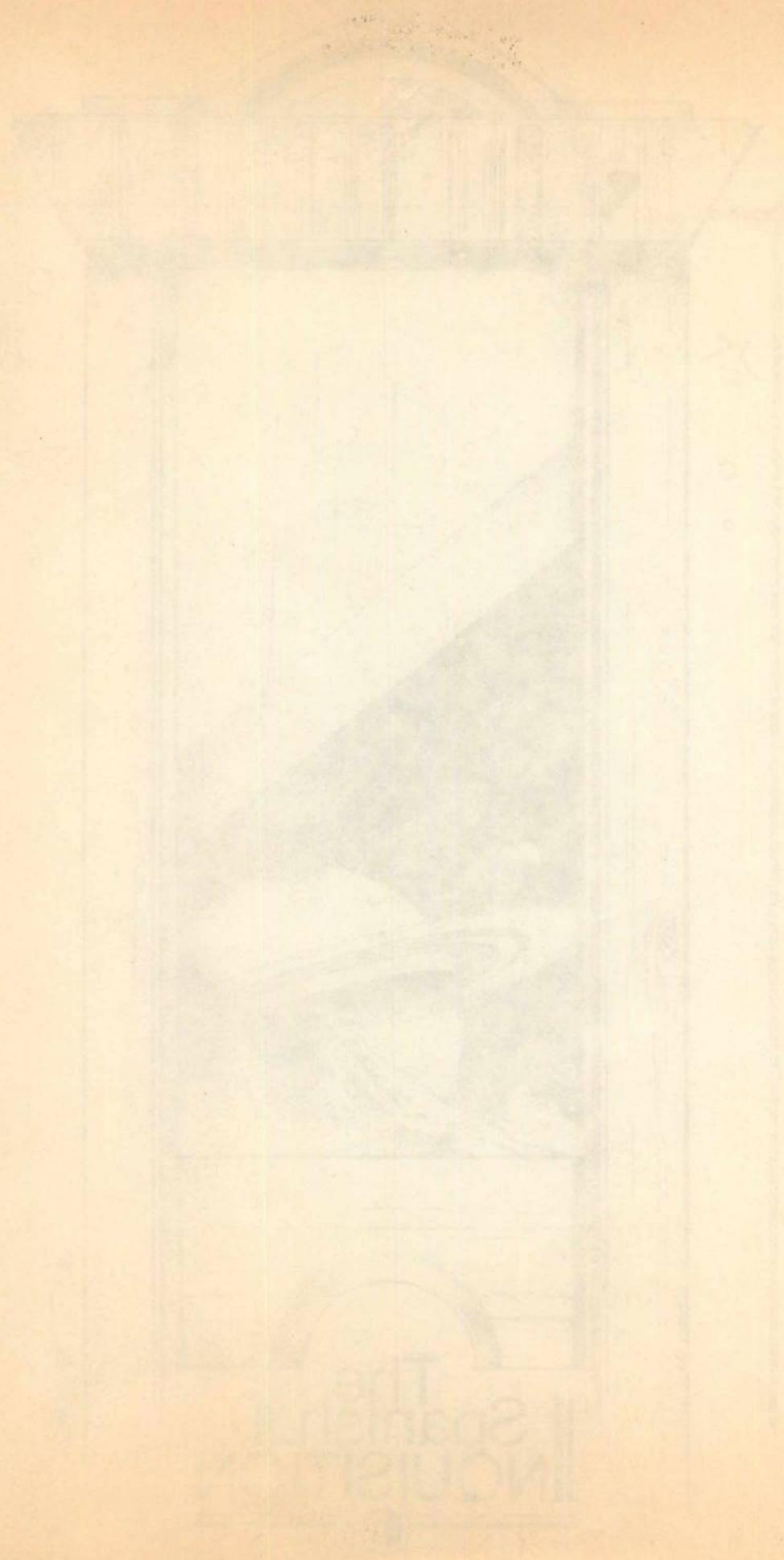


The Spanish INQUISITION

F. B. Feltz '76



special monster issue >



PLUTONIO!

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SUZLECOL

Well, here I am, in the front. Usually, as you know, I'm in the back of the issue, but many loc's suggested that changing our positions might help eliminate the problem ("Jerry's fanzine") I mentioned in my editorial in #6. My reasons for positioning the editorials thusly is two-fold. First, I can't stand having two editorials back-to-back; one at the beginning and one at the end seems much more symmetrical. Second, it's a nice surprise to find something back there after the lettercol. My reason for putting my editorial back there formerly was purely selfish. I could natter on about various matters, while Jerry had to discuss serious things about the issue, etc (I've often wailed about how much I hate to write.) Well, I suppose that if I'm to take my place up there with Bill Bowers and Lesleigh Luttrell and Mike Glicksohn as real, true editors (or whatever), I have to dig in and put my shoulder to the wheel and my nose to the grindstone (although how I can do all three at the same time, I don't know...), and discuss the issue...

Here it is--our Big Double Issue--with "The Special Balticon Section"! Yes, friends, we actually went ahead and did a live version of SpanInq at the Balticon on Easter weekend. Most of our contributors made it, even Loren MacGregor from Seattle. (Peter Roberts just couldn't come, simply because he was Fan GoH at the Mancon the same weekend, hrumph.) And disasters did not happen. It went quite well actually, especially considering the number of things that could have gone wrong. We had no real rehearsal, were using an overhead projector, slide projector and tape recorder, some at times simultaneously; well, I think you get the picture. Looking back, we might have done some things differently, but we are both pleased with the results and proud of our work.

By the way, for you innocents who are ~~thinking of doing something similar~~ thinking of doing something similar, it was a lot of work. The long distance phone bills alone were eye-brow raising (well, to us).

Balticon itself was great, had about 900 in attendance, was well and highly programmed and was held in the most beautiful con facilities I've ever seen. We didn't get to see much of the programming, of course, as we were busy doing things like editing one of the columns Saturday afternoon (our "show" was on Saturday evening) and driving around looking for a store in which to buy glue (I broke my glasses that morning). But the whole con had a good feeling and great people there. We want to thank everyone connected with the Balticon for having us as Fan Guests of Honor; we were very honored. And a special thanks to Steve and Sue Miller, Judy Kurman and Lee Smoire who were our special contacts and most helpful, understanding and supporting in the midst of chaos.

So, this is our double issue--7/8. The first section has all of the material we used at the Balticon which was feasible to reproduce. Unfortunately, Freff's juggling with running commentary, Fred Kuhn's song, Snadra Meisel's slide show and some of the art (on acetate) are not reproducible in print. [[Embarrassed typist's note: we seem to have left a mention of Fred's lovely song, "The Golden Lover," out of the

Balticon section. So here's proper egoboo for Fred Kuhn: YAAAY, FRED!]]Only our audience (which, by the way, started at about 400 and finished 2 1/2 hours later with about 150 diehards (many of those attending the con were neos, etc., and unacquainted with fandom and probably didn't understand us at all)), can tell you about them. I will not taunt you about how marvelously funny the slide show was, or how entertaining Freff was. Well, maybe I won't...

Our Technocrat of the Breakfast Table, alias Jon Singer, was there of course with his column (which is included here). However, the last part of his column consisted of typos, errors and gaffs from otherwise learned scientific journals and collected in an article in New Scientist. Jerry and I had not heard them before (it was perhaps the only thing in the presentation we hadn't heard at least 93 times), and Jon's reading them proceeded to wipe me out entirely. This is one of my most favorite types of humor and I was exhausted, so when I got up afterwards to introduce Ginjer, I couldn't move or talk or do anything but put my head down on the podium and giggle. You might not find them quite as funny, but they are sprinkled about the section for your amusement.

Thanks are in order for last issue. Although we did thank Ron and Linda Bushyager for use of their equipment and general housing and feeding facilities during the production of #6, they ended up doing a great deal more. Both of them helped much more than they should have--running it off, deslipsheeting, and so on, and were largely responsible for the existence of the SpanIsh. They deserve another "thank-you" from Jerry and me. So, Linda and Ron--Thank You.

Go back and read the colophon. I have moved again. Specifically, I have moved back to New York City and this should be it for quite a while. (Those of you who are still sending stuff to me at Linda and Ron's (thank you for sending me stuff, by the way), please take note.) Moving out of N.Y. wasn't a mistake because if I hadn't, I'd never have known that I didn't want to. (That's perfectly clear to me.) Living in N.Y. is basically worth just about anything. It's even worth enduring the choruses of "East Side, West Side" or alternately, "New York, New York" that my brother sings to me everytime I mention things like my refrigerator not working for three months (it hasn't, either), or the intercom system still not being hooked up (ditto), or the crowds in the subway. It is pointed out that while he is being paid for his legal work in goats and chickens in Waynesburg, PA, I am going to the theater and shopping in all the fashionable Fifth Avenue shops. Actually, he's not and I'm not, but we have to have something to argue about.

I came back to live in the Washington Heights area where quite a number of my closest friends (even Jerry) live. We are almost all within walking distance from one ano-

Suzanne Tompkins

ther, which helps greatly. Washington Heights Fandom Unite!! I have a new job and a new (roach-free) apartment! After sharing the old one with 794,695 roaches, the one a month that has been turning up doesn't count. I love New York and it is good to be back.

Even Though These Two Are the Same Price, This One Costs As Much

During my eight or so years in fandom, I've traveled all over the place going to cons. Like most things, the newer it is the more enthusiastic one is, so most of my long distance journeying was done during my first few years of discovery. As I was then a student at Carnegie-Mellon in Pittsburgh, my companions in ~~terror~~ travel were fellow WPSFAna, & I was often one of the two or three steady drivers (not a reference to my "motor ability," but to my driving license and Opal). Any one of you who has gone en masse to a con knows things happen. Funny things, frightening things, ridiculous things. Most of the trips I've been involved in have never been written up, as far as my somewhat shaky memory reports. I've gotten good responses when I've told several of these stories to a group, so I thought that over the next few issues, I'd try to recount some of the "Travels With WPSFA," or as it's otherwise been called (ask Eli Cohen), "The WPSFA Curse." (This first one sprang full-blown into my mind the other day, which is why it's the first.)

Midwestcon is one of the great cons. That's why so many fen brave the often 100° (F, not C) weather of Cincinnati in June to go there. After making several trips (including one by bus that was quite the equivalent of spending 10 hours in a moving sauna), we were overjoyed that Mike O'Brien had secured his family's six-passenger, air-conditioned Oldsmobile for the journey in 1970. "We" were Mike, Ginjer Buchanan, Ron and Linda Bushyager and me.

That Friday was one of massive, rolling thunderstorms when we left Pittsburgh for the 5-6 hour trip to Cincy. Clearing the tootsie-hills of far western Pennsylvania (well, that's what my brother and sister-in-law call them and they have to live there), we zoomed along through the rain into flat Ohio. Ginjer noticed Mike seemed somewhat nervous and asked what was wrong. "Oh, nothing," he said, "we've been aquaplaning for about an hour." Now this property of skimming along above the water is admirable in vehicles like the hydrofoil between Dover and Calais, but on a superhighway it leaves much to be desired. Something to do with the design and weight of the car and the speed one is traveling and the amount of water on the road. Here I might mention that Mike's car came equipped with a trailer-hitch, but that really comes into its own on the trip back...

We were a tense but merry little group as we drove on watching the storm. Then Linda said, "Gee, I've never seen a tornado. I'd like to see a tornado. Boy, I hope we see a tornado! Hey! Look over there; is that a tornado?"

"No, Linda."

After a stop for dinner, we discovered that either the wheels had been so hot when we stopped that the weight of the car had made a flat place on one tire's bottom (believe it or not, a garage mechanic on the PA turnpike once told my father that was what was wrong with our tire just before it blew out), or something was wrong. The tire was definitely making odd noises and vibrations, but nothing looked wrong when we stopped to check. Traveling on, Mike suggested to Ginjer, who was sitting nearest to the tire (left rear), that maybe she could tell what was wrong if she leaned out and tried to see it. So Ginjer held onto her glasses and Linda held onto her, and she sort of

leaned out the window, startled passing motorists, and couldn't see a thing. Two minutes (it seemed like two hours) later, the tire blew so we no longer had to ride along in suspense wondering if and when the tire was going to blow out.

We spent about an hour dodging passing trucks whilst stopped directly beside a road sign ("Exit for Cincinnati--1000 Ft."), attempting to change the tire. I won't go into detail, but a great deal of time was spent trying to get the mud guard inset from in front of the tire so it could be changed. Mike had been using the empirical approach (pulling, yanking and swearing) until Ron, a non-driver, who had been quietly thinking, walked over and said, "It should come off like this," reached under and pulled on the clasps. It came right off in his hands.

Poor Mike was a nervous, exhausted wreck when we pulled up to the Carrousel Motor Inn in the suburbs of Cincinnati, about one in the morning. Ginjer and I were sharing a room, as were Linda and Ron, of course. Mike didn't have a reservation and was going to crash in one of our rooms, so he waited in the car while we went to register. It was really a lovely place, motel style, so the registration desk was the drive-up sort and you parked outside your room. After we registered with shaking hands, the clerk pulled out a piece of paper which turned out to be a map to show us how to get to our building. "Now, you see, you go down this road, cross the bridge..."

We returned to Mike, handed him the map, and said, "Now, we go down this road, cross this bridge..."

"Map? MAP?--BRIDGE?? BRIDGE!!!?!?"

Slapping him out of hysterics, we eventually found our rooms.

Midwestcon was great; there were fans from as far away as Minneapolis (Minneapolis in '73!) and Toronto; and the Carrousel, when we finally got to see it in the daylight, was interesting and had a stream (hence the bridge) running through the grounds.

After our marvellous journey there, what could possibly happen on the way back? Well, Mike Brandl, for one thing. Mike had come in from Ann Arbor, but was returning home to Pittsburgh. Since we had a large car with an extra space, he hitched a ride. Also hitching a ride were his gear and a few boxes of books and fanzines we had collected at the con. About two blocks from the hotel we noticed a funny noise. Kind of like "KaChunk--KaChunk" at the rear of the car as we drove along. O'Brien decided not to take chances and stopped at a service station ("It's making a funny noise!"), but they found nothing wrong. Six blocks later at another service station, one of the Mikes looked and discovered that the drive shaft was hitting the axle (or vice versa). That meant one good bump and bye-bye.



Remember the trailer hitch? Somehow it was the cause of the problem; I don't know how or why, but with one extra person's added weight, we became a traveling time bomb.

Ron and Mike put their scientific, computer-type-person minds together and figured if we could somehow shift all the weight as far forward in the car as possible, it could eliminate the problem.

Now, how can I put this? Try to picture six people, six people's luggage, boxes of books (we left some strange things behind at that gas station), the spare tire, everything from the trunk, in the front and back seats. FOR THE WHOLE TRIP. IT TOOK TEN HOURS.

Ron Bushyager spent the whole time curled around the spare tire. Everyone but Mike O'Brien, who was driving, had stuff in their laps up to their chins. When we finally stopped for dinner near Columbus, Ohio, the tire iron I had been clutching had to be pried from my hand.

Near Washington, PA, only a scant half-hour from our Pittsburgh goal, we stopped for gas. Ginjer and I braved getting out of the car (there was always the danger of not being able to get back in), and got sodas at a machine. On the way back to the car, exhausted and a little giddy (as we all were), I noticed that Ginjer's coke was a 12 ounce bottle, while my ginger ale was an 8 ounce bottle. I looked over to Ginjer, who had also noticed, and, to the bewilderment of those in the car who overheard, I somewhat incoherently said, "Hey, even though these two are the same price, this one costs as much!"

Four people said as one, "WHAT?"

The twenty minutes of hysterics which followed could have been touched off by anything, and it certainly was a fitting end to our trip.

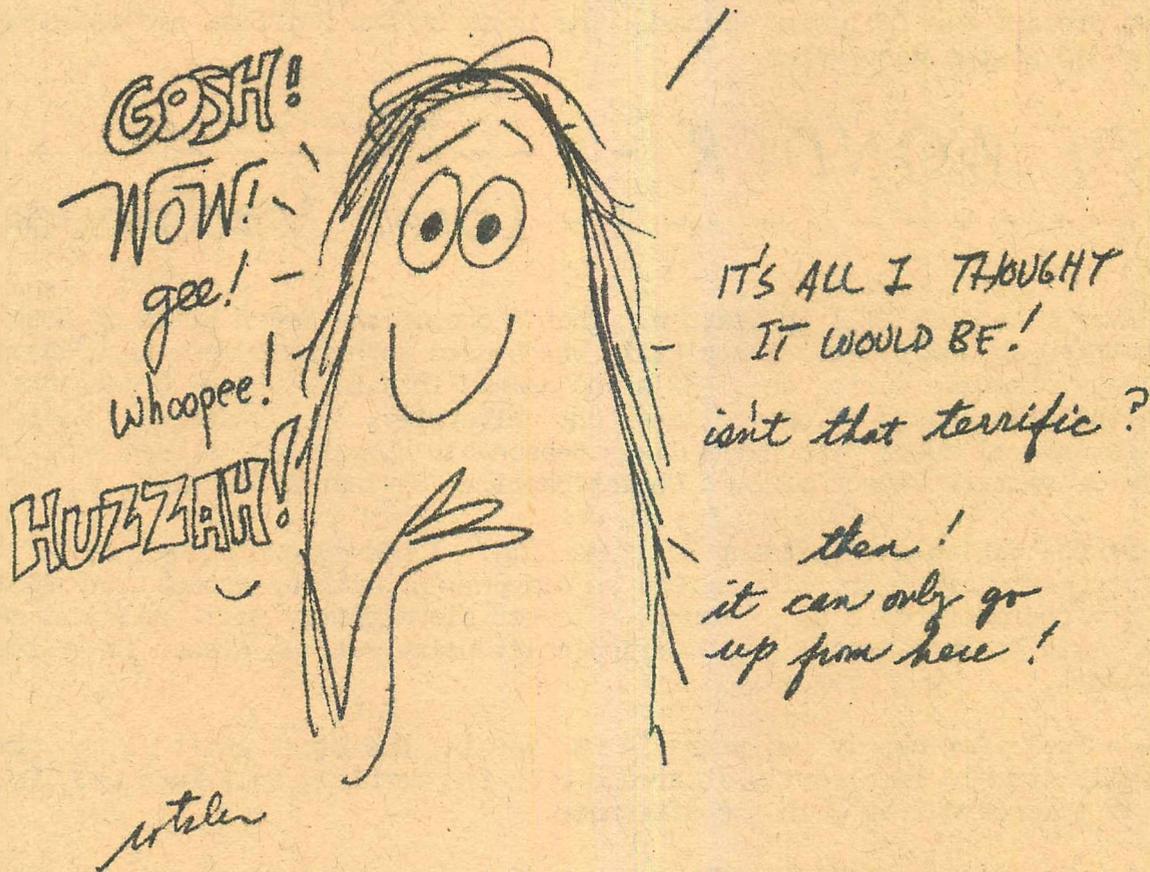
--Suzle Tompkins

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[Ron Ziegler's] fractured syntax and cryptic, ad-world jargon were such that his answers became known as "ziegles" or "zigzags," and after a typical briefing reporters would compare notes, not so much to double-check accuracy, but in an effort to break the code. And example or two of typical ziegles will suffice: Question: "Is General Hershey's replacement under consideration by the White House?" Answer: "There is no information that I have that would lead me to respond to that question in the affirmative." Question: "Was the decision also made prior to Friday's meeting to resume the B-52 bomblings?" Answer: "I think I made it clear that when we were discussing the B-52 matter--the decision to delay flights of the B-52s for a period of 36 hours--that it related to the fact that the decision, when it was made, related to a period of 36 hours, and that there was not a decision point after the decision to delay the flights for 36 hours to again order the resumption."

--Dan Rather and Gary Gates, The Palace Guard
=====

BRITAIN IS FINE IN '79

SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM!



The Live Spaning!

We were scheduled to go on at 8:00 P.M. but soon set the time back to 8:30 as we madly rehearsed, attempted to iron out technical problems, munched hamburgers and worried. Artists were practicing with the special colored markers, Moshe Feder was learning his light cues, Nick Polak was setting the mikes up, Gary Farber was working on the slide projector and Jim Freund on the overhead projector, John Douglas was fiddling with the tape recorder, and Steve Miller, Jon Singer and the Bushyagers were doing anything asked of them. Finally we felt as ready as possible, the audience was allowed to enter, and Steve blew his duckcall to bring them to attention. Jerry began (with what he thought was a bright idea) by saying, "Hi! I'm Suzanne Tompkins...and I'm much more nervous than I thought I was." After the initial laughter, Nick shouted, "Jerry, turn on your mike!" "Jerry: "I really am more nervous than I thought I was!" After a few prefatory remarks, Suzle mentioned the Vin DiFate drawing used for our cover (at the convention it was on a slide) and introduced Loren MacGregor, who came all the way from Seattle to present the following column. The illos by Stu Shiffman are based on the ones he did at the convention.

37c OF WONDER

Loren MacGregor

I used to live on Capitol Hill in Seattle. That's one of the Seven Hills of Seattle, by the way, except there are only six. Denny Hill, which used to be somewhere in downtown Seattle was carted away sometime during the 1930's and dumped into Lake Union--but that's another story. Capitol Hill boasts of one college, one university, one synagogue, "Eddie's Soul Burgers," and several shops with names like "Reasonably Honest Dave's Used Appliances" and "The Seventh Redemption Church of Lord Christ Baptized Saviour of Us All."

For two years the Capitola (Apartment 321) was home. I had my own phone, my own cat, and my own stereotyped landlord. Mr. Lindsay was an old German, with an accent that splattered the walls with fragments of T and K sounds. He got along fairly well: he would periodically threaten to raise my rent, and I would periodically point out the clause in my lease that said he couldn't.

Things went on well for nearly two years. I was working the night shift at the time, and would generally stumble in blearily at around 8 in the morning, fall into bed, fall into a coma, and get up around 2 or 3 in the afternoon.

(The Capitola was built in a large "C" shape, with a tree-lined courtyard between the two wings of the building. I hadn't realized I was such a heavy sleeper until one day I woke up, wandered down through the trees, and found that somebody had stolen the street. While I'd been in bed, the city had come in with jackhammers, steamshovels and a bulldozer or two and removed two city blocks from the front of the building. But I digress...)

One morning I arrived from work, unlocked my door, and tripped over my wall, which was lying in shards at my feet. Picking my way through the plaster, I reached my phone and called the office. "Mr. Lindsay," I said, "if you happen to be in the neighborhood in the next five minutes or so, you might stop up to the apartment."

"Is something wrong?" he asked.

I looked at my hallway. "I don't know if I could really explain over the phone," I said.

A few minutes later Lindsay was kicking affectionately at the rubble, as though it held fond memories for him. "Well," he said at last, "how do you expect to pay for this?"

"I," I said, "don't expect to pay for it at all. You own the building."

He tried to be reasonable. "But--that's why you pay a damage deposit, of course!" he said.

"I didn't pay a damage deposit on the off-chance that my wall would fall off," I said. I was sharpening my kitchen knives at the time, but I really don't think that influenced Mr. Lindsay's decision: he agreed to replaster the wall if I'd paint it. We parted best of friends, and as he turned to go, he added, "You realize that I'll have to raise your rent now."

It was soon after that that I moved to north Seattle, near the Roosevelt Area.

...The Roosevelt Area is not one of the Seven Hills of Seattle. It is the second highest point in Seattle, and has a steeper grade on two sides than any of Seattle's seven (er, six--there's always Denny) hills. But it isn't a hill, because if they counted it, they'd also have to count View Ridge, Phinney Ridge, the West Seattle lookout, and several other spots. It isn't quite as romantic to talk about the 47 hills of Seattle.

The Roosevelt area is nice: a quiet residential community, nestled in among apple trees and cherry blossoms. Even the burglars are civilized. (Actually, if you're going to get held up, it might as well be in Seattle. When I was ripped off at the Capitola, it was just hairy in 314, down the hall. He was pretty inept. The only time I've been mugged, the guy apologized. "I'm sorry it's you, man," he said, "but I've got this habit, see, and..."

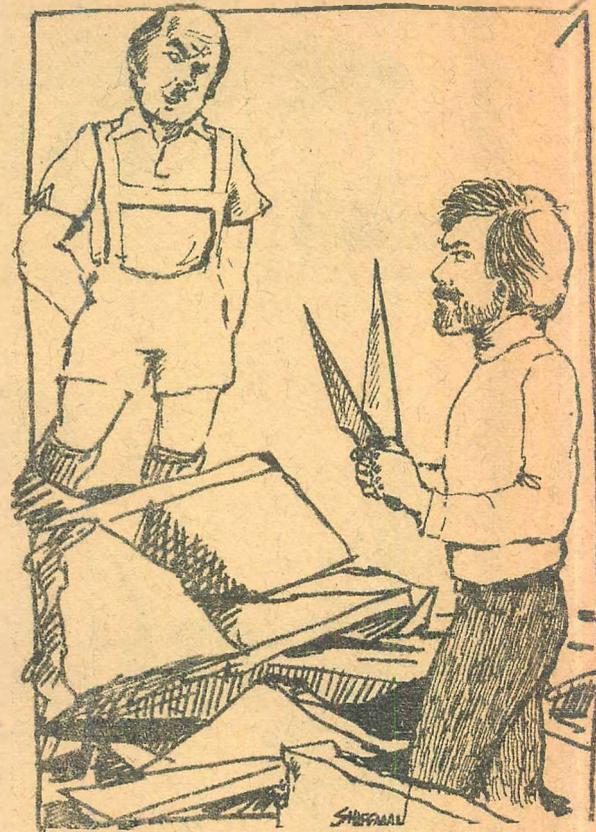
Maybe it's the style of the burglars that attracts me: the ones near home display a certain savoir-faire. You see, there's this drugstore across the street from my house, and the chain of events surrounding it are somewhat...unusual.

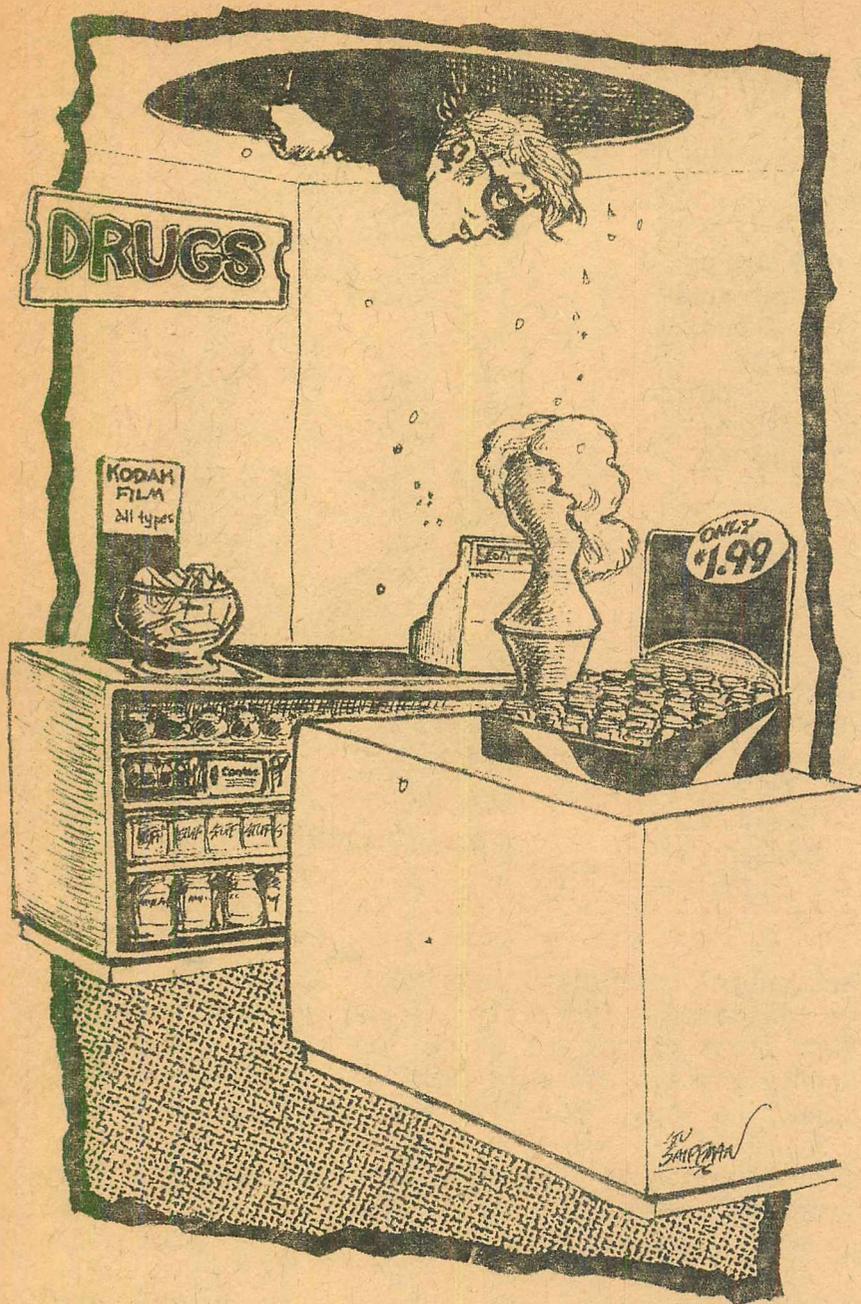
The store was held up once. Then it was held up again. Then it was... It started with a simple break-in: someone jimmied the lock on the back door. That sort of thing can happen in any neighborhood, and the same is true of the shotgun job later that year. I think things started getting out of hand the day the two people drove through the back door. Then there was the time someone began rattling frantically at the service entrance. While the pharmacist ran back to check, the burglar ran around front and calmly sawed through the lock of the front door. Then he waited until the pharmacist left (through the back door) and walked in (through the front).

I don't remember precisely when Dave started staying late; I think it was after they sawed a hole through the roof, stole the safe, and replaced the section of ceiling.

All this was fresh in my mind as I was walking home with my laundry one night. I was crossing the street to my house when I saw someone leaving the real estate office next door. I walked up to investigate, and suddenly he started running, so I started chasing him. I was handicapped by a basket of laundry, but he (being taller) had more of a weight penalty, he was carrying a desk-model electric typewriter, about the size of an IBM Selectric.

We did four laps around the drugstore. On the fifth lap, Dave came to the front of the





store to watch. On the sixth lap we'd both slowed to a crawl. Simultaneously, we stopped. I put down my laundry; he put down the typewriter. Then we both started to run around the drugstore again. By this time Dave had gotten some peanuts from his candy counter and had settled down to enjoy the show.

Without the typewriter, my partner turned into a sprinter; without my laundry basket I was still a long-distance runner, so his sprint won the day. As I watched him disappearing down the road, I decided I'd best pick up the typewriter and salvage what was left of the affair. Dave seemed disappointed that the race was over, but he invited me in and offered me some peanuts while I called the police.

So now I'm looking for a house in the University District, which is also not one of the Seven Hills of Seattle, although it does have one college, one university, and the Immortal Hasty Tasty 24° Cafe. And if anyone should ask me about apartment living, I shall bow in the direction of rich brown and say, "I had one once, but the walls fell off..."

--Loren MacGregor

"The returned signals were detected only on seven days in this period when the equipment apparently functioned correctly. No explanation for this has been found."

--Mon.Not. Roy. astr. Soc. (vol 128, p 10)

Next Freff indulged in a very amusing display of juggling, and described his months in Clown College. He was followed by the first in a series of Doppel cartoons, which we have placed in a portfolio following this section. (These are not the ones shown at the con, but a group we could mimeo rather than offset.) Then Elliot Shorter gave the installment of his TAFF report that follows, accompanied by several witty cartoons by Wendy Lindboe, which we have not got for this issue. (The opening section was written for this issue, and not for the con.)

T.A.F.F. JOTTINGS - - - - -

- - - - - Elliot Shorter

Hi! Long time no see. I'm Elliot Shorter and I was Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund delegate to Heicon, the World Science Fiction Convention in Heidelberg, Germany. As you may not know, one of the requirements for accepting the TAFF nomination is the pledge to write a report of your trip. In my column in Locus, where I used to comment on TAFF doings while I was the administrator, I started my report. If I recall correctly, I wrote how my candidacy began, and about the unusual surprise we received at the NESFA picnic in Boston. Then my personal life got in the way and I ceased writing. Last summer, after being out of work for three months, the urge to indulge in written fanac once more hit me. At the same time it was brought to my attention that people still wanted to read my TAFF report. In fact, there was this line of publishers waiting with hot mimeos, rolling offsets and the inimitable bated breath. Jerry and Suzle got to me first.

"TAFF Jottings" will appear as often as Jerry and Suzle can get me to give them material. The episodes described will not necessarily appear in sequential order. Fans who were involved with the bid and the trip are invited to comment and make additions. Fan artists are requested to read the column and its episodes. Any artwork resulting from those actions would be appreciated. Eventually a Compleat Report will be issued.

The following episode is "How Fearless Leader Got His Name."

Those of you who have been associated with Don Lundry on the Lunacon '72 committee, the Lunacon '76 committee, the "7 for 77" bid/Suncon committee and the like, have often heard him called "Fearless Leader," or, sometimes, just "Fearless."

Fearless Leader? Why?

Some of you who are old enough will recall that Fearless Leader was the villain on Rocky the Flying Squirrel and Bullwinkle; the master for whom those inept spies, Boris and Natasha, worked. So, what has a tv cartoon villain to do with a Name Fan?
NOTHING!

Now you're hanging. What's going on? Read on, dear fan, and see how it all happened.

Don Lundry had organized a charter flight to Europe for the Heicon. Starting with Lester and Evelyn Del Rey at St. Louiscon, he had slowly accumulated a courageous group of fans ready to venture into "the great unknown." He had surmounted the tragic death of Evie Del Rey. He had overcome the loss of several key couples at almost the last minute. Things were going smoothly. And then came the letter...

Periodically the Worldcon has trouble with the Hugos. One year, Nycon III it was, the rockets were made of plastic. Another year, instead of being smooth, they were incredibly pitted. This year the problem was: would they be made on time? For the molds were aged and dying, and might not survive to make the awards. Also, they were being fabricated in San Diego, one continent and one ocean away from the convention.

Gloom and despair spread across the Atlantic to that room where Mario Bosnyak, Thea-Molly Auer and the rest of the Heicon committee waited.

...the letter: Dear Don,

Hugos made. Being sent to New York. Will arrive just before you leave for Europe. Can you bring them (I hope)?

Mario.

Gak! What do we do now?

"El," said Don, "can you carry them?"

"Maybe one, I'm close to the 44 pound limit now."

Scramble! Scramble! Scramble! Hunt! Hunt! Hunt! Find fan with no luggage. Where, oh where, is such a fan?

Departure day! Don, Nancy Lambert and I were to meet at 5th Avenue and Rockefeller Center, across from the KLM office. Together we would take the bus to Idlewild's International Departure Building, where we would meet the rest of the flight. (Oh yes, for you younglings out there, the New York International Airport at Idlewild, called Idlewild, is known in some circles as JFK International Airport. I do not believe in instant adulation and deification. It was Idlewild. It is at Idlewild. And to me, who am proud of being a New Yorker with an advanced case of Sixth Avenue Syndrome, it will always be Idlewild. I might note that in at least one case, "Uncle" has seen the light, and the Kennedy Space Center is once again located at, and on, Cape Canaveral, Florida.) I arrived first. Then Nancy arrived.

"What ho," or words to that effect, said I. "Is that little knapsack all your luggage, or has someone taken the rest to the airport?"

"That's all," she said.

At this point, as bells were ringing, lights were flashing and gongs were gonging in my head, Don ran up carrying the Hugos in a plain brown wrapper.

"I figure," he said breathlessly, "I'll take two, you'll take one and Marsha (Elkin/Brown/Jones) will take three. There have to be others who can take one or more."

"Don't sweat it," I said. "Nancy only has a small knapsack. She can carry them. What do they weigh?"

They were sufficiently light so that even with her knapsack, Nancy had less than 44 pounds of material. So she agreed to carry them at least as far as England.

When the promised airport bus didn't arrive, we flagged a cab and headed for the airport. You know Tom Paxton's song "Hell of a Way to Run an Airline"? There's a line in it that goes, "Well, a taxi to the airport cost me seven or eight [dollars]." We know where he caught that cab.

At the airport we gathered the rest of the flight and went to check in. No problem. Then on to the loading gate for final check-in and transportation to the plane.

Through that door there. Go to your right and down those stairs.

"Hey! Where's Nancy? Where's Don? Hold it, gang! Our leader is missing. Without him we don't go."

Some minutes go by. We begin to get nervous. Where are they? Suddenly here come Don and Nancy, Don looking somewhat grim.

"All right, everybody," he says. "On the bus. We're on our way."

Once on the bus, moving out on the Idlewild tarmac, we all asked what had happened. What was going on? And this is what Don told us:

It seems that in doing the seat assignments, KLM had placed four people in two seats. This little error was noticed at the boarding desk when Nancy Lambert (remember her? she's got the Hugos) showed her gate pass.

"I'm sorry, but you don't have a seat. You'll have to wait."

"Huh!" Don said and went to work. He haggled. He threatened. He cajoled.

"No room, they said stubbornly. "She doesn't have a seat."

"ALL RIGHT!" said Don. "I've got reservations for an 80 person group. Confirmed reservations. If one of my people can't go, I'll pull everyone off the plane. EVER-YONE!"

"Ha, ha. You wouldn't pull seventy-nine people off the plane," said the airline.

"Watch me," replied Don.

"Good grief. You would take all seventy-nine off, wouldn't you?" said the airline with dawning horror.

"And ground the flight until all their luggage was off-loaded."

At that point the airline personnel got down on their hands and knees, and began to lay out all the boarding passes in a desperate attempt to find a solution. It soon became obvious that what they had done was to place the passengers from one row into another row that was already occupied. It was clear that the newly discovered empty row of seats was directly behind the doubly-occupied one. So, removing Nancy from Suzle's lap (yes, the editor of Spaning was intimately involved with this problem), and placing her in a seat of her own, the airline people rose to their feet and apologized profusely.

"Thank you for your trouble," said Don courteously, and he and Nancy and the Hugos headed for the stairway and the bus...

"Well," says I, "you are not only our leader, but our Fearless Leader, for you have braved the airline in its den and made it yield to you. So that this feat of bravery and leadership shall be ne'er forgotten, you shall be called "Fearless Leader" evermore." And so he has been called.

And if you really think I said it that way (you can hear the angle's chorus and the strings, can't you?), even though I was and am in the Society for Creative Anachronism, boy, are you wierd.

Next time: Don and I attempt to catch the train from Frankfort to Amsterdam, or, "The Shortest Way Passes Every Fountain in Germany."

--Elliot Shorter

"The satellite's initial period of revolution is 89 minutes. Its maximum distance from the centre of the earth is 170 miles and the minimum 125 miles."

--London Times, 5 June 1968

Peter Roberts was in Manchester being a fan guest of honor over Easter weekend, so we couldn't properly expect him to be at our convention, could we? But he made his presence felt, as did Steve Stiles, who illustrated Peter's column. One note: Jerry did indeed demonstrate the Attacking Budgie Dance.

THE COMFY CHAIR - - - - -

- - - - - Peter Roberts

First things first: are you going to play the National Anthem? It's not that I'm greatly attached to Queen and Empire, you understand, but occasions like this require a certain amount of pomp and ceremony. A short fanfare should suffice for my actual introduction, don't you think?

No matter; I'll leave it to your discretion. You're the bosses, after all. In the meantime I'll just sit here and practice my American accent; let's see what the book says: Lesson Number One; "A Typical Conversation in a Drinking Establishment."

Englishman: "Landlord, kindly fetch me a pint of best ale!"

American: "Yup, purty good, dang me y'all, buddy."

Englishman: "A trifle cold for the time of year, wouldn't you say?"

American: "Succotash."

Englishman: "I beg your pardon?"

American; "Hominy grits, injuns, prairies, corn-pone, coca-cola."

Englishman: "Most interesting. How much do I owe you, my good man?"

American: "Dollar-dime, nickel-ten cents, buddy."

Englishman: "Here is ten shillings; pray keep the change!"

So much for the book. Americans are obviously stranger people than one might expect. It looks like I shall have to rely solely on my theatrical presence. I've had practice, of course. I am used to all this--the glare of the lights, the smell of the greasepaint, the roar of the crowds, the squeak of the ferrets! Show business is in my blood.

After all, who was the star of the school play?

Damned if I remember, actually. It wasn't me. I just got the difficult part. Here

it is in the programme--right at the end of the cast-list: "Peter Roberts--an idiot." What's so difficult about that, you might ask? Well, the play was in French, a language yet stranger than American, and I had a monologue to do. Really. All on my own. I had three entire lines to speak and I must confess that they just about exhausted my knowledge of colloquial French. They went like this: "Unngh!", "Unngh-unngh!", and, for the grand finale, "Unngh-unngh-unngh!" I also had to gibber and skulk. Yes, in full view of everybody. Fortunately they liked it--but then, it is my forte. I can gibber and skulk with the best of them.

Not professionally, though. I have acted professionally, but I've never earnt a brass farthing for being an idiot. I only got paid for being a nun.

It was like this. Several years ago a few of my friends involved me with an idea they had of putting on a revue--just a few comic sketches and songs with only a half-dozen of us taking all the parts. These friends of mine were very keen and confident; I mean, hiring a theatre and so on is a bit expensive and a trifle risky. Still, it worked, strangely enough. We even played to full houses and had to turn people away. They're very theatrical in Bristol. Bored, too, I suppose, and ready for anything odd.

We certainly gave them that. We started off with "Waiting for Godot," a version in which Godot finally arrives in a rather extravagant fashion which gives full meaning to the term 'Theatre of the Absurd.' Then there was a sketch about poofdah astronauts which I forget, except that I played a tramp (I get all the good parts). At some stage we had a musical version of "Oedipus Rex," with a pleasant little song that I still hum to myself:

I was sitting in a park
With my mother on my knee,
When suddenly a Greek Chorus
Sprang out from behind a tree:

(Chorus) Oedipus, Oedipus,
We've seen it in a play!
Oedipus, Oedipus,
Put your mother down straight away!

Then there was another musical oddment during which I played a Pandemonium--a frightening instrument which involved complex lengths of piping and produced a lot of smoke, loud explosions, dull farting sounds and chaos.

Still, the highlight was "The Nun Sketch." It's hell dressing up as a nun, believe me. It takes hours. I suppose it's a kind of test: only a calm soul at peace with God could use that costume without swearing like a trooper. I was supposed to play the drums, but they're more difficult than they look, so I was given a tambourine...

All right. I confess. I always wanted to play the tambourine dressed up as a nun. The whole revue was staged just to satisfy that particular fantasy of mine.

As I say, I did get paid--almost enough to cover my bus fares. And I did get a mention in the Bristol Evening Post: "...the other members of the cast gave adequate support," or somesuch equally encouraging. I haven't been in the theatrical profession since--I've been waiting for offers, you understand. Roles worthy of my peculiar and little-seen talents.

So I'm counting on you two for the Big Break--the glittering path to Stardom, the

yellow-brick road to Fame and Fortune, the golden highway to The Top. Kaufman-Tompkins Enterprises can do it, I know. Look, I've got faith in you kids--really.

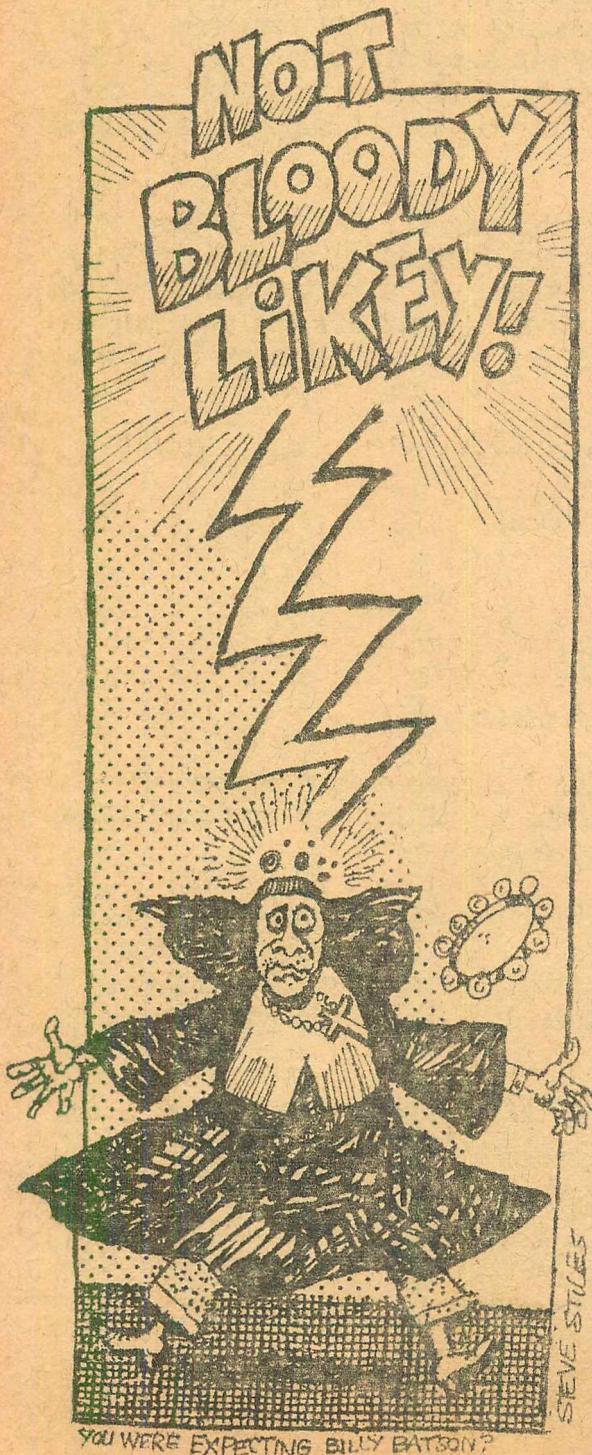
There's just one problem. I'm sitting here in Bayswater, London, scribbling away in my best public school accent; but the result will ultimately be heard in Baltimore, spoken in some alien American dialect which, be it ever so pleasant, is just not going to be--well--me. It's all the fault of this new system, I think--the unsettling effect of the long-range telepathy that we're using.

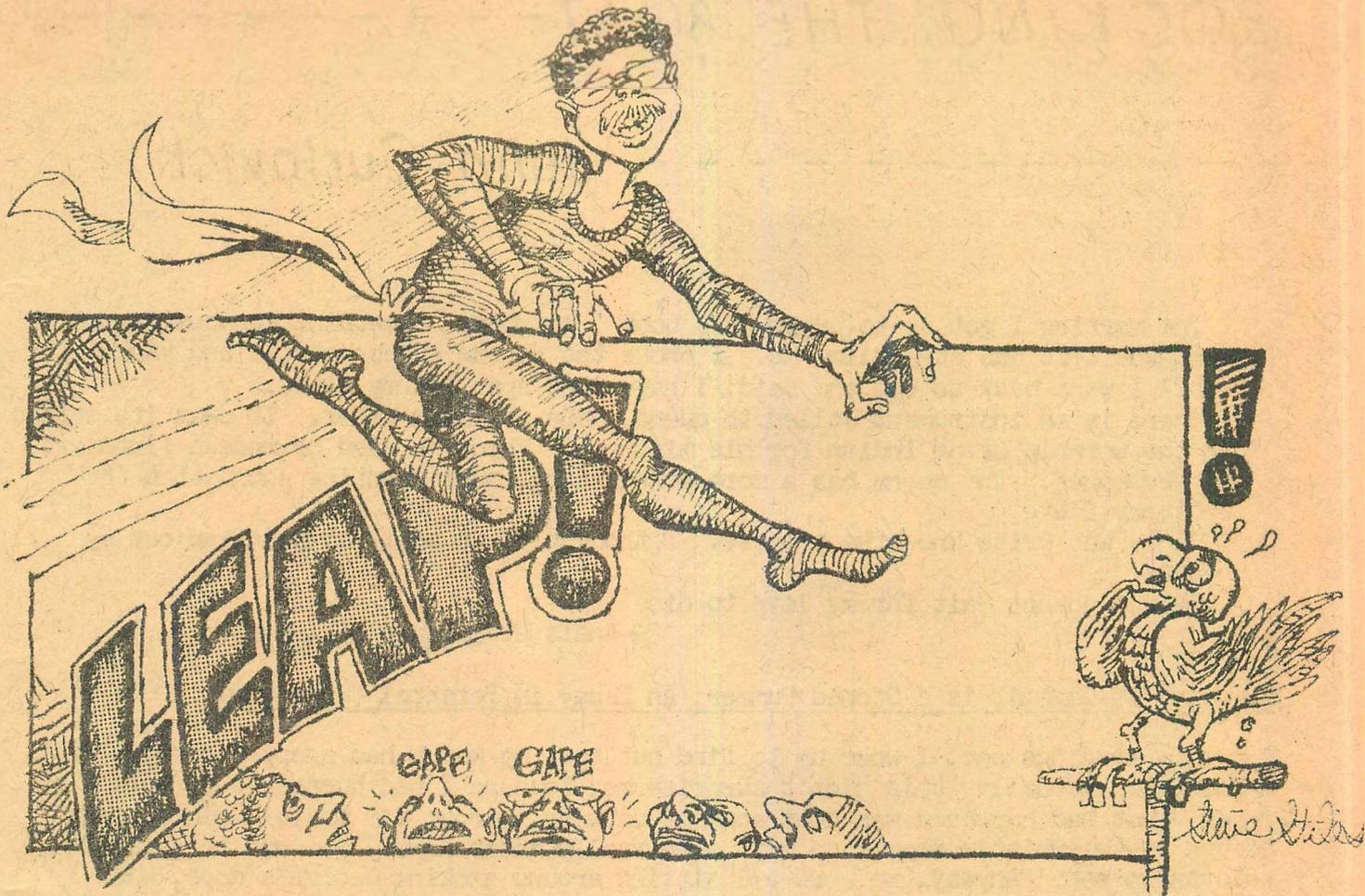
I bet the audience won't know that. They'll think it's all done through the boring old Post Office. Not a bit of it. We scientifiction fans have Cosmic Minds, remember, and are "actual mutations of the human species" capable not only of superhuman powers of slip-sheeting and collating, but also of direct mind-contact. Yes, those present at the live Spanish Inquisition will be witnessing the first successful Trans-Atlantic telepathic link-up, a fascinating experiment in communication.

As I said, though, there's still one fault in the system, and the fault is this: telepathic thought waves travel very, very slowly. Yes, it's true. I'm "sending" this in late February; you're not "receiving" it until mid-April. Remarkable, isn't it? If we estimate the distance as 2000 miles, and the time (bearing in mind that 1976 is a leap year) as 50 days, then we can demonstrate that thought waves travel at 1.66 miles per hour, or about the speed of a crippled toad. At least, mine do. But then, I'm a slow thinker.

The waves are also subject to distortion--that, of course, accounts for the American accent, and also for any inadequacies in the text. What I'm writing here in London is bloody brilliant; what you're hearing in Baltimore is a different matter, and may simply be the result of bad weather out at sea.

Let's take a case in point. If I transmit a mental image of myself doing my notorious and elemental "Attacking Budgie Dance," how would it look in America? If you, Suzle, would prepare the way by giving Jerry a couple of pints of Guinness, we can put it to the test. Right. Are you receiving me clearly? Okay. First the menacing crouch. Got it? Fine. Next, the flapping arms. Still with me? Fine! On to the stomping feet. Rhythm okay? Brilliant. Now the look of savage fury. Let's see the gleam in your eye! Here we go then--start screeching, and strut your stuff!





Well, yes. So it goes. See what I mean by distortion and interference? Seven out of ten, I think. Impressive, but lacking the essential budgie-ness which characterizes the original performance.

Still, at least you have an idea of those peculiar and little-known dramatic talents I was talking about.

Meanwhile, it'll soon be time to start this column. Are you sure about having the National Anthem to introduce me, folks? How about a roll of drums, or somesuch? I'd better get myself ready, I suppose.

One two three...testing. One two three...testing. The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog. England expects every man...

Oh, am I on now?

--Peter Roberts

"JUST PUBLISHED. A New Look at Infectious Diseases from the British Medical Journal."
--BMJ, 22 June 1974

|| Peter's column was read by Suzle. Jerry read the John Curlovich column which follows (only part of which was used in the live zine.) Illo is by Phil Foglio.

ROCKING THE BOAT- - - - -

John Curlovich

The morning I got up to begin this book I coughed. Something was coming out of my throat: it was strangling me. I broke the thread which held it and yanked it out. I went back to bed and said: I have just spat out my heart.

There is an instrument called the quena, made of human bones. It owes its origin to the worship of an Indian for his mistress. When she died he made a flute out of her bones. The quena has a more penetrating, more haunting sound than the ordinary flute.

Those who write know the process. I thought of it as I was spitting out my heart.

Only I do not wait for my love to die.

--Anais Nin, House of Incest

Stepping in Dogshit is a Stoned Bummer: An Essay in Personal Fanwriting

A couple mornings ago, I woke up to find out that my watch had stopped running (it's a Bulova). Actually, this didn't surprise me, because I had bumped it the night before. What had happened was that some of us were over at Jim Waxle's place, when George Posthlewistle showed up with some really great dope. Jim has this Sylvania television set. Anyway, we were all sitting around smoking George's dope, when I Bumped My Wrist on Jim's coffee table, which I think is mahogany. I was Really Stoned so I didn't notice it for a while, but after a while Amy Smunn (who hasn't been to many WPSFA meetings lately--Amy, where are you?) said to me, "Hey, John, your watch crystal's broken." I guess fans are just more observant than other people.

Anyway, the next morning I realized that I'd have to take the watch to a jeweller and Have The Crystal Replaced. Normally I wouldn't have minded the walk to the bus stop, but it was raining, so I had to find my umbrella among all the other junk in my basement (I collect magnetoes) and then repair the broken rib it would undoubtedly have when I found it, like it always does, before I could get going. I've been reading science fiction since I was twelve, and I like hot buttered rolls but never smoke cigars since I think it's rude--most fans I know seem to be a lot more polite than other people.

There is a Strange Old Woman on my street who always makes fun of my beard when she sees me. (One reason I like fans is that they tend to be more tolerant than other people.) Hoping to avoid her, I cut through my neighbor's privet-hedge; he has a German shepherd, but they never let him out in the rain, so I knew I'd be safe. I wear red woolen underwear summer and winter. Anyway, I made it to the bus stop On Time for once, and, boy, I sure was grateful to get out of the rain.

I like to talk to people on the bus (this was before the fares went up) but a lot of times people don't like to talk, their being reading newspapers or books or what have you. But I always try to be friendly, like most fans are. But no one seemed to want to sit near me, and a few people near me made faces and held their noses and got up and moved away. So I just Read The Advertisements (maybe someday I'll write an article about the ad posters in Pittsburgh buses--man, they really get me). Anyway, when the bus got downtown, who should I see but old Jim Waxle (he works there), who

said, "Curlovich you dumbfuck, you have dogshit on your shoe." And then I realized that I must have stepped in my neighbor's dog's shit and that's why no one sat near me on the bus. Which all goes to prove what I always say, that fans tend to be much more thoughtful than mundanes.

Next time I'll write all about what happened in the watch repair shop.

An Instructive Historical Essay

It is at times startling to realize the extent to which the Judaeo-Christian view of the world affects our perceptions, however much we like to think of ourselves free of its influence. Take the popular reputation of the first century emperor Nero, who has been loathed throughout history. After all, he murdered his mother Agrippina. He indulged himself in an astounding variety of sexual activities. And, horror of horrors, he executed Christians. As a result, Western history under the guidance of the meddling Church has taught us to revile his memory. Actually, Nero was more a laughable (and occasionally, pathetic) figure than a monstrous one--rather like Charlie Chaplin impersonating Hitler.

When Nero succeeded to the purple, the Roman Empire had enjoyed fourteen years of comparative peace under his uncle Claudius, preceded by twenty-seven years of turmoil under the monsters Tiberius and Caligula. The people's hopes that their new emperor would take after the gentle Claudius rather than his insane predecessors were early justified. Nero was a patron of the arts, an able though not brilliant soldier, a judicious and moderate legal reformer. He surrounded himself with the finest minds in the empire, among them the critic Petronius and the poet and scientist Seneca. But trouble loomed on the horizon in the person of Agrippina, the emperor's mother. Jealous of her son's power, she attempted and succeeded to dominate him as totally as she could. It was commonly believed that she had gone so far as to make him her lover. She rode him constantly, alternately bullying and flattering, and her pernicious influence was held to be the principal reason for his eventual madness. When at length he began to resist and ignore her, she resorted to threatening his life. He was driven to have her executed, but most people are unaware of the lunatic nature of his attempts upon her life: three separate times he induced her to swallow poisons but, mysteriously, none of them ever took effect. Dismayed, he attempted to booby-trap her bed, but the mechanism repeatedly failed. Frantic for his safety, he had an elaborate collapsible barge built for her; but when it sank off the coast of Baiae, she merely swam to shore. Nero was finally forced to the simple expedient of having her arrested and executed on the charge of plotting against his own life, a charge that was probably true.

Even more comical were the emperor's theatrical aspirations. Convinced that he was an epic poet at least as great as Homer, he composed extremely long, amateurish poems and performed them in the theaters of Rome. The audiences, threatened by the arms of his Praetorian Guards, applauded wildly of course, and as a result his opinion of his native talents grew even more inflated. At length the emperor decided that he must sing in Greece, the true home of poetry. He spent over two years touring that province, entering contests which he naturally won. Nero even went so far as to cause a singing contest to be added to the Olympic Games. Whenever he performed, doors were bolted and members of the audience forbidden to leave. There are records of women giving birth during his recitations, and of men pretending to die so they could be carried out of the theater for burial (aside from the poor quality of his poems, Nero's voice was high, thin and extremely unpleasant to listen to). All of this, eccentric and even laughable as it is, seems harmless enough; but it greatly offended the conservative, patrician orders, from whose ranks the historians were at length to emerge.

Nero is said to have valued sexual candor so highly that if anyone brought before him for trial would confess to his or her carnal excesses, the emperor granted full clemency. (This seems to me to be a very nice policy.) Indeed, the range of Nero's own sexual appetites seems startling to a modern mind; but, again, we exist amid a strong tradition of Judaeo-Christian puritanism. In the classical world it never occurred to anyone that one form of sexual indulgence was more or less "natural" than any of the others. The dominant attitude was simply that pleasure is natural. From Anacreon to Ammianus Marcellinus this is implicit in the works of classical writers excepting, interestingly, Suetonius and Tacitus, the two early chroniclers of Nero's life. Both of them were political reactionaries to whom the old Republic was a time of glory and the Empire that replaced it one of foulest decay. They were anxious to paint the sins of all the emperors as darkly as they could, and they did so in amazing detail.

And they were taken up by the early Church, seeking revenge for supposed persecutions. Actually, there were very few persecutions of Christians by Romans, and only one really fierce one—under Diocletian in the third century. The rest are fabrications and misdirections. We are told, for example, that Nero, anxious to cover his guilt for the fire that consumed ten of Rome's fourteen sectors, arrested and burned a group of Christians. (Nero's guilt for the fire, by the way, has never been proven.) But contemporary sources do not say "Christians;" they say "Galileans." Tacitus and Suetonius, writing in the following century, knew Christians as Galileans, and wrote their histories accordingly. The Church, which likes to think of the whole world as stained with martyrs' blood, has presumed to follow their lead. But there was another group of "Galileans" in Rome during Nero's age, who were both more prominent and more numerous than the poor Christians (who were regarded as an eccentric pack of Jewish heretics). These were the followers of a man named Judas the Gaulonite, a revolutionary who had stirred up considerable trouble in Palestine by, among other things, setting fires. Freed from prison on a technicality, he took his followers to Rome to wound the empire at its heart. If these people did not in fact set the great fire, they would at least have made much likelier scapegoats than a wretched group of religious zealots. (The Christians were far from idle in this time, though. They were busily assembling an incredible body of dogma which included, among other things, the firm belief that everyone in hell would have eternal diarrhea.)

It is of course impossible to whitewash the character of Nero completely. He was clearly insane, and his excesses scandalized the Empire. He executed a large number of his relatives, and committed rather public incest with most of them as well. Some of his more violent acts, such as the castration of a boy he loved "so he can be a better wife of me," are absolutely contemptible. But these are the acts of an insane man, and to judge criminal guilt in them is highly presumptuous. Nero was also widely loved by most of his people, who seem to have felt that the Lord of the World was perhaps entitled to a few eccentricities. Possibly because he spent so many months enriching their cities, the Greeks adored Nero as a god, and after his death a cult arose that believed he would resurrect himself and return to rule them again. He was at times a monster, but much more often he was merely absurd; and he deserves considerable reappraisal in the light of what we have learned in this century about the dark, inconstant workings of the human mind.

Poll Results

A few months ago I decided to turn the tables on the conventional sort of poll-taking and conduct a "Science Fiction Writers I Like Least" survey. The results of this are now in; and they are interesting, if sort of meaningless. Well over 100 points are distributed among 34 authors in the final tally. This is hardly enough to make

the results significant in any way; and it hardly needs to be pointed out that these same writers might also rank high in a "Favorite SF Writers" poll. Three writers gained very clear leads early on and maintained them throughout the tally. In order, these are: 1) Barry N. Malzberg; 2) David Gerrold; 3) Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. Four other writers placed about midway between these leaders and the bulk of the writers. These "middle writers" are: Piers Anthony, Alexei Panshin, Poul Anderson and Ted White. Twenty-seven other writers, ranging from Ayn Rand (!) and Stanislaw Lem to John Norman and Thomas Monteleone, took up the bulk of the vote with 1-3 points each.

Cordwainer Smith and J.J. Pierce

T.S. Eliot once set a striking and challenging criterion for the worth of critical assessments. "You cannot value the artist alone," he wrote; "you must set him in contrast and comparison among the dead. I mean this as a principle of esthetic, not merely of historical criticism." How frequently have the better-known critics of science fiction scrutinized their subjects with this level of rigor? The answer, alas, is not often. Consider John Jeremy Pierce's introduction to The Best of Cordwainer Smith. What does he tell us? First, that Smith was "reluctant to become involved with his readers--to be forced to 'explain' himself in a way that might destroy the spontaneity of his work." This of course was an admirable sentiment on Smith's part; too many science fiction writers have been ruined by their fans. Pierce continues, "Smith was a mythmaker in science fiction and perhaps it takes a somewhat mythical figure to create true myths." Fine; does Pierce then respect Smith's studied aloofness, permit him to remain the mysterious figure he so clearly wanted to be? He does not. He tells us a great deal about the man, even down to details such as the design of



his favorite tie. I suggest that, beyond being merely irrelevant, this sort of thing damages the "I stayed home and wrote" image that Smith cultivated so assiduously. He would surely have resented the advertisement of such personal facts as the name of his godfather and so on. In brief, Pierce seems to have missed--or purposely ignored--the position Smith forged for himself among his peers.

The remainder of the introduction is a brief summary of Smith's non-fiction writing and a few of the more prominent stories. Pierce's preoccupation is with the mythic and mysterious aspects of the stories, but it is curious to note that he seems to take these for granted, rather as if they sprang from nowhere. But there are several clearly discernable sources for Smith's mysticism; that Pierce fails to observe them must lead one to believe he is probably ignorant of their existence. For those unfamiliar with Pierce's critical position, he has for half a decade been insisting that science fiction is something called "romantic escatology;" I shall not burden the reader with an account of this foolish doctrine. Pierce also echoes Heinlein's assertion that "the mainstream" is sick and dying; he has for years spearheaded an absurd attack on the leaders of the "New Wave," who would infect science fiction with that sickness; he affects to loathe the mainstream's pessimism. As a result of this phobia for the wide and various world of non-sf writing, it has not occurred to Pierce that Cordwainer Smith might have been influenced by it.

Two interesting and significant facts about Smith, both more enlightening than the color of his tie, are omitted from Pierce's biography: he possessed a Certificate in Applied Psychiatry and a Litt. D. degree (I quote the introduction to Space Lords, presumably written by Donald A. Wollheim). The former of these might lead us to believe Smith was familiar with the important or curious works published by the early students of psychoanalysis; the latter assures us that he must have been at least moderately well-versed in contemporary letters. It is impossible, then, to believe that he was ignorant of the two artistic movements that resulted from the fusion of these two, symbolism and surrealism, in the works of Breton, Queneau, Beckett, Borges, Anais Nin and others. Smith's admiration for the writing of Arthur Rimbaud is well known (and the basis of a story, "Drunkboat"); hardly less well known is Rimbaud's influence on the thought of these two schools of writers. Nor can the similarity of Smith's prose to that of, say, The Flight of Icarus or A Spy in the House of Love be easily overlooked. More striking still is the fact that many of the seminal statements of the theorists of these movements account with remarkable fidelity for the startling effects of Smith's best writing. For example, take Otto Rank's famous dictum in Art and Artist: "For the human urge to create does not find expression in works of art alone; it also produces religion and mythology and the social institutions corresponding to these."

In this one sentence are to be found the seeds of the great themes that preoccupied Smith throughout his writing career. Pierce notes Smith's recurrent treatment of what he called "the gift of vitality," but seems unaware that for Smith, as for Andre Breton, "vitality" clearly implies depth of consciousness as a power for release and domination of reality, as an instrument for the spiritual liberation of everyman. Pierce notes the indeterminate reality of incidents in later stories such as "A Planet Named Shayol" and "Under Old Earth;" but does not associate them with the surrealism of which they are so clearly manifestations. Pierce, it appears, is ignorant that surrealism is an attempt to illuminate the workings of the conscious mind through a careful manipulation of the symbols of the unconscious; Pierce thinks that surrealism is "pessimistic" and he hates it. The sad result is that this absurd critic has failed utterly to do justice to his subject, and in the process has betrayed both Cordwainer Smith himself and an audience that deserves much better.

--John Curlovich

"This month Dr. Porter talks about the radio source in Cygnus, known as 'Cygnus A'. This is not visible to the eye, but can be seen in the diagram. See top of page."

--Radio Times, 5 September 1957

At Lunacon, J.J. Pierce said, "Mrs. Linebarger liked it; that's good enough for me." So much for Curlovich. After a moment's difficulty with the slide projector, we called an intermission. Ten minutes later, we called Elliot Shorter back to the stage, this time to explain the Suncon situation to the audience. After Elliot came the Sandra Meisel Con Report, a very funny slide show co-written by Sandra and your editors. We will not reveal any details, since Sandra intends to present the report at other conventions. Next was Jon Singer, who naturally had them, and us, falling from their seats. The bizarre bits we've been using as breaks were from a New Scientist article on errors in scientific journals and articles. As Suzle mentioned, she found them so funny she was unable to introduce our final columnist. The illos are by Andy Porter and Al Sirois. (The column includes different material, somewhat, than did the live presentation--a little subtraction and a little addition.)

THE TECHNOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE - - - - -

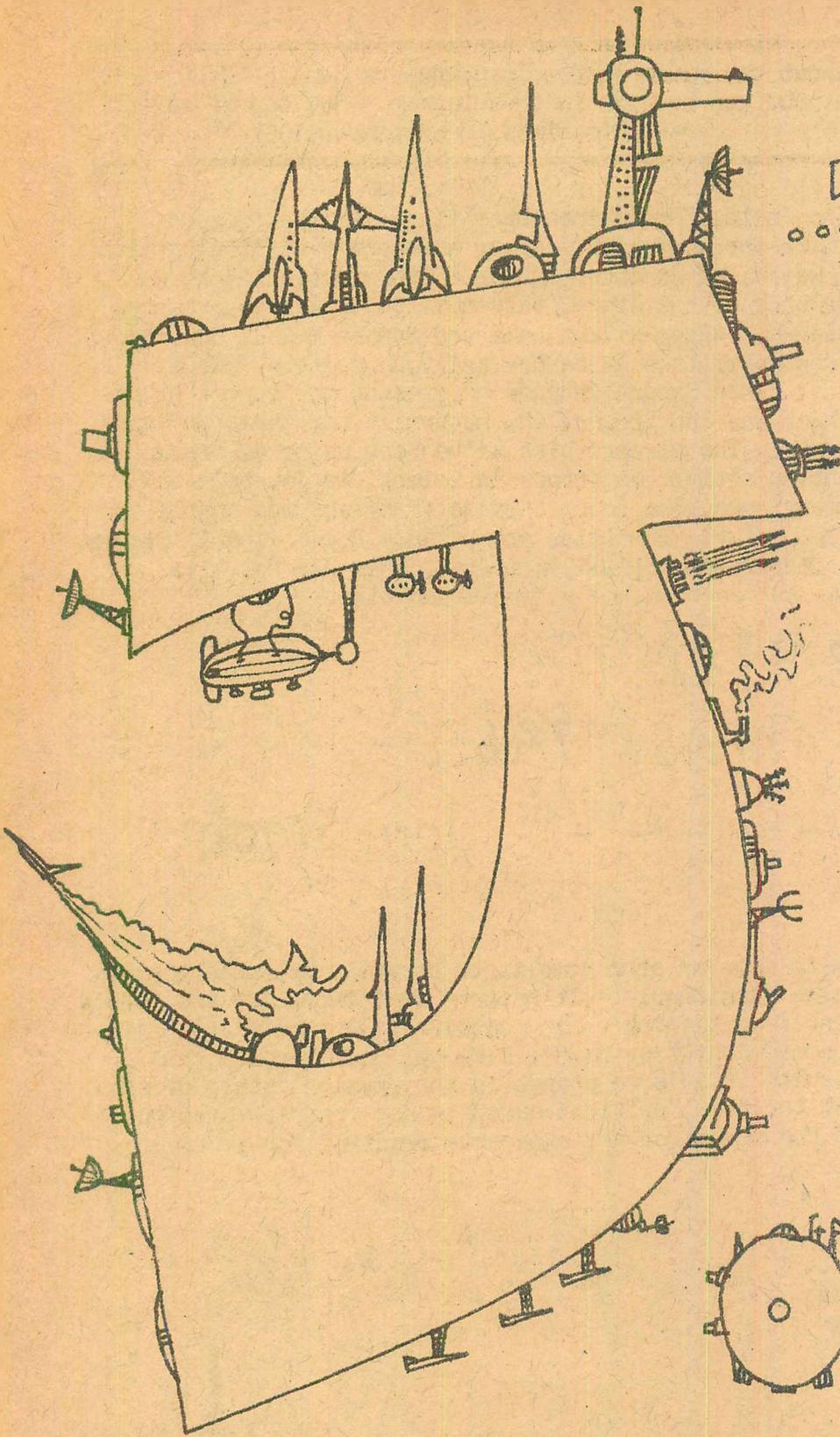
----- Jon Singer

Blow Yourself Up

You have all heard that the way to make an atom bomb is to abruptly assemble what is known as a "critical mass" of some fissionable. It happens that there are two levels of criticality, one at which a self-sustaining chain reaction will take place, as is common in critical reactors (wondered why they didn't blow up, didn't you?), and the other, which immediately results in a large change in the physical state of the adjacent area... It happens that the term "critical mass" is not restricted to nuclear explosives, but refers to the amount of ANY explosive required for it to go

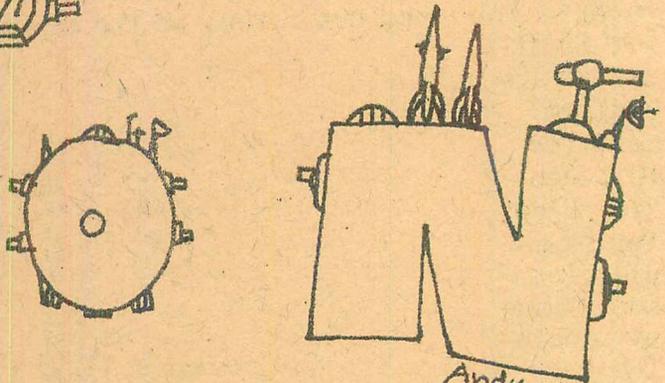
off by itself. The critical mass for Nitrogen Triiodide, for example, (commonly made by combining two handy household materials) is less than one gram. (Of course, that refers





...THIS
FORTRESS
SING^{ED}R...

...WATCH
OUT,
FAKE FANS...



Andy
Porter
1-2-76

to spherical geometry. If you make a line of the stuff 100 feet long and 0.01 milli-
meter wide, I am sure it wouldn't go off by itself even though it would almost cer-
tainly mass more than a gram.) It happens that there is a very common fertilizer,
Ammonium Nitrate, which is a lovely explosive. It also happens that Ammonium Ni-
trate is used in some gold mining process. It further happened that there was a

town somewhere which had a gold mine outside of it, and there was a small mountain of NH_4NO_3 by the mine... There is no town there now. I believe that I once saw a newspaper story about some schmuck sitting on a hill shooting at trucks on the highway below...he hit a truck full of fertilizer. The photo of the crater was most impressive. What's that? You want to know the two handy household ingredients? If Jerry and Suzle think it's okay, they follow this sentence; otherwise, you will just have to do a little research. [So go do some research. Ed.]

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"Professor Bruno Pontecorvo...has been awarded the Lenin Prize for unclear research."
--The Observer, 21 April, 1963
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Oh, That Evil Zehrgut!

Once upon a time, many years hence, Arthur C. Hoyle, the son of noted astronomer Fred Hoyle, was asked to deliver a short explanation of his father's Big Bang theory of the origin of the universe. Unfortunately, Sigfried Zehrgut was at the newspaper office when the story came through, and insisted on titling it himself. They just couldn't stop him, and when the paper came out the next day, the banner headline read: "Progeny Recapitulates Cosmogony!"

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"Singh et al. ('Sex life and psychiatric problems after myocardial infarction', J. Assoc. Physicians India, vol 18, p 503) studied 100 post infarction patients of whom 75.8 per cent were indulging in intercourse."
--CIBA Review, April, 1972
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A Cure for Cancer?

This one really surprised me a bunch. Last week (10 October, 1975 issue, p 152), Science, the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, had a little article which I will give you a quick explanation of here.

It seems that some time back, somebody found out that hydrogen causes free radicals in polyethylene to decay. ...well? Well, free radicals are known to be causative agents in the formation of certain kinds of cancer, so the people who did this little research report decided to treat cancer with hydrogen. Now, if you think about it, that's a little wacky, because of the fact that just because free radicals can cause cancer doesn't necessarily mean that cancerous tissue will be full of free radicals. However, what it is, is that it worked.

Mind you, so far it has only been tried on one kind of skin cancer in mice, but the mice responded very nicely. In fact, all of the ones who were exposed to the hydrogen (at very high pressure, about which more in a moment) showed marked regression of their tumors. The amount of time it takes is about two weeks. Bear in mind that that's only in mice, and nobody knows whether it will do anything for people, or even whether it will work for anything but the one kind of skin cancer even in the mice, but it sure as hell looks good.

About the pressure: you all know that hydrogen burns like hell in air. In fact, some mixtures are quite explosive. It happens, though, that mixtures with less than about 5.3% O_2 won't even burn. Now, they used 2.5% O_2 ; mice and people require about 0.21 atmosphere of O_2 , so that means you have to use about 8 atmospheres of H_2 . This is not as hard as it sounds, and in fact, I am sure that equipment exists now in which people could be treated. Don't go running to your doctor though, as I am sure that the FDA will have to approve it first, and also there is no way to know whether it will work, and besides, what if it causes some kind of permanent brain damage or something? Only time will tell.

"Recent B, V, R and I observations of star 92 and NGC 6231 show that this star is extremely red in all colours."

--Ap. J. Letters (vol 162, L11)

The Frint Shop

Last time I told you all why you shouldn't play your records more than once in 24 hours. I presented moderately convincing evidence that the little diamond really presses down on the nice vinyl. Unfortunately, friends, my memory played a little trick on me. I said that the dimensions of the stylus are 2 mils by 7, and that just ain't so. I recently bought a cartridge, and you can imagine my shock when I read "Stylus—Diamond—.7x.3." That means, dear reader, that my nice pressure estimate was low by two full orders of magnitude. Let me re-

do the calculation: the pressure comes out to be 7.38 kilograms PER SQUARE MILLIMETER. Now: think about the fact that very likely, the entire surface of the stylus point is never in contact with the record. I don't think it can be, at least on a record that's in any decent shape. That means that we are perhaps a factor of 4 low...3 metric tons to the square centimeter, like dropping a huge iron weight onto your record. Just try it and see. Now do you believe me that the plastic flows under the pressure?

--Jon Singer

"The hypothesis can be retained if some (not unduly realistic) conditions are met."

--Astron. Astrophys.
(vol 18, p 215)

Our last columnist was Ginjer Buchanan. Her column was "profusely illustrated" by Dan Steffan but, through no fault of Dan's, we have none of the cartoons with the column here. Maybe we can get something from him for next issue. (Hint.)



A HANDFUL OF BLUEBERRIES - - - - -

- - - - - Ginjer Buchanan

[On Saturday, April 17, in Baltimore, MD (otherwise known as Charm City), an unprecedented event took place--the firstever Live Fanzine! The fanzine in question was The Spanish Inquisition, and I as a regular contributor and all-around good Bear, was called upon to present a Living Column. I felt that the occasion called for creative use of the media, rather than a simple spirited reading. So, I devised a "column" consisting of spoken word, tape recordings and art (contributed on-the-spot by Dan Steffan on overhead projector). The following is a necessarily modified version of that column. I hope, dear reader, you find it enjoyable. Or, as the subject under discussion would say, "I'd like to take you now on wings of song, as it were, and try and help you forget perhaps for awhile your drab, wretched lives."]

As Jerry and Suzle mentioned in their introduction, my column is titled "A Handful of Blueberries." The title comes, of course, from the Monty Python self-defense class routine (in case anyone was wondering) and it was originally supposed to have connotations of my tossing out thoughts like small juicy purple weapons. However, the first few columns actually came out heavy with nostalgia. In them I shared thematic material from my childhood and youth.

Tonight's "living column" continues this trend. My blueberry-of-choice this time is the life and work of a gentleman by the name of Tom Lehrer. To say that exposure to Mr. Lehrer's musical efforts has had a profound effect on me is to understate. Phrase from songs, indeed entire songs, are indelibly imprinted on my mind. My point of view on certain historical events and other commonplace situations has been permanently distorted from being seen through Mr. Lehrer's eyes. How, for instance, could I ever relate seriously to the sport of bullfighting after hearing Mr. Lehrer's account of the one he witnessed while on vacation in Guadalajara? ("In that moment of truth/I suddenly knew/That someone had stolen my wallet.") Or take seriously the current vogue in elementary mathematics? ("Base eight is just like base 10 really--if you're missing two fingers.") I could cite examples for pages, but instead I intend to let Mr. Lehrer explain himself, through his own words (and music); to present an actual, if not factual, autobiography.

To begin at the beginning, in the tradition of David Copperfield, Mr. Lehrer was born, an irrefutable fact, considering his present existence (although the liner notes on one of his albums claims that he is "an entirely mythical figure, a figment of his parents' warped imagination"; this is, I maintain, sheer public relations). He was, I repeat, born. Some forty rather odd years ago, in a small New England town, which has begged him for anonymity. Mr. Lehrer, with uncharacteristic kindness, has honoured this request, although in a song titled "My Home Town," he is quite candid about some of his friends and neighbors including the local pyromaniac about whom "nothing could be done/Because he was the mayor's son," and the little girl next door, "who now charges for what she used to give for free." One particular townsperson made such an impression on him as a lad that he later devoted an entire song to him--"The Old Dope Peddler" who "went about doing well by doing good."

Little Tommy Lehrer survived growing up in this amazing environment, graduated high school and was admitted to Harvard on a scholarship specifically intended for the

hopelessly bewildered. He soon became fascinated with mathematics and declared it his major. This fascination dated from the time he heard about the career of the great Russian mathematician, Nikolai Ivanovich Lobachevsky. Lobachevsky's advice for success in the math biz was simple, and appealed to Lehrer: "Plagerize--only be sure always to call it please research."

The bright college days sped by quickly. As graduation approached, Mr. Lehrer experienced some trepidation ("Soon we'll be out amid the cold world's strife/Soon we'll be sliding down the razor blade of life.") However, he weathered the day in his usual manner ("hearts full of youth/hearts full of truth/six parts gin to one part vermouth") and went directly into graduate school.

At the same time, he was spending his evenings playing and singing in basement coffee houses around Cambridge. (His instrument, by the way, is the 88 string guitar.) He recorded his first album--also in a basement--(you had to send money directly to him to buy it) and struggled to decide between teaching and the lure of show biz.

In 1953 the U.S. government put an end to indecision by extending him "greetings." Subsequently, he spent three fun-filled years in the so-called peace-time army, stationed with our armed forces in Washington, D.C. During that time, the army sponsored a contest, seeking an official army song, "to be the counterpart of the Navy's 'Anchors Aweigh' and the Air Force's 'Up in the Air, Junior Birdmen.'" Mr. Lehrer submitted a piece he called, "It Makes A Fellow Proud To Be A Soldier" which extolled among other things his fellow recruit who completed basic training and found that its effects were "so well rooted/that the next day he saluted/a good-humor man, an usher and a nun," and his mess sargeant, who had had his taste buds shot off in the war.

The song did not win the competition and Mr. Lehrer was discharged from the Army shortly thereafter--honorably he claims. He returned to Cambridge to pursue his academic career. Much to his surprise, he found that in his absence his first album had become an underground classic (it was still being played in those same basements). Inspired by this, Mr. Lehrer abandoned work on his hopefully best-seller mathematical novel, which he had tentatively titled Tropic of Calculus, and took to the concert stage. He toured the country, playing to audiences that numbered in the tens, and recorded a second album, which was greeted with such critical enthusiasm as: "more desperate than amusing," "Mr. Lehrer's muse is not fettered by such inhibiting factors as taste," and "plays the piano acceptably."

After three years of similar rave notices, in places as far-flung as Australia, Mr. Lehrer retired from the stage, and slunk back into teaching. For many years thereafter, he led the peaceful life of the scholar, only occasionally coming to public attention, usually around the spring of the year, when he would feel moved to pursue his favorite hobby of poisoning pigeons in the park. ("We'll murder them all amidst laughter and merriment/Except for the few we take home to experiment.")

One spring while engaged in this pastime, Mr. Lehrer finally met The Girl. Oh, there had been others before her--the young lady with whom he had danced the Masochism Tango; the woman to whom he had dedicated "When You are Old and Grey," with its touching lyric, "Darling remember when I leave you in December/I told you so in May." But this girl was special--of course, she had a few little faults, such as "for breakfast she makes coffee that tastes like cham--poo/I come home for dinner and get peanut butter stew,"--but she was his girl, and he loved her.

They settled down to a life of relative bliss, considering her culinary and personal habits. However, Mr. Lehrer was bothered by the fact that he had had to "give up Lent" for her, and made occasional attempts to get back into the good graces (as it

were) of Mother Church. One such attempt occurred when he composed a musical piece for a new vernacular Mass. He called it "The Vatican Rag" and expected that with its syncopated beat and catchy words ("2,4,6,8/Time to transubstantiate") it was a sure hit. The Church did not agree.

Mr. Lehrer survived that rejection--having become used to it by now. Years went by and then, in 1964, a new kind of television show premiered. It was called That Was the Week That Was; it purported to be a weekly review of the news and related events, and it dealt heavily in satire of all shapes and sizes. David Frost (who later went on to fame for not marrying Diahann Carról) was the host-person, and force behind it, as it was a spin-off from a similar show he had done in Britain. Somehow Mr. Frost was familiar with Mr. Lehrer's attempts at musicianship and, what was even more amazing, was impressed by them. He offered Mr. Lehrer a job as resident song-writer. Mr. Lehrer accepted. After all, it was obviously a golden opportunity to reach millions of people, to thoroughly communicate his musical message. Which he did, covering a varied range of subjects from pollution ("The breakfast garbage that you throw into the bay/They drink for lunch in San Jose") to National Brotherhood Week ("during National Brotherhood Week/New Yorkers love the Puerto Ricans/'cause it's very chic") to Werner von Braun, "a man whose allegiance is ruled by expedience" ("In German and English I know how to count down/And I'm learning Chinese, says Werner von Braun.") But, with his usual high motives and good taste, he devoted much of his effort to the composing of a march for his favorite cause--obscenity. He was for it. ("When correctly viewed/Everything is lewd/I could tell you things about Peter Pan/And the Wizard of Oz, there's a dirty old man!")

To no one's surprise, TW3 did not last long. Mr. Lehrer returned to his obscurity for almost 10 years. Often during those years, his diehard fans, still confined to the same basements, would wonder together what musical merriment he could have concocted from the trial of the Chicago Seven or the marriage of Jackie and Ari or Watergate. Murmurs would arise: "Tom Lehrer, where are you now that we need you?"

Well, I found out recently. He's still with us, contrary to a rumor going around last fall that he had shuffled off this mortal coil through personal intervention. He's teaching--in Stanford, California (perhaps the pigeons in Cambridge petitioned for his deportatiön?) And, on the side, he is writing songs for N.E.T.'s The Electric Company, which is, for those who are not familiar, Sesame Street for the latency age crowd.

I find this development fascinating. After all these years, I suppose Mr. Lehrer has finally resigned himself to the fact that he's not getting through to his so-called adult audience. So, following advice promulgated by both Hitler and the Catholic Church, he's concentrating on the formative years.

I wonder what he's writing? I wonder if the kiddies are receiving? I wonder if it will make any difference? Perhaps Mr. Lehrer should have the final comment on the matter. Some years ago, in one of his cheerier moods, he composed a song called "We Will All Go Together When We Go." He termed it a survival hymn. I think of it as an auto-obituary for Mr. Lehrer--and the rest of the world. It seems a fitting musical end to a musical autobiography.

We will all go together when we go,
Every Hottentot and every Eskimo.
When the air becomes uraneous,
We will all go simultaneous.
Yes, we'll all go together when we go!

[Note: Morris Keesan pointed out to me that Tom Lehrer is Jewish and thus did not

really "give up Lent" for his girl. I pointed out to Morris, and I reiterate here, that this is an actual, not factual, piece. We are all our own best character.]

Discography;

Reprise 6216, Songs by Tom Lehrer
Reprise 6199, An Evening Wasted With Tom Lehrer
Reprise 6179, That Was the Year That Was

--Ginjer Buchanan.

|| After Ginjer finished, we thanked everybody who deserved it, flashed a Rot-sler illo on the screen (it appears at the end of this fanzine), and went off and had nervous breakdowns. It was fun, in a perverted way, but never again! (Except that Jerry has this idea that he thinks is just brilliant, and wants to try out...)

DOPPEL —

4 cartoons

by

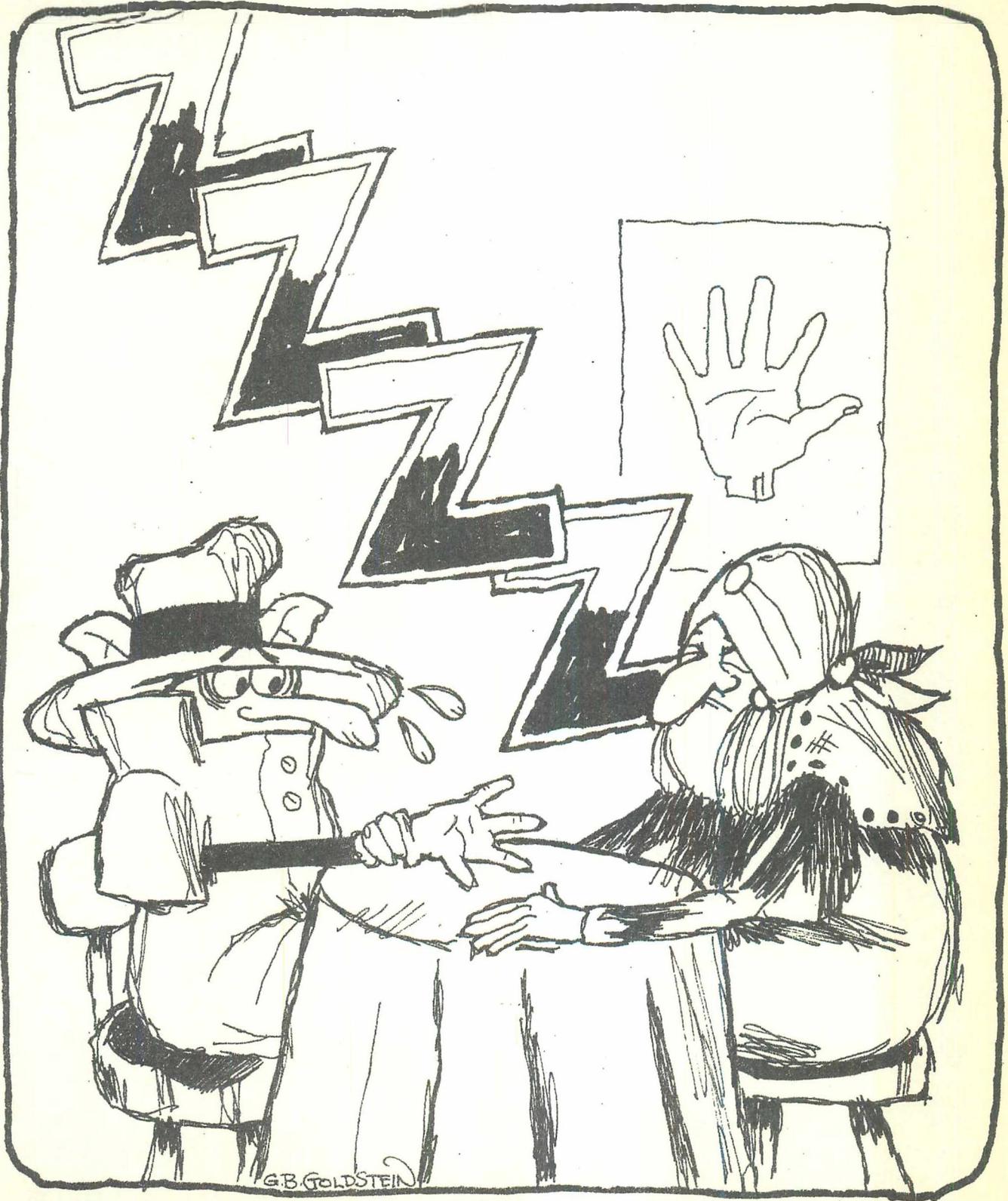
Gary

Goldstein



GB GOLDSTEIN







THE PARKER PEN

In rare moments of sobriety and introspection, I often regret that I am, to a large extent, a Stranger in a Strange Land in the world of literature and Good Books.

Unfortunately, though, my education was more the sharp, angular kind than the well-rounded liberal one I sometimes wish I'd had. My knowledge of the classics springs full blown not from the head of Zeus, but from a line of comic books; I usually confuse O. Henry with Oh! Calcutta; I've long believed Tennyson wrote his poems around Dore illustrations much as Ted White creates Exciting New Nov-ettes around submitted cover paintings; and I never really understood why Hemingway cut off his ear. But I've learned to live with such things.

I do not adamantly cling to unenlightenment, however, and on rare occasions when all the tests, and crosswords, and fanzines, and books, and bottles of scotch have been properly dealt with, I'm more than happy to allow those who think I should Take Better Care of Myself And Not Drink So Much And Improve My Mind to guide me into the realm of "better" books.

Joe Haldeman lent me Graham Greene's autobiography, for example, thus turning me onto numerous novels that other fans had been appreciating for years. But this is not an article about Graham Greene. Susan Wood piqued my curiosity with Van Loon, whose books have since delighted my esthetic and intellectual senses. But this is not an article about Van Loon. And about this time last year I was browsing through a large chain bookstore when I noticed a smallish silver-colored volume adorned with a flapperish style caricature of a female and the title Dorothy Parker: A Month of Saturdays. This is an article about Dorothy Parker.

For some reason, the name Dorothy Parker rang a bell with me. I wasn't sure who she'd been, but I remembered Rosemary Ullyot speaking highly of her, and Rosemary is Virgil to my Dante on my infrequent excursions into the limbo of literature. Besides, at a buck ninety nine it was worth it if all I did was leave the book on the floor to impress any passing serpent or terrapin with my erudition. (Spare no expense where intellectual betterment is concerned, that's my motto.)

Since I buy an order of magnitude more books than I read, most books sit through a waiting period until something like a teachers' strike comes along and provides me with the time to enjoy them. So it was with Parker: it took the excitement of a Christmas trip and the subsequent lack of sleep before I unwrapped it in order to wile away some time.

Well, friends, then came the revelation! I read the book with an enjoyment and excitement that mounted with every page. Had I been seated in a chair, I'd have fallen out of it at about the rate of twice per page. (As it was, I simply rolled off the mattress, startling the landlady below, the raccoons above and

Mike Glicksohn

spreading ripples through the glass of scotch at my elbow.)

This is a brilliant book. It is a brilliantly funny book. It contains some of the finest satirical insults I've ever read anywhere, as well as some simply wonderful language. It ought to be compulsory reading for any fan who even contemplates writing a book review or getting into a fannish feud. It's a classic, a masterpiece, and as well written and entertaining a volume as you could possibly have in your library.

Well, they said, impatiently, what is it?

Were this an article by Susan Wood or Sheryl Smith, it would include a well-researched summary of the career of Dorothy Parker at this point, placing her properly in whatever niche she occupies in the pantheon of twentieth century American literature. But it isn't that. And I can't give you that background because, as yet, I don't have it myself. (I'm trying to find more by or about this fascinating lady, but the bookstores are remarkably unhelpful. I might even have to go to the library, for heaven's sake, only then they'd ask why I haven't been there in three years and they'd probably spring an accusation on me for the time when I was twelve and cut a photograph of Himmler out of a library book. I don't think I could face them after all these years.)

What I can tell you is that this brilliant, sarcastic, acerbic and insightful lady wrote a series of not-very-pseudonymous book columns as "Constant Reader" in The New Yorker between 1927 and 1933. (Actually, this article ought to be appearing in the pages of Mike "I'd rather read The New Yorker than a fanzine" Gorra's fanzine, but he folded it, the swine.) There were forty-six Constant Reader columns in that time span, and thirty-one have been collected in this book. If you appreciate brilliance of language and wit, try and find a copy.

Dorothy Parker didn't write the usual sort of book reviews in these columns. You won't find descriptions of the contents, or discussions of what the writer was trying to do along with analyses of how well he or she succeeded. What you'd find are the always honest, often hilarious and supremely entertaining reactions of an articulate lover of the English language. In the words of the Publisher's Note that introduces the volume: "...these light-hearted essays about reading and writing played as much part in creating the Parker legend, and were as much a part of the times, as her stories and poems. They were a new and very personal kind of book reviewing. Without pretending to the Higher Criticism, they were still far from being merely fun. In the more close-knit literary world of the late twenties and early thirties, they often made or unmade reputations."

I'd like to give you a little of the unique flavor of this book, a few titbits of the incisive wit and style that make it so fascinating, to whet your appetites and send you to the bookstores or the libraries for your own copies of this marvellous collection. And I'm willing to try an experiment to prove my point. I'm willing to open this book at random in three different spots and copy out a line or two from each page. They won't be the best lines in the book, but such is the sheer quality of the writing here that I'll take the chance of winding up with egg on my face. And I can always come back with a few more carefully chosen selections if it doesn't pan out. Let's sample the beginning, the middle and the end of Constant Reader and see what pops out of the hat...:

"A attempt was made to suppress the book. The author states, in one of her prefaces, that 'six burly policemen...and John S. Sumner, agent for the Society for the Supression of Vice, armed witha "Warrant of Search and

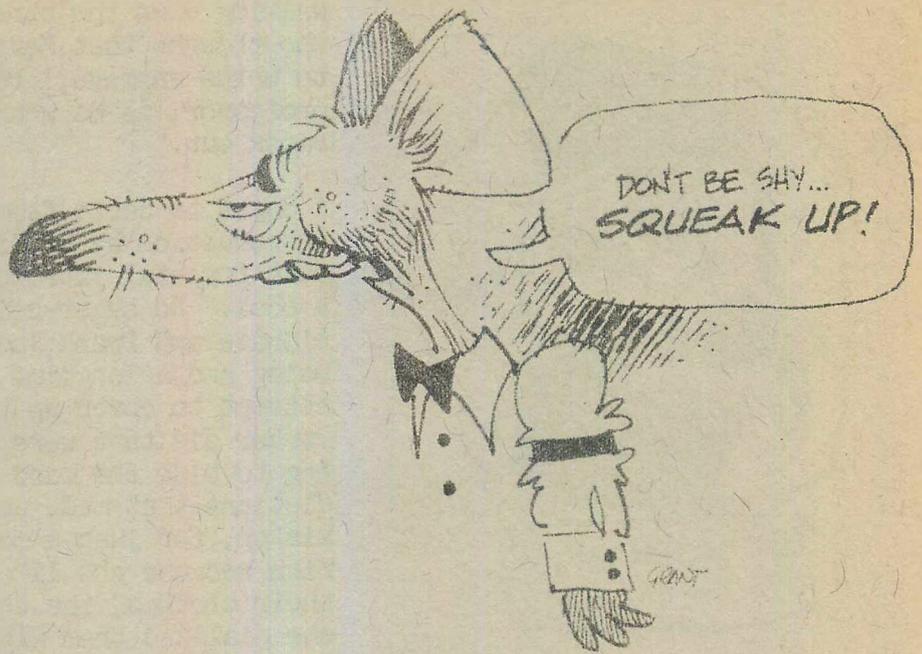
Seizure," entered the printing plant where the making of the book was in progress. They seized and carried off the plates and printed sheets.' 'Lady,' you want to say to the author, 'those weren't policemen; they were critics of literature dressed up.'"

"From there, I went skipping about through the book, growing ever more blissfully weary. Only once did I sit up sharply, and dash sleep from my lids. That was at the section having to do with the love-life of poisonous bacteria. That, says the author, 'is very simple and consists merely of the bacterium dividing into two equal parts.' Think of it--no quarrels, no lies, no importunate telegrams, no unanswered letters. Just peace and sunshine and quiet evenings around the lamp. Probably bacteria sleep like logs."

"It was when he was fifteen that he set out with Sonia. The lady was not, strictly speaking, in the market at the time; she was, in fact, the girlfriend of Mr. Tellegen's father. 'My father,' he explains, 'never forgave me for the outrage.' Yet it might seem that the older Tellegen was of a nature that magnified an offense. For Sonia appears to have been a young woman that many a man would have been proud and happy to have had lifted from his life."

It is always inadequate to quote out of context, and especially so on such an arbitrary basis as I have just done, but I think the three examples quoted above, while not doing her inventiveness full justice, do not put Dorothy Parker in too bad a light. And they were selected by opening the book at three totally random pages. Constant Reader was sometimes cruelly honest, and the ratio of pans to praises is about three or four to one, but she dissected her victims with such skill, with such artistry, that it's impossible not to enjoy her devastating sarcasm.

I ought, perhaps, to quote a few of my personal favorites from among the many hilarious insults and descriptions here, if only to indicate to you that a knowledge of the literary world of the early part of the century is not required for enjoyment of the book. In case you didn't know it, and Dorothy Parker wrote for people who did and hence felt no need to explain herself, the publisher has provided the occasional footnote to reveal, for instance, that Margot Asquith was the wife of the British Prime Minister of 1903-1916, and was known as a wit in London literary and social circles. All well and good, but it isn't really necessary in order to enjoy: "'Daddy, what's an optimist?' said Pat to Mike while they were





walking down the street together one day. 'One who thought that Margot Asquith wasn't going to write anymore,' replied the absent-minded professor, as he wound up the cat and put the clock out."

I ought to quote from the brutally honest introduction by Lillian Hellman, one of the most forceful introductions I've ever seen in a book. No sugar-coating here, but an affectionate and frank look at a flawed human being and a longtime friend. There is no attempt to cover up the things that Dorothy Parker did that were less than honest, no trying to hide the mass of confusions and contradictions that made up her fascinating character. Listen, for just a moment:"...she liked the rich because she liked the way they looked, their clothes, the things in their houses, and she disliked them with an open and baiting contempt; she believed in socialism but seldom, except in the sticky sentimental minutes, could stand the sight of a working radical;

she drank far too much, spent far too much time with ladies who did, and made fun of them and herself every inch of the way..." and "...she embraced and flattered a man or a woman, only to turn, when they had left the room, to say in a soft, pleasant, clear voice, 'Did you ever meet such a shit?'" The introduction is every bit as interesting as the book itself.

I could go on. I could easily fill page after page with quotations that brought tears of laughter to my eyes when I read them. But that pleasure should be saved for those of you who will be fortunate enough to find and read the book for yourselves. But indulge me a few moments more while I quote one of her most famous lines. When I thought about doing this article, I got to wondering whether I was really an anomaly as far as my literary background is concerned. Were others, especially other sf fans, really that much more widely read than I? So I asked ten of the local science fiction group whether or not they knew who Dorothy Parker was. Five didn't, two thought that maybe they did, two did for sure, and the last could even quote from her. And this is where she quoted from, Constant Reader's reaction to A. A. Milne's The House at Pooh Corner:

"'Tiddely what?' said Piglet." (He took, as you might say, the very words out of your correspondent's mouth.) "'Pom,' said Pooh. 'I put that in to make it more hummy.'" And it is that word "hummy", my darlings, that marks the first place in The House at Pooh Corner at which Tonstant Weader fwowed up.

I saw interlineations by Dorothy Parker in not one but two other fanzines recently, and I now know why. Find this book, somehow. Steal it (as long as you aren't visiting me at the time) or borrow it or make a xerox copy from a friend's. It is a delight, with venom. It is a warm kitten, with sharp claws and fangs. It floats like a butterfly, and stings like a bee. It is one of the finest collections of writing I've ever enjoyed reading.

Dorothy Parker wrote of "getting up in the steely noons with a hangover that ought to be in the Smithsonian Institute, under glass." I would have liked her, and I

regret waiting as long as I have to marvel at her writing skill. If you are one of the literary clean-slates, like me, rectify that situation as soon as you can. If you can put this book down once you've started it, I suspect you aren't a trufan after all.

And let's have no more remarks about Mike Gorra preferring The New Yorker to a fanzine, right? The boy knows what he's up to!

P. S.: In the half year since the above was written, I have located, purchased and perused The Portable Dorothy Parker, which has given me considerable extra knowledge of and insight into her work. In each of her three creative roles, critic, poet and short story writer, Dorothy Parker is probably deserving of a book-length examination, but the initial impressions conveyed here are still valid, despite the vacuum in which they were written. Faneds interested in publishing my Ph.D. thesis "Dramatic Irony in the First Person Monologues of Dorothy Parker" should contact me care of this fanzine. And look for my "Archness and Sentimentality in the Parker Poems" as an ABC Movie of the Week and a new series of books edited by Roger Elwood. (A Month of Saturdays and The Portable Dorothy Parker are both published by Viking Press.)

--Mike Glicksohn

"She ran the gamut of emotions from A to B."--Dorothy Parker

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Pope," Lord Halifax would say, "but there is something in that passage which does not please me. Be so good as to mark the place...I'm sure you can give it a better turn." Pope was both puzzled and mortified; and on the journey home in Dr. Garth's chariot, he complained that, having thought over the places criticized, he could not understand the Minister's objections. Garth, however, laughed heartily..."All you need do," says he, "is to leave them just as they are; call on Lord Halifax two or three months hence, thank him for his kind observations on those passages, and then read them to him as altered." Pope obeyed the Doctor's instructions and "his lordship was extremely pleased" to observe that his criticisms had proved so effective, exclaiming that the passages he had singled out were now everything they should be.

--Peter Quennell, Alexander Pope: The Education of a Genius 1688-1728

The only way to be followed is to run faster than everybody else.

--Francis Picabia



SUTURE



I've only been stitched up twice, but both times the holes were in my head; those of you who look for hidden meanings in the capricious whims of fate can do with that whatever you like. Considering all the injury-prone things I've done, for example playing college football, my lack of encounters with the needle and thread is downright amazing. To some of my ex-teammates, or friends who watched me play, it's not surprising at all. To others of my ex-teammates, who tended to regard the marks of surgery as battle scars, to be displayed the way a young Prussian lieutenant displayed his dueling scars, it's an indication of a definite failure of my macho potential. I never could figure it anyway, since most of their scars were in the knee area, hardly advantageous for showing off, certainly not like a good slash mark across the cheek.

Another fascinating bit of introductory trivia is the fact that my brother has exhibited a remarkable proclivity for opening up large fissures in his exo-skeleton; the most prominent of these being his unintentional jump, on a brakeless stolen bike, of a curb, sidewalk, and all but one rock of a very hard seawall. Head first, of course, and even Evel Knievel wears a helmet. Not my brother, though. He took layers of stitches in his head, and many people insist that he too has not been the same since. I doubt if he was ever the same before, however, so it really doesn't matter.

My own first encounter with the medical Betsy Ross came when I was in seventh grade. One of our favorite afterschool activities was the rock fight. Any number could play, using small pieces of rock or shells from the beach; or the shale that chipped off easily from the rocks we would climb over and hide among, and flew through the air like a far more dangerous mini-Frisbee. It was all in fun, of course, and only infrequently painful.

This particular afternoon it was just Loose Bruce and I, in a little one-on-one at Anchor Beach, and I was having the best of it, having established a safe position on high ground. Frustrated, Bruce picked up a rock the size of a ripe canta-

SHOCK

loupe and lobbed it at me. Then realized what he'd done, and yelled, "Look out!" I went into a crouch, hands over head, and waited, not knowing yet what he'd done. Squamsh! Right on top of my head, between my hands.

So I moved my hands and the blood gushed out and I went uh-oh and moved down toward Bruce. He saw me coming, hands atop my head, and said, "Oh, no, you can't surrender," and then he too saw the red stuff and uh-oh'd. We headed toward his house, which was closer, and ran into Pearly Stevens, or PS, as he was better known to his friends and victims. PS was a classmate of ours, though in a slower section of the 7th grade, and had a father who rode a motorcycle, was in a gang, and also, we'd heard, spent some time in jail; in short, a legendary figure. Sometimes a gym class would be outside, playing softball or something, and Pearly's old man would roar by, and PS would flash his already rotting teeth and smile. "That's my old man." Pearly was 14, which wasn't too old for 7th grade by Seabreeze School standards, but it was too young for motorcycles, so he rode a bicycle specially customized to look like what Peter Fonda's bike would look like 5 years later, in Easy Rider.

Whenever PS arrived on the scene it meant somebody would have to fight him. Which wouldn't really have been too bad, considering that he was kind of small and scrawny, but Pearly was also a greaser, which meant he affected stiletto-toed Cuban-heeled shoes, which he could legally use to kick you in the balls. Being a greaser had definite advantages when it came to gentlemanly conduct, and the time-honored rules of childhood warfare. It also meant that if you beat him up he would inevitably return later, "lookin' for you," with either two older brothers, three cousins, four friends, or a knife. So the trick was to let PS, or other greasers, beat you up, without letting yourself get hurt, and maybe landing one or two good shots, just for your pride. It wasn't that hard to do, but it did take effort, especially to make it look like you were really trying, and to make your "uncle" sound like it really came from the depths of pain and defeat. Right now, however, neither Bruce nor I particularly felt like fighting, so we tried to ignore PS, hoping he'd go away.

Our fears were hardly justified, however, because it turned out that if there was one thing PS liked more than a "good" fight, it was the sight of blood. And I was a walking Nirvana for him. "Hey, wow, real blood! How'd it happen? Jew-el! Boss! I gotta get Pizzillo, and show him! Wow! Blood!" and so on. And he rode off, the wows fading into the distance. Of course we weren't there when he got back.

Where we were was at Bruce's house, and his mother was used to blood, because they lived closest to the beach, and we always played down the beach, and blood was an integral part of our play. Or a constant result. Like the time Bill Kovel and I had a fight and I bloodied his nose and mouth, and was sitting on

Michael Carlson

him, waiting for him to give, and he spat a mouthful of blood all over me and my clothes. Which meant stains, mother yells, and other fates worse than death. Bruce's mother had handled it then and she handled it now, washing off my head and coating it with enough iodine to create pain in my head that must've delayed my entrance into puberty six months.

It must've been a Saturday, because my folks were home and they looked at the cut with the usual "how could we raise such an idiot for a son" look reserved for times like this, or for getting caught reading by the bathroom light after I was supposed to be asleep. My father, a noted medical genius, diagnosed the problem as minor, gave me some aspirin and told me to forget it. This, I would learn later, was precisely the approach favored by most athletic trainers, who heal and work other miracles with tape, Atomic Balm, salt pills, aspirin and vitamin C.

So it wasn't till the next day, with the cut still open and bleeding, that we arranged to meet our doctor in the emergency ward of the hospital in Milford. Emergency rooms, even in Milford, are scary; everyone else looks like they're about to die, so you figure you must be about to die, too, only no one told you. I can remember locking myself in the bathroom, screwing up the courage to face my dangerous surgery. Then I went into another room, laid down on my hands, and the doctor stuck needles in my head like a witch doctor and then sewed me up like a sailmaker.

It's an eerie experience to hear and feel the pull of the threads going through your skull, without actually feeling anything else, like pain. It was also strange to examine my head afterward--they'd shaved a small section of my head, and covered it with a plastic spray, rather than a bandage, which left the cut and the stitches completely visible. I soon became a celebrity in the 7th grade; for a few days I spent half my time bending over so shorter people could look at the hole in the top of my head, and Bruce ran around trying to take as much credit as possible for the whole thing. It was even better than the time I had poison ivy all over my body, head to toe, and even internally, and came to school coated with a vile orange lotion. And got to drink a pain killer every couple of hours, which was my first experience of how much fun school was high.

Eventually my head healed (despite what Sirois claims), but it wasn't long before the doctors were at it again. This time it was my brother's fault.

It was Christmas Eve, a year or so later, and I was working out in the room my brother and I shared (and still do when we're both home). I was using one of those spring exercisers, you know, the kind you hold at the ends and pull apart and grow muscles like the guys on the matchbooks. It was very easy, since only two of the possible six springs were on this one. I was holding it, stretched out, behind my head, trying to feel my muscles growing. Trying so hard that I failed to hear my brother sneak up behind me. Which he remedied by screaming "BOO!" in my ear.

I reacted. Released one handle and turned toward my brother, so the released handle sprang toward the one I was holding, only to be met by the side of my head, my left temple, to be precise. I toppled over, dazed, and a large cut opened up.

The doctor told me, after the stitching was over (it went easily, since by now I was an old hand) that the temples were a very risky part of the body to use for a handle-cushion, and I had been lucky I hadn't injured myself more seriously. I said, "no sweat," and walked out of his office and into a plate glass window, which resisted my impact and sent me sprawling away.

I don't know why, but I've been walking into things ever since. And I always push the pull doors, and vice versa.

--Michael Carlson

A TALE

I have been occupied these last weeks in growing a tail.

I decided on this particular project as a means of dramatically establishing the powers of the Will in controlling the Body, or, if you would rather, mind over metabolism. I should have been satisfied with the appearance of a caudal extension of ten centimeters in length, or even a stump like that of a rabbit. Overwhelming my expectations, I managed to produce with reasonable facility a fine responsive tail hanging to the middle of the shin.

The elation of my success was tempered by chronic soreness in the region of the lumbar vertebrae and occasional muscle spasms in my shoulders and neck. I reasoned these discomforts were brought about by the faulty body placement resultant from the new appendage, the human upright posture not being adapted to carrying a 30" tail. These immediate symptoms were relieved, upon consulting my physician, by Valium at a dosage of 10 milligrams Q 4 H, while the postural problem was eliminated when I began ambulating on my hands as well as my feet.

If you will make trial of this position, you will notice a difficulty often glossed over in descriptions of the difference between the human animal and the quadruped. That is to say, you will surely find your head directed fixedly at the ground between your front limbs. Forward vision is possible from this position only with a stretch of the cervical vertebrae that results nearly in strangulation.

The most obvious solution to this new difficulty would have been to migrate my eyes--after the manner of a flounder--moving them both to the erstwhile top of my skull. I, however, believed the most efficient use of my energies would be found in shifting my foramen magnum, that hole in the base of the skull through which the spine passes, from the bottom to the back of my head.

Thus were the physiological accommodations to the tail completed. I had not anticipated the alterations in my environmental status that would ensue: articles of clothing previously worn such as shirts and trousers became totally impractical, giving way in the seams within minutes after being donned. Dresses and skirts were equally useless, as they tended either to drag on the floor or climb up the rear. Going without clothes was a chilly prospect in standard temperate-zone housing and my system responded by activating my vestigial hair follicles and by producing new ones. I now no longer miss the warmth provided by clothing.

It has been increasingly difficult to maintain my employment since I grew a tail. The attitudes of our society are deplorably provincial; poverty and lack of appreciation have become my constant companions. Inevitably my sad condition has released in me those twin demons Hunger and Resentment which express themselves in the spontaneous lengthening of my upper and lower canines. In fact, were it not for my continuing supply of Valium and a willingness to adopt the long view over personal misfortune, I might find myself a rather hostile and anti-social martyr to Science.

Conditions being what they are, I have spent my recent days in the privacy of my apartment, heavily sedated, wagging my tail.

R. A.
MAC AVOY

SOVKINO KAK

"Movies," said Jerry. "Write me something on Russian movies. After all, SpanInq was supposed to be a film fanzine. Anyhow, if you write something on movies I can use it for my apazine, too."

"But I don't know anything about cinema," I could have replied. But I didn't.

The wiley Kaufman would have just said, "So? Who do I know who both is competent and has just spent ten months in the Socialist Fatherland? I'll take what I can get. And anyway, where's your quasi-Asimovian omnicompetent hubris?"

With such people, it's better not to argue.

I. A Preliminary Excursus on Danish Movie Houses

Actually, the last time I saw a film in Europe (besides on television), I was not in the Land of the Sovlets at all, but in Denmark.

II. Sub-Excursus on British Television

Oh, but while I'm thinking of television, let me mention that while I was at Peter Weston's in Birmingham, I saw an episode of Britain's latest sf show, called The Survivors or some such. What they've survived is a plague which has devastated civilization, in the manner of Earth Abides. The show obviously didn't have much of a budget, but the episode I saw wasn't bad. Apparently the week-to-week development adds a dimension, too. The Westons were fairly enthusiastic about the series.

III. Back to Denmark

Anyhow, I was in Aarhus (Denmark's second city) visiting Bent, a Dane I'd met at the University of Moscow, and his wife Lizzie. ("Lizzie" isn't how you spell it in Danish, doubtless, but it's how it's pronounced and what it means.) That evening I had to catch the overnight train to Copenhagen, so that I could get the plane for London, so that I could get the train for Birmingham so that I could get to the Westons'. The train for Copenhagen didn't leave until midnight, so there was some time to expend.

"A porno movie!" said Lizzie. "Let's show Patrick a Danish porno movie!"

"No!" said Bent sternly.

Instead, I got taken to Play It Again, Sam, in English with Danish subtitles.

In Denmark, as in England but contrary to American practice, movie theaters always have reserved seats, and one is supposed to be there at the beginning. None of this "this is where we came in" business. Also as in England, the first thing you get is



ONA EST'

a string of commercials.

IV. Sub-Excursus on Commercials

Now, I had seen exactly two commercial messages in the previous ten months. Tennessee Ernie Ford had taped a show in Moscow and Leningrad, and after it had been broadcast in the U. S. the Cultural Section of the American Embassy received a videotape of the broadcast. I happened to be at the Consulate in Leningrad in February when they ran part of the tape. The two commercials on it were both for American Express Card. One of them was the Bill Miller one. ("Hi! You don't remember who I am, do you?") Thus I learned how far the Republic had sunk during my absence.

V. Main Excursus Resumed

Bent had already been back in Denmark a month, but he had mostly spent the interval laying sewer pipe, so he was not much more acclimated to commercials than was I. We checked off which of them we had seen last year. (Maybe half were for Danish products, but many of the rest had at least the same format as American commercials, and one [Irish Spring] was in English with Danish subtitles.) Seems to be a lag before commercials get to Denmark, for I had seen the Irish Spring one before I'd left in July 1974, but Bent hadn't, even though he didn't get to Moscow until October '74.

VI. Sub-Excursus on Books

Come to think of it, it takes a while before all sorts of things get to Denmark. They read great quantities of English-language books, for instance. One of these that I saw in a department store was a Robert Bloch book based on that fellow that went around hacking up young females at the 1892 Chicago World's Fair. As I've always been fond of the 1892 World's Fair I would have bought the book were it not for its incredible price. This is jacked up by taxes on top of import costs. But I have seen no sign of this Bloch volume since getting back to the Anglophone world. Probably long out of print.

VII. On Subtitles

I hadn't seen Play It Again, Sam before--indeed, I'd only seen Casablanca itself once, in October, 1967. (I remember the date because the University of Chicago's film group was promoting series tickets, and therefore let first-year students in free.) I enjoyed it. Bent tells me that sometimes the sound is so low on such films that you can't hear the English dialog, but it was okay then. The one trouble was that sometimes the punch line would appear in Danish before it had been said in English, and then all the Danes would laugh so that I couldn't hear the line. (A related problem will be observed with comedies in Russian or whatever. Seems that punchlines always use grammar or vocabulary that is more complex than that in the

Patrick McGuire

rest of the joke. Gets terribly frustrating after a while.



VIII. Excursus on Poland

I never did manage to see a film in my 4 1/2 days in Warsaw. In Soviet theaters, the last showing is at about ten o'clock, which will let out shortly before midnight. (Soviet feature-length films are shortish, rarely over 90 minutes long. Sometimes Western films get cut up rather badly, being hacked down to this size.) Thus spectators have time to get home just before public transport stops running. (The subways stop at 1:00, and the last buses about 1:30, leaving nothing except taxis, which promptly jack their fares up to three or more times the legal rates, until the streetcars start up at 5:30.) But

in Poland, the last showing is 8:00 or so. Are the Poles really such clean livers? If so, there are certain compensations. The night my cinematic desires had been thwarted, I ended up in a "youth cafe" with cushioned contour seats and polite waitresses, and drank glass after glass of real Coca-Cola and was very glad to be out of Russia.

IX. Our Topic At Last Attained

Yes, Russia. The Soviet Union. ("Russia" is to "Soviet Union" as "England" is to "Britain." Soviet journalists never say "Russian" for "Soviet," but they seem to be aware that people Outside do. When, in Russian novels, a Western news report is quoted, the author often has the Western journalist using "Russian" imprecisely.)

The last film I didn't see in Russia was by the director of Solaris, Andry Tarkovsky. The film was called Zerkalo (Mirror), and was Controversial. Apparently it has no plot, and is possibly anti-Stalinist in the guise of being anti-Maoist. What with the rush of the last month or two in Moscow, I never saw it, but it got talked about enough. Another film I didn't see was The New Centurions, which apparently had been edited to the point where it no longer had a plot. Oklahoma Crude was playing under the title Oklakhoma kak ona est'--"Oklahoma Like it Is." For a long time, just seeing the title, we American students assumed it was a documentary about the oppressed American farmers or some such. The Russians are currently very fond of the phrase "like it is," and they use it all over the place.

The last movie I did see in the USSR was not a Russian-made film, but a Rumanian one, The Last Bullet. I went with two Soviets to see it.

X. Linguistic Complaint

One reason "Russian" gets overused in English is that there's really not a satisfactory replacement for it. Even in Russian, there is no one noun that will serve (the way one can say "Briton" instead of "Englishman" so as not to offend other ethnoi), but the phrase sovetskii chelovsk, "Soviet person," is used just as if it were one word. The nearest one can really come in English is to say "Soviet citizen," which has a rather legalistic tone to it. Hence one tends to want to use "Soviet" as a noun, as a synonym for "Soviet citizen." But this the dictionary will not allow, doubtless on the grounds that "soviet" means "council." The most even the lax Webster III will permit is use of "the Soviets" in the same sense as "the French." Even Poul Anderson once reprimanded me for using "Soviet" to mean "Soviet citizen."

XI. Narrative Resumed

Anyhow, one of the Soviet Nationals I went with wanted to turn around as soon as we found out that the film was Rumanian. The only good films from the socialist countries were Soviet (sometimes) and Polish, she said. But the other Soviet national insisted that if it was bad we could always walk out (admission prices are low enough to make the risk an acceptable one), so in we went.



It was marvelous! The Rumanians had contrived to give a veneer of political justification to a gangster movie. Just after "liberation", when there is still technically a coalition government, a dedicated Communist police commissar with a marked physical resemblance to Robert Stack is determined to stamp out organized crime in Rumania. With this excuse we have the Rumanian Untouchables. (This film in fact was a sequel to an earlier one. They were getting milage out of that background.) Only two elements would have been out of place on the American series. There's one long and largely comic episode where a gangster is disguised as a monk in a Rumanian Orthodox monastery, so that the police commissar also impersonates one to smoke him out. Not particularly anti-religious, except in portraying the monks as so stupid they don't notice all this going on, and in showing them as toadies to the rich, but it would never go on U.S. tv. The other unsuitable element was more familiar. The capitalist decadence of the gangsters provides an excuse to give the audience sexual titillation in such things as night club floor shows, the multiple mistresses of the head villain, etc. Lots of sub-machine guns, and even one scene of shooting up a warehouse full of bottles, even though Prohibition wasn't an issue.

But if the Rumanian film was amusing though unprofound, a Hungarian musical I saw would seem to bear out my acquaintance's low opinion of (non-Polish) films from the satellite countries. It had the unlikely title of Duke Bob, and was an absolute dud. The thing had a cheap look to it—I don't care if you are doing a spoof. A liveried servant should look liveried, goddamnit. 'Twas set in a never-never land of the early nineteenth century, with all characters for no good reason having English names. (If we were doing such a film, we'd stick it off in some corner of Eastern Europe, around Hungary.) Various baddies attempt to seduce, befuddle, or otherwise thwart the good Duke Bob as he prepares to assume the throne. The heroine was lust-after-able, but that was the film's only good point.

I saw this movie in a smallish oldish theater on Nevsky Prospect in Leningrad, largely in order to get in from the cold. I had had the damndest time finding the kassa. In Russian theaters the kassa (here, the ticket window; in general, the place where you pay for anything and get a receipt rather than the goods or services themselves) is usually in a different entrance from the zal (the theater proper). This one was particularly well hidden. The separation perhaps minimizes crowding. In any case, for even halfway popular films (which Duke Bob wasn't), you have to buy tickets a least a few hours in advance of the showing. Soviet television shows a total of one (1) movie a month, and there are few television dramas (it's mostly talk shows, documentaries and sports; I was watching a hockey game once, though, and was astonished to find out that Soviet tv does have instant replay). Under these circumstances, movies are popular. Modern downtown kinoteatri are plush, but the older ones, and even new ones outside the center, are more like American school auditoriums than American theaters, down to the non-padded seats. (The theater near my Leningrad University dorm--when I was in Leningrad I saw a lot of movies--where I

saw the just-dubbed version of Ford's My Darling Clementine (Moia dorogaia Kementina) was like this. I hadn't seen the original, but the dubbed version was quite successful, except that Russian doesn't have a word corresponding to "marshall" in the old-West sense. It was decidedly odd to hear Wyatt Earp and fellows continually referred to as "the police.")

By contrast, there was the theater, also on Nevsky Prospect, where they were showing a Mexican soap opera about a girl Raised by Gypsies. (I keep thinking the title is Yenisei, but that can't be right because that's a river in Siberia. Yeselina, maybe? Something like that.) I got to this theater a bit before my showing so as to have the full experience. I bought an ice cream cone in the lobby (ice cream is the kinoteatr equivalent of popcorn; I'm told that at some point the Russians tried popcorn, but that it didn't go over), ate that, and went over to the small auditorium where an amateur orchestra was uplifting the culture of the waiting patrons. I debated whether to stand in the longish line at the bufet (final t pronounced in Russian) for something more substantial, but the bell for the performance rang before I could exhaust the pleasures of the foyer.

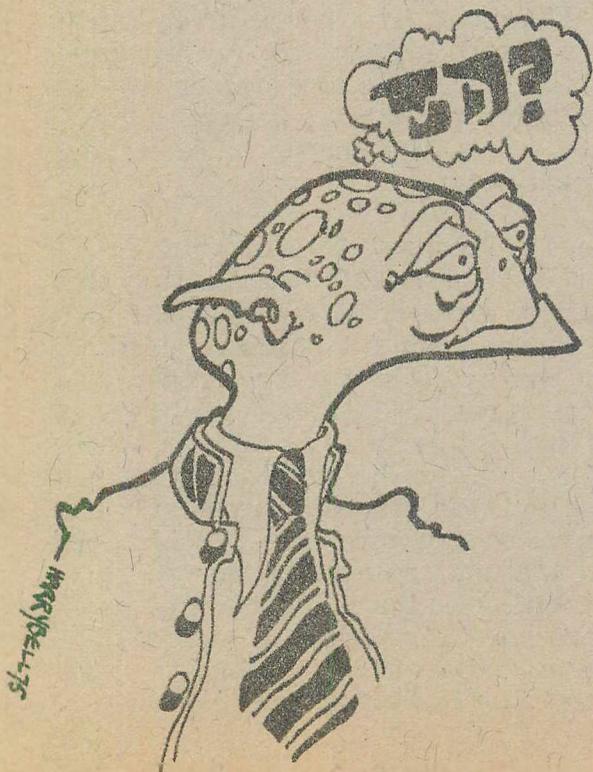
There is, by the way, something decidedly odd about watching a film made in one foreign language which you know dubbed into another foreign language you know. Not the same feeling at all as watching something made in English dubbed into Russian.

The movie had a really hoky plot, but it was well made and I enjoyed it. Gypsy girl meets officer for Juarez. Girl and boy get married. Boy goes off to war, gets captured. Girl finds out that gypsy ceremony has no legal standing, decides she has been seduced and abandoned, goes back to gypsies. Boy is released, finds girl gone, decides that gypsies are no good and that he has been seduced and abandoned. Boy gets engaged to new girl. Gypsy girl turns out to be bastard daughter of wealthy mother, who is now repentant of having gotten rid of her. Gypsy girl moves in with mother. Turns out that her half-sister is boy's new fiancée. Turns out also that half-sister has heart condition, and that to break engagement Would Kill Her. Gypsy girl prepares to return to gypsies. Half-sister accidentally finds out truth, is not killed thereby, and makes noble renunciation. Gypsy girl and officer get married, this time in church. Bride wears white, the hussy.

Feh! This article is getting to be inconveniently long. But I haven't even gotten to Okean, A Story of the Men Who Go Down to the Sea in Ships and of the Women Who Love Them, or to "A Romance About People in Love" (three words in Russian: Roman o vlublennikh), which is supposed to be ProFOUND even though it looks like a remake of Elvis Presley, nor even to how I saw Solaris at the University of Moscow and then retired for an Anglo-Soviet-American discussion on What the Hell Did That All Mean?

So maybe I'd best call this Part I, and maybe one of these months Jerry will talk me into a continuation, in which I will tackle these and other topics. But for now:

That's all, chelovecki!





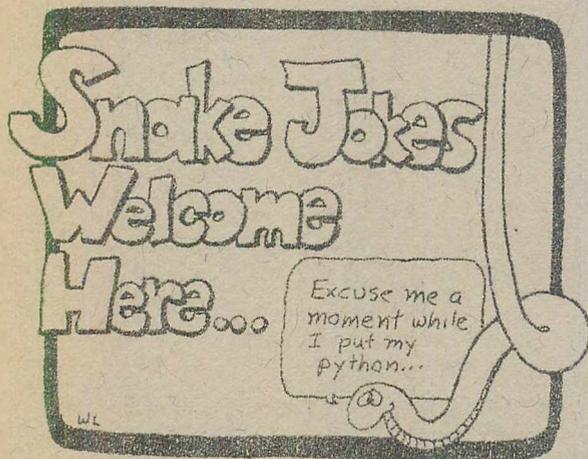
No, no, actually the letter column is called:

SHEEP IN THE WAINSCOTTING

Comments on the letters by Jerry Kaufman are marked [[JAK]]. Comments by Suzanne Tompkins are marked [[SVT]].

Eli Cohen
2920 Victoria Ave, #12
Regina, Sask, CANADA

SpanIng arrived yesterday (Oct. 7), and of course I immediately read it cover to cover. I'm rushing to get this loc in ahead of the impending Canadian Postal strike (I wouldn't say the workers are being



unreasonable--a 72% increase isn't really all that much, is it now? After all, my union has opened negotiations with a modest demand of \$300/month plus 10%).

Spaning is a really fine fanzine, undoubtedly the best genzine being published today. I found it interesting and entertaining from beginning to end, and in fact, I would've done this loc last night except I got involved with these Twelve Golfballs (see, if first of all you divide them into three groups of four, and then depending on...oops, sorry.)

Singer's column was one of the best things in the issue. Of course, he's absolutely right about synthetic memory. What, Jerry, you mean you weren't in the Deathcar? But I'm sure I saw you there.... Yes, and ask Dena about Baycon sometime.

[[Wait a minute, Eli, you weren't in the Deathcar, either...SVT]]

Ordinary soap can be made into a good substitute for animal fat. Right. And plastic can be made into oil (which these days can be turned into food). Next thing you know, some clown will be growing trees out of leftover NY Times. Those Japanese are really great. Right now there's a contest going in Western Canada for a viable grasshopper harvester--the Japanese want to import them (the grasshoppers, not the harvesters) as a delicacy, and they can also be used for animal feed. The trick is to separate the big ones from the little ones and leave the big ones relatively undamaged for quick freezing (crunchy grasshopper, anyone? Frankly, if I was going to eat grasshopper, I'd want it to look as little like the insect as possible.) (Oh well, de grasshoppers non disputandum est.) I like the idea of harvesting the grasshoppers that ate the crop you were going to harvest. There's a lot of justice there.

Of course, when optical records come in, we may find ourselves turning in our modified oil slicks to be turned into raw plastic to be made into oil to be burned to provide the energy to make the new product. If Jon is that worried about record damage, he oughta switch to tape. But I think somebody already has plans for an optically-read disc that would replace video-tape, something you could play on your tv--and if you can do that with a picture, accurate repro of sound would be trivial. (I think there was something about it in Victoria Vayne's fanzine.) But Jon's thing could play existing records ("Hear every scratch with perfect fidelity! Every dust-mote, every thumbprint... Never has there been such perfect reproduction!"), a tremendous advantage. (I would like to note for the record, oops, no pun intended, that although my cartridge and turntable theoretically can track down to one gram, I find that if I track at much below two grams, a quarter of my records become unplayable due to warping, scratches, etc. And I'm talking about new records, fresh from the wrapper. The old ones are nicely broken in.)

I pronounce "They Did It" a brilliant extrapolation.

As to Peter Roberts, I note that in my bible, there's nothing about not eating dead ferrets, merely that touching them makes you unclean until evening. Though I suppose by implication they're off-limits on the menu too. There is, however, a ban on "the

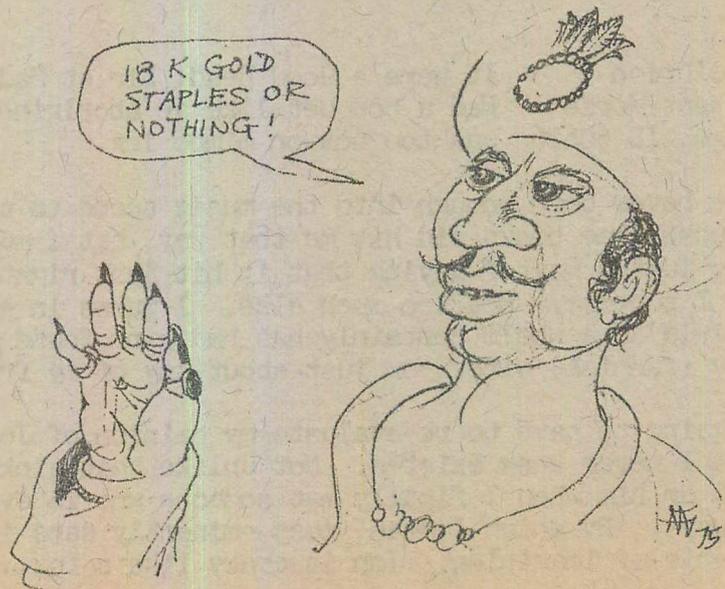
tortoise after his kind" which I take to mean a homosexual tortoise, leaving the question of heterosexual tortoises open.

May I note in passing that this same chapter (Leviticus 11) explicitly states that grasshoppers are kosher, so if the Japanese welsh out on the deal, Israel is still a possible market.

I have now gotten to Suzlecol, which was actually the second thing I read in the issue. Bravo! Three full pages! I really think, Suzle, that your writing is excellent, and very funny. (Favorite line: "...in 1977 August 31 is on August 28th." Even though these two are the same price, this one costs as much...) Actually, I remember Ginjer as the one who was always chortling about knowing what she was having for dinner on Labor Day five years hence. I certainly didn't say anything about it in Krat, so you're in the clear.

You're absolutely right on food words. I can't get aubergine here hardly at all--I have to settle for eggplant. I tried to explain zucchini to our British systems analyst, with little success, and you can go through the pop-soda-soft drink thing even within the U.S. But some of people's misconceptions about such differences are really funny: I'll never forget the very helpful Customs clerk at Heathrow in London (on the way to Heicon). I asked him how to find transportation, and he replied, "There's a taxi stand right out front--oh, you would say 'cab'." He was very proud of his knowledge of American slang.

And as our plane cabs down the runway, we get to the serious part of Suzlecol. Suzle, I sympathize with your feelings, but I think part of the problem is that layout and editing tends to be anonymous in a co-edited fanzine, and it's the comments in the lettercol that leave the strongest impression of editorial personality. Which is another reason I'm glad to see a substantial column from you this time. I've gotten hell from Susan for some careless remarks made years ago (unfortunately in print) that implied that Energumen was Mike's fanzine--but it was the same situation: he did the lettercol, and had the extensive opening editorial where he talked about the fanzine, and Susan appeared as simply a columnist, despite the work she did on the editorial and production side. I recall the early Granny as distinctively co-edited, I think because there were extensive interlineations by both of you; I always think of Starling as coedited. I can't be objective about Akos, but I think that had a clear multiple personality. But, frankly (and I may get more hell from Susan about this), Energumen gave the strong feeling, and left the impression of being Mike's fanzine; Locus comes off as Charlie's; and the last issue of SpanInq read like Jerry's, I think because of the extensive lettercol which dominated the issue and was full of his remarks. I would suggest, if you two can't manage to both get in the lettercol, that Suzle writes longer editorials



(which would be nice anyway--~~she should be chained to a desk and forced to write more~~ (obscure private joke on Jerry)), and comments more on the fanzine itself. I've always liked your descriptions of fanzine production--I admire the technical expertise with which you can describe a mimeo's ancestry, personal habits, and ultimate destination.

Grant Canfield
28 Atalaya Terrace
San Francisco, CA 94117

I really have only a couple of comments about this issue, specifically in regards to the Sayers article by John Curlovich. He says, "Only two detective writers to my knowledge have presumed to offer their audiences anything more than the usual puzzles, red herrings, surprise witnesses and so on: Dashiell Hammett...and Dorothy Sayers." Is he kidding? I guess the phrase "to my knowledge" is the key to that sentence, because surely the same could be said for any number of writers in the detective or mystery genre, including the obvious examples of Raymond Chandler and Ross MacDonald. Curlovich also maintains that Sayers is also "the only mystery writer in my experience who displayed any real growth or maturing in her fiction." Again, the disclaimer within that sentence merely illuminates Curlovich's apparent lack of experience with mysteries. When Ross MacDonald first started his Lew Archer series, the novels were nothing more than tough-guy hard-boiled dick stories in the Hammett/Chandler tradition. But recent entries in the series have been much, much more than that. Today Ross MacDonald is heralded as the depicter of the Southern California of now in much the same way that Chandler was the observer of that strange land in the Thirties and Forties. MacDonald's latest novels are the work of a master novelist, not just a hack story-teller. And I am completely nonplussed (or absolutely astonished) at the total disregard for Raymond Chandler. For evidence of maturity in fiction, compare his The Long Goodbye, one of the last Marlowe books, to the earlier ones in the series. I haven't bothered even to mention some of the fine contemporary mystery fiction being produced by the likes of Joe Gores, Donald Westlake, Bill Pronzini, Ed McBain, Sjowall and Wahloo, Stanley Ellin, Dick Francis, Brian Garfield, Mark Sadler, Roger Simon, etc., etc.

I guess the phrases "to my knowledge" and "in my experience" sum up my beef about the article. Obviously Curlovich knows little about mysteries and detective fiction, and has limited experience with the field. Either that, or his tastes are so far different from mine as to make further commentary ridiculous. I disagree, that's all. Besides, I don't even like Sayers' work, so I'm a Philistine myself...

[[Myself, I'd add Josephine Tey to your list.JAK]]

Mike O'Brien
1642 West Morse
Chicago, IL 60626

It were a Good Read, Sir et Madam. Mademoiselle. Whatever. Had a bouquet like an aborigine's armpit, yas. Well, I never was too hot on mimeo ink.

I have never been enough into the music scene to say that an album "changed my life". I suppose some books did hit me that way, but I must agree with Jerry that that is really just a way of saying that it hit just right. Very few have even done that. LotR, I suppose. Not too much else. I guess in all fairness I'd have to say that the field as a whole certainly has had a profound effect on my life, though. Just ask my (fannish) wife. Or just about any of my friends. *Or Jon Singer.*

I am going to have to re-evaluate my opinion of Jon. I think this fellow has depths I never knew existed. Not unlike that sinkhole in the cow pasture. I got a lead on him when I finally met someone who is even more blown-out than Jon, in some ways. By which I mean, most eminently sane in a fashion that most people are incapable of imagining. Jon is crazy like a fox. I must speak with this man at

some length in something other than a convention setting. The rest of you may hang on to your hats. Those who saw us when Jon and I first met will know what I mean by that one.

[[That episode was a real experience. It happened at Fredcon (Lerner) several years ago. They just sat opposite each other in a room for hours, talking in esoteric scientific terms, finishing each other's sentences, laughing fiendishly, planning the end of the world (or possibly Lowell, Mass.). Perhaps I'll write up that trip sometime. Most interesting. SVT]]

I see that they are able to turn plastic into oil, according to Jon. Well, a tailored bacteria has been found to turn oil into wax. Hmm. See Jon mentioned that too. Now all that waste plastic can be turned into candles to light our homes when they run out of coal.

A typewriter makes not such a bad boiled-egg slicer, if you can figure out the right keys to hit, and if you don't mind inky eggs. A selectric is only good for cracking walnuts, though.

[[Have to be damned small walnuts. JAK]]

Ah, Dorothy Sayers! I've just been re-reading Gaudy Night, for about the nth time. It's peculiar the way I appreciate these things. I have a scholarly mind gone deliberately to seed. I am a dilettante. Hence, I really tend to enjoy as central to my appreciation those things which are regarded by their authors as peripheral. The central work of Dorothy Sayers' scholarship, I am informed, was her translation of Dante. I have never read it and I may never read it. As far as I am concerned, Gaudy Night is her central work in my appreciation. Unlike most of her fans, I could care less about the mystery problems in her work. It is the comedy of manners overlying her scholarly playing that I find so exquisite. Orson Welles, I think, had this sort of attitude when he said, "A movie set is the best toy a boy ever had." That's why I think The Ascent of Man is the best television I've ever seen. Basic concepts clearly presented in a novel and fascinating way. That, in fact, is why I prefer designing operating environments for computer systems and their users to actually programming an application. Somewhere in the same ballpark with McLuhan, I suppose, though I've never read him.

Sarah was devastated by Ginjer's article. She is a Secret Populator too, you see. Early on in life she invented a leisure game in genetics (her father is a geneticist). She still works on it occasionally, in an effort to refine it to the point where a "run" will provide useful material for a fantasy novel. Her characters become real people because they are produced by a genetic heritage which is passed on to their children. In essence, it has become a model of a society where inheritance of property is of importance, but is divorced from inheritance of power. It gets pretty complicated...the ledger sheets; are mainly taken up with the genetics of the people involved. For lo, these many generations. In fact, one reason why she finally agreed to my faunch for a Texas Instruments SR-51 calculator was because it has a random number generator. She uses that one a lot.

I was about to make some sort of crack about how Jon Singer would make a pretty good random-number generator, if you were to index all possible subjects with numbers and then copy down which ones he talks about, but then I sort of mentally went wandering off about how one would do that, and became stumped when I realized I had no idea what the cardinality of "all possible subjects" might be. Feed that one to Eli and see what comes out.

Joe Sullivan I hadn't been feeling too well recently, dizziness, fatigue,
244-25 88th Dr. and so I went to my doctor. He gave me a good examination but
Bellerose, NY 11426 I feel awkward around him. Maybe it's his habit of wearing
 sunglasses constantly or opening beer cans with his scalpel.
Still he is the doctor. His degree is right on the wall, University of Gonzo.
"What seems to be my problem, Dr. Thompson," I said. "You seem to be suffering from
an accelerated case of seriousness, Mr. Sullivan," he said, "aggravated by an ulcerous
lack of imagination." "Goodness, Doctor," I said, "that sounds serious. What
do you recommend?" "Suicide. Now get out of here, you dull pus-ridden cretin."
"Isn't there any hope for me, Doctor?" I asked. "Only continuous and sustained lechery,"
he said, taking a vicious slice at an anatomical chart. "Doctor, some people
go through life seeking adventure, joy or love. I am one of those few people who
seek nothing. We are never really happy but we are never deceived. It's not that I
have anything against debauchery. It's just that it's so much work." "Now listen
to me, you snot-licking, pimple-picking mass of fecal matter," he said. "You is
going to debase yourself. You is going to barbarize, immoralize, and mesmerize
yourself way beyond the point where there's any pleasure in it anymore or I am going
to come over there and perform a lower pelvic extraction on you with a spoon. DO
YOU HEAR ME, TURKEY?" "Yes." "Good. I'm going to send you to a specialist. I
think she'll be able to help you." He opened up a cabinet and began looking for
something in it. "Is she a physical therapist?" I asked. Dr. Thompson brought out
an odd collection of whips, chains and black leather tights and handed them to me.
"You could say that," he said.

Pronounced, the word flies; written, it swims.---Edmond Jabes

Sheryl Smith Chee whiz, Kaufman, when you ask specially for folks to slave
1346 W. Howard St. over a hot sheet of sercon just for you, the least you can do is
Chicago, IL 60626 print the damn stuff! I mean, that is several fucking hours'
 worth work gone to waste, along with the odd sweat, and making
me do that for nothing is the surest way to get me never to speak to you again, even
though we never have spoken. After all, there are limits (if there aren't you can
probably make some at a cost of \$2.23, with materials available from your local
mathematical surplus store.)

[[First of all, the only direct request I recall making to you was a word or
two at the end of "The Curlovich Papers" in #5. Second, we printed nobody's
comments on David Gerrold, because we wanted nobning more to do with him.
(Ignoring him worked, too. He went away.) Third, your letters are no less
work to transcribe than they are to write. Hunting for your commas in your
handwritten letters is like hunting for the right window in an unemployment
office--you usually find you're in the wrong line. Wouldn't typing be easier
for you? I'm sure it would be for us faneds. JAK]]

Jon Singer is a very special writer, since he can get me to read avidly about sub-
jects I usually can do without. Kindly keep him at it, for the sake of my continuing
intellectual development.

Although I do not entirely agree with John Curlovich on Dorothy Sayers, it pleases
me to see her getting serious attention, which she deserves. (Sometimes it seems
the mystery buffs are too taken up with Sherlock Holmes to give Sayers her due.)

Nevertheless I find Curlovich's guilty-liberal annoyance with Lord Peter Wimsey's
aristocratic behavior somewhat tiresome, being of the school that does not hold re-
levance a necessary component of artistic quality. I myself find Sayers' strong

female characterizations--especially the marvelous Harriet Vane--are quite sufficient to make her seem politically revolutionary today, and touched with human truth for all time.

And I cannot understand why Curlovich (and it is not only him) rates The Nine Tailors as "Sayers' best novel." Indeed it is a goodie, well written and characterized (after my second reading, I now feel I am on the verge of figuring out what change-ringing sounds like); but in its primary focus it is another of those "elaborate puzzles" Curlovich deprecates for their limited possibilities in that the most striking feature of the novel is the method of death. I myself favor Clouds of Witness and (especially) the first three Harriet Vane novels, because in them the detective is given a personal emotional stake in solving the crimes. Suddenly the detective story isn't an intellectual exercise, but a quest, and its human possibilities broaden until it is scarcely less restricted than the whole realm of fiction. This, I think, is Sayers' unique accomplishment.

Gene Wolfe's Midwestcon report was utterly brilliant--lucky you for getting it.

Arthur C. Clarke I enjoyed the article
Colombo, Sri Lanka [by Rob Jackson] and
since it was written

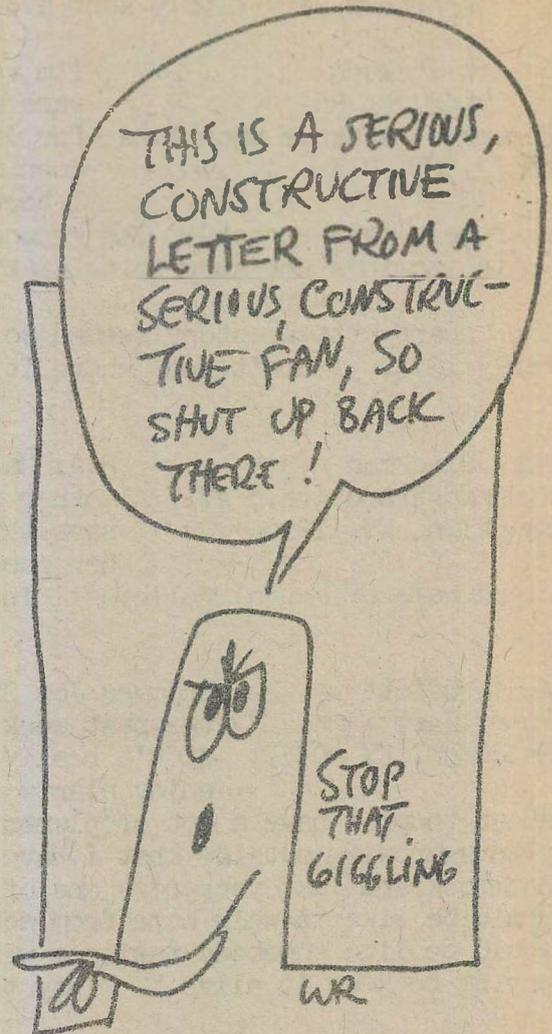
several years after the event it is pretty accurate, though Hal Jr. objects strongly to the illustration and says he's nothing like that. Also if Rob thinks I'm "white-haired", I would not trust him to diagnose a hang-nail (or was "white" a misprint for "light"?). Perhaps he's getting back at me for calling him Bob.

Anyway, as proof that what hair I have is an attractive mouse color, see enclosed photograph. (Taken on the roof of my new "bungalow" beside the earth station recently presented to me by the Indian Space Research Organization. I now have the only television set in the island, and as far as I know the only privately-owned Satellite Ground Station in the world. I always work this into the conversation when I am discussing the weather, or the high price of carbon paper.)

And I've never had a heart-attack (touch wood) and can't imagine how this story got around.

Also interested in Bruce Arthurs' reference to the possible influence of Soleri on Rama. There wasn't any, because the ideas in Rama far predate Soleri (viz Bernal's World, the Flesh and the Devil (1929) and Dandridge Cole's Islands in Space (1964). One of the illustrations in this was the specific inspiration for Rama--although there were certainly similar pictures in the decades before).

However, I do know Soleri and in fact had a fascinating discussion with him some years ago which was broadcast on CBS-TV.



[[Arthur very kindly sent a carbon of his letter to Rob and Rob replied.]]

Robert Jackson
21 Lyndhurst Rd
Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE 12 9NT, U.K.

I'm very glad you enjoyed the article, and that there were not too many inaccuracies in it. My apologies for describing your hair as white; my memories have been coloured--or should I say bleached--by the photos I took when I was at Gregory's Road, which came out extremely over-exposed. The ground looks white, and your three tortoises look white, so it's not surprising that your hair looks white, brown though it is.

The "heart attack" story seemed to appear some time after your diving accident in early 1973. I don't know where it sprang from, but it deserves scotching.

Mark Blackman
2400 Nostrand Ave., #717
Brooklyn, NY 11210

R.A. MacAvoy's bit reminded me of the fact that my mother almost never uses proper nouns; instead, she says things like "I told her that she should talk to her about her problem," forcing my family to play a wierd game of mental volleyball in order to follow her references.

Jodie Offutt
Funny Farm
Haldeman, KY 40329

Enjoyed Jon Singer's paragraphs about walking in LA. Just in the past week or so I realized that I have a new hobby. It didn't really dawn on me till Andy pointed it out. I really enjoy plants; during the past year I've learned quite a bit about them; I have a lot of plants. Not 200! But I would so enjoy walking among plants growing outside that I have to be so careful with inside. I have an Irish Shamrock and just yesterday one of my children was imagining in amazement what it would be like to walk home from school among shamrocks growing wild. "Why, it would be like somebody taking a weed from our school path, putting it in a pot and trying to keep it alive." Missy thought that was fascinating. And it is.

Don D'Amassa
19 Angell Drive
East Providence, RI 02914

Dorothy Sayers is indeed one of the most literate (if not the most literate) of mystery writers. John and I even agree on her best book, The Nine Tailors. He rightly points out Hammett as another fine mystery writer, but then admits to knowing of no others. For his possible edification, then, I strongly recommend Raymond Chandler, the only writer to my knowledge who did Hammett's thing better than did Hammett; Friedrich Duerrenmart, who wrote some psychological studies masquerading as mystery stories that are true classics (e.g. Traps, or The Pledge); and Charity Blackstock, who has latterly given up mysteries altogether for the straight contemporary novel, with mixed success. She wrote a few pedestrian pieces as Paula Allardyce, then rapidly improved under her own name.

Hank Heath
250 Dale Drive
Cassadaga, NY 14718

I suppose that most fans are dreamers who use sf as an anchor to future realities. I know that in these past 28 years of life, I've been that way. For instance, one of my boyhood dreams has been to live on a houseboat. Being landlocked in a little West New York State village, I had little opportunity to properly fantasize my way out of it. In fact, I had one of many intense crogglings as a result of the show It's a Man's World. It seems the media have always found a way to cater to my own particular fantasies as I was developing. And IaMW did it. In fact, my wife and I share that same dream, probably developed by that program. But the fact that such things don't normally allow for making a living, we've had to repress that particualr dream until some vague time in the future. So it was

properly filed deep within the subconscious, hopefully to be lost before it did any damage.

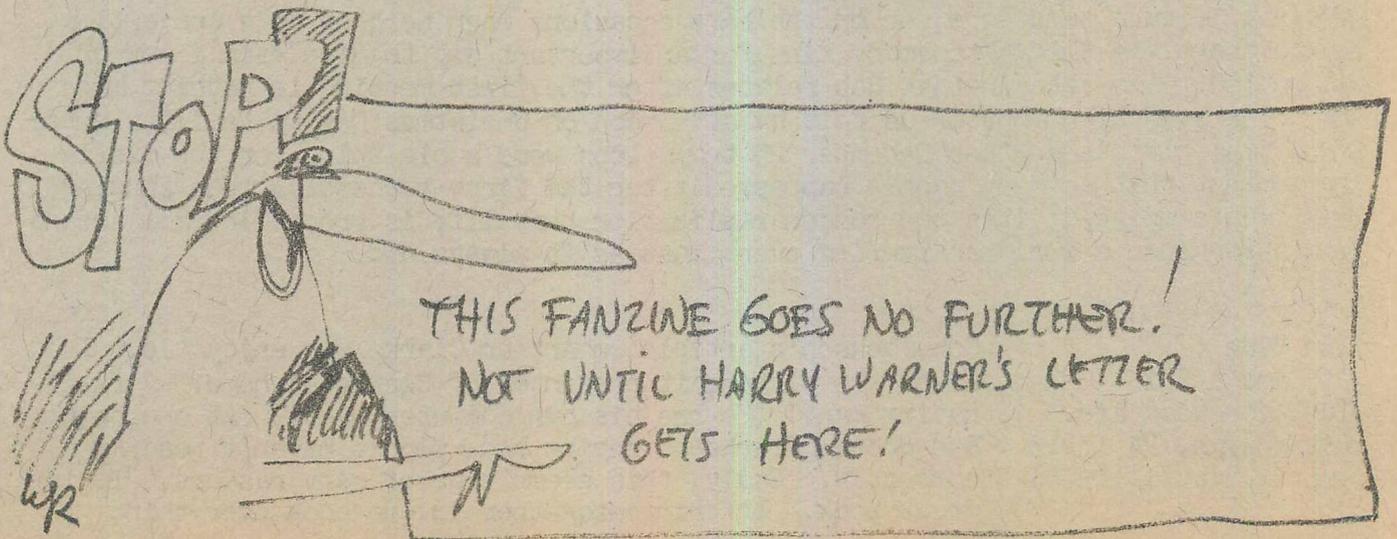
Then Ginjer Buchanan had to go and include it in her childhood fantasies in Spaning 6. Damn, damn, damn. I've just settled into a somewhat mundane existence, and she has to plumb my sub. You know that this is dangerous. I have a tendency, at this point in life, to go through with fantastic ideas. Like taking a leave of absence to complete teacher certification when I've got a perfectly good mundane job. Like subsequently joining fandom when I can't afford it. Like typing locs at work when the guy I work with was threatened for studying during workhours. Like building a houseboat when I haven't even got a good portion of my mortgage paid. You think I oughta get some counselling?

Meanwhile, you're bringing up my adolescence, or at least the last part of it, by tripping out on Dylan and "Tangled Up in Blue". I've identified with the big Bob for some time. His plastic backwoods boogies were the top of the charts along with the Liverpool invasion in my eighteenth year. His and Baez's music probably had more to do with the way I grew than Pirsig does with my status now. I just think the title could have been improved by making it "Tangled Up in Blues."

[[If Dylan does good things for you, what about the Blues Project (whose first album is walling away on the stereo now) or the Doors (whose first album I bought today, only about nine years after it was released)? JAK]]

Jon Singer croggled me with his frictionless substance. According to the way he wrote it, the coefficient of friction for it is less in a static situation than in a dynamic situation. Normally, in the case of metal-to-metal sliding, you have micro-miniature weldments and breakages that cause friction. The reasons it's easier to keep going than to start are 1) the formation of fewer large weldments in transit and 2) the formation of miniature "ball bearings" of broken-off weldments. In the case of a lubricated surface, the fluid flows between the surfaces to prevent the reformation of the weldments after they are broken. But this substance must prevent the formation of the initial welds and then breaks down rapidly in a dynamic situation! I don't understand.

Oh, bad news for you and John Douglas, Suzle. TTFN is Tigger's line (Winnie the Pooh and Tigger, Too fame).



Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, MD 21740

Careful analysis of the letter section in the new Spaning indicates that the previous issue is one of the 697.8 fanzines that I've failed to write about in recent months. So, with the reservation that I still hope to get around to commenting on that previous issue, let me do the decent thing for the latest one. There isn't any law that locs must appear in the same order as the fanzines they involve, I keep telling myself.

I can't honestly claim that any individual record changed my life in the sense that you may have had that experience. The closest I've come to such happenings has been the assortment of times that a record opened up to me a whole new field of interest which eventually took up so much time that my leisure hours activities were strongly affected. Four or five years ago, when I knew I was about to have an operation, I got to half-listening to an all-night country music show from a Wheeling, W. Va., radio station while trying to get to sleep. They played nightly a Lee Moore recording of "Worried Man Blues" (which isn't a blues in the accepted sense) and it fit into my mood and thoughts so well that I developed after the operation a strong interest in country music such as I hadn't had since I was a child and hadn't yet discovered classical music. Ever since I've been reading a lot about country music, listening to much of it, buying some recordings, even writing about it occasionally as part of my newspaper work, and all this has also caused me to take more interest in folk music in general. Even today, I haven't found a copy of that recording, goldurn it, and they never play it over WWVA anymore so I can't tape it off the air.

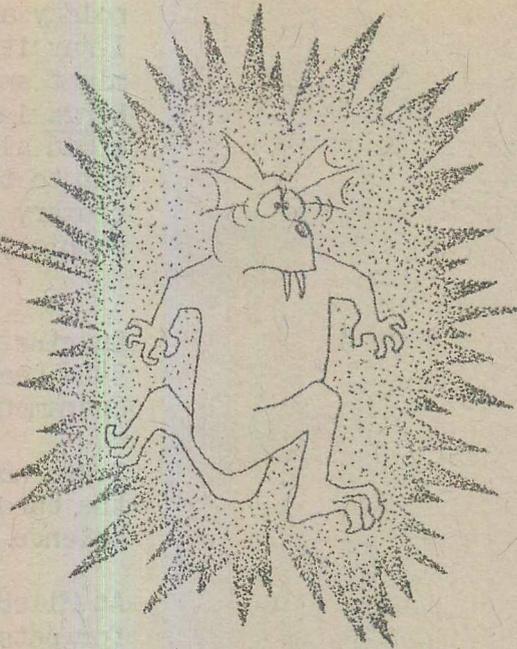
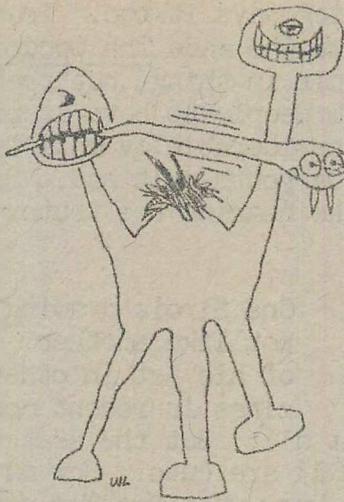
R. A. MacAvoy should get acquainted with the character in Babel 17 who couldn't use the first person pronoun. If the situation pictured by this article really comes into existence, it'll be the end of most fans. How many of us could write a loc or hold a conversation without using the capital I at least once every dozen words?

I wonder how many people who have these imaginary television characters, like Ginjer Buchanan, are rough and tough enough to turn them into actual scripts, and thereupon become new writers for the tube? Her article is wonderfully done, even though I never had the kind of imagination that would have permitted me to engage in any such pastime.

Rob Jackson makes his experience in Sri Lanka seem wonderfully real and immediate. I'm happy to find someone giving Arthur Clarke a good rating as a pro meeting a fan. Maybe the whole trouble has been the way he customarily meets fans in the most crowded circumstances: amid a throng of mundanes who want to talk with him after a lecture somewhere, or on the rare occasions when he goes to a convention, where there are always too many fans for an important pro to give each a lot of attention. The letdown that Rob relates after the first meeting is nothing more than the sensation most of us felt by afternoon on Christmas Day in families where Christmas gifts and other December 25 traditions were a big thing, or the disillusionment that so many people expressed after the first successful moon landing had been completed; it's the sudden realization that life is proceeding all around you after such a world-shattering event just as it always did.

Jim Mann
Pi Lambda Phi
1057 Morewood Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
(until Sept 1, 1976)

Rob Jackson's article on Arthur Clarke was enjoyable. I liked the picture it presented of Clarke at home. A fascinating man. (He has his own computer, yet!) At one point Rob quotes Clarke as saying some people haven't read Rama correctly. Sadly, this seems true of many readers. It is a great book. It brings together in one book everything



Nessus uses the Tasp
on Speaker - to - Animals.

Clarke has been saying for years. It's very well written. The style is beautiful. Clarke pays great attention to all the little details (as he always does.) His philosophy for the future of man comes through very clearly. And it's a very good story. What else does anyone want from a book? Rama is a deep book, not shallow. Those who find it so aren't really reading it properly.

Ginjer's column was engaging. I don't know whether creating fantasies about tv characters is a strictly female phenomenon or not. Most of my own daydreams of this sort came from books, usually by Wells or Verne. I would weave very strange fantasies set at the center of the earth or taking place during a Martian invasion. It was always a lot of fun making up elaborate plots in which a young boy (an extension of myself, of course) would accompany Professor von Hardwigg to the earth's core or travel with Professor Challenger to the Lost World. (I was very big on dinosaurs as a kid.) It was great.

Stephen Antell
45 Pineapple St, Apt 4A
Brooklyn, NY 11201

You may find yourself a little short on locs this ish, if everybody got hung up on the 12 golf ball problem and didn't have any time left for letter-writing. Like almost happened to me. It was great fun to be reminded of that old conundrum, which I hadn't run across since I learned of it in junior high school, just after I'd gotten past the problem about you have 3 buckets holding respectively x, y, and z gallons and you have to fetch n gallons, how do you do it? I couldn't go the golf ball problem then; even now, it took me two evenings of hard slogging before I figured it out.

[[So explain it to us, already. JAK]]

Why does John Curlovich get everybody's back up, as you seem to imply? To judge from his discussion of Sayers, I'd say he's just a young man with his head screwed on the right way and with a bit more discernment than most. I'm especially sympathetic to his matter-of-fact evaluation of Tolkien's views about science and tech-

nology as "reactionary." Lundwall says it, and I say it, and Curlovich says it too. True, it might annoy the people who made The Lord of the Rings into a youth cult in-thing, but then it would also annoy such people to have it pointed out to them what a considerable overall reactionary cast the 1960s youth cult had. Some people just don't like hearing the truth.

Laurine White
5408 Leader Ave
Sacramento, CA 95841

One Sirois drawing is not like another. Some of his art in other fanzines in recent months

I did not care for at all. But the sketches on the bacover and page 11 are cute. How many science fiction fans know what Spa Fon means?

At MileHiCon I met a girl who had some ferrets for pets. She is writing a book about how to care for them properly. At the masquerade she was a girl from the "Witch World" series and carried two ferrets on her shoulders as familiars. Strange. I knew little about ferrets, but there was one in a pet store window in downtown Denver. First one I ever remember seeing. Then I talked to her that night about ferrets. And next day "The Comfy Chair" mentions ferrets.

Gary Goldstein has a neat cartoon style.

After reading John Brosnan's letter and his comments on Jet Jackson, I looked up Capt. Midnight in The Great Radio Heroes by Jim Harmon, and found the following: "After the first run, sponsored by Ovaltine, the tv series became 'Jet Jackson'. Everytime a character said Captain Midnight, the new name, Jet Jackson, was dubbed in very loudly, very poorly, and very obviously. But then this series was a lot more Jet Jackson than Captain Midnight. The reason for all this? Ovaltine wanted to reserve the name Captain Midnight as its exclusive province, some possible future use in mind."

Phil Foglio had some nice full page art in a couple of fanzines I got several months ago. One of those was a great cover illo. Offhand, I can't recall the name of either zine, but it was the first and last time I heard of him. Until now. I sure hope to see much more of his art in future.

[[Try writing Phil at 2312 North Clifton Ave, Box 524-1, Chicago, IL 60614 and asking about Effen Essef, the fanzine he coedits. It is stuffed with his art. I'd tell you how much \$\$ to send, but can't find a copy close to hand. JAK]]

Frank Balazs
19 High St
Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520
(Summer)

Outside the window: trees, tennis and basketball courts, and the lake all experiencing a rather wintry afternoon. And windy--I can survive with my jacket open if the wind doesn't blow. When it blows, I feel like crawling into a warm burrow. Albany winter is coming--snow before Halloween perhaps. All in all, a thirtyish dismal day.

Inside: me and my typer and a cup of tea, HPLovecraft rotating on the turntable in the background, all set to loc you folks' latest production of the unexpected ' cliche...

I know I clutch at straws sometimes, but sometimes it's the best us little-banded-about fans get. I mean, my name banded about, not my body. Still it seems to me that my name was mentioned a more than reasonable number of times in the latest SpanInq resulting in more than average EGOBOO for yours truly. Who knows? Someday people might start putting me in the same breath as the likes of Mike Gorra, Don D'Amassa or Meade Frierson. Then, I'll get in the same class as, say, Mike Glicksohn or Sandra Miesel. After I die, I might become a living legend like Carl Brandon or Richard Shaver or (even) Claude Degler. But I wouldn't wish that on anyone.

[[Who did you say you were, again?JAK]]

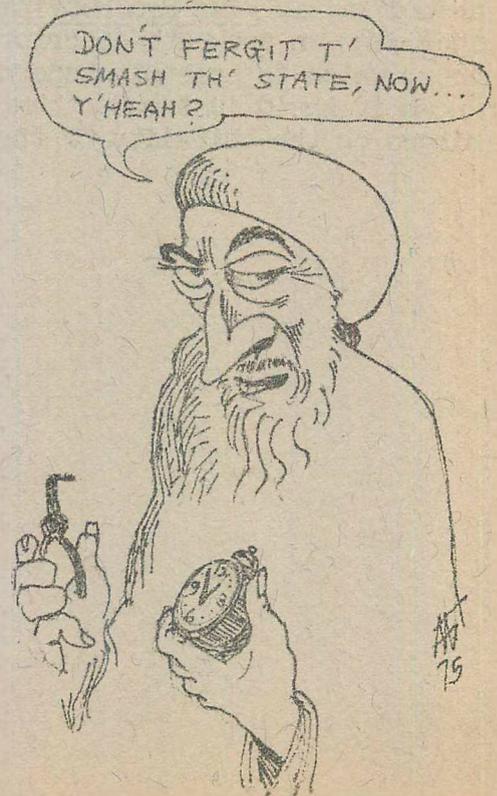
Blood on the Tracks. The song that really grabbed my guts on that album was "If You See Her, Say Hello." First time I heard that was on a highly mediocre am car radio, with almost as much static in the radio as there was wind in the car (making noise). The bitter effectiveness of the song is amazing. The only song I'm disappointed in is "Jack of Hearts." I know it's a ballad and it does have quite a story, but musically it is BORING. Eight minutes of the same progression is just too much.

Isn't friction some sort of bath oil? Jon Singer is his usual entertaining fascinating self and his synthetic memory section has direct application upon last year's Anonycon. Gary Farber and I, when we weren't trying to convince the concom to get us as next year's fan gobs, decided that in 1974 there was an Anonycon. This is at least one stage beyond Jon's "stage four." Not only do you remember being at a con you weren't at, you remember being at a con that didn't exist. Only thing is you can't admit this until other people remember being there too; so there was an Anorycon last year--I seem to remember that both of you went, too. Good con, huh?

I'm not sure if your bacover was entirely successful. My eye at least is very trained to look at the upper right first and it seems that for your collage to work the Sirosis illo ought to catch the eye first.

Victoria Wayne
PO Box 156--Station D
Toronto, Ont, CANADA

"A Chicken Looks At Midwestcon" was beautiful, but certainly doesn't entice me to go to any more banquets. I ran the FanFair banquet; I thought the food was palatable but a lot of people thought it was dreadful. Is it my poor taste in food (I live entirely on hamburger and tuna casseroles, mostly (4 out of 5 times) from the freezer) or are the rumors that con banquet food is always bad absolutely true? Could it be that I would enjoy the food at any banquet, however bad, owing to my numbed taste buds? When I can afford it again, I must attend a con banquet and find out. I'm



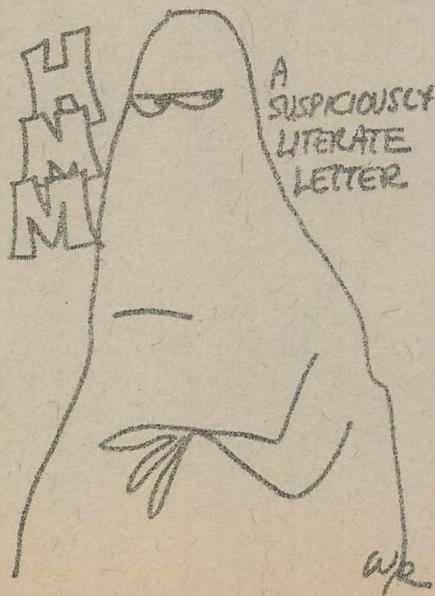
still paying off the cost of the FanFair banquet. I could've had THREE steak dinners for that! And incidentally, although I ran the banquet, I didn't set the price. That was determined by the hotel cost, taxes and overhead. But the article was good, lots of funny references.

Ginjer Buchanan's article was also of interest. I guess everybody with a creative bent concocts a worldful of characters in their early years; many I know still retain something of this in adulthood. (I had some amazing secondary universes, things that verily did defy science, when I was a kid. Even now, I maintain two secondary universes, one of which I have already written into a novel but like to daydream about; another, science-fictional, that I hope to shape into a whole series of novels some day.) Fantasy universes don't tend to reflect real life, I find that they are fun to read about. AND talk about, as some great times I can remember were spent in hearing all the details of someone's universe.

Darroll Pardoe
24 Othello Close
Hartford, Huntingdon
PE18 7SU, U. K.

Being a Sayers fan, I must say something about The Nine Tailors. It seems to me that John Curlovich likes it for the wrong reasons, or at least he omits to mention some of the right ones. Dorothy Sayers wrote best about those things she knew from personal experience; thus since she was an East Anglian by origin, her fen settings are fully authentic; since she was an Oxford graduate, she writes knowingly about Oxford. Incidentally, it's not true that she "lived virtually cloistered at her university": she had no formal connection with the University of Oxford after she graduated, indeed she worked in an advertising agency until Wimsey brought her enough money to be independent of such things. She was certainly of an academic turn of mind, but she wasn't an academic.

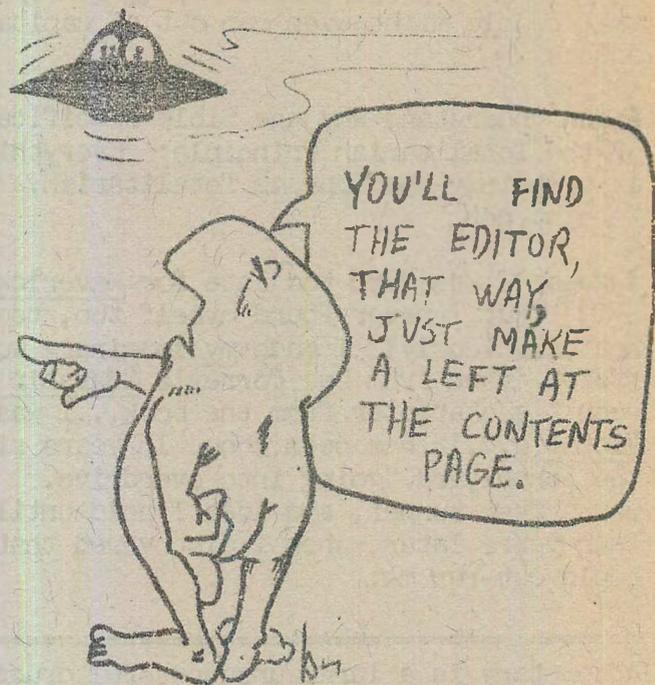
One of her strengths was that she researched her books thoroughly before she wrote them; thus, The Nine Tailors is full of perfectly accurate talk about campanology, which she obviously troubled herself to get to know about before she wove her plot around it; in Five Red Herrings the railway operations are thoroughly gone into, including an accurate description of the particular ticket punches in use in that area, which is something she need not have done: very few people would ever have known if she'd just made them up. In The Documents in the Case, the whole plot hinges on the chirality of the fungal toxin, which is not something she'd know about unless she bothered to go and find out.



The names of the people in The Nine Tailors are for the most part authentic names common in the fens: Thoday, Wilderspin, Gotobed are all to be found in the Huntingdon phone book. And the church at Fenchurch St Paul is accurately drawn (she must have researched her ecclesiology pretty well: I can't fault it, though I tend to disagree with her disparagement of Perpendicular architecture)--the picture of it in the front of the book might easily be of a church in Marshland. A bit of Walpole St Andrew; a bit of Terrington St Clement; a bit of Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalene; and there it is, Fenchurch St Paul.

The real achievement of The Nine Tailors in my mind is the way it evokes the life

and people of the fens. It's the most successful book I know of in that respect (though Tom's Midnight Garden has its merits). The fens are a strange, remote, brooding place; Sayers' achievement is not (as Curlovich seems to suggest) that she created such an environment in her book in a vivid way, but that she managed to bring over the feeling of a real, strange place so authentically. I knew the fens first, before I read any Sayers (I first was there in 1960, but I didn't read any Dorothy Sayers until 1971) and the first time I read The Nine Tailors I was immediately struck by how well her description of it accorded with my own experience. I think you have to have been out on the fens in a foggy winter dusk, when they have flooded the Washes, to really appreciate this aspect of the book.



Fenchurch St Paul (a small fen village, incidentally, certainly not a town: the nearest town is Walbeach in the book, obviously Wisbech, where Sayers lived at one time) isn't a sickly, pale sort of place; I don't know how Curlovich can read that impression into her description of it. It's a lively, real place very much as I suppose most of the fen villages must have been like in the twenties (I make the date of the book 1930; ten years or so after the great jewel robbery, not a whole generation as Curlovich says). Most of the inhabitants are the typical dour characters one finds in the fens (just like our family doctor, a typical ferman with a broad accent which is a delight to listen to).

I can't go along with Curlovich in his final sentences: our age is not one of intellectual and aesthetic decline. Admittedly there's more overt violence than there was say twenty years ago, but that's not necessarily a bad thing in all ways; it's out in the open, instead of hidden, and the oppression of minorities is far less easy than it used to be, when any inequalities could be swept under the carpet. Intellectually, we are at least the equal of any past time, and aesthetically, too. And why must we live with as much "style, restraint and refinement" as we can muster? I can see no advantage in so doing, except that in that way we wouldn't offend the over-sensitive people among us so much. When Curlovich says no worthwhile books have been written about "doing your own thing" I immediately think of Kerouac.

David Singer
5501 Old Richmond Ave
Richmond, VA 23226
(summer)

I've heard differing differing reports about the advisability of repeated playings of records; I usually try to wait at least 12 hours for the vinyl to recover, and 24 hours is better, but I have heard that 95% of the recovery takes place in the first 15 minutes. One place that would seem logical

to check would be with radio stations, especially top-40 stations; some of them replay a record every hour-and-a-half. I think that some company has come out with a photo-cartridge (this was three or four years ago), but it wasn't successful; I'd be very interested in one if it did come out at a reasonable price, though...it'd almost be worth it to totally eliminate stuck records.

no pronouns preposterous next thing you know someone is going to try to tell me that people might even run out of capital letters punctuation marks and maybe even spaces

I can understand why the Bible specifically forbids ferrets; it's just an extension of the Totalitarian Principle: "Everything not forbidden is compulsory." And God is certainly the Supreme Totalitarian. Would you want to have to eat ferrets? I thought not.

I guess I was born too late for Maverick; I barely remember it in reruns. [[*sigh* SVT]] But I never found myself too, too influenced by television at all (at least not consciously); I made my imaginary worlds in books. The one I remember best was ~~stolen~~ drawn from Lee Correy's Starship Through Space; interestingly enough, I wasn't a character from the book...I was the Starship Vittoria (or maybe it was Victoria...it has been about 15 years since I've read the book), and I'd run around the schoolyard "going into overdrive." Maybe that's where I got the idea that I was a fast runner, and idea I held until summer camp between fifth and sixth grades, four years later, when I discovered that just about every kid in my age group could out-run me.

=====

A cemetery is a large unsuccessful drugstore--Ramon Gomez de la Serna

=====

J. Robert Holmes Please have Jon Singer look into the possibility of creating
725 N. 13 St, #842 images on a new moon through use of Earth-based lasers. This
Milwaukee, WI 53233 would seem at least nonridiculous considering that a laser
 aimed at the moon covers about one square mile. One could
scan across the moon with a high power laser much like an electron gun in a tv.
Using this system it would be possible to make moving pictures visible to half the
world at a time. Think of the propaganda value of it. The only problem that I
could see might be in getting a sufficiently powerful laser that could be run
nearly continuously that would be visible from Earth. Let's see something on this.

[[Robert mentions in his letter that he is doing a one-shot, The Mutant, and would like *quarters* sent to him. I gather my mantle of near-infallibility (conferred on faneds by the pope in his bull Merde in Toto), so listen up. First, don't announce that your publication is a one-shot. A new zine that isn't going anywhere will get very little response. Next, do the issue first, then solicit \$\$\$. People will be more willing to pay for something they are fairly sure of getting. Third, the best way I know to get response to a new zine is to send it willynilly to letterhacks and faneds (who will eventually give you some artists' addresses). Use this letter column and my editorial for some addresses. JAK]]

Eric Lindsay Seems to me that Jon Singer is not giving the most effi-
6 Hillcrest Ave cient use of tech gadgets. For example, the fridge would
Faulconbridge NSW 2776 be a better room heater if you had the door closed, and
Australia you filled it with water, preferably warm. A fridge is a
heat pump---warmer the inside, the more heat you get pumped out into the room. Of
course, when the water freezes, you have to remove it, but you can always drop it
off building roofs or something. The thirsty bird gadget is dependent upon the hu-
midity, so an evaporative cooler would slow it (since it puts water into the air--
you know the type--a fan blowing through a wet towel, all surrounded by a metal box
that adds 50% to the price) whereas a true reverse cycle air conditioner (which
doesn't change the humidity, but would reduce the temperature and thus the evapora-
tion rate) would not slow it down to the same extent, for an equal temperature drop.

Of course, this doesn't take into account the effect of being in a moving stream of air; which would tend to speed the thing up...

=====

I am writing on the expanding wall of the universe--David Ignatow

=====

Sandra Miesel
8744 N. Pennsylvania St
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Some while back in Spaning the question was raised as to how personal Silverberg's Dying Inside is. Well, in a letter to me he described it as partly autobiographical and partly fantasy but predicted that few would be able to disentangle them. I didn't read the book so I've never tried.

It has been a source of wry amusement that your correspondents seem to regard me as considerably more competent than I regard myself. But if we're going to play a game of pretending to be some modern culture figure, there's one I'd like to stake out. (She's not exactly contemporary but then I have scant regard for current culture.) I think it would have been exciting to have been Isabella Stewart Gardner, a beautiful imperious, turn-of-the-century bluestocking who was one of the great art collectors in US history. The mansion she designed--stone by individual stone--to hold her collection remains as a museum in Boston. And somehow she managed to combine her career as a glamorous eccentric with a happy marriage.

In re Jon Singer's comments on enrichment culturing: many a doctoral thesis in biochemistry or microbiology at the University of Illinois began with a bucket lowered into Boneyard Creek, a vile open sewage ditch that meandered across the campus. (But what will future scientists do if the EPA has its way and makes all running water sparkling pure?) We used to joke about finding a bug that ate Teflon and excreted HF.

Although I'm flattered by Ginjer's references to my youthful pastimes, a few corrections and expansions are in order. The first thing we noticed we had in common when we met at the '69 Marcon was not fantasizing but the independent invention of Graham Craker Mush (a concoction any sane initiate would find distressing). She didn't get to see my files until the following year. My "Saga" ran from the French Revolution to the present and had a cast of 200 related characters. I wrote in parts for some sympathetic girlfriends but none of them ever got into the spirit of things and their characters simply remained entries on the genealogical chart. The "Saga" was the chief flowering (weeding?) of a habit that began many years before with Lone Ranger pastiches (with a role for his masked woman friend who rode a white-maned black horse named Starfire and had a faithful Indian girl companion named Peach Blossom). These were followed by Range Rider and Cheyenne stories. In fact, I only gave up the hobby a few years ago--once you're over thirty the thrill fades. By then it had deteriorated into a simple sleep-inducing trick. My final production was centered on Poul Anderson's Dominic Flandry and his stormy marriage to a neo-Israeli girl named Sarah bas Kochbar. No, I've never had the courage to tell Poul any of the details. I'm too fond of him for that.

Since references were made to my translations of theme songs, I thought you wouldn't mind seeing an example. There were never any in French. I have only a reading knowledge of that language.

Cheyenne*, Cheyenne,
Ubi eris nocte?
Vir sole,

*considered as the vocative of "Cheyennus"

Cheyenne,
Manibitne cor lene,
Somni, Cheyenne, de puelle non amabis.
Move, Cheyenne, nubes supera similis.
Inflat area,
It venitque,
Fuit Domus sola.
Ferox ventus terminabitne
Cum non jam vagaris?

Move, Cheyenne, ager alter est verdior.
Vagare, Cheyenne, non obliviscere visos.
Et cum sedes,
Ubi erit?

If there's an ending in the wrong place somewhere, experts, please remember this is transcribed from aural memories of nigh on twenty years ago.

Before Patrick McGuire went off to Russia for a year I made up a short filksong about him:

Oh, the maids of Minsk are very fair,
And Kievan lips are willing,
Moskovy maids without compare
And Solchi smiles are thrilling.

But though he basks beneath their smiles,
Their charms can never bind him,
He will come back to the USA
And the school he left behind him.

Stuart Gilson
745 Townsend Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada

The highpoint of the entire issue certainly had to be Rob Jackson's article. Although I haven't read a wide variety of Clarke's stuff, that which I have I found entertaining. That, of course, isn't saying all that much as "entertaining" is such a servicable word; I'll have to reserve judgement on Clarke's overall abilities as a writer until I've digested more of his writing. However, that which I have read of his work, despite its structural and conceptual strengths, was unaccountably "cold" and insensitive, much akin, I suppose, to Asimov's own peculiar style. Perhaps Clarke was simply overconcerned with the scientific background, as he was, to a certain lesser degree, in Rama; in the case of this novel, however, any lack of understanding for the central characters the reader may have felt was more than adequately compensated for by the sheer weight of the concept of Rama. That's so often the case with both Clarke and Asimov: the essential strength behind their writing lies firmly embedded in the scientific rationale around which the story is written, and this many times at the expense of the "enjoyment factor."

doug barbour
10808 - 75th ave
edmonton, alberta
canada

i think youre right to reply to don d'amma on the 'novel' question. we once knew what a novel was, we no longer do. hell, the breakdown possibly began within sf--all those collected stories which made up a 'novel.' we dont have a critical term that will fit a collection of stories which is obviously more than the sum of its parts merely, in which connections are made that a simple collection of previously uncollected and unrelated stories does not have. the term 'novel,' loose and easy as it is, has been asked to bear the burder of classifica-

tion here. well, why not? it does the job, even if it swears a bit, and threatens to join a union to protect the simplicity of common terms.

Sheryl Birkhead
23629 Woodfield Rd
Gaithersberg, MD 20760

Rumor--or some such--supposedly there's "something" which can be injected into pine tress slated for harvest, which drastically increases sap production (uh uh, don't say it-- I already know fandom has enough saps) to produce nifty products--you may not be able to get blood out of a turnip, but you might get oil out of a pine!

Are slugs snails off the half shell?

Don't think I'm afraid to comment on Ginjer's column--just that my world wasn't populated by one specific character. "It" fluctuated (male, female, animal) in just about every variable imaginable but a few (in humans--they were always a bit older than I, girls had long hair, hair color was never brown, eyes always blue, always loners). In relating to the specific tv shows, I did just that and built myself into the existing cast.

Gary Farber
271 E. 197th St, #5A
Bronx, NY 10458

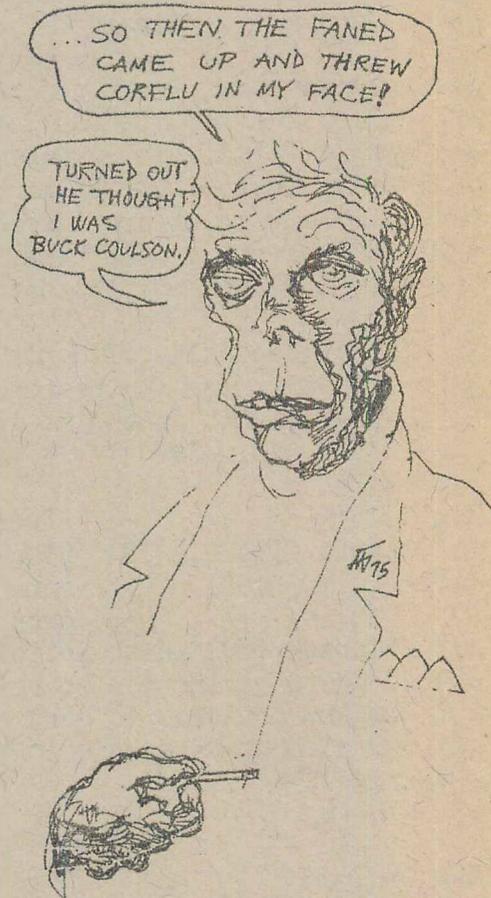
I've never had a record "change my life" before, but then I'm not sure I'd be conscious of it if it happened. Maybe one will. I've certainly been turning from a person almost wholly ignorant of music, specifically modern rock, into a person with a great deal more knowledge, and what's more important, an appreciation of the music. I can recognize that my tastes are evolving very quickly, and that what I delight in and find brilliant now, I may be apathetic to in a few months, but right now, I have definite songs that affect me emotionally, if not change me. I suppose listening to a song that hits me emotionally, changes me, changes me as everything does, and as an emotional effect does.

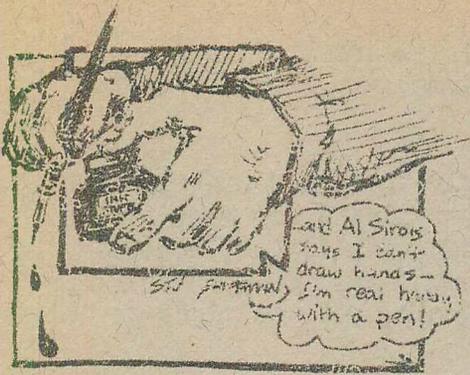
For fannish techno-funnies, I've long been speculating on glow-in-the-dark mimeo ink...

I have to take note, here of something very low-keyed but pleasant, and that is the patterning pictures in your lettering-guide headings. I know you're waiting for someone to notice it, but who's doing it, drawing the rocking chair in the "R" in "Rocking the Boat," or the bone and chicken claw in "A Chicken Looks at Midwestcon?" A pleasant touch.

[[Suzle is too modest to tell you (and she's out doing random errands), so I'll tell you--she thought 'em up and she executed them. JAK]]

And as for Gene Wolfe's piece? It's people like him who make me sick of writing locs, straining to find new ways of saying, "Great, wonderfully well-written,





brilliant, I loved it, superb and Pretty Good." I start feeling pretty inadequate, looking for new ways to praise, and not finding them.

Ah yes, Ginjer. I've read Joan Winston, Jackie Lichtenberg and Sondra Marshak's book, and I do say it made me feel much more sympathetic towards Star Trek, and the Phenomenon, again. The concept of the mass fantasy as a viable social entity and tool of entertainment/education is fascinating, with a great many implications.

[[I think I grossly misspelled a name back there. Anyway, Gary, what are some of those implications? JAK]]

On the other hand, when Ginjer mentions Roddenberry doing the second pilot of ST, and having no strong female lead, and wonders if this was possibly an intentional opening for "unofficial script-writers," people's fantasies, I must protest this as sexist. Does Ginjer think only females have fantasies, and that therefore since the male roles are already filled, males are left stranded? Pishtush! Besides, I strongly doubt they had any idea of the Phenomenon, as applied to any tv show--at least, not in that strength. Far out, though.

[[Well, actually, I don't doubt that males have fantasies at all; but of all those who responded to Ginjer's article, most of the men said they didn't fantasize in this manner, whilst most of the women said they did. -SVT]]

Ben Miller
306 Stevens Circle, #1C
Aberdeen, MD 21001

After reading R.A. MacAvoy's article about civilization's great loss, this writer hopes something can be done to save some articles before all articles follow pronouns into oblivion. However, MacAvoy is no help;

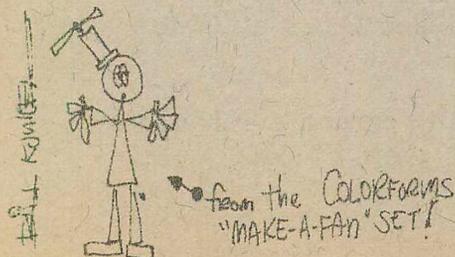
using fifteen indefinite articles and over seventy definite articles in one page is leading to extinction of this irreplaceable resource. One paragraph without pronouns and articles is hard enough; this writer hopes to see R.A. MacAvoy with one page without either one in some future issue. What will be depleted next--possessives?

Buck Coulson
Route 3
Hartford City, IN 47348

Dear Suzelle,

If people can't spell your nickname, it's your own fault for demanding an unusual one. If you had a nice, simple nickname like Buck (or Spot, or Rover) nobody would have any trouble at all. Suzal, indeed!

I've read the article Sam Long mentions about turning one's bicycle into a mimeo. But to complete the recycling process, did you know there are also uses for worn-out mimeos? Recently my mother-in-law got the fall catalog of Hammacher Schlemmer (I never realized that was a real place, before) and on the front cover was depicted an odd-looking mimeo, or perhaps a ditto. Only it wasn't; according to the catalog it



was a device for producing crepes. (I guess that's what was called crepes-suzles or something of the sort when I was young.) It's obvious you could convert a mimeo to do the work; you'd have to install heating coils in the rollers, I suppose, and maybe enlarge the ink-feed to handle batter. The thing sells for \$595, so making the conversion might provide a tidy profit for some indigent fan. (Come to think of it, maybe it is--Andy Porter has to be getting income from somewhere to finance Algol.)

Mike Glicksohn I suppose that now you've published this splendid looking and high-
141 High Park Ave ly readable SpanIsh, you intend to sit back and basque in the ego-
Toronto, Ontario boo that will flood in. As Iberia no ill will and want my name to
Canada a-pyrenees pages once again, I shall herewith render you my Franco
 pinion of your latest extravaganza and shall not Dali in doing so...

I've never been "into" music (isn't that the way it's usually stated?) to the degree that most of my fan contemporaries have been. Oh, I enjoy listening to a variety of artists and styles but I suspect there is no true ability to actually appreciate music on a fundamental level in my soul. (When they were giving out the Music Appreciation Module I was probably over arguing for an additional Scotch Imbibing Capacitor.) I have been moved by the closeness that certain songs have to what's happened to me (Kristofferson does it a lot.) but my reaction to that and to hearing others say similar things is to realize how effectively commonplace my problems are. Here am I, suffering seemingly mountainous difficulties, and here's a poet able to express the same things so a million people will nod and say, "Yeah, that's exactly how it was!" It tends to put things into perspective for me. I always liked Dylan's images, although I usually didn't understand them, but the songs that I'm familiar with didn't really touch me personally. Dylan's world and the things that concerned him were very far removed from my own more immediate and personal concerns; he worried about saving a world, and all I was concerned with was learning to live with who I was turning out to be. Somehow Desolation Row and Bedford Road never really intersected.

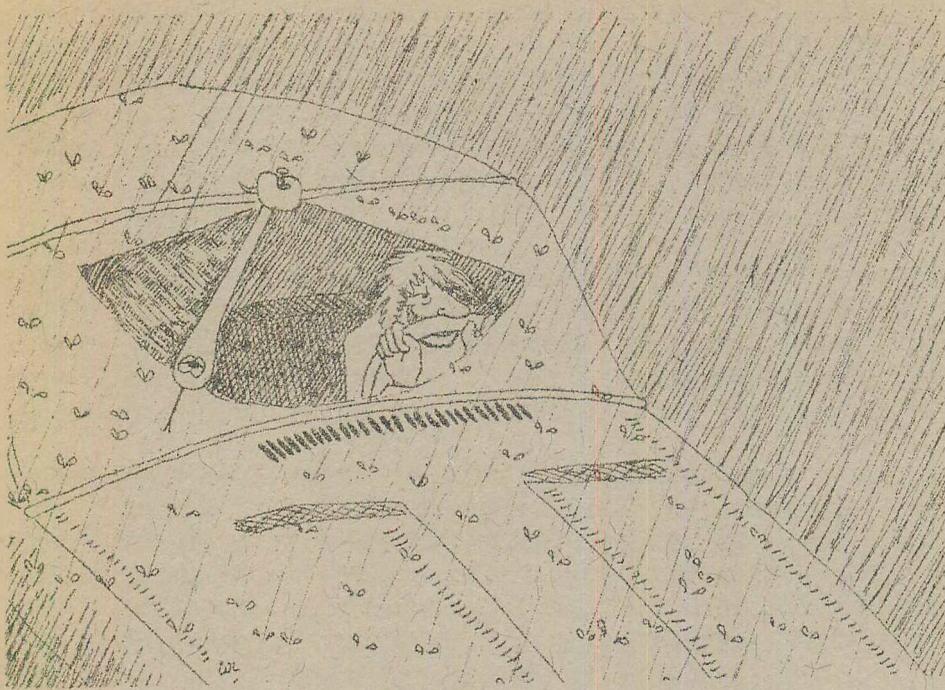


[[Dylan only did two albums of "protest songs;" his material from then on was about love, futility, the inside of his head, the wretchedness of life; later, joy, fulfillment, love, the inside of his head and, recently, the faults of society. He worried about the same things you did, only he masked them in the language of dream and nightmare. Probably couldn't bear to face them straight. JAK]]

I'm not sure I'd accept anything that might possibly be edible from a crazed plantophile like Singer, not since he ran around FanFair cackling insanely over those deadly nightshade berries. As for lima beans, if you leave off the mineral oil they make an excellent natural emetic.

Visually fascinating double-page spread in 10-11. On the left we see Al Sirois drawing like Al Sirois and I'm not very much impressed, but on the right we see Al Sirois drawing like Wally Wood with far superior results. Fascinating, as a well-known art critic was wont to say.

Excellent column by Peter, in all respects. This is the sort of off-beat imaginative



fannish writing that makes great fanzines. If Peter really wants to let loose all restraints and go wild in defiance of all the rules and niceties of polite society, he can always visit Dartmoor and thumb his nose at law and order by disobeying the sign there that reads, "It is forbidden to throw rocks at this sign."

Weird article by Gene Wolfe. (Which wasn't in any way enhanced by the capital italic presentation, as I

see things.) I'm not sure how some of the people reported on are going to take it, and I'm not sure how I take it, but it's...er...different? Hope you weren't counting on ever getting a contribution from andy offutt.

I think Don D'Amassa's a little off-base in ascribing motives to the oft-true rejection by fans of mainstream efforts at sf. It seems to me that the criticisms I've seen of such dabblings isn't that they were undertaken without our "permission" (god, even fans aren't that arrogant) but that they were, through ignorance, badly done. Surely Don would agree this is a legitimate basis for criticism.

As for Don's belief that fans want to remain ghettoized and ignored by the so-called mainstream because of the camaraderie that generates, that conflicts with his earlier observation that a good many fans don't even read the stuff any more. I for one could care less if the mainstream and the sf ghetto merge tomorrow. Just as long as they leave fandom to the trufans!

George Flynn
27 Sowamsett Ave.
Warren, RI 02885

Peter Roberts' piece fascinated me, so I naturally took out my Bible to inspect Leviticus XI. I was shocked to discover neither ossifrages nor dead ferrets were present. This piqued my curiosity, so I hied me to the library to compare translations.

It seems that in most modern translations the ossifrage has become a vulture, while the ferret is now a gecko and the mole (sometimes) a chameleon. All this considerably decreases the flavor of the passage, and there are a whole bunch of other examples (like the cuckoo becoming a seagull). More to the point, there is frequently a footnote saying that they don't know what a lot of these things were. This throws a new light on the whole thing: if I weren't sure whether a particular specimen were a ferret or a gecko, I wouldn't want to eat it either.

No, Suzle, in 1977 August 31 is on September 4 (if it comes off at all).

Alyson Abramowitz
638 Valmont Place
Elmont, NY 11003
(summer)

Found Ginjer's column to be fascinating. I was discussing it with Tom Morley the other night, and from what I gather, re-writing of tv scripts into one's own fantasies seems to be unique to women. I find that a bit incredible as I did it for years.

I was interested in the spy and doctor shows (never did anything with Bonanza though I watched it for many years). My longest fantasy was of a young (comparable to my age during each "episode") girl who created a hospital of her own using kids as doctors and nurses. The plots and things within the hospital often were lifted out of Medical Center or whatever the popular M.D. show was at the time. I did have a logical background as to how she got the money, training, etc., though. Which probably shows how I got into biology...trying to fulfill my fantasies, I suppose.

Sam Long

PO Box 4946

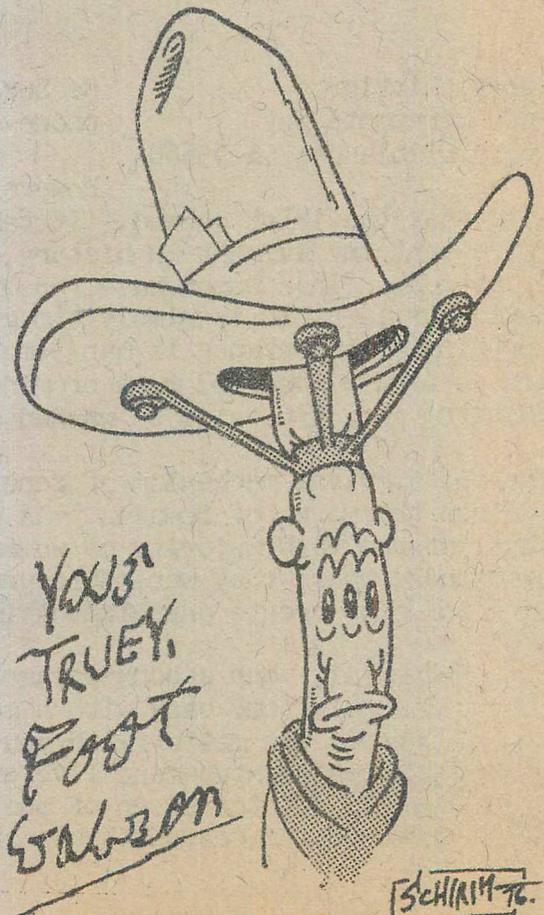
Patrick AFB, FL 32925

You may say that this [#6] is SpanInq's finest issue, and I've only seen one other ish, so I'd tend to agree with you. However, the effect is lessened by the page and a half on rock music and Dylan, at least in my eyes. Only a little bit lessened, mind you, but lessened nevertheless. I'm a classical music fan myself (I was listening to Beethoven as I wrote this), and rock and such like turn me off -- especially in fanzines.

[[Two pages ago I was listening to Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. Last page I was listening to Abbey.Rodd (Beatles, Sam). Now I'm listening to Black and Blue. Next I might listen to John Coltrane or George Crumb or "Spider" John Koerner. I once saw a sign in a record store in Columbus, Ohio that said, "'You goddam bunch of sissies! You've got to learn to stretch your ears!'"--Charles Ives." Got that, Sam? JAK]]

R.A. MacAvoy's story without pronouns reminds me of the chap who contrived to write a whole novel--in good English and with a decent plot line--without using the letter "e" at all.

Peter Egg Roberts' article was very good. That's a good likeness of him, by the way. I wonder if he found while he was reading the Bible that the word "piss", and its elegant variant "pisseth", occurs no less than seven times in the Authorized (King James) Version. Neither the aardvark nor the wombat is mentioned in the Bible, which is not altogether surprising, but Leviticus declares that crickets and grasshoppers are clean, i.e. kosher. (Actually, in the early Hebrew religion, as in all early religions, "unclean" and "sacred" meant the same thing. All the forbidden animals were sacred to the Goddess or Yahweh in one or another of their aspects. In particular, the pig was sacred to the Goddess as death-goddess and to one aspect of Zeus, who as Zeus (or Dionysus) Sabazius was equivalent to Jehovah Sabaoth (Lord of Hosts); and the mouse (mentioned after the weasel) was sacred to Apollo Smithes--



Mousy Apollo--who appears often in the Iliad and to whom Yahweh as Sun-God could be compared.)

Onward. Gene Wolfe's Midwestcon report was fine and funny...and so was Ginjer Buchanan's bit. I never put myself "into" tv shows or films like Ginjer and Sandra did--though I remember some of the shows she mentions with affection--but I sometimes think about how I'd act as an already existing character. But the most I ever do in the dramatic sense nowadays is to talk sometimes in iambic pentameter. Occasionally I read plays or books aloud to myself.

The British postcode is like our zipcode in that the first three (or four) symbols represent the postal area, and the last three define it closer. The Mearae have a postcode DE2 7QH. The DE2 is for the Derby area, and the 7QH is for their particular neighborhood. It's a little more precise than ours, which identifies only the old "zone" that the destination is in. When I was a kid, my address was in Charlotte 5, NC. Now it's Charlotte, NC 28205. The postcode, both in Britain and Canada, can specify the very street.

John Brosnan...I've always thought it strange that the BBC should sell its gold for dross. The quality of the tv shows they sell in America is much higher than the quality of the ones American networks sell to the BBC. Even ITV, the commercial network in Britain, does better than ABC, NBC and CBS. I don't remember any Australian tv shows in the US, but there's one Aussie show on ITV that's a kind of Down-Under western. It opens with a stagecoach rattling across the plain in a cloud of dust. You expect it to be an ordinary western Western until you see the kangaroos bouncing along out of the way of the stagecoach.

[[I'm sure I've seen one episode of Skippy, an Australian Lassie with a kangaroo instead of a dog. And Suzle says she and Ginjer watched it regularly in Pittsburgh. JAK]]

Terry Whittier
3809 Meramonte Way
North Highlands, CA 95660

Re Suzlecol: I think you had every right to step in on the phone call and tell the bastard off.

However, I find myself slipping into the same way of thinking that the idiot showed. It takes an effort to realize that women, despite their infrequent involvement in history, are now capable of acting as well and as confidently as men. Since women have rarely figured into the making of any movement, organization or idea, it is simply thought that men are the cause of most things, and that anything of importance is man- (male-) made. It will take a while, but as women begin to figure more and more prominently in matters of import, the old ruts that human thinking gets into will be washed away.

The old survival mechanism of generalization is at work in this instance of prejudice against the works of females. As well as the historical basis for present thinking, consider the vast majority of women in this world and society who were raised in an atmosphere where they were discouraged from thinking for themselves and from attempting to do or create anything of importance or consequence.

[[Uhm, ah, your second paragraph there just sent me into overdrive. I feel I should come back with a meaningful, literate comment; oh, something like "What's the matter with you, nit? That's the most inaccurate, illogical, uneducated statement I've ever heard! Have you ever studied history, any-way?? But the sweep of the thing has just left me speechless. And for some of the reasons I was speechless during that phone call. -SVT]]

ball. "Not 'Tuxedo Junction'", I was saying to myself. "Please, don't play 'Tuxedo Junction' again!"

But T-J it was, so I went and played "Tangled Up in Blue" for myself, and got a lot of stares from people.

Dylan is not In, not on the west coast, not in Seattle. Manhattan Transfer is in.

As for me, I'm still caught in an era of Fred Neil at the Gaslight, a night with Eric von Schmidt and Richard Farina; I'm just starting to get into Joni Mitchell, and I'm practically suicide to the tune of IN MY LIFE, by Judy Collins. A great album, that, but it takes you a long ways down and doesn't bring you back at the end.

I don't understand people who have, or grow, or know about plants. I like plants, you understand, but I also like Bosch paintings and I can't grow those either. God knows I've tried.

Years ago (subtle transition) my parents and I moved into a new house, lost somewhere in suburban Seattle. Of course, most of Seattle is suburban in terms of New York, though not Los Angeles, but then in comparison to...Where was I? Oh, yes. The area had originally been an orchard, and whoever had subdivided the tract had decided (I light a novena in his honor every year) that it would be a shame to waste all those apple, cherry, plum, and pear trees.

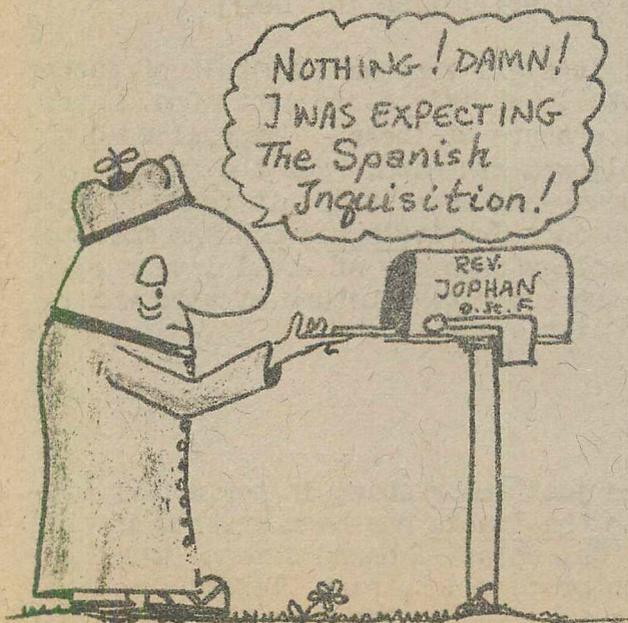
So each yard had between two and four fruit trees in the back yard. We got two, a Gravenstein and a Transparent, apple trees both. We also inherited a small stand of raspberries, a huge plot of rhubarb, and, over in the corner, a tiny spread of some vine-like plant, with green leaves and shiny red berries. That commenced to spread over what used to be the chicken coop, but was now a deadfall and obstacle course.

When we first moved in, the choke grass moved with us, and decided to settle in neighbourly fashion right next to my rhubarb plant. (I love rhubarb, as much as I love H. Allen Smith. I had never tended a plant in my life. I am capable of killing a lawn by looking at it too long -- but I love rhubarb, and here was this lovely rhubarb plant, all ready for some kind of attention.) I let it go for a year, since it was already June when we moved in, and besides the rhubarb seemed to be growing all right. I let it go the next year too. No sense interfering with a good thing, and I got 3 or 4 good crops.

The next year, I thought, "If I can get 3 or 4 good crops without doing anything, what would I get if I weeded a little?" The plant immediately died, and today there isn't a trace of it left. Instead...

Remember that vine-like plant I mentioned? Well, it slowly left its corner and began to tap tentatively on the back side of the garage. "This will never do," I thought, and began to pull the thin tendrils of plant out by the roots.

Half of the lawn came up with it. It seems that this trange red be-berried plant was Deadly Nightshade, which has an enormous, complex root system; like an iceberg, only a small portion shows on the surface.



Not only that, but it doesn't remain up-rooted; first of all, you have to remove all the root, including the fine, tendril-like filaments that break off when you pull the damn thing up. Secondly, it takes root wherever you happen to set it down: on your lawn, in your trash barrel...in the trunk of your mom's brand new Dodge Dart, the one with the box of dirt next to the spare tire...

At the moment, the rose bush that used to climb into my second story bedroom window (I didn't know roses were vines) has been supplanted by the Nightshade, or Belladonna.

At this point, I smugly allow Jon Singer to interject the phrase "Nightshade has reddish flowers and shiny black berries." I know that, but this story wouldn't be nearly as effective with "radda-root" or whatever.

Speaking of which, I showed Jon's article to Bubbles Broxon and Buz Busby (sounds like a vaudeville team, doesn't it?) at the Nameless meeting (now this is really getting absurd, but let's continue) and Buz's response was somewhat quizzical. "You weren't at LaCon?" he said. "I thought I was you at that party, you know the one I mean, up on the (Nth) floor."

"No," Bub said firmly, "I definitely, positively wasn't there. I think."

The writer salutes the author of the piece without pronouns.

I tend to disagree with John Curlovich. (I have learned, through trial and error, to understate for effect.) I'm not, by any means, an expert on Dorothy L. Sayers, but I have read one or two other mystery writers. Like, for instance, Raymond Chandler.

Chandler went broke during the depression, and turned to writing as a means of support. His early stories, in BLACK MASK and similar magazines, were very crude, but they all showed a good grasp of character and an excellent sense of description.

He improved as a writer; despite his very real narrative ability, it would have been difficult not to. But in each of his early stories, there are episodes, scenes that stand out, that can almost stand by themselves; Chandler took those few scenes and later put them in his novels. It's not often that a writer can give himself a second chance, but Chandler did it and did it well. You can spot those scenes in THE SIMPLE ACT OF MURDER, released recently in the U.S. in paperback as two books, TROUBLE IS MY BUSINESS and PICKUP ON NOON STREET. Bits and pieces show up in FAREWELL, MY LOVELY, for example.

As many people have already said (don't you love the staid, scholarly tone of this?) the plots in Chandler's stories are often secondary, I mean, they're there, but it really doesn't seem to matter. Marlowe matters.

Sayers may recreate London, but Chandler creates Los Angeles, that seamy, almost sordid, scruffy relative of New York. That glitter isn't diamond, its chrome -- and worn, rusted chrome at that.



Marlow "does his own thing," if you want to put it that way. It gets him busted, spaced, beaten, but he doggedly keeps going.

...You see, I lived in a neighbourhood of gullible children. There was Steve Winkler and his kid brother Artie, and Davey Kraft (he shot his eye out with a tinker toy one day; he looked to see why the air rifle wasn't firing) and Fletch, and the Odegaard twins. I think the twins were my favorites. They were the ones who accidentally ramm'd a bulldozer into our house one day, after somehow starting the engine. Later that week, they pulled the blocks out from the wheels of somebody's boat, to see what they were supposed to be; the boat sailed down the hill and crashed into a car.

Within a year after moving in, I had Steve convinced I was a Martian, Davey convinced I was a robot, and Fletch and the Odegards were sure I was twin brothers, one good and one rotten. The twins were easy to convince; they were both rotten, and thought everyone else was, too.

I spent the next three of four years juggling my stories around. By the time the kids were old enough to poke holes in my stories, my parents had decided to move.

Rob Jackson's article was very enjoyable, not only for the view of Arthur Clarke, but for the impression of Ceylon. Before I read it, I had very nebulous ideas of the place. I'll go farther than that: before I read it, my only impression of Ceylon was "Arthur C. Clarke lives there." Now I've got an idea of the culture, the people, the commerce, the hospital structure, the terrain, the climate. And so, best thing in the issue. If you don't get more from Rob, I'll scream and cry.

I like German Shepherds. I even like vicious German Shepherds. I expect them to be slightly nasty. They're supposed to be, sort of. I mean, they're police dogs and all that. I like most dogs. I, too, am a dog person.

I do not like small dogs. Even toy poodles make me nervous. Small dogs seem to be mad at the world for trapping them in such small bodies. Most small dogs seem to stare at me as though they were saying "It's your fault, you son of a person. You're the reason I ended up this way." Then they proceed to bite me on the kneecap, if they can reach it, or the ankle if they can't.

Up the street from my house there's a small dog. It is part pomerianian, dachshund, chihuahua, schnauzer, pekinese, sheltie, poodle: it has inherited all the bad points and none of the good of all of these dogs. In other words, it is nervous, it barks, it whines. It hates everybody, which is okay, because the feeling is mutual.

This dog used to keep company with another, an even-tempered Irish Setter that I used to like until he ate my hat. Now that dog has disappeared, and a Shepherd has taken his place. The shepherd is one of those leapy, boundy, bouncy dogs that almost kills you while trying to be friendly -- either he tromps on your kidneys or he pushes you out into the street where you're run over by a car.

At any rate, junior still steadfastly protects his home against the ravages of casual pedestrians, unless the shepherd runs out to play footsies. In that case, he runs out and attempts to be friendly too. At that point the German Shepherd either tromps on his kidneys or runs him out into the street.

Tops on the play list is Harry Bell, although he is followed closely by Stu Shiffman, who is getting more weird all the time. I like Sirosis' stuff, which reminds me that I need to write him a letter about how he is well-known at Evergreen Hospital for his masterful recreation of our most recent disaster drill.

[[We got a few belated letters on #5 from Eric Lindsay, Hank Heath, Sheryl Birkhead and Stuart Gilson. On #6 we got long letters and short notes from Debby Notkin, Lee Carson, Harry and Irene Bell, Katy Curtis Gandino, Terry Hughes, Tom Morley, Tim Kyger, Laurie Trask, Alexis Gilliland, Tim Marion, Larry Carmody, Robert Runte and David Griffin. Thanks to one and all. Knowing what farces our "deadlines" have been in the past, we're not setting one this time. Write anyway. SVT & JAK]]

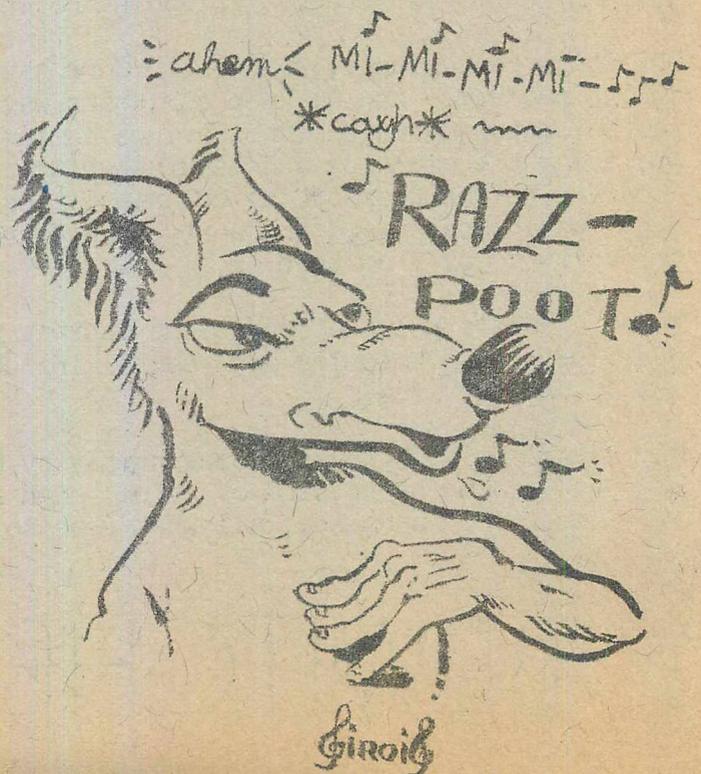
March 5, 1976: Waynesburg [Pennsylvania] has had summer weather for a week and more-- daytime temperature in the mid-70's, blue skies, budding flowers (which are in for a surprise), more dull nice people on the dull nice streets, probably more crime, too, since your average miscreant likes nothing better than balmy weather in which to pop his pill, or pike his punk, or ravish a nonconsenting person of the feminine gender, or put a lonely barn to the torch, or to take possession of a "controlled substance," or otherwise to breach the peace of this commonwealth in such a way as to generate fees for at least three attorneys: usually the District Attorney, the public defender and the judge. On the civil side, the budding-and-blooming season is also the time for breach of contract, debtor default and, that old Greene County favorite and enricher of the bar, driving while intoxicated, which is not a civil matter but which often gives rise to civil matters in the form of torts: your action for the value of one barroom mirror, or one high-bridged nose, smashed in the fray. Barely is the snow melted from the hillsides when the Greenie takes to the bottle and the road simultaneously, hell-bent on giving rise to legal fees for pleading him guilty or getting him on the A.R.D. Program (a first-offender probation alternative to indictment and trial, which carries with it a pricetag of \$375 in lieu of fines).

Soon, however, winter will resume; and crime will turn ill-natured and curmudgeonly-- fender-benders with ill will on three sides, i.e. both drivers and the insurance adjuster, not to mention the investigating officer, who frequently issues citations to both drivers because he is irritated at having to risk his own neck on icy roads to get to the scene of the accident. Old ladies will get whapped by snowballs, or will slip on your sidewalk and will have themselves transported by ambulance to the office of the nearest negligence attorney.

-Ken Tompkins

Elegant and opulent, yet undiscovered, "the hidden ballroom" at Versailles whose entire floor is made with many fragile panes into a smooth, single surface of mirror, rests undusty in darkness, unentered for two centuries by a flicker, nary a moonbeam nor match, lamp, nor any light, except for once when a tiny batch of insect eggs (blown through a crevice down through an imperfection in the molding under the great glass floor) hatched fireflies.

--Spencer Holst



Jerry Kaufman

For the past eight months my head has been in space.

I've read articles, attended lectures, argued and discussed, and even tortured my brain cells (seldom able to carry a thought for the down, much less the touchdown). I am tired, I am weary, but I've got a headful of ideas that're driving me insane. They weren't mine to begin with, but they're occupying the belfry apartment; and I really ought to charge them rent, said rent consisting in lining themselves up in rational fashion and displaying themselves to you. So, rationally, we begin at the beginning, not of my obsession, but of the object of my obsession, the O'Neill Space Colony.

It all started some years ago in small, provincial Princeton University, where physics professor Dr. Gerard O'Neill asked his students the odd question, "Is the surface of a planet the best place for an expanding technological civilization?" After giving it some thought, the students said no. Do you suppose they then said that under the surface was the best place? No, no, no. They said space. The void.

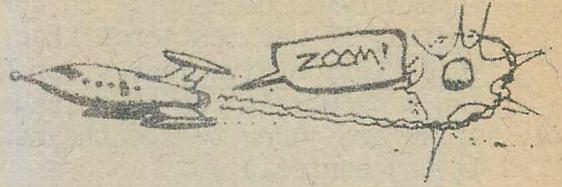
Why? Unlimited room and unlimited energy. You can fill the surface of a planet, and you can build only so far above and below the surface. There are no limits in space. You can quickly run out of fossil or atomic fuels, and solar energy at a planet's surface is intermittent and diffuse. In space, solar energy is never-ending, ever-present and intense.

So, said O'Neill, how does a technological society expand in space? Here's how, he answered himself. We build colonies out there. We hang them at the LaGrange points, spots in the Earth-Moon gravitational system at which there is a balance. Anything at an L point just stays. Including colonies.

But it'll cost plenty, won't it? Sure says O'Neill, but only about as much as the Apollo program. And we keep our costs way down, by mining the Moon instead of the Earth for our material (the savings coming from the much lower gravity Up There), and doing the smelting and manufacturing right in space. And the first colony will manufacture the rest of the colonies. Besides, in fifteen years the thing will start paying back, and in twenty-five years it'll reach full pay back and will be producing gravy from then on.

Whoa. There's a lot of questions in that paragraph. How does a space colony pay back? How many colonies are you talking about? How big are they? How many people? How do they get fed?

Oh, says O'Neill, they pay back partly by being zero-grav, high vacuum research and manufacturing centers, and by being "high frontiers". But mostly they pay back with all that lovely sunshine, all that free solar energy. They turn it into microwave



energy and beam it back to Earth. Thousands of megawatts of it. As much as we can use. Number? The first colony will make the next, and the increase can continue geometrically. After the space around the LaGrange points is filled, other positions can be found, and after the Moon is used, there's always the asteroids. As for size and population, the first colony will be rather small, only holding 10,000 people. Colony III, the final projected style will be 6.2 miles long, 1.24 miles in diameter, and hold one million people. Colonists. In a colony that size, there can be farms, forests, villages, clouds. An entire and closed ecosystem.

So a bunch of people get excited, started helping O'Neill research, start some societies (like the L-5 Society) to push for colonization. Other people jump on O'Neill for his assumption that we have all the technology now to start work on the first colony. These people being of technical bent, they start working to iron out the wrinkles in ecology, economics, microwave transmission, metallurgy, etc.

But there are still other people who question the space colony idea from a more basic position. They go right back to that first question. "Why does a technological civilization have to expand?" In the last few years a philosophy of steady-state, stable, harmonious society has been building from such blocks as Taoism, ecology, systems analysis, Small is Beautiful, etc. O'Neill bypasses this whole line of thought. The philosophical headset has been developed as a response to a lot of economic and physical situations, and O'Neill claims the colonies will, eventually, change the situations totally, thus destroying the need for the philosophy. But a philosophy once started isn't stopped by such a change, especially when the change won't affect current realities for fifteen years. And I believe it will be just that philosophy that will allow us to survive those fifteen years and longer. And it will be just such a philosophy that will keep us going after the colonies are up, because I don't trust the colonies. I can foresee us here on Earth indulging in a Bacchanal of energy-drunkenness, enslaved to the colonies which will be able to shut off our energy-alcohol at their will.

But I'm still enormously excited by the idea, and its working out. The thing is getting lots of serious study and seems certain to have some real effects--as Stewart Brand put it, "The toothpaste's out of the tube now, and nobody can put it back." I'd like lots of feedback on this, if you can get it up. To get properly acquainted with the subject, I'd suggest you try getting the Fall 1975 and Spring 1976 issues of The CoEvolution Quarterly (Box 428, Sausalito, CA 94965). The fall issue has twenty-five pages on the colonies, and the spring issue has seventy-five pages of response in the form of quarrels, quibbles, excitement, endorsement and Jay Kinney cartoons. (Back issues are two dollars each.)

ED & BEMILDRED

IMPORTANT ANTI-ANNOUNCEMENT: In a recent issue of Karass and the just-published Fanzistorica, it was mentioned that Suzle and I were going to publish the next issue of Science Fiction Five Yearly for Lee Hoffman. Lee has had a change of plans, and we will not be working on that issue. We don't at present know what Lee's new plans are, but we are eager to see the new issue come out. (I believe it will be the fifth in the series.)

The following will be not so much an essay, as a foray, into the subject of fanzines. It will be a hodgepodge of impressions and opinions, and will be done, dare I say it, on stencil. Forward, then.

Who is doing fanzine reviews lately? David Emerson, Jhim Linwood, Taral Wayne MacDonald, Bruce Arthurs, Keith Walker, Malcolm Edwards, Mike Glicksohn, Ken Josenhans, Bud Webster. To name only the ones who come to mind. (Of them, I like Linwood the best, as he seems most aware of what goes into each fanzine he reviews. Edwards seems to express his bitchy opinions best, and Emerson comes up with the most original approaches to a column.) What is it that all of them have in common that would summon me to review fanzines myself? None of them is me. (That has to be at bottom the reason each of them would give. We each of us has a unique view of affairs, and not finding anyone else who can express that view, we must express it ourselves.)

Besides, Suzle feels, with good reason, that we've gotten dozens of fanzines in the last ten months without giving adequate response. A mention in a column in SpanInq should be quite good enough, especially as I am about to give nothing but praise. It might on occasion be faint praise, but I will damn nothing. I have removed the boring and/or incompetent before beginning, and have left the amusing, the promising, and the superb. But first some random thoughts.

I have some pet prejudices. I will almost never read fiction in fanzines. It is almost always bad. I will read a story by a "name" professional (like Thomas Burnett Swann's story in Moon dust), humorous fiction about fans or fan interests, or stories by friends. Otherwise I skip over fiction, so that a zine like Empire is largely a loss to me. (Need I say that I find the fiction in the sf prozines to be largely an eyesore also?)

I do not much read short reviews of fiction unless I have already read the book being reviewed? I like to compare my reactions, y'see. (I pick new sf by author or word of mouth.) Sometimes I find myself skimming con reports and letter columns in impatience, too.

Personalzines are of two sorts, either letter substitutes of interest only to friends, or collections of short essays, of interest if the writer is good and the topics of moment. I don't often find the former of interest if I'm not a friend, but exceptions do crop up with alarming frequency. (Last year's alarming exception was Don Thompson's Dinosaur.)

A personalzine is just the thing to bring up the subject of motive. Why does a person do a fanzine of any sort? Nice wide range of motives to choose among: pursuit of egoboo, meeting of a personal challenge, expression of fannish energy because all around you there's other people publishing, wish to have something to offer in trade, desire to present or promote a topic, an approach or a group of writers currently being ignored or not properly presented (as, for instance, Notes From the Chemistry Department has been trying to foster discussion of science and more technical science fiction). We do SpanInq out of a combination of challenge, egoboo and presentation of a

unique combination of talents whom we feel are that good that you should all be happy to read their writing/see their drawing.

Why have I left out the bad from the stuff I'm about to review? Because I think the demonstrably bad is a waste of time. I know that there is a school of thought in fandom that we are here to sooth each other's egos; being a sensitive and insecure person let me admit to having taken advantage of that easiness. But I have never wasted fandom's time or eyes so badly as some of the faneditors who send us their zines. I would like to say that my main enjoyment in fandom is intelligent interplay, exchange of information, suggestion of rhythm and beauty, provoking laughter and being provoked; that sums it up proper for fanzines, though conventions are much less specific. I am not here to give equal ear to the bums and the brilliant.

Of course, a few fanzines will be missing from the following simply because I have no very recent issues to review. This means that you get to decide if I left your fanzine out for one reason or the other. (Quane, I don't have any recent Notes; Thompson, no recent Donosaurs. Your minds, at least, are at rest.)

I feel that I am momentarily talked out, and will proceed to the "reviews." I'll give all pertinent data at the end of my editorial.

I haven't finished the newest Algol (Andy Porter) but four things in it have struck me so strongly that I'm going to go into detail (probably more detail than I will use on anything to follow). The thing that really got me going was Susan Wood's "Propellor Beanie." I know the thing was written for publication in Amazing (in which it has, surprisingly, appeared), and at a few points Susan's explanations of fan-speak show it, but that hardly matters. What Susan has done is to give the gestalt of fandom in the form of a series of anecdotes about Aussiecon, structured by the question, "Why are we here?" and the series of answers she and others give. Susan's love for fandom and her friends in it come through most strongly, and it is this love and friendship that she presents as the strongest reason for fandom's existence. Without it there would only be a sort of MLA for science fiction.

I am always interested in anything about Samuel R. Delany, and have carried for some years a plan for a massive, detailed article of my own about him (sort of a "thesis"). Even more interested am I in anything by Chip, and another vague plan I hold is to do an even more detailed interview with him. Darrell Schweitzer begins to lay the groundwork for me, by conducting the merest beginnings of such an interview. Chip is an enormously varied and interesting person, and he shows the barest ends of the threads that lead into his labyrinth. I think the interview must have been conducted by mail. I could not have resisted the suggestions Chip gives of subjects, angles, by-roads.

On page 27 is a full page drawing by Mike Streff. Streff is a newcomer as artists in fandom go...he's been around the field for maybe two years, and most of his work has been in Cincinnati fanzines, but that doesn't much matter. What matters is that this drawing is a study of four faces that fascinate me. The large foreground face is serene, strongly molded and beautiful, while the face directly above is distorted in a way that gives it many expressions, almost flickering across it, serenity, arrogance, pride, strength, sensuality. A circular background of blackness and planets ties the four faces together as though they were characters whose lives were intertwined. I like it.

And there is also Vin Di Fate's "Sketches". Vin says he is awkward with words, and he is a bit stiff. But his own voice comes through when he writes what he is thinking: "Frank R. Paul's product is, without question, the most annoying, unsettling,

inept body of work that I have yet seen in our genre, yet it is quite extraordinary and effective. It is good--my inclination is to say great--SF illustration." That is a tasty first sentence, and a second sentence with a typical hedge. Vin has strong opinions on sf illustration, and they are well-founded ones, but he remains a bit shy about expressing them. I'm sure he'll get over it. As you will have anticipated, Vin's subject is science fiction art, and in this first column, he examines Paul's faults and virtues in a clear and technical language. (Yes, language can be both at once; see William Atheling, Jr.'s reviews of sf.) Sf art has long needed someone who could analyse it for us, and the late sixties boom of columns on sf art gave us only people who talked about the economics of the field (except for some material by Ron Miller, who seemed too disdainful of the field to offer it anything it would listen to). So Vin's Column is exactly what is wanted.

There's other stuff in Algol, too. Andy can write a mean, fannish editorial, for instance, and put himself on the hot seat just by trying to be nice. Andy (the reviewer said through clenched teeth), this fanzine has two editors. Suzle is, shall we say, peeved.

Everybody begins fanzine review columns by reviewing Locus. I wouldn't dream of it. I'll just mention that there are only two fanzines I read immediately they arrive in the mail. Locus is one of them. For the six of you who don't know, Locus carries all the news of the professional sf world: markets, books, conventions, minutiae. The other fanzine I read immediately is Karass. For the twelve of you...more news, of fandom: conventions, fanzines, clubs, changes of address. Charlie and Dena Brown also run columns and cartoons in Locus. Linda Bushyager runs columns and cartoons in Karass. Nice.

Normally Rune (Fred Haskell) is a collection of comic strips, reviews, off-beat articles and the most monstrous lettercol in fandom. #47, though, is a marvelous jape, almost entirely a comic strip that gives the best approximation of an sf con I have ever seen. It is more true to conventions than most straightforward con reports. It opens with a dazzling series of cover pages, and includes a wierd Singer (jon singer, patent pending) convention speech, and a very plausible series of party "quotes" by Jerry Stearns.

A few years ago Moshe Feder published a fanzine honoring Hank Davis; last year Mike Glicksohn published one honoring Joe Haldeman (and the practice extends into anti-quity, with zines done for fans of the past). Now Larry Downes comes along and does The Cy Chauvin Memorial Fanzine. Cy isn't dead, but he might wish to be, since the zine is one long string of zingers at his expense. Even if you don't know Cy, the zine is interesting for what it demonstrates about Detroit-area fandom: they are a tight group. But, though amusing, the thing is not quite perfect. Larry could have made better use of his printing facilities, gotten better art, laid in the headings straighter. Oh well, it reads good.

A few zines of more specialized interest: Kolvir (Tim Daniels, Gil Fitzgerald) is chiefly a fantasy fanzine with the tangy critical articles of Gil being its greatest merit. Kolvir is beginning a series of articles about the handling of male/female relations by sf and fantasy authors. Starling (Lesleigh and Hank Luttrell) is an old favorite of mine, a "popular culture" fanzine which wanders off to any subject that engages the interest of its editors. Currently they are off on mystery fiction, and I am just waiting for them to go off in another, more interesting direction. #33 starts the pendulum back to sf and comics. Empire 5/6 (Mark McGarry) is a very ambitious effort, aimed at those who want to be professional writers. There are a lot of you, aren't there? Mark publishes fiction and how-to articles...and he inter-views faneds! (gasps of disbelief) His mimeo is not equal to his ambition, but he

told me (at Lunacon) that he is planning to go to off-set with the next issue.

It becomes evident that I could go on for pages, so, before I delve into a severely shortened continuation of my reviewing, let me take a moment for an undisguised plug. My apartmentmate, Joe Siclari, his co-editor Gary Farber, and Joe's willing slave and fiancée Karina Girsdansky, have just published Fanhistorica 1. Although I have not read the completed zine, I have read parts in manuscript. And it has some quite good material. Fy is to be, in large part, a reprint zine. There is a whale of a lot of good material out there just waiting...and some new material as well, this issue boasting a new article by Lee Hoffman (legendary fan and a fine person). Not perfectly produced, since there was some trouble with the mimeo, but to make up for it Karina is hand-coloring a Stu Shiffman illo, a mad undertaking. (The issue also contains "I've Had No Sleep, and I Must Giggle," by Ginjer Buchanan, which is at the same time a perfect rendition of the Baycon and a sharp parody of Harlan Ellison.)



Boom. That was the sound of a pile of fanzines falling to the floor, after being shoved aside. What's left? Maya 10 (Robert Jackson) with a very clever cover and the best of Britain inside, a mixture of humor, criticism and personality. (boy, you sounding like a reviewer now.) Mota 16 (Terry Hughes) with a mixture of humor, humor and more humor. The best of America? Not bad. I have by accident grouped together two fanzines that have the good taste to print the same Bob Shaw article about taxi driving, though Mota has the better illustrations.

Two rather heavy fanzines here, weigh about a pound apiece. Khatru 5 (Jeff Smith) opens with a lovely Freff cover: a group of bejewelled and intelligent kit foxes. James Tiptree frightens me to death (well, nearly) with his heart attack in Mexico, and the lettercol is full of people (and a few right twits) responding to the "women and SF" issue. And S F Commentary 44/45 (Bruce Gillespie) finally came in. Bruce's personal writing is less self-pitying than usual, but I identify with him just as heavily as usual (I identify with anyone who is searching for something. Quests are such fun, even hopeless ones.) And even more fun is George Turner as he talks about LeGuin, Wolfe and Lem; he has such a fine ear and steady, penetrating mind. Another writer, pretty much a newcomer to SFC, is Gerard Murnane, whose material also is fine.

The Katzes are publishing again, the second issue of the new series of Swoon just out. Get this for Harry Warner's article about his fifties history, A Wealth of Fable and for the crisp and lovely layouts (we owe a lot to Swoon at SpanInq) if nothing else. Also, Bill Kunkel is publishing Rats! again. The first issue is very pleasant, infused with what I think of as Bill's genial nastiness.

Oh, how they march on, these fanzines. One more tried and true: Kratophany #8*. Only 8, Eli Cohen? What kind of a publishing schedule you got, anyway? I love Eli's writing, which consists of a sly intimacy, an intellectual Jewish wit and a sure touch with a bit of allusion.

And to finish, four zines either from new fans or simply new zines. Log of the Star-

ship Aniara, a personalzine from Bud Webster, who could be the next good personal writer on the scene; Scintillation 8 (Carl Bennett), constantly growing and engaging, like its editor; Moon dust 1 (Bob Roehm), slender, impeccable and very promising; and Calcium Light Nights 3 from Phil Paine, with a nice range of subject matter presented through a light touch.

Many sorries to those I decided to toss off the desk. Indeed a lot of joys and virtues I wanted to point out and at greater length, but perhaps I will take up doing this for another (and more indulgent) fanzine.

Fanzines Reviewed (if you are so kind as to call them "reviews"):

Algol: Algol Publications, POBox 4175, New York, NY 10017. \$1.50, 6/ \$7.50.

Locus: Locus Publications, POBox 3938, San Francisco, CA 94119. 50¢, 15/\$6.00.

Karass: Linda Bushyager, 1614 Evans Ave, Prospect Park, PA 19076. 3/\$1.00.

Rune: Fred Haskell, 343 E. 19th St, Minneapolis, MN 55404. 50¢, year/\$2.00.

The Cy Chauvin Memorial Fanzine: Larry Downes, 21960 Avon, Oak Park, MI 48237. \$1.00.

Kolvir: C/O HOPSFA, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD 21218. 50¢, 5/\$2.00.

Starling: Hank & Lesleigh Luttrell, 525 W. Main, Madison, WI 53703. 50¢, 5/\$2.00.

Empire Science Fiction: Mark J. McGarry, 631-E So. Pearl St, Albany, NY 12202. Issue reviewed is \$1.50, reg. 75¢, 5/\$3.00.

Fanhistorica: JoeD Siclari, POBox 1343, Radio City Sta., New York, NY 10019. This issue 50¢, next issue 75¢.

Maya: Robert Jackson, 21 Lyndhurst Rd, Benton, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 9NT, UK.
US and Canada: \$1.00, 4/\$3.00

Mota: Terry Hughes, 4739 Washington Blvd, Basement, Arlington, VA 22205.

Khatru: Jeff Smith, 1339 Weldon Ave, Baltimore, MD 21211. \$1.25, 4/\$4.00.

S F Commentary: Bruce Gillespie, GPOBox 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia.
5/\$6.00 (do not send checks in American money.)

Swoon: Joyce and Arnie Katz, 59 Livingston St, #6B, Brooklyn NY 11201. \$1.00, 6/\$3.00.

Rats!: Bill Kunkel, 85-30 121st St, Kew Gardens, NY 11415. \$1.00, 6/\$3.00.

Kratophany: Eli Cohen, 2920 Victoria Ave, #12, Regina, Sask S4T 1K7, Canada. 50¢.

Log of the Starship Aniara: Bud Webster, POBox 5519, Richmond, VA 23220. 50¢, 4/\$1.50.

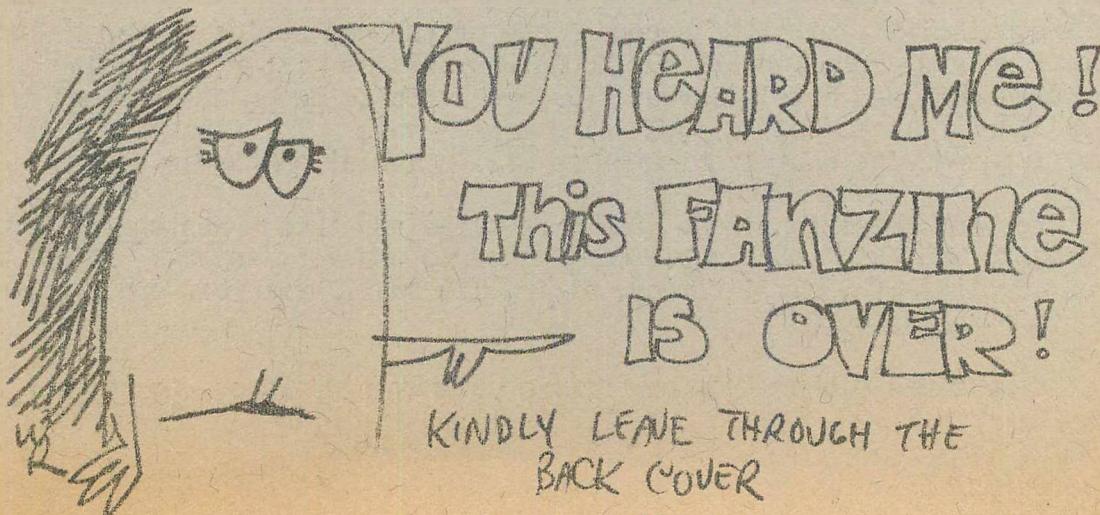
Scintillation: Carl Bennett, Box 8502, Portland, OR 97207. 50¢, year/\$3.50.

Moon dust: Bob Roehm, 820 Cambridge Blvd, #165, Clarksville, IN 47130. 75¢.

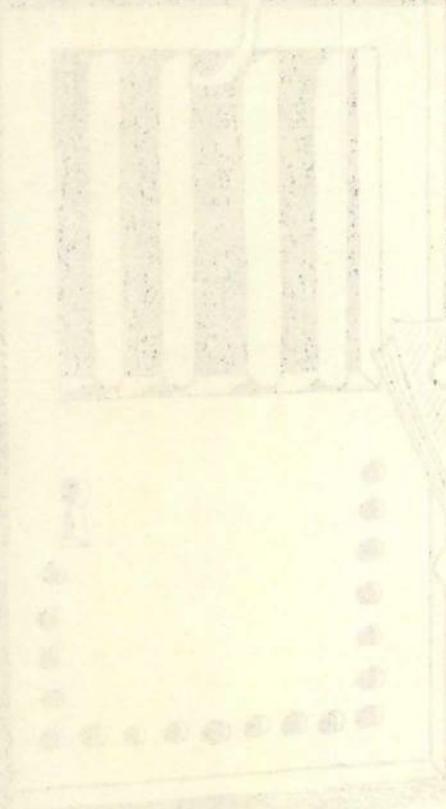
Calcium Light Nights: Phil Paine, 206 St. George, #910, Toronto, Ont. Canada.

Almost all the above are available for The Usual, i.e. trades, locs, contributions.

Mota and Calcium Light Nights are available only for The Usual. Mota and Fanhistorica are also to be gotten for old fanzines. Algol, Empire, Rats! and The Cy Chauvin Memorial Fanzine require trades to be pre-arranged. Locus and Karass can be had for useable news, too. And that more than wraps it up. Goom-by.



...AND IN HERE
JERRY KEEPS
HIS FAVORITE!



... AND IN HERE
JERRY KEEPS
HIS FANZINES!

