

number one
for Apa L #5
19 November 1964

Redd Boggs'
SPIROCHESSE

GO TO L

Apa L at least offers opportunity to use notes, first drafts, and unused material that strike one as too trivial to publish in FAPA. up the items in one's file folder of

COLOR ME CROGGLE GREEN

Carnival yellow, white sail, eraser red, macaw green, brown sugar, bitter chocolate -- I'm quoting from a list of 445 "magnificent spring shades" that are listed in an ad for the Standard Shoe stores of Los Angeles (Times, 22 March 1964) -- Dr Pepper, desert bottle, lipstick, sunglass green, baked Alaska, currency green, Kolinsky, corncob yellow, whitecap, sugar mauve, cheetah, coffee #1, coffee #2, pinkissimo, honeybee pink, potato skin, wet sand, paint-the-town red, Russian spy (intense red), bookbinder violet, purple persiflage, girl scout green...

All these shades are available or, if not, exist in color swatches and, says the ad, "We'll dye your shoes in 7½ minutes, as we kiss your hand." Roi Tan brown, toasted marshmallow, supernatural, gunbarrel, red devil, buggy whip, red caviar, police siren (red), cocker spaniel, Lifebuoy soap, beelzebulb [sic], winter light, recorder tape brown, yellow cab, taco tan, filing cabinet, mercurochrome, Texaco silver, Thesaurus orange, cough drop, jealousy green, bank check violet, potato chip, eye-shade green, cigarette ash, raspberry popsicle, firecracker, coconut meat, cream of tomato soup, bus driver blue, green banana, Indian penny, Spencer Tracy grey, cream of wheat, sea serpent (green), hot coral, iced tea, A-1 sauce (brown, of course), fried noodle, tepid pink, watermelon red, watermelon green, 40-fathom blue, 30-fathom blue, 20-fathom blue, go green, Volkswagen white, land turtle, passionata (red, what else?), old teabag, charcoal broiled (deep red), toy balloon red, cheesecake, white kitten, bison brown, red suspender, naked shoulder, ripe radish, catsup, snuff, grey flannel, Mexican caterpillar....

And dozens more, including one Gretchen misread as "corflu violet" -- only it turned out to be Corfu violet. The list of available colors fills six columns of fine print, and then there's the notation: "And 689 other shades for which we are desperately trying to find appropriate names."

There's an opportunity for you! I have a few to propose, to start things off: Donaho shitbrown, Halevy nosebleed red, Alva chameleon, and Buechley scared-green.

JOHN'S A-COLD

In John Kusske's MIC-KuP #2 in the third Apa L distribution, I note the following comment (in regards Gretchen Schwenn's Horsetail):

The reason why you Califans are so lazy, no-good and degenerat (don't bother to tell me that it's spelled wrong,

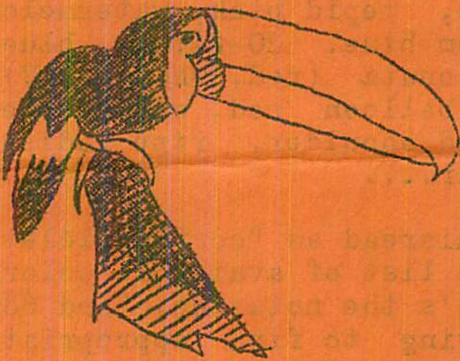
these deadlines are too much). It takes a cold winter and an unpredictable spring and summer to turn us Minnesotan's [sic] ...into the superior people we are. I feel sorry for you people who don't have [sic] bundle up with 20 pounds of clothing, or who haven't had the pleasure of delivering papers in -0° weather.

17 November. Today I went to the post office in the rain, shivering inside the black sweatshirt Gretchen lent me to keep out the unseasonable chill. Last night my mother phoned from Minneapolis to say she had seen in the Morning Tribune that the previous night's low in Los Angeles was 36° and that snow was expected here. As I listened to Mother's chortles, I gazed vaguely into the dusk outside but could see no snow; however, the headline in today's Herald-Examiner is "Snow, Rain, Hail -- L.A. Gets 'Em All!" Edith Ogutsch phoned today and remarked that this was the most miserable day she remembers in eight or nine winters in the Los Angeles area. But I asked my mother last night about the weather in Minnesota and heard about heavy frosts and snow flurries and storm windows, so I'm still happy to be in Elmer's country.

At any rate, I'm glad to learn the source of my slanhood: I was born in Minnesota, and I spent more cold winters there -- not to mention more unpredictable springs and summers -- than John has lived. That ought to indicate how superior I am.

A TOUCAN LOOKS AT LYING

This same John Kusske, and Len Bailes as well, criticizes Bill Blackbeard's comments on Ayn Rand's "monstrous insult to literature and eyesight called Atlas Shrugged" by remarking that Bill had no "right" to call the book "shit" because he hadn't read it. But how much shit have you got to eat to know it's shit for the birds?

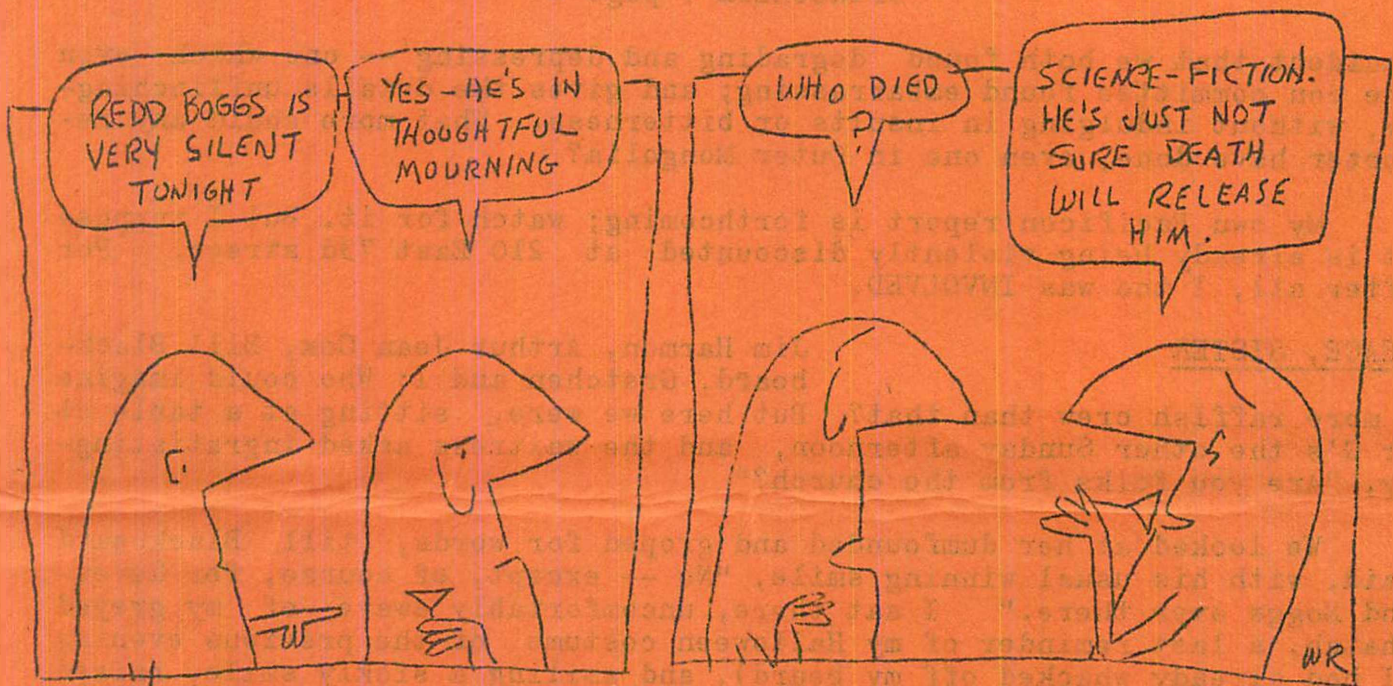


Speaking of that -- Ayn Rand, I mean, not shit -- reminds me of Henry Stine. And of his illiteracies, which he publishes under the title of Oh God. Stine is the youngster who looked at the beard I was growing for my Halloween impersonation and remarked (feeling of his own fuzzy chin), "My god, everybody's imitating me!" I grew a beard in 1944. Henry imitated a previous act of mine by getting born in 1945 or somewhen.

And Henry reminds me, parenthetically, of an interlineation which went out of date before it could be printed:

Goldwater: 1984 twenty years too soon.

In Oh God, Another Fugghead! in distribution #3 Henry tells Gretchen Schwenn that she has "this put on thing about how violent and dirty you are." I'm not sure what he means by "violent and dirty," but I wonder why he thinks such an attitude must be a masquerade, a pose. Henry, I am afraid, would not recognize real violence till he looked down and



saw blood jumping from his jugular vein. As for "dirt," he reminds me of Jim Benford in Frap #4 who in describing a visit to Tijuana imagined that a whore faunched back with a "stupid surprised expression" when he said kiddingly, "How much would you charge to beat me with a black belt with a brass buckle?!" Kids like that would be surprised to discover what a whore is for, for the godsake.

Dick and Pat Lupoff, though, have less excuse, for reason of age and experience, for writing in Opo #18 (distribution #4) that Gretchen's report on the squabble with Bob Buechley at the Pacificon was "biased" because she was "INVOLVED." According to Dick and Pat, "one's observational and reportorial powers tend to become biased in proportion with the cube of one's involvement." I presume from this that the ideal reporter of the Battle of the Mezzanine would be a Kazak kumiss importer living in Outer Mongolia.

One oneders, moreover, at the Lupoffs' remark that Gretchen "had developed long before the Pacificon a reputation for highly imaginative reportage." Before the advent of Apa L, her only contributions to the fan press (outside of some artwork for the 1963 Westercon program booklet, Riverside Quarterly #2, etc.) were a pamphlet titled omophagia, a practical joke on Apa X (1962), and a set of FAPA mailing comments in Donaho's Asp (1963). Neither of these texts could be called "reportage." I'm sure that she would lie to a cop (and so would I), but I don't think you've been conferring with the fuzz. Who have you been talking to?

Whoever it was must have been another naive soul like our Henry: a person who disbelieves any account of an attitude or an experience that lies two inches beyond the safe little 9-to-5 world we all know and love. I have not seen John Boardman's Dagon, but I have read Gretchen's original letter and it strikes me as an honest and accurate account. She does not import gore, screams, and fisticuffs into a battle that had none of these things. Such would be the usual tendency, if one were given to "highly imaginative reportage." Instead, she tells us of an

incident that we both found degrading and depressing -- one which even the con committee found embarrassing; and gives the details unflinchingly, without indulging in insults or bitterness. What more could any reporter have done, even one in Outer Mongolia?

My own Pacificon report is forthcoming; watch for it. But I suppose it is already being violently discounted at 210 East 73d street. For after all, I too was INVOLVED.

PEACE, SISTER

Jim Harmon, Arthur Jean Cox, Bill Blackbeard, Gretchen and I: Who could imagine a more raffish crew than that? But here we were, sitting at a table at Mr G's the other Sunday afternoon, and the waitress asked ingratiatingly, "Are you folks from the church?"

We looked at her dumfounded and groped for words, till Blackbeard said, with his usual winning smile, "No -- except, of course, for Reverend Boggs over there." I sat there, uncomfortably aware of my greyed thatch, a last reminder of my Halloween costume of the previous evening (I had already whacked off my beard), and smiling a sickly smile, raised my hand and said, "Praise the lord, praise the lord."

I expected the waitress to hoot politely and go off to fill the sugar shakers, but to my surprise she said, "What church are you from, Reverend? I'm from the Pentecostal church myself. I go to church every Sunday morning and to midweek hymn-sing as often as I can."

I thought desperately for a moment, and couldn't think of the name of the Rainbow Revival church which stands under a "JESUS HEALS" sign at Olympic and Vermont, so I said feebly, "The Unitarian church" -- which is just down the street from Mr G's and which Edith and I visited a few times though not for services. I knew that the Unitarian church is anathema to most fundamentalists, but it was the best I could do at short notice. It was good enough.

"I'm happy to see you, Reverend," the waitress said. "Drop in any time."

"Peace, sister," I said, and beamed beneficently upon her.

"You're cute as a spirochete!" -- Old Insurgent insult.

ARTWORK CREDITS, ETC.

The Spirochete heading and the toucan on page 2 are by Gretchen Schwenn; the cartoon on page 3 is by William Rotsler. I absolve the artwork herein from the onus of triviality mentioned in the opening item; also the poem that appears below. The Gafia press never publishes anything not worth publishing, bien entendu.

MISDIRECTION

I sang and danced,
And told some jokes,
And when I had that fly distracted,
I hit him with an axe handle.

-- Flanders Modrian