

DRINKS FOR ME AND MY MERRYMEN!



TAKE GOOD CARE OF THAT EGG WHILE I'M GONE, IRVIN!

YES, MRS. CONFORI!



...WHITE MONEY?



...A COURIER ON HIS WAY BACK WITH FUNDS FOR THE BOSS!



WATCH OUT FOR THOSE NATURALIST SANDS. OH, LORDY, PEOPLE ARE SO CURIOUS ABOUT US!



AND THAT LOOKS LIKE MIKE WALLACE AGAIN!



BE A PEAR AND PROP A ROCK ON HIM FOR ME!



# DAGON

#375 9 July 1988

Additional titles of interest:  
**PRINCE CINDERS.** Written and illustrated by Dabette Cole. Pemm. \$12.95. (Ages 5 to 9) Prince Cinders is a hapless wimp. His three brothers are hairy brutes who zoom off to the Palace Disco, leaving him at home with the chef. With the help of a fairy who falls down the chimney, Cinders, just like a 98-pound hero on the beach, wins the woman of his dreams. Happy Father's Day.

APA-Q  
Distribution  
#283



IT'S NASA. THEY WANT TO KNOW IF WE HAVE ANYONE WHO REMEMBERS HOW TO FLY THE SPACE SHUTTLE.

Retirement Home Apts.



BATTLING THE DARK SIDE



WHY DON'T YOU CALL UP THE NEW WED FAMILY AND ASK THEM TO TAKE THE OFFICE OF V.P. MEMORABLE AND FOR HIM FOR SERVICE E.



WHY DON'T YOU ASK NEARBY HICKSLEYER IS BEAT?



SO, CATHY, HAVE YOU DATED ANYONE IN, SAY, THE LAST TEN YEARS?

WELL, YES... I'VE BEEN SEEING ONE PERSON FOR A WHILE.

BUT YOU ALSO SEE OTHER PEOPLE??

WELL, YES... SOMETIMES. YOU'RE SEEING ME RIGHT NOW.

AND WHILE YOU'RE SEEING ME, IS YOUR BOYFRIEND SEEING PEOPLE AND ARE THEY PEOPLE WHO HAVE SEEN OTHER PEOPLE AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE THOSE PEOPLE MIGHT HAVE SEEN???

I MISS THE GOOD OLD DAYS WHEN I COULD BE REJECTED ON MY OWN MERITS.



HOW DOES IT FEEL BEING IN A FULLY FEATURED, NEW OPERATIONAL MANUAL, AND ONE HUNDRED PROGRAMS?

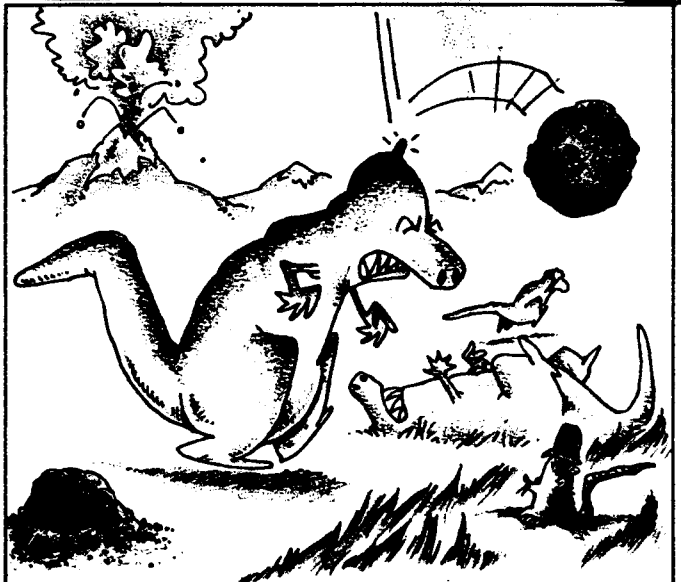


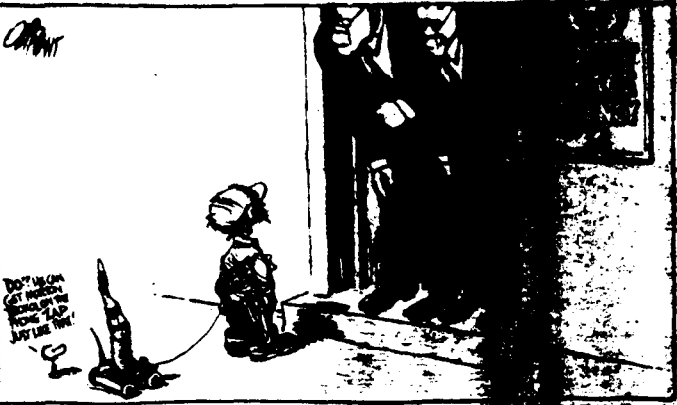
AND A NEW OPERATIONAL MANUAL.

YELLOW, HAVE I'M DEAD AND THIS THE RECENT HISTORY OF DAVE'S INFERNAL..

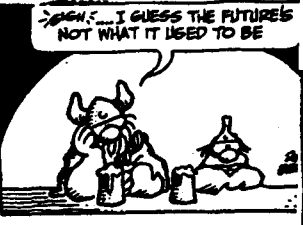


BEEN THERE, DONE THAT?

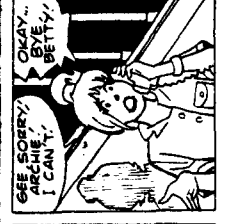
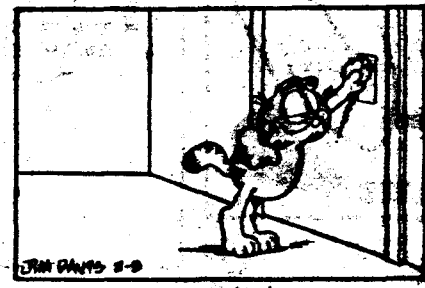
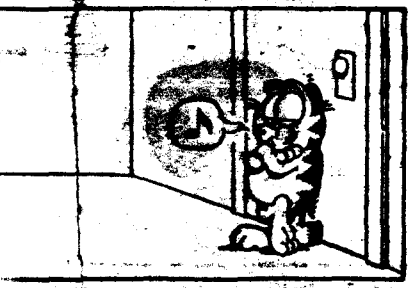
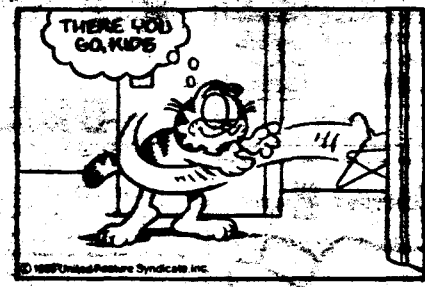
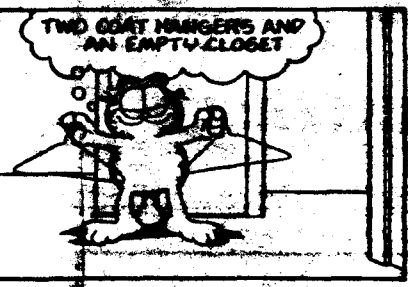
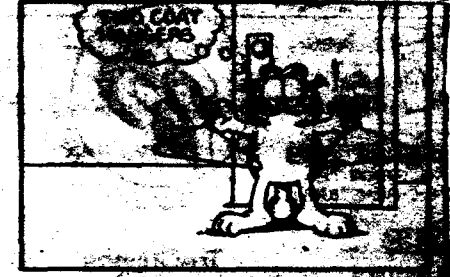
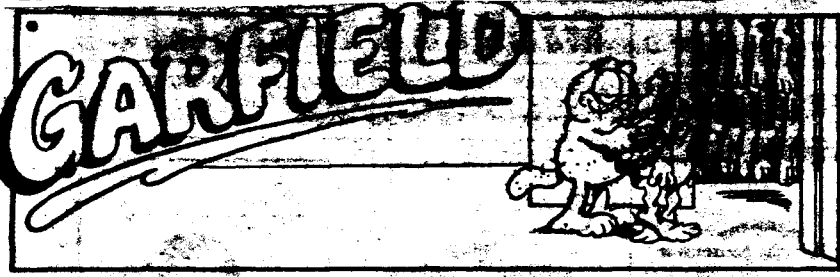
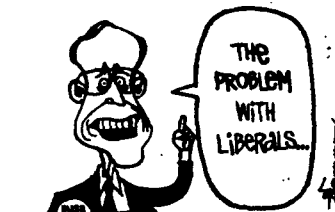




THAT'S VERY NICE OF YOU TO OFFER US YOUR HELP WITH OUR M... TION SHOT... JUST WHAT EXACTLY CAN YOU DO?



A POEM - by Luann Dehoot  
HERE I AM, JUST SITTING AROUND,  
READING A MAGAZINE.  
MY HOROSCOPE SAYS: "YOUR LIFE IS SO FULL!  
YOU'RE ONE VERY BUSY TEEN!  
PLACES TO GO! PEOPLE TO MEET!  
A SPIRITED SOCIAL SCENE!!"  
... SOMETIMES I HATE JUST SITTING AROUND,  
READING A MAGAZINE!



## I'LL SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAPERS

## LIV. Following Up

There have been further developments in a number of topics that were the subjects of recent issues of this column on comic art, and readers will be brought up to date on them in this installment.

Chief among them is the release of the second volume of the English translation of Keiji Nakazawa's powerful anti-war book Barefoot Gen (Hadashi no Gen). This is Barefoot Gen; The Day After, and like its predecessor is \$8.95 plus \$1.50 packing and postage from New Society Publishers, 4527 Springfield Ave., Philadelphia, Penn. 19143.

Where the first volume was an ominous build-up towards the bomb that fell on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945, the second one shows the horrors of the first few days after the destruction of the city. Nakazawa does not spare us, and there is no reason he should. His character of Gen Nakaoka is based on the cartoonist himself, who was on his way to school on the morning that the bomb fell. What he saw, he shows us - even to the deaths in the firestorm of his father, sister, and brother, and the birth of a baby to his mother in the immediate aftermath of the bomb. With two older brothers away from home, it fell to Nakazawa to look after his mother and baby sister until some semblance of relief could be arranged by a government already reeling from the effects of 8 years of continuous total warfare ending in defeat.

Incredibly, there are still some people among us who can regard war as an admissible alternative, which can legitimately be resorted to in the "proper" circumstances. Such psychopaths should - although they probably will not - consider the realities presented by Nakazawa in this series. None of the confident militarists who in 1937 committed Japan to the invasion and conquest of China envisaged the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima in 1945. The Germans who in their enthusiastic millions made Adolf Hitler the master of Germany, and tried to make him the master of Europe, did not think of the Hamburg firestorm or the Dresden firestorm or the utter ruin and permanent partition of their nation. We do not have even the slender excuse that they had. The first nuclear war, after all, has already been fought. We have Nakazawa as an eye-witness to what that means. More generally, in their book How to Stop a War: The Lessons of 200 Years of War and Peace, James F. Dunnigan and William Martel point out numerous instances where one or both sides in a war totally underestimated a potential enemy's resources, capabilities, or determination, turning what was expected to be a quick and easy victory into a national disaster.\* As an example, at the beginning of World War I as a matter of public record both sides expected their war efforts to be victorious before Christmas, whereas in actuality the war went on for over four years, and ended only because populations on both sides of the conflict revolted against their governments rather than go on fighting.

Nakazawa shows us all what he saw - the dying people reeling around the streets, the corpses that fell apart as stricken rescue workers tried to remove them, the utter inadequacy of all rescue and medical services, the maggots in living flesh, the disfiguring keloid scars, the famine, the plague of flies, the families leaving notices to probably dead relatives by the ruins of their homes, the attempts to satisfy Japanese custom by collecting the bones for burial. Gen's fevered mind rejects the reality that his father, sister, and brother are dead. Once he attaches himself to a girl who he at first thinks is his sister, and prevents her from committing suicide when she realizes how badly her face is disfigured. He cannot be convinced that a bomb orphan named Ryuta is not his beloved kid brother Shinji. The scars of Hiroshima are not only carried on the body.

(There is a bitter irony in one line: "The purple spots that appeared were a symptom unique to radiation sickness," Not any more, they're not.)

So far, we have avoided further nuclear warfare, but there have always been voi-

\* - I reviewed this book in GRAUSTARK #550, the 25th Anniversary Issue of my postal war-gaming fanzine. Send a self-addressed envelope with 65¢ of postage if you'd like a copy.

ces to advocate it. As early as 1954, President Eisenhower was urged to use nuclear weapons against the large concentration of Vietnamese troops that had just defeated the French at Dienbienphu. It is known that men with the rating "Nuclear Weapons Assembly Technician" were sent by the U. S. Army to Vietnam. The U. S. government has never forsworn the first use of nuclear weapons, and just four months ago Governor Dukakis said he would as President use them against a hypothetical Soviet invasion of western Europe.

As I observed in a review of an earlier Nakazawa book, Keiji Nakazawa is offering us, out of the bitterness of his experience and that of his family's, a way out of a world of nuclear devastation, and we ought to seize it with the same eagerness that a drowning person grabs a rope.

There are two lesser items to be added to this review. One is that Nakazawa, though a victim of an American weapon in a war with America, does not specifically blame America for the destructions of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The real villains are the militarists who started the war, and the common people who gave them enthusiastic and unthinking support. Americans were also victims - indeed, he shows us the body of an American POW who died in the bombing. America does not need to go on a national guilt trip about using nuclear weapons against Japan - unless, of course, we accept as our leaders the same sort of brainless militarists who brought Japan into national disaster.

The translators also go into some of the items that I mentioned in the review of the first volume in DAGON #363 - cultural differences between Japan and America, or between Japanese and American conventions of comic art - which have obviously raised some questions among people who have not been exposed previously to much manga - the booming art form of the Japanese comic book.

\*

The 6th issue of Cherry has come out, and I regret to say that it is not as good as the first five, which were enthusiastically reviewed in DAGON #371. The front cover gives us Cherry as a Yuppie - and just in time, if the Yuppies go the way I think they're going to go within the next couple of years. The longest story in the comic is a "Beach Party" wherein the concept of the Total Party Animal is examined, not too favorably. We also meet three of Cherry's girlfriends - the stuck-up, rich brunette Lola (and guess who she's modeled on, from Archie), the broad-breasted and sexually charged blonde Patty, and the skinny, spaced-out Ellie Dee, whom we've already met as a highly skilled computer hacker and bisexual. The four of them appear to a male computer nerd who tries to make a deal with the devil ("Bimbos from Hell"), and finds he'd rather settle for an orgy.

Well, they can't all be winners.

\*

The second volume of Larry Gonick's The Cartoon Guide to U. S. History is now on sale, apparently only at the main branch of Barnes & Noble on the southeast corner of 5th Avenue and 18th Street. I am grateful to Eric Lurio for this information; his The Cartoon Guide to the Constitution of the United States was reviewed, along with Gonick's first volume, in DAGON #366. All three books are \$6 each. Lurio's book and Gonick's are both getting wretched distribution, despite their high quality and unusual perspectives; we do not get exactly a naive patriotic view of history, but our nation is painted, in the words of one of its founding fathers in the spirit, with "warts and all". I have not yet bought Gonick's second volume, but on the basis of long familiarity with his works I can recommend it without hesitation. It will be reviewed in a future issue of DAGON.

\*

Ronert Knox, whose comments on the work of the late Wally Wood appeared in DAGON #374, writes that he has discovered who now controls the rights to Wood's works. The executor of his estate is Bill Pearson, a sometime editor of Witzend whose eight issues carried many of Wood's more experimental works. Knox is now looking for Pearson's address, and asks whether any DAGON reader can provide him with it.

\*

In DAGON #372 I reported seeing, at this year's Lunacon, the second issue of Anime-Zine, an American magazine of commentary on Japanese manga (comic art). I have since been given a copy of its 3rd issue, which is much thicker, and printed on a better quality of paper. Obviously this is a growing hobby in this country.

The biggest article, copiously illustrated, deals with a newly released animated film version of one of Japan's most popular manga, Dirty Pair. The "Dirty Pair" are two young ladies, superbly skilled in combat, and set in a futuristic background including other major characters who are also described. As you might expect, Kei and Yuni (the "Pair") are a blonde and a brunette in the obligatory combat outfits - boots, bikini shorts reaching nearly halfway up to the navel, and an upper garment that at the same time manages to be high-collared and low-cut. This seems to be standard operating garb for the heroines of action comic books, leaving us to wonder why it is so much different from what female athletes wear in real life.

Not only manga, but American comic art influenced by it, comes under Anime-Zine's purview. The Pinis' elves have not yet come into the pages of Anime-Zine, despite the obvious Japanese influence on the art work, but #3 has an article by J. Thompson on Ralph Bakshi's 1977 film Wizards.

Bakshi does not have a good reputation in comic art and animated film fandom, and the reasons are not hard to see. There is a rumor that, when Wizards was in production, Bakshi put some Wallace Wood drawings on the wall of his artists' bullpen and said, "I want something that looks like this but isn't." And, sure enough, in Wizards the Good Guys look like Wood's characters, and the Bad Guys look like Vaughn Bode's. Both men are now dead by their own hands, leaving Bakshi to profit off the work of artists that he wasn't fit to draw borders for.

An Anime-Zine article by Patricia Malone answers the question that many of us have asked: Why does practically every character in manga look Occidental rather than Japanese? After all, they all seem to have "their long, lean look, with thick flowing hair and large emotional eyes." Well, "they do look Caucasian, but to the Japanese they look Japanese." And there is a difference "from most American animation characters, which tend to have square jaws, short hair, and painted-on clothes."

Besides, the Japanese seem to have this amazing admiration of western culture. There is a terrific market in Japan for classic western works of art. Yoshiyuki Tomino is quoted as saying "that the Japanese didn't like their own faces and think of themselves as a cosmopolitan people...In their commercials, they use the widest-eyed people they can find." And Osamu Tezuka, the biggest name in manga, "felt that the future would be dominated by Western man, so he incorporated the large roundish eyes into his characters."

\*

Ralph Bakshi is getting back into animated film again, after a well-deserved eclipse of some 4 or 5 years. His first film, the 1972 Fritz the Cat, mangled the original concept of Robert Crumb. Heavy Traffic (1973) and Coonskin (1974) worked ethnic stereotypes nearly to death; the latter was yanked after massive protest from several Black organizations. ("The film has been likened to Uncle Remus in Harlem.") His Lord of the Rings came under much criticism from fantasy fans when it was released in 1979, and the balance of the animated version of Tolkien's work was taken out of Bakshi's hands. Both Wizards and Lord of the Rings made plentiful use of rotoscoping, a cheap-o technique which turns live-action photography into animation. Furthermore, the message of Wizards is that technology is evil and totalitarian, and only magic and a gentle harmony with nature can triumph. ("Swords against rockets, arrows against airplanes yet somehow a balance is attained." In a pig's wazoo.)

According to the television section of Newsday of 3 July 1988, Bakshi has now broken out in a new place. He is now the artist for Mighty Mouse: The New Adventure, which will release this '40s character on Saturday morning TV. "Mighty Mouse has become a mouse of the '80s," writes critic Kari Granville. "A Guy who's a little afraid to do some of this super-hero stuff...He's very vulnerable and very unsure of himself."

Mighty Mouse has some other '80s mannerisms. At one point he sniffs crushed flowers. Or that's what Bakshi says it is. (The show is on Saturday mornings on CBS

at 10:30, so you can try to figure it out for yourself.) But the Rev. Donald E. Wildmon of the American Family Association claims that Mighty Mouse is snorting cocaine, and is screaming about it. No matter what we may think of Bakshi's artwork, or of his ethics, here is an issue on which we have to close ranks behind Bakshi or be victimized by the forces of censorship.

\*

I have not yet seen Who Framed Roger Rabbit?, but Perdita tells me it is good, with two reservations. One is the style of the animation artwork, which she does not like, and the other is violence rather excessive for juvenile viewing. But all the reviews say that the animated art and live-action photography are superbly blended with each other, and several articles have appeared in the press explaining how they were so neatly blended.

The film is based (not very tightly, I am told) on Gary K. Wolf's 1981 novel Who Censored Roger Rabbit? I read this book when it first came out, but when the film was released I mistakenly recalled the book as being by Ron Goulart. After re-reading it, I can see why, and if somebody told me that Wolf was a Goulart pseudonym I would not doubt it in the least. To complicate matters further, Greg Costikyan has designed a fantasy role-playing game called 'Toons, in which characters go over cliffs, get hit with custard pies, or fall down elevator shafts without noticeable damage.

To the best of my knowledge, the mixture of live and animated action was first attempted in Walt Disney's 1947 film Song of the South - a racist rendering of the "Uncle Remus" stories which is now best forgotten, and whose revival a couple of years ago merely served to bring back the original condemnations from Black groups. It has been done frequently since, but apparently never on this scale and with this degree of expertise.

\*

Another mixture of live and animated action will be coming up this summer - a film based on the popular Parker Brothers game Monopoly. (Newsday, 8 June 1988) There will be only one animated character - the mustached businessman who appears in the illustrations on several of the Monopoly cards, and who is here called "Rich Uncle Penny Bags". As an added attraction, Parker Brothers executive Philip Orbanes will soon have a book out called The Monopoly Companion, in which we will allegedly be told at last about the frequently made claim that the game was designed not in the mid 1930s by an engineer named Charles B. Darrow, but in the early 1920s by a Feminist and Socialist named Lizzie Magie. (Even in the game as we have it, there is ample evidence that the designer did not believe businessmen to be paragons of honesty and selflessness.) Furthermore, Parker has a deal, with the firm that produces "Wheel of Fortune", for a Monopoly TV game show, starting sometime next year.

\*

In DAGON #372, there was a brief mention of a comic book called Japan Inc.: An Introduction to Japanese Economics by Shotaro Ishinomore (University of California Press, \$25 cloth, \$11 paper). The New York Times Book Review of 3 July 1988 had a review of this book by Clyde Haberman, who also gives a brief account of how popular comic books are in Japan. This book was originally published by Nihon Kaizai Shimbun, Japan's equivalent of the Wall Street Journal. It and its sequel were best sellers in Japan. The plot of the book is a conflict between two young businessmen, Tsugawa, who gives us straight cut-throat capitalist economics, and Kudo, who has a social conscience. At one point, Kudo says, "I think...the U. S. economy has gotten weak, because it's easy to make a killing on the stock market rather than investing in equipment. U. S. companies don't renovate their equipment."

This is precisely what we have been told by home-grown economic analysts, who quote the saying that "The cheapest place to drill for oil is on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange." But the Japanese economy is not free from internal strains and problems, either. "Executives scheme, battle, and back-stab. Some drink to excess and so do their neglected, bored wives. Their aging parents are given indifferent

## GETTING CAUGHT UP

DAGON 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 the same address and schedule, and whose next few collation dates are given to the right. The copy count is 35. If you'd like to contribute, or receive APA-Q, just send a few dollars for postage costs, and I'll keep you posted on the state of your account in "The Ministry of Finance". (See elsewhere in this issue.) You will be charged postage costs plus 25¢ for the envelope. If you don't have printing facilities, I can print any stencil that can fit on a Gestetner mimeograph, at 2¢ per sheet per copy, or xerox it for you at local commercial rates, and debit your postage account.

#284	30 July 1988
#285	20 August 1988
#286	10 September 1988
#287	1 October 1988

One item that should have been in the last Distribution of APA-Q wasn't. Robert Sacks had a contribution left off at my house, and it got filed with the incoming mail rather than with the material for the next APA-Q. I have heard at second and third hand that Sacks is putting sinister imputations on this oversight, and is claiming that the omission of his 'zine from the last Distribution was a deliberate and underhanded plot against his golden words and incisive comments on world affairs. Knowing Sacks, I have no intention of trying to persuade him that the omission was a culpable oversight on my part rather than a deliberate "censorship". I also know that he will not believe this, and that nobody will believe him.

Vaudeville Lines #198 (Lipton): You are also coming up on the 200th issue of your APA-Q 'zine, a landmark which Mark Blackman recently reached. And John Malay has recently marked his 100th issue. Nobody has ever asked me why the issue number of DAGON is higher than the number of APA-Q Distributions, but the reason is that DAGON also circulated through APA-F in the middle 1960s, sometimes with 3 or 4 issues in each mailing. I have just continued the issue numbers from them.

I well remember The Mixumaxu Gazette, and regret its passing from the postal Diplomacy scene.

Statistical analysis has indeed been done, comparing the suicide rate among players of Dungeons & Dragons with the suicide rate in the whole age group from which most D&D players are drawn. I cited those statistics in the 232nd issue of my gaming fanzine EMPIRE on 18 October 1986. The Suicide Fact Sheet, published by the Game Manufacturers' Association's Advisory Board, dealt with suicides in the age group 15-24. There are about 40 million people in this age group, of which some 3 million play D&D according to an unfriendly documentary broadcast by CBS on 15 September 1985. The number of successful suicides for the whole age group each year is 6,000 to 10,000, but only some 30 D&D players committed suicide over the past five years.

From here it is an easy calculation. The suicide rate for the general population in this age group ranges from 1 in 4,000 to 1 in 6,667 - but the suicide rate for D&D players ranges from 1 in 100,000 to 1 in 500,000. The only possible conclusion that can be drawn from these data is:

"The suicide rate for the general population, ages 15-24, is 15 to 125 times greater than the suicide rate for D&D players. D&D may act either to increase stability of its players or as a selector for stability."

This is conclusive logically, but since we are dealing with Christians that won't be enough. Remember, we are dealing here with people who believe that virgins can have children, that dead men can come back to life, that humans are utterly unrelated to other animals, that the universe is only a few thousand years old, and that it is contrary to the will of god to work against war and for peace. These are not people to be deterred from their beliefs by mere facts and numbers.

"Skell" is a piece of New York slang for a general low-life; I think it may be of

Irish origin.

With regard to your reply to Robert Hauser, it seems to me that most of the Anarchists ("Libertarians") in our circle of acquaintances are people who have only recently left the parental roof or the regimented life of a college dormitory, and are on their own for the first time in their lives. They resent the restrictions under which they have previously lived and rejoice at their present freedom. They see those restrictions as unreasonable infringements on their individual liberty, and in many cases they are right to do so. But they overreact, and proclaim themselves free of any obligations whatever to their fellow human beings, or to the abstraction of society which summarizes these fellow human beings. Unreasonable governmental restrictions, such as military conscription or the narcotics laws or the very real limitations on freedom of speech and the press which still exist in our society merely confirm this belief. And so we get people like Russ Rusnak, who claims that drunken driving is a civil liberty, or Rick Buchanan, who claims that the U. S. Constitution does not bind him because he did not sign it, or a certain fan who has since got over this delusion, but who claimed that civil rights laws were unreasonable restrictions on the personal liberty of whites.

I quite agree with you that Hauser's

"...statements show a naivety that makes it almost impossible to discuss government with you. I fear that the growing libertarian movement, with its philosophy that people owe nothing to each other, will wind up destroying much that is good in this country and, if successful, replace it with a robber baron government."

This also occurred, nearly 30 years ago, to a Los Angeles fan who used the pseudonym "George H. Smith" and put his forebodings into a book entitled 1976: Year of Terror (Epic Books, 1961). In his future, the crushing growth of taxes for military purposes caused people to turn increasingly to a Libertarian Party. A Federal Security Police (FSP) was established. Then the President was assassinated, and in the resulting confusion the Libertarians took over and dissolved just about every agency of the U. S. government except the armed forces and the FSP. The armed forces were supported by a national lottery, while the FSP became the sort of self-supporting agency later envisaged by Sir William Casey and Lieutenant Criminal Oliver North - an "off-the-shelf" agency that financed itself out of confiscations and had no restrictions whatsoever on its activities. The nation deteriorated into lawlessness, in which only the people who could afford the fees of private security agencies had any right to protection by them. Private enterprise takes over - complete with long-term indentures barely distinguishable from slavery, huge cartels with governmental powers but without governmental responsibilities, and a violent criminal underclass who preyed on the people who could not afford private protection, and whose members often had mutually profitable agreements with the rent-a-cops. The hero and his friends eventually get the government of the United States of America restored.

Not long after this book appeared, I saw a review of it in a "Libertarian" publication. The review whined that Libertarianism wasn't like this at all, but failed to explain what could keep the conditions envisaged by "Smith" from developing.

Blancmange #202 (Blackman): "Holmes & Wimsey clones in that Darcy continuum"? Also Nero Wolfe, Archie Goodwin, Inspector Clouseau, and the whole Orient Express. Garrett didn't miss a bet, and if he had been preserved to us in full health, I don't doubt that others would also have been included.

Fremont's Intelligence Newsletter #7 (Hauser): There are two explanations as to why William Murrary's account of the upcoming film Nightfall are so far-fetched:

1. His account bears very little resemblance to the actual Asimov story.
2. He's a Christian, and therefore chronically incapable of comprehending anything.

In the Asimov story, scientists work out a rational explanation of the catastrophe that seems to threaten their society, while religious fanatics look forward to its destruction. This is the same way in which religious fanatics today claim that a nuclear war will fulfill the prophecies of Revelations, and that therefore people who work against



a nuclear war are fighting against god. The obvious parallels would be most disquieting to Christians, who therefore can be expected to oppose Nightfall with all that is in them. Fortunately, that isn't much.

DAGON #374 (me): Despite his defense attorney's claim that This is playing D&D had driven him crazy, Daniel Kasten was found guilty of murdering his step-parents. Mind you, none of this will affect the Christian campaign against D&D.

I saw the two Europe Cup semi-finals, and both were very good games. The Netherlands beat West Germany 2-1; one goal for each side was a penalty kick, but the winning Dutch goal was scored with great skill. The USSR played an "Italian" style of game to beat Italy 2-0. The Soviet skill was so great that I feared for the Dutch team, but on 25 June they won the Cup with a 2-0 victory.

And the U. S. chances to get into the World Cup finals is now greatly improved for both 1990 and 1994. Mexico has just been disqualified for several years from international soccer competition, since they put over-age players into their youth team. With Mexico out of the running for the North American slot in the 1990 World Cup, our team's chances are materially improved. (Mexico is also out of the finals of Olympic soccer this year.) And in 1994 the U. S. will be the host, so our national team automatically gets into the final round!

I have learned that "The Official State \_\_\_\_\_" has just broken out in a new place, and that the state of Maine has proclaimed the Maine Coon Cat to be its Official State Cat. There are even Mainers who will tell you that the animal is a cross between the domestic cat and the racoon! Knowing how stupid politicians are, I am sure that Official Cats will be named for other states as well. The Yuppies of California will probably select some exotic breed like the Burmese or the Abyssinian. Some states will opt for native cats like the bobcat, the lynx, or the cougar. New York will, with our mixed population, go for the common alley tabby. The dog fanciers will not be far behind, and Tennessee can have the blue-tick hound, while California can have the akita, or "Yuppie puppy", and somebody will certainly choose the pit bull.

At the last First Saturday, Marc Glasser informed me that Joe Braman had sent the same questionnaire to his household. It is also reported that, despite the Goldman, Sachs return address, Braman has already picked up an advance from a publisher and moved to California. If you find out what publisher, unload any of their stock that you may own. Giving Joe Braman an advance is like giving Oliver North a shipload of Sting missiles.

#### I'LL SEE YOU IN THE FUNNY PAPERS (continued from p. 6)

treatment in regimented nursing homes." In short, the Japanese "economic miracle" is causing as many misgivings among the Japanese themselves as it is among us.

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Newsday of 30 May 1988 reported that Mort Drucker of Mad was named the best cartoonist of the year by the National Cartoonists Society. He also won the special features award. Drucker's most recent productions have been The Ronald Reagan Coloring Book and The Ollie North Coloring Book. As the lawyers say, res ipsa loquitur. Oliver North is apparently going into history with the same reputation as William Quantrell, George Armstrong Custer, Pretty Boy Floyd, or Elmer Fudd.

#### THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE

As of today, and including postage and/or printing costs for this present issue of APA-Q, your account's balance is given in the space to the right. Your next issue will come to you along with ANAKREON #39 or, if you are a member of APA-Filk, the 39th Mailing of that filksingers' amateur press association.

Accounts which fall into arrears will be suspended. Presently suspended accounts are:

Vinnie Bartilucci	-76¢	John Hartzell	-79¢
Andre Bridget	-72¢	Mark Keller	-86¢
Shelby Bush	-\$5.98	Ted Pauls	-39¢
John Colton	-88¢	Joyce Scrivner	-75¢
John Desmond	-61¢	Peter G. Trei	-73¢
Liz Ensley	-37¢		

#### THE MINISTRY OF MISCELLANY

At First Saturday a week ago a number of fans decided to hold our Line Party for the Central Park production of Much Ado About Nothing on Wednesday 6 July. Present were Mark Blackman, Ira Donewitz, Bob Lipton, Eric Lurio, and ourselves. The production was really carried by one of Shakespeare's best pair of lovers, Beatrice and Benedick, played by Blythe Danner and Kevin Kline. Jerry Stiller was the comic constable Dogberry, and very funny in the role. The play will continue to run, every evening but Monday, until 24 July.

Our only reservation about the evening had nothing to do with the play, but we regret to report that that Mexican restaurant on the west side of Columbus Avenue between 77th and 78th Streets has gone way downhill in quality and well up in price.

In August the Central Park Shakespeare theater will present King John. This is a rarely produced "history" play, and reading it will tell you why. It has only been done there once before, in 1967. The only really interesting character in the play is Shakespeare's invention, a bastard son of the late King Richard the Lion-Hearted. (Time out for laughter from those who know about Richard.) And Shakespeare never seems certain whether to present King John as a villain who murdered his nephew the rightful heir, or a hero who defied the Pope and the French.

Both Central Park productions of Much Ado About Nothing have been in out-of-period costume. The 1972 production was in 1890s costume, and the soldiers who enter victorious at the beginning of Act I looked as if they had just come back from storming San Juan Hill. The 1988 production was dated "1800", although Perdita's expert eye put the costumes as a couple of decades later.

The landscaping around the Delacorte Theater has undergone what is undoubtedly regarded as an "improvement" but which destroys some of my favorite memories of the place. There is a rocky ledge which overlooks the rehearsal yard and the green room, south of the theater. On many afternoons I have sat on that ledge with a daughter and watched the actors prepare for the play, or seen the costumes and props being rolled out. Now they have installed a heavy log fence and landscaping that blocks the public off from that access, as I found when I went there with Anthony on Tuesday afternoon.

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The Federal Bureau of Investigation is still making itself ridiculous looking for spies in the libraries. For several months it seemed to me that the only person concerned about this was Robert L. Park of the American Physical Society, whose weekly newsletter What's New has been frequently cited in these pages. But then the professional associations of libraries and of librarians have been publicizing the FBI's "Library Awareness Program", and articles appeared in the New York Times on 21 and 28 June 1988, alerting the general public to this comic-opera investigation.

What's New reported on 3 June that the National Security Archive has filed suit against the FBI to release documents about the FBI's library snooping. "The FBI at first denied the existence of the program, and now contends it is confined to the New York area, but librarians from all over the country report FBI visits." Neither the National Security Archive, People for the American Way, or the American Library Association has thus far been able to get any documents at all out of the FBI on this matter.

The FBI is going doggedly ahead, not only pursuing this program but trying to

justify it. The "new FBI chief, William Sessions...released an unclassified version of a top-secret FBI report that must have been ghost written by Art Buchwald." (What's New, 3 June) An example of suspicious behavior given in this report is an individual who "is observed departing the library after having placed microfiche or various documents in a briefcase without properly checking them out of the library." James H. Geer, assistant director of the FBI, told this story to a House subcommittee looking into the "Library Awareness Program." Geer said that microfiche loss was a major epidemic, with hundreds of thousands of items being stolen. The library witnesses denied that any such epidemic was taking place. (Linda Greenhouse, New York Times, 21 June 1988; What's New, 24 June 1988)

In 38 states, including New York, library records are protected by law in their confidentiality. (This may soon be extended to videotape rental shops, to judge from attempts made in the present political campaign to use such records against candidates.) But, according to Parks, "In a Brooklyn public library, a trench-coated agent flashed his badge and asked the librarians to 'look out for suspicious looking people who want to overthrow the government.'" In defending the program James Geer "explained that the FBI was not asking librarians to spy. They just want them to look out for people who are 'acting funny.'" Among his examples were persons who copy large quantities of technical material. That net would capture virtually every physics graduate student."

When quoting what Geer said before the House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Parks does not mean that Geer actually spoke there. In What's New of 24 June, Parks tells us that advance copies of Geer's testimony were circulated at the beginning of the hearings on 20 June 1988. Geer was scheduled to testify last, after several librarians had spoken. However, as the librarians told their tales of the "Library Awareness Program", the FBI apparently got more and more embarrassed. "When it came Geer's turn to testify," the subcommittee chair, "himself a former FBI agent, called a recess and left with Geer. He returned later without Geer and adjourned the hearings, announcing that the FBI would testify at a later date."

According to Herbert Mitgang in the New York Times of 26 June, Geer is claiming that this has been going on since the early 1960s. He apparently thinks that this exculpates his activities; instead it makes them even worse. It now seems evident that attempts to get the FBI to clean up its act are accomplishing nothing, and the serious thought ought to be given to the abolition of this agency.

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Another topic that comes under Parks's watchful eye in What's New is the increasingly farcical "Strategic Defense Initiative", which to George Lucas's dismay is better known as "Star Wars". It now appears that this money-wasting scheme is incapable of accomplishing its stated goal of protecting U. S. territory from every missile without exception that is aimed at it. (In fact, its remaining proponents are now falsely claiming that "Star Wars" was never intended to do any such thing.) Whenever dreams are dashed, the dreamers turn to mysticism, and it seems that the U. S. armed forces are no exception. Parks reports in What's New of 8 April 1988 that the Pentagon Meditation Club has launched a "spiritual defense initiative", which offers a \$65 "peace shield gauge" to measure the strength of the "peaceful aura".

On 22 April What's News reported that, after extensively re-writing an Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) report on "Star Wars", the last three chapters have been "classified". Parks further reported on 29 April that "After \$12B and 5 years invested in SDI, the US could be back to the ABM concept abandoned in Grand Forks, SD in 1979, when it was deemed to be ineffective." Subsequent issues of What's New reported that Congress has at last lost its willingness to pour money down this rathole, and that "Star Wars" appropriations are being cut to the point where the Secretary of Defense has recommended a presidential veto of the Defense Authorization Bill! On 27 May Parks quotes George Keyworth, a former Science Advisor to the President, as lamenting "that advising on defense technology resulted in his alienation from '...my own scientific community, which had become essentially pacifist in its attitude towards defense.'" Tough rockoes, George.

Finally on 10 June What's New reported that the OTA report on "Star Wars" has finally been made public, sort of, more than nine months after classified copies were

made available to delivered to "key congressional committees". As matters now stand, "Three critical chapters dealing with offensive countermeasures are still being held up by the Pentagon and the remaining nine chapters have been sanitized." Furthermore, "Tom Karas, the project director, and others involved in the study, made it clear that in their opinion the expurgated portions...are being withheld to prevent a full public debate of the SDI concept."

Well, what has been revealed by the OTA? "There is a significant probability that software problems would lead to a catastrophic failure of the ballistic missile defense (BMD) system the first...time the system were used in a real war." Also, "given optimistic assumptions and more than \$150B, the proposed first-phase system might destroy from a few up to a modest fraction of attacking warheads." To this, Parks tartly observes that "we can destroy half of their warheads with a START treaty." Finally, the satellites on which the whole "Star Wars" concept depends could be destroyed by Soviet direct-ascent nuclear weapons, which is a "relatively mature technology".

As an added idiocy, it seems that the SDI Organization's Pentagon offices were burglarized in April; a two-night operation removed two computers and associated software. On 1 July 1988 What's New reports that "There is concern that the stolen equipment could be used to access major data banks or to infect the system with a virus." I leave it to APA-Q's computer hackers - that is to say, anyone who believes that "access" is a verb - to expand further on the implications of that one.

Professional scientists are balking in large numbers at this waste of money and misdirection of scientific priorities. On 31 May 1988 the New York Times reported that members of the American Mathematical Society have voted by a majority of 57% to boycott the "Star Wars" program. The resolution called "Star Wars" "incapable of achieving its stated goals and dangerously destabilizing". AMS members were urged not to seek research grants from the program, which would lend it "a spurious scientific legitimacy." The number voting was about twice the number that usually does in AMS elections.

Tom Wicker noted the same thing in his New York Times column of 14 June 1988. "Even among devout Star Wars advocates" the program is in trouble. "The most serious blow to SDI was dealt by the Defense Science Board, an independent scientific panel convened by the Secretary of Defense, Frank Carlucci. Though SDI contractors are heavily represented on the board, it recommended scaling back spending and substantially slowing deployment." As for the legality of "Star Wars", "The Science Board caustically criticized the Reagan Administration's efforts to reinterpret the ABM treaty to permit advanced Star Wars testing. The reinterpretation has backfired, the report declared, causing Congress to cut back funding and impose testing restrictions to keep the SDI within the previously accepted limits of the ABM treaty." And some Senators have pointed out that we don't even have the heavy rockets necessary to launch the components of "Star Wars" into space! (John H. Cushman, New York Times, 12 June 1988) And a project in New Mexico, to develop the giant laser which would shoot down all those Soviet missiles, is two years behind schedule. (William J. Broad, New York Times, 17 April 1988)

Of course, there are still a few true believers keeping the faith. On 24 May 1988 Newsday published an interview with O'Dean Judd, the chief scientist for the "Star Wars" program. He defended "Star Wars" against its critics before an audience of 20 executives of the Grumman Corporation, America's fifth biggest military contractor and one of the largest employers on Long Island. "No one in the audience questioned whether SDI should proceed. Grumman has a \$304-million SDI research contract that it would like to see grow into much more."

So what are they doing out there at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the think-tank that lies at the heart of "Star Wars"? On 15 June 1988 the New York Times told us. There seems to be massive drug trafficking there, and "Federal officials quashed an inquiry into" it "just three days before the investigation reached the laboratory's most sensitive areas, and then they misled House investigators." I am not surprised. To judge from what William J. Broad said about that place in his book The Star Warriors, and what the scientists there said to him, the whole lot of them were obviously on some drug that greatly distorts reality. (If it ever gets on the market in the streets here, we may see effects similar to those described by Chester Anderson

about 20 years ago in his "psychedelic" s-f novel The Butterfly Kid.) The investigation was called "Operation Snowstorm", and was shut down in September 1986 by the Department of Energy, which through an interesting bureaucratic manipulation has control of a laboratory whose "energies" are directed solely for military purposes.

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The next APA-Q deadline, 30 July, is only two days prior to the next APA-Filk deadline, 1 August. APA-Q mailings that weekend will be delayed until APA-Filk can also be included in the bundle, for those who get it, or ANAKREON #39, for those who don't. (ANAKREON, my filk-singing bulletin, goes to all readers of DAGON.) The copy count for APA-Filk is 60. The 39th Mailing will go out on Monday 1 August, and the 40th will go out on Tuesday 1 November.

Sometime during the first week of August, bundles will go out by 3rd-class mail containing several recent issues of DAGON - plus GRAUSTARK and EMPIRE for those people who get one or both of my gaming 'zines.

\*

The New York Times of 19 June 1988 announced that, on the previous day, Margot Adler and John Gledman were married in West Tisbury, Mass. The ceremony was performed by Margot's fellow Witch, Selena Fox of the Circle Sanctuary in Wisconsin.

The story mentioned the impressive intellectual accomplishments of both spouses. Margot, who is known to many local s-f fans, was a Phi Beta Kappa and a Nieman Fellow, and is now a reporter for National Public Radio, and author of books on modern Neo-Paganism. (Several years ago, I put her book Drawing Down the Moon on tape for the benefit of what appears to be a substantial number of blind Neo-Pagans.) John is co-author of a book on handicapped children: The Unexpected Minority. (He once said that, as long as they tried to treat it as a problem in health care, the book did not come together, and it could be written only after they re-cast it as a study in the civil rights of a minority.)

Both are children of psychiatrists, and the story also mentioned Margot's world-famous grandfather. It did not mention that they have been living together for at least ten years. We all hope that this relationship does as well with the approval of the state as it did without it, and wish the bride and groom happiness.

\*

Yesterday's Newsday reported that the U. S. national soccer team will start out on the rocky road to Italy on 24 July 1988. One slot in that tournament has been allotted to a representative of CONCACAF, which I believe stands for "Council of North & Central American & Caribbean Associations for Football". Now that Mexico has been ruled ineligible, the US team has at least an outside chance. We open against Jamaica in Kingston, and play a return match against them in St. Louis on 13 August. If we can come out ahead in wins (or in goals, if it's a tie), our team will advance to the next step. In the meantime, the US team will play a "friendly" against Poland on 13 July in Bristol, Conn. If there are plans to broadcast any of these games, I have not yet heard them.

\*

Robert Hauser has just sent in, for this Distribution of APA-Q, a one-page issue of his 'zine introducing several pages of material photostatted from a publication of the John Birch Society. All the pages of photostatted material are jumbled together. If the collators want to go through the tedious business of sorting them out before collating them this afternoon, this material will appear in this present APA-Q. If they decide not to, it won't. Contributors are once again informed that if they sent in more than one page, all their pages 1-2 should be together, all their pages 3-4 should be together, all their pages 5-6 should be together, and so on. If this is not done, the collators will collate it or not, as seems good unto them at the time.

And what are these marvelous revelations that Hauser thinks we should all know about? Well, it seems that on the Morton Downey Jr. show a dubious member of the international underworld named Bo Gritz claimed that several high U. S. officials were involved in a drug-smuggling ring in southeast Asia. Gritz, you may recall, was the guy who once ran a scam about collecting money to get some apparently non-existent

American prisoners of war out of duration vile in the jungles of Asia. (Mind you, this was before Rambo II.) William Shatner, whose childhood reading apparently never included Terry and the Pirates, was taken for a bundle by this scam.

Mind you, these accusations may even be true. However, anything that comes with the attached names of Snortin' Morton, Bo Gritz, and the John Birch Society, should be regarded with extreme suspicion.

\*

In order to get elected, politicians naturally say what they think the voters will want to hear. However, sometimes this backfires. You would then think that the politicians would abandon a stand that the public shows it will not vote for.

Think again. The Republican Party of New York seems to believe that there is a vast groundswell of opinion in favor of capital punishment. Its last four candidates for Governor have pledged to restore capital punishment, and have damned their Democratic opponents for opposing it.

And what were the results? An apparently permanent Democratic lock on the gubernatorial mansion. The table to the right gives the result of the last four gubernatorial elections in this state.

In addition, in the 1982 Democratic primary a proponent of capital punishment tried to challenge an opponent on this issue, and lost 47.6% to 52.4%.

	D	R
1974	57.2%	41.9%
1978	50.9%	45.2%
1982	50.9%	47.5%
1986	64.6%	31.8%

The Republican Party, incidentally, confidently expects to fight the 1990 election on this issue. So much for the image of the atute political leader, keeping an informed ear open for the voice of public opinion.

Meanwhile, the Republican candidate for the Presidency seems to believe that there is a vast groundswell of opinion in this country against abortion, and that by making his opposition to freedom of choice loud enough he will have a clear ride to the White House. Stay tuned for further developments.

\*

The Planetary Society is circulating a Mars Declaration to promote a landing on Mars with real astronauts instead of just machinery, and to explore the planet. However, they could get better named than those reported in a story on the petition in the New York Post of 2 July 1988: Jimmy Carter, Paul Newman, Gregory Peck, Quincy Jones, and Johnny Carson. Carson, it seems, "has a purely selfish reason for adding his name to the list... 'It's too crowded in Malibu.'"

DAGON #375

John Boardman  
234 East 19th Street  
Brooklyn, New York  
11226-5302

( ) - If this space is checked, you may find something of interest on p. \_\_\_\_\_.

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