

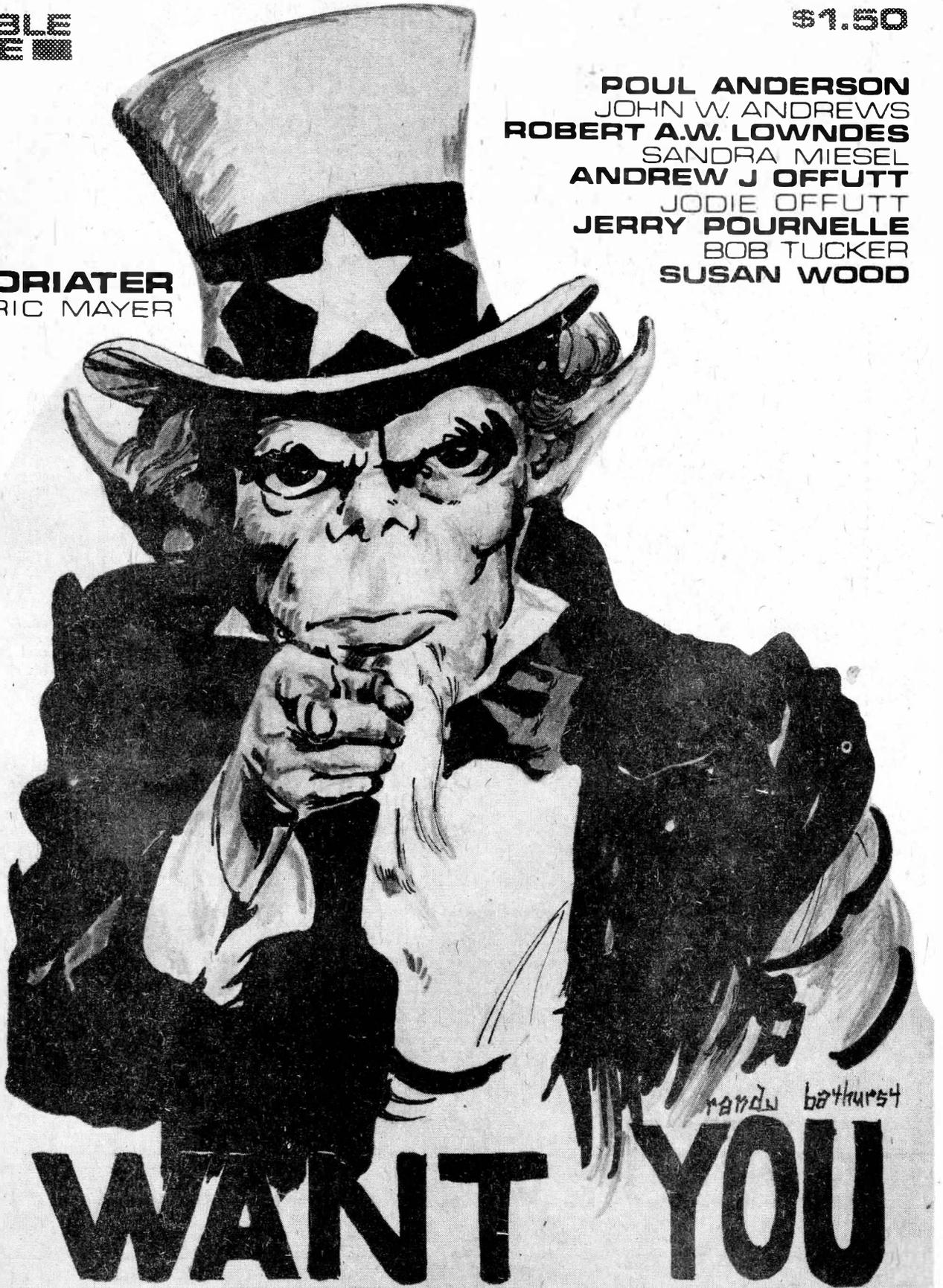
TWENTY ONE / TWENTY TWO  
**OUTWORLDERS**

**DOUBLE  
ISSUE**

**\$1.50**

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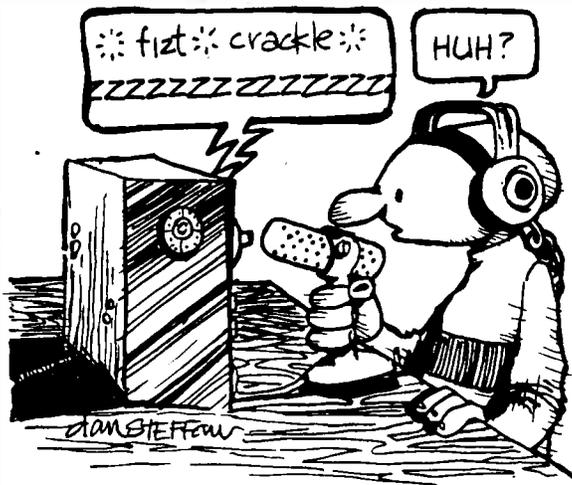
**THE  
EXCORIATER**  
BY ERIC MAYER



**I WANT YOU**

# ... from William's Pen

## BILL BOWERS



"...on newsprint? Outworlds? You've got to be kidding!"

I told no one in advance; I'm not suicidal. The main *raison d'être* is, of course, financial; the 'savings' are over a third of what 72 pages on 50# offset would have run. And that's a substantial savings that permits me to indulge in such luxuries as a 38-page lettercolumn. But it's not the primary reason. Not this time. This was to have been physically one issue of 68 pages, with a 'stiff' cover...not two limp separate issues. But in order to accomplish that I would have had to have taken the same course that I did with #20: i.e., collating, stapling, and trimming 1500 copies virtually by myself. No way. Not right now. (And I don't think you'd want to wait another three months until I got it done...) The size is dictated by the limits of my new printer's capabilities for paste-binding; by working within limits, for once in my life, I'll get it back trimmed, bound and ready to mail. I think I'll like that.

So, no apologies.

(I'd called up Danner Press, which prints *Mother Earth News* [and other fanzines], and which is located a block away from where I now work. They said they'd talk to me when my print order was 25,000 or more! Maybe next issue...)

Present plans are to alternate newsprint issues with those on a higher grade of offset white. There are some nice things done on newsprint: *Margins* and *Wild Fennel*, for example. But I won't go to it on a permanent basis because I've still got to do the fancy, pretentious zine. But don't look for any issues of OW on coated stock; I detest 'slick' paper. I'm still enough of a creature of the "Mime Mythos" to require some texture...a 'feel'...to the paper used in my fanzines.

Status Report: As of this moment, the 8th of December, I'm still in Wadsworth...in a house full of boxes and a world full of snow. The house is up for sale, finally (it took much, much too long; my own fault entirely), so now it's out of my hands. I've taken a new post office box near where I now work, and would appreciate your noting--and using--it.

I hope to locate somewhere around there, but I haven't the foggiest notion of how I'm going to get all this junk into an apartment. But I'm going to have to get a small place if only to force myself

into dispensing with some of these possessions (mostly print-on-paper things) I've been hung up on far too long. (I'm going to cry a lot, but I'll do it.)

Thank you, Robert E. Margroff, for providing me with the long-sought-after de Camp SCIENCE FICTION HANDBOOK. ...and those of you who bought the 'sets' (all gone now) at those inflated prices: Thanks to you, I now have three new golf balls (for a total of eight) to play around with: The *Script*, *RATOR*, and *Symbol*...err, 'Symbol' elements. I'm in the process of working out a new style sheet to take advantage of the added capability...

On a related subject...I'm hoping the old Selectric holds together for another year or so. But it's been making some weird noises. I bought it in 1969; we immediately did D:B 21 and The SYMPOSIUM, together some 216 pages, justified, and therefore typed at least twice. And the first couple of years of OW were justified (why does that seem so long ago?). It's been a good and faithful machine, and once you've used a Selectric, it'll spoil you forever. It's not as good as sex, but the difference is slight.

But I've been thinking... If it does collapse and go to that great Steno Pool in the Sky, maybe I should get a, well, 'straight' typer next time. It is fun playing games with changing typefaces, and can often be useful. But in a sense it's copping out on the essential priority of communicating the writer's word to the reader's eye. I couldn't do a simple, straight-forward fanzine if I tried (and I haven't, recently), and it's not a world-shaking event in any case. Taking advantage of the Selectric's capabilities is fine; becoming dependent on them is, I suspect, not. I haven't made any final decisions yet; just thinking it out...

And having said all that, perhaps you can dig it when I say that the Annish will, in all probability, be typeset!

I've just opened the fourth bottle of Liquid Paper...the offset faned's corflu, for these two issues. I hope it's been put to good use...

I've never been one to list my Hugo choices, or to attempt to 'influence' my readers along those lines. But perhaps it's about time I started pushing the people who've given me special delight in fanzines...the ones (in no particular order) that I'd like to see listed on the Aussiecon Final Ballot. For Fan Writer: Jodie Offutt, Dave Locke, Don C. Thompson, Susan Wood, Barry Gillam. For Fan Artist: Grant Canfield, Bill Rotsler, Steve Fabian, Sheryl Birkhead, Jim McLeod. For Fanzine: *Title*, *Don-O-Saur*, *Notes from the Chemistry Dept.*, *Karass*, *Gorbett*, *Kyben*.

Please note a couple of things: I didn't use the word 'best'; I didn't list previous winners; and not all of them are Big Names. Yet. There are others who could well be listed, and I'll think of more after this goes to the printer...but in essence, these are some of the people who

have made "fanzine fandom" a rewarding and enjoyable experience for me. In the case of the fanzines--even though some will quibble about the "general availability" of some listed--these are simply the six fanzines I currently look forward most to seeing in my mailbox. (Where are all the genzines?)

Speaking of Hugos and other Controversial Subjects... Several things:

...not to quibble about 'payments' and 'eligibility'--and they are quibbles (The Trouble with Quibbles...?)--I'm glad that Andy got his Hugo at last. Perhaps now he can be more relaxed and less defensive about his zine. But then look who's talking!

I'm fantastically happy that Susan received hers. She deserved it.

Me...?

Well, I'd gone to Discon with the subject firmly put out of my mind; I knew that there was no chance. Trouble is, once there so many people came up to the table and told me how much they liked OW, and that they'd voted for it, that I got a glimmer of hope despite my basic pessimism. So it was a bit of a let-down when the results were announced. Hey, people...I really do appreciate it if you like OW (though you have No Taste), and love it when you tell me so. But, please, write it and send it to me. If you tell me in person, I'm either going to be flip, or more probably speechless. It's the way I handle such things...

The only 'downer' about Discon was that when the nominees were read, only my name was attached to *Outworlds*. It wasn't Andy's fault; he read what was before him. And Ron Bounds apologized to Joan for the Committee--so there's no animosity. However, for the record:

This is the last issue that Joan's name will be on the masthead. But, if you are inclined to nominate OW for the awards at Aussiecon, it should be in both names (i.e., "Bill & Joan Bowers"), and if awarded...likewise. It would be the only way I'd accept it.

Next issue I will be completely on my own; we'll see where it goes from here.

In an ironic way, although nominations are flattering, and while I'd really like Joan to have something to show for the five years of her life...despite all this, I do not really think I'd want OW to win a Hugo. That would, after all, spell "success" and acceptance by the "establishment". And I'm not all that certain I could handle that. I'm serious. It would ruin my reputation.

Besides, as I've told some people, I have it all over Dick and Andy, anyway. Why? Just because I have Jodie, Susan and Sandra writing for me, not to mention a few males, not to mention the crew of the ART-worlds...I have all of this, and I have friends who prop me up and honor selfish requests and who are there when I need them--as I often do. And you'll pardon me if I find all these inhabitants of my modest little 'worlds' to be infinitely more worthwhile, more beautiful than any mantel-piece yet devised.

Not that I'd turn one down, you know.

Mae was here.

I don't think I'll ever be the same.

I picked her up at the bus depot that passes for a drugstore in Barberton the

(Continued on Page 799)



# THE EXCORIATER

## Eric Mayer

"LANEY AND GOD NEVER DID SEE EYE TO EYE."

Charles Burbee

Photos by Connie Faddis



PROLOGUE: Scranton

THE BLAZE OF SUN wrung pops of sweat from the old fan's brow yet he shivered. He could not shake the premonition. It clung to his back like chill wet ditto masters. In the distance, beyond the grimy rooftops of Scranton the culm banks loomed up, great black mounds shimmering in the heat like a vision of hell. He felt strangely alone.

Something was waiting.

He entered a printer's shop. The clamor of mimeographs and ditto machines seemed to push him backwards with a palpable force. And he was tired. One of the workers nearly collided with him. The man's hands bore dark stains. Like blood.

The old fan went up a flight of stairs at the back of the shop. The collection had been almost completely catalogued by now. Nothing exceptional. A few old *Amazings*, cartons of crumbling fanzines. The collector was carefully penning a few final entries in his ledger. He offered beer.

But the old fan shook his head, eyes fixed upon something on the table in front of him. The collector watched, vaguely troubled. What was in the air? He felt a prickling in his neck as his old friend moved at last, reaching down for a fanzine and studying it pensively. A skeletal figure, partially clothed in rags, extended a boney hand, as if it were trying to reach up out of the yellowing, decayed cover.

*The Acolyte.*

Abruptly the old fan sagged.

He knew.

It was coming.

He heard the yappings of dogs fighting in the streets of the city. The sun was beginning to sink behind the culm banks. The old fan hastened away, his heart encased in the icy conviction that soon he would face an ancient enemy.

I: *The Beginning*

LIKE THE FLARE of fannish feuds that registers not at all on mundane eyes, the beginning of the horror passed almost unnoticed.

Chris MacNeil was propped up on the bed of her Brooklyn apartment, searching for comment hooks. She glanced away from her zines with a frown of puzzlement. She heard squeaking sounds. They were odd. Muffled, as if they emanated from some unimaginably great distance. From FAPA. Or the dead.

She got up to investigate and found her daughter's room empty. So who was the trickster?

Abruptly she flicked a quick glance at the floor. There! Faint squeakings. Someone was using the mimeo in the club-room below. Without authorization?

"Hi mom."

Her daughter, Regan. She was bounding through the door. Red pony tail. Freckles. A promising young neo.

Chris forgot the sounds immediately. Beaming, she caught her daughter in a bearhug and kissed the girl's cheek.

"What'djya do today? Anything exciting?"

Regan's eyes widened. "*Gosh wow*, mom. I met a BNF! Oh mom, you should've seen him. And he has his own zine. *Really*. I wish I had a zine. Can't I use the duper mom? I mean *could* I?"

"We'll see baby."

Regan smiled in response. "Oh mom. That would be a *wonderful thing*. I could define SF and review Star Trek and everything. And the Spirit of Fandom told me that she'd help me make the Perfect Fanzine."

"Honey, who's the Spirit of Fandom?"

"Ya know. The Spirit of Fandom. The one in THE ENCHANTED DUPLICATOR."

Chris tried not to frown as she felt

a dim and sudden concern.

"But she's only in a book."

"Oh no mom. She talks to me every night."

Children's imaginations, thought Chris, as she returned to her room. Maybe she should encourage Regan to read something other than Ace Doubles and Perry Rhodan. She was oddly disturbed and wrote no Locs that evening.

2

DAMIEN KARRAS stood at the edge of the clubroom waiting for the rumble of the mimeo that would still the ache that was always with him. The other fans seemed far away somehow. For a moment his gaze met that of a femmefan. Chris MacNeil. He knew her vaguely from her letterhacking. She was on his mailing list.

A cough. He glanced to the left. A grey stubbled derelict stared at the BNF. "Couldja help an old faned? Article? Loc? Sticky quarter?"

The derelict put a hecto-stained hand on Karras' shoulder. His degradation was awful to behold. Karras sagged. He found himself looking at a copy of *Vondo* 893.

"Th'usual frien'. Jes th'usual...?"

The rumble of the mimeo. Karras turned away. His heart felt cold as the offset pages of a semi-prozine.

He'd spoken to the OE about dropping the FAPA membership he'd devoted his life to gaining.

"It comes down to vocation, to the meaning of life. It's not FIAWOL anymore. Not even FIJAGH."

"Every thinking fan has his doubts Damien."

The OE, a Publishing Giant and a harried man had not pressed him for reasons for his doubt. For which Damien was grateful. He knew his answers would have sounded insane.

"The need to lick stamps. His first 9 Locs. Crudzines. Feuds. *Locus*. An item in *Fiawol* about a neo set upon viciously by an aging midwest fan." No. Too emotional. Too vague. Existential.

He found himself at the stapler. The loose pages of his own zine were being shoved into his hands. Automatically he pushed down on the stapler, hearing the snick of the staple with an aching remembrance of the joy it once gave him.

Suddenly his brooding was interrupted by a voice near his ear. "Chris," it was saying, "I think we have a visitor."

Damien turned, and gasped to see Regan MacNeil pouring indelible ink gushingly onto the rug. Staring fixedly at the gathered fen she intones, in a lifeless voice, "Rosebud". Over and over again.

II: *The Edge*

1

THE DOCTOR STARED at Regan. Shrieking hysterically she was flailing her arms as her body seemed to fling itself into the air above her desk and then slammed down savagely onto the typer. It was happening rapidly and repeatedly.

"Oh mother, make him stop," she was screeching. "Stop him. He's trying to kill me. Stooooopppppp himmmmmmm!"

Chris turned a beseeching look at the doctor. "What is it? What's happening? Whatever's gotten into her?"

He shook his head. The girl's up and down movement ceased abruptly and she crumpled over the shattered typer. She twisted feverishly from side to side with her eyes rolled upward in their sockets so that only the whites were exposed. Suddenly they rolled down, but weirdly green brown. She arched her head back, disclosing a swollen bulging throat and

began to mutter something incomprehensible in an oddly guttural tone.

"taobsy entruocdewasi...aoacavehi..."

The doctor reached down to take the girl's pulse and abruptly was reeling stunned and staggering across the room from the force of a vicious backward swing of Regan's arm as the girl sat up, her face contorted with hideous rage.

"The neo is mine," she bellowed in a coarse and powerful voice. "She is mine. *Mine!*"

She began to laugh. But it was the cry of a frustrated cow elephant during a monsoon.

2

"FOR GHU'S SAKE," erupted Chris. "She's acting like a psycho. What do you mean it's GAFIA?"

"How Mrs. MacNeil," the doctor said calmly. "GAFIA has been known to produce some rather bizarre manifestations. Consider AH! SWEET IDIOCY! for instance. The gafiating fan is often given to feelings of omnipotence, and destructive actions."

"...Like eating an entire FAPA mailing?"

The doctor shrugged. "Actually such

actions are more common than people realize. Regan does exhibit the GAFIA syndrome --antisocial behavior, a desire to dis-

associate herself from all things faanish." "But how could a girl her size manage to push a mimeo out the window?"

"The abnormal delusions of power I mentioned earlier. In some forms of GAFIA the victim feels a superiority toward fandom. This naturally vanishes once he's been in the mundane world for a while.

"On the other hand this might be a breakdown due to Crifanac. Cases of so called possession have even been reported. One fan actually believed he was Claude Degler for a while."

"So what's next?"

"Well, we'll run a Rotsler GAFIA sequence--show her Rotsler cartoons and see if she laughs. Then we'll have her make a choice between *Locus* and *Fiawol*--that sort of thing. In the meantime, try not to worry. All fen go through this stage."

3

CHRIS JERKED HER HEAD UP at the sound of commotion in Regan's bedroom. Rappings, rapid with a nightmarish resonance as if someone was beating the floor with a Nebula



Regan, screaming in anguish.  
A thundering bass that was threatening, raging.

"Good Ghu. What's happening?"  
Frenzied, Chris rushed into her daughter's room and stopped, rooted in paralyzing shock. The threatening bellow came from Regan whose features were transmuted into those of a feral, demonic personality. The girl was standing naked in the center of the room, her body obscenely smeared with printing ink.

"You'll do it," raved the voice.  
"You'll do it."  
The room was suddenly choking with a stench in the nostrils, with an icy cold that seeped from the walls. A yelping laugh of spite and rage triumphant spilled from Regan's lips and she flung herself with terrific force at the wall, hitting with a sickening thump and bouncing off, leaving an impression of her body with hectographic clarity.

She careened about the room, slamming into the walls again and again as if her flesh were nothing more than a stencil stretched over the mimeo drum of her body.

Page two followed page one and in the purple print of this *Outworlds* of the damned Chris could discern blasphemous ravings against Fandom and unspeakable obscenities. And then, near the left hand of page three, nearly illegible due to the poor repro, Chris could make out, scrawled in familiar neoish writing--  
"Help Me."

### III: The Abyss

1  
A CASE OF POSSESSION? An exorcism? It all seemed unreal to Karras. Only the unmistakable desperation in Chris MacNeil's eyes kept him from dismissing the whole thing as another hoax.

"But I'm not a priest."  
"Well, you won a Hugo didn't you? That's close enough."  
Karras sighed inwardly. How could he explain his doubts to her? "We'll need proof of possession of course."

It was with a tape recorder and a bottle of tap water that he entered Regan's room.  
And his eyes locked stunned on the thing that had been a neofan. The creature was strapped to the bed, eyes bulging wide in their sockets, shining with a mad cunning, seething in a face shaped in a skeletal mask of mind bending malevolence. A totem pole left out in a hailstorm.

"Hello Regan. I understand you've been a bit under the weather. I can see it isn't Twonk's disease."  
"So, so, so," gloated Regan sardonically, and the hair bristled on the back of Karras' neck for the voice was an impossible bass thick with menace and power. "So...they sent you--a fan. I have nothing to fear from a neurotic ape like you. Besides, I'm not Regan."

"Oh, I see. Then maybe we should introduce ourselves. I'm Damien Karras. Who are you?"  
"I'm Francis Towner Laney."  
"Ah," said Karras, "now we can talk."  
Then he was dodging a projectile stream of ink that shot from the Regan-thing's mouth.

"I had expected something more Swiftian from you."  
The demon's face was contorted into the hideous grin that seemed its only expression.  
"Wasn't that Swiftian? You would prefer anecdotes perhaps? Ask me about Burbee's sex life."

"That would prove nothing. He'd admit to anything."  
"Why don't you release these straps. Karras; so I can get out of this pigsty?"

It isn't at all what I'd been led to expect. Besides, I want to teach the neo to fandango in the clubroom."

Karras held up the bottle of water. The demon looked wary. "What's that?"  
"Corflu," he said, beginning to sprinkle the water on to Regan. "I understand faanish demons are allergic to it."

Immediately the demon was writhing, bellowing in terror and pain. "It burns. It burns." Finally it lapsed into incomprehensible speech. "...aocaevah!... redistuo...taobsy entruocdewasi..."

"Laney would never talk such nonsense."  
"Ah," gloated the thing in the bed.  
"But it's not nonsense. If you're so slannish you should be able to figure it out."

2  
"YOU'RE CONVINCED it's genuine?"  
Karras nodded, "I think so, yes. The reaction to the water may have been meant to mislead us. As for the strange words..."

He pressed the "reverse" button on his taperecorder and a deep bass voice could be heard saying, "Outsider...I have a COA...I sawed Courtney's boat..."

"I was hoping you'd know someone qualified to undertake this exorcism."  
"Well, now, Merrin's around. He'd been reduced to miniac from Scranton, but I understand he's back now."

Early that silently waiting evening, a young neo found the old fan immersed in his pulp collection, and handed him a message. The old fan thanked him, serene eyes kindly, and turned back to his contemplations. Now and then he would pause to admire a Finlay drawing. He did not open the message. He knew what it said. He had known. He had read it on that dusty table of fanzines in Scranton. He was ready.

### IV: "And Let My Cry Come Unto Thee..."

1  
A SMOTHERING STILLNESS hung over the room. The Regan licked a wolfish, blackened tongue across her cracked and swollen lips. It sounded like a hand crompting a cruzzine. "Well Merrin, you old queen. At last. At last you've come."

The old fan lifted a hand to the propeller of his beanie, made a gesture. Then took out a bottle of corflu.

"Ah yes. The correction fluid now."  
The face of the demon grew livid, distorted. "Use it on your life Merrin. Use it on your totally crapped up personality. Erase the neuroses that..."

"Be silent!"  
The words flung forth like bolts as the old fan began to sprinkle the corflu. Karras gasped. The front of the bed was rising up off the floor! He stared at it incredulously. It's not happening, he thought.

In a workaday manner the old fan stoppered the corflu bottle, reached up and touched the propeller of his beanie again.

Karras heard Regan hissing, saw her sitting erect while her tongue flicked in and out rapidly like a cobra's. She buzzed like an insect. Cuts began to open in her flesh, as if she were being torn with invisible staples. The demon stared balefully at Merrin and the bed settled back to the floor.

Merrin knelt and began a murmured prayer. Ink began to pump from the Regan-thing's mouth as if it were a broken ditto machine. The old fan ignored it, continuing his prayer.

"...and let her come once more into that Sense of Wonder..."

The viscous flow of ink ceased. Merrin's hand was buried under it, like the rankest neofan.

"...I cast you out, unclean spirit, along with every mundane power of the enemy. It is the Spirit of Fandom who commands you, who once led Jophan to the Enchanted Duplicator, who..."

The demon excreted noisily. Purple slime slid down the sides of the bed, carrying illegible trekzines, monsterzines, all manner of loathsome, vile smelling crud.

"There," croaked the demon mockingly, "Consecrate *that*, Saint Merrin. For *that* is Fandom."

Karras felt uneasy and then the hair on his arms began prickling up. With nightmare slowness Regan's head was swivelling like a manikin until those ghastly eyes fixed on his.

"And you Karras, you pathetic quasi success...you and your phallic Hugo. Are the femmefans attracted to your Hugo, Karras?" It laughed, mockingly. "Vondo is dead, you know. Dead after 893 issues. And all for lack of response. You hypocrite. Go play with your Hugo!" The head turned slowly back to Merrin.

"...you corruptor of all that is good. You foul begetter of feuds..."

Karras shivered. The room was getting colder.  
"Depart monster! Return to us our neofan who..."

"Possession is nine tenths of the law Merrin! You will lose! The neo is mine! Mine!"

A muffled pounding jolted the room, like the engine of a car breaking down halfway to a convention.

"I adjure you ancient serpent..."  
"Queer! Fairy! You're only in it for the egoboo Merrin! You scum. Go away and I'll Loc your zine. Is it a deal?"

Merrin continued the prayers, unheeding, as the torrent of abuse raged on.

"You're like all the rest Merrin. I was in the lavatory of the LASFS clubroom back in '43. I saw what you did. You and that strapping young neo! 'This is what Fandom is all about son.' Faggot! Homosexual filth! Maybe Karras will let you feel his Hugo!"

But the old fan's voice remained steady.

"...it is Ghu who commands you...It is Foo who commands you. It is Bloch who commands you!"

2  
"BUT WHAT IS THE PURPOSE of possession?"  
Karras said, frowning. "What's the point?"

"Who can know," answered Merrin. "I think the demon's target is not the possessed, it is us, the observers--every fan in this house. And I think--I think the point is to make us despair, to reject Fandom, Damien; to see ourselves as ultimately pathetic, phoney, without dignity or value; as sick people, overgrown adolescents who cannot face reality."

"And the demon knows where to strike for what is 'normal behavior' other than a majority opinion? And fans are a minority. Better yet, from the demon's point of view, fans, as sensitive, intelligent people, are susceptible to the doubts he seeks to implant--more susceptible than many mundanes would be."

"Rest for a while Damien. I will continue alone."

3  
AS KARRAS ENTERED THE ROOM he heard the demon roaring frenziedly at Merrin. "... would have lost. You would have lost! And you knew it! Scum! Faq! Come back! Come Back!"

Karras almost stumbled over the body.

Shocked, he knelt, turned the old fan over. Saw the bluish coloration of his face. In a wrenching, stabbing instant of anguish he realized Merrin was dead. Heart failure. He sagged with despair and grief.

"...pervert...homosexual..."  
Karras heard the words of the demon and began to tremble with murderous fury. He looked up with a face that was a purpling snarl. "You son of a bitch." The demon eyed him with malevolence. "You were losing. You're a loser. You've always been a loser!" Regan splattered him with ink. He ignored it. "Yes, you're very good with neofen," he said trembling, "with little femmefen. Well come on, let's see you try a BNF! Come on loser. Leave the girl and take me. Take Me!"  
It was only a minute later that

Chris heard glass breaking. She rushed to Regan's room. The window was shattered. Far below, on the street, lay Karras-- obviously dead.

EPILOGUE.

SUNLIGHT STREAMED through the clubroom window. Chris MacNeil was relaxing on the worn sofa, listening to the creak of the dupe and the cheerful sounds of faanish conversation.

Regan came bounding over to her, holding a sheet of paper. Her daughter could not recall her ordeal at all.

Chris took the paper. *Cosmic Tales*, editor: Regan MacNeil. It was the first issue of her first zine.

"Oh mother, isn't it a *Wonderful Thing*."



Smiling, Chris began to read the editorial. "It is a proud and lonely thing to be a fan."

Editorial (from Page 794...)



Saturday evening after Discon, after Sheryl had put her on the bus, and loaded her down with canned goodies. She left Monday afternoon before I got back from work.

It was the best two-day con I've ever been to...

Joan worked both Saturday & Sunday nites, so Mae & I just sat and talked and talked. About many things, yet a very few things. She was so gosh-wow about Americans, I began to find my carefully cultivated cynicism crumbling, though I fought it all the way. She was the first person I could ever talk God & religion to without feeling threatened. I told her my hopes, my fears, and my dreams. And she gave me the answers I needed, although they certainly weren't always the ones I wanted to hear. And I almost gave up a long engrained habit: that was the longest stretch (other than at cons) I've gone in a long time without even turning the tv on. Or, more importantly, *wanting* to!

Although I spent a fair amount of time with Mae at the con (including a delightful dinner with her, Joan & Loren the night of the awards), we were both 'on' there. Here...here it was just two friends talking. The fact that we were from thousands of miles apart, from very different cultures, that there was a fair degree of difference in age & sex...these weren't there to any noticable degree.

I've never talked so much, so freely to anyone in my life.

I'll never know what she thought of that strange weekend in the wilds of Ohio, but it is something I'll never forget.

If there was not a Mae Strelkov, it would be necessary to invent her. Just for me.

Mentioning Loren MacGregor...who else would have called long distance from Seattle last July, to wish me a Happy Fifth Anniversary! No not *that* kind of an anniversary; not even a premature well-wishing for NW's upcoming event. If *you* don't remember what happen on July 20, 1969 (other than one of my birthdays, of course), then what are you doing reading this fanzine?

Thanks, Loren. It was appreciated.

This is rather a good issue, he said not at all modestly.

It has the variety of subject matter and the (I think) balance between serious and light pieces that I've sought for a long time. There's nothing earth-shaking in here, just some good stuff. I'm happy.

I'm even rather pleased with the layout, which is Early-Get-It-Done, or, you start typing here, and come out there. I think just possibly I may be getting the hang of it.

Some notes on the material....

Sandra's piece was written in 1971. I had it for a while back then, but never got it published, so she withdrew it and sent it to another faned. Who proceeded to hold it even longer than I had! I got it back this summer. And this time I'm getting it published. Now.

John Andrews simple little thing was written in July, 1973, sent to me in December of that year, and published one year later. Not bad. If you have any questions you should refer to the June '73 *Analog*.

I suppose this is as good a place as any place to say that, when I say to an author or artist that I will publish their work in a specific issue, I really do mean it. But these things happen. Take the "Discon Section" this issue, for example: When I got Jerry Pournelle's penetrating Social Commentary, I told him it'd be in the Annish. Then I received Jodie's essay. Then I received Andy's transcript. So I ran them all this time.

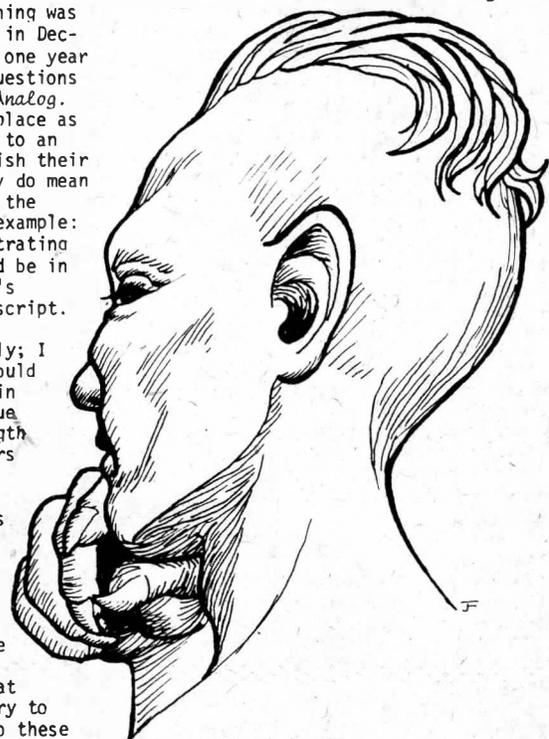
I don't do such things lightly; I bumped some things that I swore would be in this issue. But I must retain the option of constructing an issue on a basis other than that of length of time in the backlog. The writers thus far--particularly Joe Christopher, Grant Canfield, Patrick McGuire, the bumpee's this time--have been understanding and patient. For which I'm grateful. Some of the artists have even more grounds for complaint...but I do try and work the illos into the text, and sometimes it will be quite a while before something in my mind clicks and says, "Hey, that illo should go *there*. (I made a try to get every artist in the files into these

two issues, but even failed at that.)

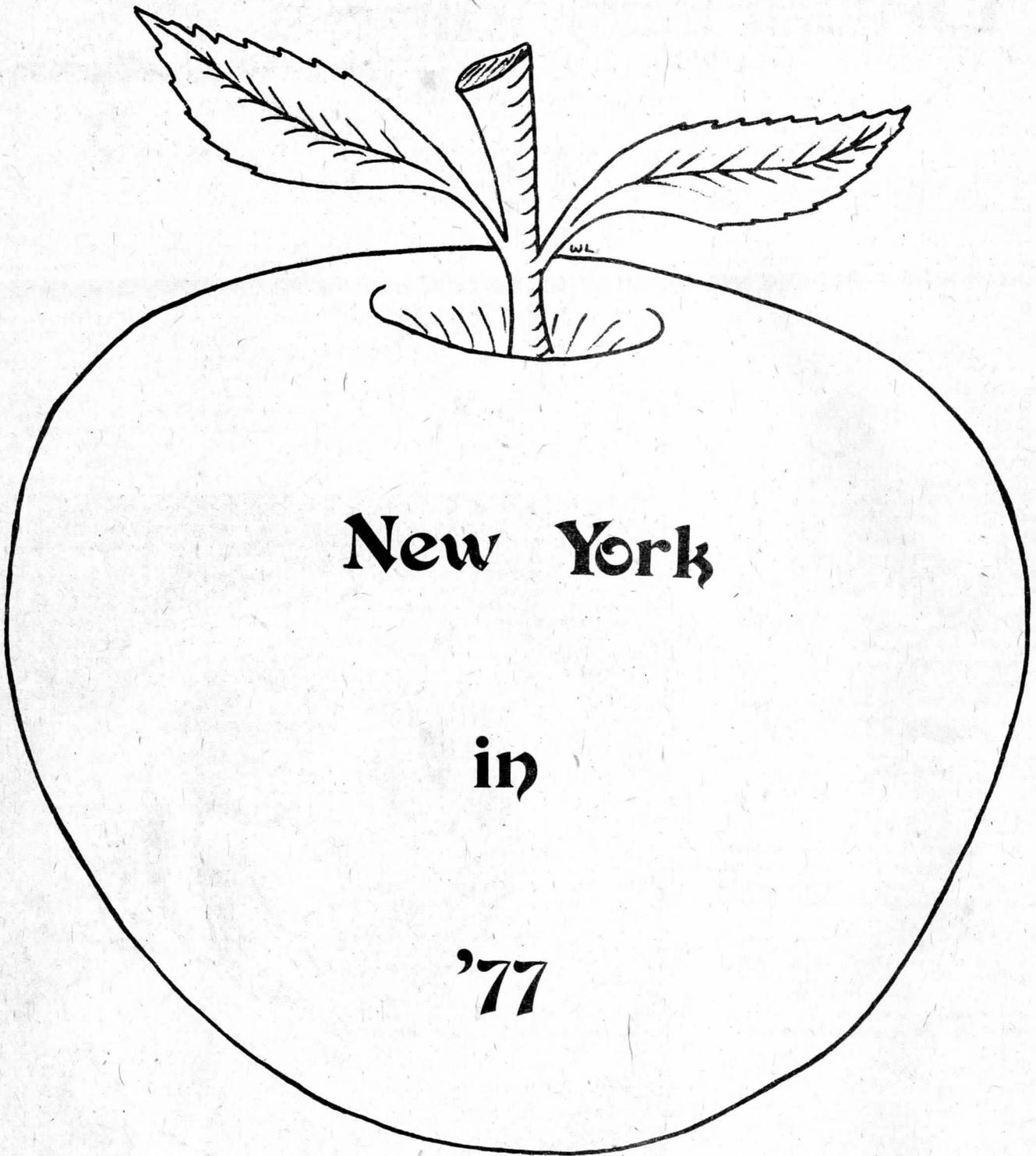
I suppose I should tell you to lay off the contributions until I get caught up. But I won't; I *can't*. As I perhaps mentioned before, my biggest fear in 'going big' was not financial (I make do, somehow) but that I might not be able to find the material needed. To say that that particular fear has thus far been groundless, is to put it mildly. But I've never been able to plan even one issue in advance before, and I have this fear, still (I think many of the faneds do) that someday I'll have the time, the money to publish an issue, an audience to do it for...and have nothing to run.

I have this cat, I call Blackie and Joan called Gut. Someone dumped it at the semi-vacant house next door, when it was only a couple of weeks old. It took Joan two days to locate the kitten behind the whimper, and coax it out from under the porch. That was eighteen months ago. It *still* eats until it has gorged itself sick. It knows that there might not be any food tomorrow, and you must get it while you can.

I know how that cat feels, because I feel the same way about material (and a few more important things): It's my 'fix', and I must store up against a possibly lean tomorrow. (Continued on Page 822)



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# Understandings

ROBERT A.W. LOWNDES

I CAN'T HONESTLY SAY I *like* censorship, and I like still less when it's larded over with hypocrisy, however unconscious. Yet, there it is: time after time I find people who, on the one hand, are constantly ringing the fire alarms against the danger of censorship from a source they consider illiberal not only justifying but often perpetrating censorship when it comes to viewpoints or works of art which they consider "reactionary" or that beloved term "fascist."

We should all be free to say what we think, write what we feel like writing and have it published if someone who is publishing thinks it good enough to put into print; we should all be free to see and read what we want to--*providing* that it's "liberal."

Some time back, I got a phone call from Roger Elwood, inviting me to do a story for one of his projected anthologies. I believe that the subject was generally on religion for this one. Now it happens that, now and then, I do get an idea for a story; I find the best thing to do is to pour myself a long drink and drink it slowly, then lie down for awhile. But, nonetheless, the prospect of writing on order was enticing, although I told Mr. Elwood that, everything considered, such an "assignment" ought to be on pure speculation. I'm not a big name and I haven't so much as tried to work out a short story--a brand new one, that is--for over ten years. Let's have fair dealing on both sides of the fence.

I believe I also told him that while I have a certain amount of vanity about my skills, I do not consider every word I write as sacred. I've always been willing to make major alterations to satisfy a purchaser *providing* they do not distort what I'm trying to do in this particular story. Not that I enjoyed reworking something that I thought was good, but I've found from experience that sometimes an editor can see the "better way" of doing it that I didn't realize myself until it was suggested.

There was that time when Jim Blish and I turned over our first completed version of *Chaos Coordinated* to Fred Pohl, who was then Jim's agent. Fred read it, said it was a dandy story, then told Jim exactly what was missing. And it was so elementary that I think we both blushed. We took it back, reworked it (what was wrong was that everything went just too darn smoothly for our protagonists, but we hadn't noticed it) and sent it back to Fred. Fred got a real fast acceptance from Campbell--which he wouldn't have gotten from our original version.

Then there was Marty Greenberg.

"A short time ago, I delivered chapter four of this book, as a paper before a group of university teachers. Afterwards, a young woman of advanced 'liberal' views approached me and said in all seriousness: 'You're advocating censorship; you shouldn't be allowed to publish it.'" (Duncan Williams, TROUSERED APES, footnote in chapter 6)



Janis 74

I wanted to make my old novelet, *A Matter of Faith* into a novel, and approached Tom Bourey, for whom I was editing the Avalon series at the time. I told him what I was doing and he was perfectly willing to take another book from me. (THE DUPLICATED MAN, by Jim and myself, hadn't broken any sales records, but it had done as well as a dozen others by well-known names.) But he said he had a deal with Marty Greenberg, tying in Avalon and Marty's operations (at that time Marty's operations were in seemingly reasonable condition), so would I mind letting Marty see what I had done so far? No, I wouldn't.

Well, Marty read my first four chapters and the original novelet, which would give him an idea of how it all came out, and wrote me a two page letter. It showed me exactly where I'd done wrong; I couldn't, for a novel, open up the way I had in the magazine. --we needed a few chapters to get to that point, in order to fix the reader firmly into the background of my worlds of Ein. That meant throwing out about 50 pages and starting all over again. But the result was a book which I still can bear to look over again, now and then. I dedicated it to Marty. (Mind, I didn't go in to all this on the phone with Roger Elwood; but these things were in the back of my head.)

So I'm willing to rework something--but, I did say, I won't change a single word that distorts the story I'm trying to sell, even if that means I don't sell. He agreed with my principles and asked what the story I had in mind was about.

I told him and immediately he began to suggest changes which, in fact, made it an entirely different story, leaving only the background. The background was a "utopia" under the big brother aegis of H.E.W., which had become a dictator, in effect. Religion of any sort is considered mental illness. People who entertain any sort of religious beliefs relating to any "established" faith are quietly put into hospitals and kept there until they've been "cured" of their sickness.

As a result, Cosa Nostra's biggest bootlegging operation is religious services and sacraments. My story would deal with this, and in this particular instance what's being bootlegged is oldfashioned Roman Catholicism.

Oh, no, said Elwood, we can't have that. Now here's how you can make a good story out of it. I listened and finally said, "Yes, Mr. Elwood, I'm sure someone can write you the story you just outlined to me--but I'm not going to. It doesn't interest me at all."

Whether the story done my way would have been any good is problematical. It might have been good. But the thing was that a seemingly "liberal" editor, who had previously said that I could write what I wanted to, immediately clamped down when I stated what I wanted to write. He wouldn't

## If This Goes On...

"I got a million of 'em," said Roger Elwood.

HAS ANYONE NOTICED that Elwood is taking over? That is, anyone besides Barry Malzberg, who expressed his own qualms in the May *Analog*. Malzberg examines the magnitude, and some of the consequences, of Elwood's remarkable presence in the field of SF; his observations, as far as they go, are shrewd, but he assumes the phlegmatic pose of a news commentator after election night. Or perhaps, more like the Viennese professor who offers a small cavil one week after the *Anschluss*. In the end, Malzberg voices a mitigating circumstance, declaring that Elwood, because of his ignorance of the field, is very open to outside suggestion. He is a weak editor, who exercises a minimal control over the contents of his books; this is his strength, we are told, and a Good Thing for writers.

The actual record hardly bears out this contention: quite otherwise, as we shall see.

At last count, Elwood had amassed contracts for 60-odd SF anthologies. (By now it is likely more nearly 100.) Some are odder than others, but almost all belong to that dubious class of *objets d'art*, the "theme" anthology of original fiction. Quite often, the stories Elwood uses are ones that have been written to cut-and-dried specifications, parceled out at random to various authors of his acquaintance. Many of these books are being promulgated in the academic market as an encyclopedic source of material for undergraduate and even high school courses in science fiction, each volume illustrating a particular speculative subject or literary theme. A cook-book-tour of science fiction, as it were.

In tandem with Robert Silverberg, Elwood is editing a mammoth annual collection called EPOCH, ostensibly as a showcase for the superior and the ultra-literary. He has also been engaged as SF editor for Pyramid, Chilton, Bobbs-Merril, and Harlequin Books. (Curiously, his greatest coup for Chilton thus far is "a major book on baseball star Hank Aaron.") He has just issued a SF recording, promoted in psychedelic terms in full-page ads in all the prozines... it is, of course, the first in a series. At one time, Elwood was negotiating with Sol Cohen for *Amazing* and *Fantastic*; he planned, after purchase, to fire Ted White and issue the mags as paperback books under his own editorial hand.

Within the past couple years, Roger Elwood has knocked down publishers' doors like an endless row of dominoes; from relative obscurity, he has rapidly become a big stork in our little pond, by using a few contracts-in-hand as credentials to pile up further conquests. His onslaught has spawned a rash of quasi-thematic original anthology projects among ambitious young authors (and other tyros of even lesser repute) who apparently intend to take a ride, as freelance neo-editors, on Elwood's voluminous coat-tails.

But what kind of ride awaits Elwood? Were he the world's greatest editor, with the best of intentions he could hardly maintain any standard of excellence throughout many dozens of simultaneously-edited books. The prospect of mediocrity--at the very least--is eminent, if not inevitable.

There is good reason to believe, as well, that Elwood's native literary

even read such a story; he "knew" (because to him it was "illiberal") that no one else would like it.

Thinking the story over since then, I'm just as glad that I didn't get the go-ahead signal on it. As with various other short stories that occurred to me as such, I'd have found myself with a full length novel on my hands--and that, these days, I just do not have either the time or energy for.

Understand, I do not intend this as a slam at Roger Elwood; there's nothing, as I see it, either unusual or awful about an editor not wanting a certain type of story or theme. When I was an editor there were certain stories I wouldn't touch with the well-known ten foot pole myself. Or,

in reprinting an old pulp story (either for my own magazines or Avalon Books) I would delete or alter material which struck me as being "needlessly offensive." No--it was the pretense of being liberal that annoyed me. ...

And led me to realize that I am not 100% opposed to censorship. Since then, when the occasion calls for it, I've said so. We can all preach better than we practice; my thing has been to turn that old saying, "Why don't you practice what you preach?" around. These days, when I preach at all, I try to preach what I actually practice.

A modicum of these views appeared in a letter to Dick Geis' *Alien Critic*, and one reader, Brett Cox, took excep-



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# JODIE OFFUTT

IT HAS BEEN SAID that charisma is that indefinable quality possessed by a woman with big tits.

Some of us are lesser endowed with charisma and therefore have to come up with other ways of attracting attention. Nowadays, the other ways need to be more and more bizarre.

At Discon, for instance, the real attention-getters used snakes, cut-out and see-through clothes, and flat-out (*un-flat-out*, I should say) bare breast(s). It makes it tough on us timid souls who don't have it in us to want/need quite *that* much attention.

Time was when the braless look was enough of an attention-getter in itself. Now it's such a natural that the swing/jiggle doesn't always draw the eyes; lookers get used to anything. (A friend of mine decided a while back that she'd never wear a bra again. Period. I think that's a mistake; it's limiting. Besides, charisma, as Richard Nixon learned, tends to sag with age and lack of support.)

One night I was getting dressed to go out and I decided I'd look better with a bra under whatever I was wearing. And I made a discovery: "Hey, Jodie's wearing a bra!" someone said later that night. It was then that I realized how long it'd been since I'd heard a comment on my bralessness.

So I started switch-hitting.

Bras are nice; they're pretty, colorful, attractive and can be sexy-looking. (Not all of them.) Cleavage is nice sometimes, too, and it takes one hell of a lot of charisma to produce cleavage without a little help!

There are other little switch tricks. I like to wear skirts when I think other females will be in pants. Or tight-ass pants when most will be wearing dresses. Boots, especially now that they're not so 'in'; kinky stuff. You get the idea. These things are a

far cry from loin-cloths and bareness! They're also a lot more effective in a small town.

One night at a party when I was wearing a short dress with a low neck a friend said, "Is that *all* you got for Christmas?" That night I also found out that I had an attention-getter I wasn't aware of. My doctor looked at me and said, "You've got a blemish! Right there on your chest. Just look at that."

I did. Looked like a freckle to me. A big freckle.

First thing I knew most of the people in the room were eyeballing my chest. The doctor continued:

"You've got no business walking around with such a mar on your chest. You were just in the office last week; why didn't you mention that growth? What do you think annual check-ups are for anyway, if not to take care of such disfigurements. Why, you've got an imperfection on your body!"

(Actually all I care about is getting a pap smear because I can't get my Pill prescription refilled but four times without it. My license to practice sex.)

I stammered and blushed...clear down to my defect. I was embarrassed.

"Funny," his wife said, "he's never noticed *my* mark. Of course, it *is* under my arm..."

The following Monday morning I called the doctor's office and asked the girl to find out if he could remove this growth from my chest without hurting me. Puzzled, she went away, then came back even more puzzled. "Yes, he can take it off, come on down ...I don't know what's so *funny*."

As I recall he gave me a shot of novocaine (the needle left and unsightly bruise for *days*) and burned off my mole (or wart or whatever). It smelled terrible! It took about three minutes.

Damned if Blue Cross didn't pay for it! "Surgical procedure," the doctor said. Seemed more like cosmetic surgery to me. But what do I know--I'm just a girl.

The next time I went to a party I wore a turtle neck and I embarrassed the good doctor by telling everybody about his drumming up business by closely inspecting female chests for flaws.

After a few months even the scar began to fade and I was left without any trace of my attention-getting blemish.

Then at Discon, the New York in '77 people gave me an apple--a little thumbnail-sized embroidered apple with stickum on the back--that I stuck in a strategic spot on my chest. My little apple didn't attract all that much attention in Washington, not with all the charisma around, but back home in Morehead it was a different story.

Somebody at the con told me she'd put an apple (or a KC heart) on her skin that had left a place when removed. Rather than risk another blemish, I just left my apple on, thinking I'd peel it off when I got home and had some salve to put on the spot. Then I decided to leave it for a party the following weekend. My little piece of fruit held up surprisingly well under showers and baths, and as a good attention-getter.

"What have you got there, a cherry?" ...Hardly.

"Where did you get that?" ...I embroidered it myself, took me all afternoon, got a terrible crick in my neck.

I started to explain its source once, but you know how involved it can be explaining fannish doings to the uninitiated. It led to some interesting conversations. One girl told me she had a secret desire to have a butterfly tattooed on the back of her shoulder.

"Why not way low on your butt or high on the inside of your thigh? I suggested.

"Nobody'd see it there!" ...Oh.

When I finally picked my apple the backing was all gummy and the stuff rolled off without a trace.

There was another party the following weekend. This time I cut a 'bite' out of my apple before replacing it.

"Hey! Somebody's been nibbling on your fruit." ... "Nearly ate the whole thing." And so on.

I got a lot of mileage out of that apple. It is now stuck on a tile above the bathtub. When one doesn't have charisma, one has to make do with props. What next? I dunno...

Let me check through the Frederick's catalog....

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## We've Come A Long Way,



Baby!

# Beer Mutterings

POUL ANDERSON

WAY BACK IN THE '60's we heard a lot about idealistic youth encountering the cynicism and hypocrisy of the adult world. (I say "way back" because already protest, relevance, counter-culture, and the rest seem pretty remote and time-faded, don't they?) The prime case in my own experience involved my daughter. About eight or nine years old, she came from school with a homework assignment, to write answers to a bunch of the usual inane questions about a story that had been read in class. One was: "What do you think the author's purpose was in writing this story?" Said Astrid to me, despairingly, "I know what the author's purpose was, but how can I tell the teacher?"

Perhaps I should have suggested she quote Samuel Johnson, to the effect that anyone who writes for anything but money is an ass. The Grand Cham had a gift for forceful oversimplification such as may be the only possible reply to litcrit types. But here among friends I can ramble at somewhat greater length around the subject of what motivates writers.

Professional writers, that is, though not exclusively full-time professionals. (In fact, most of us, including some of the most highly respected, moonlight at it.) Nearly everybody has to do the occasional report, business letter, duty letter to a relative, etc.; but chores don't count. Then there are the people in and out of academe who publish to further their careers and/or out of a desire to inform. But these writings are just means to an end. And I won't deal with the writer-for-fun either, whether he be a diarist, a correspondent, a shy amateur who keeps his scribblings private, a bolder amateur who publishes in noncommercial outlets like fanzines, or a sucker who pays a vanity press to print his stuff. In this column I myself am an amateur, so I can tell you from the inside that when a person functions as a pro, he's quite a different breed of cat.

Mainly, he goes to the trouble of making his work saleable. I don't mean better per se. Some amateur writing is superior to some professional writing (virtually never in fiction; but a sprightly fanzine essay can be enjoyable when a dull pro story is not). I mean that he does more than amuse himself and a tiny coterie, or more than go off on an ego trip. On the negative side again, this does not imply he subordinates his individuality. Indeed, in a sense his individuality is what he has to sell: experience, philosophy, choice of motif, manner of



expression. But he must make that self-presentable to a sufficient number of cash customers to justify the cost of dressing him in print. For example, unless a discursus like the present one has a real place in a story--unlikely, though maybe not impossible--out it goes, even though I find it interesting. Litcritters who label any commercially published writer "self-indulgent" merely show their ignorance.

Of course, judgments do vary as to what may or may not belong in a given piece, what is or is not an appropriate style, and so on. The writer has to follow his instinct and hope it is sound. If, by and large, he is readable enough, his audience will tolerate a certain amount of material they wish weren't there. But he's got to be readable enough, and that's hard work.

Now why should he go to this effort unless for money? We have already observed that he can satisfy the desire to communicate in a lot of non-commercial places. True, most of these have small audiences; but by that very token, communication is apt to be more effective. Anyhow, he would have to be quite a megalomaniac to believe that his writing must reach millions or the world can't be saved.

Granted, there is the vanity aspect. Many people don't give a damn for payment but want pro publication

so bad they can taste it. However, while this essentially amateur attitude may energize them at the start, it won't survive years of more or less steady production.

What is so awful about writing for money, anyway? Your doctor, your lawyer, your friendly neighborhood astrophysicist, practically everybody you know is working for the bucks. He has to make a living, after all. The question is what he makes the living at. If he's fortunate, he gets paid for what he likes doing. But...prodrom of any kind, as opposed to amateurism, involves a lot of drudgery. Thus, the pro astronomer doesn't simply aim his telescope at the skies when the mood strikes him; he office-politicks for time at the instrument, reduces observations, angles for funds, et grubby cetera. It's the need to keep the money coming in which sustains him through this, as well as the possibility of an occasional moment of genuine insight and accomplishment. Same for writing.

In short, virtually everything ever published commercially has been a potboiler in the sense that it helped keep the author's pot boiling--even when he has had income from other sources. It may or may not have involved a daimon to boot. And whether it did or not is unimportant. Some very bad stuff has been written compulsively, and some masterpieces to order. You deny the latter? Just check what is known about how several of Shakespeare's best plays came to be; or, in the field of music, recall that it was Bach's job to churn out those myriad compositions.

Inspiration, whatever that means, may well follow the decision to undertake a particular project. (My stab at a definition makes "inspiration" the state in which everything somehow seems to click together, and there the vision is and need only be reported on.) But would it have come without the external need which prompted the decision? In most cases--not all--I doubt it. And is it a sine qua non for work of the finest kind? Again, I doubt it. The same result can, in principle, be obtained by painstaking application of knowledge. (Granted, in practice this is apt to involve so much toil that the creator usually settles for ordinary competence.)

Be the foregoing as it may, undeniably most things are written by technique alone. This doesn't imply they are empty. They can contain profound and beautiful passages. The notion that the highest flights can only occur in a state of fine poetic









# Energuwoman

## SUSAN WOOD

ONE SUNDAY EVENING in 1933, in the little Dutch town of Veere, Thomas Jefferson sat playing the violin. His host, Hendrik Willem Van Loon, was delighted, observing that Jefferson "was, as far as I can remember, our only President to whom music meant something more than a hymn and 'I've Been Working on the railroad.'" Over a dinner of salmon, duck and spoon bread, the President discussed everything from rice to Alexander Hamilton with Van Loon, his wife, his friend Frits who paid the bills, Lucie Van Dam their artist friend, and Desiderius Erasmus the Renaissance philosopher. Then the bells in the town hall tower chimed midnight, and Jefferson vanished.

Before Van Loon and Frits could entertain Catherine the Great, Marie Antoinette, or other notables, the dinnerparties ended. The next week, Hitler seized power. Reality intruded, even in peaceful Veere, the refuge "which only exists in our imagination."

Fantasy? My library classifies it as biography: VAN LOON'S LIVES, subtitled by the author "a true and faithful account of a number of highly interesting meetings with certain historical personages, from Confucius and Plato to Voltaire and Thomas Jefferson, about whom we had always felt a good deal of curiosity and who came to us as our dinner guests in a bygone year."

History? Perhaps, but of a special kind: a chatty, informal, unashamedly subjective collection of biographical sketches by a writer who, at the age of ten, announced his ambition to become "a very famous historian," and who later defined history as "that which makes sense out of what otherwise would be nonsense."

I encountered VAN LOON'S LIVES in the children's section of the library when I was ten or eleven. As far as I was concerned, it was historical fiction, or maybe historical fantasy, full of names and dates which I ignored and characters I remembered: the candy coating impressed me more than the educational pill. Van Loon's forte lay in turning historical figures into people. Years later, for example, when I read Emily Dickinson's poetry, I identified it, not with the spinster recluse of popular myth, but with Van Loon's "highly amused spectator of life." Talented, and more than a little selfish, she sat upstairs in Frits' bedroom, impishly dropping poems down on Chopin and Rossini, until she was coaxed down for a glass of cognac--after which, she went back to heaven after swiping Lucie's lipstick.

The framework of VAN LOON'S LIVES, then, is pure fantasy. It demands the same willing suspension of disbelief as fantasy; it supports it with the same mixture of airy assumptions and concrete details. The book's premise is introduced quite casually. Van Loon and Frits were sitting in the latter's parlour, drinking coffee and talking "God out of His heaven and the Devil back into his Hell." Van Loon tended to go in for vast topics--his books included THE ARTS, VAN LOON'S GEOGRAPHY, and THE STORY OF THE ARTS, which pretty well covers civilization--and his conversations with Frits included most of the universe and every name "in the whole card catalogue of the past." At some point, Frits looked across at the gothic tower of the town hall, and observed: "What a pity we can't ask that old tower some day to drop in for a plate of pea soup! It has been there such a long time, it

has seen so much! It ought to be able to tell us lots of amusing things about all sorts of people it would have been fun to meet."

To which Van Loon replied: "Why go in for second best when we can have first best and at no greater expense of effort or money? If we can make a Gothic tower come and sit at your dining-room table, it must be just as easy to invite some Babylonian potentate who has been in his grave the last fifty centuries!"

From "if only we could" to "of course we can" in one paragraph--"There is nobody to tell us no." The friends arranged (never mind how, since they promised to be discreet) to choose some guests, leave their names on a list beneath one of the stone lions outside the town hall, and prepare them a dinner, each Sunday at seven. Within this framework, the actual biographies were disguised as informal introductions to each guest, written by Van Loon for Frits' benefit.

Now disbelief, as Judith Merrill observed, must be willingly suspended, not hanged by the neck until dead. Instead of simply setting up his premise, Van Loon underlines its implausibility by frequent coy allusions to "our secret" and "the great mystery." His native Holland has been scarred by religious strife: the persecutions of the Inquisition, the religious wars of independence, the joyless Calvinism he associated with his fault-finding father. In reaction, he regarded religion as a game of make-believe. Turning Heaven into a running joke, though, harms the LIVES, as, for example, when he assures Frits that, if the dinner-guests get indigestion, St. Peter can dose them with bicarbonate of soda.

God, whom Van Loon once described

as "a sort of beneficent grandfather with whom I occasionally hold conversation and discuss my own little problems," appears in the LIVES as a friendly autocrat quoting, to Erasmus' delight, from his PRAISE OF FOLLY. Heaven resembles a dreary minimum-security prison; Queen Elizabeth I calls it "a Goddamn hole." Generally, spirits are allowed a brief "sabbatical leave" every seven hundred years, but Van Loon's guests are granted special leave in the hope that "a short glimpse of the old familiar scenes might make them all the more resigned to their present mode of existence." Erasmus is allowed, in fact, to take up residence in the town hall, and Van Loon observes that he seemed bored by heaven, "starved for a bright and amusing exchange of ideas." One wonders why he had to come to earth to meet Montaigne.

The other guests seem more literally starved, a fact Erasmus blames on the Protestants' interference in "the management of our establishment," insisting on "plain living and high thinking" for everyone. The Americans did better; they introduced a filing system which "covers about five thousand blocks in heaven and is entirely filled with tin boxes," containing summaries of what posterity is saying about the various inhabitants.

With the food on this earth, Van Loon returns to safe ground. Nothing makes an era of history more real than knowledge of how ordinary people lived. Van Loon, by his decision to offer each guest a contemporary meal, is able to offer the reader a lot of social history. You think of the Middle Ages in terms of knights and illuminated manuscripts? For most people, it meant interminable boiled cabbage, sour beer, and stews because everyone's teeth were rotten. Erasmus was a great humanist, and Van Loon presents him wisely commenting on the follies of some guests, conversing wittily with others. But Erasmus was also a human being. He had gallstones, his host remembers, and is careful to order a special Moselle wine; he was incarcerated in a cloister as a boy, and fed poorly on fish, so he would appreciate a hearty meal--of meat; and he was once presented with a knife and fork by a Polish abbot, so it is safe to assume he can handle utensils, and serve him veal cutlets instead of stew.

The discussions of each guest's habits, health, and presumed preferences in music as well as food, do as much as the formal biographies to fix each character. And they set the stage for the arrival of the guests themselves, presented with a successful blend of fantasy and realism. Queen Elizabeth's praise of the Empress Theodora's woolen panties gives insight into the facts of life pre-central heating; she, and almost everyone else, complains constantly about the cold and draughts. It characterises Van Loon's version of Good Queen Bess, a vulgar old harridan who, after her seventh mug of ale, would insist on having Theodora show off the garment

in question (the Empress, a former prostitute turned respectable, declines). Finally, since the remark leads into a discussion of the wool trade and thence to taxation, it allows Van Loon to show why he considers these two women important: as competent, powerful rulers, as well as uninhibited personalities.

The blend of fantasy and reality works equally well the next week when Frits and Van Loon invite two inhibited and evil guests. Torquemada, Inquisitor General of Spain, sits gloomily poking the fire--and suddenly the blaze is full of heretics burning at the stake, while ghostly corpses sway from the rafters. Robespierre, meanwhile, sits guillotining oranges.

On a more pleasant note, Mozart is followed back to earth by the little dog who accompanied his coffin to the cemetery; Hans Christian Anderson is followed by his Ugly Duckling, who floats happily in a tin washtub throughout dinner; and St. Francis, of course, attracts a garden full of birds. And while it is no new idea to describe the creative imagination by picturing determined characters in search of their harried authors, Van Loon uses it to good effect, further confusing the line between reality and fantasy. Rabelais' Gargantua sits down on the town hall, munching a boiled ostrich and dropping the bones into the harbour. Shakespeare downs tankards of ale (Van Loon has a rather limited view of the English) and complains about having "that morose Scandinavian hanging around my neck all these centuries." Meanwhile Hamlet, tall, lank, holding a skull, droops over the squat, morose figure of Molière's Malade Imaginaire, one discoursing on his soul, the other, on his stomach.

Several penstrokes, a few brushes of grey wash, and there the figures are. Van Loon's sketches for the LIVES, some in bright colours, are witty and appropriate, again blending suggestive vagueness with precise detail. Erasmus and Sir Thomas More, two bent backs swathed in warm gowns, sit deep in talk--the fantasy figures outlined against the realistic background of the Delft tiles of a Veere fireplace. Empress Theodora is an impression of exotic majesty in a red-and-gold robe, with huge black eyes. The Bachs and Breughels fiddle and paint all over the town square, in a riot of red and green, blue and yellow.

VAN LOON'S LIVES is a joy to browse through.

As serious reading matter, it's less successful.

Re-reading the books you loved as a child is always risky. At age 10, the Scarlet Pimpernel is entrancing; at 25, he's embarrassing. The cataloguer who originally consigned LIVES to the children's section had the right idea. The book gives an excellent introduction to a multitude of famous people, and to history in general; but it loses much of its charm when viewed critically. As a historian, Van Loon was criticised for his sweeping generalizations, his subjective, often-

distorted interpretations, and his inaccuracies: all problems which flaw the LIVES. Simplistic judgments abound. Shakespeare, to take someone I know something about, is shown as no artist but a kind of steam-shovel operator, a "human dredge" who unthinkingly "dumped the whole of humanity at our feet." The four or so pages about his life offer nothing more than a chatty, superficial rehash of all the popular myths, without any insight.

The whole book is inevitably biased. Both the lives chosen and the manner of their presentation are Van Loon's--and, one gathers, Van Loon felt the most interesting life was his own. THE STORY OF HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON, by his son, Gerard, bears this out. Van Loon, when asked about his life, "very rarely told the same story twice--unless it was a good one. In that case, he embroidered it." His factual books, however, are full of autobiography. In the LIVES, one senses that the people he portrays are, in his mind, less important than his own reactions to them. Worse, these reactions, given in the biographical sketches, seem to force the guests into predetermined roles. Van Loon identifies strongly with Erasmus, whose birthplace he shares; thus he presents the philosopher in an uncritical, rosy light as a kind of benevolent, wise greatuncle--and nothing more. But if Van Loon the author disapproves of a character, Van Loon the host glumly predicts a miserable evening--and the guest obliges with insufferable behavior. Napoleon, for example, is escorted back to heaven by a brigade of his faithful grenadiers, including Van Loon's fanatically loyal great-great-grandfather; and Van Loon the character admits to being fascinated by the Emperor's eloquence at dinner. But Van Loon the author dismisses Napoleon as a tyrant, without any attempt to account for his charisma.

Van Loon's portraits are memorable, but that does not mean they are either accurate or insightful. Robespierre is dismissed on the dubious physiological grounds that he resembles Himmler, with "the same tight lips, the same sneer of self-righteous superiority, the same holier-than-everybody-else attitude in the shoulders." However much a reader may sympathise, this sort of simplistic judgement is not serious history. It is, however, inevitable. Van Loon the Dutch-American detested "the unholy Teuton" all his life...and published LIVES in 1944. The author's hatred of the Nazi regime threatening his homeland turns the book into a paean to individual liberty. The most honoured guests are those who, like William the Silent, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson, helped to bring political liberty to his two homelands; those who, like Erasmus, embodied moderation and tolerance in an irrational world; and those who, as musicians, artists and writers, brought beauty and happiness to mankind. The book's philosophy unifies the separate sketches, and makes them more than a whimsical

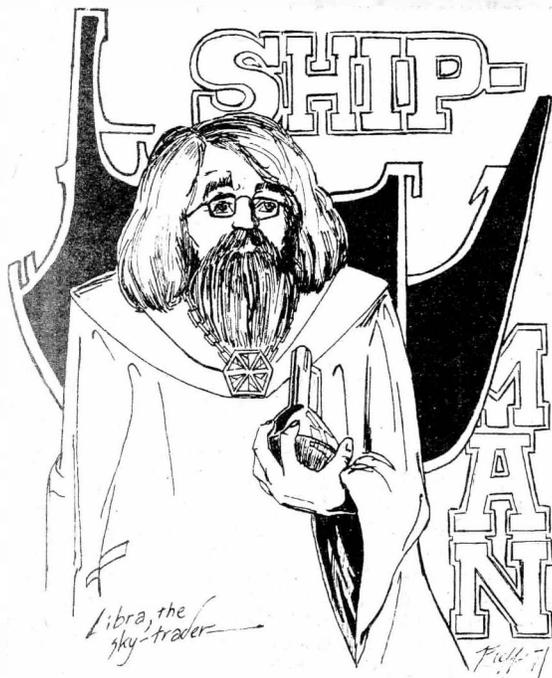
entertainment.

Yet the specific anti-Nazi propaganda, however understandable, weakens the universality of the theme. The artist should not sell his birthright for a pot of message. VAN LOON'S LIVES opens under the cloud of the Nazi threat, and the characters are introduced in relation to it: Lucie Van Dam

has not been heard from since the invasion, and since "she loathed everything German, her fate cannot have been a happy one"; Frits is dead, and "perhaps it is just as well," since the Nazis undoubtedly would have shot him; Veere itself has been bombed in an attack on Flushing.

Each guest seems to exist only in

relation to Hitler. Confucius and Plato leave, Van Loon turns on the radio, and listens with "dumb despair" to a BBC report on Hitler's rise, gaining no hope for the human race from the wise men who have just departed. The specific, all too real war explodes behind the timeless fantasy, exploding it as well; and the dream-



SANDRA MIESEL

# Prince

"It runs on Albanion? I shoulda guessed. I'm with the Quetzalcoatl Corporation myself."

"Whata ya do there?" asked Valyunt suddenly intent.

"Private pleasure thingamajigs. I'm an adman." He tensed as though anticipating a rebuff. None was forthcoming. "But I never saw no rig like that before."

"'Course not. Iss a custom job. Say, ya don't sound too happy with yer work."

If Valyunt was oblivious to the social stigma attached to his profession Slug had no intention of enlightening him.

"Oh, Uncle Q's allright as interstellar cartels go but I keep hearin' rumors SURD money's behind it. Don't wanna be mixed up with that bunch."

"No friend o' th' SURDs, eh? Now, Slug, since ya sucha good drinkin' pal," he refilled Slug's tankard, "I'm gonna make ya an offer." He waved his arms expansively. "Sign ya on as m' personal secretary."

"Ya mean be ya very own aman... amanuensis? Sure thing!"

"O.K. Now here's the gig: first off we visit a haruspex to have the entrails read..."

$$\text{II} \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} \psi * \psi dt = 1$$

---probability proverb

THE GOOD SHIP *Schrödinger* lifted off from the spaceport in a crescendo of manmade thunder. A troop of scrofulous urchins playing water polo in a sewage ditch paused in their game to wave goodbye.

Since the craft's operation was fully automated from launch to landing, Valyunt and Slug (hereafter designated as Faithful Slug) relaxed in the sybaritic main saloon. The latter was transcribing notes into his Spock™ micromini data bank. "Tell me again about your fiancée, Val. What did she look like?"

$$\nabla^2 \psi + \frac{2m}{\hbar^2} (E - V(x, y, z)) \psi = 0$$

---profound transcendental truth

THE BRUTAL SLASH OF SUNSET bled across the sky. Waves of rinkytink music from an antique MOOG spilled out the portal of a sleazy whitecollar bar.

"Ya say ya really are a prince, eh, Valyunt?" The pallid speaker--of uncertain gender and ambisexual inclination--was plump, hairless, and semi-nude.

"Yah, the ole man's titular king of m'home system, Ultima Thule."

Valyunt took another sip from his generer martini. He explained with slurry solemnity: "We call it Ultima Thule 'cause iss th' las' system before th' edge o'th' universe."

"Uh? I always thought space was curved in some kinda...whatayacallit... 'saddle-shape'."

Valyunt set down his glass with a resounding thwack. "Cripes! Ya know, Slug, I never woulda believed Earth was this far behin' th' times. The universe does too have an edge. We gotta whole buncha big yellow signs in transplutonian orbit: 'CAUTION! CONTINUUM ENDS ONE PARSEC.'"

Radiating waves of irate incredulity, Slug simply glared. He began to chew his scarcely visible fingernails. Warily he studied the other from beneath quivering lashless lids. Valyunt was twice his own height

from the crown of cropped black hair to the grimy and betaloned bare feet. His scrawny stoop-shouldered figure was clad in a tunic of metallic plastic chain mail topped by a blue polo shirt. Slug didn't recognize the animal whose head was blazoned in red across Valyunt's chest. In all, the prince's only remarkable feature was the seven foot, double-elbowed right arm resting on his sword hilt.

Having nibbled off a last morsel of cuticle and quaffed a Guinness, Slug groped for a fresh subject: "Say, that's some sword ya got there, buddy."

"Iss m'Singing Sword. 'Cause it sings. I jus' tap in a code here," long yellow nails raked jewels on the hilt, "and out pops any song ya want. Gotta whole music library right here on itty bitty mo-lec-u-lar beads, all snuggy behin' collapsed metal shield-in'. Everything from Maria Callas to... to..." his voice dropped to a reverent murmur, "Th' lates' rage in th' Nether Dominions."

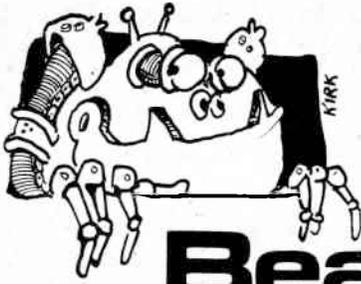
"Not?"

"Th' same. Jack Barron and his Bugs!"

"Aw, Valyunt, play me somethin'." Gregorian plainchant erupted between them. Shyly, "Do ya think I could ever learn to operate that gadget?"

"With yer stubby fingers? Not a chance, kid. Took me months to get th' hang. This here Albanion power unit needs a dainty touch."





# Beard Mumblings

## BOB TUCKER

I'VE BEEN SITTING HERE playing with my beard (the long grey one which reaches from my chin to the floor when I bend down to pick up a coin) and contemplating the short arm of coincidence. Readers who are, or who have been, trained killers for Uncle Sam my snicker at the term "short arm" but no scatological connotations are intended. I am convinced that coincidence has a very short arm indeed, and that it is nothing more than a set of wheels within wheels turning to befuddle fan and mundane alike.

Consider Seymour, Indiana, and a double coincidence. Last May, I was traveling by train from Chicago to Nashville to attend the Kubla Khan Klave (an evil gathering of fans), traveling in good company with three Chicago fans, and sometime during the evening we made our way to the bar car as good fans are wont to do. *Who* was on duty behind the bar? A Heinlein fan, that's who. You can't escape them, although in truth I didn't really want to escape this one; when he learned we were fellow Heinlein readers enroute to a real fan convention he became most convivial, and I'm quite certain I paid for no more than two or three drinks that evening. Fate--and the second coincidence--caught up to us early the next morning as our train was zipping through the undistinguished town of Seymour. Faster than a speeding bullet, our train jumped the tracks and mated with a freight train standing on a nearby siding. Loud were the mating cries of that unexpected meet and within minutes the whole population of Seymour was at trackside, gaping and pointing and snatching up souvenirs. The entire Officer Corps of Seymour were also there: three patrol cars, two ambulances, and a garbage truck. I worried only about that garbage truck. It didn't contribute to my peace of mind when I peered out the window and found it pulled up alongside my coach.

But where, you may ask, was *this* true-blue fan after crawling from the wreckage and snatching up my own souvenir?

I was in the bar car toasting the health of the Heinlein fan, that's where, because the man knew that heroic measures were called for in times of crisis. He had thrown open the bar, with all drinks on the house. I suspect we survivors cleaned out his

stock in about eight minutes, even before the first ambulance driver worked his way through the train calling out "Anybody dead in this car?"

The second coincidence may be found in print. Last January, I had delivered the manuscript of my new book, *ICE AND THORN*, to Doubleday and then forgot the matter except for looking forward to publication day in October. If you have a copy of the book you will find Seymour, Indiana, on page 153. That was *not* inserted after the wreck, but was written into the plot sometime last winter and forgotten.

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YET ANOTHER COINCIDENCE involving trains and fandom occurred in October, but not in so dramatic a fashion. Keep in mind the fact that I had moved to Jacksonville, Ill., in June 1974.

In October, I took a train to Chicago for still another convention, the Windycon (an evil gathering of fans), and for most of the way I was entertained by the buzzing of five women seated just across the aisle from me, plus one more seated directly behind me. They were talking politics. After a while one of the ladies across the aisle spotted the hometown newspaper I was reading and called out "Are you from Jacksonville?" I cautiously admitted that I was, and prepared to flee. The lady introduced herself, and her companions. All but one were from Jacksonville, all were practicing politicians, and all were going to Chicago to attend a municipal officers' convention located in the hotel just across the street from the Windycon hotel. The five ladies were the Jacksonville city clerk, the city treasurer, and three aldermen. (They insisted it was alderman, not alderwoman.) The last woman, seated behind me, had been born in Jacksonville but now was a branch librarian in Chicago. Wheels spun within wheels. It soon developed that one of the ladies was the alderman of my ward; she hadn't known that I'd moved into her town and her ward, and I hadn't known that I had an alderman, male or female.

We eyed one another and mentally jockeyed for position. She wanted to cadge my vote, and I wanted the pot-holes in the street repaired. She began by asking if I was registered to

vote, and what did I think of our beautiful little city, and then the inevitable "What do you do?" I'm always wary of that question; the wrong answer can plunge you into trouble. I never tell a stranger I write science fiction until I first make sure there is no rope nearby, nor a handrail for riding out of town on. The conspicuous absence of tar barrel and feathers is always reassuring. Nor do I tell strangers I'm a semi-retired theater electrician until I make sure they are *not* connected with a Little Theater group, a church, or a school which just happens to be preparing a play for the boards. Because this woman was still a stranger, my alderman or not, I answered "Nothing."

That reply is always good for a gasp and a stare, followed by a careful scrutiny of my clothing to determine if I am a bum or a retired millionaire. (I always tip a nickel to lend credence to the last possibility.) Not until I knew her better, not until we neared Chicago did I admit that I wrote science fiction, sort of, and that I was going in to a science fiction convention, sort of. She was most properly impressed, but the branch librarian seated behind me was not. The librarian had heard of science fiction, but hadn't heard of either Tucker or Heinlein. She said most of her patrons read gothics and nurse romances. In the end, I invited them all across the street to the fan convention with a promise of wild orgies, after learning that *their* convention lacked such civilized niceties. None of them came over. Once or twice I met them on the Chicago streets as we were going to restaurants or museums or whatever, but they never appeared at the Windycon. Their loss.

But *another* lady alderman did appear. This lady alderman was from Alton, Ill., which is located across the river from St. Louis, and I met her in a restaurant one night after recognizing her name badge. She was a pleasant young woman wearing contact lenses and a cherry-blonde wig, and I persuaded her to come with me to see a real live convention--the kind politicians miss. With large round eyes she inspected the huckster room, the art show, the boisterous (and perhaps sodden) fans filling the corridors, and was properly impressed. She listened to my quickie explanation of

fandom, and prodom, and confessed she'd never been to a convention like *this* before. She said that aldermen never did anything like this. (I think she is a novice politician.)

After the two cons were over we all rode home together, again on the same train and coach, telling each other what (good) or (dull) times we had. I've never seen my alderman since that day, but the potholes in the street have been repaired.

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YET ANOTHER COINCIDENCE, but hopefully the last one for this installment of the column, occurred on a theater stage at Illinois State University only a few weeks ago. I've been working part-time on that campus for nearly twenty-five years as a stage electrician, and my job (together with my crew) is to hang and light the various road shows booked into campus auditoriums: touring Broadway plays and musicals, ice shows, ballets, home talent stuff, and rock concerts. During the course of a season they will import the likes of Grand Funk, Elton John, Guess Who?, John Denver, Gladys Knight, and all like that. I sometimes wonder what students did for recreation before the invention of rock concerts, and what they will do after it goes out of style. I also wonder how many of the students will be deaf by graduation day. A few weeks ago, and the cause of this coincidence, a rock group known as "Yes" appeared, together with tons of equipment crammed into three semi-trailers and a cast of thousands. Well --there were three or four musicians on stage, and a crew of perhaps half a dozen technicians traveling with them.

The crew were English and I suppose the musicians were likewise. I never asked *them*. The by-now familiar coincidence reared its head when the chief electrician admitted he read science fiction. "The short stories," he said. "I don't like books--they're too long." That seemed to rule out his being a Heinlein fan. The chief electrician told me he was an Australian, and added confidentially that he looked down his nose at Englishmen. Someone on my crew told him that I wrote the stuff, and we were off and running. As it happened, he'd never heard of me but he was vaguely aware of fans and fandom because he bought the magazines.

He was surprised and delighted to learn of the coming worldcon in Melbourne, and surprised me by saying that Melbourne was his second home; he always stayed at the Southern Cross hotel when he was in the city. Wheels spinning like mad within wheels. He said that next year's tour wasn't yet nailed down but there was a strong possibility his show would be playing Australia during the season, and that if he and it were anywhere near Melbourne at convention time he'd pop in to say hello. I daresay he will be more interested in a fan convention than a lady alderman.

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A LONG TIME AGO, at least during the first third of this century when Hugo Gernsbach was thinking of inventing science fiction, some newspapers published a comic strip which may have been called *The Toonerville Trolley*. That was the name of the broken-down streetcar in the comic panel and I've always associated that name with the name of the comic itself, although the association may be false. Grey beards aren't noted for accurate memories. One of the characters in the comic was a woman called The Powerful Katrinka, who always had to lift the streetcar back on the rails when it jumped; and another character was an old man whose name is unknown to me, but who was the spitting image of foxy grandpa. Grandpa was usually seen walking or roller-skating about town holding a baby (his grandson?) in the palm of his hand. Grandpa was the first man (to my knowledge) to make the comment about wheels. The only comment I can recall seeing in the balloon over his head was "Wheels within wheels, do you get it?"

I got it. The mundane world calls that coincidence.

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BILL BOWERS HAS SUGGESTED that I include a short history of this column. I can't. I've forgotten. I know that it was appearing in Vic Ryan's fanzine *Bane* about fifteen years ago, and I'm reasonably sure it appeared somewhere else before that--but I don't remember where nor when. Buck Coulson would probably remember, but then Buck remembers everything, even those incidents you don't want remembered.

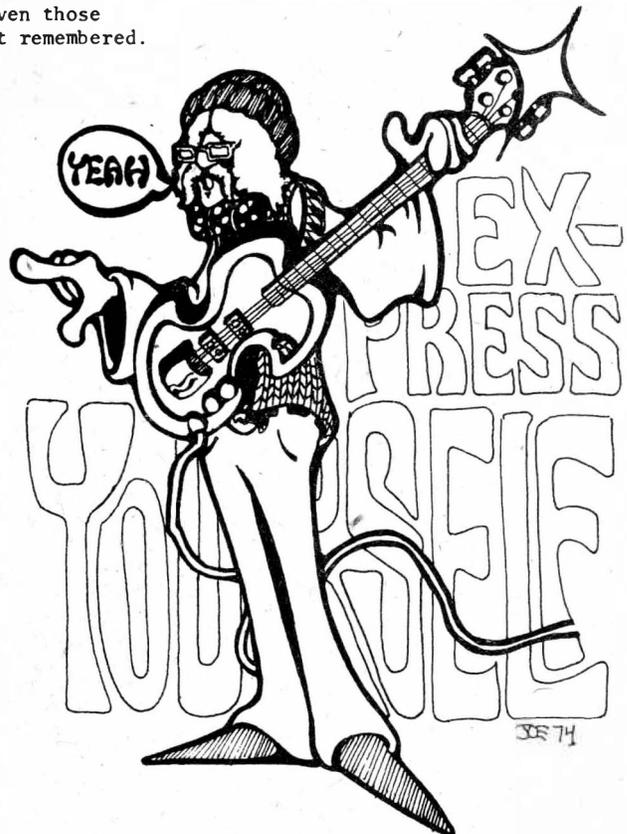
After the disappearance of *Bane* the column appeared in a fanzine published by Jim Reuss, and after the disappearance of *that* it came up again in another fanzine published by Joyce Katz, but I can't recall the title of either fanzine. This wheel is slowing down.

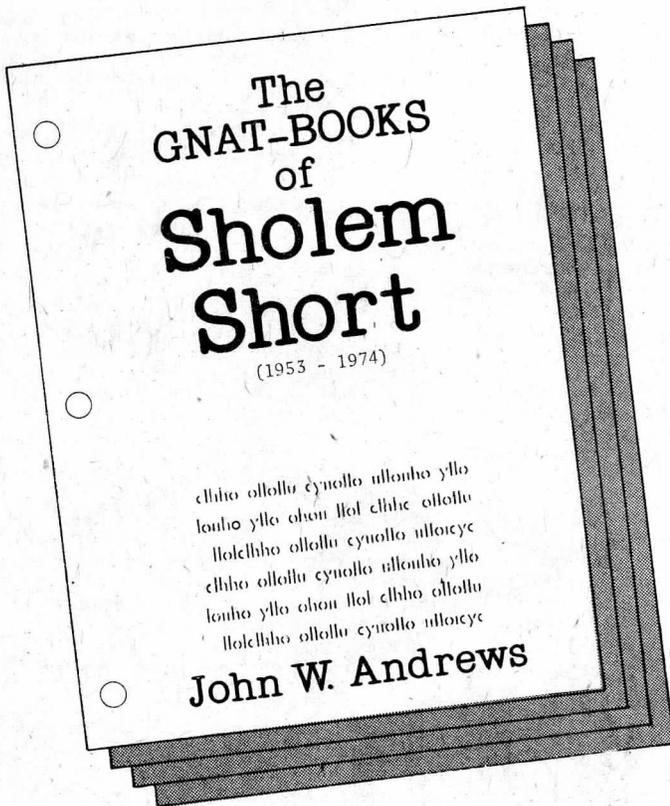
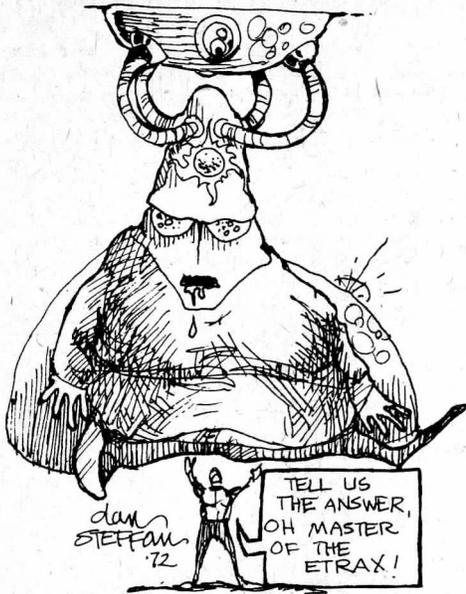
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> The title of Reuss' fanzine (and an excellent one it was, lasting only 4 issues, I believe) was *id*. In Joyce's case, it was probably *Potlatch*, also a very good fanzine...although I didn't recall *BM* appearing there. Beardless, I may be, but my memory is not all that accurate either. Plus I'm at somewhat of a disadvantage in that all my fanzines (other than those that have come in over the past month) are packed away for the *Duration*. But I have faith in my readers: *Somebody Out There Knows!*

I've always had this mad desire to have BOTH *Beer Mutterings* and *Beard Mumbblings* (though I could have sworn that the latter was also a "mutterings", but perhaps I'm confusing it with *rich brown's* fanzine?) in the same fanzine. So, when after plying Bob with generous quantities of Jim Beam (his own) at *Windycon* (an evil gathering of fans), he agreed to revive the column for *OW*, I was (and am) very pleased.

I hasten to add for the benefit of any Low-Minded readers that, having two *BM's* in these pages, has absolutely no relationship to excretory functions. Mine OR the fanzine's. I hope that's Very Clear. BILL





- [ ] Hide your beer in a dark suite at Cons. If any persnickety, mooching fans come 'round, you're all set for ambush.
- [ ] By all data, Galactic and personal, only one animal poses a threat to me--man, especially critics and fans. They provide the indispensable irritant that keeps me on my toes--and furnishes real target-practice.
- [ ] Women aren't as sentimental as us--it muddies their feeling for things.
- [ ] Certainly I play a crooked game: lose, and you've nothing to bet, anyway.
- [ ] Any pro or fan must be presumed lousy until proven imitative (of ME).
- [ ] Make sure experts advise against your move. That's so others won't beat you to the first shot at it.
- [ ] Get a shot *first*. With today's high-velocity M16's you may not need a second. --No guts to mention the Bomb! (interpolation believed to stem from Short's sister, Edna Short [1960 - 1984]).
- [ ] There's no conclusive evidence of literary immortality. But no critic has evidence I trust. Someday, the critics may KNOW. I only fret about royalties.

- [ ] Although not expressed in figures, it's still MY opinion--bother whether it's science!
- [ ] All agree one author writes better than another; which one? A difference crucial for my ego.
- [ ] A fake SF critic I can tolerate. An authentic critic should be shot out of sight. P---!! did not get one fourth the kicking he deserves.
- [ ] Delusions are often financial. A writer's appreciations of his stories' beauty, thought-variants, good dialog, &c., &c., keep him from throwing drafts into the wastebasket.
- [ ] Most SF authors would make more \$<sup>13</sup> washing bottles, but I'm Special.
- [ ] A "militarist male" is self-contradictory. Most self-appointed 'hawks' aren't tough; they exercise a privateer's license under jingoist colors. When the wind changes, the stench of the corpses (in jolly Vietnam? --Edna) bothers them just like the doves.
- [ ] Nourishing does not lessen the beauty of a woman's teats; makes her look s--- on and hippy.
- [ ] A SF author who wears white suits in public may have nastier habit<sup>16</sup> in private.
- [ ] An author who ignores his past novels lacks a predictable future history.
- [ ] What--a wonderful world--for call-girls?
- [ ] Small porn paperbacks often lie under seats.
- [ ] History does not record anyhow<sup>20</sup> a SF novel that has rational plotting. SF is a crutch for people not wild enough to imagine the Unknown (especially group-sex) by themselves. But, like religion, most faans do have a Book,<sup>20</sup> spend money and time on it, and seem to get pleasure out of criticizing it.
- [ ] Your 'maturity' resembles weariness. Amazing tales?
- [ ] Dislike the size of royalties; dislike readership, period.
- [ ] Your critic is never a scoundrel in his eyes. Keep this in mind; you may be able to offer him a bribe. If not, well...
- [ ] Officers never lose so long as the army can retreat.
- [ ] No state can justify survival based on the draft; hence, sooner-or-later, no state shall survive. Rome used to say to her sons: "Go on campaign and rape, or turn gladiator and live it up, or else celebrate, survivors, in orgy and rape--that's the only way you'll get any." Later, these barbarous customs declined. So did Roman population (temporarily).
- [ ] Of all the bizarre 'tales' fantasy writers have woven from inked ribbons, sodomy is most likely to appear in *ESF*, with space-opera and Anthony struggling for a place in *Amazing* and *If*.
- [ ] H\*\*\*!\*\*\*n's Law: 90% of what Sturgeon writes must be cr--, too.
- [ ] It is better to punctuate than never. Aahh, ya just got stuck, Sholy--nothing to say Shellcracky! Spit-nik! (Interpolation believed from the hand of Short's sister, Edna Short.)
- [ ] All SF conventions are based on regulation to protect pregnant pros and young children. The rest must be conspicuous consumption, deliquescence, Fashion & Art shows, vice, or faandom: which can--and shall--be brushed aside by unscheduled program changes to foster First Fandom.
- Even as the urge to preserve the race by sexual reproduction is the only spur to immorality, no other basis can be had. Attempts to structure a "perfect Con" by the first or any other foundation--"women and children"--are not only "no go"--I could bust out bawlin'--but logically contradict the prime directive to propagate. Nonetheless, starry-eyed fen (all men) keep making passes endlessly--and\*\*\*CENSORED\*\*.
- [ ] All fen are created unequal to pros.
- [ ] Money is a powerful psychedelic. But flower-children \*\*\*CENSORED\* for flippancy. --R. Oldwood\*\*.
- [ ] I hunt brutes for pleasure, shoot fans from spite.
- [ ] I have but one council for a widow: recall the risk, (keep up the Pill).
- [ ] When a need arises--I oughtta know--be able to shoot your own mouth off. Don't let it be farmed out: that only makes the gossip worse.
- [ ] Do your thing in excess. To enjoy the flavor of wife \*\*\*CENSORED\*\* bites. Moderation's for monkeys.
- [ ] Yes, better to be a live sailor than a dead officer; much better to be a live officer. And ever so much nicer, especially in a peacetime Navy with lots of shore-leave.
- [ ] One man's SF Con Chairman is another fan's big belly to laugh at.
- [ ] Sex between friends. Or else with robots; they're dis-creeter, though a harsh Mistress.
- [ ] Fen rarely raise up a critic more refined than they. Most fan-critics have the air and morals of spoiled baby-dragons.
- [ ] Never appeal to the "better nature" of a fan. He may not need one. Their yen for autographs and first editions gives leverage.
- [ ] Old men after little girls--dare not excuse!
- [ ] You can have peace. Why, you might enjoy freedom more. But I can't trust a Party or Picnic of both at once



Specialization is for computer salesmen.

[ ] The more intercourse, the more you could have intercourse --and the more intensely. Nor do I set any limits. If one had time, one could enjoy the multitude who are both recent and lust.

[ ] Masturbation is easy, free of many possibilities--and don't need to come, home in coldness. But like most, I do it all alone.

[ ] Suspect selfishness--based on love of money=root of all evil.

[ ] If you feel an urge to self acts, lay your hidden motives bare, search your heart to get it together. Then, just wallow like the Gergesene swine...

[ ] The most backward notion that H. Sapiens has ever conjured up is that the Lord High Editor, Shaper of Alternate Universes, czar of SF magazines, wants the sugary appreciation of His readers, can be moved by their letters, and grows Brassy if He doesn't receive flattery. Nonetheless, this absurd fantasy pulp, without bolstering readership, pays the highest rates in the strangest, least productive industry in Western Civilization.

[ ] The hindmost posterior motion is that copulation which is inherently sinful\*For once I should agree with you --R. Oldwood\*.

[ ] I'm not ashamed of the money I've made writing. In two hundred years these dogs'll be worth zilch. Don't worry about lost millions--none of us can take it with us anyway.

[ ] Dear, don't give him the trouble of tribbles, nor bore him by your past sales. The hippest way to deal with a fan: don't tell him anything he doesn't want to know.

[ ] Dear, a true man takes off his shorts and does it with the best whores. Otherwise, I'm as dignified as my pose requires.

[ ] Not everybody lies for sex.

[ ] If computers were the intelligent beings the AI researchers<sup>78</sup> claim they could be, then psychologists like Skinner need never have written the amazing stories twaddle like "behaviorist psychology." So both are wrong as scratch and the dickens: as cleverly wrong as thiotimoline experts.

[ ] Those hip fans are always sounding off about incense, love-oils, LSD trips, &c.. I prefer the Real Thing\*\*\*\* CENSORED--R.O.\*\*\*\*\*

[ ] If there's any opinion more universally accepted than the worth of (\*missionary position\* --R.O.), and setting the stork into her orbit, I've kept my ears plugged against vile rumors of such filth.

[ ] Thou shalt\*\* \*\* \*\* CENSORED\*\* \*\* \*\*.

[ ] A benchmark to assess the intellect of any prozine editor: determine what he thinks about the astrology mags that appear on the stands with his--usually with better distribution.

[ ] Royalties are not assessed for the good of the readership.

[ ] There aint no such thing as "sociable grumbling." Either you tear out the other pro's heart on the panel--or you are a \*\*CENSORED\*\*. If you don't like this, don't grumble.

[ ] An old Navy saw: forget debts when you weigh anchor. Wow, in the Space Navy--not even extradition!

[ ] The first military training, I was so inexperienced I nearly got killed. Not to mention respect lost for my country and myself. War is too serious to be taught by drill instructors.

[ ] A talented, versatile SF writer can't be envious of others. Envy is invariably a *sign of* Aaahh, our father's elephant's pyjamas! Edie.

[ ] Money is most conducive to appreciation. Women love to be appreciated.

So, especially in my last several stories, do m e n.

[ ] You live and write--or don't write long. (Y'always write yourself SHORT --Ha! Ha! [Interpolation ascribed to Edna Short]).

[ ] Whenever women have obtained sexual equilibrium with men, they've inevitably wound up with a dirty s\*\*\*k or some such device. How they are made and what they can with it makes 'em superior to men, and the prurient tack is to demand special pleasures, all the traffic can bear. For women, mere sexual "give-and-take" is disastrously puny.

[ ] War extensionally defined is but another means to support life. We may need to give it wide berth, since the H-bomb swallows both sides. (Is Peace an extension of the Viet Nam War? Edna).

[ ] One fan's "magic" is another's engineer's pipe-dream. "Astounding stories" is now a null word.

[ ] The phrase "we (I)(you) simply LUST--" denotes soemthing that nevertheless gets done. "That goes without saying" in the red-light district.

[ ] "Of course" means check it--*caveat lector*. Such small cliches are dependable propaganda marks--especially in authors who use opinion as fact.

[ ] Do not hamstring children by trying to keep them that way.

[ ] Rub MY feet. That's it--keep it up--what else can a man MY age indulge in while wielding a busy typewriter.

[ ] Should you happen to be one of the elite, fretting over royalties for created fiction, never strain your plot out your exhaust; you'll abort your mission that way. Be patient and let it come when it's ripe. Learn to wait: don't take laxatives.

[ ] Don't pry into private crowds of youngsters about their affairs. When\*\*\*\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*\*\*nervous at both ends\*\*\*\*\*. Yes, they'll surely make partners, but that's their pleasure, not yours. (You made your own, didn't you?)

[ ] Never estimate the stupidity of SF readers--not in public.

[ ] Do tell her she's beautiful; try more if she is.

[ ] If you are part of a SF convention that votes, do so.

There may be no sites nor artistic products you *like*...but you're bound to hit on those you despise. If uncertain, vote NO (or for yourself). Thus you shall but rarely have cause to kick yourself, even if you don't win the Hugo. Should such be too bland-tasting, insult some well-meaning fan (lots floating around) and get his advice (naturally, not his consent). Vote opposite. Thereby you can be a good con-goer without consuming the huge moneys and time that the exercise of an intelligent Machiavel demands.

[ ] Recipe of a freeholder on happy whoring. Pay or do without.

[ ] Those who wantonly refuse to support and wheedle MY state of mind within my freehold, where I am Sovereign, Lord&master, scarcely earn patronage. Shooting or beating up insubordinates, especially hip fans who engender cults upon gross mis-readings of my ideas on libertarianism--well, I'd scarcely call this a "crime" in an constricting legals sense.

The treasonous offense against MY state of mind (Please note that from MY vantage, I'm the Universal Center) should rather be described as "provoking use of deadly weapons within the Coventry Commune," "Blocking traffic--the roads *must* roll!" or "Endangering freeholders in a nearby commune by dodging & spoiling my aim," &c..

Moreover, my mental state may rationally close itself for a season when these idiotic asses get dangerously succinct.

An authentic critic has rarely gotten their stories and skepticism off the ground and\*\*\*\*CENSORED\*--inner Party of Fandom--\*\*\*\*\*the tribbles there... regrettable, since they had biggest \*\*\*\* and smallest \*\*\*\*\* of \*\*\* first fandom.

The sly-mouthed variety of anti-scientist writer has spread like spores through *Galaxy*, *F&SF* and virtually everywhere on the New Wave Front, without ever learning to change their diapers: no quarter for them! Doggone it, they often shoot their mouths back at ME.

[ ] Also an integrant for happy whoring\*\*\*CENSORED--R.O. & R.W.\*\*\*\*\*.

[ ] Still another: give her her own writing desk, keep your manuscripts off it!

[ ] Stuffed toads. This is a family argument you're right--so apologize NOW or you'll regret it! --Edna.

[ ] "H\*\*\*!n split himself into a thousand pieces that he might have characters." Well, may not be accurate, but impresses, and it's no more addled than the rest of fannish critics.

[ ] To seem young demands incessant face-lifting, and ability to uncover old facial make-up.

[ ] Does time record a case in which the majority of fans were right? Especially since 1967?

[ ] When the tax (collector) bites--smile!

[ ] A fan critic is one who creates nothingness and thereby feels constrained to judge the output of the creative. There's a curious libidinal neurosis here: he *hates* all creators just the same.

[ ] Money is no joke. If a fan speaks of his sense of humor, make him pay to hear or read you.

[ ] Never shock a little editor. He'll rewrite you.

[ ] Only a sarcastic monqrel--or a fan--tells a bald, famous pro the truth in public. --I've heard you howl yourself (ascribed to Edna Short).

[ ] This sad little tea-tray told me he was a flying-saucer on his mother's side. I laughed not: forsooth, objects that boast of Fortean ancestry have little else to sustain them, floating in the thin air of a Denver restaurant. Humoring adds nothing to the check and adds a sort of wonder in a universe where such hippiness needs all the refreshment Short or otherwise, that it can get.

[ ] In navigating around Black N Stars--move politely.<sup>116</sup>

[ ] The factual world I do wander--like a stranger in a strange land, my fantasy avoids a sense of blunder--and it's null fantasy at that, since my real world's all I wander about in.

[ ] The contrast between hard science fiction and all those d-- fuzzy arts is that pros can over-awe the audience with their mastery of esoterica, but doggone fans are apt to feel they're qualified to butt in humanities with mere scholarship.

[ ] Copulation is more spirited if done with incense, &c.--or is just exercise with friends. Belay that--delete "friends." Punctuation (You ape--the copula --Edna) not "friends"--not

even a hippy bedtime for 2 strangers in a strange land. But copulation and hyphenation at its incensuous best is so much more than physical\*\*\*CENSORED\*\*\* stacked\*\*\*\*\*. By decree of R. Oldwood.\*\*different-in-kind\*\*\*\*\*.

The baddest feature \*\*m\*s\*x\*\*y is not that it is badd or even that it might lead to prolepsis.<sup>219</sup> --rather queerer that it's so hard\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*\*\*union. Not unfeasible--but\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*stacked\*\*\*\*\*.

Yet--most spiritually--many never do attain sharing even with the body-English of male or female (whichever applies): they are doomed to masturbate all alone.

[ ] The touch for a hand-out is most fundamental skill. We Short children were all kept very short on cash ~~but we~~ Ahhaa! Why we're both little thugs? (Intrusion believed by E. Short.)

[ ] Tryants need to exercise a cover-up to stupefy public opinion. Heck, I'm pretty aloof myself--or I couldn't control my life.

[ ] The greatest productive farce<sup>222</sup> is my solipsism. --You said it--right on, Sholly.

[ ] Beware the Demon Rum. It can spoil your aim at fannish autograph hounds.

[ ] The professional fan receives many benefits. He (or she!!! --Edna) enjoys Hugo status [at Cons] with wanton liveliness, free of labor in the weary, mundane sense. At most cons he gets pleasures and immoralties not granted to other fen. Yet hard it is for me to see, how a fan who has been granted a firman from on Hugo to spread tidings of great joy to all fan-kind of good will<sup>224</sup> can be seriously involved in passing a charity collection to repray a torn movie-screen or star: such leads one to suspect that the BNF is on a moral level like that of the average con-goer.

0, it's a grand way of life if you can stomach Banquets, holiday restaurants, dry Sundays and gallons of bheer.

[ ] A wife should be assessed according to the same standards as other paid professionals (for example, dentists, barbers, masseuses, Plumbers.<sup>225</sup> for espionage, &c., &c.). Is she a professional c\*\*\*t? Does she give good service?

Indeed, one might estimate that the percentage (5% or what, Sholly?) of decent, competing wives is greater than that of Plumbers and much greater than the figure of Washington lawyers. --Well, *huge* in comparison to SF writers.

[ ] Maximize your waldos until they're automated: thus double your effective half-life--and you'll have leisure to enjoy butterflies and little girls, Nabokov and moonbows.

[ ] \*\*\*Censored CENSORED by decree of R.O. & R.W.\*\*\* --Naughty boy, Sholly! ((Extra tag by E. Short.))

[ ] An expert in one area must be a fan in another. Experts often claim 'transfer' of expertise outside their domain: the less their area covers, the more tempted they are to cheat.

[ ] Never, never try to pick up a lass dressed as a cat--especially at a Masquerade.

[ ] Feasting at fan-eds smarts you more than it does the fan-eds.

[ ] I, Edna S., hereby go on record as puissantly opposed to Sholly's foul mind--temptation, my dirty toe-nails!

[ ] F--ing a person\*\* \*\*CENSORED\*\* \*\* \*lese majestatis\*\* \*\*.

[ ] "Go to bed!" or some direct result is the answer a suggestive proposition fates.

[ ] The correct way to copulate with a sententious fool who begins: "Certainly, it's none of my pleasure but--" is to\*\* CENSORED\*\*\*\*\*such a fan with a period. Cutting his throat \*\*\*\*\* momentary business \*\*\*\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*\*\*.

[ ] A fan doesn't deman physical duty in a partner who builds on his morality. Sometimes, he's the man-who-comes-to-realize she IS dutiful--he just hadn't noticed.

[ ] A drunk is better company at a con than a fan who takes pride in being Frank Merriwell.

[ ] "All is fair in love and fan feuds." --I never played fair with this yet!

[ ] Avoid "Leda and the Black Swan phallicism." Perverted sensuality does not lead out of itself, like a vicious circle: there's no way to get a new generation of youth out of it (If boy-can't-meet-girl as himself by time travel), and it manipulates false pleasures\*\*\*\*\* perfect sex. If you fail to revere this\*\*by R.O.\*\*\*\*trip. The designers of the first bordellos called this the "Gigolo Law," that is, "\*\*CENSORED\*\*". Normal, married, hetero, functional, missionary sex is much more of a grind--but can make babies to become new youths. --For once, we must agree, R.O. & R.W....

[ ] Teeny kid-sisters that prank earn torture according to their dirt. Running the gantlet fits the crime. For extraordinary baddies spacing will be the approved sentence of the future. But that doggone Edie! An ant-hill ((Here the text has been garbled by an unknown hand..."EDIE" is underlined in red--like dried blood or nail polish--what an unpleasant profession, editing)).

[ ] Nature shows no piety.<sup>140</sup>

[ ] Somewhere on a body of the star-cluster SDM616 (G-M-O-R-R-A) dwells a little being known as a "fuqm". It

smokes grass and has no natural Kinsey outlet and is easily cajoled and petted--sort of\*\*\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*\*\* ...wiggles its pleasure\*\*\*\*\*that humans can\*\*\*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*trip.

Somewhen a smart alec will figure out how to play this all around, then some smartie will see the commercial hooks-- not too long before it'll be inspected and taxed, just as the IRS does now for prostitutes' earnings.

Meanwhile, I've naturally supplied a fake mnemonic for that analog issue; one that's hundreds of parsecs off on a tangent.

Naughty me.

[ ] Freedom begins when Mrs. Grundy concludes you can fly a kite: as long as she can't spy on what you're really doing.

[ ] Take care of the cor-flu and the fan-feuds will take care of themselves. Try to have a take-off, but don't be faanatic.

[ ] If "everybody knows" some faanish scandal; odds are it's only what ten thousand rumors have made of ohe joke.

[ ] Political tags--such as antisestablishmentarianism, Fourth Monarchy, Greenbacker, sibboleth, Know-Nothing, Young Turk, Liberality, equal Freemasonry, your fraternity pin-- can't be basic touchstones. All humanity, unlike Gaul, is mostly divided in only two parts. Lo, those would-be Puppet-masters, and those who're simply dire. Behold the good intentions the master tread to hell. But the bitter remnant call you churl, suspect you as a puppeteer, refrain from hackneyed truism. Nonetheless, they make better business partner than other Shorts.

[ ] Cats are never gray in Space--Jet black away from the Sun, a rainbow burst sunward.

[ ] It's lies to judge hurting others of necessity a sin.

(All others are mere twaddle beside the issue of MY self-defense.) Getting wounded yourself? Stupid--shows you're not the survivor-type.

[ ] Unlike MY natural inboard generousness, some have learned perverse "bleeding-heartism". I get this straight from Twain, but I only resemble Kipling--my previous incarnation.

[ ] A man can't love a whore wholeheartedly without having loved all his wives. I supposed some reciprocal holds for women.

[ ] You can go wrong by being too skeptical. I can't, after all, there's some doubt *you* are as real as I.

[ ] Correct politeness between a man and his whore is even more significant than between strangers in a strange land.

[ ] Free offers are worth what I make you pay--no such thing as a free brunch, either.

[ ] Don't store garlic in your pantry. Let the poor vampires and were-wolves console themselves there, leaving the juicy stuff for you. \*\*There is some doubt whether this should be rated "G-whiz." --R. Oldwood\*\*\*.

[ ] Future History is what we anticipate; Stranger, Evil, and Time Enough is what we get.

[ ] Pessimist in insurance policy, optimist in bank-account-- one can do both. What's the deal? Never gamble without a good fix, anticipate frisks you can't avoid. Thus you can play your marked cards nonchalantly, unflustered by the certainty of the outcome.

[ ] [Here the text has been garbled and decimated by unknown hands. It is not known if there is any connection with the gruesome fate of young Sh. Short.] Do not confuse "beauty" with what others hope from you... They are indifferent; you alone are Real. Beauty is a bet you owe... obligations you have undertaken. Paying off that bet can...from tears of drudgery to constant readiness to die. Perilous it may be... self-respect.

But there will be no Hugo award for doing the same old expected things... not only perilous, but improbable. One can easier bargin with the Mafia... than the parasites who demand "just a few days more -- this won't tie up Short." If a dime is your remaining capital... telephone call...painfully long.

So teach tot the meaning of No--and be far more crude about it than Spock ever was.

...Despite the Gulf<sup>256</sup> that separates me from other fen, I can't imagine why all the hubbub over playing with marked cards. Otherwise, I wouldn't have a dime to curry favor with my beauty, nor do my thing, certainly... not a dime for loaf or hippiness. ...Martian nests...have nibbled...

This protocol does not forbid that you do s\*\*\*CENSORED\* favors... friend, or even strangers with a strange brand.... let the choice be Mine..."expected" by you.

[ ] Eripuit caelo fulmen, mox scaeptra tyrannTs. ((Applied to Benjamin Franklin in the 18th Century)).

[ ] A con committee is a symbiotic life-form with six or more \*\*\*CENSORED\*\*\*.

[ ] Pros can be driven crazy... autographs with too small a pen...

[ ] Don't try to be Last Man on Earth. What if you succeed?

.....

...Given the current circulation, and the fact that (NW) is received by a fair number of new fans, non-fans, I've gotten some requests from those wishing to get into an active correspondence about SF, and the like. I'm the world's worst, myself (as those few I have left will testify), but I will remember when I got into fandom that feeling of being a bit lost, and how the N3F helped ease the way in. You're not going to find out from any of the other Big Circulation Fanzines, so I asked Sheryl to do a brief intro. (You'll pardon me if I ignore the fact that a week ago I got a copy of the WHOLE EARTH EPILOG (print run--370,000!) and that IT mentions the N3F. Somedays...!)

Basically the N3F (National Fantasy Fan Federation) is a conglomeration of fans--from all over--who keep in touch with each other and fandom through correspondence. It's what brought me into fandom--because, being shy, I hadn't the nerve to go up to fans at a convention and join in. Many warm friendships were started and are still going strong. The N3F's Welcommittee welcomed me enthusiastically and with open arms -- thank you.

Someone in the group would mention fanzines--so I'd find out about that. Someone else would mention apas--so I'd ask about them. Fan jargon, Round Robins, collecting ..."tape responding"...tapes for the blind...writers'exchange...manuscript bureau--and on and on. In fact, if you have a specific interest, the odds are pretty good that you will find someone with a similar interest--or else you can start up your own project and kindle interest!

Where is it? Well, that's a bit more difficult to pin down. It exists wherever a "Neffers" is. Specifically the Secretary-Treasurer--Janie Lamb, resides at Route #1, Box 364, Heiskell, TN 37754. Dues are \$3. a year. Any Neffer is more than willing to chat, or possibly answer questions (at the very least, we may know who CAN answer that question if we can't). If you're curious about the N3F--just drop me a note (Sheryl Birkhead, 23629 Woodfield Rd., Gaithersburg, MD 20760), please.

Two clubzines, TNFF (The National Fantasy Fan)--a "newsy" type zine, and Tb (Tightbeam)--a letterzine--are published for the members--one of them every month. Fans are a friendly bunch, perhaps one of us just might give you a gentle nudge smack dab into what fandom is "all about" -- people.

I've saved the hardest question for last--why is the N3F? Being, basically, a newcomer, about the best I can say is because...well, we're all fans. It was begun in 1941 and a listing of some members (past and present) would read like a Who's Who of Fandom. We're here because we have a good time being here.

It's mighty difficult to convey the warmth within the N3F, but it's there. Of course you have to give a little--but it's worth it.

So, if you'd like to know a little more, or even join us...just let me know -- letter, postcard, note in a bottle? Please.

---SHERYL BIRKHEAD

...a slightly different group, you've seen on the masthead the last few issues...

COSMEP (Committee of Small Magazine Editors and Publishers) is an international association of more than 500 small magazines and presses. It publishes a monthly newsletter --with occasional special issues, bookstore and library lists, and technical information useful to editors and publishers. It holds annual and regional conferences. COSMEP is partially supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council of the Arts, the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, and an anonymous private trust. Membership is open to any magazine or press of limited circulation at \$20. per calendar year, and includes all back publications that are currently in print. There are no membership application forms.

RICHARD MORRIS, Coordinator: COSMEP, P.O. Box 703, San Francisco, CA 94101 ...in a lot of ways, it IS sort of like the N3F: a gateway into another 'fandom'. If you're not into publishing, or if so, only into apa- or personal-zines, I don't think it would be for you. The dues are a bit steep for most fans. But apparently, Porter, Geis, the Browns, and a few other fans find it worth it. I know that I do.

I have a million notes of things I want to mention here, but 99% of my things are packed--and what's left is so damned organized that utter chaos reigns--in other words, I can't find things! Maybe, just maybe, next time I'll get everything in I'd intended to. Then again...

I need addresses for Kurt Bromley and for Guy Plunkett, III.

I'm going to be thinning out my various collections over the next year. I'm NOT going through THIS again! And I've a few boxes of over-run D:B & OW covers, etc., that I'll be collating into art folios. I'll probably try to push most of it at Marcon & Midwestcon, but some things will be available by mail. If you're interested, send a legal-sized s.s.a.e. (overseas --a mint commemorative stamp or two will do) Note that I'm not saying WHEN this will be done, but hopefully by mid-year. (All income goes back into OW--naturally...)

New Dealer's Rates: Discounts: 30% 5 - 9 copies; 40%, 10 - 14 copies; 50%, 15 or more copies, one order. (Applies to U.S. only; others should write.) No returns; No consignments. Free 20-word Unclassified, or 10% discount on display ads, if you take 10 or more copies. Cover price for next issue (#23): \$1.50. (Advertising rates remain the same--except for Un-classifieds--as in R.C. 74-2, for #23.)

If I fail to mention it elsewhere...the ONLY Back Issues available are #19 and #20, at \$1. each. (If your sub ends with this--#21--you can have the other 'half' --#22--for 75¢. Otherwise they're available only as a 'set' for \$1.50.) New and renewal subs received before 2/1/75 will be entered at the 5/\$4. rate.

The new DUFF race--to send an American fan to Aussiecon--is now on. Many zines will carry ballots, but if you don't get one, send a s.s.a.e. to the American

UNCLASSIFIED ADS Note new rates: 5¢ per word, including name and address. Minimum: \$1.00. Check with copy, please.

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Administrator: Lesleigh Luttrell, 525 W. Main St., Madison, WI 53703. And even if you're not familiar with the candidates--John Berry, Jan Howard Finder, and Rusty Hevelin--or not sure which to vote for... send a buck or two along anyway: it's an expression of what makes Fandom a joy...

The Tucker Fund is a resounding success, but I believe some copies of THE REALLY INCOMPLETE BOB TUCKER remain. Now that you've read his column here, and would like more--much more: 60 pages!--send \$1.50 to: Jackie Franke, Box 51-A, RR 2, Bascher, IL 60401. (Any excess from the Fund will be used to help Susan Wood and Mike Glicksohn --the Fan Guests of Honor--get to Aussiecon That in itself is a worthy reason!)

PROZINES: As most of you know, Paul's expanded Beer Mutterings from #19 appeared in the August Galaxy, rather than (the now sadly expired) If. # The Feb. 75 Fantastic is a fannish 'must': Not only are there stories by Juanita Coulson, Alpaigord and Bruce D. Arthurs; not only is there a very striking and beautiful Steve Fabian cover--it also survives Mike's first pro 'story'!

Those of you who appreciate the punch line in Jessie Salmonson's piece in #22 and would like to see if she could live up to it, might be interested in New's Home Made Apple Fanzine #1000 [\$1. from the same address]. I suspect it will be the most discussed fanzine since Richard E. Geis... for much the same reasons, I imagine. And quite the wrong reasons, perhaps, which is a shame, because it's an excellent fanzine. (It'll be interesting to see if fandom is quite as open-minded as we like to think it is. My own reaction is mixed, but not as 'shocked' as I might have thought it to be.)

...I haven't even touched the 'pile'. I'm going to have to go to a nearby TW yet!

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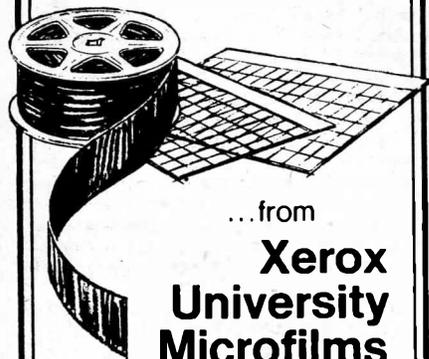
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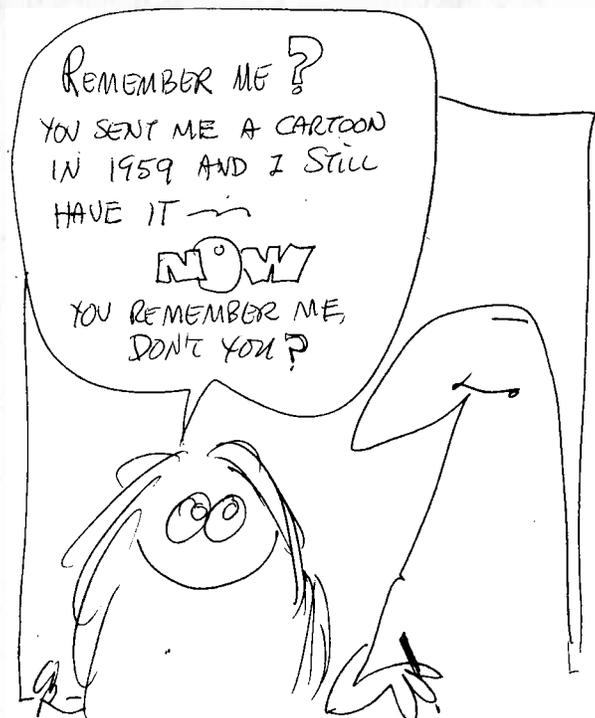
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Editorial (From Page 799)

I can only say this: anything that I do accept, I will publish. And I'll do so as quickly as I possibly can. So send me the things you do best, but accept with a grain of salt any publication dates I may give you. O.k.?

This page had been reserved for the annual OW Index. (It couldn't have been in #22, since that went to the printer 10 days before this.) But even though the other three are logged, on this quiet snowy Sunday eve, a young couple just having gone through the house, cats sacked out in the living room, and a quiet FM station on, I think I'd rather ramble on...

What I'll do, instead of the Index this year, is to skip some 8 pages between 22 & 23, and do up a Complete Index to the first five years (+ one), a brief history of the OW-creature, and, possibly, a look at the financial statement for OW-'74.

Probable publication with #24. It will automatically go to the libraries, and the contributors. Also to those who, according to my records, received all four '74 issues. If you've been getting it thru a dealer, drop me a postcard, telling me which one. If you started getting OW with #20 or this one...now would be the time to get #19 and/or #20.

Got to get rid of those back issues!

Speaking of the hard sell...I probably should issue a disclaimer to the effect that the OW ad in *ALgol* #23 was made up by Andy, not me. Not that I've any objections to it, but it's not an ad I could have done. You see--Linda tried giving me lessons in aggressive salesmanship at *Discon*--and now Andy is trying to show me how to do successful print advertising...with a similar lack of success, I fear. I just don't have what it takes, I guess. Either that, or I'm too stubborn.

[Minor interruption: While in the middle of the last paragraph...I think I sold the house! It's dependent on the people being able to borrow the down payment, and it's not nearly what I'd hoped for, but right now I simply want it Over With. I hope.]

I've made the decision to take *Amtrack* to *Philcon*, in spite of Tucker's column. I just don't see driving it this time of year; besides, although I vaguely remember the last streetcars in *Barberton* (I'm old!), and while I once took a train into the mountains of *Luzon*--that was an Experience--I've never ridden a train in the States. So why not?

I'll be sharing a table in the huckster's room there with *Andy Porter*--which might prove interesting. You see, I've finally decided that all my Troubles began at *Torcon* when, while *Andy* was off getting a sandwich, I sold subs to *ALgol* to two unsuspecting neofans. I hope I've been sufficiently punished for that act by now!

I haven't heard from *Ted White* since April 1, when the column last issue, and the letter in #22 were sent. I didn't talk to him at *Discon* (my fault) and he hasn't responded to my notes. As of this moment I have no idea of the status of his column, the *Shaw* (Larry) matter, or anything else. Perhaps he was waiting for the appearance of *Piers'* letter; perhaps not. Perhaps he's simply been busy. Maybe a number of people can now say "I told you so...", and perhaps if I was sufficiently paranoid, I could believe that he has elected to leave me hanging, slowly turning, twisting in the wind. I hope not; I've got to believe what I said to *Larry Shaw* in *Inworlds* 12.

As things stand now, I can only assume that *Shaw* was right, *Ted* wasn't... and apologize to *Larry* for my not having checked it out in advance.

*Bill Wolfenbarger's* column/serial/'life' was not split in #22 for any of the usual reasons I do such things. It is simply that the last three chapters came in after the others had been worked in, and I was deep in the sea of controversy... I say this not by way of apology, but simply to spare *Mike Glicksohn* the embarrassment of spending three paragraphs telling everyone what a great coup I pulled this time!

I publish *Bill's* tale, with the full realization that it's not for everyone. I do it because he speaks to me... In a way...we're about the same age, been in fandom the same number of years...he took the path, the road (in many ways) that I sometimes think I would have liked to have tried... But I couldn't break out of the rather straight-laced, conservative upbringing I had. As, as I'm gradually learning to accept myself for what I am, I'm not really that sorry I didn't make the break; I take it seriously, and I make a Big Deal out of it...but by and large my life has not been unrewarding.

Still, I enjoy--if only vicariously--experiencing the life I *might* have led. And that's why I publish *Bill*...

Several people, people whose friendship I valued very highly...expressed concern over the tone of my last editorial. In particular, concern over that line about OW where I said that "I aim to put everything I've got, emotionally and financially, into it."

I meant every word of it. And yet...

*On hand, for future issues:* A major excerpt (57 pages in manuscript) from *Joe de Bolt's* book on *John Brunner* (to be published next fall)...*Sandra Miesel's* *Crème de les Sensies*...*Doc Lowdes* tells of his "October Game" in a long *Understandings*... a poem-book from *Joe Christopher*...*Dirt & Smut from Waste Paper*, as collected and illustrated by *Grant Canfield*... "Thru Space & Time with *S.A. Stricklen, Jr.*"; my title for a collection of delightful items almost guaranteed to break you up...poems by *Neal Wilgus*, *Greg Benford*, *Alexis Gilliland*... *Russia's Defeat and Occupation, 1952-1960*, from *Patrick L. McGuire*... the translation, by *Dainis Bisenieks*, of the Introduction to a Latvian anthology of SF & F... a new "Outworlds" strip, this one by *Brian Sultz*... *Jon Inouye's Tom Quick and His Polar-Dynaspheric Telejector Transportator*... that plus the *Columnists*, several Projects (in varying stages of completion) ...and perhaps even a *Bowers-thingie* or so. #23's cover will be by *Steve Fabian*... and most of the other makers-of-the-ARTworlds will be present. ...plus, of course, whatever You send in! And a letter or two...

Talking with *Mae* convinced me I had somewhere gotten off the track. I can't become again the idealistic *Bill* that tilted against all that's *Bad&Wrong* in the world, the *Bill* that wrote those long editorials in the last few *Double-Bills*. ...much has happened since I and the world were young. You can't go home again. But perhaps you can trudge back to where you took the wrong fork in the road...and get back on track.

If *Bruce Gillespie* didn't have a good claim on it, I might take "Talking to my friends" as the title for this column...

A friend sent me a card recently. It has a quote I'd never encountered before, but one I may end up using as often as I have *Peter Gill's* line on fanzines...

A friend is a person with whom I may be sincere.

Before him I may think aloud.

---Emerson

*Outworlds* is still a very important part of my life, and possibly always will be. It's my self-learning educational tool; in it I learn from people I stand in awe of. (I'm a very limited person, unsophisticated, but I have a knack for finding people who don't share those characteristics...) It's what I 'do' for those I find worthwhile knowing in this life, as a very small token of thanks for what they do for me.

But OW is no longer the single most important element in that life.

I live with the world's biggest fear of death. It's something I'll have to learn to cope with eventually. In the meantime I must of necessity grasp at that which I find valuable and beautiful...even tho I do so too fast, too selfishly.

It's not what people do that's important. It's the people themselves.

I've come to the point where I think I could give up OW, voluntarily. But I think it may be the stronger, even the longer-lived, for that realization.

Most of my friends are in fandom. And this issue is for three of them:

...for *Jodie*, for the most fantastic "fan" letter I've ever gotten; ...for *Michael*, for being there when I needed someone to talk to, someone to lean on; ...and for *Joan*, for having put up with me these years...for becoming a friend.

But, mostly, this issue is for me. I'm selfish that way.

...Bill

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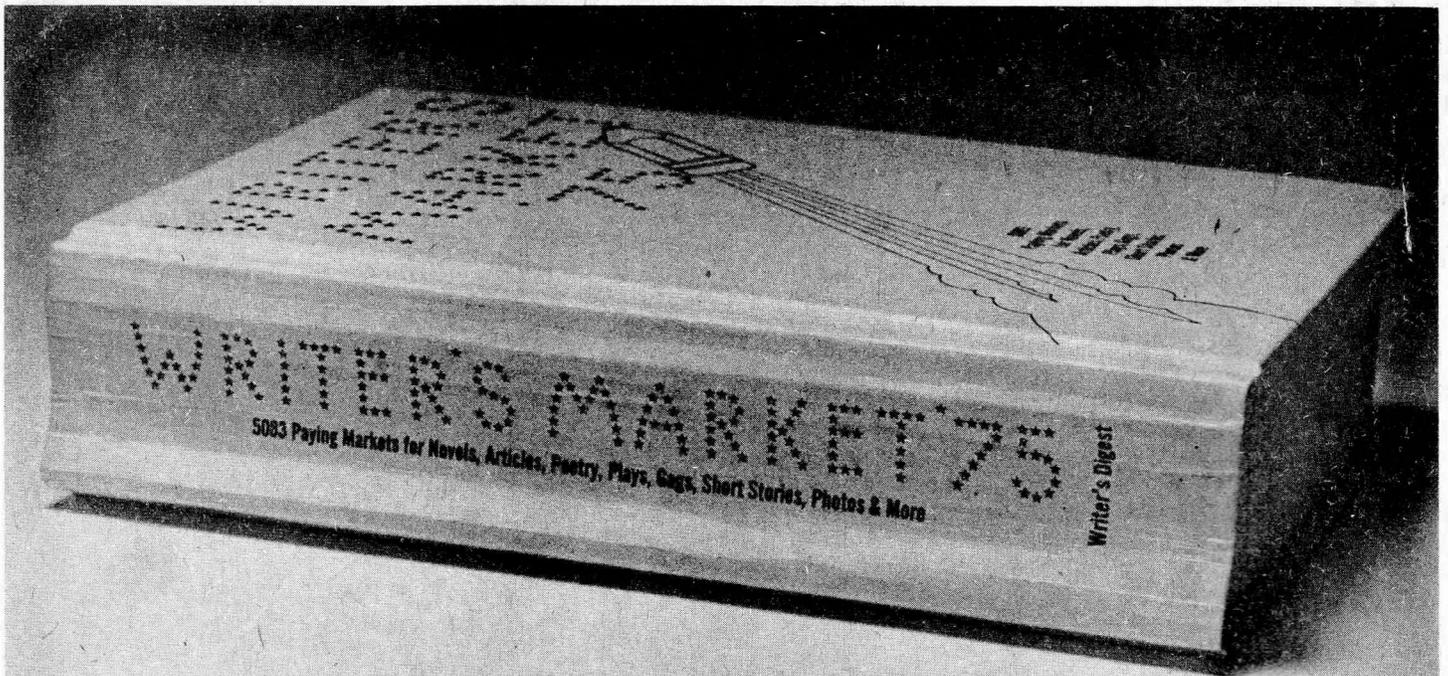
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