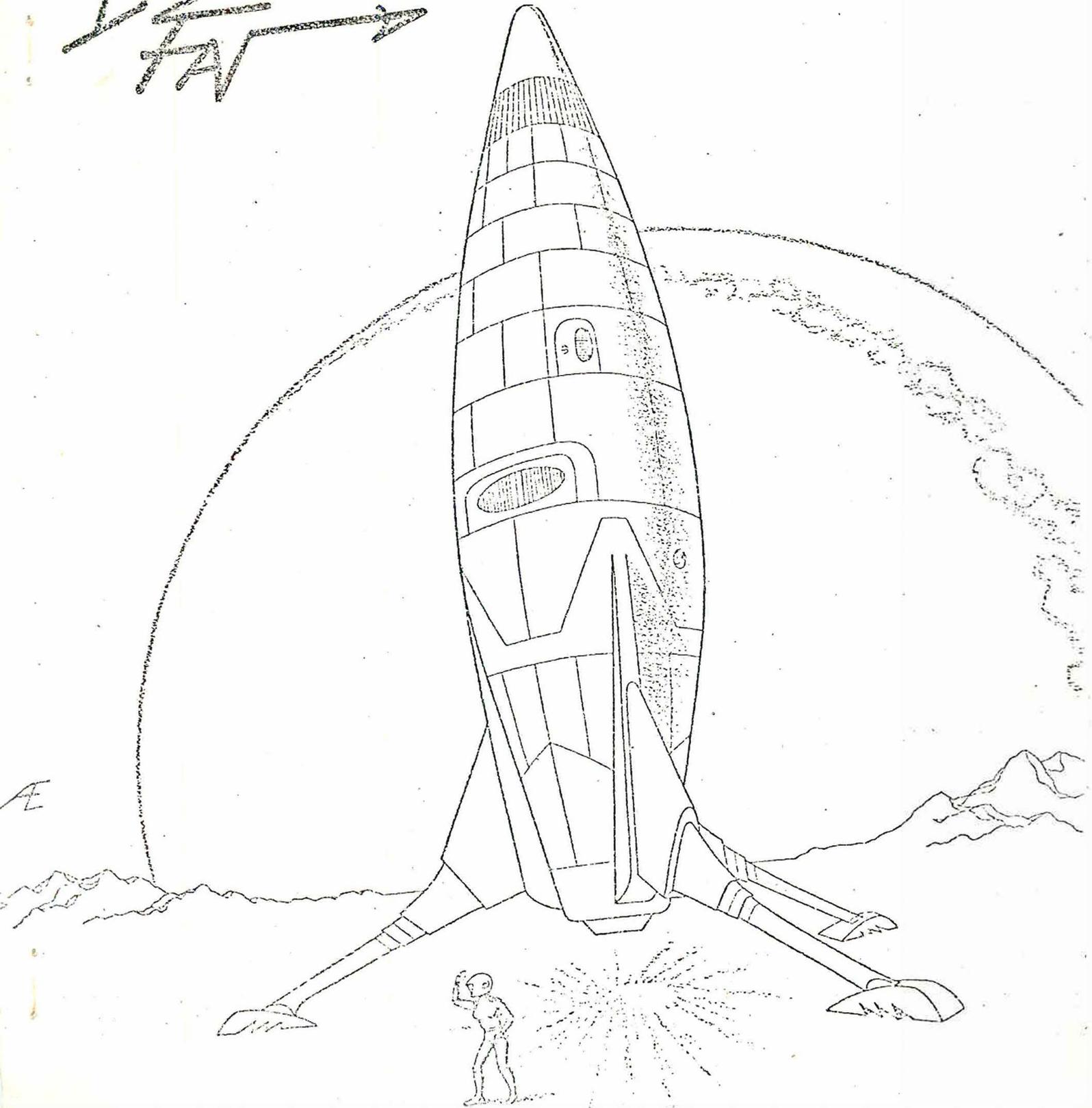


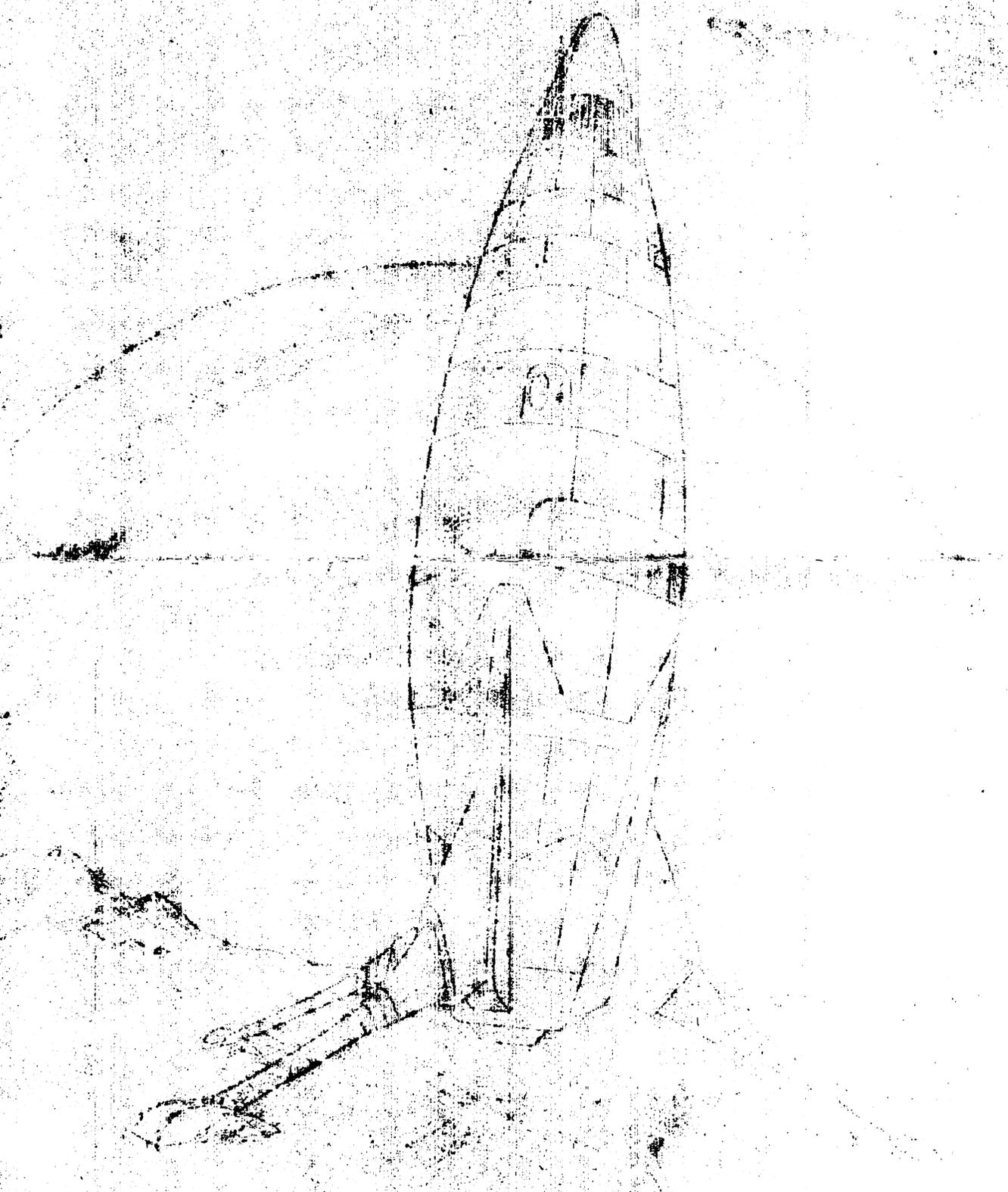
THE POSSIBLE
INVISIBLE
FAT →

VI



1941

17



THE INVISIBLE FAN #5
(SILVER DAGGER PUBLICATION #26)

Winter, 1977-78

Perpetrated by Avedon Carol

You Are Here.....	1
Reelin' In The Years.....	2
"Something Ineluctably Masculine".....Jeanne Gomoll.....	5
Desolation Row.....Joel Sattler.....	12
The Fan and The Famine Examined.....Jack Howard Lechner.....	14
You Know It's Really Raining... ..Helen Berrotini.....	16
And That Concludes The News... ..	20

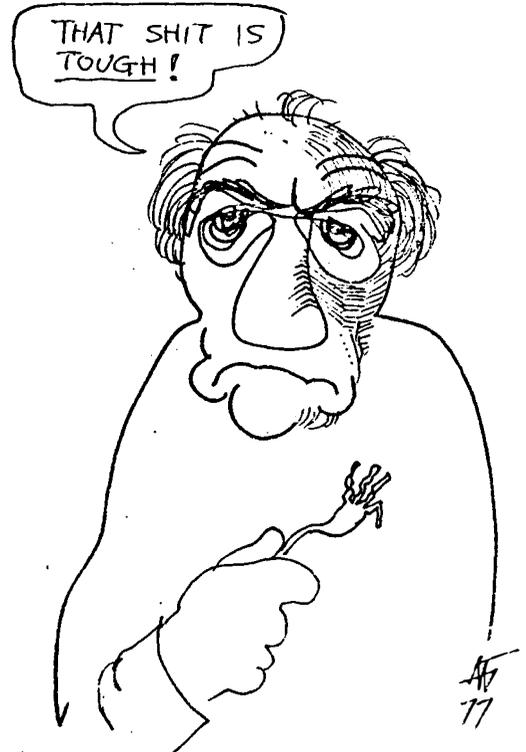
Illustrations: Cover--Alex Eisenstein
 Alexis Gilliland--2,10,12,17,19,22,23,24
 Dan Steffan--5,7,9,15,18
 Jessica Amanda Salmonson--6
 Alex Eisenstein--8
 Sarah Prince--11
 Jeanne Gomoll--13, and lettering on P.6
 Steve Stiles--14
 Pat Mueller--16
 Stu Schiffman--20, 25
 Back Cover--Ice Scarlet

Copyright © 1978 by Avedon Carol. All rights are hereby assigned to the contributors.

The Invisible Fan is available for the usual or three 13¢ stamps U.S. (I'll take money if you insist) from:

Avedon Carol
 4409 Woodfield Road
 Kensington, Maryland
 20795

"Show me someone who is not full of herself and I'll show you an empty person."
 --Nikki Giovanni



REELIN' IN THE YEARS

and other stories

OF COURSE I HAVE A BAD ATTITUDE!
MY DOCTOR PRESCRIBED IT FOR MY ULCER.



First, a word to those of you who seem to want to know why the hell I am going to school in spite of my obvious lack of enthusiasm (hi there, Jenny Brown). I am going because I need a nice shiny degree so I can have some freedom to treat my patients without being required to have somebody who knows far less about gynecology than I do peeking over my shoulder and telling me what's true and what's not. It gets just a little ridiculous when I'm told that certain medical facts (like the fact that vinegar works just as well in treating trichomonas, and is much safer) are just my politics and I have no business propagandizing my patients, when it happens to be true, and the flagyl which most doctors recommend is often deadly and might not even work. Or when a virgin with a degree has to counsel a pregnant 14-year old because without a degree I can't, legally--and I've at least been pregnant and have some idea of what I'm talking about. It is somewhat bizarre, I think, that I am forced to train people who just got out of school so that they can supervise me. And it's damned aggravating that I am considered an expert in my field and

yet am still having a hell of a time getting any money for my work. So, despite all the fear and loathing I have for school, here I am among the blue-jeaned edition of what, ten years ago, were the villager blouse and bouffant hairdo females, now believing themselves hip, I suppose, due to having tried the demon weed and possibly the pill, and their male counterparts, long-haired and stoned but showing little real difference from the chux-and-banlons shorthaired boys of ten years ago. I can tell there is no real difference;

they use words like "faggy" and "n-----" and so on--real intellectual, aware types, you dig? And when the instructor spoke of a certain famous political philosopher, the diligent note-taker to my left wrote "Marks". Sigh. I just know I don't belong here...

By now you've noticed, I assume, that I am no longer justifying my margins. I have hardly bothered, in fact, to give much consideration to my layout at all, since I simply have not been able to find the time to think about this zine, what with the advent of my return to acedeme and all that. It's just going down as it goes down, and if it looks ok, that will be real nice. Besides, I was getting tired of LoCs from people demanding to know what the hell was wrong with me. Perhaps this zine will degenerate into a more normal looking mess. ("Now *that* looks more like a good first issue, kid")

If you were here for the last few issues, you may recall I've had a feature called *The Archival Gilliland* appearing more-or-less regularly, and you may also remember my saying in the last issue that I would be running part two of *Problems of the Superrace* here in #5. Well, it

isn't. I didn't run it yet because I'm still having a devil of a time trying to figure out what to do about the bloody pronouns and I think I'm going to have to get together with Alexis and brainstorm with him over it, but I sure as hell don't have the time for that right now, so it's going to have to wait. I also mentioned a possible book review, but since the author of that review has gone well out of his way to prove to me that he is the most dishonorable individual I have ever had the misfortune to know, I don't think I will be printing anything more by him. And that concludes the business about what *isn't* in this issue (unless you count Steve Davidson).

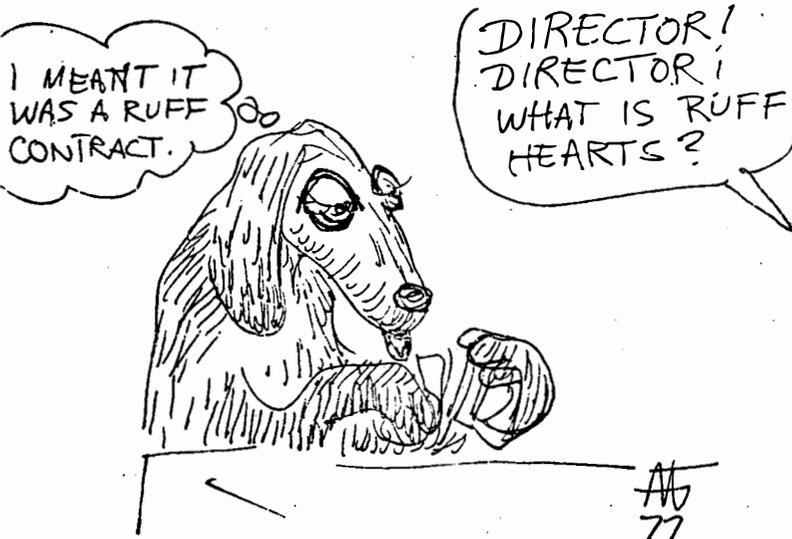
What is in this issue is an article by Jeanne Gomoll about one of my very favorite writers, one (or three) James Tiptree Junior, or Racoon Sheldon, or Alice Sheldon, who by any other name would still tell one hell of a fine story. You have no idea how gratified I feel about this whole Tiptree/Sheldon thing. They laughed when I said I found it hard to believe that "The Women Men Don't See" was written by a man. They being men, of course. My friend Josy kept telling me it was impossible anyway, and I've never known her to be wrong. Well, now her record is intact, and I'm all pleased. I was on one of those 9 million Women in SF panels once, and I was babbling about how the new crop of female writers were writing *as women*, and how that is what made the difference in the way women were affecting the field--that is, that these women are writing about those things which have become primarily women's concerns, like reproduction and such, and before I had a chance to except Tiptree ("Your Haploid Heart"), someone else mentioned that story rather triumphantly. Thought they'd really caught me up. Well, I'd like to take this opportunity to say: Nyaa Nyaa Nyaa. I love you, Alice B. Sheldon.

As I sit here, this cold and dark day after Xmas, the year 1977 is yet

crawling to a close, and one hell of a year it has been, too. I have learned many things. I have learned, for example, that you really *can't* be too careful, because no matter how well you build up your defenses and believe that you know your enemy, he (and I use the pronoun fluently) can still sneak in and twist you up good, as long as you have allowed any part of yourself to remain human. I have learned that you *can* go back, but only in the most extraordinary cases. I have learned that the best surprise at a Holiday Inn (You were at Philcon this year?) is no surprise (I mean, I really shouldn't have to wear my full-length wool winter coat over my jacket and a scarf-like-a-blanket when I'm *inside* the hotel, for one thing. And that's just *one thing*). I learned that Oregon is not pronounced Or-re-gone, but is pronounced Orygun, if you are in the presence of anyone who is from there. I have learned that no matter how well you have proven your



word, some people would rather believe that you are lying or crazy than believe that the frightening story you tell them is true, even when you can call up some pretty strong witnesses. I have learned that some people are even crazier than I would have believed possible. I have learned that I can live for two weeks without eating much solid food to speak of. And most of all I have learned (from a *most* appropriate source) that there really *is* one born every minute, and one of them was born female and armenian in Kensington, Maryland, on 30 December in 1951. Oh, yeah, and I learned how to play bridge, too.



I have also *done* many things this year. Some of them I have already discussed above. Some of them have no place in a zine like this. And some of them I can't remember. One thing I remember is driving an awfully long time to get to miami. I know I didn't want to go to miami, but you know how it is. I was on a couple of panels, and I even saw a few that I wasn't on. The ones I was on, of course, had titles like "Sexism in Fandom" and "Feminism in Fandom", as anyone could have predicted. I was awake for one of them. I even went to the Hugo Banquet, and cheered and booed in all of the appropriate places. As you

may have guessed, there were several places which I considered very appropriate for booing.

Normally I'm not what you would call a big fan of masquerades, but this year I decided to be uncool and join Ctein in "Slave Boys of Gor" (a worthy cause, I felt) as the slavemaster. We drafted another slave who had the proper qualifications (nice ass) named Steve Johnson, and ended up winning a very tacky certificate for Best Presentation. At the Hugo loser's party, someone looked at me and said "What are you doing here? You *won* something!"

Can somebody explain to me why so many men made passes at me while I was walking around with that whip?

Another thing I did this year was misplace a lot of things people sent me to put in this issue. I imagine that these things are buried somewhere under my Psych notes or something, but that's another story. Or maybe not.

I also went to Philcon twice. The first time it was snowing like crazy and took forever in second gear. It was good people and good times interspersed with some very nasty things. The second time it was a more normal drive to Philly, but again good people were packed in between some ghastly things. Well, that's the war for ya, I guess. I would like to state here for the record that I did not jack anyone up against a wall or in any way assault anyone there; however, if I hear the story again, I may bloody well do it.

I found Star Wars trading cards in Wonder Bread. I have always been fascinated by the things they put in Wonder bread. I'll trade you two Darth Vaders for a Grand Moff Tarken...

A lot of people say a lot of things about fans and fandom, but I'll tell ya one thing right now: I've got some good friends in fandom like no one I've ever met outside of it, and there were times this year when, without you, I couldn't have made it. When I needed you, you were right there, no matter where I touched, solid like a rock.

“something ineluctably masculine”

by Jeanne Gomoll

COMPARATIVE ART DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN, MADISON, WI, TERRA I

...REQUIREMENTS FOR A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

PREREQUISITES FOR ADMISSION: A masters degree in Comparative Arts, or any field of Terran I language or art, or any other degree acquired from any of the other departments of Comparison concerned with aspects of and variations between human cultures in the various alternate universes. The committee on Comparative Arts will consult with the appropriate participating departments of each of the Terran alternate worlds (in compliance with #8027-A-123 of the Alternate Terran Worlds Pact, Educational Section) when reviewing the admission request...

(Selections from the subdept. of "Genetic vs Socialized Determinants in Art: follow:)

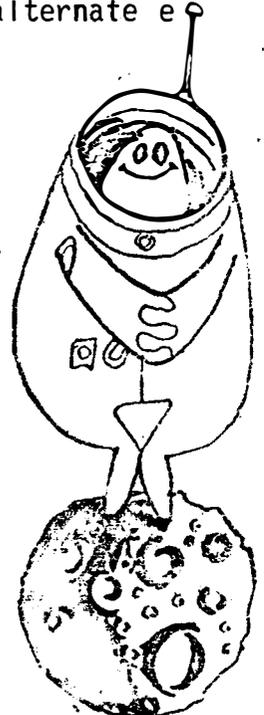
...FIELD TECHNIQUES AND METHODOLOGY (4 cr.) "Turning the Corner" techniques, "World Hopping" skills and etiquette practiced and perfected. Self-Real World orientation hypnosis conducted. Recording methodology, theory confirmation (through hypothesis world setting techniques), discretion and escape, and Impromptu camouflage covered. This course is a prerequisite for all other Comparative Art classes. AW insurance coverage (maximum amount) required for admission. Survival constitutes a passing grade.

THE EFFECTS OF VISABLE SPECTRUM RANGES AND VARIATIONS ON TERRAN ART (2 sem., 8 cr) A survey course covering Western, Eastern, African, American and excentric art form progression as influenced by the visable spectrum percieved by the various alternate e Terran world peoples/ things.

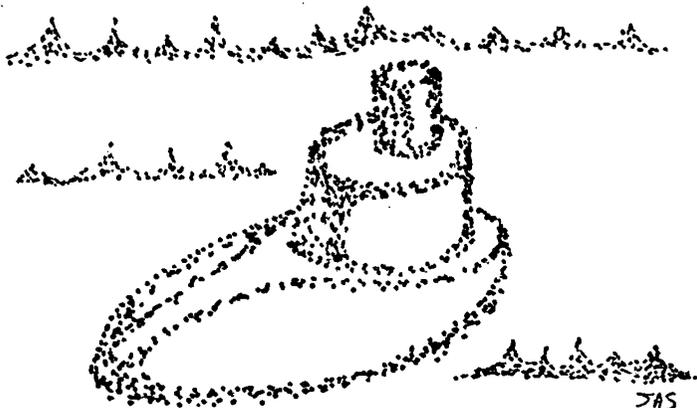
THE MEDICI'S CONTRIBUTION TO RENNAISSANCE CULTURE (3 cr.) European cultures in the 15th and 16th century are viewed in their different permutations as affected by varying influences of the Medici family. Concentration on four alternate universes; further field trips optional. Prerequisites: knowledge of Romance languages and Monte Carlo Behaviorology.

COMPARATIVE ARTS: HUMAN POTENTIAL (2 sem., 8 cr) Survey of the range of Human physical and psychological characteristics as they relate to artistic achievement. Co-taught by Learning theory (PSYCH/PHIL Dept).

SEMINAR: WHAT IF SHAKESPEARE HAD BEEN BORN A WOMAN? (3 cr). Detailed study of Shakespeare's works through the various possibilities suggested by Shakespeare's having been born something other than a white, male, Anglo-Saxon. Emphasis on AW-Mobile worlds.



Such would be a mere sampling from the Graduate School Bulletin in this unwritten story of a world in which mobility among alternate universes has been made routine. I like to think my hero would be an excentric researcher in that department looking for the most extraordinary of worlds to stimulate her notions of what-is-possible, and what-is-right in her own world. Possibly she'd be involved in making evident (or perhaps the world would have found it obvious long ago) that when sex is made a determining factor in our expectations of an artist's capacities or abilities (or genius)--it is more of a restricting force emanating from the culture without, than from the artist's chromosomes.



And yet we who are writing in science fiction forms *can* peek into alternate worlds and *can* free our minds and our hearts with such imaginary excursions. And in our midst we have the exciting opportunity to look at one writer who has been reacted to as *both* a woman and a man. The author is James Tiptree, Jr./Raccoona Sheldon/Alice Sheldon.

About this author, Robert Silverberg has written:

It has been suggested that Tiptree is female, a theory that I find absurd, for there is to me something ineluctably masculine about Tiptree's writing. I don't think the novels of Jane Austen

could have been written by a man nor the stories of Ernest Hemingway by a woman, and in the same way I believe the author of the James Tiptree stories is male.

His...keen knowledge of the world of hunters and fishermen, in ["The Women Men Don't See"]..., would appear to prove him male.

Such certainty now seems merely absurd. (James Tiptree, Jr. was last year revealed to be Alice Sheldon, who has written also under the pseudonym of Raccoona Sheldon.) Had Tiptree always been known as a woman, would Silverberg have compared her stories that are "lean, muscular, supple, relying heavily on dialog broken by bursts of stripped-down exposition" to Hemingway who "preferred to be simple, direct and straightforward" and was "a formidable and extraordinary technical innovator"? Or would he instead have suggested that Tiptree's prose reminded one of Lillian Hellman's writing, which is equally lean, muscular and supple, relying heavily on dialog broken by bursts of stripped-down exposition? Perhaps. Though undoubtedly, a word like "muscular" would have been omitted, and replaced by a more acceptable feminine one to point out the dramatic and inevitable differences between men's versus women's writing. Since last year when James Tiptree was revealed to be Alice Sheldon, people have been rereading things written, and generally rearranging all sorts of assumptions and preconceptions.

The whole affair has an air about it like that of the old joke about the mysterious doctor. (A child's father has been killed in the same accident that seriously injured his son. The doctor, after taking one look at the child when the boy is brought into the emergency ward at the hospital, says, "I cannot operate on this child. He is my son." Who is the doctor?) Why, one wonders, is that considered a "trick" question? *More:* why did practically all of us pause at least a moment or so, confused, when we first heard that joke? I feel

a similar pang of embarrassment looking back on my reactions to Tiptree's statements in Jeff Smith's *Khatru* # 3/4 Symposium on Women & SF. It seems that we are still not far from the stage at which it was generally acceptable to say that women make weaker, less effective and less interesting radio announcers, merely by the intrinsic quality of all female voices.

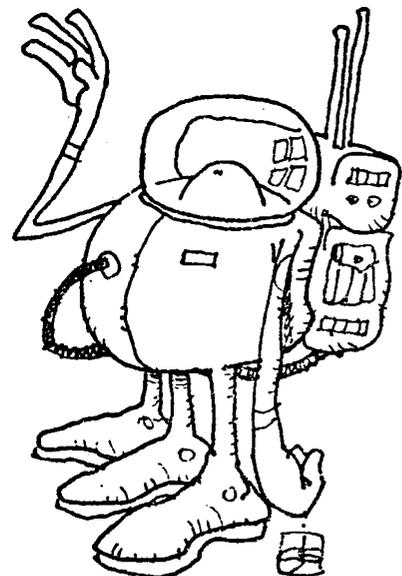
We are now forced to deal with the very real fact that our prior knowledge (even if ill-founded) of an individual's sex leads us to make assumptions that sometimes take on more importance than reality, in the way we assess and approach a given work of art. It doesn't seem too important to me why Sheldon took a male pseudonym, though I will be curious for further details than the information now available; but it does seem unfortunate to me that her second pseudonym, Raccoona Sheldon, wasn't given more time to develop and write, so that we could have later compared criticism of both of them in light of different assumptions as to her gender. One thing we do know, is that despite supposedly superior writing skills which should be assumed to result from more practice gotten during her Tiptree "apprenticeship", Raccoona Sheldon's early writing met with a far different editorial reception than did those of Tiptree's. Says Jeff Smith (who has published essays, letters and fiction by both Tiptree and Sheldon in his fanzines, *Phantasmicon*, *Kyben* and *Khatru*):

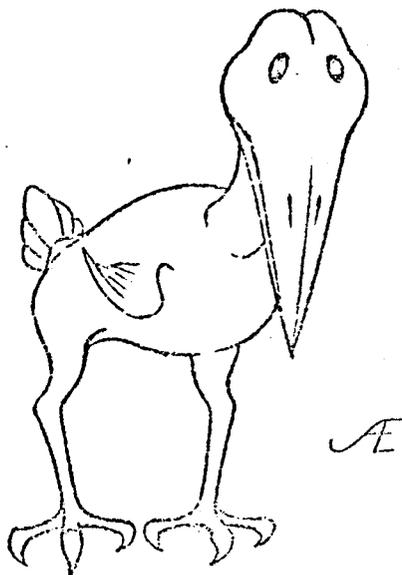
mostly they [stories sent out under the name "Raccoona Sheldon"] were rejected, until Tip sent along covering letters suggesting that the editors might wish to look at this story by his friend.²

Beyond the absurd genetically based assumptions as to differences between men's and women's writing styles, however, the question remains as to whether women's and men's writing does indeed differ--not as a result of genetic-psychological differences, but as a result

of socialization differences that have affected all of our perceptions and techniques of expression. With Silverberg's uncautious pronouncements as examples, however, the rest of this article will tread a great deal more carefully than would have been the case had I been writing in an alternate universe in which Sheldon had never resorted to disguising her gender. Nevertheless, there are myriad themes and ideas in Tiptree/Sheldon's writing that suggest lessons learned and perceptions gleaned from growing up female. These are the same points and feelings which made other critics count Tiptree as one of the few male writers in the field who were very conscious of feminist ideas, and which now expose a sad loss in the ranks of conscious male sf authors.

The "ineluctably masculine" aspects of Tiptree's writing are not imagined by Silverberg (and others), but certainly, it must now be admitted, have a far different explanation than the facile one that Silverberg suggested, i.e., that Tiptree thereby proved herself a man. The first-person images employed by Tiptree certainly betray much knowledge of a "male perspective." For instance, in the same story that Silverberg himself





cites, "The Women Men Don't See" (1973), the protagonist is a recognizable Hemingwayesque hero. He first appears coming "out of the can"; later his knowledge of fishing, and references to other such "masculine" pursuits are presented in a totally convincing "male" style (as attested to by such satisfied male readers as Silverberg), a style far more convincing, I think, than any male writer, writing from a female perspective, has achieved so far. That statement is my prejudice, just as subject to attack in the end perhaps as Silverberg's on Tiptree's gender--but I stand by it. The situation in our culture that enables a woman to write accurately from a man's viewpoint, but not the reverse, is understandable on the basis of a phenomenon pointed out by Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex*, and more recently by Suzy McKee Charnas.

The slave knows her master through and through: she has to, for her survival and her comfort if her men are in a position to provide any. The master, however, is never forced by the realities of power to so much as notice the slave. What he sees if he does choose to look need never be corrected by reality, since part of the slave's survival technique is to

play the roles that the masters have invented for them. The slave who allows jarring notes into her performance risks punishment for challenging the master's prejudices. In any event, most masters have no desire to see beyond the role-playing camouflage if he perceives his slave as a real person instead of a cartoon stereotype, his position as master (which depends for its justification on reducing the slave to cartoon proportions) becomes untenable. ³

Charnas used this analogy as the basis for her novel *Walk to the End of the World*. Tiptree used it in the story "The Women Men Don't See." In this story Tiptree portrays the world as one in which there are "...endless wars... all the huge authoritarian organizations for doing unreal things. Men live to struggle against each other, [women are] just part of the battlefields." In such a world the women who survive are the women who know how to remain invisible, women who know their environment in intimate detail but camouflage themselves entirely against similar knowledge by men. "Think of us as opossums, Don. Did you know there are opossums living all over? Even in New York City."

Of more interest to me though than that Tiptree/Sheldon has accurately captured the admired macho-competent character in her stories, are some of the themes she has worked with during her career which began (at least *Tiptree's* began) with "Birth of a Salesman," in the March, 1968 issue of *Analogue*. With that first story, Tiptree's fascination with aliens and the idea of aliens has remained an important theme in her work.

On the most obvious level, Tiptree has produced a really amazing and incredibly fascinating series of glimpses into alien psychology. The energy protagonist of "I'm Too Big But I Love to Play," (1970) is an excellent example. The aliens who staff the customs ports on distant planets and must be dealt with by (and do business with) Terran

entrepreneurs in "Birth of a Salesman" or the alien Olympics entrants of the story "Faithful to Thee Terra in Our Fashion", (1968) whose moral codes must all be dealt with and integrated with each other's so that a "fair" race can be run, are two others. Alien motives are (properly) only dimly understandable, and through alien interaction with human beings and human motives, we are made aware both of their alienness and of our capacity to rationalize the alienness we find in our own lives. Human *reaction* to alienness is Tiptree's real theme, not just the colorful parade of alien forms she treats us to.

"Oh, Gandalf. Earth's greatest day, I'm living it. The first alien contact. Me. You too," he added. "Us. The first." ("All the Kinds of Yes", 1972).

It is not a coincidence, I think, that Tiptree has been so successful at drawing believable portraits of both aliens *and* men. And in "The Women Men Don't See," this very juxtaposition of viewpoints is suggested to us. Women and Men in our culture are shown to be aliens to one another. The women in the story risk with very little hesitation a change of one set of alien masters (men) for an unknown set (aliens-from-outer-space variety). It is tempting to connect Tiptree's theme (to be an undercover alien in a society) to the Tiptree/Sheldon pseudonym situation. And it is interesting to consider other stories about alien/human interaction as if they were inferred from female/male interaction, gleaned from lessons learned from growing up female in a culture that has institutionalized roles according to gender and alienated one sex from the other.

There are several other themes dealt with by Tiptree/Sheldon which I think grow in interest when seen as being based upon a woman's experiences and socialization, and as possibly containing some comment on those experiences. For instance, in "The Milk of Paradise" (1972), in "And I Awoke and Found Me

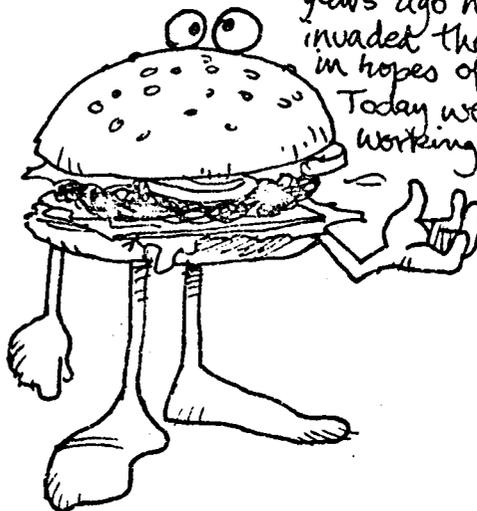
Here on the Cold Hill's Side," and in "A Momentary Taste of Being" (1975), an idea is examined.

"Man is exogamous--all of our history is one long drive to find and impregnate the stranger. Or get impregnated by him, it works for women too. Anything different-colored, different nose, ass, anything, man *has* to fuck it or die trying." ("And I Awoke and Found Me Here on the Cold Hill's Side").

In the story quoted above, humans are literally driving themselves toward extinction through their fascination with alien contact, and subsequent uninterest with human interaction. In "The Milk of Paradise," a man born and raised among another race (later identified as the disgusting "subcrots") has learned to find beauty and the only happiness he will ever recognize among the people he has been socialized to live with. "A Momentary Taste of Being," Tiptree's longest work to date, also discusses this theme/theory of human exogamy. If people can learn to love, find beauty in and want (to the exclusion of other more "real" beauty and love) the opposite

SIGH

the fates have been unkind! Ten years ago my people invaded the Earth in hopes of conquest! Today we're all working for M^cDonalds!



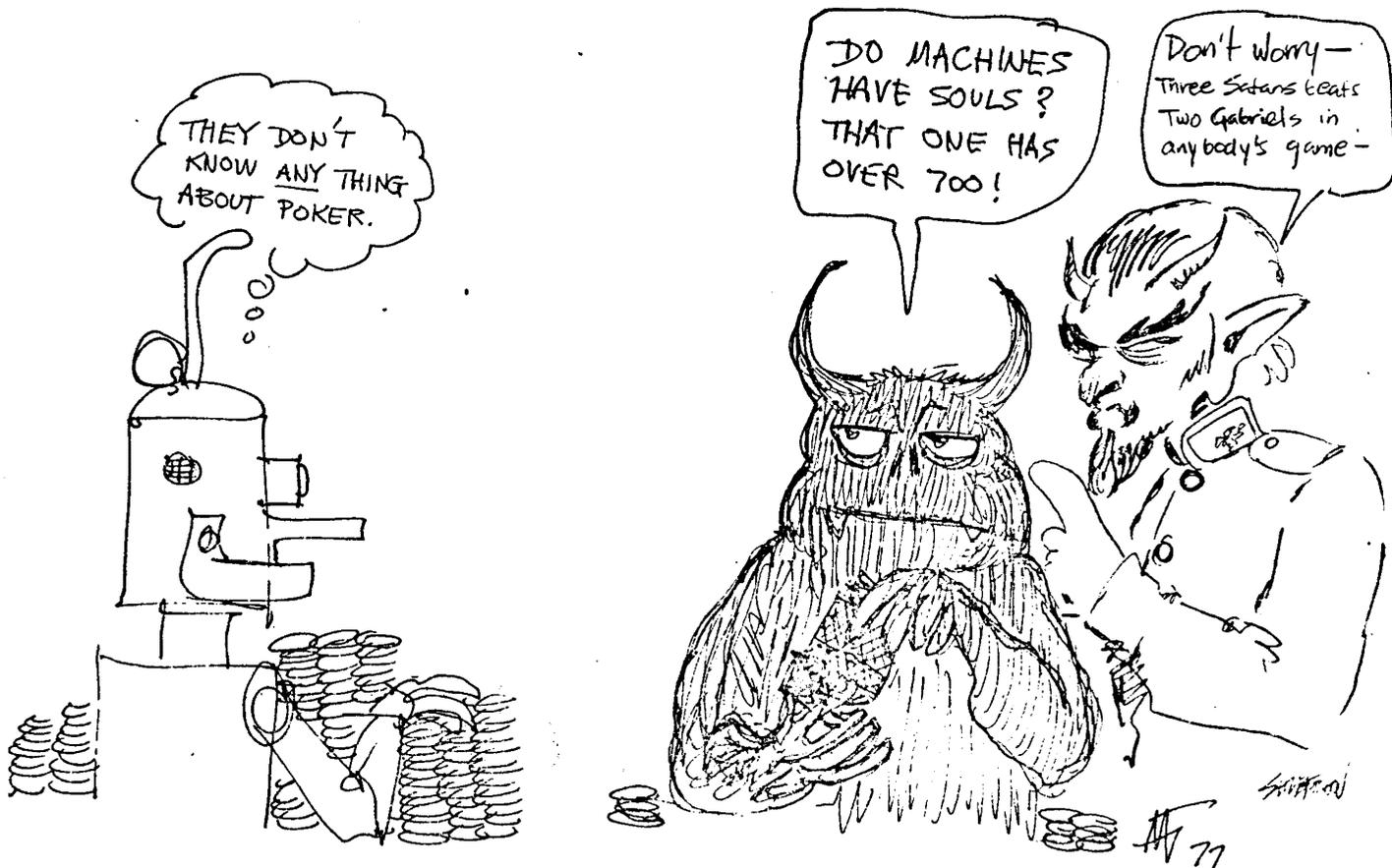
sex, it is but a short conceptual jump for Tiptree/Sheldon to suggest that an analogous situation could occur between human beings and other aliens.

In "Mamma Come Home" (1968), Tiptree writes of what has been a traditionally female experience from a male perspective, that is, the experience of being raped.

"(Ever think about being attacked by a *musth* vacuum cleaner?)"

As her writing has become more and more popular and especially when Racoon Sheldon made her appearance, stories with more obvious feminist content began to appear. Racoon Sheldon's story, "Your Faces, O My Sisters! Your Faces Filled of Light!" (1976), in *Aurora: Beyond Equality*, and her "return" appearance in the magazine which first published Tiptree with "The Screwfly Solution," (1977) as well as Tiptree's contribution to *Aurora*, "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?" (1976) are excellent examples of this tendency. They are al-

so fine specimens of Tiptree/Sheldon's tales of catastrophe. Perhaps this is an aspect of Tiptree/Sheldon's remarkable ability to imagine and write such innovative stories; for she is an "idea" wielder extraordinaire in the sf world. She was criticized in *Khatru 3/4* (in the symposium on Women in SF) for making insupportable generalizations (concerning the "mothering" role/instinct enacted by women in patriarchal culture), and in "The Screwfly Solution" and "Houston, Houston" she develops ideas she mentioned in that same forum. In both stories, the possibility that male sexual instinct and aggressive tendencies are linked, is carried to (different) logical extremes. In the Tiptree version, following a plague that kills off all the men, women have finally achieved a healthy, cloned, non-warmaking society. Men who appear through a sun spot time warp cannot be helped and are not allowed to re-enter the human civilization. In Racoon Sheldon's version, through the intervention of a different sort of biological disaster, the fragile barrier





between men's aggression and sexuality is broken down. In both stories, a tendency that Tiptree/Sheldon has observed as prevalent in our society is taken to an extreme in very successful efforts to horrify us with contemplation as to the awful goals towards which we may be pushing ourselves.

Racoon Sheldon/James Tiptree/Alice Sheldon is writing science fiction about ideas which have been overlooked and ignored by most male-written sf today. She is showing us the implications of our society's mores, showing us the potential destruction we drive

ourselves toward if we do not rethink and redesign the way we as women and men interact and *see* one another. We can no longer look at the other sex as if it were an alien race. We can no longer teach moral standards or expect behaviors on the basis of gender. And we don't have universities set up to allow field trips to alternate universes to learn that consciousness. We *do* however have science fiction to help us change, and to accept change. And we *do* have Alice Sheldon (as well as several other writers, mostly women) writing. I fervently hope that she (and they) will continue giving us such important and exciting stories.

Notes: ¹This and previous quotations taken from Robert Silverberg's introduction to the paperback anthology *Warm Worlds and Otherwise* by James Tiptree, Jr. (Ballantine, 1975).

²"The Short, Happy Life of James Tiptree," by Jeff Smith, in *The Suncon Program Book*, 1977, p. 93.

³Suzy McKee Charnas, *Khatru* # 3/4, 1975, pp. 13-14.

DESOLATION ROW

by Joel Sattler

After the atomic holocaust there are only two major urban centers left in the U.S: Boston and Los Angeles. The rest of the country is enveloped in enormous, terrifying storms and populated by freakish survivors and oversized gila monsters. The problem--Boston is in the early throes of a plague for which LA has the cure, but the Californians can't get the vaccine to the East (the storms make it impossible to use airplanes). In fact, only one man has made it as far as the Mississippi River. He is Hell Tanner, the world's last free Hell's Angel--a total deviant iconoclast and a son-of-a-prick to boot. They capture Hell and force him to take the ride across country through the only available safe corridor left open. Hell and the few other recruits are given a couple of specially-built, heavily-armed military land cruisers. After a series of hair-raising adventures only Hell makes it across the finish line alive to deliver the serum and become a hero to the Bostonians. They erect a statue to him, but in the dead of night he spray-paints something obscene on the monument's base, and roars off into the night--never to be seen again.

Sounds like a great idea for a science fiction movie, doesn't it? And so it must have seemed to somebody over at the studios of 20th Century Fox, at one time. You might as well forget the above scenario, because somewhere between the book and the movie something went wrong. This is what Fox and director Jack Smight have given us instead of *Damnation Alley*:

When the final nuclear battle begins, George Peppard and Jan Michael-Vincent (Heck Tanner) are a couple of Air Force officers in charge of firing retaliatory missiles when most of our major urban centers are destroyed by the Russkis. They, along with everyone at the base, survive underground for years until the radiation dies down. They come up to find a sky full of bolts of wierd-colored light and a desolate ruined world. One day, the place accidentally explodes, leaving four survivors (including George and Jan), who decide to try to make it to Albany, N.Y., the only spot that's sending out radio signals. They start from Nevada in a couple of armored land cruisers that look like boats on wheels, enduring a series of truly ridiculous escapades (such as narrowly outrunning a herd of armor-plated "killer cockroaches"). They lose two people and gain a couple of hitch-hikers (including the OSF--Obligatory Screaming Female as played by Dominique Sanda). Throughout the film these characters maintain strictly platonic relationships: Two men who haven't seen a woman for years, a romantic songstress who has been stuck under a still electric Las Vegas, and a precocious half-savage adolescent who can pitch rocks better than Vida Blue can throw baseballs. The OSF never misses an opportunity to shriek her lungs out, the men insist on playing out their games of macho rivalry, and the kid gets to play David and Goliath not once but twice. In Detroit they are engulfed by a cataclysmic flood and



neatly deposited only 17 miles from Albany. What luck! Suddenly the sky is blue and everything is inexplicably back to normal again--right down to the clapboard houses and picket fences of middle-America. The end.

Well, there's no way around it: the film stinks. The only good things in this movie are the music (Jerry Goldsmith) and some of the special effects (such as that electric sky). When Tanner speeds across the desert floor on his Harley, dodging Volkswagen-sized scorpions left and right, it's easy to see that the damn things are only a few inches big at the most. The actors are all competent, but they're not given anything meaty to bite into. The screenwriters (Alan Sharp and Lukas Heller) really botched this one. They've created a group of inarticulate zombies in a totally contrived environment. There is not one real spark of imagination in the film. The whole project was ill conceived. *Star Wars* is essentially the creation of one mind, George Lucas, but DA is an example of what the Hollywood mentality and method can do to a potentially good piece of work: too many cooks spoil the broth.

Roger Zelazny wrote his original idea into a book that was lots of fun, but he evidently sold all of the movie rights to it and lost control. This meant that the producers (Hal Landers, Bobby Roberts, Jerome M. Zeitman and Paul Maslansky) could do anything with Zelazny's *Damnation Alley* without ever consulting him. I hope he never sees this film. I know that if I had been in his shoes, I would have become deathly ill in the theatre. The film not only destroys the premise, the plot, and the characters of the book, it doesn't even try to be honest. I thought the most absurd, disgusting moment in the movie was the sight of these nuclear criminals cheerfully speeding across the devastated landscape singing "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" into their CB-radios. These guys have not the slightest guilt over what has occurred; they seem to be totally unaffected by the havoc they have helped wreak on the world.

So what was Fox doing? Who were they trying to appeal to? The answer dropped

on me like a lead zeppelin as I walked up the aisle: this is a sci-fi fantasy movie for (and about) *truckers*!

I think Fox is setting a bad precedent for other filmmakers with this film and even with *Star Wars* by leaving both movies so full of obvious flaws and inaccuracies. Some future generation will laugh at these films in much the same way that we deride Melies' silent classic, *First Men In The Moon*. Actually, the *science* of these movies is not so much in the story as it is in the special effects. *2001* was a fantasy film, but every part of it was explainable. You could convince yourself that most of its scenes could be real. However, there are many fallacies in DA. First of all, it assumes that an atomic war would wipe out nearly all life on the planet yet leave a few areas virtually untouched, and would cause the axis of the planet to tilt drastically. Also, it assumes that after only a few years the survivors could easily breathe the air and drink the water without fear of radiation poisoning. Perhaps the most unbelievable premise is that these survivors would easily maintain their mental equilibrium in the face of this series of apocalyptic events.

DA seems to be simply the film version of a genuinely awful piece of TV kiddie trash called *Ark II*. In fact, this film was obviously meant for kids: there's no sex, surprisingly little violence, no difficult themes, sheer total mindlessness. It's a waste of time if you ask me.

And if you paid more than 50¢ to see this turkey, you were ripped off.



THE FAN AND THE FAMINE EXAMINED

by Jack Howard Lechner

Analysis by an analog computer has revealed some amazing facts about the long-buried relics recently unearthed in several parts of the galaxy, notably the planets Iasfm and Fasf. These fantastic revelations answer some questions which have been the bafflement of the cosmos since the time of Galileo.

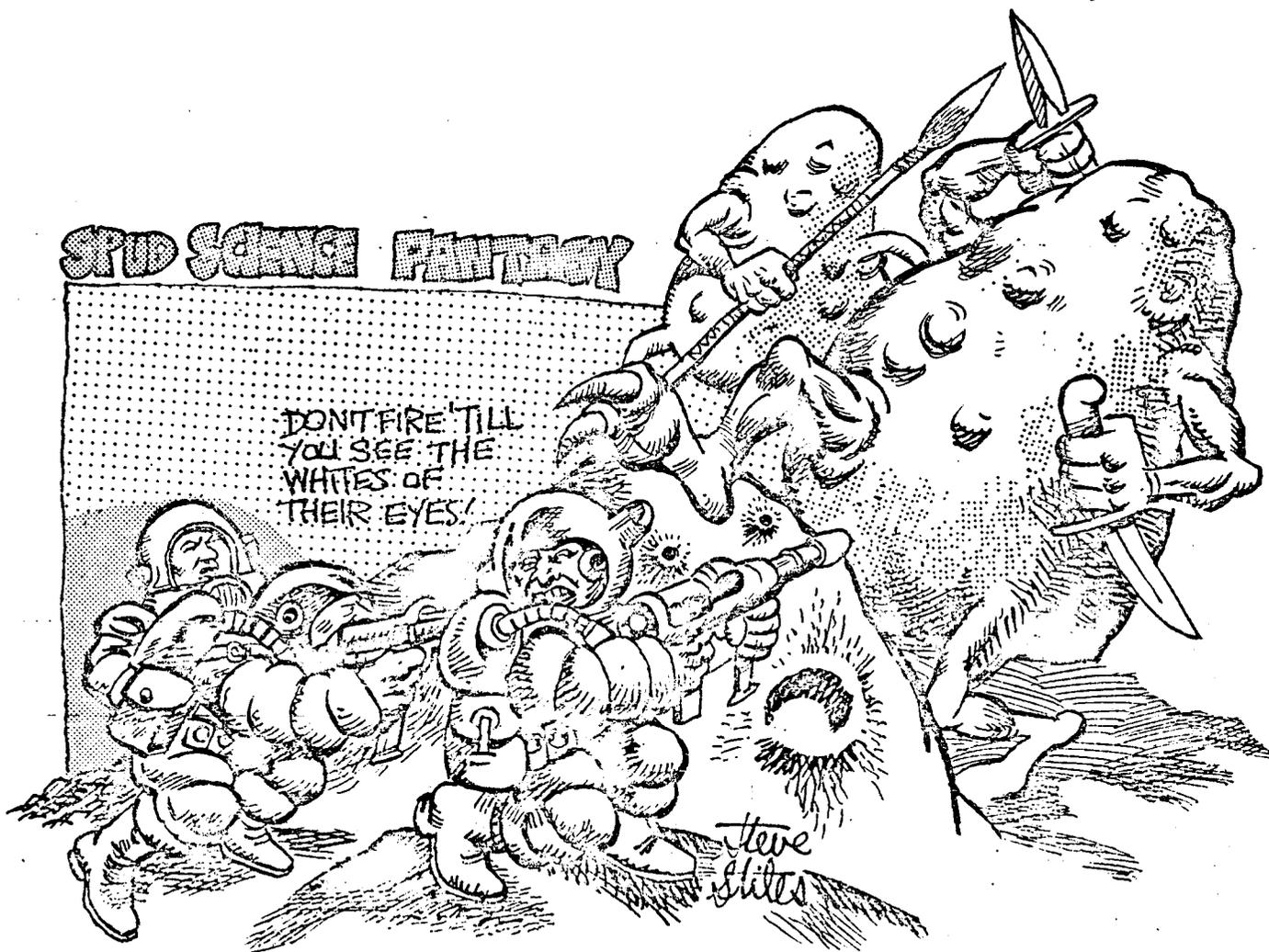
And what is this momentous discovery? It is the tracing of the 20th century Earth phenomenon known as "science fiction fandom" back to a single historic event: The Irish Potato Famine. Let us examine this catastrophe in detail.

To begin with, the potatoes were star-

ving. Whereas Ireland had once held thousands of these appealing creatures, the middle of the 19th century saw them being whipped by starvation, dwindling their numbers to a paltry 907.

Obviously, something had to be done. On September 30, 1845, an emergency meeting was called by the head potato, known as "Mr. Potato Head." No transcripts or reports of this meeting have survived, but it is obvious, in light of subsequent developments, what plan of action was decided upon.

One week after the meeting, the potatoes attacked. Every home in Ireland



was raided by hungry potatoes and their yammering cohorts. Those brave citizens of Ireland who tried to fight back were mashed by the oncoming potatoes, who refused to cash in their chips. Some historians have attributed the alertness of the potatoes to their large number of eyes, but this idea is, at best, half baked.

The attack of the potatoes grew so fierce that many Irishpeople leapt into the ocean to escape. They eventually arrived in America, becoming the first Irish immigrants. At first, they were easily recognized because of a distinguishing trait--their profanity. These hapless refugees from a ravaged island tended to curse their luck, using oaths as foul as they could create. This characteristic, although not unique, was quickly linked with the Irish in the minds of the public, and was still so linked forty years later, which leads us to the climax of our narrative.

Malicia D'Intent was a historian in the New York City of the 1880's. As she wandered through the New York Public Library, doing research for a book about the Potato Famine, she chanced to hear someone cursing in the men's room. "Aha," she thought, "A first hand source."

She rushed exuberantly into the room, and asked of the curser, "Are you Irish?"

"No," replied her annoyed quarry, whose name was Gernsback. "I'm Jewish. Can't you tell?"

They fell to talking, got married, had a baby, named it Hugo, and inadvertently became the grandparents of "Modern Science Fiction", and of Modern Science Fiction Fandom as well.

Incidentally, this trait of swearing, being fun, was quickly picked up by other ethnic groups. By the mid-20th century,

even the President of the United States was swearing (solemnly.). And one of the major newspapers in the U. S was called *Women Swear Daily*.



The author, Jack Howard Lechner, is locally known as a menace and a member of the Fanny Hill Gang.

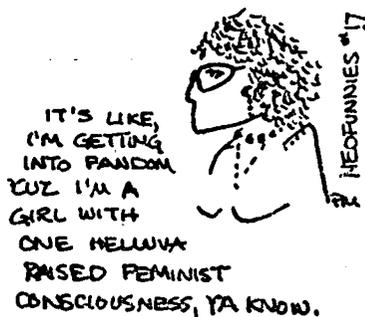
YOU KNOW IT'S REALLY RAINING WHEN THE RIVER'S
RUNNING BROWN

From The Letters of Helen Berrotini

In which Heron continues his attack on the Reality as Preached in favor of the World as Will. -Recreating the Past from the five extent tapes of The Dong Show and Saturday Night Live would have borkled a lesser light, which is what happened. Nevertheless, the struggle to erase Imperialism from the annals of Hysteria, and to exalt Not-meism in its place, has always remained a Guiding Principle of Heron and our school.

Waaaalllll...I'm afraid it's time to take another sfwaat at the sci-fi swill-mobile to show how fantasy gets mistranslated in the reel world of Dementia Pecuniarius. Actually, this is not an adaptation, but a creation, *so to speak*, out of whole cloth, proving once again that directors should under no circumstances whatsoever be allowed to script --but more of that later. We start with this nifty night in Indiana, you see. And then there's this whole pile of toy trains, motorcycles, dolls, cannon--a whole goddam F.A.O. Schwartz in this kid's bedroom--which start up, and the lights go out, block by block. That's when all the *really* bright people go to sleep...ZZZZZ.....

shimmer shimmer



...er unh, last month at the Kristull Ssitee Marriot I had an experience that will forever remain on my etch-a-sketch. A closet encounter, like your normal religious experience only better. True grift. A well-groomed young person with only slightly pointy ears approached me and approached me about the Oristic religion, also known as Autism, but not to be confused with the Oughtism taught by leght-wing poghiitical persons. Orism poses the existential question "What're ya doin'", but profoundly. (Among butcher fandom it is known as choice-ism, and to literary and stuttering fen as the *deus ex-ex-machina*. The basic beliefs crop up periodically under various names.) Orism preaches that since decision is the basis of our being, ambiguity is the highest state of bliss, since it maximizes necessary decisions. Ergo facto, Quid Exits Depreciatingly. Now this may not seem like much, especially if you've got your head etc. together, but I had lately found Pyramidology palling and hungered for further rebirth. Orism opened new doors of receptions, cleaned up the grain on my UHF, and especially enlightened me of the burdens of recent and until-then-inexplicable experience.

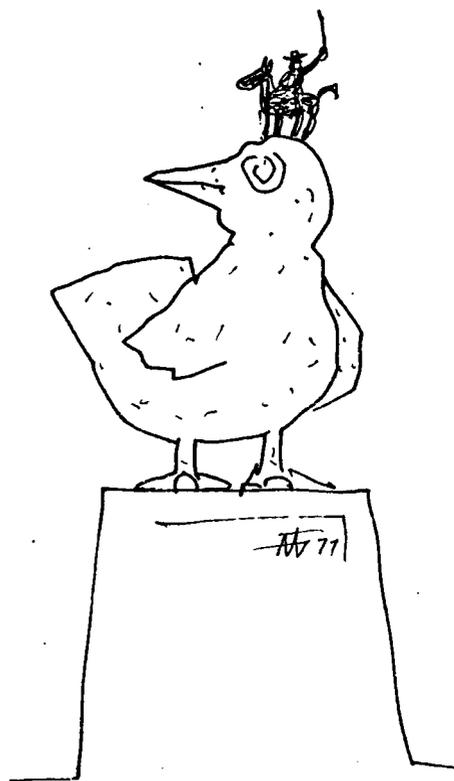
(For local color) we might for example observe that the slogan "Baltimore's Best" relies for its (slight) impact on the ambiguity of the apostrophe in English: either the "s" is a contrefaction

for "to be", or it is possessive, and how you read it depends on context, idiosyncrasy and credibility. You assert your existence by deciding--it's nearly orgasmic, and it doesn't even mess up the sheets! What will preScience think of next?

It seems there was this butte out in (a) Wyoming or (b) Montana where the government (a) had or (b) hadn't constructed a base for secret landings of extraterrestrials. There was this enormous (a) mother ship of a research expedition or (b) independent flying city which (a) was or (b) was not in collusion with the (a) Air Force (b) Army (c) CIA or (d) IRS to hide the existence of alien beings from the general population while the aliens experimented to discover if humans were (a) peaceful gentle folk or (b) edible. The aliens themselves were (a) energy creatures who fed on electricity (b) peaceful ambassadors of goodwill (c) pederasts or (d) highly improbable. There was this French (a) lunatic or (b) lost movie director running around spending money like crazy and able successfully to winnow the few genuine saucer contacts from the 1000's of sightings each year! Not only that, he recognized the alien origins of Siva and understood the Bermuda Triangle!

As luck would have it, so did the aliens. While they were busy teaching our computers to play the organ, he was jotting notes for a score which however didn't. Never mind. He was rich and famous and we weren't, so he didn't have to worry about how the aliens could simultaneously (a) not know how to communicate directly with us and (b) be able to send us coordinates for a landing base in Greenwich-based longitude and latitude. And actually being in the story spared him worry I supposed over how the alien base could have been near the top of the butte for those who climbed it but at the base of it for those who filmed it. Or why the aliens led their zombies to cross the mountain rather than skirt it. Or why they returned the WW II planes when they could have made

a fortune selling them to movie studios. Or how they could have picked people up from many different times in the past 35 years and still keep them *all* from aging. That's pretty nifty faster-than-light travel! (Let's see...there have been 35 different expeditions, all of them going into near-light speed loops designed to rendezvous in 197x? or was everybody ferried to a special ship traveling in a circle? or do they have human immortality pills?).



Whatever the science, the fiction in this thing is great. A major power outage of several hours in a large city, associated with a highway patrol car wrecked in another state and crowds of terrified people, *rated only page 8 in the local paper!* Do you suppose the first page was entirely taken up by discussions of the impact of the GATT negotiations on intra-European trade? Sheer fantasy were the large city on the



Ohio side of the turnpike and the toll collector asking for a quarter (ha! when was the last time *you* drove that road?). And let's not think about the couple of dozen air traffic controllers and cockpit personnel who would have been fired immediately if any of them had ratted to their superiors.

We have been told that this is a "religious experience." Yeah: salvation comes from a flying carnival show full of virtuous aliens who recognize our inherent perfectibility. Uh-huh, like Melanesian cargo-cultists, all we have to do is wait on the hill until the flying saucers come raining down upon us, preferably filled with milk and honey. Or we can go looking for them? Little ole' us? You don't have to be a Marxist to see which way the future is blowing, but does anyone really think this movie is going to do anything but reinforce the gullibility of drugstore novel read-

ers or the 17% of the population which tells pollsters we've never even really been to the moon? or flood the press with UFO pseudo-sightings and fuel more mindless conspiracy theories? The unexplained core of *unidentified* flying object sightings deserves investigation, not an improbable deification.

The truly frightening and/or about a real contact with extraterrestrials comes when you realize that any culture willing to get in touch with us at our present state of development must be a pretty dipshit culture. (Unless the contact was radio and they were reasonably interstellar travel was impossible.) Would you spend a pile of time and money trying to communicate with people who use the word "sunbelt"? I didn't think so.

I guess the least to be admitted is Steve Spielberg with George Lucas to the non-writer's club; but at least Lucas had the sense to poke fun at himself for being there. Why is it movie directors so often can't reason (on paper) from B to C? Must even a minimal consistency and realism be sacrificed to suspense (or what is more likely--incompetence)? Perhaps McLuhan knows--remember him? The ambiguities of *2001* (which for the sake of all our sanities *should* be a movie other purported science fiction is compared to) were necessary to the point of the movie, and the inconsistencies of *Star Wars* are unimportant because Lucas was making a manifestly unserious movie, but the confusion which abounds in this movie is without justification and an affront to the moviegoer *cum* SF true-believer. Please oh please next big-budget SF movie directorperson, get somebody who knows the

field to write your script. There's a lot of talent out there.

What I did learn is that a Close Encounter is what happens when a power company lineman who is deserted by his family meets a striking, mentally disheveled blonde young thing only to discover that they've been trapped in a PG movie. Imagine the fortitude, the cold showers, the push-ups! Maybe that explains why they climbed the mountain rather than circling?

So the coming advances of peopledom will result from shapes and tunes implanted in our oh-so-inadequate minds by the superrace. If only we provide them with enough formaldehyde samplers, we can achieve, so to speak, well...at least messiahhood. Now, I know the Constitution guarantees freedom of speak, well...at least long as you don't eat children, but I refuse to have anything to do with such Primitive Rites Orism. Inane choices are not, I repeat *not*, better than no choices at all. I will defend to the death my right to say so! Do we really care if somebody is stealing our electricity? Can the highway patrol arrest you for reckless flying? Does Everyperson have the right to butte-ify their living room? These are the important questions of Life which we were *not* allowed to decide, which were answered for us by fiat. I say bring back freedom of choice at the movies!

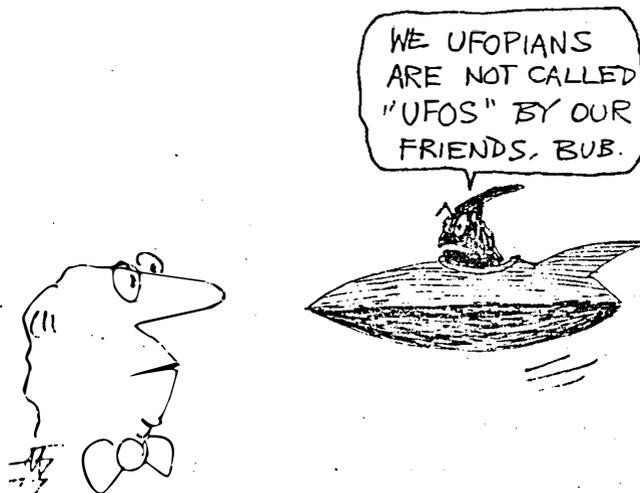
Who will Ballantine get to appear in the book? What will *Mad* entitle its parody version? How many hundreds of millions of \$\$\$ will it make? Does anybody care? My brain is ready for a dose of Krishna Konsciousness...

Helen Berrotini is the pseudonym of Heron Libertina. Who is Heron Libertina? Writes Heron: "Who is HB? Who really cares? I try not to reveal my true identity because (a) the Revolution

needs me without any restrictions (b) the police are after me (c) who really gives a shit who I am? or (d) all of the above. Really, the phone booths have become crowded enough without my giving away my secret identity. So I shall remain for whoever asks, truly yours, Anonyfan.

"Meanwhile, the battles in the periphery are going well, and we have won the leaders of three more systems over to Hysteria. So long as everone can keep in mind that there is a definite *difference in meaning* between the phrases "sci fi" and "SF" that is syntactical and not merely euphonic, we may yet have a chance to emerge victorious."

About the above review, our author says: "I was convinced when I saw the flick that many fen would share Helen's disdain for it, but subsequent conversations have cast doubt on that belief. So, it may be something of a conversation piece to have an overwhelmingly negative review of *Close Encounters* to run. Of course the management does not accept responsibility and all that. It really was a wretched movie, and in a sense quite dangerous to the genre and the world at large. ("This is the clown who had something *nice* to say about *Logan's Run*? Get her to the booby hatch!" I hear in the background.) Well, at least LR didn't have the ridiculous pretensions of this mess."



AND THAT CONCLUDES THE NEWS...



So now you're wondering where the fake feature is? No, you're probably not, because you scan the Loccol before you even look at the articles. That's OK, because this is where it is. It's not a fake letter, tho. You've heard the word "fakefan"? Well, welcome to *The Invisible Fan*, the fanzine that gives new meaning to the word, "fakefan".

It all started with the fake letters in TIF #1, in which, as you may know, I wrote all of the letters myself. In the interest of showing a wide variety of loccols up for what they really are, I had the obligatory letter from someone-you-never-heard-of asking for clarification of some hard-science type stuff by Jerry Pournelle. I wanted it to be a name so common that any guy (those letters are always from guys) in fandom could have written it. So of course, I picked the two most common male names in fandom--Dave and Steve--and constructed Steve Davidson. Imagine my surprise when I started running into him at cons

and having him bug me about his existence. I apologise for having created this monster, but now I even get LoCs from him.

Steve Davidson 9 Knollwood Dr.
First of all, North Caldwell, NJ.
I think it is 07006

rather cruel of you to deny me a copy of TIF #1, just because I am a non-entity. A letter is a letter, no matter who it is composed by, and under the generally accepted conditions of "the usual" I am practically guaranteed one.

But, the issue at hand is to convince everyone in fandom of my existence. (You may recall that even though I was a member of the Suncon committee, running the banquet, my name did not appear in any of the publications, nor did it appear in the computer print-out of all the members of Suncon.) So, the only means at my disposal to prove my existence are such mundane things as, a driver's license, social security card, library cards, Red Cross swimmer's cards, and the like, and also, statements by notable fans mentioning me or my existence. So, enclosed are xeroxes of the above mentioned cards, and here, below are some statements.

GARY FARBER (from *Drift 2*): "Tho' I'm not sure if he knows me."

As you may or may not know, Avedon; all non-entities reside in New Jersey. That is why the next statement from Andrew Porter, (who *has* seen me) is so important. The quote is also from *Drift 2*.

ANDY PORTER: "That's the only excuse I ever have for going to New Jersey."

SUZLE THOMPkins: "At least he got up in class a lot." (from *SpanInq 10*).

Unfortunately, there will be no quotes from you, as there are no anonymous "he's" in TIF.

0
+ So here is this letter from this non-existent person, complete with a xerox of ID cards that bear several different addresses, which suggests to me the possibility that we may actually be dealing with two separate Steve Davidsons. The letter is also signed both by Steve Davidson and by Dave Stevenson. I personally won't take his word for it. After all, it could just be D Potter with another one of her anagrams, and the kid who has been chasing me around at cons is really named Alister Crowley and doesn't want anyone to know.

Wayne Hooks 2200 Chalfont Dr.

I would very much appreciate it if you would send a copy [of TIF] to Charles Saunders, [address]. I am very much interested in your assertion that Black men have had liberties which white women haven't, however I feel Charles is better qualified to argue the point.

♀ The reason I printed this paragraph from this letter is because it amazes me. First of all, I'd like to know just what qualifications this Chas. Saunders has that would make his opinions any more valid than my own, or those of several other people I could name--some of whom are black men. If you insist on a more "qualified" source, you can try checking the national labor statistics, which show that black highschool-educated men still have better job opportunities and make more money than college-educated women. The word I used, Wayne, was "privileges", not "liberties", and you can bet I've studied the problem well enough to know twice as much about what you're talking about as you do. I'm not really interested in a game of "Who's Who in the Oppressed Movement", anyway. I'm sure white men take a great deal of delight in this sort of divisive tactic, and women generally lose simply because no one seems to be willing to take our word for it when we speak of the things that happen to

us. When women point out that they have suffered some of the same oppressions as blacks, there is always some guy around who will either deny it entirely or try to prove that it's all right when it happens to women. I remember after seeing *Roots*, when I heard people talk about how awful it was that blacks were not allowed to keep their own family names--the same people insisted that it was OK for women to be forced to take their husbands names were willing to admit that it was just terrible when the same thing was done to black men. And try reading some of the black Man's literature sometime--all about the terrible things that White People have done to Black Men--no mention of the fact that White Women were pretty much powerless to do anything about it (instead we have all sorts of tirades aimed at the White Bitch), nor any mention of the Black Woman's oppression, most of which is taken for granted by our wonderful-but-deeply-burdened Black Poet. At least black men don't have to suffer the indignity of being backed up by white women twice their size every time they walk thru a park and told how they, personally, have (a) caused their group's oppression and (b) benefited by it, as white women have had to. Blacks, who have far fewer numbers in this country than do women, nevertheless have greater representation in the Supreme Court and in the Congress (quick! how many female Supreme Court Justices can you name?).

Your letters, Mr. Hooks, have been consistently insulting at best. I don't know where you get the idea that you know more about feminism and other forms of caste and class oppression than do people who have been studying the question for years, but I assure you that you do not. I advise you to read the many, many books there are on this subject so that maybe you will someday be able to discuss it intelligently.

Brian Earl Brown 55521 Elder Road

Greatly enjoyed your Michuocon report. It's about time someone wrote about it besides the
Mishawaka, Ind 46544

Narcs, but we have the photographs to prove you were never ever there. Instead, these photographs conclusively prove that you were in San Francisco whipping the new production of "Slave Boys of Gor" into line. You can buy back the negatives by coming to the next midwestern convention...

By the way, Terry Carr confirmed the rumor that Carl Brandon was in attendance. He was usually seen helping D Potter look for her other shoe. And Ted White's famous "Richard Shaver is the Greatest SF author ever" editorial in *Fantastic*, we've discovered, was written at MichuoCon, on some Michuo-can Hilton stationery. That, of course, explains that.

I'd like to thank you for introducing Denice and I to Debbie Notkin. Alas, by that time we were so far gone that it was hard to remember who we were, let alone who she was. Another time, I guess.



At last the well-publicized Chip De-lany letter. I noticed that Chip makes no mention of the 103 pornographic versions of *Angst*, nor the 15 versions that are obscene to Martians. I suppose he doesn't want a stampede of sweaty-palmed boys and Martians who'll read his work for the wrong reasons.

Typically, you've waited til the fourth issue to do the standard "this is who I am" bit that most faneds run in their first issue. But to balance that you've printed your first upside-down page--proving that you're just as human as the rest of us (except Victoria Vayne, who *never* makes mistakes. Victoria is obviously the incarnation of the Goddess of Publishing).

Don D'Amassa
Read TIF the
other day. The
real horror in
the Calley story, as I see it, is not
so much in what he did, as in the fact
that he is probably fairly typical.
Scarey.

19 Angell Drive
East Providence
Rhode Island
02941

While I was in Vietnam, I observed an interesting manifestation of the double standard. Several of the other GI's, even those who seemed reasonably intelligent and fair minded, would sit around telling each other how they would murder their "old lady" if she should cheat on them while they were overseas. At the same time, these fine upstanding individuals would patronize the local prostitutes at every opportunity. When I was unwise enough to point out to some of them that this seemed to be unfair, I was told that I should know that "men have needs that women don't" and it would be unhealthy not to satisfy them. Bullshit.

I doubt that oil was really the major cause of US involvement in Vietnam. My guess would be the almost religious anti-communism that infects many high government circles, particularly the military. Economic interests were undoubtedly a part of it, but I suspect that the whole thing was supported by misguided altruism, the

military desire to test anti-insurgent warfare techniques, lethargy, stupidity, and a number of other motives.

0
+ Hmmm. Maybe those generals and politicians had had those needs that "men have and women don't" denied for too long?

Ah, what you mean is that you don't think oil was the *only* reason. Well, that's already kind of obvious. It takes a certain state of mind first--like the desire to test anti-insurgent warfare techniques with an almost religious anti-communism...

Terry Carr Broadway Terrace
The fanzine Oakland CA 94611
was pretty good, with Steve Stiles' cover the highlight--*Loved* it! He's so good, and has been for so long, that I'm appalled at fandom for never giving him a Best Fan Artist award. The contents weren't "all nasty" as advertised, though you do do a bit of Lecturing at us. I sure know what you mean about women having done so much of the work and risk-taking for various social protests in the past, and getting Damn Little reciprocity from men for the women's movement. I'm not politically active myself; I have a feeling halfway between contempt and horror toward politics of any sort, and don't even vote these days. But the last time I *was* at all active in such a movement, it was for black rights and I spent a day in Harlem typing address stickers for a mailing on a March on Washington. Typing is Women's Work, as you know, but I'm a fast and accurate typist so I lent that talent to the cause. I got, in return, politely concealed contempt from every black involved in the project. (I "felt a draft," as we said in the parlance of the 60s). Somehow I never got around to going back for more work; the same feeling no doubt got to women in a sense: I think workers-

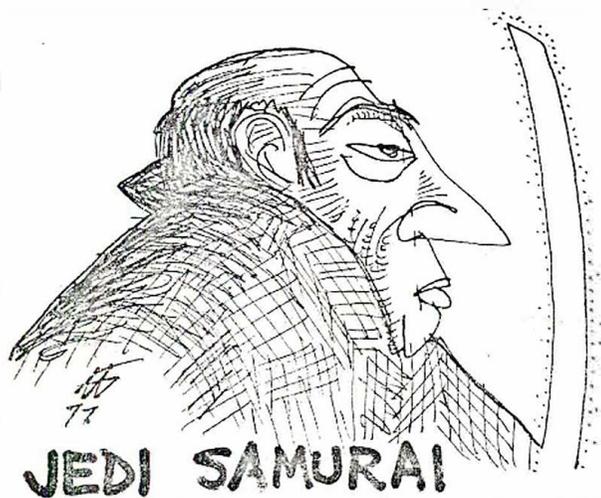


for-a-cause distrust members of the opposition group(s) even when they're working with them. To be expected, I guess, but it's a shame. Equal rights for Fellow Travelers, say I!

Good for Jeff Frane for calling Harry Warner on male homosexuals "tainting" the word "one." And good for you for changing the generic pronouns in Alexis' piece--the changes make their point. It's all to the good, provided I agree with the cause. I wouldn't be so happy (and am not, having seen a few examples) with examples of right-wing backlash--the conservatives are getting into the act, as you know, taking their cue from the (limited) successes achieved in the last decade by civil rights protests, anti-war protests, etc. To Anita Bryant, if you're not actively campaigning against the seduction of children by gays, then you're aiding gays in laying five-year-olds of thier own sexes. Which of course brings us to the question of who's right, and how **we** get people who disagree with us to listen to our sides, and the whole thing gets too complicated for me... in a loc, anyhow.

But I liked your comments to Mike Glicksohn and Eli Cohen, and your trashing of that *Locus* review of Boehm/Varley's "Air Raid", and I laughed several times

during the report on the MichuoCon, and incidentally was convinced briefly during the early part of Alexis's piece on creating a superrace that he was leading up to talking about the Jews or maybe the Chinese. I didn't think the Gilliland cartoons this issue were as good as in the past (you're right, Geis is stealing your best cartoonist) but liked the Obi-Juan Kenobi one, and Joe Mayhew is getting good. He has you on the back cover in a dress and high heels though, fergodsake.



♀ That isn't *me* on the backcover! I wouldn't be seen dressed like that, anyway. That's just some random invisible fan--female, as most invisible people these days tend to be.

Arthur D. Hlavaty 250 Coligni Ave.
 Your cover was New Rochelle, NY
 delightful. It 10801

occurs to me that the first 2 questions that will come up if we meet another species out in space are, "Can we eat them?" & "Can we fuck them?" Both questions, of course, are pragmatic as well as moral.

Thanks for the kind words about my letter, but I do want to deny this business about being a spy. Some people have been spreading silly rumors that I

am an agent of the Illuminati & have Occult Powers & like that, and something has to be done about it. If this keeps up, you can expect a knock at your door some midnight. From the inside.

♀ You stick to that story, son...

Neil Rest 4433 Walton
 A strange Chicago, Ill, 60651
 and wonderful

thing. We've all heard Wierd Tales of Postal Idiosyncrasy, but I've just witnessed another. TIF IV arrived with the wrapper in unblemished condition, but when I opened and read it, almost everything but the LoC's had somehow gotten lost.

(I met Freff very briefly in Miami Beach, as a result of which, I owe him the wand out of a bottle of bubble stuff. But now I have his address, from you.) Does Freff's comment about taking the WorldCon on the road from arena to arena have anything to do with accounting for Suncon?

Your conreport on MichuoCon seems a worthy successor to locs and reviews previous, but I don't see *how* you missed it (thereby necessitating a second-hand report). (By the way, *was* the piece in response to hearing of Owsley's, "Shit, where's Avedon?")

♀ Shit, where's Owsley?

Terry Garey 372 Shotwell
 Recieved TIF SF, CA, 94110

#4, and I must say that those people who wanted to know more about you certainly got their chance. Front cover is very nice, and the back cover superb! Inside...that's Avedon all right, yup yup yup, that's her, uh huh, know those clenched typer keys anywhere.

Of course, none of it was a suprise to me, I had been warned. When you sound off, m'dear, you sure do it classy. Luring them on with Gilliland cartoons and snappy editorials and then WHAM!

right between the eyes. I really appreciated "Nervous Energy" because I have been trying to put that into words for a long time, writhing in frustration at my inability to pin it down and express it.

"Heyyyy, baby! I gotta be free, I gotta be a *man*, so why don't you go scrounge food and cook it for thirty heads I invited while I smoke some dope and play mah gittar, honey."

"Having babies is Organic, it's Nature's Way, and besides, condoms get in my way. Just don't ask me to change a diaper, it makes me puke."

Ah yes, the good ol' days. Just don't ask me to live them again, it makes me puke.

♀ You can say that again.

Stella Nemeth 67 Zornow Drive
A note on Rochester, NY 14623
the draft and

women. Back during the Korean war there was a bill up before congress to draft women. Most people don't remember it. (I was about 10 years old at the time but I can remember hearing about the debate on the *radio* news.) It didn't pass. Most modern nations who do draft men also draft women. The ones that don't have a peacetime draft do have the machinery to draft women at those times that men are drafted. The draft question is a straw man not only because women in combat zones get raped (and they do, and we both know it), but because in a legal war (like WW II for example) that has most of the population behind it (you have to be at least 40 to remember what that kind of war is like and I don't qualify) women *do* get drafted.

♀ Yep. And that includes the United States. Yes friends, legally, with or without the ERA, women can be drafted. So much for our feminine protections which are being preserved by Phyllis Schlafly.

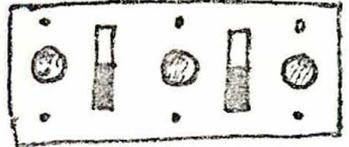
We also heard from: Trina King, George Flynn, Jennie Brown, Peter Edick, Alexis Gilliland, Mike Glicksohn (twice), David Hull, Peter J. Lancaster, and Bill Brummer. Some of their stuff I simply didn't have room for, and some of them asked first-grade-level feminism questions that I have neither the time nor the energy (to say nothing of the space) to answer here. Some of them, by the way, were downright insulting. Most of the letters printed were also cut, either purely because of space or for the above reasons.

It is really unnecessary to tell me about the plight of people of color or kids or old people or convicts or anything else--you see, all of these are concerns of feminism and I am already quite aware of them.

It hasn't been easy finding time to get this issue out, believe me. Jeeze, I'm sure glad I'm down to my last page, with school starting tomorrow. Lucky for me, I can't think of any of the brilliant things I was going to put in before closing the issue this time, so I'm through with it. All I have left to say now is that the screen at the UPTOWN theatre is all slashed up, so who cares if they have the 70 mm print of *Star Wars*?, why does every glass of Coke I pour lately taste like onions?, and of course, god save the Kinks.

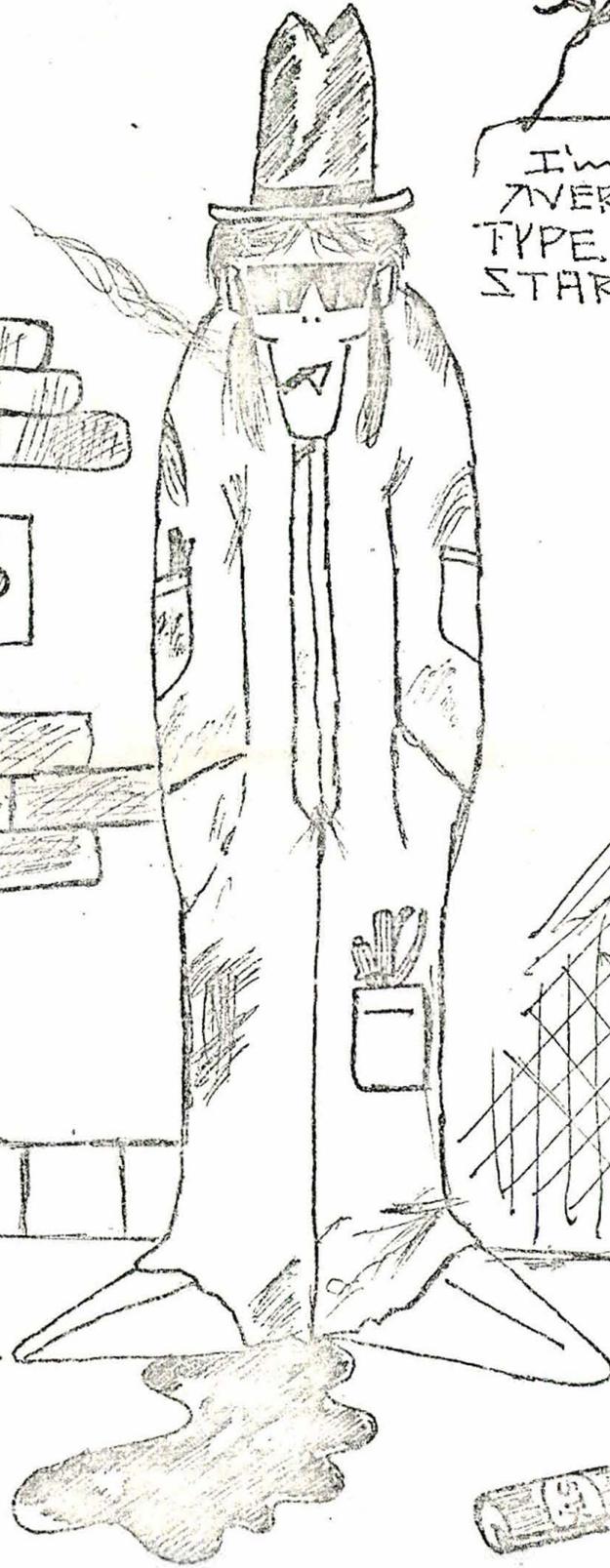


DELCO
"to be sure"
COMPACT
ATOMIC
GENERATORS
PARTS TO FIT ALL
DOMESTIC MODELS



NO SMOKING

I'M JUST YOUR
AVERAGE FREAKY
TYPE INTER-STELLAR
STARSHIP MECHANIC



W. G. ...
1954

