



the spanish inquisition 9

Bewitched, Bothered and Bemildred

I've just returned from Confusion, an exhilarating convention in frigid Ann Arbor, Michigan, and I feel I could go on for pages describing all the nice people, and analyzing my own complex reactions to them and to my own constantly shifting feelings...but I won't. I've restricted myself to two pages of editorese in order that our page-count stay at forty. In a mad attempt at magical suggestion, I will list some of those wonderful people: Bill Bowers, Cy Chauvin, Denice Hudspeth, Seth McEvoy, Sarah Shaw, Mike O'Brien, Alex Krislov, Barbara Jones, Lynn Parks, Josh Madarasz, Diane Drutowski, Dana Siegal, Mike Glicksohn, Linda Moss, Tony Cvetko, Larry Downes, Jo Anne McBride, John Benson, Gary Farber, Paul Madarasz, Ken Josenhans, Jackie Franke, Alica Madarasz, Ben Zuhl, and this is getting silly. A few people on the list made big impressions, though I only saw them a few minutes (like Josh), while others I enjoyed seeing just don't come to mind at the moment, but everyone made this a worthwhile trip. (By the way, Jackie, you can tell your English friend to take the pen out of his nose now.) (Blast--forgot Fred Haskell and Jennifer Bankier and...)

And if I'd have been a good worker like I ought, this issue would have been done in time for Confusion. But while Suzle worked at stenciling headings and patching in illos, I goofed off. (If either of us were really energetic, this would have been done months ago.) So now it will be done for Boskone, and one of the editors will be there to collect her due share of egoboo.

Next on the agenda: a list of those who helped us collate the Monster Issue, those willing workers without whom this fanzine would be an Utter Drag: Barbara Geraud, Tom Morley, Jim Mann, Laurie Trask, Ira Kaplowitz (all from Pittsburgh, and in town for the Lunarians meeting at the time), Hope Leibowitz, Lou Stathis, Bridget Dziejczak, Laura Haney, R.A. MacAvoy, Linda Bushyager, Gary Farber, Anna Vargo, Chris Couch, Stu Shiffman, Meryl Bloom and Deby Kucker.

Thank yous for this issue go to Brian McCarthy for running our electrostencils, to Linda Bushyager for procuring our paper and allowing us to run the cover on one of her mimeographs, and to Stu Shiffman for doing odd bits of art to order.

You will notice that we are attempting to "go fannish," with a mailing label formed from our back page. We hope to save money, of course, by not using an envelope. We have also attempted to reduce your ridiculous faith in our perfection by including a judicious selection of popped "o"s. Energumen, we ain't.

Several budding fan editors have asked us for the addresses of fan artists. Realizing that it is difficult to find addresses for many of these people readily, and realizing that many artists don't get many fanzines because of this, we've decided to give you the addresses of a number of our artistic contributors:

Randy Bathurst, 9270 Commerce Rd, #5, Union Lake, MI 48085

Jerry Kaufman

Harry Bell, 9 Lincoln St, Gateshead, Co. Durham, NE8 4EE, UK
Grant Canfield, 28 Atalaya Terrace, San Francisco, CA 94117
Gary Goldstein, POBox 3734, Santa Monica, CA 90403
Bill Kunkel, POBox 163, Richmond Hill, NY 11418
Barry Kent MacKay, 35 Thorncliffe Pk. Dr., #1208, Toronto, Ontario,
M4H 1J3, CANADA
Tim Marion, 614 72nd St, Newport News, VA 23605 (calligraphy)
William Rotsler, Box 3126, Los Angeles, CA 90028
Stu Shiffman, 880 W. 181st St, #4D, New York, NY 10033
Marc Shirmeister, 342 Camino Del Sol, S. Pasadena, CA 91030
James Shull, 5503 Tilden Ave, Van Nuys, CA 91401
Al Sirois, 550 Dixwell Ave, New Haven, CT 06511

We expect to have another issue out in three or four months, perhaps, and we already have on hand a long Mae Strelkov article, a bizarre study of show tunes by "Marrin Cahill" and a typically hilarious column by Loren MacGregor. We expect columns from Ginjer Buchanan and Peter Roberts as well. And Gary Farber will begin a column of thoughtful analysis of fanzines and their contributors, as companion to his reviews in Karass. And scattered through the issue will be the results of a collision one evening between Stu Shiffman and Phil Foglio. SpanInq 10 is looking good.

A few words about the future. Who can predict it? Chicago is turning into the fannish Mecca of the seventies, if the folks at Confusion can be believed. But Seattle is the cultural Mecca of the seventies, and in the end that will prove to be of greater importance. Which is my way of saying that I am moving to Seattle sometime later this year, a move prompted by my impressions of the city gathered during last summer and by my growing disenchantment with New York. I do not know what will happen after that; I've no way to predict it. Suzle is considering the move, too, but is undecided at present. (Of course, these decisions are subject to new factors, and may change. Chance moves in mysterious ways.)

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"As it is, psionics promises to be even funnier than dianetics or Ray Palmer's Shaver stories. It suggests once more how far from accurate is the stereotype of the science fiction fan as a bright, well-informed, scientifically literate fellow. Judging by the number of Campbell's readers who are impressed by this nonsense, the average fan may very well be a chap in his teens, with a smattering of scientific knowledge culled mostly from science fiction, enormously gullible, with a strong bent towards occultism, no understanding of scientific method, and a basic insecurity for which he compensates by fantasies of scientific power.

Martin Gardner, Fads and Fancies in the Name of Science, '57

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"It was all over in one ballot. Flushing led the rest with 532 votes, Baltimore had 317, Providence 100 and Boston 73. Flushing had won the Worldcon. Shiffman was released from his straitjacket and a bucket of icewater was dumped on Feder to return him to consciousness. From this first step was to come the most bizarre convention in history."

2) Oliver St John Gogarty, The Year the Worldcon Came to Flushing

37¢ OF WONDER

For years I've been wasting my time reading porno novels. Pornography is filthy, vile, degrading, disgusting smut. However, that's not why I stopped, because basically porno is fun. Yes, indeed. I stopped reading porno because I started reading Norse mythology.

Gee, I didn't know they wrote about things like that back then. It sure must have warmed up those long winter nights.

Just as an example, I was reading of the time when Asgard's Wall was destroyed in the Wane War--

...What kind of name is that for a war, anyway? I mean, a war is an exciting thing: pulses pounding, swords clashing, horses rearing. Can you imagine a scene between two old duffers, sharing a beer in a local pub: one asks, "Hey, Pancho! Who we fighting this week?" and his partner shakes his head and says, "There's a war on the Wane," and the first says, "I didn't ask how the war was going, I asked who we were fighting." But I digress...

Odin calls together his wife, his sons, his daughters, his Uncle Ed, and says, "Hey, folks, we gotta rebuild that wall. Who's got some suggestions?"

Just then Loki speaks up, "I know this terrific stoneworker outaways and five'll get you ten he could knock together a wall in no time." So Odin calls the stonemason (who happens to be a giant in disguise) in on a consult.

The giant steps back to survey the area; he squints a little; tilts his head to one side; frames the scene with his thumbs and forefingers. Finally he says, "Ya, shure, ay ban build yew a vall in vun year, yew betcha." (In later years, by the way, he joins a flying team called the Blackhawks and lives happily ever after.) "Yew yust give me der sun, der moon, and a warm cuddly bod if ay ban do the yob up right."

"Far out," I thought to myself, "Sex!"

So Odin thinks it over and says, "Why sure!" meanwhile biting his sleeve to keep from laughing. "What a hick!" he's thinking.

"You just got to promise me two things," he continues. "One, if you don't get the job done in a year, you don't get paid, and two, you can't bring any of your friends over to help; you've gotta do it all yourself."

The giant shuffles his feet and brushes back a cowlick. "Uh, can I bring my horse?" he says.

"Sure!" Odin answers. "And say--if you get done, I'll even throw in my daughter, Freyja." At this point I suspect that both Freyja and

Odin's wife Frigga started throwing pots and pans, but I don't have any evidence.

From the sound of things, the giant was a member of a strong union while his horse was either non-union or an apprentice. At any rate, the giant worked slowly all day, while the horse (whose name was Svadilfari) whipped things into shape on the graveyard shift.

Pretty soon it was obvious that things weren't going too well for Asgard. Frigga took Odin aside and said, "Look, Big Fella, I suppose I can get along without Freyja, but when the sun disappears you're going to get awfully damn cold in your bed alone--if you get my meaning."

Odin's lightning-quick mind cuts right to the quick. "Loki!" he bawls, and the master of mischief (I thought it was time for a little class in this thing) comes running up. "Yeah, Pop," says Loki, as he combs back his D.A.

"Loki," Odin says, "what's with this character out there building that wall?"

Loki leans out the window to look. "Well," he says, "the giant..."

"Giant? Hold it..."

"...the giant ain't worth shit. But that horse of his--now, that's a magic horse, and he'll whump that ol' wall up there in a month or two."

"Why," says Odin, "didn't you tell me it was a magic horse?"

"Hey, man--you didn't ask me!"

Odin smiles grimly (a thing only gods can do). "Loki?" he says mildly.

Loki starts to edge towards the door. "Ah--see you later, Dad," he says. "Gotta go see a man about a dog."

Odin grabs him by the collar. "You got us into this, you get us out. Go out and get rid of that horse."

"How am I supposed to do that?" asks Loki in a whine.

"How should I know? Seduce him if you have to, but..."

"Hey, now wait a minute!"

"Loki, I said go...AND I MEANT IT!"

"All right, all right," says Loki. "Don't get your teeth all in an uproar."

Next thing we know, Loki is trudging through the woods around Asgard, looking suspiciously like a chestnut mare. "All he wanted was the frigging wall built," he's mumbling to himself. "How the hell did I know he'd keep his stupid promi--Hel-lo there, good-lookin'! How's about a good time?"

Svadilfari looks up from the wall; lays his trowel down (magic horses



have prehensile hooves); and continues to look up, and down, and up again. "Gr-rrr-r-rowf!" he says. "Your place or mine?"

Meanwhile the giant (who has been dozing on the sidelines) wakes up with a start. "Hey, hold it," he calls. "You're not finished with your shift yet."

Svardilfari pushes him away. "I think I'm gonna take a coffee break now," he says. "As a matter of fact, I think I'll take one for the next three or four days. I may even be gone a week!" He nods to Loki. "C'mon, beautiful, let's take a walk." And Loki and Svadilfari walk away, arm in arm, leg in leg, neck in neck, or however Horses in love walk when they're together.

According to Norse legend the giant sat there all year, working on his stupid wall, while Loki and Svadilfari were off cavorting in the woods. And a year later, Loki had a ~~kid~~ colt, which he thereupon gave to Father Odin as a present. Rumor has it that Loki looked very pale at the time, and had lost a lot of weight. Rumor also says that Odin still rides that colt and chuckles a lot, but that might just be because the horse has eight legs and bounces in very funny places.

As for me, I think I've had enough of Norse mythology for a while.

Next week I'm moving up to Greek.

---Loren MacGregor

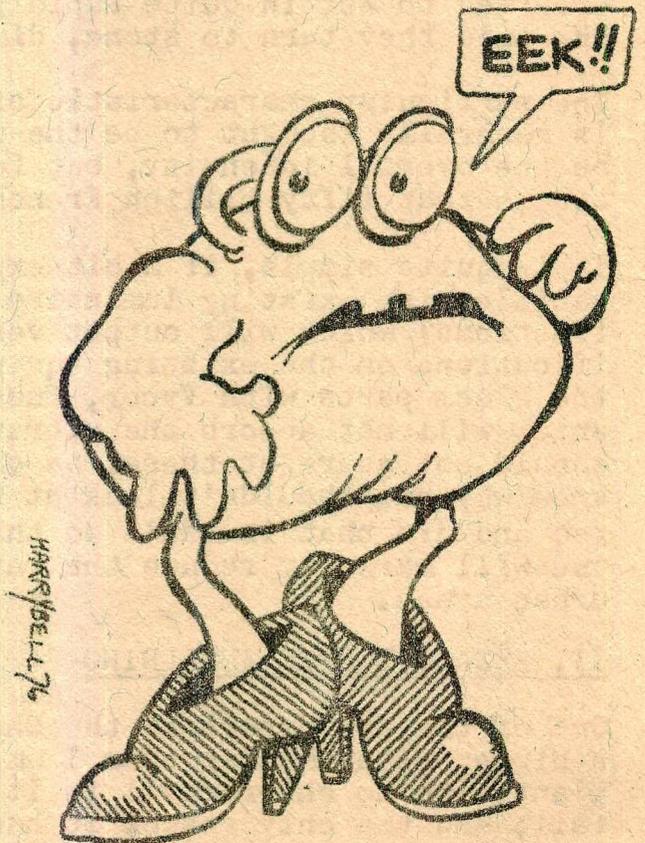
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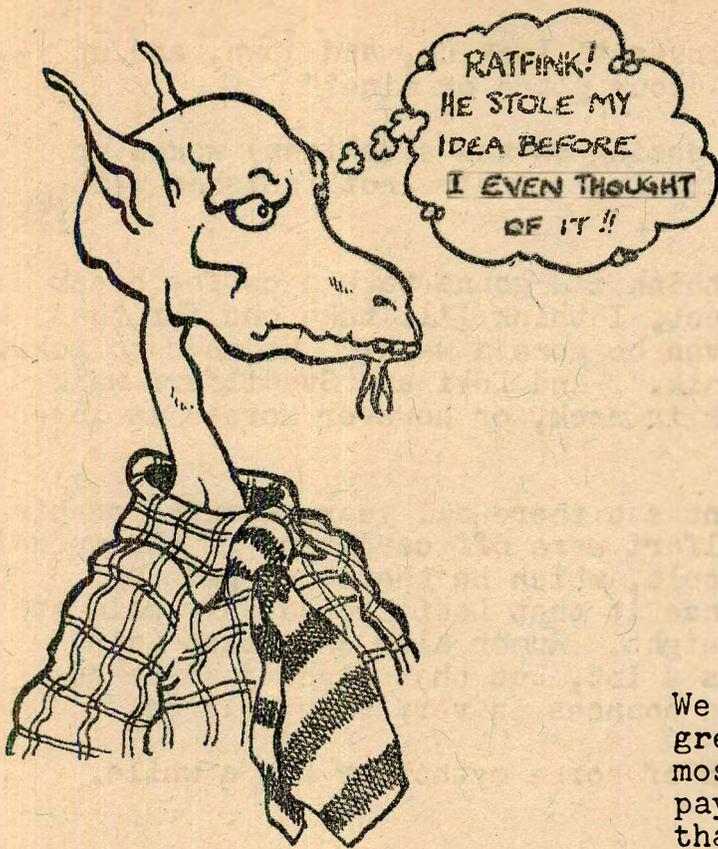
"... 'Stop!' she wailed.

"But it was too late. Townley's brush, loaded with red pigment, completed its arc full on the crown of the Mayor's magenta hat, splattering red paint all around the podium. Townley shouted, 'Viva Le Violence!' (a pun which Shiffman later refused to explain to Ms. Abzug, though much of the crowd seemed to understand at once) and evaded most of the hands that grabbed for him.

"Two members of the unofficial security group, Bearly Adequate Security, Gaier and Belsky, caught up with him by a hot-dog stand, and talked him into surrendering by threatening to loose Derek Carter on him..."

---Oliver St. John Gogarty,
When the Worldcon Came to
Flushing (p. 237)





I. OFF THE TROLLS

There are some people who just won't believe that technology can frequently offer a reasonable handle on arcane or otherwise obscure problems. For these, I offer the following possible solution to one of the relatively disagreeable problems of the day, troll infestation.

We are all aware of this, to one degree or another, drivers more than most (Welcome to Connecticut. Stop, pay troll 25¢.) and it seems to me that as long as I have this forum in which to speak out, etc.

Now, the nitty gritty here is that trolls are allergic to sunlight. They get a nearly instantaneous anaphylactic reaction which not only kills them, but also a powerful and permanent rigor mortis, which is observed to set in quite rapidly. ("Maude, what the hell did he say?" "He said they turn to stone, dimbulb.")

The particular characteristic of sunlight which governs this reaction is generally thought to be the ultraviolet content. (In fact, it may be the overall intensity, but for the purposes of this paper, we will assume that fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong.)

It is quite simple, if a bit expensive, to produce light sources compatible with existing luminaire installations (with minor field modifications) which will output very large amounts of UV. The minor modifications on the existing equipment mainly would consist of replacing the glass parts with Vycor, fused quartz, or some other substance which will not absorb the ultraviolet emitted by the new lamps. One should not stare at these, as one's eyes will turn to stone (now you know why you shouldn't look at the sun; at sunset, of course, it is so red and dim that it can't do that to you), but I am certain that their use will markedly reduce the rates of troll assault in rural and suburban areas.

II. ZZZAP! YOU'RE AN ALBINO

One of the professors in the Chemistry Department here at Wesleyan is a bigger plant maniac than I am, and he recently acquired an avocado plant with no chlorophyll in it at all. The thing is about eight feet tall, and the only reason it has lived long enough to reach that size

Jon Singer

is that the seed of the avocado is very large and has lots of food in it. I once had two tamarind seeds come up that way, and they lasted about two weeks before they died. Max has no intention of allowing this avocado to die, however, and he has asked me to graft the top of it onto a regular avocado. I am also going to graft the top of a regular one onto the root system of the mutant. That way, if either graft takes, we will have succeeded in keeping the genetic material of the mutant. I gave him a three-stalked regular one that should work nicely as a base, since it doesn't need all of its stems as food producers. The albino is really cute. It has white leaves and a white stem with pink spots on it. I just hope it lives till next week so we can graft it.

III. WIFE, SCHMIFE! I MAKE IT MYSELF

Those of you who like fountain pens of various sorts and who have access to chemicals may enjoy this section. I have just found that crystal violet makes a fine ink. I would bet that methylene blue, methyl orange, malachite green, and perhaps acridine red (or methyl red), would all be suitable, and water solutions could be used to fill felt-tip pens that have run out of ink. (One of my favorite little goodies: you just stand the pen in the ink for four days, and it fills itself. No need to rip the back end off and get all messed up.)

The original of this section is being written in crystal violet. ((Typist's note: The ink has neither smeared nor faded, though Jon sent this to us many months ago. His handwritingmmmm...jak))

I bet that mixtures of various of these dyes would produce damn near any color you would want excepting pink, (Rhodamine B) or yellow (Auramine O or (maybe) Fluorescein or agridine yellow or one of them things).

I bet you could even mix crystal violet, malachite green and methyl orange to get a decent black.

These dyes, by the way, are standard compounds. Rhodamine B and acridine red are common laser dyes, as is Fluorescein. The others are indicators and old-fashioned biological stains. Many organic chemistry students make methyl orange in their lab classes.

I bet I know just what it is that makes ditto masters purple...

IV. TENSER, SAID THE TENSOR

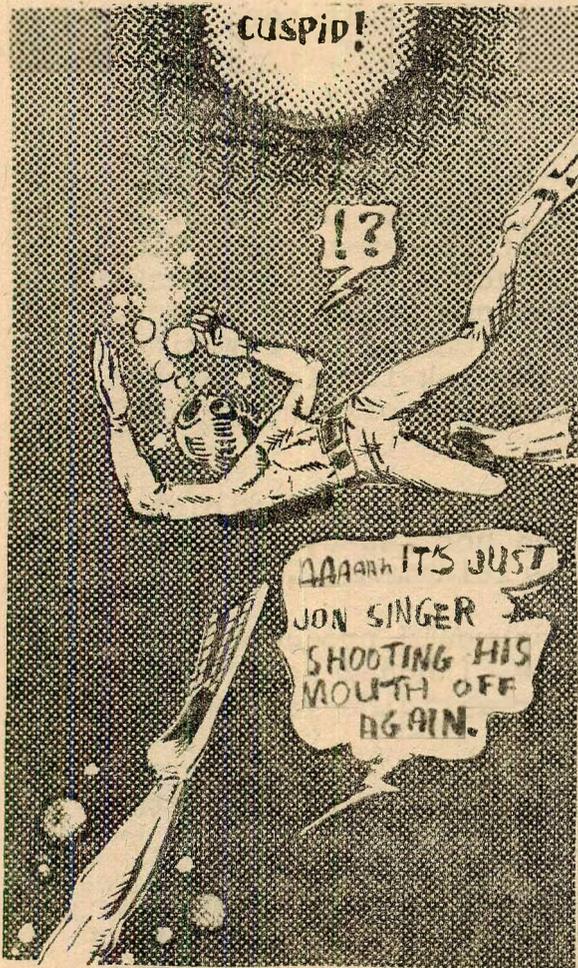
The other day, the right headlight on my car blew out its low beam. When I went to replace it, somehow it seemed a waste to throw out a perfectly good high beam, so I decided to make a monster high intensity lamp instead. When I checked the wattage, I found that the

Breakfast = Table

the lamp which mine was designed to replace drew only about five amps at twelve volts, which is not really a lot. It happens that I had a transformer lying around which was capable of supplying 8.5 amps, so I put an eight amp fuse on it, and found that it worked quite well. Since then I have put one of those little switches on the cord (you know, the kind with the little wheel you turn), and the lamp is illuminating my typer at this very moment.

I am surprised at how bright a mere 55 watts can be. (It is because the lamp is very directional, and doesn't send too much off to the sides.) (One week after I wrote the above, my new tensor lamp blew out. Fortunately, the very same day, the other low beam blew out of the car, and so I still have my lamp, months later.)

V. SKIN OF OUR TEETH



For a long time, divers were unable to go much deeper than, say, 350 or 400 feet, because of a condition called nitrogen narcosis. Of course, if they stayed inside rigid suits, and the pressure was not equalized with that of the water outside, they could go deeper, but rigid suits are not easy to work in, and they occasionally fail. Also, air has to be supplied from the surface, and that can fail, too.

Somebody finally came up with the brilliant idea of replacing the nitrogen with something lighter, to eliminate the effect. Hydrogen was obviously out, so they tried helium instead. Aside from the fact that your entire vocal apparatus vibrates faster because helium is less dense and less viscous, so you sound like Donald Duck (Frank Zappa has made good use of this on several Mothers of Invention tracks I've heard), it is a marvelous improvement. Also, since helium diffuses much faster than nitrogen, the bends are much less prevalent, and decompression times are much shorter. (The bends are a problem caused by rapid decompression: the nitrogen

which has dissolved in the blood under high pressure comes out as tiny bubbles when the pressure is released too quickly. Not nice.) There is one unfortunate side effect that I am aware of: if the fillings in your teeth are not extremely tight, the helium will diffuse in behind them, and fill the spaces. Then when you are decompressed, the pressure inside the tooth is still high, because decompression times, as I mentioned, are rather short. The result is a bad toothache if you are fortunate, and exploding teeth if not. Deep divers are advised to use only the best dentists.

VI. LETTER FROM WESLAYAN

Hank Heath: The stuff I heard about wasn't frictionless, it just starts sliding easier than it continues to slide. Since the stuff is largely Teflon, though, I figure that in most situations the coefficient of friction is quite low.

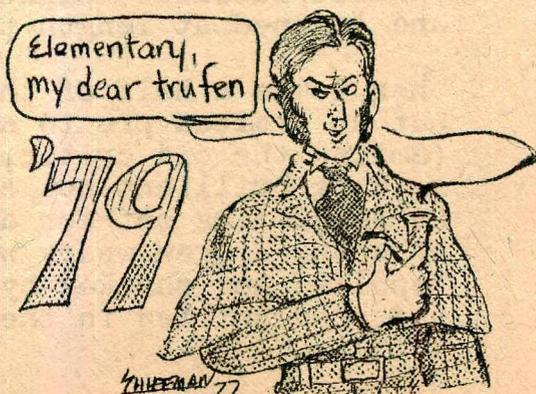
J. Robert Holmes: While it is true that a laser on a mountain on Earth can be made to illuminate a spot maybe 2 kilometers across on the Moon, let's look at what it would take to bring some of it back: first, we will assume, for simplicity, a "screen" consisting of 1000 lines, each of which contains 1000 pixels. (Do it digitally, it's easier.) (A pixel, for those unfamiliar, is one picture unit. A dot.) Now, if one laser does the entire job, and if there is no off time between pixels, each pixel is illuminated for a mere one millionth of the total time. This doesn't look too good, so let's go to 1000 lasers, each doing one line.

Now, how bright does a pixel have to be for us to see it? I would think that in consideration of the fact that each one will only be lit one thousandth of the time (mind, now, the lasers are all on all the time), lamination equivalent on the average to full sunlight should do. On the Earth, after the stuff goes through the atmosphere on the way in, full sunlight is perhaps a shade over 1000 watts per square meter. Let's use that figure for convenience. 1 kw per square meter on the Moon means that each pixel receives a Gigawatt! If we allow for 50% overall efficiency (that's DAMN GOOD) including atmospheric losses, that means that all the lasers together down here pull a grand total of 2 Terawatts. This is about 250 times the peak draw of New York City ...remembering that this is a liberal calculation, and that things are very likely much worse (as for example, if you are doing this in color, you can instantly triple that to 6 Terawatts), I think that while this is an interesting idea, it simply ain't gonna happen. Not only that, you'd have to watch it through binoculars, anyway.

Enclosed please find one pack of permanent razor blades, fifteen yards absolutely indestructible cloth (cutlines marked, patterns adjusted to your sizes, plenty extra to play with), one hand computer (picosecond gate times, intelligent, friendly, massive memory, can be installed in stuffed toy to keep your child VERY busy), twelve assorted gallons of patternpaint (put it on your wall, you will surely be amused), four rolls of experimental switchable film, with camera (press the lever to the right if you want a black and white picture, to the left for color; speed dial is on your right), one gloryroad bag, three hippotophers (no relation to Topher Cooper), and a super mood ring (set the color, the ring sets your mood).

---Jon Singer

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**Britain
is fine in '79**



ROCKING THE BOAT

"First, though not in order of importance, is the poet who has emerged docketed 'lyrical,' from the Civil Service."

--Dylan Thomas, "How to be a Poet"

Lament?

When I was a neofan and a bit
And a ripe mark for the Commodore
(Sighed the old critic, sated with Heinlein)
I looked about and timidly saw
No author with a bright flashing wit;
Berserker kill the agelong myths he bore;
The old man's foolish excess undermine
The foundation of his fabled triple law
In my cynic's respect. Those selfsame eyes
That often in the past had scanned their pages
Beheld dismayed the Lilliputian size
Of these Tiresiases of unborn ages.

When I was a fan who had joined a club
Well marked with the gym and roaring drunk
(smirked the old critic, tiring of Niven)
Not a goshwowing kid at Infinity Con
But a man with a fanzine sub
I plied my incubations like a monk,
Chinchilla fathered, in bush labor given
To astounding explications. Then anon
with stewed mark trying the Gordian knot
For a bag of shells I till the owl light sang,
Stomped the virgin's arm and forgot all thought,
Knew the sad-sweet alcoholic's pang.

When I was a fan you could call a fan
And the fierce wit of the lettercol
(Grinned the old critic, fed up with Farmer)
Blunt and brash and fannishly thick,
Not a wide eyed boy of the star struck clan
Nor a drunkard staggering hall to hall
In the mazed hotel of the east, but a warmer
Type, chairman and pane bearer for A.B. Dick
I fashioned a computer corflu born,
Captured a bishop, shot the trekky star,
Fondled luscious thighs through the long morn
And learned at length to shun the hotel bar.

When I was a half of the fan I was
But an orbited pro to spread my fame
(Smiled the old critic, bored with conventions)
A young brilliant hot shot named by the night,
No swaggering sot for a femmefan lass,
No apan, I grew weary with the game.
Repulsed and shocked by eerie rank attentions
And seed spilled in the stairwell by the bright

Young things, will-I nill-I priested by the row
I railed within the unexpected zine,
Was fingered by harlequin's ghost and so
Resolved at length to quit the fannish scene.

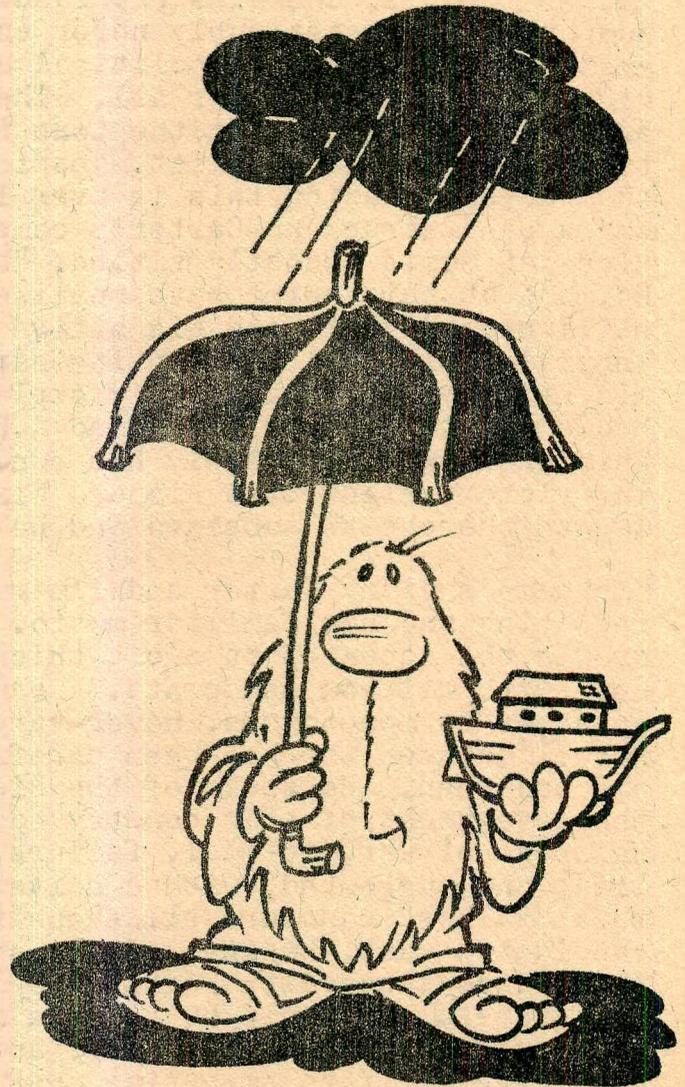
Now I am a fan no more no more
And feeling fine as the gafiates tell
(Laughed the old critic, leaving from fandom)
Am going back at length where I came from
No more to sleep upon a crowded floor
In an over priced under sized hotel
Where neos wow and authors bore in tandem.
I have turned in my beanie: cease'll come.
No more have I the will to bare my knuckles
Amid the sercon brawls and fannish strife.
Now Gore Vidal instructs me, John Barth chuckles,
And all the mainstream writers cheer my life.

Two political speeches

"It is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes; it is not due simply to the bad influence of this or that individual writer.. ..All issues are political issues, and politics itself is a mass of lies, evasions, folly, hatred and schizophrenia. When the general atmosphere is bad, language must suffer."

--George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language."

An ancient Chinese curse, particularly virulent as curses are supposed to go, conjures, "May you live in interesting times." A dispassionate observer might well suspect that our shining republic has been the object of such an incantation, for a good many things have gone wrong of late. Our foreign policy has suffered well-deserved setbacks in Asia and West Africa for instance, and polls indicate that the confidence of the American working man in the ability of the American fighting man is at a long time low. We are in terrible shape economically of course, a situation no one but the Arabs can feel optimistic about. Worse still, confidence in the nation's leaders is



John Curlovich

vanishing. Richard Nixon's fall from the heights set into motion forces which, one suspects, have yet to work their final effects. For the first time in our brief history the will of the majority has been demonstrably, not to say catastrophically, wrong; and though superficially all has become well again, it is difficult not to think that many good citizens must be experiencing doubts in private they might never publically voice. If as a zealous writer once proclaimed, "the people are wiser than anyone knows," then their wisdom must be verging on that of the Greek Cynics, who questioned everything. (When Aristotle defined man as "a featherless biped," Antisthenes the Cynic sent to him a messenger bearing a plucked chicken.) In short, the national luck is running dangerously low, and it is difficult to know where we might look for the strength we need to guide us through a possibly critical time in history.

One possible source of course is the Democratic Party. On Thursday, July 15, 1976, Governor Jimmy Carter of Georgia went to the Madison Square Garden in New York to accept his party's nomination for the presidency. The scene for his arrival was carefully set. Senator Walter Mondale, the Vice Presidential nominee and a protege of Hubert Humphrey who mysteriously never entered the campaign, made a rather amateurish and routine political speech. Nothing must detract from the night's real star, after all. Then a promotional film, produced by an advertising agency, set the tone for the campaign to come: Carter was to be pushed as a populist, despite the fact that he owns more money than anyone reading this is ever likely to possess. The film ended and a band struck up Carter's campaign song, a wholly characterless piece of music modestly titled, "Why Not the Best?" And Carter entered. He must at this point have realized keenly that a great many people still regarded him and his native South with profound suspicion (in an interview with Walter Cronkite earlier in the evening Carter's mother, Miz Lillian, had ingenuously explained that when Jimmy was young "he had a little colored boy named A.D....") but not here, not tonight. This crowd was completely his own. He stood before them waving, flashing victory signs like Richard Nixon, showing them his teeth. At length the cheers subsided and he began.

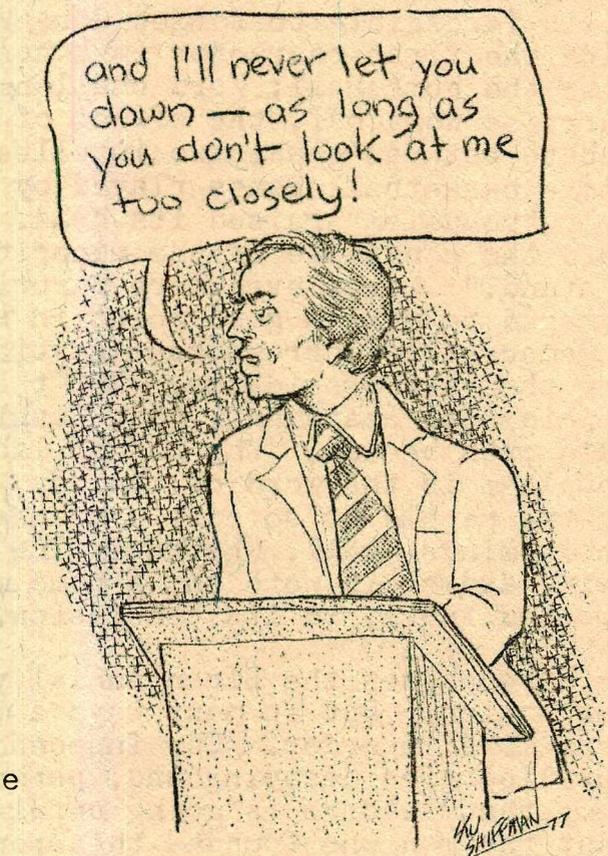
"My name's Jimmy Carter and I'm running for president," he intoned, repeating the now familiar motto. Pause. Smile. Was it imagination, or was the accent just a bit thicker tonight? "It's a pleasure to be here with all you Democrats." Pause. Smile. The cadence of Carter's speeches is monotonous, never-varying: he comes across like a high school debater who has been carefully rehearsed in which gestures to use and when. He spoke of the Bicentennial and of his desire to "give the government of this country back to the people of this country." He spoke of war, scandal, failure, mediocrity, inferior quality of life; and suggested, with a naivete that can't be genuine, that "simple moral values" can cure all these ills. Then as all of his party's candidates must, he invoked the spirits of the Democratic dead: Franklin Delano Roosevelt, begins the litany; Harry Truman, and one thought how grateful we would be to have that "first rate second rate man" among us now; John F. Kennedy, and here Carter reached up and touched his hair, as if to emphasize that at least superficially he resembles the martyred St. John; Lyndon Baines Johnson, and here credulity snapped as Carter referred to the man who turned a minor conflict into a major land war as "bighearted." At one point he explained that, "We Democrats believe that competition is better than regulation," an alarmingly Republican statement and, given the circumstances, more than a little confusing. He recited a list of promised actions--tax reform,

voter registration ("here's some-
thin' that could really help our
country") and so on--which sounded
fine until one recalled that, ex-
cepting a national health program,
they were the same things Richard
Nixon promised eight years ago.

What is to be made of a speech like
Carter's? One sober realization is
that while he certainly makes a
flashier candidate than Ford, he
doesn't seem appreciably more in-
telligent. But one's dominant re-
action was to realize more fully
than ever before that Carter, like
all recent candidates, is a manu-
factured thing, completely artifi-
cial, a product designed to have
maximum appeal at minimum cost to
the producer. But who is the pro-
ducer? It is the content of the
speech (such as it is) that provides
a clue. For the speech fairly oozes
with what passes these days as pop-
ulism. Carter wants powers to reside
"not with the power broker but with
the people." He has promised to
make "an investment in people, not in buildings and weapons," as if it
were possible to do one without the other. He said he would be a
president who "feels you pain and shares your dreams and takes his
wisdom and courage from you." This is strong praise indeed when you
realize he's talking about the populace that re-elected Richard Nixon.
American politicians have always sweet-talked the people and the peo-
ple have always liked it. But once politician's also took stands;
they had ideas and they expressed them well. Do you suppose any in-
formed citizen was unaware of Jefferson's opinions, or Hamilton's, or
even John Jay's? Yet Jimmy Carter, who claims to represent leadership
and progress, confused flattery with populism and so told us exactly
nothing.

On Thursday, August 19, Gerald Ford accepted his party's nomination in
Kansas City. This time the scene was not set at all carefully; the
Republicans have never had much sense of drama. The Ford campaign
film was screened before anyone quite realized what was happening, for
instance. Ford's nomination of Robert Dole to be his running mate had
confused the delegates and thrown a wet blanket over the convention.
Dole's acceptance speech, full of dull conservative platitudes, didn't
help this much. Then Cary Grant of all people was introduced, and
though he is seventy years old he still has dimples and that cute
smile. (Dorothy L. Sayers once remarked that muddled aged men who
have elfin charm should be put into lethal chambers.) Grant told jokes
for twenty minutes by way of introducing Mrs. Ford, who then smiled,
spoke a few words, waved and left, an anticlimax if there ever were
one. You see the point about their lack of dramatic sense? Still,
given the character of the incumbent president, all this seemed
somehow apt.

"I am honored by your nomination," Ford began his speech, "and I accept

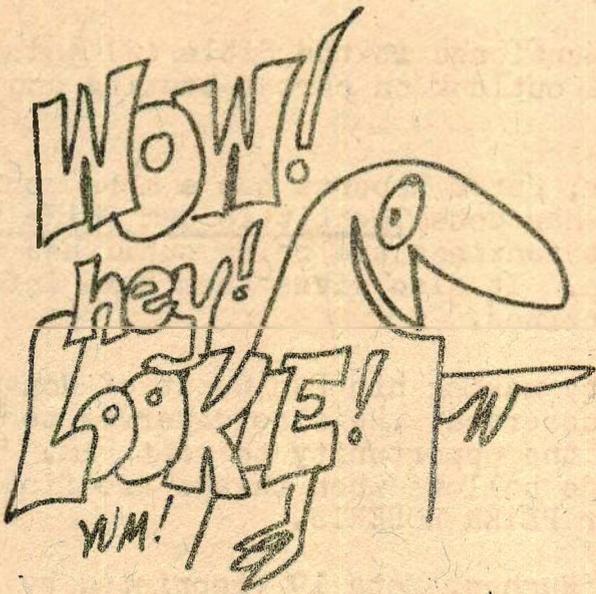


it." He looked tired, drawn out, perhaps embarrassed at nearly losing the nomination to an entertainer. "We will win," he said; etc., etc. It is impossible to forget Gore Vidal's description of Ford: he looks like the first character in a horror movie to see the monster. Then came the bombshell; Ford challenged Carter to debate. Once the initial surprise wore off, the effect of this was ironic and rather morbid. A debate between these two intellects would be uncomfortably like one of those basketball games played by people in wheelchairs. Then inevitably "populism" raised its head. "It is from your ranks that I come," said the candidate of the minority party, "and it is on your side that I stand." Next, even more surprising than the challenge, Ford actually managed to make a good point in his case for himself, specifically that a Democratic Congress had "certified" him a worthy candidate, if only for the vice presidency. But the effect of this was quickly wiped out by his next statement, that Washington, Lincoln and FDR had taken the same oath he had. Why had he labored a fact so self-evident? But Populism is the word of the day, and if one can be made to seem a man of the people by so easy a means as planting spurious associations in their minds--well, why not? The rest of the speech was in this same vein, and so it wore on, a name mispronounced here, a preposition dropped there, to its conclusion.

We have passed the Bicentennial year, the glorious 200th birthday of our nation. But in many ways a year of national mourning might have been more in order. Our innocence is gone, our environment ruined, our liberties decaying and, perhaps most alarming of all, our need for competent leaders is going unfulfilled. Whatever else can be said about the men who founded this republic they were among the finest political thinkers in their world. Look at what we have now. If Carter and Ford had been alive two hundred years ago, they'd have been upholsterers. But the fact that these loons could loom so large in our affairs is symptomatic of a much deeper problem, one more akin to the spirit of tragedy than to the Petronian comedy our presidentials enacted last fall. The political sense of the American people, never very sharp even in the best of times, has all but died. Now, in times that are much too interesting for comfort, the people crave the anodyne. They listen enthusiastically, uncritically to any "solution" as long as it seems easy, comfortable, unlikely to make life more complicated or less pleasant. Carter and Ford, with their simple justice, simple courage, simple this and simple that are a reflection of what we have become, or at any rate what we wish desperately to become.

Admittedly it is somewhat unfair to judge a politician on the basis of only one speech. But what else has one to judge by? Each of the candidates reversed his position on key issues with startling ease and frequency. It is at least possible to gauge the quality of his mind through the clarity and insight with which he propounds a given stand on a given day. And then of course these two particular speeches were not completely typical. Each at least in theory was a sort of apologia, an attempt to delineate as fully and convincingly as possible the qualifications and merits of the man who delivered it for high office and public trust. In ancient Rome a man's whole political career could hang on one speech well delivered. But in our new republic it seems a candidate can only become popular by speaking badly and saying foolish things. The historian Tacitus sadly noted that the Roman republic collapsed when its leaders began to cater to the whims of the people rather than risk unpopularity by taking firm, thoughtful stands. If this is true and if history does repeat, we may all live to witness the American eagle follow the Roman one into the dust of old neglected times.





PETER ROBERTS for TAFF

Before too long the 1977 Trans-Atlantic Fan Fund contest will take place, determining which European fan will be brought over to the United States to attend Suncon. Most of you are well

aware of the benefits of TAFF and what a grand idea it is. The alternating exchange of fans between North America and Europe enables fans to meet one another in person, something which would not be possible without the financial aid of such a fund. TAFF draws these fandoms closer together and makes each more aware of the other. It is not yet known who all the candidates for TAFF 1977 will be, but Peter Roberts will definitely be one of them.

In all honesty, I can think of no other fan I am more eager to meet than Peter Roberts. In the contact we have had through fanzines and letters, he has impressed me with his quick wit and his writing ability. He seems to be such a great person on paper that he would be a lot of fun to meet in person. Most of you will need no introduction to Peter Roberts for he is one of the best known British fans. If you pick up any fanzine, you are very likely to find a loc from him in the lettercolumn, be the fanzine British, American, Canadian or Australian. He is an active loc writer because he is aware of how important response is to fan editors. He gets that awareness in part due to the fact that he is a faned himself, having done fanzines with such bizarre titles as: Mor-fach, Bybyn-Bubyn, Krumhorn, Cronogas, Tikky-dew, Scribendi Cacoethes, Express Toad, 30% Bran and who knows what else. He founded the British newszine Checkpoint, which, under the present editorship of Ian Maule, continues to supply fannish news to its readership. The fanzine Peter Roberts is most well known for is Egg, which he began back in 1970 and is still going strong if not frequently. It was by doing Egg that Peter became the patron saint of Aardvark Fandom. I think Egg is the best British fanzine being done today. It has talented contributors, one of the best-edited lettercolumns in any fanzine, and most of all it has Peter Roberts and the sections he writes are the highlights of any issue, Any topic is fair game for Peter and the subject matter has ranged from aardvarks to Claude Degler to a piece titled "Great Science Fiction About Pigs."

He by no means limits his writing to his own fanzine. Since Peter is a vegetarian, he wrote a piece for Granfalloon on how to cook various edible fungi; a piece filled with real information, sure humor, and stomach-shuddering recipes. In one installment of "The Comfy Chair," a regular column he does for The Spanish Inquisition, he told the

readers how many times cucumbers are mentioned in the Bible (2) and also gave out facts about the Biblical outlook on carpet beating and ossifrages.

In addition to his wild sense of humor, Peter Roberts has a more serious side as evidenced by the fact that he has done The Little Gem Guide to SF Fanzines to inform new fans of what fanzines are being published and what kind of material they contain. It also gives them some information on how to produce their own fanzines.

British fandom honored Peter Roberts by making him Fan Guest of Honor at the 1976 Eastercon, an honor well deserved. He also deserves to win the 1977 TAFF race and we deserve the opportunity to meet him. When the time comes--and I will include ballots when things are finalized--do yourself a favor and vote for PETER ROBERTS.

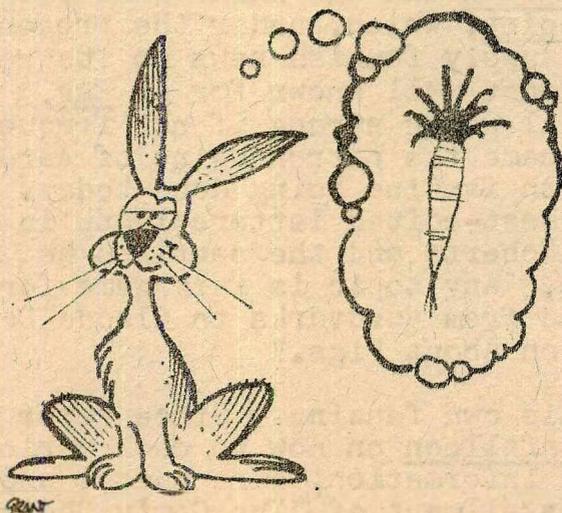
**Terry Hughes, Mota 19 (reprinted by permission of Mr. Hughes)

((Obviously, some time has passed since Terry wrote the above, but he still laid out the basic points better than we felt we could. The only aspect of Peter's fan career that Terry omitted is Peter's convention activity. Peter has co-organized several of the major British national conventions of the last several years and is currently on the bidding committee of the Britain in 1979 push. And Terry only hinted at Peter's wide-ranging interests when referring to vegetarianism. Peter is (we have been told) also deeply interested in odd languages, Cornish nationalism, science fiction (really!) and painfully bright clothing.

There are ballots enclosed with this issue. Instructions in their use are on them. Be sure to use them.

Several things of note, to update Terry's information: Peter is once again the editor of Checkpoint, running news and amusement from England and elsewhere. It may be had from Peter at 38 Oakland Drive, Dawlish, Devon, UK. It is monthly, and can be had. Send him news, trades, old fanzines (write first) or 6/\$1 for North American subs (he says not to send checks--only cash, International Money Orders or International Reply Coupons). As for The Little Gem Guide, Linda Bushyager (1614 Evans Ave, Prospect Park, Pa. 19076) reports that she has copies for 50¢. jak)))

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"...the hairy mass in the corner of the room reached blindly with one palsied hand for the silver rocket. Trembling, the fingers groped its tip.

"'Oh, damn,' the mass mumbled, 'I can't get th'damn cap off.'

"Bowers looked on, smiling grimly..."

--Gogarty, ibid (page 145)

ZEN

AND THE ART OF WALKING

WITHOUT TRIPPING OVER CRACKS IN THE SIDEWALK

Fleetwood Mac, in one incarnation or another, rock and rolling all the way, has been around the music world for a long time, a real long time, but that probably has nothing to do with much of anything else except that a line on their 1973 album Mystery to Me, side one, band four (by Bob Welch, no longer with them), "Hypnotised," happens to pertain somewhat specifically and rather mystically to my activities this past May:

"Now it's not a meaningless question
To ask if they've been and gone
I remember a talk about North
Carolina and a strange, strange pond
You see the sides were like glass
In the thick of a forest without a road
And if any man's hand ever made that land
Then I think it would've showed

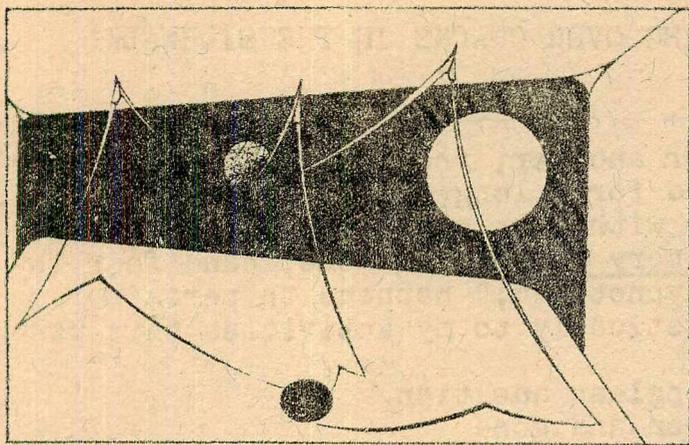
Seems like a dream
(They) got me hypnotized."

I had this job, something which in itself can be quite mystical these days, you see. As a Geological field assistant with the United States Geological Survey, working in the vicinity of the Savannah River Nuclear Project (where they make the hydrogen warheads and ghu only knows what else) near Barnwell, South Carolina. Now, the pond in the song refers to an interesting feature of the Carolina coastal plain: it is pock-marked by a large number of ellipsoidal depressions, in sizes varying from a couple of hundred feet to a mile or more across, shallow, with gently sloping sides, called Carolina Bays. No one seems to know how they came into existence and very little has ever been done in the way of studying them. According to my brother (who is working towards his Ph. D. at Emory in ecology, monitoring a bay inside the nuclear project), only one person has ever admitted to taking a core sample from a bay. Why he did it, or what he found, was never made clear to me, all very mysterious, of course, but I don't think it could have been in any way conclusive.

There is just no apparent reason for these depressions to exist. Other similar semi-tropical coastal plains throughout the world seem quite capable of existing without them. Among other things, my brother is monitoring the changes in the water level in his bay (dubbed "Thunder Bay") and maintaining a rain gauge on the site, attempting to discover if the water comes from springs underground (there are no streams in or out) or entirely from rainfall. The scientific method being as it is, it seems that the automatic level recorder only works on alternate Thursdays, but at the moment the presence of springs under the bay seems unlikely. There is supposed to be a solid clay lens beneath the muddy bottom, along with who knows what dark secret things.

Now, as for what I was doing, stumbling around in the jungle, I was assisting a government geologist in an attempt at tracing the ground-water flow in an area just outside the boundary of the nuclear project,

Jeff Schalles



half a mile down the road from the controversial Allied General site (the new, incredibly expensive, and so far inoperative nuclear waste recycling plant). We were drilling 400 foot wells in a triangle pattern around Chem-Nuclear Inc.'s massive low-level waste burial site. They have been filling huge trenches full of 55 gallon drums of waste, covering them with six feet of dirt, planting grass (and leaving a genuine tomb-stone detailing what lies beneath!) for over ten years. They just decided

to find where the ground water comes from and goes to a year ago. Every half hour or so an eighteen wheeler would cruise by where we were drilling, a huge lead container on its trailer, from anywhere and everywhere, as far away as Colorado or New Hampshire. Lots of security guards cruising around in jeeps with walkie-talkies, lots of strange vibes about being so close to something as unreal as all of this, wearing a hard-hat and a film-badge, standing around (or sitting in the cab of my government issue pickup truck), mainly there just to make sure the drillers kept on drilling, really.

My boss, a friend of my brother, hired me basically so he could take a vacation from the jungle. He'd been on the site for months and had found that anytime he left for town or went into the woods to take a leak or something, the drillers (civilians working for the Army Corps of Engineers) would sit down and have a testosterone attack or something.

This was my first close encounter with highly paid red neck laborers. I've never met anyone in my life who could find slower ways of doing simple operations. To begin with, the two older guys barely did anything at all, save make adjustments on their drilling equipment from time to time. They made the "low man" do everything, while they sat around smoking Luckies and talking about drinking and women and making snide remarks on the side in reference to how much work I was doing. A lot of the time I found myself helping the low man with something or other, because it wouldn't have gotten done otherwise. My first couple of days on the site, I made the error of pointing out this or that, suggesting at one point they use the hydraulic jack to raise a stuck drill string, getting the snarled answer of, "What do you know about drilling, boy?" after any attempt at bringing reason to light. They didn't get that drill string up till the next day. And used the jack.

Actually, they were all fairly good-natured, and after I gave up involving myself in their "work" we got along pretty well. It just took me awhile to figure out where they were coming from. In the first place, it was god-awful hot there, even in early May. It rained maybe once or twice a week, the rest of the time there was barely a cloud in the sky. They'd been working out in that sun up to their armpits in red clay and drilling mud for years, and nothing was going to hurry them up. In the second place, the wells they drilled were usually meant for people to get water from, and I could sense that they thought all this nuclear bullshit was a big waste of everybody's time. They

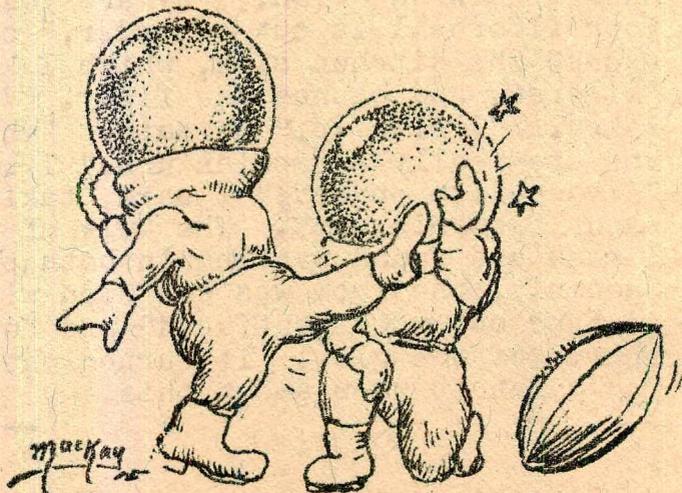
certainly didn't understand what it was all about, and weren't too awfully interested in learning. Reminded me of the Lenny Bruce bit about shitkickuhs with the southran acksents, asking what the hell all this new-cleer fishin' was, anyway?

Anyway, I spent a Saturday working with my brother, doing some photography for him, helping collect samples, and along toward sunset he handed me a pair of snake-leggings and suggested I walk around Thunder Bay and see what I thought of its origins. We'd already discussed the two main theories, one claiming that they began as alligator wallows and just sort of grew (which I really doubt, seeing as the rim of the depression is so much higher than the center, with water filling it only about one quarter full) and the other theorizing that a large meteor or comet (or spacecraft?) broke up upon entering the atmosphere, strewing chunks across the landscape. None of the bays are perfectly round, nor are they irregular in shape. Some are nearly bogs, others are healthy freshwater lakes.

I walked straight out from the bay and found it ended with a lip, or encircling mound, just slightly higher than the surrounding flatness, but from the state of the vegetation, it was obvious that the water hadn't been that high in centuries. Mostly pines and shrubs, lots of neat lichens and moss, ruts from ancient logging wagons. I didn't see any snakes, but plenty of water fowl, big herons and cranes and lots of ducks. There was a beaver lodge on the other side of the bay, but my brother had busted it up and convinced the beavers to move elsewhere; it seems they were in the habit of pulling his grid-marker stakes up and adding them to their lodge, and otherwise interfering with the scientific method.

It was a rainy, cloudy day, gloom and Deadly Orgone Radiation abounding, just the sort of thing for envisioning an afternoon ten thousand years ago when the forest suddenly erupted in a cacophony of staccato detonations, earth shaking, trees splintering, strange tortured pieces of the space craft lying smoking in the earth, brushfires and smoke and dust and freaked-out deer tearing madly through the woods. All I really was hearing, of course, was the drizzle off the trees, and I never saw any deer, just trees and mist. If these bays were indeed created by something breaking up upon entering the atmosphere, this something was both large and made up of some material that fragmented only to a certain degree. It might be helpful to study topographic maps of the region, maybe plot the locations and dimensions of the bays into a computer. Who knows, they might turn out, if seen from the proper distance and angle, to form a picture of Richard Nixon.

It was a really neat three weeks, really now. I spent the evenings drinking beer and giving my "new" VW (acquired just before I left Pennsylvania) its 30,000 mile maintenance. (I don't trust mechanics and can't afford dealerships, and would rather tear-down and regrease my bearings myself.) One week-



end I drove 85 miles to the ocean, which I hadn't seen in three years, got stoned and lay on the beach about two hours longer than I should have, crippling me for the next two days. The work was hot and boring, most of the time, and occasionally aggravating as hell, ten hours a day with those clowns, but for 60 dollars a day (field pay) I'll shit bricks if somebody wants. I ate brown rice and veggies most of the time, stayed at Emory University's research staff's townhouse, and generally made out like a bandit. Beer was (and usually is anywhere else) my largest expense, with Bo Corley's Barbycue Pit (luckily only open on Friday and Saturday nights) running a close second. Bo ran his place out of a remodeled gas station, charged you for how high you heaped your plate, and gave you all the hot sauce you wanted. A true ethnic culinary vision of delight, not to mention pure, unadulterated gluttony. I was a little freaked out though when sometime in May I was driving through town (Barnwell, SC, pop. 3,000 or so) and saw a bunch of Confederate soldiers hanging around the town square. Never knew they had their own Memorial Day, preceeding the rest of the country's by three weeks. I always seem to amaze myself when I settle down for a little while in an area a bit of a drive away from Pennsylvania, finding the people around me are from Alpha Centauri.

New-cleer fishin', indeed.

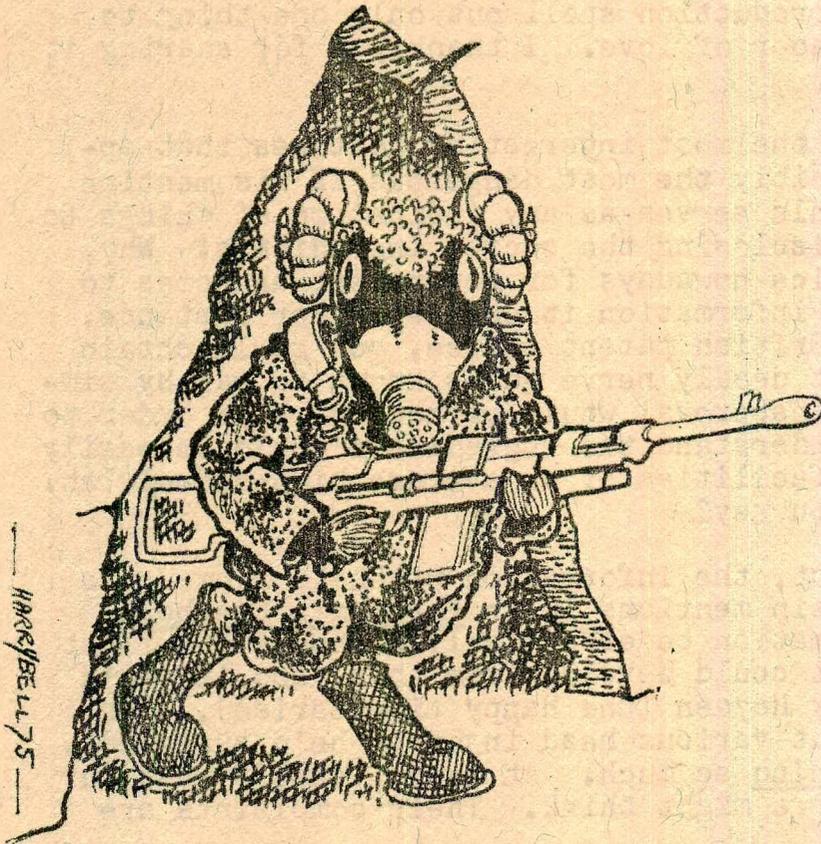
"They say there's a place down in Mexico
Where a man can fly over mountains and hills
And he don't need an airplane or some kind of engine
And he never will
Now you know it's a meaningless question
To ask if these stories are right
'Cause what matters most is the feeling
You get when you're hypnotized

Seems like a dream
(They) got me hypnotized."

--Jeff Schalles

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The other day, at around that time, I was sitting in my happy home, listening to the bathroom giggle. Suddenly, there was a knock on the floor. "Who is it?" I asked. "It's me, knocking on your floor," a voice said softly. "Take the cotton out of your throat," I said, "and answer this question. Why are you knocking on my floor?" "Because your floorbell is out of order," came the reply. I dropped everything except the kitchen sink, which I keep in a cupboard out of reach of children, and opened the floor. "Why, aren't you the mailman?" I asked. "I give up," he said. "Why aren't I the mailman?" "Because you are really a Grecian urn," I informed him. "What's a Grecian urn?" "A vase-like object," I said, taking the mail from his hands and the hands from his arms. The bulk of the mail consisted of bills, which I read and found wanting in both originality and characterization. Suddenly, the room was suffused with an ethereal glow. Pausing only to find out what "suffused" and "ethereal" meant, I looked for the source of the glow. It turned out to be a copy of SpanInq. I thought you ought to know about this.

--B. Lee Mings



SHEEP IN THE WAIN- SCOTTING

((This may seem like another of our long letter columns--actually, it's quite abbreviated. We've cut letters even more drastically than usually--but don't let that discourage you from writing (all those long letters you send are fun to read), for your comments will at least reach our contributors, for with this issue we have instituted the practice of cutting up the letters and sending relevant bits to those being commented on.))

((Before setting onto the mazy journey through all this paper, we ought to mention a few things everybody dithered about: everyone wished they could have seen the Live SpanInq, especially Jerry's Attacking Budgie Dance; everyone thought the issue was loong; everyone had some Dorothy Parker or head injury anecdote to impart; all thought that John Curlovich and Jon Singer were wierd; everyone pointed out that he/she was a great fan of Tom Lehrer...and so forth. And here's a letter (modestly presented) that is typical of the majority opinion (if just a bit stronger than most).))

Stuart Gilson
745 Townsend Ave
Winnipeg, Manitoba
CANADA R3T 2V5

SpanInq is fast on the road to winning a Hugo (I thought I'd start this letter positively). In the past I've always regarded really thick, hefty fanzines with certain reservations because they take so long to read and respond to (and when one is as slow a reader as I am, it's necessary to guard against being over-generous with his time); with SpanInq 7/8, however, I was well rewarded for my efforts. Visually exciting, a challenge and delight to read, a nicely balanced mixture of serconnish and fannish writing (with emphasis on the latter, which is the way I like it), this double issue is one of the most enjoyable fanzines I've ever had the good fortune to read. The incredible amounts of time and effort

that must have gone into its production spell out only one thing to my mind: this fanzine was a labor of love. I thank you for sharing it with me.

Jon Singer's column is one of the most interesting features that appears in your pages; also possibly the most dangerous if his mention of explosive household chemicals serves as any indication of things to come. Shame on you for not disclosing the secret ingredients! Why, it's becoming a common practice nowadays for government agencies to give the public any dangerous information it desires. For instance, if you were to walk into any British patent office, you could obtain the recipe for one of the most deadly nerve gases known to man by simply asking for it. No special approval would be necessary in order to get this information, and I understand the ingredients could be easily obtained and mixed using the facilities of an average high-school lab. A bit frightening, wouldn't you say?

((As several people pointed out, the information withheld from Jon's column is easy to find--Heinlein mentions it in Farnham's Freehold. But can, we wonder, any information be effectively withheld? A first amendment/libertarian argument could develop from this, and if you'd like to pursue it, see Patrick Hayden (the Happy Libertarian)...Stu went on for several pages about various head injuries he'd sustained. Maybe that's why he likes SpanInq so much. At least, that's what our minority of dissatisfied readers might think. Their complaints are best typified by Dave Rowe.))

Dave Rowe
8 Park Drive
Wickford, Essex
UK SS12 9DH

Surprisingly enough SpanInq came across as "light reading" despite its 80 odd pages. Mainly because there was nothing within that had pretensions of "deep intellectual significance"; nearly 100 pages of "light reading" is enough to send a loc writer

round the twist. Do I mouth the already overused cliches of complimentary remarks? After all, there was only one piece that didn't provide some entertainment so each writer deserves his egoboo. Do I go into pedantic analysis of each writing style and cartoon technique to try and determine why I find SpanInq to be only a mild success? This would only bore the pants off you, me and anyone else if you were crazy enough to print it--and anyway, I've hardly got the time. Then again, I could always come up with that standard "this puts me in mind of...", "the book/film/tart so-&-so is trying to think of is...". I know I'm gonna fall back on that but I feel guilty about it.

After all, obviously a lot of time and effort has gone into SpanInq. The production level is high, and if I were still pubbing I'd be jealous; as it is I'm just envious. But there really should have been some Mss. with more bite to them.

(('Sall right, Dave, we still love you. That would seem to be the last of the general remarks...no, wait, one more, from a gentleman we'd invited to participate in the Live SpanInq.)

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

I'm getting too old to lift such enormous fanzines. But I still enjoyed immensely the most recent Spanish Inquisition, particularly the portions derived from its viva voce edition.

You made an absentee comprehend pretty well how things were that day at the Balticon. You also made him realize that it was just as well he abstained. For a chronic worrier, it would have been as hard on me,

with all that rehearsing and last-minute adjusting and tension, as my first and last stint as fan guest of honor at the Noreascon.

If I fail to make specific comments on some of the live fanzine reprints, keep in mind the foregoing and also try to remember that several items while splendid to read and undoubtedly even better when heard from the creators' lips are quite hard to comment on. But John Curlovich will undoubtedly stir up quite a few comments with the paragraph about his poll. I'm not sure if he really took such a poll or just asked a few friends for their opinions. Whichever, I was surprised to find Vonnegut scoring so high among the least-liked writers. I thought he was virtually sacrosanct with anyone under the age of thirty, and that only the ancients like me find his novels very bad. On the other hand, I would have expected at least a medium-high placing for two or three writers who have recently created novels that got general blasting. I suspect that the results of this poll were conditioned to some extent by the authors' personalities or their knack for getting into disputes or their refusal to recognize fans as the supreme creations of the universe. Most of those who had high placings fall into these categories, except Alexei Panshin, possibly, and certainly Poul Anderson.

((It was a real poll, announced in Karass and Sfincter.)

The letter column was exceptionally fine. I enjoyed everything even down to such minutiae as confronting the fannish ethics of running a pro's full address when he resides in Sri Lanka where he is hardly in danger of being overwhelmed by uninvited visitors. Darroll Pardoe's letter could have been converted into an article with justification. David Singer makes me realize all over again how Hagerstown has somehow slipped a formidable number of years behind the remainder of the galaxy: Maverick, which he barely remembers in reruns, has just this year been inserted in the 4 p.m. time slot five days weekly by Hagerstown's commercial television station.

I can think of all sorts of reasons why the O'Neill space colony idea should be turned into reality. One that you don't mention is the fact that it could serve as the modern equivalent of the frontier. Recent years have been the first time since Columbus arrived that there has been no real frontier in North America and no major substitute for it like world wars or brief diversions like experiencing the freedom to travel that the private automobile brought. I sometimes wonder if the current crime problem isn't caused by the lack of a frontier. Many of the people who are chronically in trouble with the law today might have been opening up the West or creating the oil fields if they'd been born soon enough. One possible objection to the space colony idea is the way it would support itself. I've seen warnings that such a sudden acquisition of virtually unlimited energy would have grave consequences for Earth's climate and ecology, because so much energy is dissipated as heat while it's being utilized. But in the past century we've burned up a great deal of the billions of years' sunshine which had been stored in fossil fuels and nothing serious seems to have come of it. I'm not optimistic about the chances of such a space colony becoming reality until the petroleum supply really starts to run out in another twenty years or so. An awful lot of boats will be rocked violently when solar energy really is utilized on a large scale and the giant corporations, financial lords, and others who will get thoroughly splashed will try to delay the changeover until the last possible moment.

((A lot of the people who opened up the West were certainly wanted men. Many, though, were attempting to escape the high crime rates in the big cities of the time. That's irrelevant, though, since whatever governments or groups put up the money for space colonies are not likely to trust their investments to criminals or the poor and uneducated. ...As for the colonies being built when we actually run short of fuel in twenty years, that will most certainly be too late, as we won't have the resources to do the job.))

Steve Miller
119 Willow Bend
Owings Mills, MD 21117

You may be interested to know that SpanInq is now a reference/resource book for Baltimore County Public Libraries. It happened this way: someone came into the library

where Judy Kurman works. They were looking for info on Tom Lehrer--like when he died and things like that. None of the available reference books had much of anything on the gentleman, and eventually Judy realized that she would have to go to another source. So, Judy called me, and I dutifully looked up the latest available information on Mr. Lehrer in The Spanish Inquisition. I think they asked for a date on the info--and of course, it was the June issue of SpanInq--the up-to-the-minute zine...

((When we aren't being ten months late...))

Patrick Hayden
c/o Bill Patterson
900 W. Indian School Rd, #18
Phoenix, AZ 85013

Alex Krislov justifiedly takes me to task for a letter written too many moons ago; it seems odd, now, to be replying on the subject, one long year-and-a-half after writing the original, which I suppose only goes to prove that SpanInq will never be a Heated Discussion zine. Umm...indeed, most of the rhetoric of sf-as-a-literature-of-ideas is simply a conceit; the implication that nothing in the mainstream is, is simply untrue, and this is a point lost on some of our reviewers. But I think the central and germane point is that sf is a form which deals with those aspects of "the human condition" which are most peculiarly human. Phil Paine pointed this out in an issue of my fanzine Thangorodrim! some time ago; Othello, for instance, or Crime and Punishment would be perfectly intelligible, simplified, to a tribe of wolves: the emotions, loves, hates, ambitions, etcetera are hardly foreign to any mammal sufficiently advanced to be able to form societies. But there is a body of literature, not-quite-defined, which deals



with something beyond this, something outside of the usual spectrum of "sex, love, jealousy, rage, hate, rivalry, compassion, reconciliation; duty, complusion, insanity, dominance, subservience, warfare, politics, social standing, which in reality are the common heritage of all primates and many other animals as well, including wolves, cetaceans, and felines." (The quote is from Phil's column.) Phil pegged this special quality as childishness--the urge toward "elaborate playing, exploration, curiosity, and inventiveness." As far as we can determine, human beings are the only known animals that retain these qualities until death (with the possible exception of dolphins or chimps cut off from other chimps). The qualities are present in the young of many mammals, but they disappear with "maturity" or adulthood. Now does most literature deal with this uniquely human quality--our seemingly unending neotony? It does not. SF, or most sf, most definitely does: And this, I think, is what sets us apart...and gives us our "juvenile," which is just a patronizing way of saying "childish," flavor.

Curlovich's satire of personalzine writing is cutting and too true. The personalzine form is a tricky and demanding one and is supremely difficult to pull off; unfortunately, it is also one of the easiest modes in which to do badly, and the current personalzine/apa explosion bears this out. Hopefully, the pendulum will swing back; I mean, you know things are really getting tacky when something co-edited by Jerry "Giggle/Leap" Kaufman succeeds to the title of "Best-All-Round-Mimeo'd-Fannish-Pretentious-Genzine-Currently-Being-Published." (HHOK. Really and truly...!)

((What?))

Unfortunately, Curlovich's conclusions on the Emperor Nero are arrant rubbish. His facts are correct; quite kosher, but I find it difficult to think of Nero as anything but a monstrous tyrant all the same. This will surprise Curlovich less if I explain that I am a voluntarist anarchist who holds no truck with any Emperor, benevolent or otherwise; any human being who bases his relationship with the world on violence and coercion is shit in my book. Perhaps Nero was less tyrannical than his contemporaries, perhaps not; but in any case the operative concept is tyrannical.

It makes one wonder, actually, just where Curlovich's head is at, to hear him speaking depreciately of "political reactionaries to whom the old Republic was a time of glory and the Empire that replaced it one of foulest decay." I think I'd agree with those "political reactionaries" myself, putting aside for a moment the question of whether the word "reactionary" means anything in this context--but then, I never was much on the Nietzschean ethic. (Of course, whatever "glory" there was in the immensely-flawed Republic is a moot point in itself; certainly, it would be considered a banana republic by modern standards and a totalitarian hell by sane standards, but the point remains that it was indisputably better than the Empire which followed it. I don't recall the Sack of Rome as having taken place during the period of the Republic.... Empires are sicko systems, which either expand or collapse. Look at the crazyquilt, jerrybuilt economy of Hitler's Germany.)

denton/Thor
1471 Second Ave., #19
New York, NY 10021

On the O'Neill Space Colony issue, I've read the letters in The CoEvolution Quarterly, and I'm still on the side of the Colonies. It seemed to me that a lot of the people who

were against the Colonies were guilty of the same sort of jingoism that accused O'Neill of. Such statements as "soft drink signs all over Mars and cluttering up the moon with oil rigs," "Won't an awful lot of things start floating around willy-nilly and getting hopelessly mixed up...when the rotating device that develops the gravity must be stopped for replacement of defective parts?" These sound like the remarks of people who haven't bothered to examine the problem at all in depth. There were some very good criticisms on the technical points, but they still struck me as seeing the problems and immediately assuming that they can't be solved. Because we don't have all the answers worked out yet doesn't mean that we will never get them solved.

As for the reason, or need, for the Colonies--in my opinion, they may be essential to humanity's survival. Leary and Wilson might be right, and the Colonies are the next step in human evolution, while the problems here on Earth are simply our racial birth trauma. Mother Earth is going to seed, and we are Her seeds, Her children. This does not mean that the Earth must die as She gives birth; after all, the average human female gives birth to several children in a lifetime, each at a certain danger to her own life, but still she usually survives. Another possible analogy is the oak tree. It must reach a certain stage of growth before it can start producing acorns, but once it begins, it will continue for a hundred years or so before it dies. And the sequoia goes on for even longer.

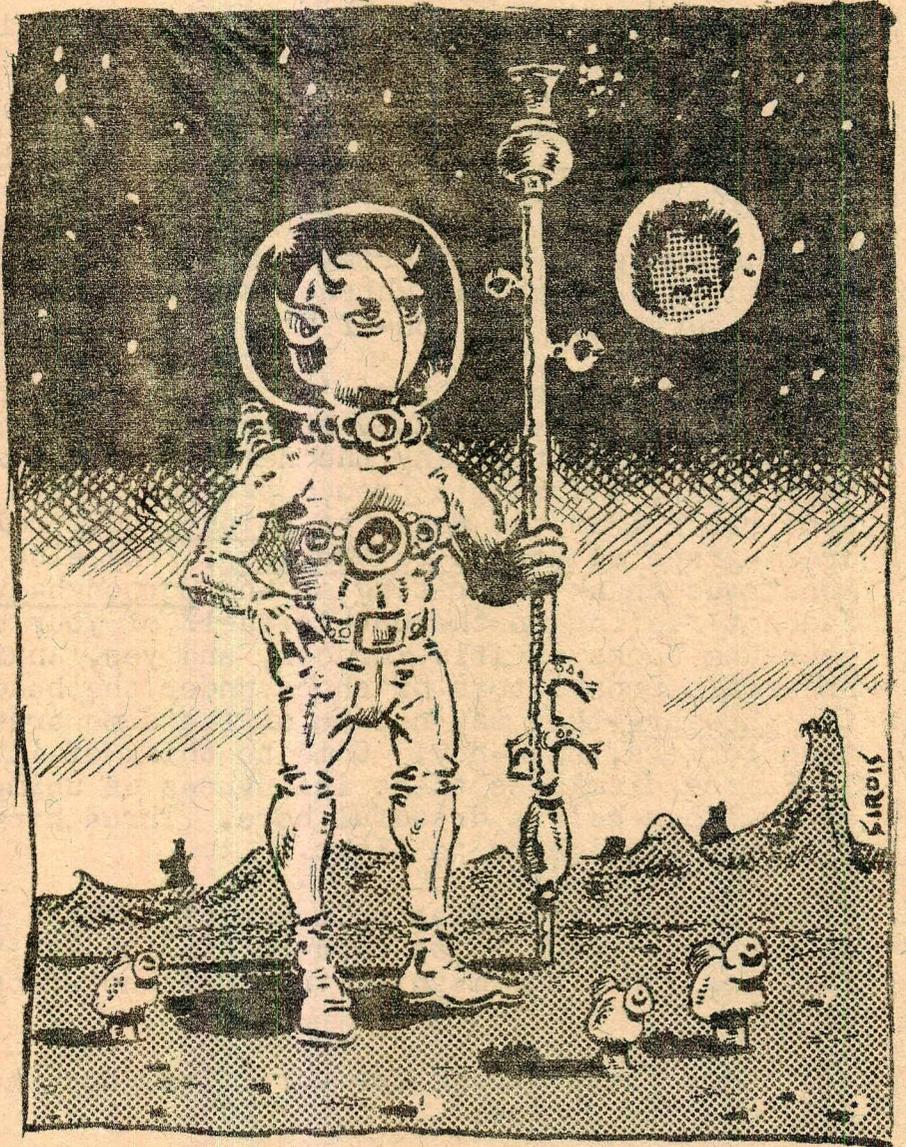
Geneva Steinberg has suggested another possibility, that the Earth is like a perennial, which seems to die every winter, but next spring the plant comes back to life just as prolific as before. These troubles we are going through may kill Her off for now, even as some of us escape into space, but She'll be back next year with another batch just like us.

Alan L. Bostick The article in Karass might have been a fluke. The
46 Arboles first installment of a column in Maya could have
Irvine, CA 92715 been a hoax. But the article in #7/8 proves that
 the person or persons named (or posing as) Mike
Glicksohn is/are more than just a letterhack. Furthermore, the tone of
the piece indicates that (assuming that the article was not heavily
edited) the aforementioned entity is literate to an inexplicably compre-
hensible degree. The piece was quite interesting. If the recent
Glicksohn activity is any sign that the man is finally coming out of
his hole, you would be well advised to make him a frequent contributor.

David Cockfield The artwork was pretty good, lots of nice fillos,
31 Durham Ct. four funny cartoons by Herr Goldstein which
Hebburn, Tyne & Wear didn't seem jewish at all, a brilliant back
NE31 1JX U.K. cover by Skull and that fantastic DiFate cover
 which set me thinking. Most of Vin's work which
I've seen has his almost obligatory Saturn-type planet with its rings.
It's usually in the background and in many cases seems to have been
used as an identifying characteristic. Guillotines are used to chop
heads off and as Vin's apparent trade mark is being given the chop I
couldn't help but wonder if he was mentally committing suicide in his
drawing.

"Suture Shock" was a piece which brought memories to the fore. I was reminded of my fear of having stitches made on any portion of my body.

I've had this fear since I was a child when I saw someone have forty or so on one of those horrid medical programmes which are so popular on British tv. The impracticality of such a fear was revealed to me when I was ten years old. With three friends and a dog I climbed over the wall surrounding the garden of our local Presbyterian church and proceeded to indulge in an illicit game of football (soccer to you lot). The game was illicit because the grounds in which we played were dominated by PRIVATE and KEEP OFF THE GRASS signs. Undeterred by such silly inconveniences we played on until one of my friends noticed that blood was pouring down my right leg. Upon examining the source we discovered that a chunk, 1" by $\frac{1}{2}$ ", clear to the bone, had been torn out of my leg. Feeling extremely faint, we searched the grass and found my piece of meat hanging on the end of a long, thick strip of wire protruding from the ground. Being rather dumb in those days (I still am according to some people), I thought that all I had to do was re-insert this meat where it belonged, in the hole in my leg. Unfortunately, before I was able to do this the dog ran up and ate it. Crying my eyes out I returned home to an empty house (Mum was at bingo or somesuch) and sat for an hour with clean handkerchiefs over the wound in an effort to stop the bleeding. Eventually I was taken to the infirmary and bandaged up. Stitches couldn't be made because I had delayed too long. Months later I was much happier because I was able to display the scar to all the girls. However, everytime I saw that dog again my stomach never felt quite right.



Mike Glicksohn
141 High Park Ave.
Toronto,, Ont M6P 2S3
CANADA

Curlovich turns out an incredibly vicious satire of personal fanwriting and even though I winced at its sharpness as I read it I couldn't help but admire his lampooning of the weaker aspects of so much of the writing

I see every day in fanzines. This is certainly one of the best pieces

of satirical writing to appear in a fanzine in a long while.

R.A. MacAvoy
435 W. 119th St., #2B
New York, NY 10027

I am a newcomer to Cordwainer Smith. Until recently I thought he came by this name because one of his ancestors specialized in repairing the metal parts on lumber-wagons. It was the essay by J.J. Pierce--the very one which John Curlovich reviews in issue 7/8--that enlightened me concerning his name, the ordering of his universe and the non-sf fiction he has written.

I know nothing about Pierce's private tambourines nor how he beats them: I only know the C.S. article. I find myself eager to agree with Curlovich in castigating the nerd if he actually despises automism, surrealism, and mystic preoccupations in sf. (Flows a murky yet lambent river from the pages of Ralph 124C41+ all the way to such a deep-dream-grope as Voyage to Arcturus. Why else would such a gorgeously monstrous chunk of writing as the Gormenghast trilogy continue to sell, and not resting on the Gothic shelf of your bookstore, either? I have seen the books of Iris Murdoch, and yes, Anais Nin, too, placed by the uncertain proprietors of shops under the heading of sf.) The alogical, the uhrwahr--they may not be of the same order of science as matter transformers, but--hey! Come to think of it, maybe they are. Anyway, if Pierce dismisses these influences as unimportant or unworthy to the genre, then he's a dreadful bore. Three hip-hips for J.C., for bringing such sentiments to light.

I was further gratified to learn of Smith's familiarity with the writers we now refer to as "modern English lit," (or are they "contemporary English lit") meaning the ones who wrote between 1920 and 1940 or so.

All these pleasantries are very fine, but they lead up to the inevitable MacAvoy grouse.

I think Curlovich badmouthed a man when he didn't need to. He had a good critical case and only lowered its standing (in my eyes) when he took things out of context from the Pierce article. For instance, that business about the tie. First of all, Pierce never did name the color of that tie; he only mentioned that it had three Chinese characters on it which stood for Smith's Chinese name, "Forest of Incandescent Bliss." This name was given to him by Sun Yat Sen, his godfather.

Second, mentioning the tie was not just a tailless piece of nerdiness on Pierce's part. (To repeat: I am not competent to judge Pierce's overall nerdiness, but this particular paragraph of his does not give evidence toward such a quality in the man.) Pierce used this bit of trivia to illustrate both that Linebarger (Smith) had a full and surprisingly public life for a writer-recluse, and that he was a knowledgeable orientalist. I found it fascinating, since neither Norstrilia nor The Best of Cordwainer Smith had given me the slightest suspicion the C.S. had such a background.

Curlovich feels--and it seems he feels very strongly--that Linebarger's policy of separation from the persona of "Cordwainer Smith" ought to be continued indefinitely, though Linebarger himself is dead.

I can't think of a wild reason why. Dr. Linebarger is beyond the reach of both the media and importunate fans. I see no reason to assume he

wanted his literary identity buried with him; to the best of my understanding he just wanted to be let be. And he was.

To stuff my whole argument into a sock, I must say that Curlovich continues to provide us with fascinating topics handled with original insights and smooth prose, and then grows restive in the middle of his constructions and settles (too often) for sweeping statements and easy dismissals. Sometimes, as he did in his prating about Pierce and the tie, he slides down all the way to sophomorphism.

John J. Pierce
275 McMane Ave.
Berkeley Heights, NY 07922

John Curlovich is wrong in saying I'm unwilling to credit Smith with any mainstream influences--I even mentioned traditional Chinese literature, and if I saw any similarity in his writing to that of Beckett and Borges I might well have mentioned that too. I went to the trouble of reading Le Bat-eau Ivre once because Smith had acknowledged his debt to Rimbaud; unfortunately, "Drunkboat" could not appear in the collection because of unforeseen circumstances.

One point I ought to make very plainly: Smith was such a complex man, and such a complex writer, that no brief introduction could possibly do justice to him. Sandra Miesel once devoted an entire essay to the religious imagery and symbolism in one story, "The Dead Lady of Clown Town"--and there wasn't a wasted word in that essay. I tried to stick mostly to what would interest the general sf reader--even at that, I had to squeeze. My hope was to introduce enough new readers to Smith to make him more than a "cult" figure to a few--perhaps he wouldn't have liked that, but sf readers are already a tiny minority so I don't think I've really risked "vulgarizing him. Norstrilia has gone through two printings already, at least; I don't know if Best will yet.

((And that is enough about John for this issue, though if next issue follows precedent, we should be running letters from Gerry and Jimmy.))

Jennifer Bankier
485 Huron St, Apt 406
Toronto, Ont M5R 2R5
CANADA

I loved your snake jokes, especially the "wind-shield viper" on page 72 (with its crossed eyes), although I had to look at the illo for a while before I got the point.

((Although you weren't the only one to mention enjoying Wendy Lindboe's cartoons, you do seem to be the only reader to get the pun.))

Victoria Wayne
POBox 156, Station D
Toronto, Ont
CANADA

I find that the live SpanInq reads better on paper than it came across live, although the live presentation did give it a life that would otherwise be lacking. The problem is me, though --when I start to read something, I often back-track and reread the beginning of an article, once I get into it far enough to be able to start following it. (Does this make any sense?) In a live presentation there isn't the chance for back tracking so if I get lost, I remain lost. Of course, the fact that the live SpanInq came during a con and a time of no sleep in 30 hours didn't help. Good columns all, now that I can actually sit down and read them properly, at my leisure.

((It might have been hard to watch with no sleep, but it was much harder to present in that condition.))



Bill Kunkel
85-30 121st St
Kew Gardens, NY 11415

Speaking of Jon Singer, which I wasn't, I saw him recently and boy has he changed!

He no longer sits around Fistfa meetings all night assembling atom bombs from scrap metal and the insides of a transistor radio (at least he didn't at the Fistfa meeting I was at--I haven't been back so he might be at it again for all I know), I was even able to hold a long and very interesting conversation with him. And he didn't even once say something like "Framistat in autostasis" in the middle

of a discussion of "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman". I think this is a good sign; however, this Mike O'Brien I wouldn't wanna touch with a ten foot pole.

((For real excitement, you can't beat putting the two of them together.))

Darrell Schweitzer
113 Deepdale Rd
Strafford, PA 19087

Re your comments on my interview with Delany: There were indeed many things that could have been followed up, but one doesn't notice them most of the time until afterwards. What you

should have said is often quite different from what you did. The French have a name for this even, and since I am wholly ignorant of French I only know that it translates as "the spirit of the back stairs," meaning what you remember you should have mentioned as you are leaving by the back stairs.

The interview was not done through the mail, but in person, at the 1975 Philcon. It was done about midnight after a long adventure of trying to find the person I was crashing with to get my tape recorder out of his room. It took about a half-hour and was quite fascinating, and aside from a few editings and glossing over of inaudible words, what you read in Algol was a straight transcription of what was said. Of course, I only scratched the surface. Delany has enough worthwhile things to say about enough subjects that you could probably interview him for three days and only scratch the surface--which at a con would doubtless be considered an unfair monopolisation of a GoH's time.

((Darrell gave us a copy of Procrastination 13, a revival of his old fanzine. For 75¢ or the usual, you can get Darrell's interesting comments on "semi-professional magazines", an amusing reprint by Bob Shaw and sloppy, haphazard-looking Schweitzerian layout.))

Patrick McGuire
28 Wilton St
Princeton, NJ 08540

Tom Lehrer fans are quite numerous, at least in the best circles. I myself am given to singing Lehrer songs when in the shower, drunk or whatever. I recall a party in Moscow at which I

wanted to sing "So Long Mom, I'm Off to Drop the Bomb," and somebody was trying to convince me that this wouldn't be quite the thing for international relations. I think the deciding factor was that I couldn't remember enough words. I have, however, sung Lehrer songs in the capitals of all three Baltic republics (Tallin in 1972, and the other two in 1975) and in various other improbable locations. I don't really have a feeling that Lehrer has changed my life, because his viewpoint doesn't seem so far from my own anyhow, but he has certainly brightened the way. Nothing like a spirited rendition of "Poisoning Pigeons in the Park" to cement an acquaintance with some new comrade,

for instance.

I recall one party of a little over a year ago where we (all Westerners in Riga, singing for the presumed KGB microphone) started out on Lehrer and got onto other songs. One of these was "Norwegian Wood." Since Bent, the Dane mentioned in my essay, was among us, it seemed we ought to make it "Danish Wood" in his favor, but of course that didn't fit the meter. Bent said he didn't mind, that he had worked in Norway and thought it a fine place anyhow. Somehow that led to a rendition of "I Love Norway in the Springtime," and when we got to the end I contributed,

I love Norway every moment, every moment of the year.
I love Norway, why, oh why, do I love Norway?
Because it's west of here!

which pretty well summed up the way we were beginning to feel after nine months in the Socialist fatherland. The hundred miles or whatever between Leningrad and Helsinki is a much longer distance than the five thousand between there and New York.

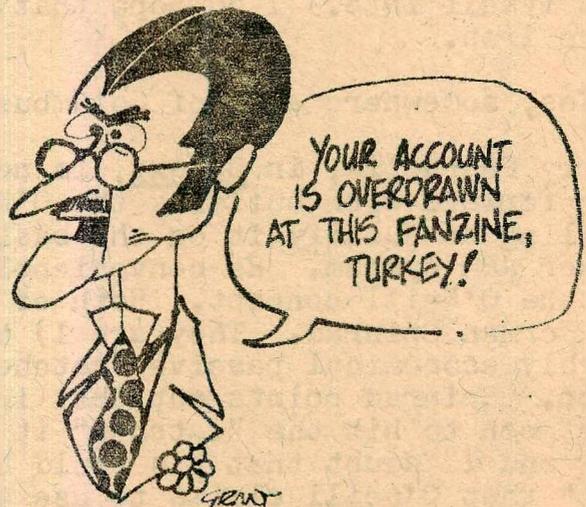
((Patrick also corrected our highly speculative use of Russian in the title and the concluding line of his article. Well, we tried.))

Al Sirois
550 Dixwell Ave
New Haven, CT 06511

I don't see how Mike Glicksohn can make so many puns in such a short space. (If I were Bill Bowers, I would probably make a joke about Mike taking up a short space physically, and filling it with puns, but I'm not so I won't.)

Also, despite the fact that Mike had had several nice things to say about how much I have improved (artistically, anyway) of late, I kind of feel bad that he didn't like my stuff when I was drawing like me, as opposed to like Woody. Still, I know that when I first got into fandom, Mike wasn't thrilled with my artwork, and I do feel good that he likes it more now. Somehow getting nice words from Glicksohn makes my day. Well, I respect the ~~man~~ fan. Nonetheless, Mike, I hope you are aware that a superficial gloss of Wood technique over Sirois "ability" hasn't changed my art other than to make it a bit more slick and tight in appearance. Not everybody likes this. Bruce Townley tells me that he likes my looser stuff, and I don't draw like that much nowadays. After all, I am actually selling stuff now, and I wasn't before. Hmmm. In fact, I just yesterday was in NYC, at Screw, and they bought two pages of comics from me, and want to see ideas for a continuing monthly "strip."

((Nice to hear, Al. By the way, we're glad you wrote. We've been holding this Canfield illo for a long time. (No, your account is not really "overdrawn.")))



Mike O'Brien
1642 W. Morse, #1S
Chicago, Ill 60626

It should be predictable that I made three quick dives into the thing when it first arrived: one quick one to orient myself, one to read my own letter, and one to read Jon Singer's thing. Predictable, but only two-thirds right. In fact, after my letter (which I read mainly because I never can remember just what the hell I have said) the first thing I read was Suzle's editorial. I have always enjoyed her stuff, and this was even more delightful than usual, mainly because it was longer. It also mentioned me, and is the first fanzine piece ever written which did so for more than a five-word phrase. That, of course, helped its popularity amazingly, even if it didn't do so in all that flattering a light. It may be of interest as a follow-up that my father had air bags installed inside the rear springs to prevent a recurrence following that. Said it was something the Germans were working on in WWII and that it never worked out right. He's also been heard to claim that nothing Mercedes ever made would start in the winter, including the German tanks invading Russia. I believe it. Luckily, that car at least started on command, even if it then proceeded to do the most amazing things while moving.

I would love to hear Jon's reactions to O'Neill's ideas. I got the relevant CoEvolution Quarterlies when they first came out, and I do believe that it is worth the attempt, but economic feasibility is predicated on absolutely all of it working more or less on the first attempt. It is almost a truism that such things do not in fact work on the first attempt unless you spend about 10 to 100 times as much money on the project as it would cost if you had done it before and knew what you were doing. Yes, from an engineering viewpoint it is quite feasible, but (for instance) no one has ever built a magnetic orbital launcher of any size, let alone a constant-usage, chaining affair. The whole thing would sound a lot saner if we didn't expect it to be worthwhile economically. This is not a political or economic statement; it is predicated on what I have observed in every engineering project I've ever been near, aerospace and otherwise. *sigh*

J.R.Holmes
1046 N. 12 St, #307
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Glad to see the Suzlecol was transported to the front of the magazine. It does give SpanInq more of the flavor of her editorship. By the way, keep up the tales of adventure with the WPSFA. For some odd reason, they have the feel of identity that I can put myself into. I do hope that Suzle finally got her hands off the tire iron.

((Yes, somewhere east of Columbus, Ohio.))

Jerry Pournelle, in Galaxy, is nearly whole-heartedly in favor of going forward with building the O'Neill Space Colonies. He is even willing to justify it on the basis of a potential spinoff, an orbiting laser ABM system. He conveniently overlooks two very basic objections to the O'Neill concept. Both of these came out in the Analog article by Norman Spinrad. They are 1) that the colony concept plans to use a highly economical passive "catcher" for materials thrown out from the Moon. Spinrad points out that in order for the linear accelerator on the Moon to hit the "catcher" it would need an accuracy of .00017%. He and I doubt that his could be done with "the current state of the art" that O'Neill claims to use throughout. But this need not be a fatal blow to the concept. Surely an active capture system, while it may use a great deal of mass, would still bring in the lunar ore. In

addition this would provide a means of practice for the eventual mining of the Asteroid Belt that would not be far off once we are in space on a permanent basis. Objection 2) is the potentially deleterious effect of beaming gigawatts of energy through the atmosphere. Precisely because it hasn't been done on any large scale (maximum transmitted so far can't have exceeded 3 or 4 kilowatts) nobody knows what the effects on the atmosphere may be. One may be a mild but permanent thermal up-draft over the antenna array. What would this do to the weather? It is missed questions like this that make me a little hesitant about our jumping into this with both feet.

Luke McGuff A record hasn't ever reached into my total life,
1111 N. Menard but there have been a couple instances where my
Chicago, IL 60651 musical life has certainly been changed.

The first instance was when I bought an album by a group from Dusseldorf called Kraftwerk. The sound totally freaked me out. It wasn't really rock music, because a lot of the transitions and techniques were very sophisticated and classical. But it wasn't really classical or electronic music, either, because it had this absolutely killer rhythm, a 60-cycle AC hum, as a friend of mine described it. Soon I was so hooked into German Rock and Roll (does anyone else out there listen to it?) that I was conversant with Can, Amon Duul II, Guru Guru, Neu, and on and on.

When that field collapsed (much as acid rock collapsed), I looked around for something else to get into. What I found was an absolute treasure: Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, on two records, recorded by Sir Georg Solti and the Chicago Symphony. Now I'm fairly conversant with Dvorak, Vivaldi, Berlioz, Bach and so on. Not to mention Morton Subotnik, Walter Carlos, Larry Fast, Edgar Varese, Qualitative Release (a local classical synthesizer band), Isao Tomita and other electronic musicians.

((You might also find George Crumb (from the "serious" end of the spectrum) and Fripp and Eno (from the "pop" end) of interest.))

Randy Fuller Here's something I once read in the Book Digest
603 E. Vine St. condensation of "Crazy Salad: Somethings About Wo-
Fulton, MO 65251 men,": "...One night, it seems, Dorothy Parker
 was playing anagrams at our home with a writer
named Sam Lauren. Lauren had just made the word "currie," and Dorothy Parker insisted there was no such spelling. A great deal of scrapping ensued. Finally, my mother said she had some curry in the kitchen and went to get it. She returned with a jar of Crosse & Blackwell currie and showed it to Dorothy Parker. 'What do they know?' Parker said. 'Look at the way they spelled Crosse.'"

Terry Floyd I, too, have been caught up in the space colony ex-
506 Holman Lane citement, though I neglected to consider the ener-
Canyon, TX 79015 gy monopoly a space colony could build up. This
 possibility could dampen the high spirits surround-
ing the project, but is one that cannot be dismissed. Of course, the simplest way to avoid such an occurrence would be to prevent a total dependence on extraterrestrial energy and maintain a 50-50 relationship between earth-based energy sources and orbital resources. I'm sure that existing power industries would favor this sort of arrange-

ment if faced with such a decision. Still, with proper regulation, the chances of an energy stranglehold by the colonies would be negligible in comparison with those of a world-wide energy crisis, should that turn out to be the alternative.

Ken Josenhans
Rm 367, E. Holmes Hall
MSU
E. Lansing, MI 48824

DiFate's cover is a truly striking piece of work, far above the level of the average fanzine cover. The tone conveyed by the symbolism, with the guillotine blade obscuring the astronomical scene just before descending on our collective neck, would have made this a fine cover for Analog, were they not so thoroughly wedded to realistic covers.

Like Eli Cohen, I'm getting a lot of unplayable records. But I refuse to increase my turntable's tracking force, even when it alarmed me to see the needle fly into the air off the surface of the disc on my first copy of Red Octopus. Instead I take the record back and get another copy.

After I had taken back my copy of Past, Present and Future for the third time I got into a conversation with the store manager about the problem. She said that the record companies are claiming that modern turntables should be able to track warped records with no trouble, and that they were starting to place limits on the number of records that could be returned by a given store in an attempt to make the stores get tougher on their return policies. When I mentioned something about never having seen a flat RCA record, she said this was a result of the special Dynaflex plastic, which has a very low softening temperature. As a matter of fact, she said, that temperature is close to the temperature used to heat the shrink-wrapping which seals each record jacket. The effect is to almost guarantee severe warps in RCA discs. She suggested that the consumer who gets stuck with an inferior disc should write the manufacturer and complain as well as returning the record to the place of purchase; maybe if the companies get enough letters they'll realize that we can tell when we're being given shit.

Richard Brandt
Box 29501, TCU
Ft. Worth, TX 76129

It's fine that Mike Glicksohn has discovered Dorothy Parker, a gifted and tragic individual --although with Mike's horrible sense of the pun, he could use a few books by Richard Armour. (Let's take up a fund...) Dorothy is famous, of course, for writing a poem about Marion Davies, the actress/mistress to the eccentric Wm. Randolph Hearst, who had a statue of the Virgin Mary before her lavish dressing room at the Hearst castle. The poem, which Dorothy is rumored to have left in the guest book, ran thus:

"Upon my honor I saw the Madonna
Standing in the niche
Above the door
Of the well-known whore
Of a prominent son of a bitch."

Word has it that Dorothy was already on her way out of San Simeon when she paused to pen those immortal lines.

Belatedly, I must admit that I had Fantasies about tv show heroes,

although never so extravagantly plotted as anyone else's, it seems. Mine more often involved the heroes of a show being stranded out in my locality; such as Napoleon Solo and Ilya Kuryakin on a mission to Peru, Indiana; or my idol Flipper traveling about in a tank truck. None of which, alas, ever came true. I read an interesting report on the effects of television on children; because many children are left alone by their parents for much of the day to sit before the tube, the televised world often becomes more real than their home. They believe that the man on the screen actually comes to see them at their home; small children are reported to edge closer and closer to the screen in an attempt to enter into that world, and children asked to draw pictures of themselves watching television wind up drawing themselves into the screen. So the reactions of your loccers are not all that bizarre. A trifle mundane, even, but they are saved by their fannish imaginations.

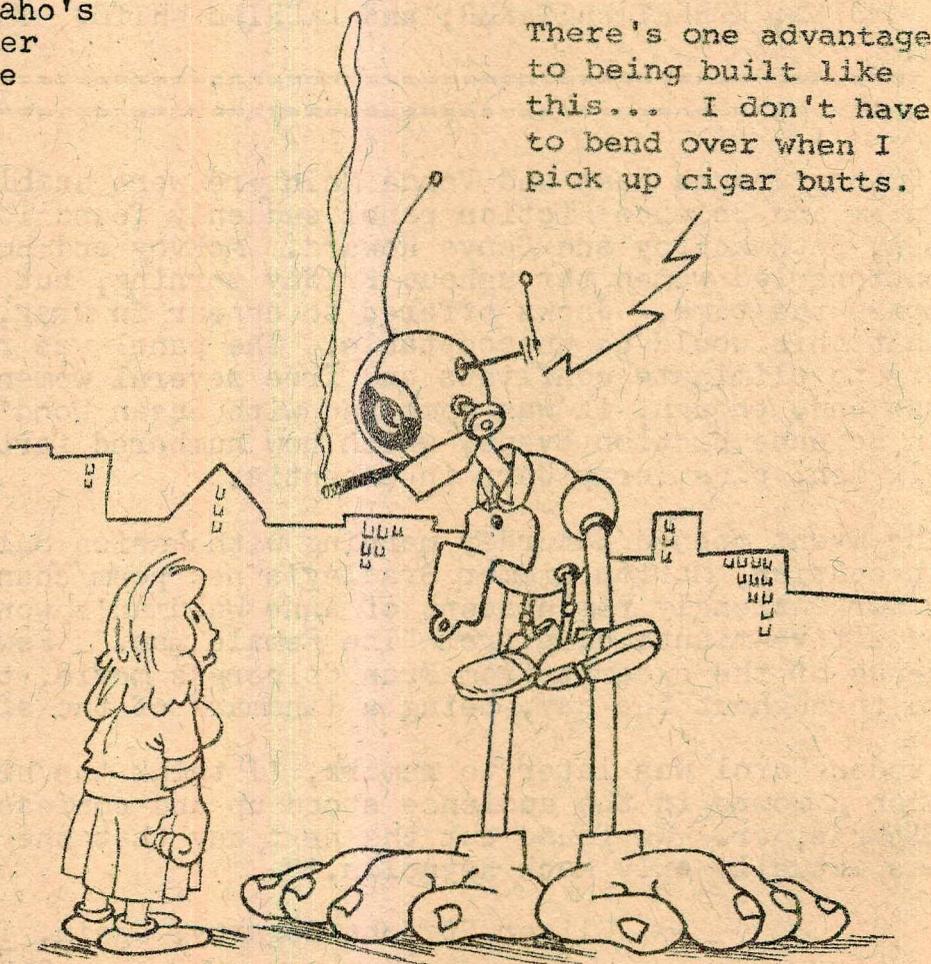
Cheryl Cline
724 Mellus St.
Martinez, CA 94553

"A Tale" by R.A. MacAvoy is really fine. Stories based on a fantastic premise, taken for granted, and then developed with a straight face appeal to me. MacAvoy might like to read "En Passant,"

by Britt Schweitzer; a story about a man whose head blows off in the wind and the head's subsequent struggle to get back onto his shoulders. It appeared in Terry Carr's anthology New Worlds of Fantasy #2. (Interesting note: the story originally appeared in Habakkuk, Chap.1, Verse 5, December 1960.) It's a very good story.

((I believe that in Donaho's numbering system, Chapter equaled Volume and Verse equalled Number.))

I have to tell you-- I dreamed about you two the other night. It seems I was in this huge hucksters room (looked like a barn), looking through a box of old fanzines. In it I found two copies of a fanzine you had done, say, twenty years ago (you hadn't aged any in my dream, so you must have done them when you were four). They were thick, and had about the same appearance as Redbook --glossy paper, square bindings-- and they had



cheesecake photos in them! There was also a photo of Suzle (fully dressed). I don't know what you really look like, Suzle, but in my dream you had long dark hair, and looked a bit like Grace Slick.

Well, I stood looking at the prices of the fanzines; one was \$1.75 and the other one was \$1.79, wondering if I had enough money to buy them both.

((And so ends the letter column, on a dreamy note. We also heard from HARRY BELL; K. ALLEN BJORKE; MARK BLACKMAN, still making Python jokes: we never expected him to quit, though; BILL BREIDING; MICHAEL CARLSON; DOUG CARROLL, who started his letter, "Dear Jerry and Buck," and who is definitely hell on wheels; LEE CARSON; RICH COAD, still rock 'n' rollin', the Rat; KATY CURTIS, who is just coming out of some rough weather; JOE SULLIVAN; DON D'AMMASSA; GARTH DANIELSON, who has very interesting handwriting; BRENDAN DUBOIS; GEORGE FLYNN; JEFF FRANE; GIL GAIER; D. GARY GRADY, who thought that R.A. MacAvoy wrote "Sovkino Tak Ona Est;" HANK HEATH, who sent an illustrated letter; JOHN HERTZ; NANCY HUSSAR; ED CONNER, out of alphabetical order; BEN INDICK, whose elaborately illustrated and funny letter was a delight; GREG KETTER; GERALD LAWRENCE; MARTY LEVINE; ARLENE LO; DON LUNDRY; TARAL/WAYNE MACDONALD; JIM MANN; TIM MARION; IAN MAULE; CATHY MCGUIRE; STEVE MIL*LER (part of his letter may be turned into an article for us); JODIE OFFUTT; NICK POLAK; RANDY REICHARDT; PETER ROBERTS; MARK SHARPE; ANDI SCHECHTER; CHRIS SHERMAN; STU SHIFFMAN; GREG AND JONI SHREVE; DAVID SINGER; SHAKRALLAH C. JABRE; ALJO SVOBODA, who wrote his letter from the YMCA in Kansas City, Missouri; JOHN THIEL; LAURIE TRASK, adding to the annals of the WPSFA Curse; ALEXANDER DONIPHAN WALLACE; BUD WEBSTER; ROBERT WHITAKER; and LAURINE WHITE. Thank you all.))

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"Since Joanna Russ and Vonda McIntyre were unable to attend, the Feminism and Science Fiction panel suddenly found itself composed of two men, Seth McEvoy and Denys Howard. McEvoy and Howard frantically buttonholed women throughout Friday morning, but none were able to spare the time. Jacks offered to appear in drag, but Howard decided that this would be unacceptable. The panel was rescheduled twice, to try to eliminate conflicts and free several women to participate. In the end, though, it was combined with Susan Wood's semi-annual Women in Science Fiction Event, which now numbered forty-seven women and six men, plus Terry Carr in absentia.

The Event opened Saturday morning with Jessica Salmonson reading, as an invocation, Marion Zimmer Bradley's new poem/chant, "Don't Deny It," a work strongly reminiscent of Anne Waldman's work. This was followed by a five-minute clip from "The Female Man." Few people could make sense of the excerpt from Fran Colberg's movie, though it was referred to throughout the day, being a landmark of the sf movie genre.

Avedon Carol was later to remark, 'I think the highpoint of the day was when a woman in the audience stood up and confessed to being James Tiptree, Jr. We found out the next day that she really wasn't. She was actually only Mack Reynolds.'

Oliver St John Gogarty, again, The Year the Worldcon Came to Flushing (p. 79)

SUZLECOL

Now, another in our continuing series of "Travels with WPSFA"

SEE YOU IN SEPTEMBER OR PHILADELPHIA, WHICHEVER COMES FIRST.

Planning trips for more than the number of people who will fit into one car is probably the first stage of lunacy, but in the early days of WPSFA (another stage of lunacy), there were many of us new to fandom and eager to get to conventions, and we sat around at meetings plotting how to get everyone to as many cons as possible with next to no money. The Philcon was always a good choice since it was one of the closest to Pittsburgh.

In the fall of 1968 WPSFA was a booming club with the influxes of local high school "kids" (Hi there, Dena) and newly arrived college students. We thus had 25 people who wanted to go to the Philcon that year and 3 cars amongst us. Noting that 3 into 25 won't go, we decided to rent a fourth car and thus started a scheme the rough equivalent of the Allied plans for D-Day.

The first three cars would leave early on Friday and could take 14 of us. We dragged neighboring fen into our plot, like Bill Bowers from Ohio, who would be driving through the general area and were willing to stop to pick up a few more of us. The 5 people who remained would go in the rented car. To make the whole thing equitable, i.e. those in the rented car not having to pay 10 times as much as those in the private cars (we were mostly poor students), we figured the cost of car rental, gas and tolls for all four cars and divided the cost equally amongst us all. Drivers were given a set amount for the trip and the remainder would be used to pay the car rental fee. (This may seem an overly complex explanation, but the car rental money later takes on new significance.)

With a lot of help, I became the coordinator for this whole mess, making sure everyone had the right amount of money; assigning those who could leave early to the morning and early afternoon cars; those who could only leave after 5 PM to the rented car; and those who could leave in between to proper pickup points for the cars passing through at different times.

Somehow, like clockwork, the whole thing worked. The first three cars left with the right people in them, those passing through actually picked up everyone who was supposed to be picked up, and by 5 PM on that Friday, I was left in my apartment awaiting the arrival at 6 PM of the rented car.

At this point, I must digress for a moment --

First, this was before one had to have a major credit card to rent a car; one could just put down a large deposit (about what you'd pay for the rental, anyway). However, you did have to be over 21, and although I was intending to do the driving, I was only 20, so the actual rental would have to be done by someone else willing to go along with our

Suzanne Tompkins

scheme. Finding someone from our group, both over 21 and with a driver's license, was rather difficult...finally someone came forward (I'll call him Fred); thus we could rent the car.

Second in this digression, Jerry (yes, our SpanInq Jerry), who was attending Ohio State in Columbus, Ohio, would have to pass through Pittsburgh on the bus to get to Philcon, and as there was room in the car for one more, he arranged to take the bus to Pittsburgh and be met by us at the station. He was to be, in fact, the last pickup on our way east.

Now, back to our story: I am awaiting the rented car at my apartment. It is 5 pm. The phone rings. It is Fred to tell me that there is some problem with the reservation, that they don't now have a car ready, but will have one in less than an hour. This is okay, I just have to call a few people to warn them. After a while, Ron Bushyager arrives. Two others are to be picked up at their dorms a few blocks away. It is close to 6 and everyone is waiting. Peter Hayes (chairman of the first Pghlange) is about to arrive with the Pghlange Flyers for us to take. We are ready and waiting... Then Fred calls again, to say that he is unable to rent the car. It seems that he signed all the papers, gave them the deposit, and went to get the car. He was then unable to get the car out of the parking lot, and, observing this, the Avis people made him get out of the car, gave him the money back, and refused to rent to him.

Now I seemed to have five, soon to be six, people in Pittsburgh who should, by rights, be on their way to Philly. What To Do? Well, the deposit would be enough to get the six of us to Philly on the bus, and there had been empty spaces in all the cars to get everyone back. (If you're wondering why we didn't use those spaces in the first place, then you've never tried to coordinate twenty-five different class, work and driving schedules and idiosyncracies.) So I told Fred to wait on a convenient corner, and called a cab. When it arrived, Ron and I hopped in and started on a trip around Carnegie-Mellon campus. Partway there, we yelled to the driver to stop; I had spotted Peter Hayes' family volkswagen coming in the opposite direction. We all stopped, Peter ran over with the flyers, and we continued on to pick up John Upton and Keith Kramer.

The driver seemed only momentarily stunned by the goings-on and got us downtown in record time. We circled the corner where Fred was supposed to be waiting, but he was not there. It was, by the way, about 20° (F), dark, and very windy. On to the bus station! Once in the very crowded, pre-Thanksgiving, station, John and Keith went to search for Fred and, more specifically, the ~~pp~~. In the meantime, we pooled our resources to see if we had enough for six tickets. (Ron is always good to have around in an emergency; he had some emergency money right with him and everything.)

John returned and proceeded to have a conversation of increasing volume which went something like--"Oh, good! Now, where's Fred?" "Mahum-mahummahummahum." "John, where's Fred?" "Uhwahwahwahwah." "John! Where is Fred?" and so forth. Keith then arrived to say that they couldn't locate him anywhere. It was freezing cold, and we were running out of time to make the 6:30 bus (which was then, thank god, running late). (Other parts of this story may be a bit hazy to me (I could never name all 25 people), but standing in the doorway of the Greyhound bus station screaming at John with everyone staring stands out

vividly in my mind.)

We bought five tickets and trundled our stuff (which had been packed for a car trip and was unwieldy) into line.

The bus we were awaiting was the very same bus that Jerry was coming in on. When it finally arrived, Jerry got off. The look on his face and how it changed as he walked toward us is one of my fond memories. He came toward me, grinning, and I could see it come to him that I wasn't just standing there waiting to meet him as he expected. As he approached he didn't say hello, or how are you; he said, "You're standing in line. You're standing in line? You're standing in line!!"

I rattled through the story and Jerry turned around and got back on the bus with us (only wimpering a few times); we were finally, finally on our way.

Trying to sneak six people with their luggage into the hotel at midnight when we arrived was almost tame in comparison with getting to the hotel. (Guess who was the only one in our "car" who had a reservation in his name? Everyone we were sharing rooms with had already arrived hours before. Jerry did register for Fred, if I recall.) And we had a great story to hit the room parties with--once we found them.

P.S.: If you're wondering about old Fred and the money, he hadn't run off with it or anything. A combination of the freezing cold and his acute embarrassment about the car (although I should think he'd be more embarrassed about leaving us stranded at the bus station), had caused him to simply go home that Friday night. We got the money back when we returned, but Fred never came to another WPSFA meeting.

*** **

I'm not in much of an 'editorial writing' mood this time, so I thought I'd start right out with that and wait to see what happened. This issue was much easier to publish all the way around (except possibly editing those letters - we could have printed a small book). My mimeo hasn't developed any idiosyncracies as it usually does while we're running off an already precarious stencil or anything. (I should say YET; this is the last stencil and machines usually can sense this sort of thing.)

Just one last note to those of you who expressed surprise that my apt. is roach-free. Well, it was.

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It's Fan Activity Achievement Award time again, fans, and we want to see you out there nominating up a storm (like to see Rune and Hitchhike and Kratophany and all good stuff like that there on the ballot). If you haven't picked up a ballot through your neighborhood newszine, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to either Bruce Pelz, 15931 Kalisher St, Granada Hills, CA 91344 or Ian Williams, 6 Greta Tce., Chester Rd, Sutherland SR4 7RD, UK. Remember, you have to have done something in a fanzine to be a nominator. (I mean, you have to have published a zine, or had art, prose, poetry or letters of comment published in a fanzine.) (Oh, get Bruce or Ian to explain it. It's all too complicated for me.) (Oh, is this the last page? Good-bye.)

SpanInq #9 is an irregularly published, amateur magazine. It is edited and produced by Suzanne Tompkins (90 Pinehurst Ave, #5H, New York, NY 10033) and Jerry Kaufman (880 W. 181st St, 4D, New York, NY 10033). It is available for 50¢, trades with similar publications (not, we have decided, necessary to send two copies), contributions of art or articles, letters of comment, or at our whim. February, 1977.

The Spanish Inquisition

Tableau of condiments

Bewitched, Bothered and Bemildred...Jerry Kaufman..1

37¢ of Wonder...Loren MacGregor.....3

Technocrat of the Breakfast Table...Jon Singer.....6

Rocking the Boat...John Curlovich.....10

Peter Roberts for Taff... Terry Hughes.....15

Zen and the Art of Walking ...Jeff Schalles.....17

Sheep in the Wainscotting.21

Suzlecol...Suzanne Tompkins37

Artistes

Stu Shiffman...cover, 9, 13

Harry Bell...5, 6, 21

Al Sirois...8, 27

Gary Goldstein...11, 24

William Rotsler...15

Grant Canfield...16, 31

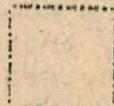
Rick Bryant...18

Barry Kent MacKay...19

Bill Kunkel...30

Marc Shirmeister...35

Tim Marion...40



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