's Apologia

The last installment of this series on comic art reviewed Barefoot Gen, the creation of the Japanese comic art genius Keiji Nakazawa. This English translation has just been released in this country, and will be followed, later this year, by a feature length, animated film version.

I have just run down a copy of Nakazawa's 1982 comic-art format magazine I Saw It: The Atomic Bombing of Hiroshima, a Survivor's True Story. This book is Nakazawa's apologia, in the original sense of that much-abused word. In it, he explains how the horrors of the bombing of Hiroshima combined with a long family tradition of commercial art to make him an artist with an uncompromising hostility towards militarism.

Barefoot Gen ends with the bombing of Hiroshima, as Nakazawa's father, sister, and little brother die, and his mother gives birth amidst the horrors of the world's first nuclear warfare. But in I Saw It most of the narrative deals with the aftermath of the bombing. In Barefoot Gen the birth of little Tomoko is made the symbol of hope and rebirth amidst disaster. Real life was not so dramatic; four months later the baby died of malnutrition. The harshness of their postwar poverty dominates most of I Saw It, until at last Nakazawa began to make a living from his art by the late 1960s. It was just after this that, worn out by her hard life and the effects of the bombing, Mrs. Nakazawa died.

(I Saw It is \$2 from Educomics, Box 40246, San Francisco, Calif. 94140. I bought it at St. Mark's Comics, 11 St. Mark's Place, New York, N. Y. 10003.)

Nakazawa pulls no punches. For him the villains are not the Americans, whom he regards as fellow-victims of war. They are the militarists with imperial dreams, who took Japan into the war. His drawings show us all what he saw on 6 August 1945: people reeling around the streets with their flesh dripping from their bones, himself as a boy tripping over loose limbs detached from their bodies, people stuck with hundreds of splinters of glass, and thousands and thousands of corpses. In one passage, Keiji and his older brother Yasuto, a shipyard worker who thus escaped the blast, go to the ruins of their home and remove the bones of their father, sister, and brother for cremation.

Even those of us who know what nuclear war will bring, in an intellectual sense, cannot match the passion of Nakazawa's work. But we can read and understand it. And, understanding it, we know there can be no compromise, and not even dialog, with the people who believe that circumstances could possibly exist in which the use of nuclear weapons would be desirable. These people, whatever their nationality, and not some abstraction of a menace said to exist in Moscow, Tehran, or Managua, are the enemy. These are the people who are plotting our deaths. Against them, self-defense may be legitimately used.

Nor is there safety in the so-called "Star Wars" program, which will assure not the safety of the United States but the prosperity of aerospace and electronics firms amidst the developing economic depression. Not even its advocates now claim that it will protect against every nuclear weapon without exception which is aimed at us. And even if it does, it will merely tempt the war-masters of Washington to attack some other nation with nuclear weapons, secure in the belief that retaliation is impossible.

"Peace at any price"? Compared to the price of war, the price of peace is negligible. Fantasy-mongers with tales about sinister international conspiracies belong in old pulp fantasy novels, not in 1988 planning sessions.

Keiji Nakazawa is offering us a way out. We should grab it with the same speed and urgency that a drowning man grabs a rope.

(This review appears on 23 January 1988 in both my science-fiction fanzine DAGON #365 and my war-gaming fanzine GRAUSTARK #545.)

## THE HEXED HEXACON (continued from p. 3)

out, there were figures there in worse shape than mine, and without the excuse of 55 years of wear and tear. Most of the behavior, both in the swimming pool and in the sauna, was decorous in the extreme, although I observed one charming young lady in the costume of Eve, playing pull-toy with a complaisant Adamite.

The management by the motel personnel had been notably competent, but on Sunday morning all the stops were pulled out. As the management later tried to explain, on Sunday morning very early some of their guests asked for the use of a meeting room. The person making this request had a room number one away from Steve's, and through an error Steve was awakened with a request to confirm. If he had known what was up, he would have told the motel manager that the meeting was cancelled, which would have saved everyone a lot of trouble. For, it seems, that room was actually used for a meeting of the Ku Klux Klan!

Word of this began to circulate around Hexacon by the middle of the morning. Perdita and I went to the weekend manager, and found that he had summoned the real manager and was in conference with him. Both men claimed that the whole thing was a surprise to them, but that they were not going to throw the Klansmen out. The manager said that when he heard the news, his "heart was pounding". Apparently his cash register was also pounding. He was overheard, by a Hexacon member, telling the staff not to send any non-white people back to wair on his guests. (How considerate!)

One of the more disappointing aspects of this whole mess was, that a lot of fans simply failed to understand what the fuss was about, or why anybody should object. And we do have the consolation that most Klansmen tend to end up in jail or public disgrace for actions unconnected with their beliefs - from Vern Stephenson, who was caught over 60 years ago messing around with underage girls, to Roy Frankhouser, the Grand Dragon of the Pennsylvania KKK, who as I informed you in the last DAGON is now on trial in Boston for fraud.

Still, the failure of the Shawnee Lancaster's manager to chuck out the KKK has left a lot of fans dubious about whether to patronize the place next year. However, the management seems to have belatedly realized its error; I have heard that they have put announcements in local media apologizing for their behavior. Still, if they have the right to choose their guests we have a right to choose our hosts. The 1989 Hexacon has already been set up for the Shawnee Lancaster. At present I am of two minds as to whether I will attend it.

## LORD PETER MEETS THE NEW YEAR (continued from p. 10)

car into a ditch at Fenchurch St. Pauls. He is put up at the rectory, and agrees to fill in for an ill man at that night's change-ringing. Miss Climpson begins her inquiries at the boardinghouse in Windle.

Wed. 1 Jan.: The peal is successfully concluded, and Lord Peter continues on towards Walbeach. Miss Climpson writes her first letter from Windle to him, and later that day makes the acquaintance of Mrs. Wrayburn's nurse. Lady Thorpe dies in Fenchurch St. Paul, and Miss Climpson and the nurse have their first "seance".

Sat. 4 Jan.: Lady Thorpe's funeral; "Stephen Driver" leaves Fenchurch St. Paul, and James Thoday does also. There is another seance in Windle.

Mon. 6 Jan.: Miss Climpson strikes gold in Windle.

Tues. 7 Jan.: Miss Climpson writes to Lord Peter with details.

Wed. 8 or Thurs. 9 Jan.: Lord Peter reads Miss Climpson's latest letter; this is the first event since 30 December that places him definitely in London.

9-11 Jan.: The concluding phases of the investigation of the death of Philip Boyes takes place, and the murderer is identified.

Sun. 12 Jan.: Hilary Term begins in the courts. Shortly afterwards, the Crown noll prosses Harriet Vane's case, Lord Peter drives to Duke's Denver, finds the family upset about Lady Mary's approaching marriage, and shocks them further by telling them whom he intends to marry.

- Sun. 20 Apr. (Easter): Miss Hilary Thorpe finds a cipher in the belltower at Fenchurch St. Paul.
- Mon. 21 Apr.: Sir Henry Thorpe dies.
- Fri. 25 Apr.: Sir Henry's funeral. The body of a stranger is found in Lady Thorpe's grave. The rector writes to Lord Peter.
- Sat. 26 Apr.: The rector's letter reaches Lord Peter, who drops everything and drives to Fenchurch St. Paul in time for the inquest on the stranger.
- Sun. 27 Apr.: Lord Peter attends services at Fenchurch St. Paul, and the funeral of the mysterious stranger.

This puts us well into the action of The Nine Tailors, and will not get in the way of the August case in Scotland, described in The Five Red Herrings. He spends Christmas 1930 in Fenchurch St. Paul, where The Nine Tailors concludes.

While all these events can be fit into Lord Peter's schedule, I doubt that they can be fit into his frame of mind. In Strong Poison, the period between Christmas and New Year's Eve 1929 has this effect:

"To chronicle Lord Peter Wimsey's daily life during the ensuing week would be neither kind nor edifying. An enforced inactivity will produce irritable symptoms in the best of men."

If we picture Lord Peter stewing in his Picadilly flat while Miss Climpson runs down clues in distant Westmorland, this makes sense. But could a man in this state of nerves have successfully completed the exacting business of ringing successfully 15,840 Kent Treble Bob Majors? And "enforced inactivity" scarcely describes the run up from London to the Lincolnshire coast. Having seen Miss Climpson off on Monday night, would Lord Peter have committed himself to spending the next several days out of town, and cut of touch of any message she might send?

In the course of this investigation, I looked into no fewer than five critical works about Dorothy L. Sayers, which I found in the Brooklyn College Library and which indicate the importance which he works have more than a quarter century after her death. Aside from the Gaillard book mentioned earlier, they are:

Janet Hitchman, Such a Strange Lady (1976, Avon, N. Y.)

Ralph E. Hone, Dorothy L. Sayers: A Literary Biography (1979, Kent State University Press)

Margaret P. Hannay (ed.), As Her Whimsey Took Her: Critical Essays on the Work of Dorothy L. Sayers (1979, Kent State University Press)

Mary Brian Durkin, Dorothy L. Sayers (1980, Twayne, Boston)

Janet Hitchens' book is looked on with scorn by other Sayers scholars, since it is unauthorized by Sayers' relatives, and dared to reveal details about the son that she bore out of wedlock in 1924. Nor does she engage in the virtual worship that Sayers seems to elicit from her other commentators, including Durkin, who is a nun, and the curators of the Marion E. Wade collection at Wheaton College, a Fundamentalist stronghold that opens every academic year with a revival meeting. (One wonders what Sayers, a firm High-Church Anglican all her life, would have thought of such scholars of her life and works.)

Much of these books is concerned with the writings of the last 20 years of Sayers' life, after she stopped writing Lord Peter novels and undertook religious propaganda through stage and radio plays, and a highly idiosyncratic translation of Dante's Divine Comedy. These works are extensively studied, while anticipatory sentiments in the Lord Peter stories are sought. The colloquialisms she puts into the language of New Testament characters were highly controversial when they appeared in the early 1940s. Questions were asked in Parliament, the Lord's Day Observance Society bitterly attacked a series of BBC programs portraying the life of Christ, and one enthusiast blamed them for the fall of Singapore!

Indeed, I fear that fans of the Lord Peter stories regard Sayers' religious works much as Sherlock Holmes's fans regard the later excursions of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle into spiritualism. Like all her works, the writings of her religious period are writ-

ten with great erudition, intelligence, wit, and humor. However, they cannot alter the fact that there does not happen to be a god. And this is why The Devil to Pay and The Man Born to be King will moulder in library stacks while the 21st century continues to read and enjoy the Lord Peter stories.

One Lord Peter novel which we will not have is Thrones, Dominations. The title comes from an obscure branch of Christian thought called "angelology", and is supposed to describe two of the nine alleged ranks of angels, ranging from seraphim and cherubim (the highest) down to archangels and angels (the lowest). More specifically, Sayers probably took the words from Milton, since the line "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Vertues, Powers" (the intermediate angelic ranks) occurs three times in Book V of Paradise Lost.

Thrones, Dominations was rumored around in the late 1930s, but by then the Holy Ghost had replaced the Muse of Detection in Sayers' career. All that exists of it is a holograph manuscript of six chapters in the Marion E. Wade Collection. Hannay and Gaillard give us details in their above-cited books. Early in the book occurs the death of King George V (20 January 1936). While Harriet searches for a black frock that will be proper to the doleful occasion, Peter drops in on his brother-in-law at Scotland Yard, and says that "he feels as though he has grown old in a moment". To Peter, the era seems to have come to an end, and all the old standards are gone. It seems to be a return in greater strength of his fears in Gaudy Night, when it seems as if war is coming to Europe and it will be "back to the army again." (These fears were unfounded, since 1942 finds Lord and Lady Peter and their sons rustivating at Talboys, without a hint that the world is at war.) To his colleague's distaste, Parker is working on a list of political agitators in Bloomsbury, a matter which Lord Peter sees as beneath his notice. While Peter and Charles will remain friends and brothers-in-law, they will clearly no longer be colleagues.

In Thrones, Dominations Lord Peter is settling in to conventionality. He frets over the proper temperatures needed to keep his piano and his books in proper condition. He even adopts the convention that requires him and his wife to sit at least ten feet apart when they are dining alone!\*

In the six chapters of Thrones, Dominations which we have, nobody has died, although Hannay observes that "there are characters in the manuscript who almost beg to be murdered." (And I'll bet you thought that six chapters with no corpse in sight was invented by Harry Kemelman in his Rabbi Small detective novels!) Presumably someday some temerarious soul will attempt to "complete" Thrones, Dominations as Vanek tried with The Adventures of the Good Soldier Shvejk or Callahan did with Treasure Island.

#### THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY .

Lee Burwasser has, as she said in the last Distribution, moved. Her new address is in a personalzine dated 8 January; it is 1516 U Street NW, Washington, DC 20003. This is only a temporary address; there may be another one in February.

\*

I have finally found Eric Lurio's The Cartoon Guide to the Constitution of the United States of America (\$6, Barnes & Noble). It was, logically enough, on sale at the main branch of Barnes & Noble at Fifth Avenue and 10th Street; it is not available at any of the discount branches. Beside it on the rack is the first volume of Larry Gonick's The Cartoon Guide to U. S. History (\$6, Barnes & Noble). I plan to review both of them in the next and 50th installment of "I'll See You in the Funny Papers" in the next issue of DAGON.

\*

I have dropped in twice recently on the Rivendell Bookshop, and bought a few books which will not henceforth be easily available. The closing party will begin in the afternoon of Saturday 30 January, and continue a while. I plan to get there as soon as I can; Perdita and I have tickets for the 11 AM performance of the Ice Capades on that

\* - Perdita and I have been married for 25 years come August, and we've never even heard of this, let alone done it.

day, but I'll get there as soon afterwards as I can.

Those people who are expecting to pick up a few books on the 30th may be disappointed. Eileen is already selling and moving out quite a bit of her sales stock, and you should get there earlier if you have any serious shopping to do.

The closing of her bookshop, which is necessitated by a new owner with exaggerated notions about the Manhattan market in commercial rents, is not altogether a disaster for Eileen Campbell Gordon. Last Tuesday I heard her say that it was like being released from prison. She has run Rivendell at 3 different locations for 11 years, enjoyed it greatly, and now is not in the best of health and ready to move on. In a few months she plans to start a mail order book business in her field of specialization "Keltic mythology, prehistory, history, and languages, and those of such nearby peoples as the Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians. When she does, I will see that APA-Q members get her price lists.

\*

Eileen informed me that she had seen Marion Zimmer Bradley at DarkoverCon, and that Marion is looking poorly. She had a third stroke recently, and her gait is affected. She also says that she has forgotten how to play the piano! I am deeply concerned about a lady who, whatever criticisms I may have had of her Weltanschauung and her fiction, has been a major figure in fantasy fiction for more than a quarter of a century.

\*

As you might expect, there was a lot of political humor being batted around at Hexacon. (See p. 3 for more serious details on that con.) Considering the circles I usually move in, I was surprised to find that practically all the humor was at the expense of Democrats. This is doubly unusual, in that the Republicans are currently the "Ins", and therefore have a greater opportunity to do laughable things.

Instead, I heard such jokes as the one about the shipload of Democratic presidential candidates that started to sink (in the water, not in the polls). Their reactions were:

JACKSON: "Women and children first!"  
 GORE: "Screw the women and children!"  
 HART: "Do you think we've got time?"  
 BIDEN: "Do you think we've got time?"  
 DUKAKIS: "Did you hear what Biden said?"

Then there was the question: "What is the difference between a Republican woman and a Democratic woman?" The answer, it seems, is "A Republican woman gives her heart to Bush...." Or, "Senator Hart's name was originally 'Hartpence', but he dropped the 'pence'." Or, "The Chinese government is happy that Hart has resumed his candidacy - they feel that they can deal with a man who eats Rice." Or, "What do Christa McAuliffe and Donna Rice have in common? They both went down on the Challenger."

Any bets that the turn-out of eligible voters drops below 50% in November?

\*

Speaking of humor, I have just finished reading Tony Hendra's Going Too Far (\$20, Doubleday). This book is subtitled: "The Rise and Demise of Sick, Gross, Black, Sophomoric, Weirdo, Pinko, Anarchist, Underground, Anti-Establishment Humor". Hendra was for several years editor of National Lampoon, the principal vehicle for what he calls "Boomer Humor", humor that particularly appeals to the members of the "Baby-Boom" generation. (Elsewhere Hendra seems to define this generation as those people born in this country between 1940 and 1955.)

The real meat of the book is in Chapter 10, in the middle of the book. Everything prior to that chapter deals with the roots of Boomer Humor in such things as Mort Sahl's monologs, Jules Feiffer's cartoons, Dick Gregory's comic barbs, and the improvisational theater scene of the middle 1950s in Chicago. (Perdita was involved in this last effort, and knew several of the people involved in it.) The later chapters seem to be mainly concerned with office politics at National Lampoon. But Chapter 10 is a

survey of the impact of the Boomer generation on not only humor, but on the United States of America. "The Sixties", a decade which Hendra puts between 22 November 1963 and 9 August 1974, cannot be made not to exist. They happened, they had a profound effect on American culture, politics, warfare, education, and mind-set, and despite the effects of contemporary critics to dismiss them as ineffectual, they are still with us. (Compare the great enthusiasm for invading Vietnam in 1964, and the fact that a 1988 invasion of Nicaragua would probably produce a revolt.) If I had the space I would reprint every word of that chapter here. Read it. Think about it.

Hendra returns to this theme in his last chapter and in a "Semi-Epitaph". Although he doesn't mention the popular "Thirty Year Cycle", and would probably poke fun at it if he did, Hendra supports it by referring to the 1980s as "the neofifties". And he is convinced that as the fifties and their mystique failed, the "neofifties" will also fail, leaving the humor of the Boomers alive and well and ready to go again.

In DAGON #334, May 1986, I described the difference between the "sick jokes" of the 1950s and those of the 1980s. I am glad to have my judgment confirmed by a professional like Hendra. Taking off from a Time article of 13 July 1959 on "sick" humor, and quoting the same joke about the limbless boy whose friends wanted him to be third base, he observes in a footnote:

"Gratuitously sadistic (or sick) jokes disappeared for a long period in the sixties and early seventies - perhaps because their apparent insensitivity was construed as playing the system's game. But in the late seventies they began to reappear, usually in a new, shorter, question-and-answer or definition form. Such jokes are now so prevalent that no disaster can go by without a rash of amazingly cruel one-liners emerging almost simultaneously. Consider the jokes that have arisen, for example, in response to the Ethiopian famine, terrorist attacks, nuclear accidents, the Shuttle explosion, and so on. Far from the sick jokes of the fifties, which could at least lay claim to some vestigially bohemian purpose, these simply affirm brutality, insensitivity, and racism - the jokes of, not against, a thuggish collective mind. They might make Rambo laugh - but not Rimbaud."

\*

In DAGON #294, four years ago, I wrote an article about the specious claims by Christians, themselves experienced censors, that they are being censored. Among the cases I cited was that of a certain John Singer, born in Brooklyn to German parents in 1931, taken to Germany, a member of the Hitler Youth and a student at an SS prep school, a veteran of the US Marines in Korea, and a devout Utah Mormon who practiced polygamy and faith-healing - and who, in 1973, pulled his children out of public school when they were being taught that Martin Luther King was a hero. After years of making an breaking promises that he could competently educate his children himself, Singer pulled a pistol on a police officer who was trying to enforce a court order giving custody to Singer's wife, and was shot dead. This happened in 1979; Christians and Anarchists regard him as a martyr. You will find details in Death of an American (Continuum, \$16) by David Fleisher and David M. Freedman, a book which was given an unsympathetic review in the New York Times Book Review of 11 December 1983. (The authors are alleged to be sympathetic to Singer; is that a job for a couple of nice Jewish boys?)

Though dead nine years, John Singer is back in the news again. As these words go on stencil, Singer's son-in-law (he married two of Singer's daughters) is holding off a police siege of his home. He is wanted for questioning about the demolition of a meetinghouse of the rival monogamous Mormons. The son-in-law, Addam Swapp, is hiding out with 13 other members of Singer's family, including Singer's widow and 6 children. They are pledged to remain there until Singer is resurrected. It looks like a long winter. (New York Times & other papers, 19 January 1988)

\*

Theatre 80, at 80 St. Mark's Place in Manhattan, has just announced its spring bill, and there are a few fantasy and other classics coming up. Things in which DAGON



readers might be interested are:

The Magician (Ingmar Bergman), Mon. 24 Jan., 4:15 & 8:20  
Ten Days that Shook the World (Sergei Eisenstein), Mon. 1 Feb., 3:00, 5:30 & 8:50  
Potyomkin (Sergei Eisenstein), Mon. 1 Feb., 4:50, 7:45 & 10:40  
M. Hulot's Holiday (Jacques Tati), Mon. 8 Feb., 3:30, 7:05 & 10:40  
Bound for Glory (Woody Guthrie), Tues. 9 Feb., 2:30 & 7:20  
Leadbelly, Tues. 9 Feb., 5:05 & 9:55  
Lost Horizon, Mon. 15 Feb., 2:00, 5:50 & 9:40  
Ninotchka (Greta Garbo), Sun. 21 Feb., 2:15, 5:10 & 10:05  
Ivan the Terrible, Parts I & II, Mon. 22 Feb., 2:00, 5:20 & 8:40  
The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari, Fri. 4 & Sat. 5 Mar., 2:45, 5:30, 8:15 & 11:00  
M (Peter Lorre), Fri. 4 & Sat. 5 Mar., 3:45, 6:30, 9:15 & midnight  
Wild Strawberries (Ingmar Bergman), Mon. 7 Mar., 2:00, 5:25 & 8:50  
Shame (Ingmar Bergman), Mon. 7 Mar., 3:35, 7:00 & 10:25

A few weeks ago, Maureen Leshendok made one of her all too rare visits to New York City. (She usually geologizes in Nevada.) Perdita and I agreed to meet her, her sister, and her sister's boyfriend at Tommy Makem's on East 57th Street. I had heard much about this Irish folk bar, and was looking forward to visiting it for the first time.

As it happened, I could have spared myself the anticipation. The performers there, a father-son team, played at a volume that would have been excessive for rock music, let alone folk. We could barely converse at screams over the booming speakers. We finally gave up and adjourned to Maureen's sister's place, where we had a very pleasant visit.

From now on, any visiting I do to an Irish folkie bar will be to the Eagle on West 14th Street near Ninth Avenue. Tommy Makem's can, as far as I am concerned, enjoy its own, presumably stone-deaf, clientele.

On the weekend of 12-14 February, which is the scheduled time of the collation of the next APA-Q Distribution, I will be out of town at PennCon, a war-gamers' convention where I will be refereeing a couple of tournaments. There will therefore be no open collation of APA-Q here. Instead, just send in your contributions, and I'll put them together and mail them out as quickly as I can, probably on Monday 15 February, which is the new, improved, better-than-ever Washington's Birthday. Anyone who gets both APA-Filk and APA-Q can expect to get them mailed out together on that weekend.

The next Mailing of APA-Filk, the quarterly filksinging apa, will probably be assembled on the afternoon at Saturday 6 February 1988. Its copy count is 60, compared to a mere 35 for APA-Q. However, both apas are increasing in membership of late, and these figures may have to be increased later this year.

John Desmond, who is organizing PennCon, has asked me to debate a couple of vehement militarists with whom he is afflicted. I have informed him that I am willing to speak on the subject of the "SDI"/Star Wars hoax, which both these characters are eagerly promoting, but I will not demean the cause of peace by putting it on an equal level with such people. Militarists are not an opposition to be debated, but a problem to be dealt with.

Dr. Robert L. Park's newsletter What's New reported to members of the American Physical Society on 1 January that computer security standards have been returned to civilian control by the Computer Security Act of 1987. This ends the situation that began in 1984, when the senile actor secretly ordered the Department of War - er - of Defense to have control over "sensitive but unclassified" information in electronic databases. Admiral Poing-Dextre, who is now probably beginning his last year as a free man, sent out a memorandum in pursuance of this doctrine which has been bitterly opposed by the APS, the American Library Association, and even by the strongly pro-Establishment American Bankers Association.

Lee Burwasser writes that librarians have always rejected attempts by the FBI and other investigatory agencies to use them as collectors of information. And the latest attempt is also being rejected and fought by the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee (NECLC), a group that fights for the civil liberties of people who are high-hatted by the elitists of the American Civil Liberties Union. The NECLC took an ad in the New York Times of 17 January in protest of the FBI's "Library Awareness Program". "One method of surveillance advocated by the FBI is for a librarian to hand over the names of foreign students or other foreigners, together with the titles of books borrowed by them...FBI agents have asked librarians in New York City to watch for and report on library users who might be diplomats of hostile powers recruiting intelligence agents or gathering information politically harmful to United States security."

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Roald Sagdeyev, head of the Soviet space program, has offered to include US space experiments on Soviet launches. (What's New, 1 January) Since the launch of the next US space shuttle has now been indefinitely postponed, with morale at NASA bad and getting worse, you would think that the US government would jump at this opportunity. However, it does not seem that US scientists will even be allowed to accept this offer.

In 1984 I urged caution about voting for Walter Mondale, on the grounds that he and his party were pledged to end the shuttle program. It seems that we have here yet another example of the increasingly common US political practice of a victorious presidential candidate delivering not on his own campaign promises, but on his opponent's.

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In line with the "Thirty-Year Law" often hypothesized by several people in the pages of DAGON, there has been a lot of "Sixties" retrospection lately as the 1990s approach. Playboy was, according to the New York Post of 2 January, planning to capitalize on this interest by running a forum on the 1960s. The present social order was defended by two of that the Post called "reformed radicals" - Peter Collier, once editor of Ramparts, and David Horowitz, who may have been a "flaming pinko" in the 1960s but was last heard crying "Thank God for the CIA". Alexander Cockburn, who has kept the Faith, blistered Horowitz in Nation for this remark. Horowitz responded with that badly overworked excuse "He took my remarks out of context". (We now know that this means: "I said it but I wish I hadn't.") In a letter to Nation, Horowitz called Cockburn an "America hater...the Charlie Manson of radical journalism".

This excursus into conservative political rhetoric, as we have come to know it in Patrick Buchanan's column and on the Marton Downey show, was too much for Cockburn, who with Robert Scheer refused to take part in Playboy's forum, for the same reason that I refuse to debate militarists.

So who did Playboy get to fill in for Cockburn and Scheer? Why, nobody but Harlan Ellison, who is decidedly a lightweight in this company. While his opponents grumped that "liberation" causes AIDS, Ellison seems merely to have observed that the 1960s had better music than the 1950s.

However, in another part of the battlefield, Wavy Gravy is back. (New York Daily News, 14 January) The old Fillmore East theater on Second Avenue near E. 6th St. has been renamed The Saint, and Wavy Gravy showed up for "a real '60s Happening". He is now a professional clown at a San Francisco hospital for children with incurable diseases, and is looking forward to "all the good stuff...coming back".

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Here's a Conspiracy Theory that may be even too far out for John Malay's collection. A nervous Californian had this question in last Sunday's Parade:

'Is it true that Mikhail Gorbachev is the illegitimate son of Armand Hammer? If so, would this make him eligible to serve as President of the U. S.?"

Insofar as it is possible to analyze the motives of a Californian, you can see

what the point of this story is. America's war-lovers are deeply upset by the deal being arranged now over a minimal and largely ceremonial reduction of nuclear weapons. As recently as six years ago, President Reagan was maundering about the prospect of a Third World War as the final battle predicted in the Book of Revelation. Now, he has sat down with the master of the "Evil Empire" and taken steps that will make such a final nuclear war less probable. Moreover, there is a great deal of Gorbachev enthusiasm here - we have seen this representative of a new generation of Soviet leadership, who realizes that his country cannot maintain its high level of social services and at the same time stay armed to the teeth against a fictitious capitalistic menace. (And it may be that a lot of us Americans are envious of a leader who not only has a coherent program, but is not afraid to upset powerful interest groups in his country by putting it into effect.)

So - we have a conservative fantasy about a Gorbachev who is "really" an American, and who will make use of this momentary popularity to get himself elected President! Armand Hammer, 89, is an eccentric multi-millionaire who had enjoyed good personal and commercial relations with Soviet leaders since before he attended Lenin's funeral in 1924. The conspiratorial mentality could easily perceive him as a spider sitting in the middle of a web and manipulating the present improvement in Soviet-American relations - an improvement which obviously causes a revulsion well below the level of rationality among militarists.

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"A common taunt employed against American radicals is that they should try living in Russia. An equally common taunt accuses them of taking advantage of political liberties in the United States that do not exist elsewhere. Anyone who has ever used or applauded either of these taunts should be made to read Richard Polenberg's excellent history of the Abrams case....As we are not taught in school, United States troops invaded the Soviet Union, in concert with the European powers, in the years immediately following the Bolshevik revolution. A group of libertarian anarchists in New York City, led by Jacob Abrams, handed out leaflets opposing the intervention and were arrested in August 1918...They were deported to the Soviet Union at their own expense, and suffered further persecution there." - Christopher Hitchens, Newsday, 13 January 1988

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We already know that, sometime in April, the first-class postal rate will be raised to 25¢ for the first ounce and 20¢ for each additional ounce. (There will be an announcement in the next DAGON, concerning a new subscription and distribution policy dependent upon this increase.) But what we didn't know until the last couple of weeks that this increase would pay for a lowered level of service. It seems that every post office in the country is going to close for half a day, and that mail sorting will be suspended on Sundays. This last step is likely to retard delivery much more than merely closing offices and stopping Saturday delivery. Virtually all my publications go into the mail on weekends, for example. (New York Times, 16 & 17 January)

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A lot more publicity than the situation deserves has recently been bestowed on a thug named Joe Clark, who is the principal of one of the two high schools of Paterson, New Jersey. His nickname "Batman" comes from the fact that he patrols the corridors of the school carrying a baseball bat. In open and deliberate violation of a court order, he has kept the doors of the school locked. (Dave Schwartz, who has visited the place, says that the building is a firetrap.) He has the practice of intimidating the teachers; some have quit, and the rest have filed grievances against him, most of which have been adjudicated against him. Naturally, the school board is trying to get him out of there. He has responded by calling two of his severest critics (who are, like him, black) "despicable beings worthy of the guillotine", while dismissing one of his defenders on the board as "a mere Puerto Rican".

And what has been the result of all this? Why, naturally, President Reagan has offered Clark a job in Washington!

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Starchild, P. O. Box 1480, Ratsmouth, Florida 33429 - oops, I translated it by mistake and it's really "Boca Raton" - well, anyway, Starchild has a new price list of Trekkie equipment and other s-f media spin-offs. There's a Trekkie Trivia game for \$14, a whole lot of "Next Generation" souvenirs, and collector's plates, a puzzle, the Dr. Who's Time Traveler's Guide, Star Trek beer steins, a Star Warriors role-playing game, a pair of \$8 Vulcan ears, and a book of Samantha Fox photoes with "upper nudity". (How'd that get in there?)

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Blaming the Victim seems to be the most effective current tactic in criminal law. Bernard "Rambo" Götz got a slap-on-the-wrist sentence after his lawyer attacked the four men he shot for penhandling - one of them was crippled for life. Then the thugs who chased a black man into thruway traffic in Howard Beach got sent up merely for manslaughter - and acquitted of rioting, which is going to make it easier for the rest of the defendants when they go on trial. (The defense attorneys had accused the victims of this racial attack of being big-time cocaine dealers.) **Robert** Chambers is now going on trial for the murder of Jennifer Levin, and Chambers' lawyer, one Jack T. Litman, is portraying Levin as a promiscuous sexual predator who deserved what she got. Also, for some reason, the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York is showing an intense interest in Chambers.

This is nothing new for Litman. In 1978, another man killed his girlfriend; this was the case in which Richard Herrin beat Donnie Garland to death with a hammer in her parents' home. Litman got Herrin off with a charge of manslaughter; as he said afterwards, "It was necessary to taint her a little." The Archdiocese also went to bat for Herrin.

There is more to this than just a lawyer grasping at straws. According to Sydney Schanberg's column in Newsday of 8 January, Litman did his senior thesis at Cornell on the detective novels of Georges Simenon, observing that "one of Simenon's major theses is that the criminal becomes the first victim of his own crime". The author of a book on the trial of Herrin "called Litman a firm believer in the adversary system, which compels lawyers to do whatever is necessary to win, within the bounds of the law." (Newsday, 5 January) But, as Schanberg observes, "How far a moral distance is it from 'I was only doing my job' to 'I was only carrying out orders.'?"

Litman's tactics may not work as well as they once did. After all, in 1988 a jury is not all that likely to conclude that a woman with a sex life that covers several partners "deserves what she gets". But, if Chambers does get off with manslaughter, there will be an obvious application to the next big headline-grabbing murder trial which this city is going to have. This one will accuse a pair of Greenwich Village yuppies of beating to death a 6-year-old girl whom they had illegally adopted. Do not rule out, on the basis of its present success, a "blame the victim" strategy for that case.

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It was a pleasure to see, after several years of being out of contact, that Joan Vinge was the guest speaker at Lunarians a week ago. Many years ago, Joan was a regular contributor to APA-Q. She and her husband Jim Frankel are now living in Westchester County, and their collaboration has not only extended to several books written by her and edited by him, but also to a child. Joan gave the basic how-i-got-started-in-writing speech, but spent most of her time answering questions on this and related topics from the audience.

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What did Robert Sacks do that was so terrible? Well, since the lady involved is telling the story, we may as well all know it. A couple of months ago, Sacks greeted a man who had just sat down with him, Brian Burley, and me, and whose girlfriend had recently had an abortion, paid for by her boyfriend. Sacks's greeting was: "Did you know that your kid is dead?" Sacks is now complaining that he is being banned for "one little mistake". However, this act of gross insensitivity was not the first, but merely the worst - and the last straw. Sacks is actually getting off very lightly.