

STOP & THINK  
COMIX

No. 1

HOUSEWIVES ONLY

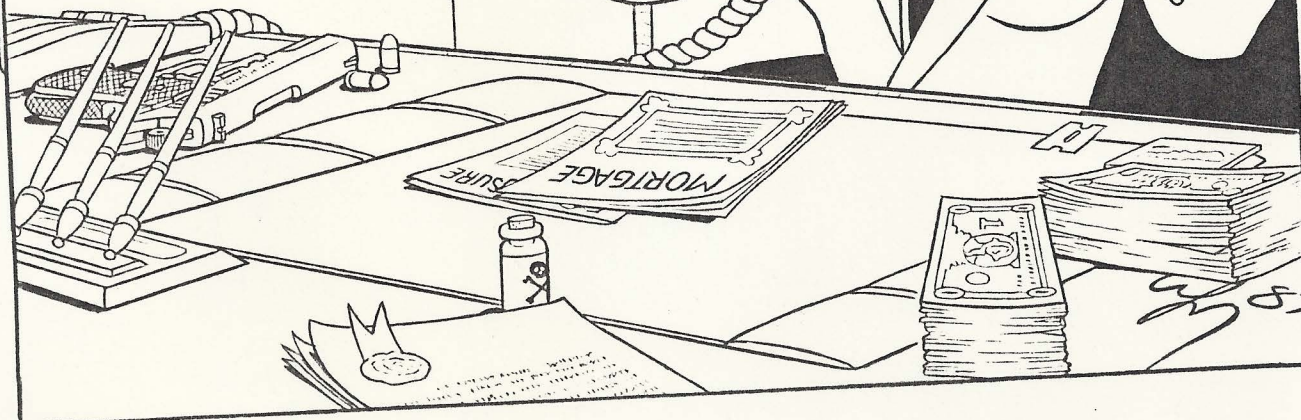
# "DALLAS"

THE CAT FINANCIER

by REED DOLLER & KATE HOURLY

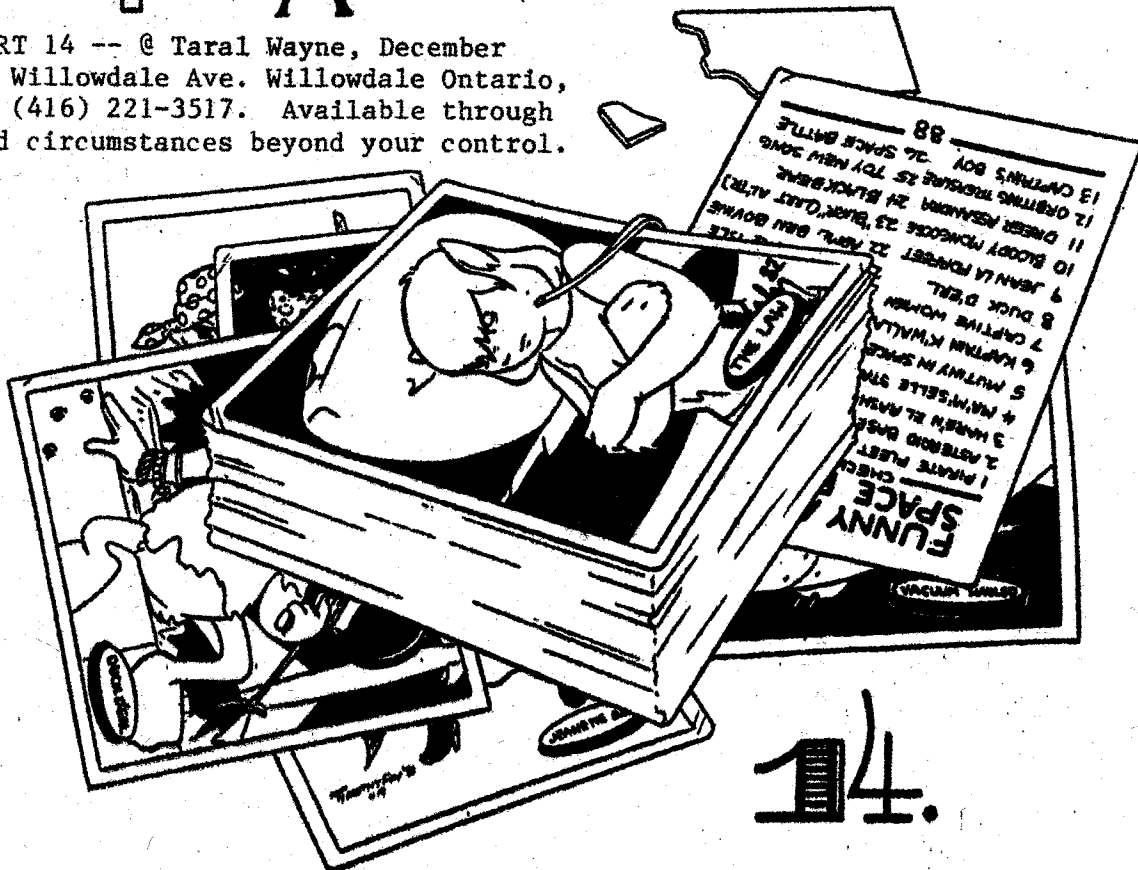


STATE OF  
THE ART



# State Of The Art

STATE OF THE ART 14 -- @ Taral Wayne, December 1987, 1812-415 Willowdale Ave. Willowdale Ontario, M2N 5B4, phone (416) 221-3517. Available through Rowrbrazzle and circumstances beyond your control.



First of all, those of you who read my last issue may remember I spoke as if the promised comic story were in that issue. It was. Oh, it was alright. It's just that no one in 'Brazzle was lucky enough to get a complete copy. I counted 50 copies of all three pages and wrapped them up with the rest of the issue, then mailed them to Schirm. No way in which anything could have screwed up. When Schirm gets the bundle, though, page two of the story is missing. What happened? Perhaps the tampered state of the wrapping is a clue.

It seems to come down to this:

Fuck off spies! You nazis at the post office or border invaded my privacy by snooping into my business, and did it so incompetently you lost the entire stack of page two. But even if you were competent you're still just a pile of shit in my eyes, and the enemies of freedom. You are below contempt.

Now then, since that's out of my system, perhaps while reading the story in this issue the members of 'Brazzle will remember that it was supposed to be in State of the Art 13. (I knew it was an unlucky number.) They might even have a chance to read it before Edd Vick prints it in Fan'Toons, as I intended they should. If not, well, maybe the next time I publish a comic in 'Brazzle I'll be more lucky.

The question is, will there be a next time? Things have been taking some interesting turns lately.

But first of all, I think I'd better mention that I've been considering whether I should drop out of 'Brazzle when Schirm steps down as OE.

There are two reasons, mainly. One is the amount of time it takes to contribute regularly. I could minac, or limit myself to mailing comments, but it doesn't seem fair. It also leaves me with the problems behind my second reason.

I've been able to belong to 'Brazzle essentially because Schirm is generous. We have an arrangement or two that helps me out. Even so, it costs me, say \$6 to mail an average issue of SotA for collation. Paper, ink, and stencils in theory cost me another five dollars. (It's hard to put a value on the printing, though, since I paid for the paper a long time ago, when the price was lower. The stencils are manufacturer's rejects, that cost me nothing. But the regular charge they make for cutting one is \$5. I bought more ink from a fan just this spring, but at a fraction of the going rate. So what is the true cost of an issue?) From time to time I also resort to xerography. At the moment I enjoy privileges with a friend that lets me photocopy whatever I want, so long as I use my own paper. This hasn't been the case for very long, though, so say I've spent an average of \$5 on photocopying part of every issue. This runs the total up to \$15 an issue. Over the course of a year I'm out of pocket \$60 to belong to Rowrbrazzle. It's only going to cost more when Schirm isn't OE.

Sixty bucks is a moderately large sum of money to me. Spread out over a year it doesn't seem so bad, but I have to look at it this way. Each mailing of 'Brazzle cost \$15. If you saw Rowrbrazzle in a comics shop, at \$15 a copy, would you buy it? Many of you would, but imagine that

you're not a member, that the contributor's are not friends, and that the mailing comments say nothing to you. Would you feel the same way about it? I don't think I'd take it off the shelf for \$15. So am I wrong in "buying" it indirectly, as a member?

By now Edd and Guy are squirming uncomfortably, my negativity-index shot way the hell off the end of the scale. Sorry guys. It's not that I'm trying to fix a value on the apa, any value, much less a low one. I'm just trying to set personal priorities for my permanently over-extended finances. On the whole I'd rather remain a member. I've managed to be a member this long, so I can probably manage a few extra small expenses.

It's just that the idea of another OE weakens my delicate sense of security.

I have to admit that I was one of the people who urged Edd Vick to run for OE. Although I have to defer to his own opinion of himself as the stuff good OE's are made of, I trust Edd. As hard as a person can try not to, he will play favourites, at least subtly. Ask different people, "who are the outstanding members?" of Rowbrazzle, and you'll see what I mean. Everyone will have a slightly different list. Some people, though, will have a very biased list. If we must play favourites, I feel safer with someone with eclectic tastes than I do with someone who'll play favourites on the basis of liking only one type of comic. Do I make sense? Edd I trusted not to favour any segment of the membership because it does cute and cuddly funny-animals like Steve Martin, or because it does Japanese anime like Robert Hayne, or because it does anthropomorphic animals like Steve Gallacci. The only candidate so far is Fred Patten. I've no reason to distrust his sense of fair play, but in regard to my fears I do wish I knew him a little better than I do, though.

I suppose the best thing is for me to do nothing I can't un-do. If I quit, I may not be able to re-join. On the other hand, if I stay I can quit whenever I like. As for money matters, I hope I'm worrying about nothing.

I mentioned working on comic ideas for a couple of people in the last issue. Steve Gallacci talked to me over the phone about my review of Albedo, and moving right along from model aircraft and Canadian politics he broached the idea of my submitting a story to him. It was just the boost I needed to put fanac aside for once. At practically the same time I had been in touch with Joshua Quagmire. During the course of our correspondence he said he hoped to get Cutey Bunny back into circulation. If I had any short stories for publication, he was interested and thought he could pay a decent minimum. Opportunity knocking twice on anyone's door would be a boost to the ego. In my case it was an exhilarating deliverance. After all, I'd been pushing a cheap pen over ordinary typing paper for fifteen years in science fiction fandom, and got diddley-squat for it. Oh yes, sometimes somebody would say how nice it was that you had drawn this or that for a fanzine, and after a while people did realize that they hadn't given me many signs of appreciation over the years, and tried to make up for it. I was finally nominated for that fan art Hugo, much to my gratification. But it couldn't make up for the fact that there were few places to get art published in SF fandom, that by and large SF fans aren't very interested in pictures, and that there is no way on Earth anyone can make a living giving art away free to fanzines. Once upon a time, it is said, fandom had been a

path to a professional career in illustrating science fiction. Hadn't it worked for George Barr, Alicia Austin, and Tim Kirk? Well, in a word, no it hadn't. The three artists I've named all make satisfactory livings, but only Barr came close to making SF and fantasy a full time career. Austin appears mainly in small press editions. Kirk found employment illustrating greeting-cards. For all that they have cult followings and make professional sales in SF, no fan artists, however high their status, has ever been a threat to the real pros. Who are the real pros? House artists, most likely commercial-arts graduates, who work under close supervision by an art director, often in the publisher's office. They illustrate whatever is assigned them -- love stories, nature articles, western yarns, political essays, or even science fiction. Free-lancers exist, but if they're hot property they usually want to get out of SF as fast as possible, and go for the real money at Harpers or Playboy. Talented amateurs simply don't fit in anywhere. They find it almost impossible to penetrate the set-up. I can only think of two fan artists who have gained any foot-hold on a professional career in SF in years. Both turned to comics in the end.

My personal attempt to enter SF as a professional artist was rather half-hearted. I made a couple of dozen copies of a portfolio and sent them to every SF magazine I could think of, and several small press publishers as well. Two magazines were edited by people I knew quite well. In spite of that advantage I struck out 100%. Simply no one was interested in my art. This was three years ago, but the situation hasn't measurably improved in SF since then. A brief ray of hope entered my professional life when the editor of a semi-professional magazine asked me to send material for spot illos. I did. He published two or three and paid \$10 and \$15 each, payment upon publication or later. The majority of my submissions, however, he rejected. Some were taller than wide, and he wanted wider than tall art for his format. (Ignoring the fact that he could photo-reduce art to fit any column width he wanted.) Other art he returned without explanation. At first I guessed that he didn't think the art was fantasy or science fiction, though if the naked broads in garish costume jewelry that he did publish were fantasy than I didn't understand how a House Gamin or robot skunk wasn't. (The cover of the last SotA was one of the rejected pieces.) I talked about this with a friend, and he thought the difference was something else. Nekkid broads, of course, need no explanation, but the magazines other covers were all serious, dignified, earnest even. And here I was sending the editor whimsical, cartoony, playful drawings. There was nothing inexplicable in their return at all. I dare say he's right. But it only makes me more disgusted.

So the opportunities offered me by Steve and Josh came as more than a chance of work, more than egotistical vindication (though there's a touch of that to be sure), but as the salvation of hope. When I hinted at these doings in the last issue, I made light of them by predicting I'd procrastinate, and blow it. Not a chance. I'm too grateful for having somewhere to go to do anything of the sort. Watch my dust.

In light of what I've just said, I have to admit that three months have gone by, and the work is still in progress. In progress yes, but progress has been made. I've spent time on drawing

model sheets, and deciding what the stories were about. I'm ready to begin drawing the first pages. Unfortunately -- you knew the word had to crop again, didn't you? -- I've other good luck interfering with my plans.

Through Josh I've been in touch with a man named Wentz who edits an electrical co-op's customer service magazine. He saw what Josh showed him, and asked me if I had a folio of non-fantasy art he could also see. I hadn't. But a week later I did, and got it off in the mail as fast as I could. Wentz responded by sending me a manuscript. Perhaps I wasn't quick in getting the job done, but I put everything I had into the illustration, and it seems to have repaid me. Now I've got four manuscripts to illustrate. Now, "The Ruralite" isn't a slick magazine. It doesn't pay a whole lot for its material. But it pays better than I was paid for spot illos in "Science Fiction Chronicle". It also pays upon acceptance, not months and months later. "The Ruralite" even has a larger circulation than some SF magazines have had. I hope to outgrow markets like this as soon as I can, but in the meantime I'm tickled pink. I've written letters to old friends in fandom saying "the hell with SF". More has happened for me in the last six months through comics than SF did for me in six years, going on sixteen.

Now then, let's get down to business. What have I been doing?

Of the two story ideas, 'Brazzers will be familiar with the House Gamins I think. "Wendy and the House Gamins" was born of the work that's already gone into gaminology, and a sketch of a little girl I subsequently named "Wendy". Wendy has just moved into a big rambling old wood-frame house in suburban New England with her parents. They don't like to believe in house gamins, and they're wilful blindness is strained to the limit because the new house they've moved into is lousy with them. Unlike her folks, though, Wendy doesn't turn a blind eye to the infestation. Rather, she watches them at night. Remember that Gamins are contagious! She gets more and more gaminish -- staying up late, talking sass, getting into mischief, developing an odd gleam in her eyes. Then one night, after she's been completely impossible all day, she unexpectedly falls asleep, and wakes up on the floor, looking up at herself in bed. The story of "Wendy and the House Gamins" is therefore the story of her dual life.

The situation may remind some readers of "Mary Jane and Sniffles", which appeared in the back of some comic or other years and years ago. A Dell title I think. Perhaps Tom & Jerry. All Mary Jane had to do to shrink to the size of a mouse was close her eyes, cross her fingers, and say:

"Now I close my eyes real tight.  
Now I wish with all my might.  
Magic words of Poof Poof Piffles  
Make me just as small as Sniffles."

Then she'd be exactly the same size as a little mouse character who wore a pork-pie hat and blue suit of clothes. I seem to recall that most of the stories were about Mary Jane getting trapped when she was small, or narrowly avoiding discovery. Having brought this bit of history to your attention, you can dismiss it as much of an influence on "Mary Jane and the --"

"WENDY and the House Gamins", that is. If you're looking for other sources I might have stolen from there's plenty to choose. "The

Littles" for instance. Or perhaps a touch of "The Horribles". Myself, I don't credit any of these as greatly influential. The gamins are Wendy's way of putting off the unpleasant job of growing up, but you can't be 15 forever. You can't even try, without paying a price, and the cost of Wendy's double life is what the story is all about. It comes the end, in the maturity of time, which is both sad and good.

Wendy's principle foil is a neighbor, a doctor of philology, who captures House Gamins to study their language. He believes it is the original language of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden. He's a crank, in other words. Wendy also has a friend, a gamin named Mordrebb who keeps the novice-gamin from falling into any of a wide variety of pitfalls. (Not only her own father's liqueur cabinet.)

The second story I've come up with is "One Step Ahead of Calamity". This is a more conventional gag strip about a rabbit. Calamity has the worst luck in the world. For that matter, most of the other characters have one kind of run-in with Lady Luck or the other. "Scientific" Edmond doesn't believe in luck, and does his best to demonstrate logically how it doesn't exist. Calamity is his principle test-subject. The boy next door, 'Cuz, believes no good ever comes of company, and prefers to stick to his self, for safety as well as privacy. Calamity has a rival for 'Cuz's affections in Perfume. Perfume is as blessed with good fortune as Calamity is cursed with bad luck. Except Perfume is a skunk... Her attentions always fail. Pandora is a cynic. She believes only in bad luck, and has every reason to. Reality actually follows her mood, and the more pessimistic she gets, the worse things around her become. The single human character in the strip is "Weak Willy" Treadwater, the worst gambler in history. He can loose a bet that a flipped coin will land heads up, tails up, or on its edge. He thinks a rabbit's foot will change his luck. And that all depends on whose, doesn't it?

Enough. I wanted to say all I could about Calamity and Wendy, but at the same time I have to leave something for the finished stories, don't I? Professional writers often claim it's bad luck to talk about their work while doing it. They're afraid if they talk about it enough the need to write it out will disappear. Maybe. I've never been afraid of that myself. On the other hand, how many finished stories have I ever written or drawn? So this time I'm keeping a little back, just to play it safe.

Last issue I disingenuously plugged a publication of mine by telling you that you didn't need to buy it. A few of you fell right into the trap. But I also put a few copies out in local comics stores. Mostly this was a waste of time, but the downtown store carrying "Sexy Skunk" sold several copies. More important, though, Sexy Skunk caught the eye of the manager, who decided to "discover" me. His store published "The Dragon Lady Dispatch", and the new series will begin a center-fold portfolio and article on new local artists. Although I told him that I was as old as the hills in this context, he was content that I was an unknown in comics. Alright by me, I said, and provided him with an armload of xeroxes and a couple of hundred words of self-promotion. I'm anxiously waiting to see the issue, and spend two hours a day practising my autograph.

The manager also urged me to attend a small dealer's con the store runs every year. Called "Tower Con", it isn't anywhere near the 1,800' tower

5  
it's named after. Instead it's in the Ontario College of Art. (Two stories and a basement.) I hadn't been to any sort of comics conventions since about 1975. I hadn't thought much about them until Rowrbrazzle members began talking about the ones they'd been to, principally the San Diego Comic Con. Curiosity aroused, I decided to accept the invitation and went to Tower Con.

I had to remind myself of two things. First, Tower Con isn't the San Diego Comic Con. Secondly, he meant well when he asked me to come. It was only a one day con, little more than a gathering of dealer's in a big room. There was another room for artists, including the guest, Joe Kubert. I was steered to a table at the end of the room. A kid selling his duplicate X-men was chased off, much to my embarrassment, and the spot given to me. I had a heavy load of art, in comic book bags for display. I'd also brought a dozen copies of Sexy Skunk for sale. Now and again someone would come by and push the art around, to see if there was something interesting underneath, but they always lost interest pretty quickly. I fielded one or two questions such as "who are you", and "are you influenced by Japanimation". Most of the time, though, I talked with the slob next to me. This was Paul Stockton, otherwise known to the world as the Strawberry Jam Press. He's a very quit guy, and I'm hard of hearing, so the conversation was pretty erratic. I'm glad to have met him, though, and tactfully managed to avoid saying anything specific about his comics. I was only at the con for a couple of hours. At five promptly it closed, and everyone went home. Everyone. Apart from Stockton next to me, I spoke to no one. I sold nothing. I didn't enjoy myself. Imagine how I'd feel if I'd been there since morning, I consoled myself. Stockton sold two or three comics while I was there. At that rate I estimate he must have made as much as \$12 that day. Why do people do it? For myself -- once bitten twice shy. I hadn't wasted much time that day, but it was obvious that being there four times as long was no remedy.

I was looking forward to the funny-animal issue of Amazing Heroes. To be honest, I'd never heard of the magazine until the day Schirm phoned and explained about the Rowrbrazzle portfolio. He asked permission to reprint something from State of the Art. I readily agreed and took it as a not too subtle hint that I could expect to find something of mine in the issue. Then I settled back and waited. I had no way of knowing when the funny-issue would be, so I kept an eye on the comic stores. Finally,

Amazing Heroes 218 announces the funny-animal special next issue. I wait the last weeks out in a cold sweat. Then, it arrives!

I plunk down \$4.50 in nickels and dimes I stole from my mother's sugar bowl, and from under my sisters' pillows. I open the magazine. There's the Gallacci interview. (Aha! So that's what Edd's dark hints were about.) There's the funny animal artists' forum. There's, yes it is, the portfolio!

I scan the pages quickly: cindymiketraycedd kenloudavedealmarkrobertralph -- oops, the end. I go back over the pages, a little more slowly: Cindy, Mike, Tracy, Edd, Ken, Lou, Dave, Deal, Mark, Robert, Ralph... Oh gawd, no! I've bought a defective copy.

How naive is human vanity. No, I hadn't bought a defective copy. I

wasn't

in

the

portfolio.

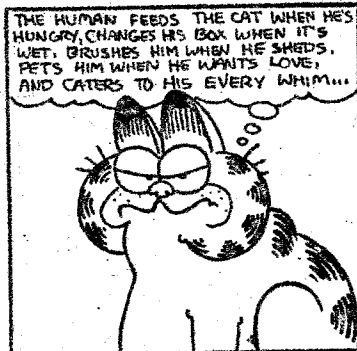
Oh. Yarg. Ahhhh. Rage. Screech. #\$\$&\*. Dimmerkintotforkootmismomimbobberahawiter-sittangohel, fui! I'd just paid four dollars and fifty cents to have my hopes dashed all over the grimy wooden floor of a sleazy two-bit comics shop. How was I going to tell my friends, after blabbing to everyone about the issue of Amazing Heroes that was going to have my art work in it? Calm down, I told myself, over and over. Don't make a mountain out of a molehill. It's only Amazing Heroes, a magazine you had never heard of just a couple of months ago, not Time or Newsweek. No one I told really cared anyway, since they don't read comics. Just shrug and be grown up about it.

I phoned Schirm as soon as I got home.

Stop blubbering, he said over the line. I can't understand what you're trying to say. Oh. That. Then he began wailing in anguish too.

It seems that he had people to explain that issue to as well as I had. Greg Bear, Tim Fay, and several others. He'd given the Fantagraphics people the material with explicit instructions what to give priority to, and they'd completely disregarded it. They printed what they bloody well wanted to print, and gave the rest of us the brush-off. I suppose we don't have grounds to sue the bastards, but at least I can vow never to buy their crummy rag again. It would be more satisfying, though, if I'd ever intended to.

And on that characteristically negative note, I bid adieu until spring and the next mailing.



DAVE JAMES

82

MAILING  
COMMENTS ON  
ROWBRAZZLE  
15



**ROBERT HAYNIE** Your first batch of cards reminds me of something I did for Ken Fletcher a few years ago, when he was publishing a tiny little comic called "Space Varmint Comix". I did a drawing of a pack of funny-animal pirate cards, which I might have well reproduce in Brazzle, since you've reminded me. Ken only published three issues of Space Varmints, and the piece never appeared. (It did, however, get published eventually in File 770.)

**SCHIRM** A theme for this mailing was sure a swell idea. Too bad I'm going to spoil it. For one thing, you might have told people which animal the Chinese calendar will represent the new year with. For another, I doubt I would have felt like doing any dragons, pigs, or rats. I do what I do what I do: unless I'm paid money, but even then I'm stubborn.

We discussed briefly my lack of qualifications for the job of running this apa. a) I've too few resources to "float" an apa's minor expenses out of my pocket. b) when the need came I'd not be able to extend temporary credit to any member. c) the next time I had to have root canal work and was flat broke, the Brazzle treasury would be a tempting pain-killer. d) How would the members have their collation party?

**JAUN ALFONSO** One of the drawbacks of covert operations against foreign governments is that it makes wild accusations such as "AIDS in Cuba" plausible to some people. After all, is dropping the AIDS virus (or dengue, or rust) on Cuba any more ridiculous than mining Castro's favourite beach, or poisoning his swim-suit? (Both of which silly plots the CIA has owned up to.) Cunning lies come in all patriotic colours, and the only defenses are skepticism and knowledge. In the case of AIDS, everybody knows it's caused by those little pamphlets you find in telephone booths. You never know where they've been.

**MARK ASHWORTH** Just to get one point out of the way, if I were disappointed with comics I'd have every right to criticize them, whatever efforts I made or failed to make to improve them. You don't have to qualify for the right to an opinion.  
Perhaps I didn't make myself clear:

I'm not dissatisfied with the B&W comics field. It's true that I found weaknesses of one sort or another in a number of the comics I reviewed, but I like as many as not, and found redeeming qualities in all. What dissatisfies me about B&W's is the cost. The low print runs cause high prices, and I suspect that hurts sales. It's terribly important to bring the price of independents down to the same range as the price of the mass market comics if they're ever to compete. I wish I could tell you how that could be done, but unfortunately I'm no wiz at business.

Returning to your original point, though, perhaps I am making an effort to improve B&W comics. I have a some comments to that effect earlier in this issue.

**DAVE BENNETT** "Disney Dollars"? Never heard of 'em. You'd think that with all that real money they could make good fake money, wouldn't you? I'm constantly appalled at the low quality of play-money. With one exception, the only decent play-money I've ever had was printed by Whitman Publishing Company. Several years ago I bought a few packs, and have \$3,334,440 worth of the stuff at face value. (Negotiable value = zip.) Whitman still prints play-money that's similar, but they don't make it in its original life-like size, or by damn I'd get another \$3,000,000 of it. The exception is confederate money. There are bad reproductions, but there's also a quite decent one I found in one of the gold-rush towns in California. At 25 cents apiece, I bought a mere \$570 worth. I regret it mightily. I wish I had more. Back in the 60's, though, a fantastic series of reproductions were printed by a bubble-gum company. They stuck a bill in every pack of Civil War cards. They were a bit less than full-size, but the printing was tops, and they reproduced about twenty different bills, in two colours, front and back. I had some \$3,600 of the stuff, and got rid of it along with the cards when I stupidly grew up. The cards are collectors' items now, and the money seemingly disappeared.

Reading something said by Guy Brownlee, I realized that I'd passed over a comment of yours, two mailings ago, that I meant to reply to. See my remarks to Guy, below, for a belated answer.

**GUY BROWNLEE** Funny you should associate Peanuts

and the Apollo landings. Back when Apollo was news I did a number of strips about Snoopy going to the moon the same way he was a WW I ace. Maybe I should resurrect them -- one or two of them weren't bad as jokes, though clumsy as imitation Shultz.

How did I miss that mailing comment of Dave's? Those mice in "President Mouse" do look rather like short-legged House Gamins, don't they? I'd never seen them before. But in answer to your question, no I'm not a re-incarnation of \*. I'm a re-incarnation of @#\$\$%.

I like the word "obstentaneously" you invented, but what does it mean? "It looks like "obstreperous", "ostentatious", and "instantaneously", all at once.

The Rocky interview already was done as a mini, but the story gets very complicated. Originally it was just a chap-book that never got printed. Then a friend of mine, who was championing the mini-comic format, offered to get me started if I'd send him something to publish. I sent him the paste-ups for the chap-book, and he dutifully ran off about a hundred of "Interview With Rocky", magically transformed into a mini-comic. He advertised them in the Small Press Comics Explosion too, and told me he'd sold about 25 of them. I got ten copies for my own use, and that was the last I ever heard from him. To date he still owes me about \$25 and has all the copies but one or two. I've been using the few I had to fill mail orders. Now I'm nearly out of them. My choices seem to be: get the extra copies back from my friend, photocopy more of them, or return any money I get in future. I've a strange reluctance to do the later. Getting back the extra copies means that I continue to circulate the old text, without the new illustrations. Printing a new edition with improvements means a waste of 60 or 70 copies of the first. Suggestions on ways to get out of this dilemma are welcome.

Apart from a clean, cute, outline style, what have Japanimation and I in common? Do I draw square eyes with six reflections, even indoors on a cloudy day? Do I give people sharp pointy chins, ears three inches above the line of their eyes, or hair that blows dramatically on a still day? I'll bet you can't find ten things that define Japanimation that are also true of me. Are we on?

**BILL FITTS** I had just a little trouble following your story, "We Think Therefore We Are". It was difficult to tell who was who since most of the characters look rather the same. I wasn't sure who was shooting at Wifred Colfax or one of his agents. Also, I didn't know Colfax was any where near Wilfy until the body fell on him. I take it that Pitri is also Colfax's son?

**ROZ GIBSON** I'll have to hold off on commenting on ".357" until it takes on a bit more shape. It's promising. I have one little reservation, though. Surely things would not look so familiar as they do in the story if it takes place 400 years in the future? Couldn't you set the clock back some? Say to 2025 or somesuch? Also, a .357 Magnum seems out of place in the far future. It's like killing people with a pike.

I don't care for those sticky mouse-traps any more than you do. They're meant to smother the creature, and that's not a quick way to die. If by chance it doesn't smother, it gets to

die of starvation or exposure when the fastidious house-wife throws mouse and trap away as advertised. But you wouldn't have gotten to see all those luscious mousey curves if I'd drawn the actual roach-motel from the story "A Mouse's Tale". To be honest, I drew it that way because I liked the effect of the curved plain, the graphic device of the ruled lines, and the shadow below. If you'll grant the distinction for a moment, sometimes I think more like an artist than a cartoonist.

I think you're right about "Greenhouse". It looks like it's a better job than "Squonk". I didn't say anything because I've never heard of the song, and had nothing to judge your impression of it against.

For some time now I've wanted to illustrate a song by Flock of Seagulls called "Wishing (If I Had a Photograph of You)". The band is a flop, apart from this one song, and the song has probably been forgotten by everyone. But I thought it was a beautiful little piece of studio assembly, and it accidentally captured a large part of my motivation as an artist. Unfortunately I've been constantly busy, and never could figure out a few of the words.

**JIM GROAT** Let's hear it for Big Daddy Roth T-shirts! I never had one, mind you, but I read the comics and built the models, and put in a brief stint trying to draw that sort of thing -- monsters and hot-rods. (I'm lead to believe that a certain Mr. Quagmire of funny-animal notoriety has a speaking acquaintance with Big Daddy.) Of course, it was all the same to me -- Big Daddy, Pappy Lemon, Pete Millar, Wonder Warthog, chopping and channeling, rails, funny-cars, and deuce-coups. But Big Daddy is as good a person to blame for all that imported California teenage junk-culture as any. Unfortunately I've never owned a car myself. I didn't even learn to drive until I was 26. Although I was steeped in the automotive arts, I never really gave a fig for grease and monkey wrenches, it was the funny-stuff I liked. Like T-Shirts. My relationship to funny-animals is much the same. I don't actually care all that much about The L'il Bad Wolf, but funny-animaldom itself is growing on me.

Josh says that Ed Roth doesn't do the art himself. I think I knew that, but hadn't thought about it for years. I knew also that Robert Williams, the underground artist, did do T's for the Roth studios. Schirm tells me that Big Daddy is employed at Knott's Berry Farm, touching up the rides and back-drops.

There was an interesting episode of "Leave It to Beaver" which features a Big Daddy type T-shirt. Beaver thinks its swell, but Ward and June are out of their minds with fear that their son will grow up to be a non-conformist, the worst thing that could happen in the 50's universe. First T-shirts, then Communism and sexual-depravity, just like pot is supposed to lead to hard drugs. A friend of mine, and mother, saw an episode of "Leave It to Beaver" for the first time this summer, and it was that one. She saw the shirt and said "What, where can I get one of those". She couldn't figure out what was wrong with the Cleavers that they didn't like the Beaver's shirt. So who says there's no such thing as progress?

It'd be fun to publish some of those old hot-red drawings of mine. Not to mention those Snoopy comic strips mentioned in an earlier mailing

comment. But this is a funny-animal apa, as Schirm keeps reminding me. Drat.

Yes I do colour. With colour pencils, a rather unorthodox medium I admit, but I can get some striking effects. You should look at some of the things Schirm is holding for me. I'd like to do an Equine cover, just on its own merits, but I also hope we're talking money here. Lots and lots of money. Or at least twenty bucks.

TRACY HORTON I've no copyright on minting Brazzle coinage, but I wonder how you'd do it. Even cardboard would be hard to cut little circles out of, and paper would be too flimsy to be any use. Maybe it's one of those ideas that works best if you don't try to do it. Major funny-animal credit cards, on the other hand...

MIKE KAZALEH On the whole I like the drawing of Captain Jack done in HB pencil. #2 Rapidograph is not quite as tight, and yes, definitely, less alive than brush. Croquill is my least favourite. So what. You like your brush best, infidel!

What would happen if you tried to publish "At the Zoo" in the back of an issue of Captain Jack? Would you be sued by Paul Simon? That stuff by A. Moore, whoever he is, is pretty wild. According to the most recently published roster, he's not a member. Am I mistaken in thinking I saw the name in the funny-animal issue of Amazing Heroes?

CINDY MURATA I know about the scotch-tape trick to remove stickum from price tags. I didn't have any at the time, and went ahead rather than wait patiently until I got home to remove the tag. I'm not sure it would have worked. It doesn't always. Soap and water was only because a more effective solvent would obviously damage the comic.

FRED PATTEN It explains a lot when you reveal that Tom Poes was drawn, not by Toonder, but by a variety of artists. The first thing I thought when I looked closely at the strips was that they were very imitative. The early samples look rather like an English character I've half forgotten. Perhaps "Rupert" the bear? Around 1974 the strip changes radically, and you ask 'Brazzlers to identify the inspiration behind it. That's obvious: Walt Kelly. The art screams it, much less the story. A little later the art starts looking more Japanese. At times it even looks like typical European comics art. Although I'm a bit put off by so much borrowing, I'm sure I'd find reading a translated collection of Tom Poes interesting. I suppose, like with The Mighty Atom, it's never been done.

STEVEN SCHARFF I believe the Wendall Washer whose name we've been seeing in the voice credits is in fact the same Wendall Washer in our midst. At least I find it difficult to imagine two gentlemen of that name loose upon the Earth. Also, Schirm may have mentioned something of the sort to me once. The trouble is I can never remember which shows I see his name in. G.I. Joe? (Ugh.) Strawberry Shortcake? Quickdraw McGraw? Oh well. And haven't I seen your name in a cartoons show, for that matter. What's that?

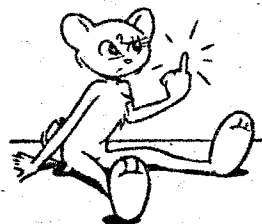
Oh, that was "Snarf", and you're "Scharff".

EDD VICK Why as many as 90 copies of State of the Art? Well, I put three away in my personal files, and another six away that I can give to people over the long term. Around town I give SotA to various friends -- Victoria Vayne, Phil Paine, Bob and Janet Wilson, Bob Webber and Hope Leibowitz, Paul Taylor, Larry Helwig, Mike Glicksohn, Phyllis Gotlieb, Tanya Huff, and sometimes to one or two others. I send additional copies on a regular or semi-regular basis to people I think would like to have my every publication -- Moshe Feder, Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Ted White, Stu Shiffman, David Langford, Ken Joshenhans, Mike Hall, Garth Spencer, Steve Stiles, Avedon Carol, Brian Earl Brown, Brad Foster, and Joshua Quagnire come to mind without checking. I try to be strict with the mailing list, but it grows fast, and the cost adds up to more than I like. (It's not as if I were mailing anything worth what it costs in postage.) I do whatever I can to reduce the list, including removing someone now and again, but it never gets short enough that 90 copies are too many.

If you think about it you might realize that to the extent that a being is intelligent, it will have many if not all the same fears, needs, goals, strengths, and weakness of Men. To the extent its motivations are inexplicable the less it must be like a thinking being, and the more driven by behavioural instincts. There must naturally be consideration given to biology. The life of an intelligent horse will no doubt be affected by it's need to eat most of the time. It's society may be nomadic, at least until smart-horses learn to keep granaries. Chairs may be too awkward for a four legged animal weighing several hundred pounds, and tables without chairs make little sense. As herd animals smart-horses might live communally, and exhibit a high degree of conformity. Males might compete vigorously for females. But none of this is out of the ordinary for human societies either.

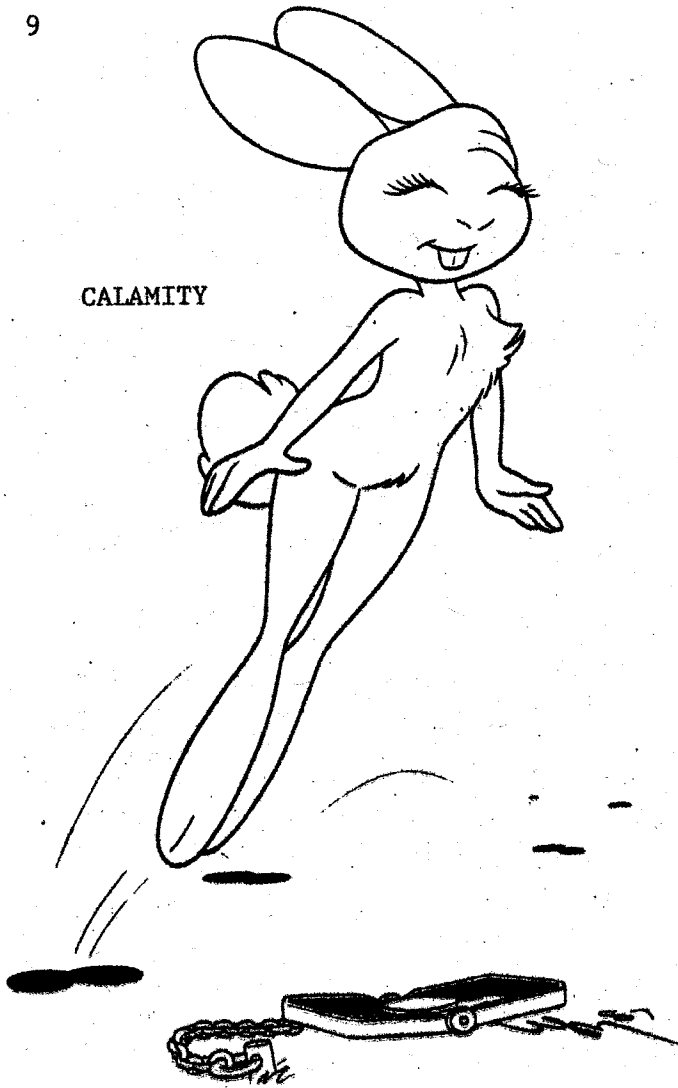
The usual limitation that authors have when imagining an alien culture is that they're often not even well equipped to imagine a foreign culture. There's not really very many ways you can live that human beings haven't, somewhere, at some time. Not unless you're writing about giant intelligent gas clouds, or crystal beings growing on a super-cold planet. Writing about such an alien species might be a tour de force, but I think to the degree it was truly alien it would be self-defeating. Human meaning is what fiction is for, however obliquely or stylized. An invented society per se is non-literary. The only good purpose for an invented society is as a device for writing a human story in an interesting way. But the story is the point, and it has to be good before all else.

Hope my penchant for lecturing serves some equally good purpose.

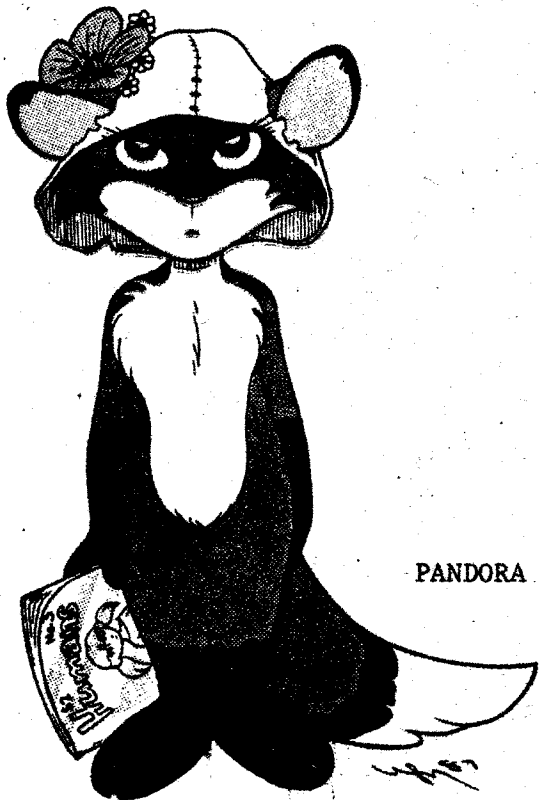
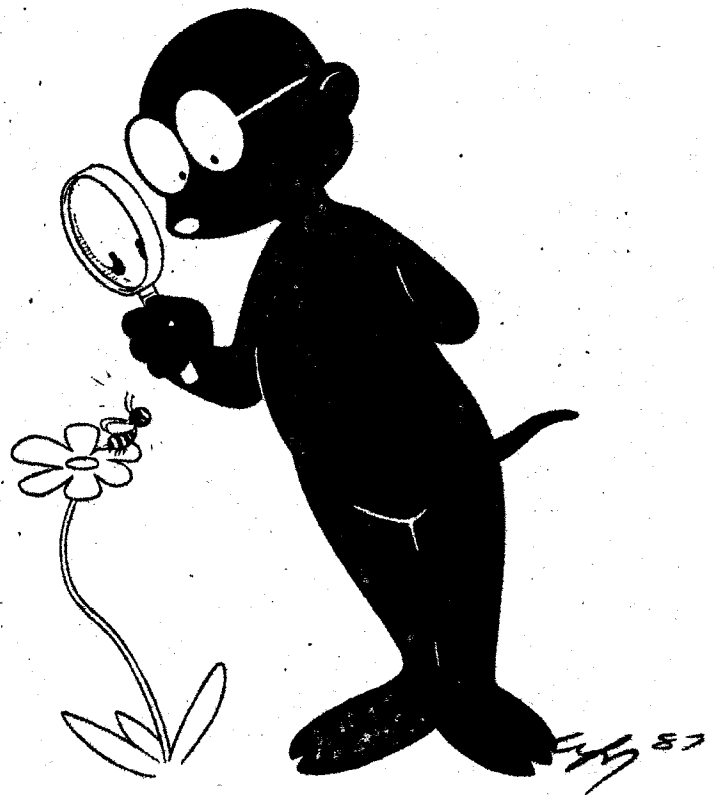




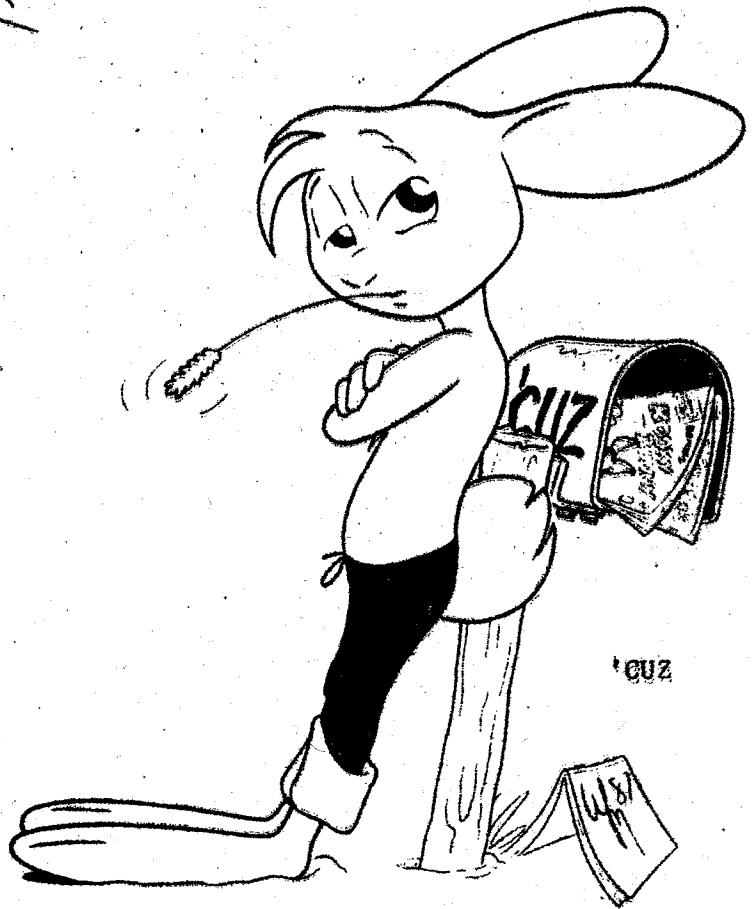
CALAMITY



"SCIENTIFIC" EDMUND



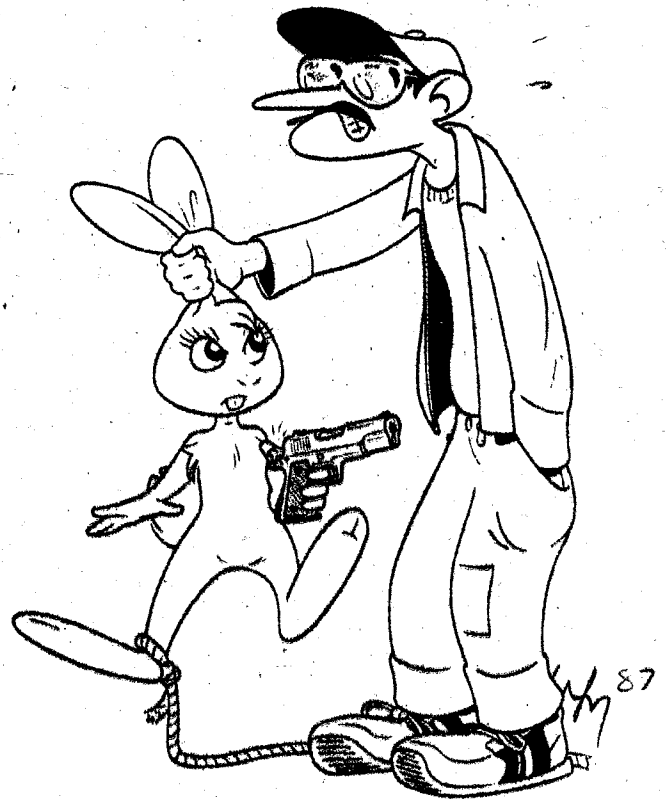
PANDORA



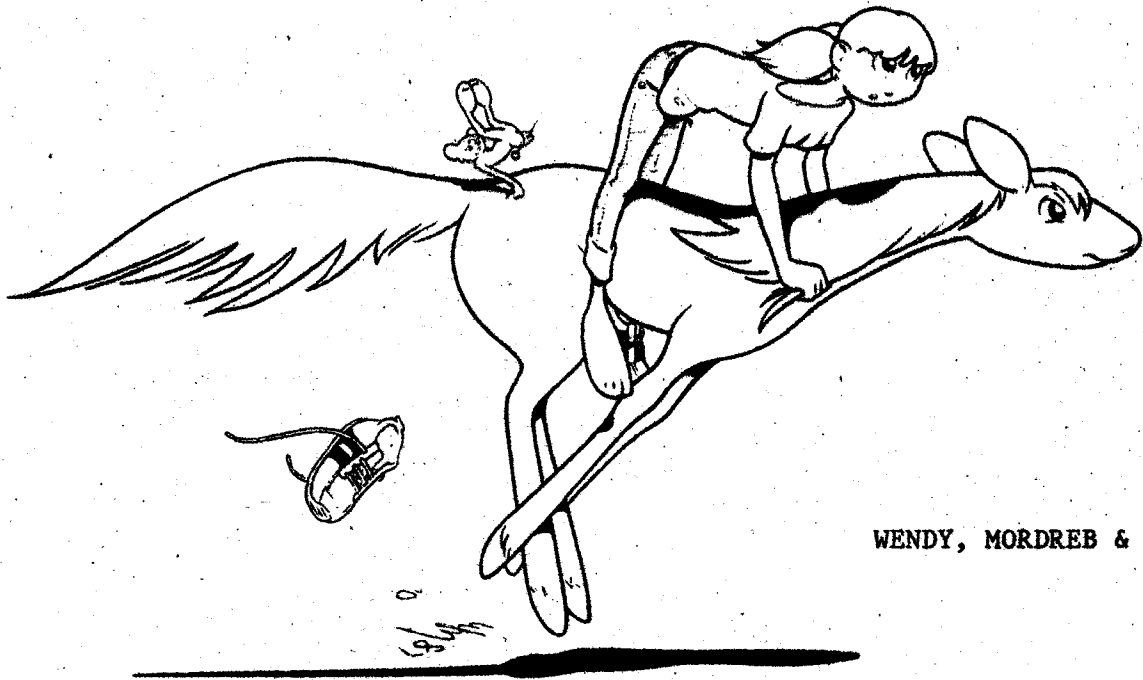
'CUZ



PERFUME



CALAMITY & "WEAK WILLY"



WENDY, MORDREB & HORSE

FIRST ANNUAL BOWRBRAZZLE STOCK-HOLDERS' REPORT

If all has gone well at Schirm's end, your mailing of 'Brazzle should include a blue American Express envelope. This contains your first cash dividend as a member of Rowrbrazzle. Each of you has been credited with one of each denomination. The one, two, five, ten, twenty, fifty, and hundred brazzle bill in every envelope adds up to \$188 per member. A total of 85 ones, twos, and fives were printed, and 75 tens, twenties, fifties, and hundreds, putting a value of \$14,180 on the currency I've put into circulation. Some \$3,835 remains for circulation outside of the apa: that is, a few of the people I usually sent copies of State of the Art to will also receive a set of brazzle-bucks. I also like to dive around in them like a porpoise, burrow through it like a gopher, and toss it up and let it hit me in the head...

My original intentions were to pay the members strictly according to the number of pages each had contributed to the first fifteen mailings. Unfortunately, the distribution would have been extremely inequitable. A few of our, ah... lower profile members would have been entitled to a measly \$5 or \$6. A certain collaborative team would have had to be paid \$323 to split among themselves in whatsoever way they chose. I considered then paying everyone a basic \$188, so they could see each of the different bills, and adding a bonus to the envelopes of 'Brazzlers with large page-counts. This had to be given up when I discovered there wasn't enough to go around. In the end I decided on a Marxist solution -- divvy things up equally and keep the surplus for myself.

According to my original plans, I had to know how many pages each member had contributed. There wasn't any way to know this unless I counted them. Which I did. I've kept the record too, and for what it's worth I'm publishing it. The first number indicates the total number of pages to the member's credit, as of mailing 15. A second number sometimes appears, and indicates the last mailing the member appeared in. It also indicates that in my opinion they may be guilty of slacking off. Properly crediting Robert Haynie and Charles Garofalo for their work was a problem. In the end I gave them individual and collective credits, but I have to admit that I have no idea what the proper division of effort should be. Then too, I've doubtlessly made errors of addition. But I think we're on the verge of taking all this too seriously.

Jaun Alfonso	21	Robert Haynie	108	Jim Price	26 (19)
Mark Ashworth	69	Bob Hill/Vawlkee	36	Ken Sample	32
James Babcock	17 (11)	Tracy Horton	75	Chris Sanders	18 (11)
Greg Bear	82	Mike Kazaleh	35	Lou Scarborough	30 (10)
Dave Bennett	47	Mike Kelly	58	Steve Scharf	52
Guy Brownlee	8	Jim Korkis	86	Schirm	75
Robert Carspecken	83	Brett Koth	43 (11)	Margaret Schnepf	39
John Cosgriff	4 (4)	Tom Linehan	71	James Smith	50
Tim Fay	81	Steve Martin	72	John Spiedel	30
Gary Fields	1	Rusty Mills	13 (8)	Ronn Sutton	33
Bill Fitts	18	Ken Mitchrone	2	Gary Thomas	34
James Fuji	24 (11)	Wayne Modjeski	18	Edd Vick	105
Steve Gallacci	43 (11)	Jeremy Morales	27	Mark Wallace	70
Charles Garofalo	80	Cindy Murata	25	Wendell Washer	54
Roz Gibson	37	Tom Owens	21	Tara Wayne	100
Jim Groat	81	Fred Patten	84	Deal Whitley	46

HONORARY MEMBERS -- John Cawley 86, George Erling 11, Ken Fletcher 6, Richard Konkle 28

COLLABORATORS -- Schirm/Bear 10, Groat/Carspecken 26, Martin/Morales 6, Brownles/Vick 11, Fay/Bear 10, Fay/Collins 22, Haynie Garofalo 135

EX-MEMBERS -- Bruce Tims 1 (1), "Art Riot" 4 (2), Brad Foster 4 (3), Jerry Beck 12 (3), Randy Clark 2 (4), G. Raymond Eddy 12 (4), Dianna Vick 4 (6), Colleen Winters 12 (5), Steve Willis 9 (16), S.O. Scott 6 (7), L. Joosen 2 (7), Dwayne Ferguson 4 (7), Al Sirois 23 (8), Scott Jeralds 15 (8), "Uncle Buck" 6 (9), Jerry Collins 90 (9).

NEXT TIME... The art's been done for bills with Gran'pa Peke, T.L. Coon, a Star Teddy, Shadow, Sabina, and a House Gamin. No idea when I'll be up to the rest of the work.