

MELIKAPHKHAZ #63 is prepared for SPPA by Lon Atkins, 9942 Voyager Circle, Huntington Beach, CA 92646. It is a Zugzwang Publication of indeterminate number being produced in the mad month of March, 1978. This magazine supports Dave Locke for TAFF, endorses Bhamcon in '81, and suggests that all its readers recognize that we are in the midst of a continuing energy crisis and take appropriate action: share your body heat with a special friend.

Just the other day I suddenly realized that I was a wealthy man. How that came to pass is a story that bears some telling, although regular readers of Zugzwang Publications will already be acquainted with the key factor. It's just that they, as I, will need the proper conjunction of information to make the connection.

Let's start way back. Some years ago chez Atkins gained a new household member. This creature was black and shaggy-fuzzy. It first attempted to pass itself off as a cat, and was successful to the point of being named "Charky" by Rachel. She would pet it and hassel it as if the thing were indeed a real cat. I, however, reserved judgement.

Charky exhibited few cat-like characteristics. True, he would eat and sleep to full quota, but beyond this he displayed little. His "purr" was so faint as to be an audible illusion. His "prowling instincts" were restricted to hiding under different furniture each day. His intelligence -- and this may have been the real tip off -- approximated that of a mushroom.

That set me thinking. I noticed that he seems rooted to the spots he slept in. It took little real insight to understand that this creature which claimed to be a pussycat was instead a vegetable of some sort. I called him the "furry black turnip" -- and as such he appeared in SPPA a few years back. This lucid description of his personality was so apropos that I abandoned further investigation. That was the way it was. Quite.

Thus the situation stood static. I was convinced that I had penetrated to the heart of the riddle. Charky was happy to be fed and watered at regular intervals. The children were content in chasing the hapless creature about the house whenever they wanted to "play" with him. It was all of a balance until I happened to read in the Sunday paper an article that opened the door to untold wealth.

Did you know that it was a major breakthru to cultivate truffles? This astounding event was reported in full detail (newspaper style) in the third main section of the Ellay Times. What caught my attention wasn't the difficulties of the process, nor the great excitement in France at the significance, but something more American. I focused in on the price: \$50 a pound.

A truffle is a fungus. It's a black fuzzy fungus. It's an expensive black fuzzy fungus. Those guys in France were ecstatic over cultivating some insignificant ammount of truffle, when here I was in America with 12 pounds of truffle on the hoof that fattened pleasingly of its on accord.

Charky, of course, could be nothing other than truffle. Wasn't he a fuzzy black fungus? Didn't fuzzy black fungus go for \$50 a pound on the open market? Charky had to be a truffle.

So how does 12 pounds of truffle (international market value \$600) make me wealthy?

Simple. Truffles breed more truffles. I've studied the matter pretty carefully, and I'm assured that if one subdivides a truffle and places it in a warm humid sub-



operant principle is radically different. All this is merely imho, of course, but it seems consistent enough with what is known about how the mind functions. I think cannabis facilitates mental connections. (And this doesn't mean that I think grass makes one smarter.)

A large part of "learning" is building a mental classification system for the inputs we receive via our senses. This activity takes place mostly below the conscious levels. It consists of constructing a series of "filters" which process our sensory inputs. Unwanted inputs are rejected, and they never reach the conscious mind. People who work in a noisy environment learn to ignore the background noise. Reporting of "normal" stimuli takes the form of shorthand signals. The input is classified and abstracted. The mind "thinks" it hears a car going by in the street out front. It hears a motorcycle. A truck. The conscious mind deals with these signals as "car", "motorbike", "truck." It doesn't bother with how the association was made. It has more important things to do.

The net effect of this survival mechanism is to isolate the conscious mind from low-level integration/classification of sensory inputs. We have to try hard to really listen, or taste, or see. We have to concentrate on the task.

Cannabis opens channels into the mind. (Another way of looking at it is that the filters are weakened, thus requiring more of the conscious -- high-level -- mind in order to interpret the inputs.) What this does is make us deeply aware of the sensory inputs. It makes sound more vivid, etc.

A secondary effect of this opening of channels is that the resources of the conscious mind are brought to bear, by necessity, on the integration/classification process which was previously handled automatically. This gives rise to opportunities for new classifications and explanations. The mind tends to use all the data that's available to it in making decisions. When new paths are to be cut, some startling things come forth. This is the "mind trip."

Such trips often produce conclusions deemed ridiculous in a straight state. What's important to remember is that they were experimental conclusions, aimed at a level which is not easily reproducible straight. When the conscious mind is dealing pretty directly with sensory inputs, it can be swamped by the strongest signal. (A reason that filters are a survival mechanism.) Stoned is a mellow enough state if one isn't required to deal with the real world on more than one front (and this means complex timing activities are difficult).

Care to comment on your levels of drugs at this level? I'm interested in knowing how other people see the effects of drugs, as a check on my perceptions.

SPRITUS MUNDI #43 (Guy Lillian) \* Castenades has many interesting things to say. He uses metaphor, though, and so makes it less accessible. I base my views purely on TEACHINGS OF DON JUAN, which I read some years ago. His other books haven't hit my reading list yet, which shows that I found him less valuable (to me) than other sources, such as the I CHING.

I don't see much elitism surfacing in SFPA these days. That's just the past you're seeing, Guy. SFPA seems to be reforming itself, with new members and new facets of old ones. I think the sooner we can all dump unpleasant memories and relinquish the right to take potshots, the sooner the apa will start to build toward another crest again. We need to go through a phase of smaller overall page counts (and I mean non-SFPA inclusions go) and concentrate more on talking to one another. I'm trying to get back into mc's myself, having been "away" for a while. I'm finding it harder than I remembered.

MERLIN'S DAUGHTER #4 (Susan Phillips) \* I can get behind your views on women's lib, because they're basically views on people's lib. For whatever reasons the sex role differentiation sprang up, and they may have been good reasons originally, that differentiation is not a good thing in American society today. I did notice your aversion to combat, however, and wondered why it is you think that men are qualified to get shot at but women are not? Care to share your reasons?

THE SPHERE 52/1 (Don Markstein) \* Thanks for updating me on what Joe Staton has been doing lately. Haven't heard from him for so long I was beginning to think he might be doing a federal stretch. Also for the story of why Cliff Amos joined SFPA.

MAN BOY DONKEY #2 (Lester B.) \* Fan politics are subject to the same ills as politics of anysort. Politics may be fun for a time -- even a long time -- but when human animosities are injected, politics become enflamed. At its heart, politics is based on human weaknesses and thus means that when politics start to drift in an ugly direction, they tend to move even more strongly that way unless checked by an outside force.

BADGERS! (Alan Badgerson) \* OK, so we got mailing comments. We got mailing comments twice running. (And, boy, are they running!) Now will you quit badgering me about them? Sorry about that abstruse stuff. I'll try for something closer to the heart of SFPA.

Boyoboy was that a good issue of League of Super Sadists last month. I liked the inking in that panel by Barks where Tricky Dicky and Klutzmouth are tearing the wings off Flygirl. It had story depth, man. Wingo! Got me so revved up I had to get out the latest Hustler (pre-religion).

Of course I only read Hustler for the cartoons and to snicker at what some people will pay good money for. That split beaver on pages 9, 10, 11, 22, 26-29, 38, 39, 40-44, 51-53, and 58 was absolutely disgusting. Not that I paid any attention. I just glanced over it as I followed the dynamite article on bestiality on the campus.

Fortunately, I was stoned enough to enjoy the article the way it was meant to be enjoyed. And so did my cat. I've tried mixing angel dust and tarragon lately, and I can tell you straight (ha!) that it's orbital. Us "fried fans" know how to cook with spices, man. I do about a lid a week and its never hindered me. Truth.

The trouble with this apa is that the elitists don't (or can't) get down where the action is. I'm not including a certain asshole in that "elitist" statement -- he's too much of... Well, no feuding from me. I'm shutting up about that turd before I say something insulting.

Did I tell you about seeing George Effington Flickfinger at a con in El Paso last month? I did. Owell. I'll do a piece on the probable winners in the next Academy of Potboilers Awards. Later. Right now I'm much too busy offending people to bother with a serious article.

BADGERS! (Alan Hutchinson) \* Well, Gene Reed drops from the Pages-Owed Scores. That makes me sixth. Not bad for a minacker. This mailing, however, it looks like I'll go over the four page minac level and maybe even produce a five page Mel. See, I listen to the OE...

Neat cover. You keep doing neat covers mlg after mlg.

I tend to think that the Favorite SFPA category in the Egoboo Poll is pretty much a composite

of the other direct categories (best MC's, etc.). To have yet another category for SFPA activity is to reinforce the distinctions made in the other voting. This means that the Fav SFPAn category probably doesn't distort the poll standings at all, so if you want to count an extra category, be my guest.

Consider the writer. He copyrights his material and may then sell it again and again, as many times as people are willing to print it. (And they'll print it as long as they think there's a market.) The artist, on the other hand, sells a painting once. If there were a copyright mechanism for paintings, then some method of sharing future profit would be available. Would you like to see such a system. I'd call it fair.

UNREAL REALITY (mike weber) \* Whatever is involved in psi-type phenomena doesn't appear susceptible to "scientific" method. I'm in perfect agreement with you that this doesn't disprove the existence of extraordinary forces. Whether they are sourced within the mind or reside externally, I don't know. I do know that when the I CHING is used properly, it produces patterns that have a low probability of being chance. Repetition of a group of hexagrams, for example, can be tested statistically for significance. (I did this with a series of readings, and I found that there was a 99% confidence level of significance.) However, this only addresses the patterning. It doesn't reflect at all on the accuracy of the readings. I throw coins to cast my hexagrams. Perhaps all that has happened is that my skill in throwing what I want has grown significant. Do you use the CHING? Any comments on patterning?

TALISMAN #15 (Cliff Biggers) \* Biorythmic minac? I'll have to remember that one for times when I can't claim to be too busy. ## We got washer and dryer when we moved from an apartment in Elly to a house in Huntington Beach. I used to hate laundromats too, though they were useful for intensive reading stretches. The people-watching possible in a laundromat environment is rather circumscribed, as opposed to what can be done when waiting at airports, theatre lines, etc.

WONDER GAB #23 (Lester Boutillier) \* I'm in favor of restricting waitlist use of SFPA as a dumping ground for overruns, but think that this is a responsibility of the OE rather than a reason for some new rule. As for minac, all it is is legal minimum activity. Legal. If you wish to have the minac level raised, I say you should obtain the proper backing and submit an amendment or prevail upon the OE to set higher standards. I'm sure I can handle 10 pages every two mailings if I must, but if I turn out to be wrong....

GIMBOATE (Gary Steele) \* Don't ask for snow. We were asking for rain here in California for the past few years. Somebody finally heard us and dumped about 30 inches on us this season. Plus a hurricane. Everything is flooded, a few roads are washed away, people have been killed in mudslides, houses are collapsing, and there're potholes in all the roads. How about being satisfied with relatively clement weather?

FINGERTIP REALITY #10 (Joe Moudry) \* Brian Varley? Never read him. What happened to people like Zelazny and Niven on you Top Five? Not that I'm saying they belong there, but you didn't discuss very many current practitioners.

OBLIO #35 (Gary Brown) \*\* Nice intro. ## Really a good point about peer pressure and apazines. It's been some time since I was very concerned with gaining entrance into the group by performing

to group norm. My activity has usually been above or below the page count that was typical. The one concession I try to make to peer pressure is mailing comments. They're so necessary for an apa. At least, for a personal apa like SFPA. As far as the rest of it, I just do what I feel like. If I do what I don't feel like, it comes out lousy.

How can you put down Don and Maggie for not wanting to go to Florida if they don't like being near water? Everybody who's been there knows that the chamber of commerce pictures are all taken at low tide, which is the only appropriate time to do it. At high tide, the entire peninsula is covered with six inches of sea water. This fact is well hidden from the rest of the country because tourism is Florida's second largest industry, right after Anita Bryant.

OK, congrats again on your Prezydentzy. It's well deserved ~~dziękuję/dziękuję/dziękuję~~. Now the ob is on you to show us the way, Gary. Bigger zines! More mailing comments! Flashier covers!

WHAT (Hank Reinhardt?) \* Is it really you, Hank? I've watched you tottering on the brink now for so many mailings, wondering if you'd appear in the next, that each time I see a Hankzine I wonder if it's a hoax perpetrated by folks who can't bear to see your name vanish from the roster. In years to come, I'm sure there'll be zines like this. Incoherent. Rambling with senile fancy. Zines done to preserve the myth, while the Hank itself sits drooling in a wheelchair in some remote Atlanta nursing home. A Hank incapable of more than turning the pages of Conan Comix. Alas, has this already come to pass? Is this zine the product of your devoted friends? (Wait a minute: does that last question make sense?)

On the other hand, you'll note that I took the precaution of being 2,000 miles away when I wrote this mailing comment.....

PANDPLY #1 (Andy Whitehead) \* I wasn't super impressed with the beginning of I, CLAUDIUS either, but I kept watching and it began to grow on me. The series was segmented into "complete" short plays, but I found that one needed to get the broader picture before full enjoyment (and understanding) was possible. If they rerun it, try following for more than a couple of episodes. (Until Messalina, at any rate.)

CHROMAKEY (Marcus Wielage) \* Welcome to SFPA. Are you sure you're not Alan Hutchinson? ### We had a friend down for dinner last night; a fellow that works in the production crews at MGM, Culver City. He was telling us about some of the fantastic film collections owned by various studio people. Seems like they have prints of all the big movies floating around. Trade with enthusiasts from other studios. Have parties. Do crazy things. Other fandoms. Now that you're in Ellay, chances for supplementing your collection should become available.

ZINITH #1 (Scott Lillie) \* Welcome to SFPA. Are you sure you're not Alan Hutchinson? ### So go ahead and tell us how you became a security guard. Seems like that's a job to offer plenty of time for fanzine composing, if you can use a typer or bring a portable in to work. Will be expecting those MC's, etc.

— LON