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DON-o-SAUR 60

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DON-o-SAUR is a personal fanzine
written, edited, printed and published
by Don C. Thompson. Never mind what you saw
on the return address label last issue,

The REAL address, the Westminster PO wants me to tell you, is **3735**

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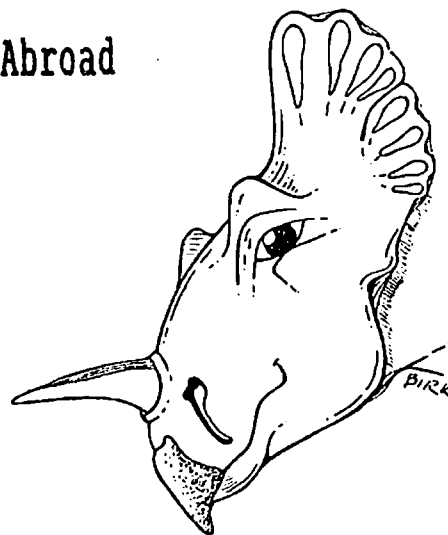
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Letters of comment from: Barry Hunter, Sally Syrjala, Mike Glicksohn, Rich Dengrove, Alexander R. Slate, Terry Jeeves, Buck Coulson, Alexis Gilliland, Wayne Hooks, Dave Szurek, Ned Brooks, Steven B. Fellows, Dave Smidt, John D. Rickett, Richard Freeman, George R. Evans, Scott Gray, Helen E. Davis, Ted White, rich brown.

ART CREDITS: Brian Cooper, front cover; Sheryl Birkhead, p. 3 & back cover; B. Ware, p. 6; Steven Fox, p. 19; Phil Tortorici, pp. 9, 31 34, 35; Alexis Gilliland, p. 14; Joseph T. Mayhew, p. 37.

A Flabby American Abroad

The embarrassing thing is that I'd actually trained for the trip to Europe. I knew I'd be doing a lot of walking, both at ConFiction itself and (especially) in London. So I'd been walking two or three times a week from the House on the Hill to the Westminster Post Office and back. The last few blocks uphill coming home are good exercise. I'd be puffing and snorting as I staggered up the driveway. And I could feel those old leg muscles coming into existence, developing a semblance of solidity. I knew they were there because they hurt. By the middle of August, I was in the best shape I'd been in for years, ready--I thought--for the rigors of another Worldcon.



I refuse to say that the conditioning was wasted; I survived. I was never able to quite keep with either Pavel or Vinç, but they never got impatient enough to abandon me, either.

This report must start with Pavel. You know who I'm talking about, don't you? Pavel Gregorić Jr. You've seen his letters in the Loc column--the Yugoslavian high school student who writes better English than most American 18-year-olds that I know. I used him as sort of a jumping-off point for the issue on education a year or so back. My own acquaintance with Pavel was not restricted to his locs. I'd written personal letters to him, and sent him books, and he'd of course written back. We became close friends by mail. It happens. By now I have a fair number of friends whom I've never met in person. Pavel had been hoping/planning on attending the Worldcon, but didn't know for sure that he could until after the Yugoslav equivalent of college-entrance exams. Not really the equivalent: U.S. college entrance exams are easy -- hardly anyone fails; Yugoslav exams are tough -- hardly anyone passes. Pavel passed, so he knew, just a few weeks in advance, that he would be in Holland on the 23rd of August. He hadn't gotten pre-registered, had made no hotel arrangements. I had, so I urged him to share my room at the Park Hotel.

We were to meet at the con, but we hadn't worked out any details as to just how. I didn't know what he looked like; he didn't know what I looked like. I hadn't sent him a picture, and he hadn't seen that issue of DoS with all the caricatures of myself in it. I just figured I could go to the Zagreb-in-'93 table once I got to the con and someone would point him out to me. It couldn't be too difficult.

Pavel met me at the airport in Amsterdam.

I will never cease to marvel at that fact; I will never get tired of telling people about it.

The Amsterdam airport is huge, and it was crowded with thousands of people, all trying to avoid bumping into each other. I had emerged from Customs, loaded my two bags onto one of those convenient carriers that European and English airports provide in abundance and free and which American airports charge for if they have 'em at all; and I was hesitantly making my in the general direction of what I hoped was the rail transportation area, not at all certain as to how I was supposed to get to The Hague, but eager to be there. I was tired. The flight from Denver to New York had taken about four hours; then there was a two-hour layover at Kennedy, and it had taken six or seven hours from there to Heathrow, and another 45 minutes or so on to Amsterdam. I'd lost track of how much time had elapsed, and what with the changes in time zones I was thoroughly confused.

I can seldom sleep on airplanes, and anyway the night had been too short, had passed too quickly to permit sleep. It was the middle of the morning, far too soon. My eyes hurt. They were searching for middle-distance exit signs and I almost ran into the good looking (dare I say downy-cheeked?) young man who suddenly seemed to pop up directly in front of me.

"Excuse me. Would you mind telling me where you are from?" Not the usual Hare Krishna approach, and anyway this kid had a shock of black hair and was dressed in jeans and sweater and had an enormous long rucksack on his back; no robe; and anyway I haven't seen Hare Krishnas at airports for a long time.

I said, "Me? Why I'm from Colorado. Denver. Colorado. Why?"

"Then are you by any chance Don C. Thompson? DON-o-SAUR?"

I nodded numbly as he unfolded a cardboard sign reading:

Don C. Thompson

DON-o-SAUR (at last!)

"I am Pavel Gregorić, from Yugoslavia," he said, at about the same instant that I'd figured out who he was.

I shouted, "Pavel, I don't believe it!" I let go of the baggage cart and stepped in front of it to grab Pavel in as encompassing an embrace as his backpack would admit. It didn't occur to me to offer a handshake. He returned the embrace. After all, we'd been friends for a long time.

Sometime in the next few minutes, while we were both trying to say everything at once, Pavel explained that he'd arrived the day before, and had in fact spent the night at the airport. I'd told him when I was arriving, and he'd checked the arrivals from the States and had been watching the gate where the 10 a.m. flight was supposed to unload. We actually emerged from some other gate (I have no idea which). Pavel said he'd spotted me from a distance and had followed a strong feeling and waited for me to clear Customs, taking the chance of missing the real me if I should appear somewhere else. (He said it much more clearly than that.)

I do not intend to give a play-by-play, minute-by-minute account of the trip. It was too complex an experience, and time is already too short. I'm having trouble really settling down to this task.

But travel is educational, and I have learned a few things about myself through my relatively infrequent travels. I've learned, for instance, that I can survive on my own, without a tour guide, without being part of a group. Some of my most memorable experiences in Australia, when I went there 15 years ago for the '75 Worldcon, were when I cut loose from the American group and spent a week in a sleazy downtown Sydney hotel, and again in Auckland when I begged off the group trip inland and just wandered around on my own for a few days in the city.

And just a few weeks before the ConFiction trip, I'd flown alone to New Jersey for PulpCon, having no clear idea of how to get from the Newark Airport to William Paterson College in Wayne, N.J.--especially at 9 o'clock at night. But I managed. The cab driver didn't really know the way either, but he got me there, stopping a few times to ask directions from service station attendants. He got me there just as Rusty Hevelin was leaving the registration area, an hour after it had officially closed. And talk about pure blind luck! If it had been anyone but Rusty, I would have had to spend the night on a sofa in the Student Center lobby, because only Rusty had the key to my room--which also happened to be his room. (At PulpCon, college dorm facilities were used, with attendees sharing rooms; Rusty was in charge of the con; he'd made the decision earlier that he and I were to be roommates.)

Never mind all that; this is not a PulpCon report, though there is some relevance.

The main point is that while I can get by--more or less--on my own when I travel, it's usually with much stumbling and bumbling and wandering around, getting lost, looking lost and bewildered, bumping into things and people, frequent retracing of my steps. It's interesting, but frequently expensive and always time consuming.

I'm really much more comfortable with a friendly native guide--or anyone who seems to have a sense of direction and displays general competence.

Immediately after meeting Pavel, I in effect gave myself over to his custody -- he radiated competence -- and followed his lead as to which way to go and what to see and when, asserting my independent judgment only infrequently.

So when Pavel suggested that we stash our luggage at the airport and spend some time looking around Amsterdam, where he'd spent some time earlier, before proceeding to The Hague, I raised no objections and was glad I didn't. Amsterdam is indeed an enthralling city, what little I saw of it, which was not much more than the area near the railway station (you've gotta take the train from the airport into Amsterdam proper)--very tourist oriented.

Pavel seemed a bit puzzled that I didn't seem more amazed at the open, relaxed atmosphere of the area, with couples seemingly camped out on the plazas and various illegal substances obviously being used, bought and sold, amid the bustle of business and the melding of ethnicities and cultures.

I told him it reminded me a little of the Boulder Mall on a grand scale, but I don't think that explained much. I said it was probably just that I was so old that nothing much astonished me now. He could understand that.

When we got to the Hague, on one of those marvelous swift trains that Pavel knew exactly where to find and how to get tickets for and how to board, I did finally make a decision of my own.

I listened while Pavel got explicit directions to the Park Hotel via bus and tramway from someone in the train station lobby, but when we got outside and I saw the line of taxicabs, I grabbed one. I didn't doubt that Pavel could carry his enormous rucksack (I'm sure it weighed at least 60 or 70 pounds) all day if necessary, but both the suitcase I'd checked through as well as the overnight bag I'd carried were stuffed with DON-o-SAURS and other weighty printed matter, and it had been all I could do to wrestle them onto the train. I had no intention of carrying them any farther than necessary. My arms were already coming loose from the shoulder sockets.

The thing that startled Pavel more than my being willing to spend money on the cab was that the driver was a woman.

The thing that startled me when we got to the hotel was the size of the room. I had paid about \$365 for five nights--what's that? \$73 per night? I'd thought that was reasonable for a Worldcon hotel, even if it was some considerable distance from the Congress Centre--the convention hall. I hadn't been expecting a suite, but I'd visualized a normal sized room with probably a double bed, a couple of easy chairs, a desk, dresser, closet, space perhaps for a bunk that could be set up for Pavel -- and, of course, a bathroom.

Well, at least the room had its own bathroom, and both room and bath were clean, and the price included breakfasts (which I never took advantage of); I gathered that by some standards it had to be considered a decent enough accommodation.

There was space on the floor for Pavel to spread out his sleeping bag between my narrow bunk and the narrow built-in dresser and wardrobe that occupied the opposite wall. The single straight chair had to be kept pushed

close to the dresser to be out of the way. The bathroom was at least as big as the room itself.

Well, anyway, it was a nice modern bathroom, with tub and shower and plenty of hot water.

Pavel showered first, being even tireder than I was.

It was still only about 3 p.m., and for some reason, probably attributable to my own exhausted state, I decided that while Pavel took a nap, I could saunter down to the Congress Centre and get registered for the con. I had glanced at the map provided in the Progress Reports. I knew that the Park Hotel was up here, and the Congress Centre was down that way, toward the coast. Take a little jog to the left, and it looked like a fairly straight shot from there. So I loaded up a little Fuji shopping bag with DON-o-SAURS and a copy of the PR and took the elevator down. (I had to remind myself to pull the elevator door open; no matter how long I stood there it wasn't going to slide open by itself.)

Here's a generalization, probably not applicable throughout Europe, possibly not even throughout The Hague, though it certainly seemed to apply in London, what I saw of it: When it comes to streets, there's no such thing as a straight shot in foreign cities. I should have remembered that from my stay in Sydney so many years ago--but that was many years ago.

I set off in what I hoped was the right direction, but the narrow streets twisted and turned and seemed to double back on themselves, and changed names every few blocks. It didn't take me long to get totally turned around and disoriented.

I didn't worry, because there was no big hurry about registration, and the city was fascinating--the fact that stores and shops were mixed right in with the homes, so that no matter where somebody lived, they were only a short walk from a shopping area. How very alien! And there seemed to be bookstores everywhere.

What was most strange, to me, was the fact that even what I at first assumed to be alleyways had storefronts and front doors of residences opening into them and were crammed with pedestrians. There were cars on the wider

streets and even a few in the narrowest, but they were vastly outnumbered by the people on foot and on bicycle. I'd never seen so many bicycles before! There was a heavy flow of buses and trams on many of the wider and (relatively) straighter streets, and people waiting for them at every stop.

By the time I decided to abandon my attempt to find the convention center and return to the hotel, I began to realize that I really was lost. I didn't know how far I'd walked or in what direction; I didn't know the name of the street (or alleyway) the hotel faced. Well, at least I knew the name of the hotel, so I started asking, finally.

In the few sketchy trip/con reports I've done since returning home--in letters, in my newspaper review column, in a report to DASFA--I've casually mentioned that in Holland, everyone speaks



English. That isn't exactly true. Everyone that I spoke to seemed to at least understand some English, and most could speak some English. It was not always enough to be helpful. I asked one lady how to get to the Park Hotel; she pointed and said, "That way, few blocks." So I went that way for a few blocks and found myself approaching a park. It could very well have been the same park that gave the Park Hotel its name; I'll never know, but I knew it wasn't the right neighborhood. I wandered some more, asked someone else, who had never heard of the Park Hotel. I asked a bartender, who gave one set of directions, while the three customers had different ideas. They were still arguing when I snuck out.

Finally, with aching legs and back, I sat down on a bench near what seemed a major intersection and studied that map in the Progress Report, which I'd almost forgotten I'd brought along. The map said I was only a few blocks from the hotel, but it still took me another half hour to actually find it. I tend to read maps backward--or something.

It was about 5:30. Pavel was sound asleep on the floor. I tumbled onto my narrow jail cot and was asleep in seconds. I woke up once at about 3 or 4 a.m. and went to the bathroom and crawled under a cover or two and went back to sleep.

Pavel and I made our way to the Congress Centre by about noon the next day, both of us feeling greatly refreshed, but I'd let Pavel figure out which tram to take, where to find it, and where to get off. I was glad to again put myself in the hands of my tour guide.

This was, I believe, Pavel's very first science fiction convention, of any kind, anywhere, ever. I've been to more than a few, and to a few worldcons, but in a way I felt that this was the first real world con that I'd been to. It was a unique experience; I'll say that.

The Congress Centre was very much like a typical American style big city convention center: Huge, with lobbies, meeting rooms of all sizes, restaurants and cafeterias, corridors, stairways, remote corners, plenty of room to get lost in. The one big difference I noticed immediately, because I was thirsty after the walk from the bus stop, was the absence of drinking fountains along every wall on every floor. It was a real challenge to find water, and I seemed to spend a lot of my time during the four remaining days in quest of H₂O. Water was not a taken-for-granted part of the meal at any of the food-service facilities; bottled water, OK--it cost about what any other soft drink did. But a glass of water was a rarity.

The difference that everyone who attended the con and has given any kind of report is certain to mention is the relatively small number of Americans. We were in a definite minority--not quite for the first time. I don't know what the percentages were for Heidelberg in 1970; but I'm sure that we were outnumbered by the Aussies at Melbourne in 1975, because I was there.

There were more English than Americans at The Hague, and English and Americans together were outnumbered by continentals. I haven't seen the final, official figures, but I think the total attendance was in the neighborhood of 3,000, of which fans with English as their native tongue constituted fewer than 1,500. You've also read, I suspect, that Eastern Europeans were represented in far larger numbers than at any previous worldcon. I can't tell you anything new about that. I saw fans from the Soviet Union, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany... To say nothing of Yugoslavia, which had mounted a strong bid for the 1993 worldcon in Zagreb.

What surprised me more than the diversity of nationalities was that (just as in the winding streets of The Hague) everyone spoke English. I heard a few people, in small groups, talking to each other in their native non-Eng-

lish tongues, but if an English speaker joined them, they switched instantly and with no apparent effort to English. All the panels and programs were in English; all the Guest of Honor speeches, even the one by Wolfgang Jeschke, were delivered in English.

Interestingly, not all the movies were in English. I watched part of what might have been a French or possibly Italian film--with German (or Dutch) subtitles.

It didn't take me long to notice that most Europeans (at least of those at the con; I don't want to over-generalize) speak better, clearer, more precise English than do most English or Americans.

I never had the slightest difficulty in understanding Pavel or any of the other Europeans that I talked to (or overheard)--well, except when they were struggling for the exact word or the exact pronunciation of an unfamiliar word.

British and Americans don't give a damn about pronunciation.

There were very few French at the con; I didn't see a single one.

Pavel and I attended one or two panels together during the con and had two or three meals together at the convention center, but for the most part we went our separate ways. Pavel wanted to attend everything, see everything, be everywhere at once. I didn't try to keep up with him. I spent a lot of time, after checking out the Sales Room and deciding nearly everything was out of my price range--books are much more expensive in Holland; did you know that?--just kind of hanging around in the lobby areas, looking for familiar faces or name tags with familiar names (getting up frequently to scout for water), talking with anyone who happened to sit down beside me.

I was carrying around a supply of DON-o-SAURS, some with specific names on them, some to distribute to anyone who looked like they might express some remote interest in fanzines. Got rid of quite a few of those, very few of the ones already addressed. Ended up mailing most of them from England. Well, I did manage to hand-deliver a copy to Joseph Nicholas, catching him at the conclusion of a panel he was on (met Judith Hannah at the same time), but I missed Dave Langford at the con, as well as most of the other Brits on the DoS mailing list.

Actually, I was looking most specifically for George Laskowski--Lan. I had been designated as sort of courier by the OE of D'APA to deliver a special packet to Lan. It contained not only his copy of DON-o-SAUR but the August mailing of the Denver Amateur Press Association, of which Lan had been a member for exactly five years. Apart from that, I just wanted to see Lan; he's a friend of mine, and I hadn't talked to him in person since the Atlanta Worldcon in '86, when he'd won his Hugo--and now he was up for a Hugo again.

I never did find him, nor did he find me. I know he was there because I kept meeting people who had seen him, but it's just one of the peculiarities of worldcons that the people you most want to see, for some special reason, are the most difficult to encounter.

But it seemed doubly exasperating because the crowd didn't seem that huge. I don't know. Some mysteries must remain forever unsolved, I guess.

I met a lot of other old friends and acquaintances that I was very glad to encounter. It was good to see Linda Bushyager again, and Leah Zeldes and Dick Smith, Fran Skene, Neil Belsky, Peggy Rae Pavlat, Dick and Nicki Lynch, Andy Porter (as Fan Guest of Honor, he was at least fairly visible, fairly consistently, always smiling, for some reason), and Moshe Feder, Rusty Hevelin, Joe and Gay Haldeman (also highly visible).

Who else? I'm not trying to compile a complete list; my notes for this worldcon were considerably less extensive than for the first one I attended.

But I recall talking briefly with Bruce Pelz and Elayne, Charlie Brown, Jack Chalker... and others whose names don't spring immediately to mind.

I was also looking deliberately and specifically for Judy Tockman--Dr. Judith Tockman, that is--former Denverite, former Director of DASFA, in fact; and I had high hopes of finding her because she was scheduled to be on a couple of panels, but she was a no-show.

However, most unexpectedly, I ran into Arjay Kimmell, another former Denverite, ex-DASFAn and flowering writer, now living in Holland with her artist husband. About the same time, unexpectedly, I encountered Lynn Hickman and Roger Simms, on their way to the Hugo presentations.

Ran into Bob Peterson of Denver two or three times, and he was at the con for a couple of days, pausing just briefly on his continual globe trotting.

I was about to say that maybe one reason I didn't see as many familiar faces as I'd been expecting was that I never got to any of the parties, and there's some validity to that, but I did in fact, manage to attend one party, except that it wasn't, exactly. It was a gathering of FAPAns one afternoon in the hotel room of Peggy Rae Pavlat (who has since been elected FAPA president). I know there were a dozen or so FAPAns at the con because I'd seen a half dozen and Peggy Rae had seen the other half dozen; but for the first hour or so of the "party" it was just me and Peggy having a pleasant visit and sipping cool water; I'm not sure if I fully expressed my gratitude for the water--I'd never before had occasion to consider simple water such a special treat. We were joined after a while by a young English lady who was not a FAPAn but was interested in finding out what it was and had a wide range of knowledge and opinions.

About the time I was ready to leave, a few FAPA members drifted in. Arvid Engholm of Sweden was able to give me the required 68 copies of his next contribution to FAPA, which I took home with me and mailed, thus saving him the overseas postage.

The problem with parties was that by the time they were starting, I was at the point of exhaustion. Most of the parties were at a hotel which was only a (long) block or so away, but in the opposite direction from what Pavel and I had to go to catch our tram back to the Park Hotel. Pavel was probably still fresh enough to party-hop for a few hours, but he expressed no interest; I don't think he ever quite grasped the concept of bidding parties or room parties. Also, he may have felt a duty to see me back safely to the hotel, knowing how easily I could have gotten lost on my own.

Pavel had been a bit nervous at first about sharing the room with me; he wasn't at all certain that the hotel would tolerate an unregistered guest, that if the management discovered his presence he would be thrown out in the street. I assured him that crashing was a standard and accepted practice at all SF conventions, and that since he wasn't occupying a bed



or eating their food or creating a disturbance, the hotel had no grounds for complaint.

I wasn't quite as certain as I seemed. After all, I was (or felt myself to be) even more of a stranger in a strange land than Pavel. I hadn't even known how to open the elevator door; how did I know what the hotel's policy on crashing was? Still and all, damn it, this was a Worldcon, and a Worldcon hotel, and some things in fandom are universal.

And I was right of course, as became evident after a day or two of desk clerks ignoring Pavel as we left or arrived together, and after Pavel had talked to a few other attendees in essentially the same situation.

We both relaxed and instead of whispering and tiptoeing to the bathroom and falling instantly to sleep when we got to the room, as we had the first night or two, we had some long, rambling, intense, enthusiastic conversations about science fiction, literature in general, religion, politics, love, life ... the things that good friends talk about. Sometimes our voices rose to the point where I again wondered if the hotel might complain, but it never happened.

I've got to shift gears. This is taking too much time, and I'm running out of time, as well as strength and energy. I'll have to summarize more to get through this. Once I get to England, I will.

The last day of the con, during which we spent hardly any time at the convention center, was in some ways the most enjoyable of all, for me, anyway. Pavel had met Ed Rom of Mankato, Minn., at the very first panel we had attended, and Ed and Pavel established a firm and immediate friendship and had spent a lot of time together. On that final day, the three of us wandered around the city, but managed to miss the standard tourist attractions. Actually, Ed and I were merely following Pavel in his quest for a toy store he'd heard about that was rumored to carry an infinite array of model kits. Models were his secret vice that he'd never confessed to me in his letters.

We made an interesting trio: Pavel, 18, bubbling with boyish enthusiasm, bright as anyone I've ever known, product of a socialist society, apprehensive about going into the army but hopeful for the future in general, very much in love, looking forward to seeing his girlfriend who was going to school for a couple of months in London, mature beyond his years but still a kid in so many refreshing ways; Ed, 40, an employee of the Mankato postoffice, a survivor of some hard times, unmarried, a recovering alcoholic, a Vietnam war veteran, a man with few illusions but no noticeable bitterness, a chess player, with some hope for the future; and me, 62, retired from most of life's conflicts, more or less at peace with myself and the universe, no illusions, no bitterness, a love of chess but little enthusiasm for other games or for toys, no remaining personal dreams or ambitions.

Twenty-two years difference between Pavel and Ed, 22 more between Ed and me; 44 years between me and Pavel.

And it didn't mean a thing. We were all fans. We could have been brothers--triplets.

I almost dragged Ed and Pavel to the Dead Dog Monday night. It didn't seem fair to let Pavel leave a worldcon without seeing what a con party was like, I thought. (Anyway, I was still looking for Lan; I thought surely I could find him at the final party; and I'd been invited by Leah and Dick Smith to a party in their room later, and I wanted to at least show up for that.)

Bad mistake.

The hotel mezzanine was jammed and everyone was talking at once, loudly to be heard over everyone else; and there was no coffee and no drinking fount-

ains, and it was hard to find a place to turn around, let alone sit down. And I was tired, but...

"Let's find a quiet corner and play a game of chess," I suggested to Ed, and he was finally able to get the message after I repeated it a few times.

The quiet corner was in the first-floor restaurant, where we ordered coffee and something or other to eat and set up Ed's portable chess set and quickly became involved in some of the most exciting games I've played. Ed plays tournament postal chess but hasn't played in live tournaments. I play live tournament chess but never postal. Neither of us has impressive ratings, but we were pretty evenly matched, and that's all that's important.

I don't know how long we played. Pavel found us and watched. They closed the restaurant and chased us out, to the crowded lobby area, but we managed to find a table and played some more. Finally I realized that I was really tired and there was a long day ahead tomorrow.

And here's where I have to start summarizing in earnest:

It took a full day to get to London via train to the Hoek of Holland, ferry to Harwich (pronounced Harridge, of course) and train to Liverpool St. Station in London, where Vincent Clarke met us at about 8 p.m. He led us through a complicated maze of Underground passageways, overland rail lines and bus rides to his home in Welling, fed us and put us to bed, me in the guest bedroom (on a bed) and Pavel on the floor of the Fan Room (he scorned the air mattress that Vinø had inflated for him).

Hey, wouldn't it be interesting to switch viewpoints about now? I think it will be, but I'm doing it primarily for my own convenience.

Vince sent me a copy of K6, his apazine for Pieces of Eight, which he'd written shortly after his life had returned to normal, and I found it fascinating, so I'm going to quote relevant portions of it, interjecting my own comments in italics and parentheses:

I invited both Yugoslavian Pavel Gregorić and American Don Thompson to stay here after the WorldCon, without giving much thought to the differences between them, only the similarities. Pavel, of whom I'd never seen a picture, turned out to be a tall-enough-for-Irish-fandom six-footer, 18 and good looking. Speaks and writes near-perfect English, his grandfather was Ambassador to Italy, he's just starting the uneasy period between passing his exams and going to university, during which period the Yugoslav government conscripts them for a year of military service. He may become True Fan, but he's mainly trying to catch up with all the sf he's heard about. Both Don and I have been sending him parcels.

Don, on the other hand, is 62, a bit frail, about my height, comes from Denver, didn't enter fandom until he was 40, and regards the whole lot of us as 'family,' tho' he's married and has grandchildren. Otherwise a normal publishing faan. He's a Moorcock completist; I'd found half-a-dozen off his Want List which were waiting for him. He's also a magazine completist--down to a couple of hundred wanted, which includes some *Weird Tales* back to 1923.

They both wanted to visit Charing Cross Road and bookshops, bookshops, bookshops, tho' their aims were slightly different: Pavel was hunting books of Latin and Greek history (didn't matter if they were written in the original language - he knows them). Don was mainly after Moorcock stuff and general booksy sightseeing. Also, Pavel expressed a strong desire to walk down Oxford Street. I think this must be a childhood ambition, as it was about the last mile in London where he'd pick up the books he wanted.

So the first day we got the train to Charing Cross, walked down to the Embankment to see Cleopatra's Needle, walked through Trafalgar

Square to Piccadilly Circus (a disappointment to me, as there's a terrific amount of rebuilding going on) and took the tube to Marble Arch. For the benefit of strangers to London this is the western end of Oxford Street. We gave Pavel careful instructions and a map, and set him on his way, while Don and I bussed east up the street and eventually ended up in the British Museum.

Don was fascinated by the Literature Section; we marveled over the illuminated mss., with brilliant colours and gold leaf glowing, which don't show in most reproductions. We found a 14th ms. with an sf story in it - hero goes down in a diving bell - and also saw a rather unrewarding Temple of Ishtar, which didn't look much like Merritt's description. After two hours we met Pavel on the Museum steps; he decided he'd 'do' the Museum another day, so we had a meal, visited Forbidden Planet, which is quite close (turned out Pavel had already found it), penetrated a few yards down Charing Cross Road just to show them what they were up against and bussed to Waterloo, where I showed them the Wellington, and home.

{Not everyone will know that the Wellington is the pub where, every Thursday evening, area fans congregate to all talk at once and buy each other drinks. It cannot be called a meeting, exactly. I think the gathering itself is called the "tun."}

In the evening Pavel managed to get in touch with his girlfriend, Helena, who was in South London (Forest Hill) for two months. Fascinating to hear the Yugoslavian *{Serbo-Croatian, actually; I'd learned that much from Pavel--but fascinating, yes}* coming out after the perfect English.

Don and I decided we didn't want to be gooseberries so as Pavel was obviously capable of looking after himself we left him and Helena to find their own way around for most of the rest of his stay. The exception was a marvellous Sunday, when, keeping my fingers tightly crossed because it might have been too late in the year, I took them to visit the sights at Greenwich. We met Helena at Blackheath station, only a mile or so from my target, and started walking there (Sunday buses are unreliable). We had a bonus - there was a lot of kite-flying on the heath (a huge open space, backing on to Greenwich Park where the observatory used to function, and gets its name from the plague victims being buried there in - um - 14th century?) and there was one organized team of four men who were flying four delta-winged monsters together, in close formation. The kites made extraordinary whistling/whiffing noises as they carved their way through the air, and it so fascinated Pavel that he went up to a woman who was unpacking a similar kite and asked her about it. He came back with the info that she'd only bought hers the previous day and it had cost £100. He visibly abandoned the thought of taking a half-dozen back to Yugoslavia.

So we went down into Greenwich and, praise be! found everything open and the place thronged. There was an open-air market, scores of stalls selling everything from Victorian biscuit-tins to African shields and, of course, the inevitable stalls selling thousands of pocket books.

Then I dragged them away to the piece de resistance, which was a sort of open-ended brick shed (may have been a tram depot at one time) that was absolutely stuffed with books and book sellers on two floors. It boasts of being "London's Largest Weekly Book & Ephemera Market," and I can certainly believe that. Amongst other things I found one stall with at least 40 sf ACE doubles....

Sheer hunger drove us away to get some take-aways, which we ate on the plaza where the Cutty Sark, an ancient tea-clipper is dry-docked (you may have seen it on TV films of the London Marathon) and also Francis Chichester's Gypsy Moth, a small boat he sailed single-handed

around the world. We then walked up to Greenwich Observatory, where Pavel and Helena amused themselves by standing with one foot in each hemisphere, on the meridian line. I'd have liked to have gone in to the astronomical museum, but it was £6 each, which Don and I thought a bit excessive, so Don and I sat and admired the view (not in fact very impressive as there's so much building going on down by the docks, including Europe's soon-to-be tallest building) while the youngsters went in on their student discounts.

That was a day.

And so it went. Pavel had to go back after a week (he's already reported to his military quarters), which involved returning to Amsterdam and then using his return ticket to Zagreb, whilst Don stayed on a further week.

We went to the Fantasy Centre one afternoon, where there was a huge consignment of magazines just arrived - and Don had forgotten his Wants List. To make up for it, however, he bought a Sexton Blake Library booklet by "Desmond Reid," a pseudonym of Moorcock and others for what I thought was an excessive £25, whilst I got a reprint copy of FANCYCLOPE-DIA 2 with the "Rejected Canon" and some other corrections built in. Also a Shangri-L'Affaires from '43 with the name of Mike Rosenblum on it. He single-handedly produced a fanzine unifying British fandom throughout the war.

There were other high points - going to Rob 'n' Avedon's and on to the Wellington, coming out from a tube and seeing Big Ben towering over one, looking at the remains of the temple of Mithras (4th century) amidst the massive buildings of the modern age....

It was a terrific couple of weeks or so, with only a few disappointments. I never did get around to doing D & P the great English meal, Fish 'n' Chips, for instance, and London is so full of rebuilding it's almost impossible to walk around without having to skirt great dusty, noisy sites.

Don left with virtually everything scrubbed from his original Moorcock want-list, but he'd heard for the first time of another half-dozen books for which to search. I reckon it's better, if you're a completist, to start looking for the works of a deceased author - at least you know that they've (presumably) stopped production.

I suppose that if Pavel, Don and I had been going anywhere other than central London I'd have regretted not having a car, but I can't imagine anyone driving in London for pleasure these days. Welling is right out on the periphery of southeast London, 12 miles from Charing Cross, and the local High Street still gets choked after 4pm or so, when the great Trek Homeward begins. It'd be nice to live nearer the centre, but pollution rules....

I have only a little to add. I was impressed by the sheer size of London, and by the fascinating juxtaposition of old and new, and by the maze of streets and alleys, and by Vinø's ability to negotiate the bus/rail/tube system; and of course I was impressed by many of the sights--the Tower Bridge, the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey.... I was impressed by the scope of the boot fairs (flea markets) that Vinø took me around to, and by his enthusiasm and stamina. I enjoyed the "tun" and the opportunity to visit with Hugo winner Dave Langford and with fannish newcomer John D. Rickett. I enjoyed meeting and visiting with Michael Moorcock bibliographer John Davey; and the visit to Fantasy Centre was like a dream come true.

Most of all, I enjoyed just lounging in Vinø's home, with its wealth of fanzines and profusion of books, and talking quietly with my host, absorbing some small fraction of his enormous knowledge of 1950s fandom.

Perplexities in print

A HISTORY OF FORT LOGAN

In conjunction with Sheridan's 100th Birthday, the Sheridan Public Library will present a slide show and talk about the history of one of Sheridan's most familiar community landmarks - Fort Logan.

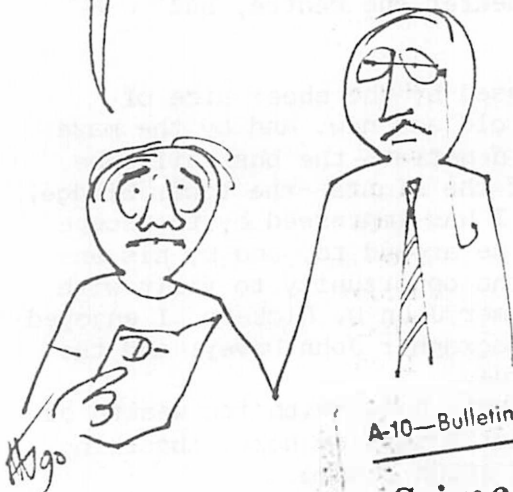
Presented by Earl McCoy, Sheridan resident and "unofficial historian" of Fort Logan, the talk will include historical pictures and antidotes about the Fort - from its beginning in 1887 as an army post, to its present role as an area mental health center.

Wednesday, 29th August, 1990

Lets's help Lisa go on Disney dream trip

YOU SAID YOU WANTED
AN HERB IN EVERY
SENTENCE; WHY DID
YOU KNOCK POINTS
OFF FOR "I
CINNAMON CROSS
THE ROAD?"

CINNAMON
IS A SPICE,
NOT AN HERB.



WALTER SCOTT'S

Personality Parade

Box 5573, Beverly Hills, Calif. 90210, or phone (213) 472-7469. Full name will be used unless otherwise requested. V

Q. When Peter Lawford, the late Hollywood actor, was a member of the Kennedy family, did he used to fix up his brothers-in-law with compliant young ladies?—R.T., Las Vegas, Nev.

A. Peter Lawford "fixed up" at least one of his brothers-in-law, but others—and Bobby Kennedy was one of them—disliked the actor and refused to traffic with him.

A-10—Bulletin-News, Star Review, ER Sentinel, HP Journal—Saturday, September 8, 1990

Crime Report

Industrial equipment valued at \$500 was taken from a junior high school in the 3300 block of Figueroa Street after smashing a window to get inside.

Melanoma update

This is probably the final issue of DON-o-SAUR.

Certainly I can't promise that there'll be another one after this. If there is, it will be on a much smaller scale: perhaps no more than six or eight pages, with no loc column.

Even that is doubtful; it's going to require at least as much energy as I possess to get this issue finished, but I WILL get it published and in the mail sometime in November--no matter what.

That is a promise to myself. But I may need a little help from my friends.

After that... It all depends on how I feel.

During the Holland/England trip, I found myself getting much tired much sooner than I thought I should. It wasn't entirely due to advancing age or the general flabbiness of my physical condition.

During the visit to Greenwich with Pavel and Vinø and Helena, I became aware of a sharp pain high in my left side. My companions were aware that I was struggling to keep up with them. My heart was pounding as we walked up the hill to the old Greenwich Observatory and museum, and I had to pause a few times, and I was happy to simply sit and admire the view of the city with Vinø while Pavel and Helena explored the museum.

When I got back to 16 Wendover Way in Welling that evening, I started poking around to find the source of that pain, which by then had become a bit more localized. My probing fingers soon found a swollen lymph node in the left armpit.

I knew what it meant, but there was nothing I could do about it at the moment, so I simply insisted on a much slower pace for myself during the remainder of my visit. I even took naps occasionally.

Almost as soon as I got back home, I called my doctor and got an appointment, which resulted in a biopsy being done...

And now, again to conserve energy, I'm going to reprint some stuff from the October issue of RIM RUNNER, the monthly zine I produce for D'APA (Denver's own nearly-20-year-old apa). Feel free to skip down to the very last entry in this diary-like segment; cut to the crux, if you wish:

5:24 a.m. Oct. 2, 1990: Did I leave you in suspense last time? Yeah, and I'll probably do it again, but I'll tell you as much as I now know. I may know a bit more before I finish this and if so I'll pass the information on.

When I left you last month, I was waiting for a biopsy report, right? Well, I waited, and waited, and waited. Let's see--the biopsy was the 14th, a Friday, and the doctor told me he should have a report "early next week." On Thursday of the following week, after hearing nothing, I called the doctor's office, was informed that he would be out of the office until Tuesday of the next week, that the biopsy report had not been received, but that the office would let me know the results "as soon as possible." On the following Monday, I called the office again. The report was now on the doctor's desk, I was

told, but since the doctor wouldn't be in until the next day, and standard procedure was for the doctor to talk to the patient, the receptionist refused to give me any information about the biopsy results.

I confess that I raised my voice.

In my sternest, firmest, most authoritative school-teacher/investigative journalist manner, I insisted that I had a right to know whether the biopsy was positive or negative, that I had already waited longer than necessary for information--10 days for a biopsy report, when the lab is no more than 40 or 50 feet from the surgery office!--and I refused to wait longer. I was prepared to complain to the head administrator of the Wheat Ridge Kaiser facility, if necessary, and I think I got that point across.

Finally the receptionist found another doctor in Surgery to look at the biopsy report and give me the bottom line. I'm not sure why I was in such a hurry. I had a pretty good idea by then what the bottom line was: Positive, of course. Dr. Ramach finally called in person late the next day, very apologetic and sympathetic, ready to start the wheels rolling toward the next round of surgery. But I had some news for him, too. Some time during the previous week, I had started noticing a certain soreness over on my right side, and my fingers had found what felt like a swollen node there.

"Before we go too far with the surgery plans, I think you should take a look at that thing," I told him.

"Well, let's go ahead and set up the surgery schedule. I'll check that new lump when I see you for the pre-op physical, okay?" I can argue with a mere receptionist. I'm less inclined to argue with my doctor. Doctors are more powerful authority figures than are school teachers or journalists--especially retired ones.

The pre-op lab tests (blood, chest X-ray and EKG) were Friday, Sept. 28. The pre-op physical and consultation with the doctor was Monday, Oct. 1. Surgery was scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 3.

Carolyn was in a bit of a quandry about the whole situation. While I was off in England, she had finalized her plans for a trip to Erie, Pa., to visit the grandchildren. She had the plane tickets, Doug was flying up from Phoenix and going on to Erie with her. Everything was settled. She would be gone about 10 days, just while I was having an operation and convalescing. Should she cancel out in order to be with me?

She may have wavered momentarily, but I was firm and (authoritatively) insistent that I could get along just fine on my own. A neighbor could take me to the hospital on Wednesday and drop me off, and then Carolyn's parents could pick me up when I was ready to come home. Helen was more than willing to feed me homemade chicken soup and nurse me for a day or two, until I could convince her that I could get along by myself.

Carolyn was persuaded. She departed on schedule Saturday, with Doug.

My Monday pre-op session was relatively brief. After all, I'd been through all this just six months before. An assistant (female) does the physical -- taking blood pressure, listening to heart and lungs, feeling lymph nodes, peering into throat and ears, etc. Then the doctor takes over.

Dr. Ramach wore a sort of perplexed grimace when he came in.

"Let's have a look at that new lump on the right side."

After poking it, he sat down, crossed his legs and assumed a sort of "Thinker" pose, chin in hand.

Finally he said, "There was a slight elevation in the blood sample that we took last Friday, too..."

"Elevation? In what?"

"Oh, certain enzymes that could indicate a spread of the cancer to one or more of the internal organs. And what with that new lump on your right side, I'm just thinking..."

He thought some more.

The upshot of his thinking was that the surgery would be postponed pending some additional tests--another CAT scan and a bone scan. Those tests are now scheduled for next Tuesday, Oct. 9, one at noon and the other at 5 p.m. That also happens to be the day that Carolyn gets home from Erie, but I should be able to meet her at the airport, since she doesn't arrive until about 8:45 p.m.

Dr. Ramach will be gone next week, so it may be some considerable time after the CAT and bone scans before I learn anything more.

Ramach indicated that the surgery would probably happen regardless of what the scans show; it's just a question of whether other treatments might now also have to be considered.

I started to tell him that if those other treatments were radiation and chemotherapy, I would say no thanks, especially since he'd made it clear previously that they had proven generally ineffective against melanoma. But he cut me off.

"No need to make any decisions at this point. If it comes to that, you'll be given the whole list of possible treatments and the side effects and all that. Don't try to anticipate anything."

Damn good advice. Take things as they come. I'm trying.

Incidentally, and related only indirectly to anything else I've been talking about, on Thursday, Sept. 27, I marked my seventh anniversary of sobriety by attending a second AA meeting that week. It seemed somehow important to pick up my 7-year medallion.

1:30 a.m. Wednesday, Oct. 17: The CAT/bone scans were Tuesday of last week (the ninth). I finally got the results at about 1 p.m. Tuesday the 16th. The call was from Dr. Ramach himself. The findings, he said, were "not good."

They indicate the melanoma has probably spread to the liver and some bones. It was a relief in a way to learn that the aches, pains and nausea that I'd been experiencing for the past few weeks were not entirely psychosomatic.

"So where do we go from here?" I asked.

"Well, there seems to be no point in proceeding with the lymph node surgery, unless those swellings start causing a lot of pain or other problems. What we should do now is get you an appointment with a medical oncologist. He'll explain the exact situation and outline all the options for possible treatment. As I've already told you, the options, really, are quite limited. Radiation and chemotherapy have proved generally ineffective. However, researchers are always coming up with new approaches. There are certain experimental treatments that you might want to consider..."

I wasn't sure what an oncologist is. I looked up the word later; it's a specialist in tumors. My appointment with the oncologist is Thursday.

Friday, Oct. 19, 3:30 a.m.: The oncologist is Dr. Koester, a young man with a pleasant smile and a forthright manner at the Lakewood Kaiser building. He didn't talk much about options for treatment--as Ramach had said, the options are very limited. But I did get a much clearer idea of what's going on and where. The bone scan had revealed some melanoma in the pelvic area (not in the right arm or the left leg or back, which is where I'd been having pains). The CAT scan showed "multiple lesions on the right lobe of the liver and one small node on the right lung." I had been having stomach pains, loss of appetite and changes in food and drink preferences, all of which are symptomatic of liver disturbance.

Suggested treatment?

Well, for the pelvic cancer, the danger is that the weakened bones could crack, immobilizing me and necessitating early hospitalization. "Radiation can help prevent that, but let's see first if it's really necessary. The bone scan just gives a general over-all picture. We need to take some X-rays of the specific area."

He sent me down the hall to Radiology, where the X-rays were taken in a matter of minutes, developed in a few more, then handed to me to return to Dr. Koester.

"Well, that doesn't look too bad, actually. I don't see that radiation would accomplish anything at this stage. Maybe later."

So what about the liver? He didn't exactly shrug, but he reiterated that there simply is no proven-effective treatment for this kind of cancer once it starts on the internal organs.

He didn't say anything about "experimental treatments" or "research breakthroughs."

And I didn't ask.

I couldn't resist the cliché: "How much time have I got left? Give it to me straight." He didn't smile.

"The average life-span from this stage of this kind of cancer is nine months. That's just the average, you understand."

No hedging, no hesitation. I really like that doctor.

We talked a little about the kind of hospice care provided by Kaiser, and a little about weight loss and appetite changes and diet:

"Eat whatever you can, whatever tastes good. There's no kind of nutritional program that can prevent you from losing weight. That will continue pretty steadily from now on."

And that was pretty much it. I have an appointment to see him again in five weeks. Meanwhile, I'm planning a trip to Sturgis, S.D., soon after MileHiCon (possibly for my birthday, Nov. 10) to visit my sister and my father. I'd like to see them (and to let them see me) before I become too weak and emaciated.

I am aware, of course, of any number of medically unorthodox approaches to the treatment of cancer, and at various times in the progression of my disease I've thought that I might be willing to try them when all else had failed. (Whatever happened to laetrile?)

An acquaintance recently sent me some information about a treatment I'd never heard of before: using diluted hydrogen peroxide, both to drink and to bathe in. The theory is that cancer cells, being more primitive than normal cells, cannot tolerate high concentrations of oxygen. I forgot to ask Dr. Koester if there's any scientific basis for that. Anyone know? One big reason I'm not rushing to gulp H_2O_2 cocktails is that even in very dilute dosages it can cause severe nausea--and I'm having enough of that already.

I've heard and read enough about "imaging" being used to arrest or reverse tumors to suspect that there just might be something to it--but you've got to believe, not just suspect. It's a form of faith healing, and I'm a skeptic.

And anyway, the overriding question is: How can I make the most of whatever time I have left? I still don't know much more about my life expectancy today than I knew yesterday, or the day before. I'm alive today, still able to sit at the word processor, able to operate the copier. I'm able to read and to write reviews.

These are the things that are most important to me, and I'd like to continue them as long as possible--communicating in my own way with whomever is willing to read what I produce. It seems to me that if I were to suddenly start pouring my steadily declining energies into a single-minded battle against cancer, I might not have time and strength to do what I really want to do with each day.

It's more than that. I don't know quite how to put it, but my life, as I examine it today, has a feeling of completeness. I'm like a novel that has reached its conclusion: Any effort to extend it would be unesthetic padding.

I can think of ways to improve the esthetics of the ending.

In a situation like this, I can't help doing a certain amount of projecting. I see myself in a few months weighing 90 pounds or less and getting weaker by the day, wasting away, literally, soon unable to get in or out of bed by myself, even to get to the bathroom, too tired even to write.

It is not a cheerful thought, but the thing that really saddens me is that is bound to be much harder on the people close to me--Carolyn, her parents, the three kids, my sister and my father, certain friends--than it will be for me.

It makes me wish that doctors were free to discuss the other option--taking a shortcut out.

If I were a cat or dog dying of cancer it would be considered a kindness to cut short the misery when it's clear that misery is all that remains.

I think (I'm still projecting, you understand; this is not the way I feel today, right at the moment) that the time will come, probably within the next four or five months, when I will demand the same consideration that would be extended any cat or dog or horse. I'm prepared to take matters into my own hands--but I may ask for a little help from my friends.



YOUR FANZINE FOR MINE

This is no longer, if it ever was, a fanzine review column, though it may seem to start out that way. At a certain point, you may notice that I revert to a simple listing of title, editor, address and availability. I ran out of time--and energy. I need to get this finished.

A&A #132 (July '90) Francis Valéry, French Space Academy, c/o Frederique Pinsard, 11 rue des Vignerons, 33800 Bordeaux, France. Attractive 6X8 1/2" French language fanzine. This one has something about dinosaurs and something about horror, as well as a review of *New Destinies* Vol. VIII.

THE ARACHNO FILE Vol. 2, John D. Rickett, 41 Forest Court, Snaresbrook, London E11 1PL. John proclaims himself a neo, but this contribution to a British apa displays a firm grasp of the principles of fannish humor and punny playfulness. Don't know if this is generally available.

BARYON 46, Barry R. Hunter, P.O. Box 3314, Rome, GA 30164-3314. Nine page of intelligent reviews by Barry, abetted by Jim, Shana and Heather Brock. I mean, they are all intelligent, not just Barry.

HCSEFazine #207, 208, 209 (Aug. Sept., Oct. 1990). British Columbia SF Association, P.O. Box 35577 Stn. E, Vancouver, B.C. V6M 4G9, Canada. Available for "the usual." An impressive 28-page combination of clubzine and genzine, with a disconcertingly regular monthly schedule.

CES Newsletter, Aug., Sept. '90 (or Paopi and Hethara, if you're a Church of the Eternal Source insider.) P.O. Box 7091, Burbank, CA 91510-7091. Pagan, but with a sharp focus on the Egyptian deities. The participants have a sense of humor.

CHICKEN BONES 2, Abigail Frost, 95 Wilmet St. London E2 0BP. This was handed to me during the seeming chaos at the Wellington (the Tun; of course, that's what the Tun means!) with every fan in London talking at the same time. I've just now had a chance to examine it. Very fannish, with articles by Brigit Wilkinson (Mexican report) and Joseph Nicholas. Cover by Atom. 20 pages.

CONVENTION LOG #58, 59, July, Sept. 1990, R Laurraine Tutihasi, 5876 Bowcroft St. #4, Los Angeles, 90016-4910. Combination diary and letter substitute, with emphasis on cons attended, but anything that happens or anything she happens to read is grist. #59 has a number of newspaper items about smoking and a long poem, reprinted from *Verbatim*, about pronunciation.

CROOKED ROADS #3, Aug. 1990, Carl Bettis, P.O. Box 32631, Kansas City, MO 64111. 8 1/2 X 14, 20-page publication devoted to good poetry good prose and good art. I like his Guidelines for Submission: "Taboos include technical exercises, lavender fog, art for art's sake, crap for crap's sake, and tailoring yourself to our editorial requirements." Available at \$2 per issue or \$5 for three.

DE PROFUNDIS #222, 223, 224 (Aug., Sept., Oct. '90). Newsletter of the Los Angeles SF Society, 11513 Burbank Blvd, North Hollywood, CA 91601. #222 reprints a newspaper feature story about legendary fan Walt Daugherty. Available for the usual from Jeni Burr, Editor.

DESERT SUN #8 (all seasons, 1990), Craig Chrissinger, 840 Ortiz SE #1, Albuquerque, NM 87108. A 20-page (8 1/2 X 14" folded) genzine which

includes fiction, verse, reviews, a few locs and some very attractive artwork. Available for \$2. Only 100 copies printed.

DINOSAURS AND DISKETTE FAILURES, Steve and Jenny Glover, 16 Aviary Place, Armley, Leeds LS12 2NP West Yorkshire, England. Produced especially for ConFiction (which is where I was given a copy in exchange for DoS), this issue provides an excellent introduction to two intrepid fans expressing their views on what a fan is. 12 pages.

DOXY: The Sheet of Shame, July '90 John Foyster, PO Box 3086 Grenfell St. Adelaide South Australia 5000. Page 1 editorial discusses FFANZ (Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand) and FFFAANZ (Fan Fund for Apathetic Australians and New Zealanders). Doxy is accompanied by **DOXA!**, edited by Roman Orszanski, PO Box 131 Marden, SA 5070.

8 1/2 X 11 zine Sept. '90, David Thayer/Teddy Harvia, P.O. Box 905, Euless, TX 76039. This is a new address. Subtitled "Committing the Cartoonist to Paper," this is the personal zine of a versatile and talented artist. These two pages contain only words of his. The one drawing is by Diana Stein.

FACTSHEET FIVE #37, Mike Gundery, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502. The comprehensive catalogue (140 pages in the latest issue) of fanzines and small press publications--of all kinds. \$3 per copy or trade. Fascinating browsing.

FOLLY #1, 2, 3 (summer, late summer & early fall 1990). This marks the return of Arnie Katz, now of 330 S. Decatur, #152, Las Vegas, NV 89107, his first genzine in more than a decade. Issue 1 is a re-introduction of himself with a pastiche of the various fannish styles that influenced him. Issues 2 and 3 trend toward genzinedom, with locs and lots of artwork. The artwork is mind-boggling: Atom, Hoffman, Kunkel, Lovenstein, Rotsler and Shull!

FOSFAX #151, Sept. 1990; clubzine of the Falls of the Ohio SF Association (FOSFA); edited by Timothy Lane and Janice Moore, published bimonthly by the Committee to Publish FOSFAX (Grant McCormick and Timothy Lane) P.O. Box 37281, Louisville, KY 40233-7281; \$2 per issue, \$12 a year. As always, an impressive array of news, reviews, locs and artwork. 60 pages this issue.

FTT #10, August 1990. Judith Hanna and Joseph Nicholas, 5A Frington Road, Stamford Hill, London N15 6NH, U.K. The initials this time stand for Flamingos Turning Tricks (of course). The original Fuck the Tories sentiments are still obvious but less pervasive as in times past. Joseph's fascinating article about river rafting in Texas almost manages to be non-political. This mimeographed 27-pager is available for "the usual."

FUNNY PAGES #9, 12, 13, Box 317025, Dayton, OH 45431. \$5 for 4 issues or \$10 for 10. If you find humor in ethnic and racial jokes and insults (I just can't, sorry), this may appeal. The guys are seeing how far they can go with freedom of the press, I guess. I support their resistance to censorship.

GEGENSCHWEIN #58, Aug. 1990, Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Ave., Faulconbridge, NSW 2776, Australia. 14 pages of personal history and book reviews. It's good to see Eric publishing regularly again.

THE GEIS LETTER #4 Sept. 1990; Richard E. Geis, P.O. Box 11408, Portland, OR 97211. The first two issues were entirely book reviews, incisive, insightful, provocative and fun. Eight pages, available at \$2 per copy or \$20 for 12 issues.

GRAVE MATTERS #3, Chris Mills, P.O. Box 6343, Burbank, CA 91510. Six-page letter substitute. Ask for availability.

JOMPJR #1, August 199 Richard A. Dengrove, 2651 Arlington Dr. #302, Alexandria, VA 22306. The successor, in virtually the same format, to Journal of Mind Pollution. Its 11 pages contain some fatherly advice and a defense of socialism.

MIMOSA #8, (Aug. 1990) Dick & Nicki Lynch, PO Box 1270, Germantown, MD 20875. 40 pages including front and back covers by Sheryl Birkhead. Available for \$2 or the usual. A genuine fannish fanzine by genuine fans.

THE NATIONAL FANTASY FAN, Vol. 50, No. 4, Aug. 1990; edited by Donald Frankson, 6543 Babcock Ave. North Hollywood, CA 91606. Official organ of the NFF, published six times annually, free to members, but also available for trade. Contains the "Trash Barrel" reviews by Don.

THE NEW PORT NEWS, 131, 132, Ned Brooks, 713 Paul St., Newport News, VA 23605. This is Ned's contribution to SFPA. 10 pages.

NOTES FROM BOB PETERSON #39, Sept. 1990. Bob Peterson, 2045 S. Gilpin St., Denver CO 80210. Just as the title says, this is a letter substitute, to keep Bob's friends abreast of his world travels. He goes everywhere, including Japan, Holland and Switzerland. Saw him briefly at the Worldcon.

OASFIS EVENT HORIZON #41, Oct. 1990, Ray Herz, editor. Clubzine of the Orlando Area SF Society, P.O. Box 616469, Orlando, FL 32861-6469. Club news, letters, reviews, etc.

PROBE #80, June 1990. Quarterly clubzine of Science Fiction South Africa, PO Box 2530 Primrose 1416, edited by Neil van Niekerk. 76 pages of club news, reviews, articles, fiction, art, etc.

RADIO FREE THULCANDRA #22 (Aug. 1990), Marty Helgeson, 11 Lawrence Ave., Malverne, NY 11565. Published for Christian Fandom, "an interdenominational fellowship of Christians and Science Fiction Fans interested in the courteous and accurate representation of Christian viewpoints in the fannish community." 52 neat and readable pages.

THE RELUCTANT FAMULUS #12, Sept. 1990, Thomas Sadler, 422 W. Maple Ave., Adrian, MI 49221. "Available for trades, logs, art, fiction, articles, poetry, threats, bribes, a sexy smile, cash (\$1.50) or stamps." 28 pages of fannish stuff, attractively presented.

RENAISSANCE FAN #9. (Cover says Feb., colophon page says July). Ronald Malin and Dick Pilz, editors, 2214 SE 53rd, Portland, OR 97215. Nature conservancy issue, 16 pages (counting covers by Roz) of animal essays, hand-colored illos and colorful paste-ins.

ROBOTS & ROADRUNNERS Vol. 2, Nos. 2 & 3 (June & Sept. 1990); published quarterly by the Urge Major SF and Literary Society, P.O. Box 691448, San Antonio TX 78269-1448. 14-16 page bimonthly clubzine, available for \$12 yearly, \$1.50 per

copy (\$2, Canada), or the usual.

ROGUE RAVEN #41 (or maybe it's 44), August 1990, Frank Denton, 14654 8th Ave. S.W., Seattle, WA 98166. A perzine, letter substitute, journal, done without benefit of computer. Frank shows what can be done with an IBM Selectric. Neat but no art. The main topic is vacations, including a stay at an elder-hostel in Montana. 9 pages; the usual.

SANDCASTLES #6, Vicki Rosenzweig, 33 Indian Road 6-R, New York NY 10034. 17-page perzine, has front cover by Vicki but no back cover, no double-sided printing. Contains several essays by Vicki and one each by Vijay Bowen and Anni Ackner; art by Gilliland and Andy Amster. \$1.50 or the usual.

SCAVENGER'S NEWSLETTER #79, 80; Sept., Oct. 1990, Janet Fox, 519 Ellinwood, Osage, City, KS 66523-1329. THE magazine for small press editors, writers and artists. Sample \$1.50. Subscription rates are \$10 a year bulk, \$14 first class. 30 pages (8 1/2 x 11 folded).

SFSFS SHUTTLE 65, 66, 67 (Aug. Sept., Oct., 1990); official newsletter of the Southern Florida SF Society, P.O. Box 70143, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33307-0143, Gerry Adair, Editor. Club news plus reviews of books and films.

SOUTHERN FANDOM CONFEDERATION BULLETIN #7, July 1990, P.L. Caruthers-Montgomery, 2629 Norwood Ave., Anniston, AL 36201-2872. 52 pages including covers, mostly con and club news, attractively laid out.

SPACEWARP #157, July 1990, Art Rapp, 282 Grovania Drive, Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9603. Art's contrib to SAPS 172. Interesting for its hand-colored cover and neatly mimeographed contents (7 pages) if for no other reason.

SPIRITS IN THE NIGHT #1, 2, 3, edited by Leah and Dick Smith, 17 Kerry Lane, Wheeling, IL 60090. This is actually an 8-page (spirit duplicated, of course) flyer for Ditto 3, fanzine fandom's alternative to Corflu.

THE TEXAS SF INQUIRER #34, 35, Aug., Oct. 1990, c/o The Fandom Association of Central Texas, Inc. (FACT) PO Box 9612, Austin TX 78766, Dale Denton & Alexander R. Slate, editors. Clubzine with book and fanzine reviews. 16-20 pages. Price is \$1.50 per copy, \$2 Canadian.

TRASH PICKINS #1, P.O. Box 9152, Virginia Beach, VA 23450; no indication of who the editor is or exactly when it was published. An Anarchist protest is planned in Virginia Beach for Labor Day '90 to commemorate the riot of '89 brought on "by racists and bullies licensed by police badges." Photocopied pictures fill most of the 8 small pages.

YINGLE #14, Arthur H. Rapp, 282 Grovania Drive, Bloomsburg, PA 17815-9603. This is Art's 16-page (mimeographed, of course) contribution to APA-69 (Classic, as opposed to the other APA-69). Membership has grown since I left, a few months ago.

WARP #74, 75 (Aug-Sept & Oct-Nov. 1990), J. Dignan, 50 Norfolk St., Dunedin, New Zealand. Official newsletter of the National Association for SF. Club news, with some fiction, reviews, artwork and logs.

XENOLITH #32, Bill Bowers, P.O. Box 58174, Cincinnati, OH 45258-0174. A sad and bitter letter substitute detailing the breakup of a marriage and Bill's consequent incarceration. Catharsis? I hope so. I found it depressing.

LOCCER ROOM

Part I: Horror Harbor

Barry Hunter
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I received #59
on the day follow-
ing *Four Past Mid-
night* by Stephen
King. Although I tend to be more a
fanatic about King than you are, I read
Don-o-Saur first and was glad I did.
There are different things that are "on
buttons" for us all. I figure that
I'll die in a car wreck due to the am-
ount of driving I do, so that doesn't
scare me. So what does? Mankind's
stupidity to itself; politicians who
believe what they shovel during a cam-
paign; "conservatives;" uncontrolled
fire; and I still jump at weird times
during a movie.

It's hard to add more to your view of King. I am a more rabid fan than you; I look for autographed editions and I've sent books to be inscribed. I read a lot about him but not everything. As you said, he is one of the most important authors of our time. He is our Poe, our Lovecraft, and possibly the horror equivalent of Asimov and Heinlein. Lovecraft, Long and Bloch definitely had an influence on King and you and me. I am proud to correspond with Long and Bloch and several others and feel the strength of their writing. Without them, there would be no King; without King there would be no Clive Barker, Joe Lansdale or others trying to make a living writing good horror fiction today. The market is glutted with "hackwork" (as are the fantasy and SF fields). There are plenty of writers out there selling books, but only a few have the ability to make it big. I can't see another coming along that will have the same success as King for a long time.

I am glad you published Ted White's response. He has a right to give his side of the story. I remember the drugs in college, the drugs and alcohol in VietNam and the pleasures and pains they can bring. Ted has paid his "debt to society," so let it go. I'd like to see him get back to writing or editing.

I'm 42 now and I keep getting told that I should grow up. That would mean

no more SF and no more rock 'n' roll. No way, folks! I still get to a concert every now and then. Recently saw Richard Marx and Wilson Phillips. Wonderful show and great music, although it can get too loud. I seem to be leaning toward lighter, softer material. Heart, Fleetwood Mac, Wilson Phillips, Linda Ronstadt, Jackson Browne and Neil Young are favorites. I still get into Def Leppard, The Doors, REO Speedwagon and Aerosmith. I can live without most of the so-called "Metal Music" and Rap.

Sally Syrjala
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Horror fiction is not something with which I am overly fond. The only works of Stephen King that

I find to my liking are those of The Dark Tower/Gunslinger Saga. Those I find to be more in the vein of Tolkien's Lord of the Rings and the Star Wars Saga in its mythic quest of Campbell's "Hero With a Thousand Faces." The rest of King's stuff I find too heavy and much too much of a downer.

I suppose you could look to horror fiction as being a form of alternative state the opposite of what one tries to reach through meditation. Its use tends to excite the psyche and to make the autonomic nervous system all that more hyped up. The fight or flight juices get pumped up throughout the body and the mind goes into overload. Quite truthfully, my body is in enough turmoil without seeking out more. Therefore, I tend not to read much horror. Why should I cause blood pressure to rise on purpose?

However, I will admit that some horror reading might be an escape valve for the mind. It is a way of giving it an amusement park excursion ride knowing that all will be well in the end. Though I have noticed that much of the horror genre tends to be very pessimistic. It takes the basic premise that most people are scum. There is mostly darkness at the endings of these books. This I definitely do not need to have enter into my own life.

I will admit to reading some of the "lighter" fare such as Ramsey Campbell's "Ancient Images." One thing I like to hold onto is the idea that good can triumph over evil and by holding with certain principles you can and do end up okay in the end. The lighter forces draw you up while the darker vibes can suck you down into an abyss. Give me those old tales of heroes struggling through the bleakness to find the sun shining through the blackest of the clouds. This is the type of book I need. It is how I choose to view life, the universe and all that kind of stuff. We all have choices to make in life and the avoidance of heavy horror fiction is one that I consciously make.

Mike Glicksohn
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I've made a physical note to stick up on my wall to remind me to nominate

both you and Dos for Hugos next year but once again I won't be holding my breath hoping to see justice done. I know you don't really care about such things but it would be nice for fandom to acknowledge just what high standards you've set in the areas of personal journalism and fanzine publication.

I'm a long-time horror fiction fan and a dedicated King fan/collector so I much enjoyed your editorial this issue. Thinking about your question, though, I realized there are few if any things I'm actually horrified by. I can be shocked, of course, by hands suddenly grabbing the protagonist's throat during a tension-filled scene in a movie, and I can be scared, suffering as I do from a mild case of arachnophobia and having a very human awareness of the results of mindless violence, but I can't think of any times in my life when I was either terrified or horrified. Perhaps my enjoyment of horror fiction comes from my subconscious guilt because I am not horrified by man's inhumanity to man or by the sufferings of those less fortunate than myself or by the disastrous consequences of nature run amok. (I am not immune to such things: they just do not horrify me as perhaps they should.) I guess I've led a rather fortunate and sheltered life, never having to confront true terror be it in the form of violence, cruelty or irrationality.

Perhaps my love of horror fiction stems from seeking vicariously what I've never experienced personally, in which case I'll continue to read King, Barker, Simmons, Reeves-Stevens et al as avidly as I can because I'd much rather read a horror tale than live one.

I recently reread *The Stand* and reinforced my impression that this is one of the best apocalyptic novels I know. It is not without faults (chief amongst them being the relative ease with which the rather innocuous forces for Good overcome the seemingly invincible forces of Evil) but it grabbed me once again and dragged me through to the end, with brief pauses every now and then to compare the "new" version with the old so see just how many changes had been made and how much I'd simply forgotten from the original reading 10 years back. And I've very glad that I was offered a copy of the leather-bound boxed and signed limited edition of the new version before I knew my ex-roommate was getting married, moving out, and leaving me to carry the whole financial burden of this house alone because I might not have bought it otherwise and it's one of the King special editions that really is special and is worth the price charged for it. And what the hell, in a pinch I can sell it sometime down the line and stay in the house for a couple of extra months on the profit I'll make!

Rich Dengrove
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As usual, DoS made me think; with No. 59 it was about my

fears. What in fact is my worst fear? The worst I ever had about 20 years ago and I suspect it had more to do with medical treatment than disease. The Doctor claimed that I needed 18 shock treatments to cure an overdose of a drug he had prescribed--in the dosage he had prescribed it. Twit! If I ever become a maniac killer, a Jason or Freddy, he would be the first to go. Of course he's probably died by now from an overdose of self-administered electroshock. (Yes, I hear he gave himself treatments.) He was president of the American Electroshock Association. What fear did his treatments produce? The fear that I was going mad. This fear came in the form of anxiety attacks. I was obsessed that if I didn't stand ever vigilant I would be dragged down into an inferno. It wouldn't be

physical, not with rocks and pitchforks; it would be psychological. A mad world like you see in Brueghel or Bosch, and yet with a window on the 'real' one. A gibbering world, a world where I would be alone, despised and worthless, probably locked away, living parttime in Pandemonium. The worst was that I could glimpse the real world: I would be part sane and know all this was taking place. Periodically I was certain that many people considered me insane; but I would only know in the back of my mind why. This fear was worse than any I have ever had. The fear of violence being done to me in dark places; the fear of ghosts, demons and Satan; the fear of spiders, rats and maggots; the fear of human cruelty; the fear of natural catastrophe--all these could dance on the head of my fear of madness, with plenty of room for more terror. In a few years this fear dissolved into a myriad of phobias: sugar, butter, drugs (even prescription drugs), and the smell of marijuana. Eventually these lesser fears dissolved into nothingness.

Alexander R. Slate
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I am neurotically
afraid of
spiders and

a little bit of bees and other insects (but not to the extent I am with spiders). I used to be much more afraid of these creepy-crawlies than I am and I can enjoy watching a spider spin its web and have even petted the occasional tarantula. But these are cases where I know where they are and I know they aren't poisonous and aren't going to jump out and 'get' me. I have no explanation for this fear; as I said it's an irrational neuroses. Though I'm not keen on the poisonous ones, I enjoy handling the non-poisonous snakes (garter snakes, egg snakes and boas).

I have this dread of tornadoes. They are one of the recurring themes of my dreams, though in my dreams they are usually very small tornadoes and not likely to be particularly nasty, though they seem to come in packs. The question I have is: why do I always seem to be in a mobile home in these dreams when I do not nor do I ever intend to own a mobile home?

Slashers and muggers and their ilk don't horrify me, though I am repulsed by the thought of persons such as this. On a more personal level, one of the

things that scares me is the thought of someone kidnapping one or more of my children. My stepson and two daughters are the world to me, and I don't know what I would do without them. I am not a violent person, and I very much believe in things like gun control, but I also have no illusions. Hurting other creatures is the only moral wrong, though it can sometimes be defended, and I am sure that I could kill (and would, given the opportunity) in defense of my family.

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I'm not so sure
that HORROR means
fright. It may be
I have always felt
that it was more
aimed at a shocked

revulsion. One may feel horror at seeing a squashed person in a car crash, but not fear. As for the theme in writing, I much prefer when the horror is left to the reader to imagine it. The modern trend to have eyeballs sliced, bones crunch, viscera yanked out and so on strikes me as appealing to the sick-minded. My favorite horror story (Roald Dahl's "Boomerang") has no blood or violence in it--just a small grub. The horror comes from it being dropped into a sleeper's ear and gradually eating its way through his skull. It eventually emerges through the other ear and the victim breathes a sigh of relief--until he finds it was an egg-laying female! That one gave me nightmares. Read my own "Upon Reflection" in the Pan 25th Horror anthology. You never see the creature which lurks in the crypt. Suggested horror is always more frightening than the explicit. As for King and his emulators, I weary of the same repetitive, explicit sex sequences which crop up in so many books. They have no part in the story but have merely been added for titillation. Another nyaah is the brand-names stuffed in like so many between-episode TV ads. "I got a Coors from the icebox, kicked off my Ramblers and sat back in my Recline-Eze to eat a handful of M&Ms."

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Horror fiction has
never stirred much
interest for me. The
presence of fear is
not in itself hor-

ror. The most fearful moment in my life was a truck accident, but despite the shock and trauma I was never hor-

ified. My reason for disliking horror has more to do with the fact that most of it is presented as evil vs. good without an explanation of the evil side. Every creature behaves the way it does for some reason, not just caprice. I cannot accept that something is evil "because it is evil." Perhaps there are very good reasons why the monster wants to eat those coeds. It might be defending its territory, protecting its young, or just hungry. Those are rational reasons, and with rational reasons the element of horror is removed. If the monster is trashing Tokyo just for the hell of it (how come they never bother Yokohama?) the reasons may not be rational but they are there. The reasons may be insanity, or a different point of view and moral code. Gophers view humans as horrible monsters always trying to kill them. From the gopher's point of view, it is not doing any harm to humans, who nonetheless relentlessly chase it.

Icky things like spiders and killer bees have never bothered me, partly because my parents taught me to enjoy the wonders of nature, and partly because I supervise pest control crews for a living. It is possible to walk up to a bee swarm or wasp nest and stand there without being stung. I have taught several people how not to panic at the sight of a swarm, and indeed to get closer to have look at one of nature's most fascinating sights. Knowledge eliminates horror of swarms. I extrapolate this in the rest of my life as meaning that if I fear an unknown, then I should learn as much about it as fast as possible. Turning this around, ignorance causes fear and horror. This is why I have difficulty finding sympathy for fictional characters running and screaming about in the face of horror. Stupid people in fiction do not appeal to me.

You mention natural disasters as a source of horror or fear. This also depends on the knowledge of the characters. Natural disasters are certainly inconvenient and destructive but not necessarily horrifying. I have lived through any number of blizzards here in western Canada, and they represent nothing more than trouble driving down drifted-in roads. I am sure that while Hawaiians may be upset by losing a house to lava flows, no one is horrified.

{For a visitor caught unexpectedly in a Canadian (or a Wyo-

ing or Colorado) blizzard, the experience can damn well be both horrifying and fatal. You'll have to convince me that no one in the vicinity of the Mt. Helena eruption was horrified, or at least awed.}

Catharsis is usually mentioned as the strong point of horror. It fails to work for me, as I cannot deal with my troubles by worrying about someone else's problems. Blood and guts strewn everywhere are shocking at first for most people, but each succeeding horror movie has to have more and better guts. Next time you are at a horror movie during a bloody scene, look around and see how many people placidly chew their popcorn while the screaming goes on. The better horror movies are the older ones where the money and technology to stage special effects were not there. The director was thus forced to use the power of suggestion. Each member of the audience imagined the horror in their own way. If the monster actually shows up on the screen, most viewers would wonder what kind of rubber was used to make the suit.

To sum up, I consider horror to be equivalent to ignorance. Watching ignorant people stumble around does not appeal to me. Evil without a rationale does not appeal to me either. If a demon wants to steal someone's soul, then it would be nice to see what it intends to do with that soul.

{As one who is ignorant of many things, I find it easy to empathize with an intelligent but ignorant character caught up in some horrifying fictional situation. Stupidity bores me; mere ignorance is forgivable.}

Buck Coulson

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I can't comment on horror because I can't be horrified, at least not by fiction. Probably

not in the real world, either. Terrified, yes, horrified no. My own non-dictionary division between the two is that when you're in physical danger (from a mugger, the possibility of drowning, your auto going out of control) you may be terrified. Horror is due to encountering something that violates your ideas of how the world operates (Nazi death camps, Hiroshima, a beach full of dead seals or your child listening to rock music, depending on your personal world-view). It comes from a mental danger, rather than a physical. (This is also the division that is made by newspapers, when they bother to make one at all.) Anyway, I

haven't been either terrified or horrified by fiction since I was a child, and I'm probably too cynical to be horrified by facts. Reading history seems to have that effect...

Gee, I agree so thoroughly with Terry Jeeves on everything but guns, but I think he needs to read some history on that subject. Since fairly modern record-keeping, England has always had less firearms violence than the U.S. There were several years after New York passed the Sullivan Law when London had no gun laws, yet London, with a bigger population, had as I recall 10% or so of New York's firearms violence. Also, England's firearms violence has risen steadily ever since their first firearms laws were adopted, which rather puts paid to the idea that they limit the problem. Before the laws were passed, there was no real problem, whereas in the U.S. there has always been one, unaffected by assorted laws.

My comments about the U.S. having to rescue European intellectuals had no bearing on my desire for firearms; I was responding to Nicholas's claims for European intellectual superiority, which was a crock of shit. Of course, individual U.S. sportsmen did respond to British requests by sending over thousands of personal firearms to defend England against the expected German invasion, so British authorities at the time obviously thought that personal weapons were important, but they had no real influence on the course of the war. (The guns were never returned, either, which annoyed more than a few sportsmen.)

While I agree with Alexis Gilliland that the right to bear arms is alive in America, I wouldn't say it was at all well. No matter how we read the Constitution, it's the Supreme Court which has the right to officially interpret it, and it's given some strange interpretations in my lifetime, though the gun issue seems to be too hot for it to handle lately. Of course, the Constitution doesn't specify what arms may be borne; fully automatic weapons were outlawed in 1935, and handguns could go the same way, as long as some weapons are allowed. Of course, in Switzerland--which has less violence than either Britain or the U.S.--military weapons including machine guns not only can but must be kept in the home, since every male is in the militia and required to keep weapons at hand. Some-

how Switzerland never gets mentioned by the anti-gun people.

(How much like Switzerland would you want us to be? -- a country that still hasn't given women the right to vote.)

Alexis A Gilliland
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A truly impressive cover
but clearly unsuitable for hanging

in the living room. The question of what makes one shudder is probably very personal, although in fiction the effect is often achieved by threatening to fold, spindle or mutilate a character with whom the reader identifies. Highlighting may be achieved by having the characters protest how they are just terrified of folding, and as the inevitable fold comes closer and closer, their frantic efforts to escape lead them to be unexpectedly spindled. The essential ingredients, of course, are reader identification with the character, the nasty threat to provide tension, and the surprise ending which may or may not be a gross-out. As in: "Eeeew, spindled!"

Generally horror plays to the emotions rather than the intellect, which is why all those teenagers are being eaten (or otherwise disposed of) in movies targeted at teenagers. In a sci-fi epic like The Blob (appealing to the intellect, yessiree, Blob!) you will recall that while there were many teenagers in danger it was only grown-ups who were engulfed by the special effects. Speaking of which, I no longer find the gasoline explosions, which movies use so freely, to be convincing. All the special effect shooting and car chases have achieved a meretricious slickness which suggests cartoons rather than real life.

Roy Lavender testily repeats himself, reassuring me that I did, indeed, understand what he said the first time. After deploring (well, "not approving" anyway) concentration camps, he points out that at least we can afford them, and then asks how I feel about mandatory execution the very next day after the initial conviction. Call me a Liberal if you will, but the idea fills me with horror. That is what the Communists used to do, not us, wantonly suspending the rights of individuals for administrative convenience in meeting their politically imposed quotas.

He also indulges in what can best be described as "the Conservative Wet

Dream" by imagining how much more government services could be provided at no cost to the taxpayers through being a little less humane to the poor. To see how this works in practice, one has only to read Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Archipelago: oppressive and cheap the Russians had down to a science. Americans have treacherously distrusted the efficient centralization of power as leading to tyranny, but Mr. Lavender seems more than willing to make an exception for "drug dealers." This is mean spirited as well as naive, since he seems incapable of imagining that he might ever need the constitutional protections he is so willing to dispense with, or to conceive that he might be on the receiving end of the sanctions which he recommends so easily for others. Perhaps he imagines his guns will protect him.

Wayne Hooks
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I don't read
"horror;" news-
papers provide
enough. For your

categories, ghosts and bumps in the night don't bother me. Creepie-crawlies don't bother me. We have all sorts of snakes, spiders and other beneficial insects all around us. I avoid the poisonous one and cherish the others.

I have more than my share of phobias but they are more neuroses than phobias. For example, I don't like to travel but I do. I just don't enjoy it the way some people do.

Acts of nature--we had Hugo last year but I haven't noticed any post-trauma stress syndrome. It's frightening but not horrifying. As a matter of fact, I was nailing shingles on a barn just before Hugo hit full blast (yeah, it was dumb).

It seems horror changes with age. At this point in my life, random violence against children horrifies me. A local incident was a man murdering his two-year-old son by holding his head in the toilet until he drowned because the boy wet his pants. If I were a juror I could send that man to the electric chair without any qualms or reservations. What is interesting is that I have seen or been involved in events that would be horrifying perhaps, yet it is the specificity of the act that renders it horrifying. A pile of bodies numbs the senses. It almost has to be one on one. For example, photographs rarely horrify me, but one--of a Kurd-

ish father and his child clutched in his arms as they lay dead from an Iraqi gas attack--haunts me whereas a thousand and other photos evoke no response.

Maybe the reason is that I have children; when I read or see of these atrocities, I identify. There but for the grace of God...

We had a couple of crazies come through several years ago. They murdered several people, totally at random. I suppose that was horrifying but it still is not on a par, to me, with atrocities against children because the crazies can be handled. In this case, one killed himself; the other, Rusty Woomer, was executed. At the same time the crazies swept through, DSS returned a small boy to his home from a foster home. His father scalded him to death.

I can stand the crazies and Hugo and God knows what other random events that strike. What is horrifying is the cold, calculating inhuman atrocities committed against the most helpless; and it seems that the more helpless the victim the more horrifying the crime.

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I don't know that
I had a phobia until recently, but
the current brand
is severe indeed. I've always been a "cautious" sort by nature, always been aware of the fact that I was going to die someday and have always been aware of the potential for danger in situations that some are awful casual about, such as reckless or impaired driving, and I have a sort of "worrywart" personality, but rather than setting me up for perpetual anxiety it's done just the opposite--the knowledge that I could be struck down by a truck tomorrow has made me appreciate today a little better. Lately, however, I seem to have developed a genuine phobia about walking on high bridges over bodies of water, an act which could be easily avoided in Detroit, but not in lower Washington. I don't mind going over such structures in a vehicle; I actually like eye-height views of the water, can think of no "post traumas" that would have programmed me toward the obvious phobia and going along with the unreasoning nature of the whole thing. I don't even have a conscious picture of anything harmful occurring. I know from personal experience that this phobia had not even been born a couple of years ago, and I have been in truly

hazardous situations wherein I did not feel anywhere near as much fear. All I know is that when I begin to cross one of those things I instantly experience an acute panic attack.

The first time this occurred, I managed to FORCE myself across, but with considerable stress--a sensation of bonafide terror, but of what, I had no idea. My body reacted with dizziness, a "faint" feeling, hot and cold flashes and the sensation that I was loosing all coordination. I was almost crying before I got across--and the bridge was probably no longer than a standard city block, height wasn't THAT great, and must have looked cute to everyone else. Subsequent encounters, however, took on the properties of a real phobia, inasmuch as my body would not cooperate with my mind, regardless of how great the resolve.

On at least one occasion, the fear has been focussed more on the sudden loss of control over my body than on the prospect of bridge-crossing itself. This has bothered me a great deal, partly because of the limited mobility, partly because it decreases self-esteem and partly because it makes me feel I am in not nearly as much contact with myself as I had previously thought. I've agonizingly examined the issue and have been unable to come up with any explanation at all.

Yet it is probably the most paralyzing fear I've ever experienced--even more overpowering than the demons which drove me while an alcoholic.

Ned Brooks
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I am not sure I totally agree with the dictionary distinction between horror and terror. To me,

terror relates to personal danger, or rather, extreme personal danger, something beyond the common hazards of the other idiots on the road; while horror can be totally divorced from any actual hazard. If I see a picture of a demon dismembering someone, I certainly experience horror in some degree, but no terror. If I see a picture of a spider I feel some horror, and even more if I see the spider in person, because I have a thing about spiders and would experience terror as well if one was close, even though my rational mind "knows" there is little or no danger.

You like King more than I do. I have enjoyed some of the movies, but I am

not that wild about the books. I find his style annoying--not the details of word arrangement or the ideas, but the thing in between, the decisions as to how to tell the story. To me he goes on too long about the same material, has five examples of some effect where two would be plenty, etc. I kept thinking, reading The Stand, OK, I've got that, let's get on with the tale--finally gave it up about halfway through. King also falls short--as compared to Lovecraft, Poe, Machen, Dunsany and so on--in that his prose is so, uh, prosaic. He has apparently no feel at all for the beauty of language. To me the perfect horror story is Kornbluth's "Words of Guru,"--a totally alienated protagonist, gruesome and bizarre imagery, terse and yet poetic prose which builds logically to a horrifying conclusion. And it is all horror--there is no terror, because even if the story were true, there is no way we could know it or do anything about it.

The Brian Cooper art is good, rather reminds me of the stuff by Ian Miller. I would like the Cooper better without the random splatter-dash. Steadman and Searle can get away with this sort of thing, but in general I like fantasy art to be sharp and clear and neat, perhaps because it gives the impression that, bizarre as a scene may be, the artist must have really seen it to draw it that clearly. This actually seems to be the case to some extent--note the current *Weird Tales* cover by Kelly Freas, a redrawing of his 1950 WT cover of a satyr dancing and playing a horn. They explain that all those 40 years, Kelly has worried about not getting the damn horn exactly right. He had 'seen' a Benny Goodman style clarinet, but couldn't get it right in 1950 as he was working to a deadline, and so used a sort of generic horn. In the new painting, he has the clarinet.

{You would have to see the whole enormous Cooper piece to see the artistic necessity for the splatter background. Take my word: The cover poster is exactly the way Brian saw it.}

Steven B. Fellows DoS #59 made
1001 19th St. #5 me think about what
Golden, CO 80401 now seems a strange
quirk: I do not like
to read horror, but I do like it.

In a bookstore I skip over the horror section and head for the SF and fantasy. I have never read a Stephen King novel.

However, there are times when I do enjoy horror, especially when it is read to me. Other times, I just cannot get into the mood to want to read a novel that is specifically supposed to be horror. I have read SF or fantasy stories that have horror in them, but never a book like Carrie.

Neither do I care for most of the horror (gore or slasher) movies today because of the stupidity of the protagonists (if you can call "bodies" that). Many of the stories have no character I like, or I totally miss the point of the movie and end up liking the "bad guy."

Movies by Hitchcock and *Twilight Zone* episodes were enjoyable. I even like making up horror stories, or when I have a particular nightmare, I will dwell on it for a while, not in revulsion, but trying to experience "the story" again.

I like some horror elements in stories not meant to be just horror genre, if the protagonists are presented with a modicum of intelligence, or at least the predominant trait is not a complete lack of common sense. Maybe someone can direct me to "horror" stories like this, but I will only start with short stories until I can find an author that I enjoy. But even then I won't read the story, because I do not like a story written by an author whose sole point is to scare the reader.

{What can I say? I don't know how you're ever going to find a horror story or author that you like if you flat refuse to read the stuff. I would recommend Stephen King's Night Shift or Skeleton Crew or Different Seasons, but if you've already prejudged him, there seems to be no point.}

Dave Smidt The cover of
11231 W. Arizona Ave DoS 59 seems
Lakewood, CO 80226 appropriate for
 the "Fear and

Loathing" topic. I am a big fan of horror fiction and the occasional horror flick but not because I enjoy being scared. I have read different authors expatiate on the nature of the attraction of Horror fiction but it is my opinion that human beings are simply curious about the unknown. Death being the ultimate in what is unknowable, the types of fiction dealing with death and the undead are merely windows into what might be.

I get irritated when traffic is backed up and slowed to a snail's pace due to an accident in the opposing

lanes. But as I am cursing the drivers ahead for gawking at the twisted pile of vehicles, I find myself craning my own neck to get a glimpse of what might be hidden in the midst of the debris. (Is that motor oil dripping from the door or...blood?) Whether or not this behavior is an unnatural and disturbed form of voyeurism into another's misery, I'm not sure. The fascination and curiosity about the finality of death has always been there for me. Perhaps horror fiction is an extension of this.

I have already stated that I don't enjoy being scared. By definition, fear is an unpleasant emotion. I do get a kick out of the realization that an author has drawn me into the plot and characterization or a story to the point that I am nervously flipping pages to find out what on earth (or elsewhere) could be behind that door. Stephen King has got to be the master at drawing me into a story. I (like millions of others) read everything I can by King, and I have a sizable collection of his novels, but I can't justify paying outrageous prices for his collectible items (even if I could afford to). At the 1989 Horrorfest in Estes Park I saw a copy of "Dolan's Cadillac" for around \$300. Hopefully some of those hard-to-find stories will be mass-published in the future. I was thrilled when "The Dark Tower" was finally released to us po' folks, and the latest issue of the new "Weird Tales" has the previously hard-to-find story "The Glass Floor."

Occasionally a really gross-out story is good for a few laughs (David Schow's "Jerry's Kids Meet Wormboy" comes to mind), but I feel that more effective tactic is to reveal as little as possible so that reader's imagination fills in the blanks.

The original "Halloween" movie was probably the only one of its kind that I've ever cared for--undoubtedly because it was one of the first. More effective movies that I've seen are those without a guy in a hockey mask toting a chainsaw. One scene that stands out vividly in my mind is from "The Changeling" when the wet toy ball bounces down the steps of the empty old house to land at George C. Scott's feet. I first saw "The Exorcist" when I was 12 or 13 years old and didn't get much sleep that night. It was probably that gravely voice steaming from Linda Blair's mouth that stuck in my mind.

At a more personal level, demonic and Satanic powers have been and, to some extent, still are very frightening to me. Growing up with Baptist beliefs has ingrained certain basic beliefs regarding the powers of Good and Evil. I still feel a primal dread regarding the powers of the Devil. What could be more frightening than the existence of a fallen angel whose sole reason for being is to cause pain and suffering and, ultimately, eternal damnation to as many souls as possible?

John D. Rickett
41 Forest Court
Snaresbrook
London E11 1PL

Fear and Loathing is a fascinating topic and raises some very basic questions. Why, for example, are arachnophobia and ophiophobia so common? Were spiders and snakes so dangerous to early primates that they entered the racial unconscious, as is sometimes surmised to be the case with fear of heights or of falling? Or do bipeds simply feel an aversion to creatures with too many or two few legs, reckoning that such things are somehow "wrong"?

Another very common fear is that of airplane travel. Is this linked to fear of heights? To the desire to avoid the vertigo (as opposed to fear) that high places cause some people to suffer? Or is it related more to claustrophobia, or even perhaps to the fear of complex technology that I suspect is growing amongst us?

Your mention of your telephone aversion interested me greatly. There does, as I just said, seem to be an increasing number of people suffer from what might be called technophobias of various kinds, and with the giddy pace of technological development one can easily comprehend why some people would feel inadequate - ill at ease with or just plain frightened of some of the complexities that surround our daily lives. But I should imagine that telephone aversion arises more from reasons other than the technology employed - the device has, after all, been with us for a goodly number of years now. There was a discussion on one of the local radio stations a few days ago that

raised subject and the technology, so far as I can recall, was not one mentioned. Most people seemed to dislike the telephone because of the incompleteness of the communication it afforded - they wanted to see the other party's expressions to help judge the actual meaning of what was being said. Personally I have an ambivalent attitude towards the telephone. If I am the instigator of a call, then I feel in charge and use the thing quite happily. But I always have a huge sense of unease when the telephone rings, probably, I think, because the situation I am about to handle is unknown to me and therefore frightening. The fact that the very great majority of calls are either routine or social gives me no reassurance at all when I am on the receiving end.

One common fear that you didn't speak of was one that placed top in a survey some years ago - the fear of giving speeches or of making presentations to groups of people. Over the years, I've conducted a lot of training in presentation skills and without exception the newcomer student has confessed to an unreasoning fear. True, the old hand also confesses to nervousness, but this is much more the heightened tension that even an experienced actor will sense before a performance rather than fear itself.

Richard Freeman
130 W. Limestone
Yellow Springs
OH 45387

There is so much horror in life that horror novels seem superfluous, or they are attempts to channel reality into something people can endure. Take those anxieties you have about the collapse of western civilization & spend your time instead thinking about children who can burn down a city without even needing a match or a cow. Stuff seems to sell so well that it's almost entropic, in the Gresham's Law sense that bad writing drives out good. Not that there is any good...let alone great...writing out there anymore. Ah well...I suppose it's just that I prefer a different brand of schlock, that's all.

Part II: The White papers

Mike Glicksohn Interesting piece
same address by Ted White, and one
as above of the few fanzine
items I've seen from
him since he regained his freedom. As
usual I found it well-crafted and well
thought out but I don't necessarily
agree with his views. Or perhaps it
would be better to say that faced with
similar choices I wouldn't have made
the same decisions Ted made. But that's
a very subjective matter indeed; I fre-
quently break laws that I don't feel
are valid. I guess what it boils down
to is the nature of one's lifestyle and
how often it conflicts with current so-
cietal regulations and I just don't
happen to have much interest in most
illegal drugs. (I'm in complete agree-
ment with Ted that decriminalization of
most drugs would be a good idea, but I
don't seriously expect it will happen
in my lifetime.) Even though I would
not have done what Ted did, I think
he's explained his situation and his
beliefs calmly and sensibly and it'll
be interesting to see if there's any
negative reaction to this article. Even
in fandom, I expect there are some
people who feel that breaking a law you
sincerely feel is morally wrong is un

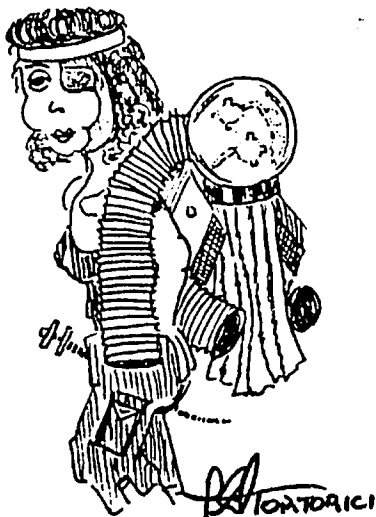
acceptable, even if you accept the con-
sequences of that action, and I'll be
intrigued as to what arguments, if any,
they bring to bear on Ted.

George R. Evans Thanks for
203 Frederick St. sending DoS. I
Mount Joy PA 17552 don't have a lot
of time for the
fanfield, but of the few publications
I've seen, yours is a class act. On a
skim-read of the Ted White piece--why
that, my friend, was as good a horror
story as you can describe. There's no
use addressing the Ted Whites of the
world on anything beyond their own con-
cept that "If I want to do it, I should
be able to do it and NO ONE has a right
to stop me..."

It isn't a brave defiance of "bad
laws;" the visible horrors of the
things he thinks it should be okay for
him and like people to use and to pro-
vide to others is all around us--and
undeniable. That his conscience (if
any) is clear makes the case sadder.
Following his own explanation of who,
how, why,, and his/their "right" -- by
that very rationale, if the cops who
finally busted him had, in THEIR "clear
conscience" believed it "best for all"
to defy his protective laws and put a
handful of slugs into him, they ought
to be acquitted and accepted. More so,
because probably they were improving
society.

Parents, grandparents, caring rela-
tives and such see "justices" all over
the country violating their oath to
"protect the American people under law"
by actually releasing and protecting
the cancers destroying our body...and
then the cancers sneer, "WE've got a
'right.' No one else has...even to pro-
tect their own lives." In a word, I
don't buy one damned justification of
White's, and I wish he had a con-
science, and it would put him in unend-
ing HELL.

Scott Gray I agree with Ted
372 Fifth Ave White's arguments
Brooklyn NY against the drug war.
11215 In fact, I thought
the case for legaliza-
tion was clear and the case against



prohibition indefensible. Until I started thinking about two points:

1) The drug war is many horrible things, including genocide and a political smokescreen. But being against the drug war doesn't mean you should favor legalization. Those who are running the drug war aren't at all interested in public health or human lives. But I can't necessarily follow that up by saying that legalization is the best way to help people.

2) If you legalize (heroin, for example), some people are going to become addicts who would not have become addicts under prohibition, if only because of the easier access. A lot of "marginal," of whom I am one, aren't willing to go to the trouble it takes to satisfy their curiosity about heroin. I mean, I live in NYC at the peak of the drug-hysteria decade, and I couldn't show you a single place to buy heroin. So it can't be as available as the media portrayal of "a crack house on every block" suggests. But if I could pick up a needle and a hit at Duane Reade, I'd sure be tempted to try it. Now, obviously that would be an issue of personal choice. If I wanted to risk addiction, that would be my responsibility. I can see that point in favor of legalization.

But the thing is, you've got to be prepared to take a strictly utilitarian position that says, "We'll sacrifice some 'marginals' to stop the murderous drug war." I just wish we could find a way to encourage folks not to turn to drugs, without waging a war against the people who do.

Alexander R. Slate
same address
as above

Ted White's
essay on drugs
is a difficult
subject to dis-

cuss. I'm not sure, but I may be a bit of a hypocrite about this topic. My feelings run all the way from libertarian 'let everyone go to hell in their own way' to 'no, the current laws making these drugs illegal are correct.' Of course, part of my feelings may be colored by the fact that I have three small children, though I'm not sure that having drugs illegal will protect them from their use. I have never used any of the strong drugs and never will.

This is from a belief that these things probably aren't going to do me any good so why mess with my body. I do not smoke. I have smoked upon the rare occasion, as some friends can attest, but have never become addicted and have never smoked more than three cigarettes on any one day (normally it was several months between cigarettes). I am a social drinker, and a sparing one at that. Most things, if used in moderation, won't do enough harm to matter, and their occasional use can be pleasurable. I do think that we should treat all the above items the same, though within certain limits.

On a purely philosophical level, I think I lean more to the libertarian viewpoint. But the freedom to do whatever you want to yourself ends when it affects me. Here's where we get into reasons for restricting, though not necessarily banning, certain things. Cigarettes are a good example of this.

Cigarettes are proven unhealthy. This is true whether you are doing the smoking yourself or you are a passive smoker breathing in someone else's smoke. No one should have to breathe the smoke from anyone else's cigarette, cigar or pipe unless it is their conscious decision to do so. Therefore I approve of limiting the places where people can smoke. I also don't like the idea of my having to financially support those stupid enough to do serious harm to themselves by smoking. This includes taxes for subsidies on tobacco and increased health care costs to pay for indigent smokers.

The same is true for marijuana, even though pot is probably less dangerous than tobacco.

Using heroin or cocaine or some of the other drugs is probably most analogous to drinking alcohol. Your shooting up or snorting isn't going to affect my health unless you do something stupid like driving while stoned or turning violent or stealing to support your habit. Possibly we can let people use these substances and punish them severely for misuse. And I think those who cause harm while under the influence of alcohol should be severely punished; we've been much too lax for far too long.

Certain other drugs, such as many

hallucinogens are in a special category. The LSD flashback is an uncontrolled phenomenon. I would not want someone who used these substances to be in control of others' lives when this happens, e.g. I wouldn't want them piloting a plane or running a nuclear plant. But if users of these substances will voluntarily forgo some of their rights to enter certain professions and some other things, such as driving, then I'm willing to listen.

Helen E. Davis
2327 Shroyer Road
Oakwood, OH 45419

It was interesting to read Ted White's essay and see how things look from his point of view. I will stand on my side of the fence, however, and argue that I don't want to see hard drugs legalized. I have run into people who were high a few times in my life, and it was a relief to get away. People who are high tend to not be in very good control of themselves. I feel that if hard drugs were legal, then more people would use them openly, and then I would run into them more often... As a drug, marijuana is rather on the same scale as alcohol to me, but with one major exception. It is a drug that can affect more than just the user --second hand highs do exist. And not all of us enjoy being chemically high. If marijuana were legal and openly used, as tobacco is, then people would find themselves getting chemically high whether they wanted to or not. Their civil rights would be trampled. So by keeping it illegal, its use and distribution are kept quiet and mostly out of the public way. Why should alcohol be legal if marijuana and hard drugs are not? 1) Alcohol is regulated by a code of historical and social dictates. When it is appropriate to drink, what it is appropriate to drink, how much is appropriate to drink, and how to think about people who violate the code. Tee-totalers are held in as much suspicion as drunkards. Hard drugs and marijuana don't have this code, not in American society. 2) You can't take away all our mood-altering drugs! Leave us something, and that will be enough to keep us happy.

{I would certainly like to know more about that alcohol code

of conduct! Ask any alcoholic how much attention s/he pays to it. And the tee-totaller is as suspect as the drunkard?! Yes, when I was a drunkard, I was often (sometimes dimly) aware of social disapproval, but that certainly wasn't why I quit. As a tee-totaller, I am conscious of no stigma. No one even notices that I don't drink, unless I happen to mention it. Generalizations are so confusing!}

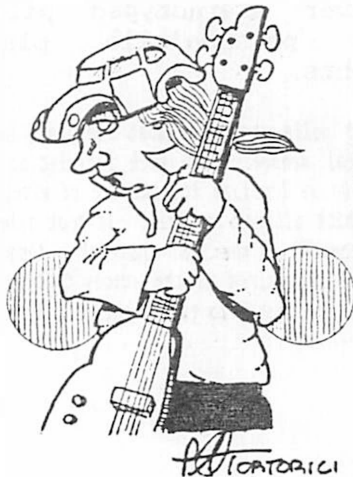
Rich Dengrove
same address
as above

Come on Ted, be real; it's not just a few bureaucrats up at some ivory water cooler who believe that dope is a menace. The last polls I've seen put the percentage of Americans who believe at above 80%. And this isn't just brainwashing. Even more vigorous propaganda campaigns have not convinced the majority the war in Vietnam was good or tax increases are necessary or the Contras are the equivalent of the Founding Fathers or abortion should be shipped to Siberia or all guns should be confiscated. No, people on their own believe that drugs are a menace. Some of this fear stems from the actual disastrous consequences of taking some illegal drug. Some stems from fears about minorities, Puerto Ricans and Blacks. Some stems from fears that their kids will start taking drugs. Some stems from fears about themselves. They can see themselves succumbing to ecstasy from some enslaving syringe, as opposed to the maybe quiet but often gnawing desperation of their lives. While those who spend their time in an unshaved stupor, saliva and vomit pouring down, often do not care, those who envision themselves in this state are appalled. Especially if they fear they are weak enough to start on this royal road to ruin after taking the first hit of whatever stereotyped pill, pipe or other paraphelalia plagues their thoughts.

(And polls show that most Americans believe Satan is real and a real menace. How much legislation should be based on polls? Do we legalize the burning of witches just because most people think witches are evil? It took a long time for abortion to be accepted in the U.S. It took a long time for the Vietnam War to be recognized as the idiocy that it was. It'll take a long time for people to take a rational attitude toward drugs.)

Terry Jeeves Whilst accepting
 same address the right of the in-
 as above dividual to kill him
 self in any way he
 chooses, I have no sympathy for Ted as
 he tries to justify his own personal
 drug activities. He broke the law, got
 caught and busted. As for making out
 marijuana ought to be legalized, this
 is another kettle of fish. Right now
 it ain't and handling it is illegal. He
 knew that, yet broke the law. One can't
 just pick and choose which laws we
 like. Why can't I drive the wrong way
 down a one-way street? It's my life,
 isn't it? (as well as that of the bloke
 coming the other way.) I don't like
 high income tax, so why pay it? and so
 on. As to the concept of legalizing
 marijuana because booze is legal, I
 accept the argument that both booze and
 pot can be addictive, but oppose legal-
 izing the latter. No logical reason
 why other than the fact that I don't
 like the drug scene and what it even-
 tually leads to in the degradation of
 the individual and his behavior in so-
 ciety.

(Well, my contention now, just as when we were arguing this
 same issue in DoS back in the '70s, is that people in fact DO
 pick and choose among which laws to obey and which to ignore or
 openly defy. We're ALL law breakers to some extent. Most
 Americans find some way to cheat on their income taxes; a small
 minority do simply refuse to pay them (if they never file at all
 they can get away with it for years). Almost no one pays much
 attention to the highway speed limits unless they know there's a
 patrol car in the area; people drive at the speed at which
 they're comfortable, regardless of the posted limits. During
 Prohibition, people who wanted to drink found a way to drink.
 We're in an era of Drug Prohibition; but people who want to use
 drugs find a way to do it.)



Alexis Gilliland As far as drug-
 same address dealing goes, one
 as above does not have to
 take Ted White as gospel
 (though he makes an excellent case) to
 know that our present drug laws are
 grossly irrational. The current boom
 in our prison population is largely due
 to drug arrests, and if anyone feels
 that we have too many prisoners locked
 up at \$25,000 a year, the solution is
 not to incarcerate larger numbers for
 less, but to rationalize our laws, so
 that we make fewer arrests.

How should we rationalize those
 laws? For openers, we can treat our
 major popular drugs the same: alcohol,
 tobacco and marijuana should all be
 legal, but forbidden to advertise in
 magazines, newspapers, billboards, rad-
 io or TV. No sports promotions, and no
 vending machines, either. The lesser
 drugs, like PCP, Ecstasy and LSD can be
 decriminalized, perhaps with the caveat
 that crimes committed "under the influ-
 ence" should be treated as premeditat-
 ed. The hard stuff? Government dis-
 pensing centers will sell heroin, meth-
 amphetamine and cocaine at cost, keep-
 ing track of the sales, so that once
 you reach a certain level of use, they
 put you in a room where you can have
 all you want on demand for the rest of
 your life. A self-administered death
 penalty for out-of-control users seems
 harsh, but they can serve as examples
 for school children as part of the con-
 tra-addiction education programs.

The main advantages are that by le-
 galizing drugs while applying a gag
 order for their commercial promotion,
 we make them simultaneously more avail-
 able and less attractive. Entrepre-
 neurs canno longer hustle the stuff for
 high profits, selling drugs will no
 longer be cool, and the subversion of
 our courts and police (and mayors--hel-
 lo there, Marion Barry) will cease. To
 ensure that drugs, including alcohol
 and tobacco, remain less attractive, we
 include a contra-addiction program in
 school, prophylaxis for a serious so-
 cial ill which can take many forms.

Will this cure the problem? Of
 course not, but it might minimize the
 damage. It may only be the best that
 can be done in the circumstances, but
 considering that we are willing to tol-

erate more annual deaths from car crashes than died in the whole Vietnam War, it ought to suffice.

Ted White I like guns
1014 N. Tuckahoe St. myself. I could
Falls Church, VA hunt and kill an
22046 animal if my survival required it;
I could skin and gut it too. Nor do I
condemn hunting: I think it lurks in
our genes.

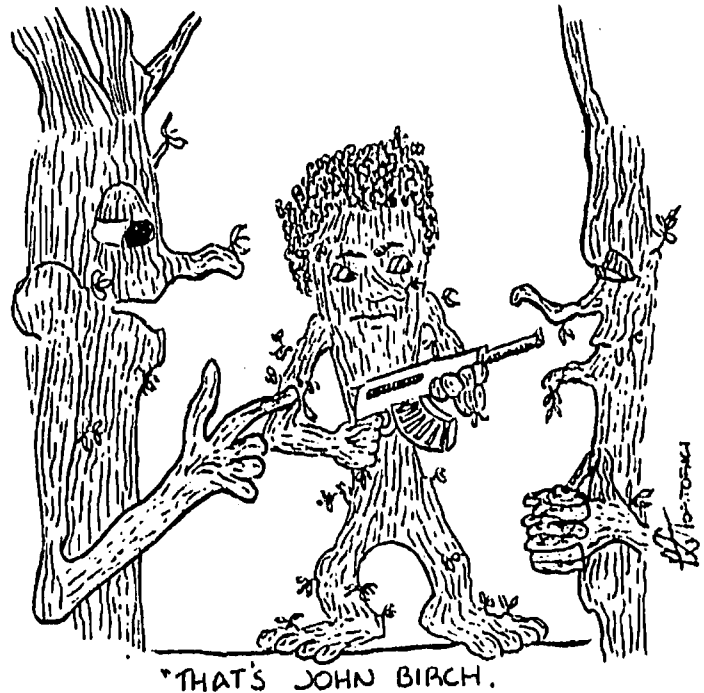
But. I am in favor of some forms of gun control.

The Constitution strikes me as a red herring in this regard. It was written, after all, in a time when virtually every household was armed, but with guns that bear almost no resemblance to modern weaponry. Loading and shooting a gun in those days was no simple thing. Between shots you cleaned, primed, loaded powder, loaded shot, and loaded a "patch" or bit of rag to keep the shot from falling out. Misfires were common. More important, you needed a gun not so much to protect you from people as to hunt for food and to care for your animals (a shot between the eyes is still the most humane treatment for a crippled horse; other farm animals might in time also require execution.) A gun is, in a sense, a farm tool.

Today you have 14-year-old kids carrying Uzis and other automatic, rapid-fire weapons. That's insane. And the greatest concentration of handguns and the like is in the inner cities, not on farms. These are just deaths, waiting to occur, either by accident or design. ("Hey, I want your Nikes. Gimme or I kill you....")

Roy Lavender thinks that "Probably the most restrictive laws against private ownership of guns in this country are those of Washington, D.C. And it is the murder capital of the world."

Oh come on, Roy,--the world? Get real. I haven't checked to compare, but I thought New York City's were the most restrictive laws on guns. The point is, however, that the laws of a given city are meaningless as long as surrounding jurisdictions have more lenient laws. Those in D.C. who want to buy guns legally can easily do it in Virginia and even more easily in West



Virginia (where no questions are asked and even I, a convicted felon, could buy a gun.) Of course I doubt that most of the guns used in D.C. by criminals were bought legally. They are more likely stolen (from a legal owner) or bought on the underground market. (That's one thing about making drugs illegal: you set up a system that not only supplies that demand but can meet other needs as well, since the market is in place.) Obviously, only national laws can have much real effect.

rich brown I made an er-
508 N. Highland #B4 ror in my pub-
Arlington, VA 22201 lished loc with
regard to the
benefits of smoking grass. As a regular smoker, I'm unlikely to get glaucoma--but the likelihood of me getting cataracts is the same as anyone else's.

(Error also noted by Ted White in an edited-out portion of the letter printed above.)

I'd like to offer some amplification to what Ted said in his piece about dealing, where he lays the blame for making some drugs illegal at the feet of certain feifdoms which otherwise would not exist within the government.

What Ted says is true as far as it goes, but there are other forces at

work which he has not bothered to mention. The tobacco and alcohol lobbies, for two, which are afraid of the competition legal marijuana would give them--smoking grass actually makes you feel good, has none of the side-effects of alcohol and only a few of the bad side effects of nicotine (i.e., I suspect if you smoked the equivalent of two packs of grass a day, you might do equally bad damage to your lungs, etc., but I don't know anyone who's ever smoked, or wanted to smoke, that much grass in a day, and if there were I have serious doubts anyone continuing at that volume for a second day).

Then too, I suspect there are "invisible lobbies--which is to say, various arms of organized crime that do not care to identify themselves as such, who do everything in their considerable power to keep cocaine and heroin from being legalized and thereby maintaining the cash flow provided by those two high-profit powders to their coffers. Moralizing about the evils of drugs is one of their best weapons; legalization, they say with scorn, means druggies could never get free of their habit--just as if, under the present scheme of things, there's a lot of hope those druggies will get free.

How many of those hypocrites, do you think, would vote in favor of having a drug rehabilitation clinic within five miles of their homes?

The simple truth is that, absent the need to sell heroin or cocaine "underground," a legitimate chemical/pharmaceutical concern could produce, sell and make a wholly taxable profit on either or both of these drugs by supplying them at a cost to the true addicts of a few dollars a day, compared to the hundreds they now have to spend.

At a minimum, that would mean taking millions, if not billions, out of the pockets of organized crime. It might also very well mean that addicts could support their habits on the salary they got for doing some menial but necessary job, instead of engaging in burglary and/or robbery.

But, hey, legalization would make too much sense--I grant you that.

I beg to quibble with two of your readers: Terry Jeeves on alcoholism and Ian Creasy on the "addictive" qualities

of grass.

You corrected Terry by pointing out that alcoholism is a "selective" addiction, affecting only about one in ten people who happen to be the specific genetic type, but failed to correct his notion (implicit in his statement that alcohol was never a "problem" with him since he could drink large quantities without being incapable) that alcoholics are just people who can't hold their liquor.

Alcoholics are people who do not metabolize alcohol as efficiently as a non-alcoholic; as a result, a "secondary" metabolizing system kicks in which is superior in all but one important feature to the regular (non-alcoholic) metabolizing system--that feature being the breakdown of acetaldehyde into acetate. Acute acetaldehyde buildup is painful in and of itself.

In the earliest stages of the disease, however, the superior metabolizing system means the alcoholic tends to be the kind of person who can consume large quantities without becoming incapacitated; s/he is often the person who drives his/her drinking buddies home, sucking on a bottle of whiskey, while they are passed out or incapable of tying their shoelaces.

Initially, the intake of alcohol improves the alcoholic's ability to think and function in a reasonably rational manner--they experience drunkenness comparable to what non-alcoholics do only when they stop drinking.

[I have to interrupt. rich is getting carried away with some generalizations that do not all match my own experience as an alcoholic. The only way I've ever gotten drunk is by drinking, never by stopping; nor can I claim that my functioning on any level has been improved by drinking (though that pleasant illusion is easily created). What happens when a drunk stops drinking abruptly is withdrawal--the shakes, nausea, headaches, a strong wish to curl up and die. Not similar to being drunk. But I also don't claim that my experience necessarily says anything about other alcoholics; it's hard to find a universal pattern.]

But the alcoholic inevitably, through no fault of his/her own, gets caught up in a terrible kind of Catch-22, a damned if you do/damned if you don't situation, in which s/he "must" drink not only to think and function properly, but to kick-start their secondary alcohol processing systems to

keep the acute buildup of acetaldehyde at arm's distance.

Unfortunately, the more they drink the more the acetaldehyde builds up. It's like using a bilge-powered bilge pump in which you have to put a half gallon of bilge in to get rid of a quart and a half, and what you have in the pump replaces what you've gotten rid of.

[Don't expect me to quarrel with that; it's a very graphic and accurate image for the final stages--at least in my case.]

Creasy contradicts the "popular mythology" that cannabis is not addictive on the basis of his observation that some of his friends, who started with the occasional joint every fortnight, are up to 4-5 joints a night.

Goodness; the mind bobbles.

I've known people who started out drinking milk only maybe once a month to lose themselves in similar abandon, consuming upwards of three or four glasses a day, but nothing as bad as what Ian reports here....

Seriously, the test of addiction must rely on more than a desire for a thing; we try various things in our lives and the things we find pleasurable we want to do more than once, not because we're addicted to them but because they're pleasurable. Sex. Good books. Movies. We might kiddingly speak of those who increased indulgence in these activities as being "addicted" to them, but it is not the same thing as being addicted to morphine.

According to the World Health Organization, the addiction-producing drugs are those which produce in the great majority of users (1) an irresistible need for the drug; (2) an increased tolerance to the effects of the drug; and (3) physical dependence on the drug, which manifests itself in severe, painful and often prolonged withdrawal symptoms when the drug is for any reason unavailable.

The real test of whether you are addicted to something is not connected so much to how much like it as to whether or not you can leave it alone.

I have been smoking grass off and on now for well over a quarter century, and my rate of consumption, when I have it on hand, has ranged from 0 to per-

haps 6-7 joints a night. The "0" is on nights when I don't feel inclined to smoke. The "6-7" involves nights when I'm out partying with friends.

The war on drugs being what it is, there are frequent "dry" spells. Sometimes when I run out it takes upwards of several months to get more. Now I grant you that I miss not having it--but doing without doesn't cause me any physical (and little, if any, emotional) distress. I'm not going to go out and knock old ladies over the head to keep myself supplied.

Also heard from:

Clifton Ansbury, David Bates, Carl Bettis, Sheryl Birkhead, Richard Brandt, Bill Bridget, Tom Digby, "Caz", A. Vincent Clarke, Pavel Gregoric Jr., Feddy Harvia, Vera W. Heminger, Tom Jackson, Fred Jakobcic, Brian Kelly, Arnie Katz, Roy Lavender, Joseph T. Mayhew, Berislav Pinjuh, Margaret Ranson, Ed Rom, Frances Scobie, David Szurek, A.J. Sullivan, John Thiel, Phil Totorici, R Lorraine Tutibasi, Michael W. Waite, B. Ware, Harry Warner Jr., Jean Weber, and Joe Workman.

Some species became extinct due to adolescent rumination. The Feosaur, over-given to day-dreaming and to hiding in quicksand, rarely dated.



... which worked out for the best... aesthetically.

Joe Mayhew

10-30-90



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