

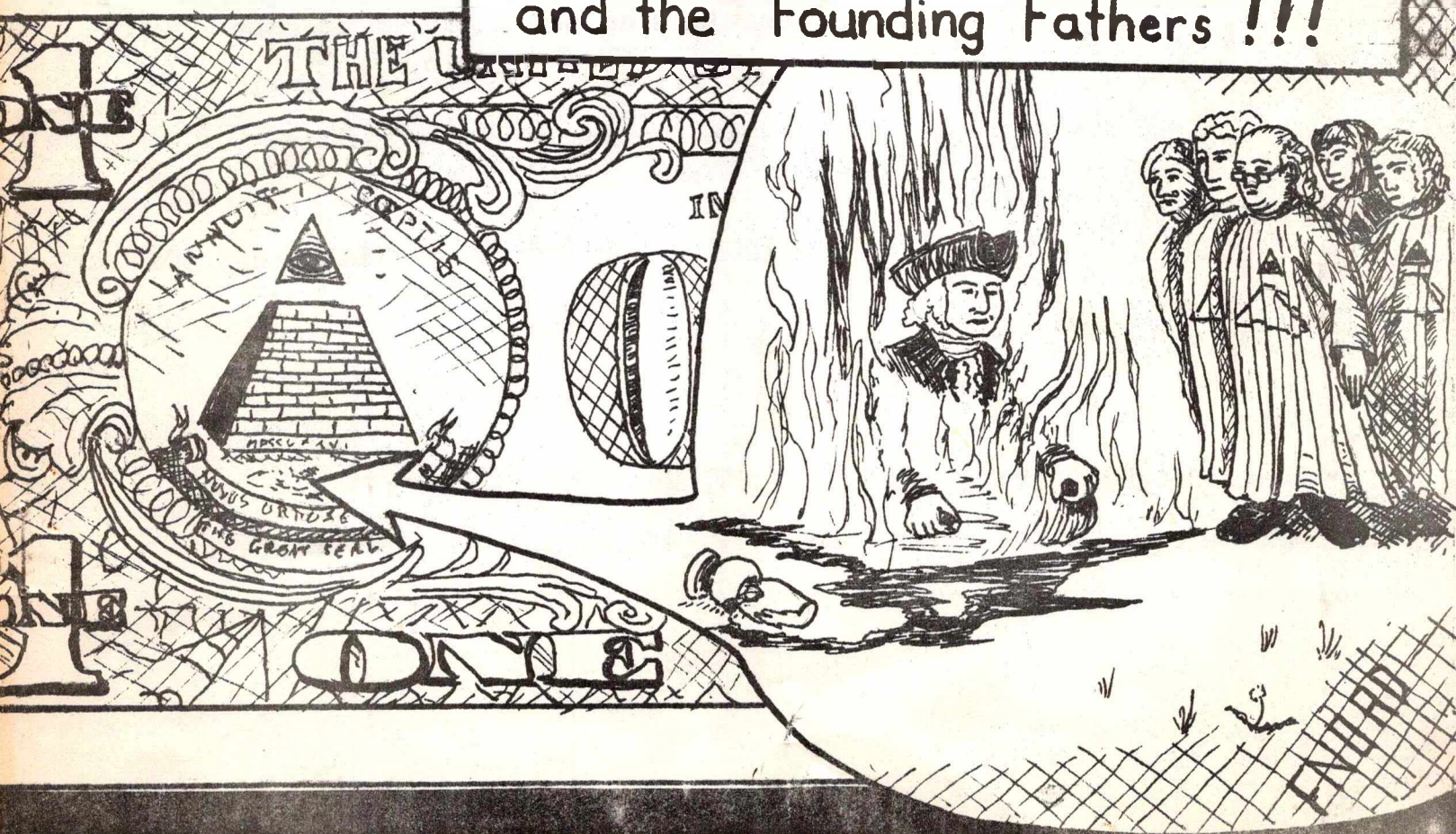
WE DON'T KNOW YET

☆ BICENTENNIAL SPECIAL ☆

EVER REALLY LOOKED AT THE
BACK OF A DOLLAR BILL ?

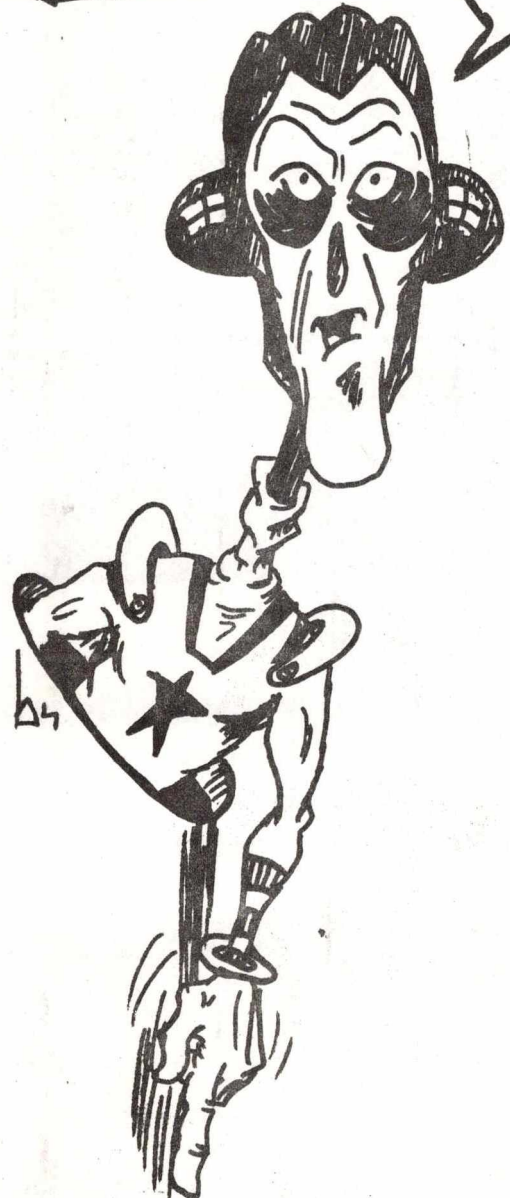
NOW IT CAN BE TOLD !

The True Story : Adam Weishaupt
and the Founding Fathers !!!



WASHINGTON IN FLAMES !

2
 Look at what this turkey has in it!



contents

SKID MARKS IN THE SKY - L.K. Tucker 2
 A MANTRA FOR TAKING OUT THE GARBAGE
 - Tim Reynolds 5
 J.A.M. SESSION - James A. Martin 6
 THE WAY - Ted Reynolds 11
 MIDAMERICONVOY WITH UNCLE ALBERT
 - L.K. Tucker 20
 STILYAGI AIR CORPS CAROUSING SONG
 - Mike Gould 25
 TALES FROM THE HOODED AARDVARK INN
 - Jim Martin 26
 JOLLY STARSHIP TROOPER - L.K. Tucker 27
 ZITA GOES TO THE MOVIES 28
 SPACE LULLABY - Zita Kutkus 29

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WE DON'T KNOW YET is available for 50¢
 or the usual

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Randy Bathurst 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 27, 28, 30, back cover

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Oct. 1976

vol. I, no. 1

THE BREAKS OF THE STILYAGI AIR CORPS

SKID MARKS IN THE SKY

What fandom needs is another new fanzine. Right?

Okay, maybe not, but Ann Arbor's Stilyagi Air Corps decided they needed a new zine, what with Cap'n Ro and Lin getting married and moving to Cleve-howardtheduck-land and all.

How'd it happen? The new zine, that is (what happened to Lin and Ro is an entirely different story and we already covered that in CAP'N RO'S WHAZ-BUNG - ask a Stilyagi-ite to show you a copy sometime).

One Sunday at our Biggle's Brigade writing workshop, Ted Reynolds loaned me a copy of CAP'N RO'S WHIZ-BANG, ostensibly for the purpose of showing off one of his own contributions. I read Ted's heavily footnoted story*, liked it, then thumbed through the rest of the pages. Then I went back to page one and studied the thing, thoroughly. I was inspired. I came away with a feeling that is best described as, "Oh, hell, I can do better than that!"

At the next Air Corps meeting, I announced that I wanted to put out a new fanzine. The initial response was favorable, if slightly reserved. At Randy Bathurst's suggestion, however, the new zine was shelved while we, with a great deal of help and encouragement from Lloyd Biggle, Jr., put together a special last issue of CRWB, dedicated to Ro and Lin. Although the idea for the WHAZ-BUNG (that's past tense for WHIZ-BANG, folks) came from Randy, there was nothing of his in the ish. After Randy had missed three deadlines stretching over a period of as many months (his favorite excuse was that he was too busy



* Actually, Ted's story was nothing but footnotes.

trying to meet somebody else's deadline - some bottom-of-the-line, Ohio based publisher who wanted, of all things, a Randy Bathurst coloring book), I reluctantly decided to do all the artwork for the WHAZ-BUNG myself, so that I could present it to the Lutz-Nageys at Midwestcon. With this oneshot safely behind me (if, indeed, that could be considered a safe place for it to be), I still felt that I could do better than CRWB, but I was beginning to realize it would take a bit more effort than I had originally anticipated.

Incidentally, the eagle-eyed fan may have noticed by now that Randy did come across for me this time. The illo on the back cover does not necessarily depict the true manner in which I finally got Randy to cough up some sketches for me, but it's close enough.

The final spark of inspiration was kindled at Autoclave as I wandered drunkenly around the 12th floor con suite at the Detroit HoJo. Oneshots were rolling out all over the damn place (it was, after all, a fanzine oriented con - and a very good one, I might add). "Hell, I can do better than any of 'em," I slurred to myself.

Mike Gould was sitting on the stove in the kitchenette talking to Howard DeVore about visiting the garage to make some slides of his pulp covers for the light show Photon Drive was going to do at MidAmeriCon (I didn't know then that I was going to get sucked into shooting and developing those slides - several months and close to 600 pictures later, I sure know now). Mike introduced me as the editor of Stilyagi's new zine and we got to talking. I told Howard about my idea for a first issue bicentennial special.

"Forget it, kid. Everybody's doing bicentennial specials this year."

So I should wait and do one next year? Anyway, I assured him that what I had in mind wouldn't be your average, run-of-the-mundane-mill bicentennial special. He was interested enough to offer to donate a whole shitload of mailing envelopes.



Next, I staggered over to where Gene Wolfe was sitting, embroiled in a typically fannish conversation/argument. I politely waited for a break in the conversation (about an hour) and introduced myself, thanking him for his contribution to the WHAZ-BUNG. I told him we were going to start doing a regular zine in the near future and he asked me what we were going to call it.

"We don't know yet," I replied.

He said he liked that title a lot and would be interested in seeing it when it came out. Here 'tis, Gene.

After I talked to Gene, I went back to drinking, talked with Lou Tabakow about the problems of trying to write sf, promised Re I'd send him a story for the new, improved, pro OUTWORLDS, didn't join in the nude fandom party at the pool because I couldn't talk Sally Sellers into going with me (I don't think there's anyone in the Air Corps or Waldo who wouldn't like to see her naked - I mean, just to look at her, not even touch her or... but, I digress). In short, I did all the things (well, almost) you go to cons to do.

So, there it is. A brief, inaccurate, behind-the-zines account of how WE DON'T KNOW YET came into being. Sure, I left out a lot but, well, I have to leave some room for all the other great people who contributed to this first ish - and we do have some great people represented in these pages! Jim Martin is representing Spider Robinson, Ted Reynolds is representing Harlan Ellison, Randy is representing Kelly Freas, Uncle Albert is impersonating a human being - we've just got a whole bunch of really wonderful, though modest, people being represented here.

Some of the people in this ish are making their fanzine debuts here. Tim Reynolds is one, as well as Zita with her film reviews and Uncle Albert with his whatever-it-is. There are some old CRWB regulars here, too, like Jim and Randy and Ted who, I am happy to announce, has become the second Ann Arbor person to sell a story to the new ISAAC ASIMOV SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE (Sally Sellers was the first).

LEST WE FORGET DEPT.

For the little fellow on the left, sorry, this being a first ish we haven't got any letters from anybody, let alone Harry Warner. To remedy this, I'd like to announce here that the magic address for all the wonderful lees all you wonderful people out there would like to send is:

WE DON'T KNOW YET
c/o Zita Kutkus
4959 Lakeridge, Apt. 1A
Ypsilanti, Michigan 48197

— Lawrence K. Tucker



Remember! Jan. 28-30 is Confusion 14 in Ann Arbor!

CONFUSION IS A WAY OF LIFE!

No, that's not a typo. Ted Reynolds does have a brother, Tim, and we are proud to announce his fannish debut with a piece called

A MANTRA FOR TAKING OUT THE GARBAGE

OM. The poetry of Trash, gnawed bones beside the fire, cities built on huge garbage dumps; that is:

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE PUSPA-KETU RAJAYA TATHAGATAYA ARHATE SAMYAKSAMBUDDHAYA
TADYATHA:
PUSPE PUSPE MAHAPUSPE PUSPODBHAVE PUSPA-SAMBHAVE PUSPAVAKIRNE
SVAHA

That is:

OM Homage to the Blessed One, King of the Flowery Banner, Tathagata, Worthy One, Fully Enlightened

that is;

Flowers, Flowers, Big Flowers! Flowers budding, Flowers blossoming, Garlands of Flowers

Amen

Of course a child is fascinated by shit, it comes right out of him, his body made it. Moses had to tell them to bury it & quit making shitcastles with it, little shrines made of shit at road-crossings, cairns of turds in the high places covered with garlands of flowers, fruit, a little cellophane bag of peanuts, 'Father Kaka, Father Kaka, I never meant to', 'I don't believe in Father Kaka', dingleberries for currency, they'd save their shit in cigar-boxes & have potlatches, the dowry of a king's daughter 800 camel-loads of the shit of virgins & eunuchs, misers buried it in the ground & suffered from constipation, soldiers looted it, great spoils offered to the shit shrines (a special class of people did nothing but tend these shrines, praying continually to Father Kaka & trying to give him things, etc., whole tribes sometimes became extinct) & Lam
BAM here come Moses down the Mountain with the Seeds of the Bush in his hand.

'Honey, please throw out that smelly ol' karma.' I just couldn't do it, honey, it'd be like killing a friend.



---Tim Reynolds

J.A.M. SESSION

BOOK REVIEWS BY
JAMES A. MARTIN

ILLUMINATUS, Robert Shea and Robert Anton Wilson

Part I: The Eye in the Pyramid)

Part II: The Golden Apple) Dell, \$1.50 each

Part III: Leviathan)

CHILDREN OF DUNE, Frank Herbert.

THE GODMAKERS, Frank Herbert. Berkley, \$.95

These are books that you buy furtively, glancing over your shoulder to make sure that no one is watching. Not because of any terrible things you've read about them-- because their covers are so exquisitely awful. "ILLUMINATUS!" screams across the top of each cover in letters shading from one color to another. Underneath, a gaudy border surrounds an even gaudier illustration--featuring a hooded figure with a single eye on the covers of the first two volumes and a vaguely similar tentacled blob on the third. Each central figure is surrounded by uncoordinated smaller items which (surprisingly) very faithfully depict things or people from the book.

Your first impression, from the cover, is accurate if not complete. In large part these books are a put-on. They are full of camp humor, weird names (Captain Tequilla y Mota), bizarre quotations from strange "sources" (The Honest Book of Truth), and, one expects to find every time the page is turned, the kitchen sink. Yet 756 pages of text can't all be put on, and it isn't. Somewhere in all of this there is a story, which, when it emerges, is fairly interesting. More copious than the story, however, are the games--with names, characters, and most of all with facts. Inconsistent theories of the origin of the Illuminati, a secret organization, abound in the early pages and tip off the reader that some of the mysteries presented will never be resolved by the authors.

And therein lies the charm of these books. They maintain in the reader a constant state of wonderment about what, exactly, is really happening. At the same time the authors slowly resolve most of the ambiguities, keeping the reader from giving up in exasperation. By the end of the books

you have actually figured out most of what intrigued you throughout. There does seem to be some sort of attempt to take over the world, and the good guys do seem to win-- whoever the good guys really are.

ILLUMINATUS!, however, is not an unmitigated success even if you like the kind of writing that keeps you guessing until the end. One of its strong points is the use of real-world material (the book is set in the present), woven in and out of the fantasy, to create a monumental edifice of food for paranoia. Everything that you have ever been suspicious of--from newspapers to the Mafia to the government-- gets wrapped up in and "explained" by the plot that Shea and Wilson weave. In some places you feel that you have to fight to keep you head above water--not to succumb to their easy explanation as to why things are going wrong in the world. The verisimilitude of this clever combination of everyday things and weird plot produces a powerful effect--but one that has the rug pulled out from under it a little too often by way of excess. For example, even my willing suspension of disbelief refused to swallow an army of armed, talking dolphins. I could buy that in a novel about the future, or even one about the present that didn't seem to be making a serious effort to convince me (tongue in cheek) that it was revealing Truth. But something necessary to the gimmick of these books is the put-on attempt to convince you that what is revealed is real--really real, not just real when your disbelief is suspended.

The other major flaw in ILLUMINATUS! is its length. No matter how you cut it--humor, adventure, social satire, or whatever--the book is mainly put-on, and 756 pages of put-on is too much. In a limited way, there are similarities between ILLUMINATUS! and THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO. But those who recall the latter work, which is undoubtedly one of the fantasy classics of this century, will recall its brevity and the fact that it left the reader wishing there was more. ILLUMINATUS! does not have that virtue--it often makes you wish there were less. Recommended for those with \$4.50 to throw around and a diploma from the Evelyn Wood speed-reading course.

I have recently reread several of Frank Herbert's books--Dune, Dune Messiah, and THE GODMAKERS. Together with CHILDREN OF DUNE they provide an interesting look at a range of Herbert's writing. It was particularly interesting to reread Dune and Dune Messiah. My initial reaction to Dune was to think that it was great, and to Dune Messiah to think that it was not nearly as good. Dune kept up upon rereading, and Dune Messiah seemed much better. The reason for the seeming improvement of Dune Messiah was, I think, reading it in close conjunction with Dune. Dune wove a very rich fabric of background--especially the mores of the inhabitants of the planet Dune. Dune Messiah, on the other hand, is rather spare in providing the background that gave the original book such a feeling of richness; instead it seemed to confine itself to advancing the plot. Ironically, since Herbert's plotting is so intricate, the effect was to produce a seemingly slow-moving book. Dune, in contrast, probably actually moved just as slowly but appeared not to because the wealth of background material was so entertaining.

Children of Dune, I am happy to say, stacks up very well against Dune and Dune Messiah. Its protagonist is no longer Paul Atreides, but his son, Leto. Both of them are infected with a vision of the future of Dune, but they are distinct characters, and Children of Dune thereby avoids the pitfall of being simply warmed-over Dune. Most of the old characters are there; some have changed, some have not. Their personal interactions somehow seem more real in this book than in either of the two previous ones. In typical Herbert fashion, of course, these personal interactions are woven intricately with palace intrigue and the fast-paced movement of the plot.

I have read two other reviews of the book so far; both authors expressed great admiration for the book but disappointment with the ending. (One review gave a vague hint about the ending with a statement along the lines of--Don't worry, what I've just said won't be comprehensible to you unless you have already read the book, so I haven't spoiled the ending for you. Unfortunately, the "hint" became perfectly clear after one had read a portion of the book, and so did deflate the ending somewhat. I won't commit that sin.) Perhaps because I was forewarned not to expect much from the ending I set my sights low and enjoyed it. More likely, I think, is that I simply disagree with the other reviewers--I found the ending utterly consistent with the sense of destiny and, in a limited sense, mysticism that pervades these books.

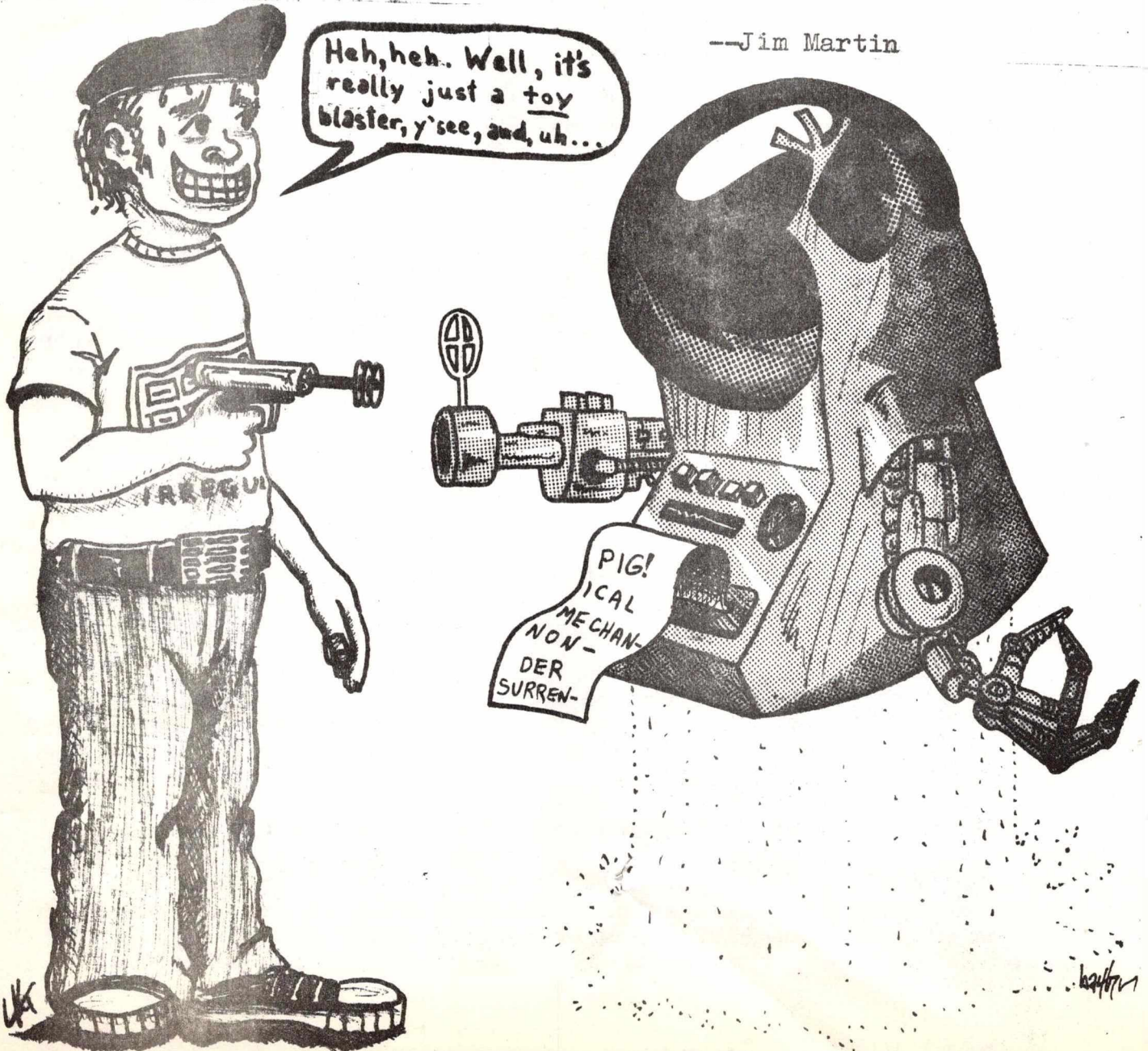
You will probably not rate Children of Dune as highly as you did Dune itself. I think that it is just as good a book, but that Dune, by being the first of a series of books that brought a fresh synthesis of ideas to science fiction, stood out more sharply from the other writing of its day. Children of Dune itself is fresh, but within the context of a now-familiar world and manner of story-telling. Most of the magic is still there; only the magic of newness is absent.

THE GODMAKERS shows Herbert as the unsuccessful blender of science, destiny, and mysticism, in marked contrast to the Dune trilogy. The book is not bad; it is simply commonplace. One has the feeling in reading it that it was written as a sequence of shorter stories, now patched together to make a novel. The title is honest: a god is actually made--and a real god, too, not a phony god. But science fiction has already had stories about gods, about the creation of the universe, etc., so that the mere idea is no longer fresh. It requires special treatment that Herbert here attempted but didn't quite bring off. The brooding sense of destiny present in the Dune books is simply lacking here, so that when the protagonist becomes a god, it all has the feeling of being a bit too mechanical. The book also begins to sound a bit like an old

Analog editorial toward the end--pushing the view that, contrary to the feelings of all you old peaceniks, the nature of the universe is such that war is a necessity. I don't believe that, but I could accept it as the tenet of a good piece of fiction if I hadn't felt that the fiction was too openly manipulated to preach that conclusion.

The Godmakers is nice diversion, if you don't expect too much from it. At 221 pages of relatively large print, it will probably end before your frustrations become too great. Faint praise, but praise nonetheless.

--Jim Martin



THE WAY

by Ted Reynolds

The old man kept close to the warehouses on his left, for fear of the cars. A good many old men - and kids - were lost in these days without sidewalks, when everybody else was riding in the machines. Half a mile out of town, it was assumed that no sane man walked anymore. Maybe so, thought the old man; but they won't stop me walking just because I'm mad, and old, and lonely. Not if I'm the last man in the world.

He paused at the next corner and peered with failing eyes down each road. He didn't know if the mist was about him or inside him. Was it already time to cross to the right, or must he go on another block? It was hard to be sure. There was a street sign over there, but it was swathed in shadow. He had forgotten the name of the street he sought, but perhaps if he saw it he could recall. He looked both ways into darkness, and saw nothing; listened to the inaudible. And then suddenly a lighted auto shot across the intersection with a roar and was gone.

The darkness and silence are more in myself than in the night, thought the old man. Day by day the world constricts around me, and soon my thoughts will be alone in the night. Ah, well, in me there is no spot for death to strike.

With a mild hope that there would be no cars he tapped his way across the street. Fate did not strike this time, and he arrived beneath the sign. But staring up through the shadows that fell across it, he saw that it still clutched its enigmatic secret to itself. The image of the imageless, the transcendently abstruse. Well, if not this street, then another, he thought. He looked around to

regain his bearings. He had come up that road, certainly. Who trapped me cunningly in this body, these senses, step by step, without my realizing? Why didn't I notice where I was going? Well, I know what to do in these cases. The further one goes, the less one knows. I must wait here until something occurs.

A short distance down the street a door opened, shedding an angled light across the pavement. The old man allowed himself to gravitate in that direction. Shapes stood before the door, low conversation was interrupted as he stepped apologetically into the rectangle of light.

"One moment, Doctor," came a voice. A man came down the steps. "Can I help you, sir?"

"I do beg pardon. I seem to have mistaken my way. Would you be able to direct me to the Space Communications Laboratories?"

"Why, you're there," said the younger man, "though I'm afraid this is a most inconvenient evening for visitors. We are all quite busy."

To accomplish is not to strive. The old man simply hung his head in mild dejection until, as was inevitable, the other said, "But won't you step in for a few minutes at least; it's a poor night for such late walking."

The old man permitted the other two to usher him into the lobby and then, over his gentle protestations, to divest him of coat and muffler. Leaning on his cane, he was shown to a quiet room and a soft armchair. Sinking into it gratefully, he glanced up at the others.

"I would not wish to disturb your work tonight," he said at once. "I am George L. Youngdahl, Peter's father."

The man, round-faced and fortyish, who had spoken to him was taken by surprise. "Mr. Youngdahl? Good heavens, sir, it's an honor to meet you. I certainly never expected... Let me introduce myself; Loren Horsell, director of the Space Communications Laboratories." He gestured toward the taller man, some ten years older. "And this is Dr. Riesling of Astromed."

"I believe we have met before, Mr. Youngdahl," said the doctor.

"Indeed, I remember. It is pleasant to meet you again, Dr. Riesling."

"I presume," said Horsell, "that you have come to follow reports of the Hesperides' landing?"

"That is correct. At first I didn't know where to come. Then it struck me that this place, as provider of the major part of the communications equipment for the Hesperides, might quite

likely be keeping track of things." His voice questioned.

"You're quite right. As a matter of fact, this is one of the few monitoring stations for the whole flight. But surely you didn't have to come all the way out here to be informed?"

There was a trace of bitterness in the old man's reply. "Sir, you do not know how uniquely fortunate you are to have access to the information from the equipment you have supplied the government. The government is not joking when it speaks of the need for secrecy these days. I have been personally informed by the undersecretaries for both the Department of Space and that of International Competition that I must wait for general release of information concerning all aspects of the flight."

The doctor snorted. "I knew there was general discretion about it, but that's pretty snotty. The captain is your son, after all."

"It's just the usual bureaucratic mentality," said Horsell. "We don't worry about those things around here. If you'd asked my wife's mah jongg club, you'd have gotten all the information you wanted."

The old man saw his advantage and pressed on. "So if there is a corner near the radio or teletype or whatever you use," he begged politely, "where I would really be out of the way, disturbing no one - unless you are intimidated by the Department of Space..." His eyes crinkled in brief amusement.

"Damn the Department. It's just that... Well, you will understand if we are all very rude, won't you? There's so much to do. Is that all right, Mr. Youngdahl?"

"But of course. Don't trouble about me, or I shall become most uncomfortable at imposing."

"Fine. I'll ask someone to scare up some coffee or tea, and then take you to the screens. After that, we'll just have to ignore you. The landing approach will begin in about thirty minutes; and that means the reports will be coming in about fifteen minutes after that. So you're just in time. Please, excuse me."

The doctor and the old man were left alone. The doctor smiled pleasantly, remarking, "You will be pleased to know that, at latest reports, the voyage is completely successful."

The old man grimaced slightly. "I did not come to be comforted, but to observe the obvious outcome." And then with seeming irrelevance, "For you know I did not want Peter to go to Venus."

"I should know. You certainly told me that when you came to see me before his last physical."

"Do you consider I acted unethically in so doing?"

The doctor pondered. "I think not. If you had wanted me

to reject him - and one parent did - even if I found no physical cause for doing so, I should have had to consider you... not unethical, but perhaps not sufficiently aware of the integrity of your son's individuality. But as you merely requested me to let nothing prevent me from acting on any defect I might notice..."

"Peter was so anxious to go. I feared he might convince you to overlook something important. My son can be very persuasive."

There was no need, Mr. Youngdahl. Peter is a perfectly healthy specimen. If I had found anything wrong at all I would not have overlooked it, even without your suggestion. We have our own code of ethics, you know..."

"I know. And I have decided I was in error. We say 'To quicken but not to own is supreme virtue'. I had forgotten."

The doctor looked interested. "You are a Neo-Taoist, Mr. Youngdahl?"

"Of course."

"I have been most intrigued by the latest rebirth of that faith. I am delighted to have the chance to inquire..."

The old man lifted his hand. "Wait, Dr. Riesling. I can tell you nothing. It is very convenient for us followers of the Way, who more often than not are slow, stupid and unsocial, to take seriously the tenet, 'Who speaks knows not; who knows speaks not'. If you are to find the Way, it will not be through anything I say. And if you are not seeking the Way, I do not care to fill up the silence with useless noise."

He smiled briefly, dropped his hand, and there were several minutes of silence before Horsell returned.

"Won't you both come to the viewing room?" he said.

There were perhaps a dozen people in the viewing room, all seemingly with their own work to do, so the old man made himself as inconspicuous as possible. Everywhere were scattered some sort of consoles, each bearing single large screens or a cluster of small ones. The end wall, faced by a short row of chairs, was a single huge screen. At first it seemed a microscopic survey of a boll of cotton; slowly it resolved itself to his dim eyes as a large segment of a cloudy ball of sparkling blue. A rim of shadow cut across the top; a lower corner was sliced into by a sliver of black space. This, then, was the nearing goal his son had so coveted. Fool!

Someone handed him a cup of tea. He sipped, and pondered. Everyone here seemed quietly and efficiently occupied with their various tasks. There was a sense of prepared haste, but none of crisis. And six months out from Earth, and more miles than he

could comprehend - the other side of the sun, anyway - a tiny ship was plunging toward a dead and useless and inhuman world. The scene he saw on the screen was that his son was now looking on with his own eyes, thinking, we are the first, the first. He wondered if there was a sense of crisis on that little manmade bubble above Venus; or merely this same prepared haste and efficiency. Was Peter rising in spirit above the urgency of the decisions he must make? For a moment he felt a tug of pride for his son, out there on the bridge of the Hesperides in the middle of nothing; and then he choked it down with the rest of his tea. Fools; fool.

A girl stopped briefly at his side. "You're Captain Youngdahl's father, aren't you?" she asked. "You must be so proud of him. Now we don't want you to worry. He'll be back on Earth safely next year."

The old man shrugged. "I haven't the slightest expectation that he will ever return," he commented quietly.

The girl looked at him with shock, and then recovered. "Now don't you dare think that way," she said. "They'll be all right. You'll see." She hurried off.

Somewhere in the room someone began calling off meaningless numbers in a loud voice and people began gathering around the seats beneath the wall screen. On the wall nothing was to be seen but streaks and criss-crosses of white feathers on white wool, moving and twisting. The old man turned away and wandered over to some of the nearer, neglected consoles.

The screen above the first console he approached looked down on a world rumpled like a red baked apple. As he watched, the features moved staelthily from left to right across the screen. He passed to the next, where several small screens showed the now familiar features of the Earth from space; here like a dollar, here like a crescent dime, here like a sparkling pinhead. From far space it was neither blue nor green, but white and featureless. The next console had several views scanning up from desolate lava plains at high peaks glinting in a merciless sun. On one there was something odd on the slope of a nearer hill. The old man strained to make it out. It was four rude crosses sunk in the stones. He nodded to himself and passed on.

The next image showed only dots of white on an aching blackness. "This is the view outward from our Jupiter probe," Horsell was standing beside him. "We have others bound for Saturn, for Mercury, even the sun itself. All unmanned, of course, but after them will go men; brave men, like Peter." He gently grasped the old man's arm. "And your son has just landed safely on Venus. Come along. You won't want to miss anymore."

The old man let himself be led across the room. The viewscreen showed nothing but wisps and tendrils of white mist, concealing in their eddies further layers of mist in a white night. The room was holding its collective breath in an intense silence while a faint, tinny voice was droning across the millions of miles.

"No visibility on the middle and ultra bands, Infra shows a few hundred yards of gently rolling..." It faded from the old man's hearing but the others in the room remained leaning forward, cupping ears and straining brows. The old man turned away and found himself facing another console screen. He puzzled over it. The far distance was powdered with the dust of stars. In the left corner, a small arc of Earth was waning. But the screen was also filled with fat globules and thin streamers of glowing gas or dust, and oddly irregular shapes which slowly turned, glittering in the darkness. He could make nothing of it.

He turned to Horsell. "Where is this view from?" he asked.

Horsell kept one eye and one ear turned toward Venus as he replied, "That is from a probe recently shot right into the tail of Halley's Comet," he said. "Approaching the sun, the head - you can think of it as ice - is vaporizing in the sun's rays. Doesn't melt out there, just goes straight to gas. The solid material in the ice is being set free as meteoric chunks. The probe will leave the solar system with the comet and return with it, I suppose, about 2060 A.D."

The old man struggled with himself. "It is grand," he admitted, "but men should not want to go out there themselves."

The voice from the depths of space rose again into his hearing. "...temperature 10 degrees higher than expected, which makes for a long, hot summer..." and faded away again.

Horsell spoke quietly. "Tina tells me you have no hope your son will return to Earth."

"I know he will not, sir. I know."

"May I ask the source of your confidence?"

"How do I know it is such? Through Itself!" quoted the old man. "He is doing things the wrong way. I recognize the sincerity of all of you, Mr. Horsell, but this is not the right way!"

"How so?"

The old man groped for words to express the inexpressable. "You are trying to overcome the universe. To... rape creation. You want to grasp worlds with your stubborn and puny bravery and bend them to your will. It is simply wrong, sir."

"I'm afraid that's the way Man behaves, Mr. Youngdahl."

"That's not the way Man should be, Mr. Horsell. 'To conquer beyond oneself shows power, to conquer within shows might'. Men who have not made the effort to conquer themselves have no right to impose themselves on the universe - and the universe will not let them, Mr. Horsell. It will not let them!"

In the silence that followed the tinny voice was saying, "no ascertainment yet of the speed of rotation, which at least suggests an extremely slow..." On the screen the white mists wrapped about themselves endlessly.

Horsell spoke slowly. "Mr. Youngdahl, you have seen a great deal of change in this century, there is no doubt. I am at least a generation younger than you, but one thing I think I have learned. The discomfort felt by the fathers for the audacity of their sons is a lasting constant in history's changes. Come now, wouldn't you agree - if it were not the case of your own son - that the youth have not always been proved wrong?" His major attention was still centered on the unrevealing screen.

"You are trying to be kind," said the old man. "Youth should of course reject and repudiate the errors of their fathers, but they should equally hold fast to the essential truths gleaned by their fathers' experience. In this case, through ignorance of the inner reality of man and the universe, men like you and Peter are making a tragic mistake. I do not call it wicked, but it is very, very sad.

"We must postpone this discussion for a less inopportune time..." began Horsell, when one of the other men turned to him and whispered rapidly. "A moment. There is some difficulty." He pushed off across the room. The mist swirled on.

Fools, thought the old man. How they tear my heart! He retreated from the group to the far end of the room. He had no business hurting so. In self-made solitude he recited the canticle which would return his tortured soul to balance above the agony. It was part of his soul and mind as he whispered:

"Forlorn am I, O so forlorn! It appears that I have no place whither I may return home.

"The multitude of men all have plenty and I alone appear empty. Alas! I am a man whose heart is foolish.

"Ignorant am I, O, so ignorant! Common people are bright, so bright, I alone am dull.

"Common people are smart, so smart, I alone am confused, so confused.

"Desolate am I, alas! like the sea. Adrift, alas! like one who has no place where to stay.

"The multitude of men all possess usefulness. I alone am awkward and a rustic, too. I alone differ from others, but I prize seeking sustenance from the source..."

It was much better. He could turn back to the screen without fearing the dry mists swirling and scudding eternally.

And a new voice came from out of the distance, and it was a voice he knew. Dry-eyed, the old man listened for the end of the story.

"This is Peter Youngdahl, Captain of the Hesperides," came quietly and clearly. "Please listen carefully and make no noise.

You must hear everything the first time. I must be precise from the start. The mission has been a failure in one respect. We shall not be able to return to Earth. We are in great difficulty. It is necessary for us to abandon ship."

The room was deathly still.

"The instability of the surface upon which the Hesperides is resting" Peter's voice resumed, "appears due to large-scale shiftings of the sand itself. The ship is swinging and swaying constantly and it is only through repeated use of our stabilizing rockets that we are able to keep precariously upright. The sand surface seems to be actually flowing beneath us in waves like a huge tide. It is possible that solar attraction on the sand particles makes the surface of Venus much more fluid than was anticipated. At any rate, we will not be able to keep the ship intact much longer."

There was a slight pause. Horsell was gripping the back of a chair and grinding his eyes shut. A young man was softly crying.

Peter's voice recommenced. "The crew members have already abandoned ship, with the exception of two engineers who are preserving our precarious balance until I can complete this transmission. You know how short a time we can survive in our suits, even under mere lunar conditions. We do not even know if it is possible for suited men to remain above the surface of these sand tides. We can hear nothing from those who have gone out. We have always been willing to accept the possibility of disaster. Now that it has come, you should count us as lost. We do not want hasty rescue attempts. We have seen enough of this world not to over-estimate the chances of survival here.

"But this I am authorized to tell you from the whole crew," the voice proceeded calmly. "And this you must never forget. We do not want our mishap to discourage others from the dream. Others will want to follow us. They must be allowed and encouraged to do so. If it is necessary to keep our tragedy secret from the public, that is what you must try to do. But do not let this keep Man Earth-bound. That would be to betray us."

Fool. Damned fool!

"I have now let the last two engineers depart from the airlock. I have one personal message I would like someone to deliver for me. Please tell my father that I have found my..." The screen wrenched, the mists scampered up it. There was no more to be seen, no more to be heard.

The room was paralyzed. There was not a sound. A girl suddenly turned and dashed from the room. The others stood like statues.

The old man stood stiffly in the center of the group. His face was hard. Slowly he raised his cane and jabbed it at the dark screen.

"There! There!!!" he cried in desperate triumph. "Now can you understand? In that way does the universe... strike. But you shall never understand. Fools!"

Horsell glared miserably up at him. "What kind of man are you? Your own son..."

"Son me no sons. My son is dead. He chose his death. He died because he could not understand. He tried to beat the universe at its own game. Fool! And you, who weep tonight, tomorrow shall send more fools to die on the shoals of space. Because you simply cannot grasp that Man must first conquer himself. Only when he no longer demands to impose himself upon things will he be freely granted what he really needs." His eyes swept the group. "Fools," he repeated softly, sadly, almost lovingly and spun about, stumbling. "Now I shall go."

Somehow he found the way out. In the lobby, he hastened to put on his coat, before some well meaning, sympathetic idiot could catch up and help him. Defiantly, he swept out into the sweet mists of Earth. Darkness pressed upon him. There was no light. He stumbled toward the intersection. He must have calm and peace and a place to atone. He must go at once.

Peter, Peter, I told you how many times? How could you be such a fool, so blind? He reached the shadowed street sign, the long, empty street in the night. A door opened somewhere behind him but he didn't slow down.

No more men, no more fools. Let me be alone with the memory of my son. He strode into the crossing. He felt calm and pure again and he knew where to go.

A voice behind him cried out, "Look out, sir! The car!" Into the narrow circle of his vision sped a lighted, screeching machine. But before it struck, he had already made the passage.

From where he stood the velvet grass swept down to the tranquil sea. The strange flowers he had named Lovers' Troth winked up at him. The pale green sun blazed down. The air against his face was moist with the alien odors of rest and peace. It was as he remembered it. The tender blue things would care for him again, he would find rest for his soul and a place, in this world not of man, to weep and atone himself for his son, who had never been able to understand, and had insisted on the hard way.

from GARGONZOLA STATE UNIVERSITY



1976, the year of America's bicentennial... also the year of the Viking landings on Mars, of the 34th. World Science Fiction Convention and, most importantly, Uncle Albert's national debut as the host of the videotape, "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Fandom", premiering at MidAmeriCon's Neo Fan Room.

What could be more appropriate, in this bicentennial year, than to cross the plains, heading west from Ann Arbor to KC, in a convoy reminiscent of the great pioneer caravans of yesteryear? Westward-ho! Come-a ti-yi-yippie! Boogie boogie!

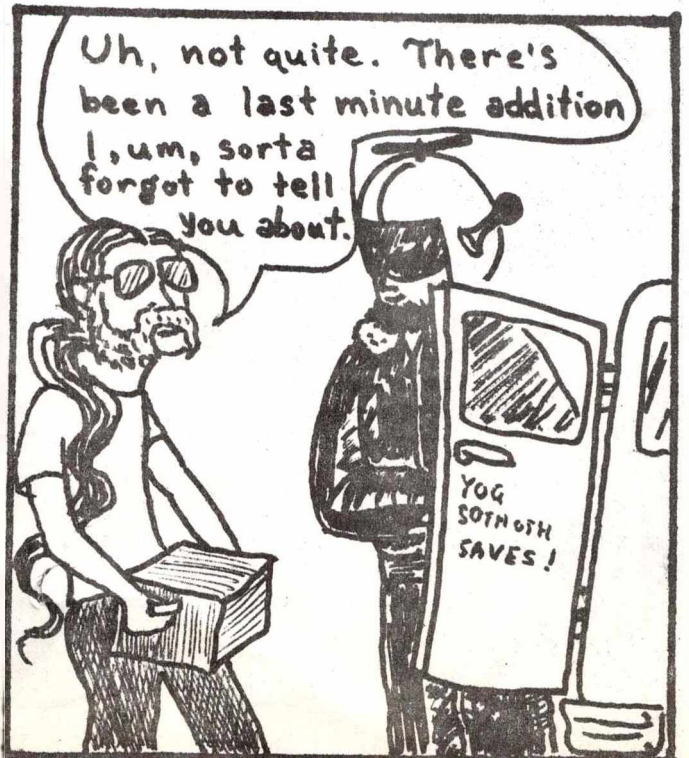
But enough of this tedious prologue. Let's pack up our lasers, our videotapes, time windows and a change of socks and climb aboard our covered wagon as we start off on a

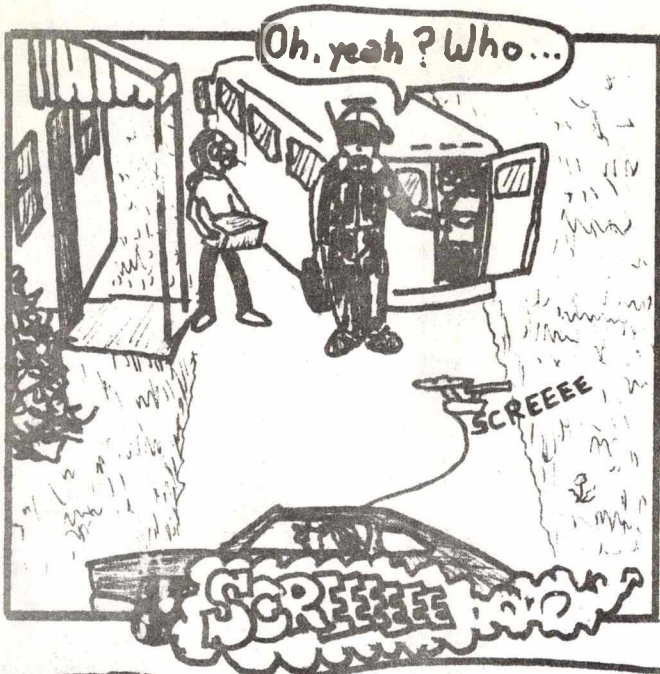


MidAmeriConvooy

WITH UNCLE ALBERT

story & artwork by Lawrence K. Tucker ©1976

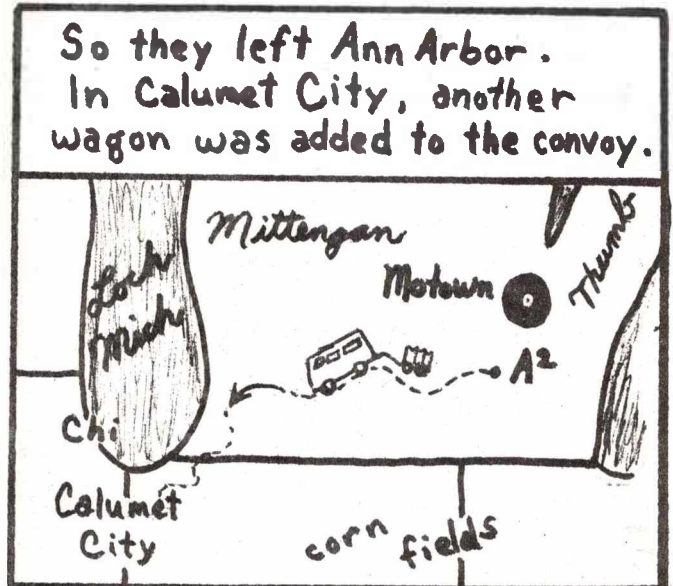


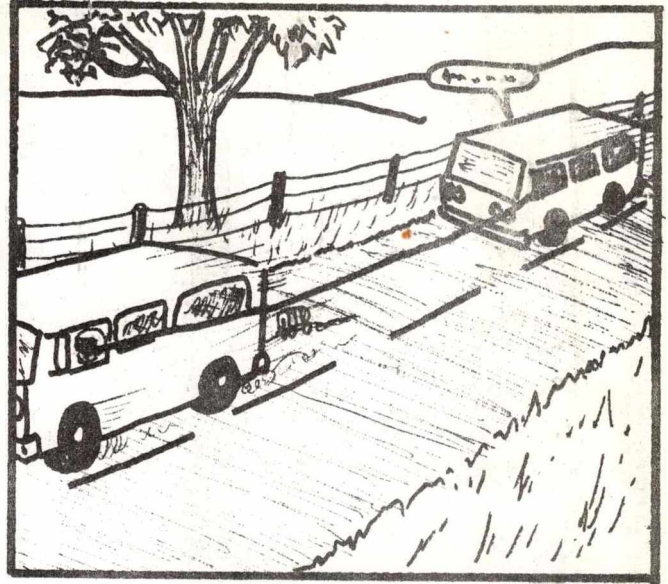
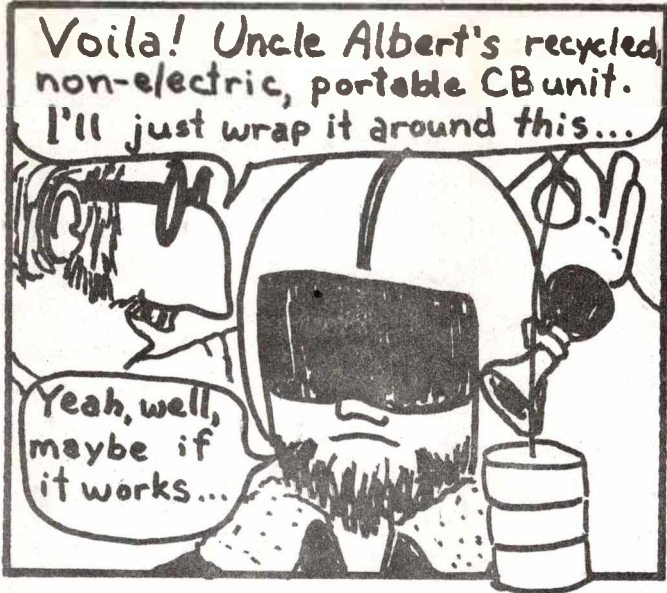


Aw, he was only trying to help. When we couldn't get the dimmer board working in time for the gig it didn't look like we were going to have any kind of light show. But, thanks to Uncle Albert...



And this is a ducky...





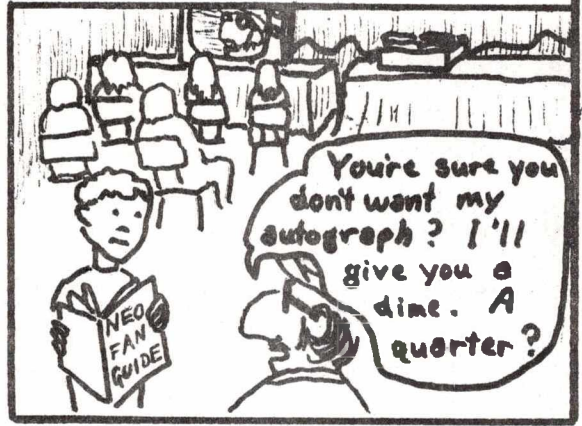
After 15 hours on the road they arrived in K.C. where the crack commando team from A2's Stilyagi Air Corps managed to cleverly infiltrate MidAmeriCon's proceedings ~



At the opening ceremonies



In the Neo Fan Room



That's all, fen!



(to the tune of "Hail to the Victors")

Drink to thee, brave Stilyagi
 Air Corps, though drunk and groggy,
 Drink, drink and drink some more,
 The con suite's not dry.

Chug down, the bheer's not gone yet,
 Quaff 'til the carpet's all wet,
 Swill, swill, well I sure will
 And fall down by and by.

(to the tune of "Gaudeamus Igitur")

We sing to thee, O Stilyagi,
 Fannish hymns of yore.
 Then lift anew your elbows high
 And cry aloud for more.

Here's Ro and Lin and Randy too
 And Roger, Jim and Mike and Sue
 And others whose names don't rhyme,
 Whom we'll name some other time.

(back to "Victors")

Mimeo 'til you turn blue,
 Hand me that jug of corflu,
 Write, write into the night,
 The fanzine's not done.

Read from that stack of zines, fen,
 Argue 'til bar-time and then
 Yell, yell, the old P Bell where
 Ann Arbor's fen have fun.

("Gaudeamus")

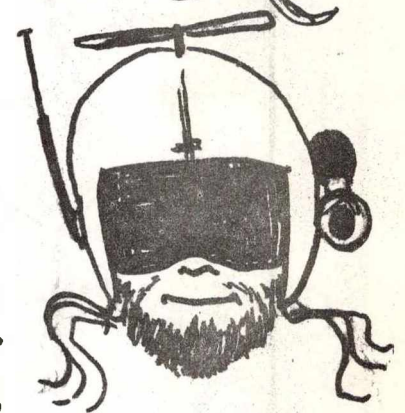
Lo, some fen felt rather pissed
 To be excluded from the list:
 There's Zita, Judy to be said,
 Two Daves and Sally, Rick and Ted.

Here's Sandi, Wayne and Sid and Jerry,
 Tim and Tom and two named Larry.
 We got neos, we got SMOFs,
 We get high and we get off.

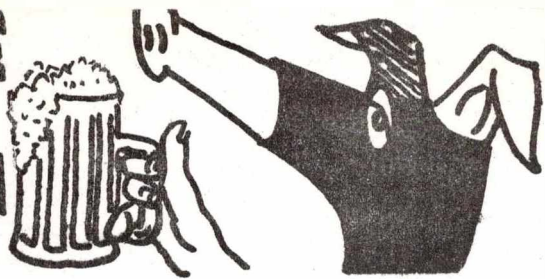
("Victors")

Smoke up that fannish joint there,
 Toke down that lump of hash rare,
 High, high, Ann Arbor fandom,
 Red eyes and brains.

Sing fannish songs and ballads,
 Eat banquet peas and salads,
 Cheer, cheer into your bheer,
 Ann Arbor's Confusion reigns!



TALES FROM THE HOODED AARDVARK INN



"Yes," said the stranger who had arrived at the Hooded Aardvark Inn without anyone's notice, "I certainly did embarrass myself that time." He drank deeply from a mug of the Inn's most expensive beer--rare 20th century Stroh's beer.

"Beg pardon?" I said, naively.

"It was on a trip to the 34th century--earth that is. By the 30th century, as you know, earth had conquered what some called the final frontier--inner peace. Hardly a person on earth suffered from the the insecurities, the petty vanities, that had plagued earlier cultures and given rise to national greed, prejudice, war and the like. What I didn't realize was that after four centuries of such living, people had no resistance to things that roll off our backs. In particular, their educational system, which was responsible for their great tranquility, fought the number-one cause of human troubles--pride. A curious byproduct of this was that giving someone a compliment was considered just as bad as bragging--and both were terrible, given their viewpoint. So terrible that no one ever did either, and so no one ever thought to warn me."

"Warn you?" I asked, again naively.

"Yes. You see, since the art of time travel was lost at some point before the 30th century, I was quite a celebrity. I was even asked to give a speech on planet-wide television, in front of the World Council. I had to depart fairly quickly after my opening remarks, before I had a chance to begin the substance of my address."

"Oh?" I asked with a sinking feeling.

"Quite. I complimented everyone in the 34th century on the tranquil society they had achieved. There were bodies lying everywhere."

"Please don't say it--" I begged, but he had already opened his mouth.

"A sad thing. They had all fainted with damned praise."

--Jim Martin



JOLLY STARSHIP TROOPER

(to the tune of Yankee Doodle Dandy)

I'm a jolly starship trooper
 Starship trooper do or die
 A doting nephew of my Uncle Bob
 Born on a rock in the sky
 I have a starship trooper spacesuit
 A wond'rous gadget to behold
 Starship troopers ride in torch ships
 We kill bug eyed monsters
 That is a starship trooper's joy

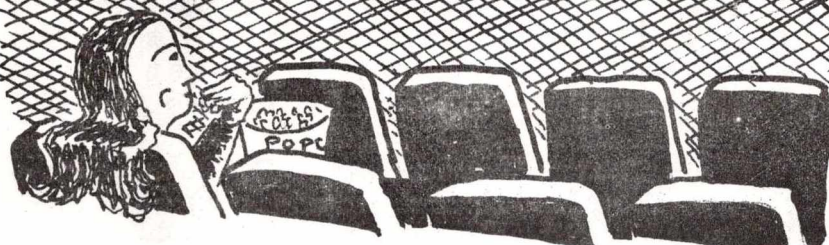
(At this point, the filksinger(s) could perform an impromptu tap dance, although it is not mandatory. Clacking spoons or beer cans together would suffice.)

I'm a jolly starship trooper
 Starship trooper 'til the end
 The pay ain't great but it's lots of fun
 Just give us worlds to defend
 Starship troopers live forever
 Grandpa Laz'rus told me so
 If you want to join our outfit
 Don't waste any time oh
 Give me the starship trooper life

— Lawrence K. Tucker

Larry and I feel a strong obligation to see every science fiction movie that comes this way. Some are openly billed as science fiction, others are just intriguing enough to draw us to them. Lately, there have been quite a few science fiction type movies. This latest trend has kept a couple of film buffs like us pretty busy.

Zita Goes to the Movies



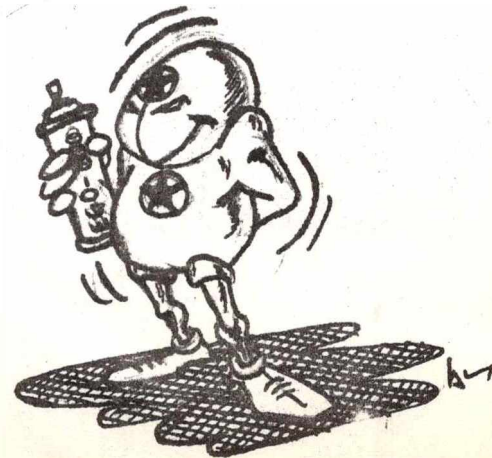
The weekend of Midwestcon, Logan's Run came to Ann Arbor. We started hearing mixed reviews about the movie at the con. Before then we were really anxious to see it, having seen a good write-up on it in a professional laser publication. Holographs on film? This I had to see, no matter what people said.

I hadn't read the book, nor do I have any desire to read it after having seen the movie. Needless to say, I was rather disappointed. The actors were not used to their potential, holographs are just not impressive on a two dimensional screen, the costumes were trite and chauvinistic, the scale of the model city was all too evident, but aside from these small points, the writing is what killed the movie.

The dialogue was very cliché-ridden and contrived. The actors really did not have anything to work with. Peter Ustinov, as the old man, was the only actor in the movie who put in a solid performance. Ustinov's characterization was excellent and provided some greatly needed (intentional) comic relief.

My biggest objection to Logan's Run is that the plot just doesn't hold up. There's this post holocaust world where everyone over thirty goes to "carousel" to die. Test tube babies are created to maintain population. Apparently, the city dwellers are sterile and promiscuity is the norm. Life seems carefree. Needs are taken care of by the technology of the subterranean city. For those approaching thirty, hope is nourished by the rumors of runners who have escaped the city. These rumors turn out to be false, but during their "run" Logan and his girlfriend discover the outside world and the old man. They return to liberate the city dwellers from the fatal time clock. In their exodus, the city is destroyed. The movie ends with the young people turning on to the old man.

But where do they go from here? How are these people, who are accustomed to



pampered city life, going to feed and shelter themselves? If any do survive the hardships of the outside world, they cannot reproduce. The test tube laboratories are left behind. They have doomed themselves by leaving the city without preparation and forethought. Logan's Run definitely lacked some thought.

We approached the next movie more cautiously. The Man Who Fell to Earth was in town at the end of August. This is one movie I definitely wanted to see twice, but it left town just as we were returning from MidAmeriCon. This is definitely a must movie. I even read the book to help me get a better insight into it, which made me even more anxious to see it again.

Some may have thought that this movie was just a vehicle for David Bowie. This is not the case. It just so happened that Bowie was the perfect person to play the alien, Tommy Newton. The features and mannerisms described in the book draw a good picture of Bowie.

Larry is still unsure whether this is really a science fiction movie, or a movie that happens to have some science fiction in it. The alien could be just a schizophrenic human. If you try hard, the movie could be interpreted this way. The book, however, is not nearly as ambiguous. The many ambiguities and questions in the movie make it more provocative. On the lighter side, there was one question in the movie that knocked me right out of my seat. It comes at a serious moment when a scientist is talking with Newman, expressing his concerns and doubts and asks, "Are you a Lithuanian?" No one has ever asked me if I'm an alien.

Larry and I both contend that the director must be a science fiction reader. Many of the scenes are reminiscent of other science fiction books. The most obvious one is the marked similarity between Newton's home planet and Dune. Newton's home is a desert world where people wear outfits that look very much like stillsuits. Rings take on significance throughout the movie. Might they be interpreted as French water rings?

The Man Who Fell to Earth is definitely a brain strainer. There is little attempt on the part of the director to keep reality straight for the viewer. Many things, such as time, are purely subjective. The symbolism gets to be quite involved. Definitely do go see it. The Man Who Fell to Earth is provocative, good science fiction.

— Zita Kutkus

Space
Lullaby

Lullaby, sweet child of the universe
Mother Earth sings you this soft song
From my womb you were born
At my breast you did nurse
On my fertile soils you belong

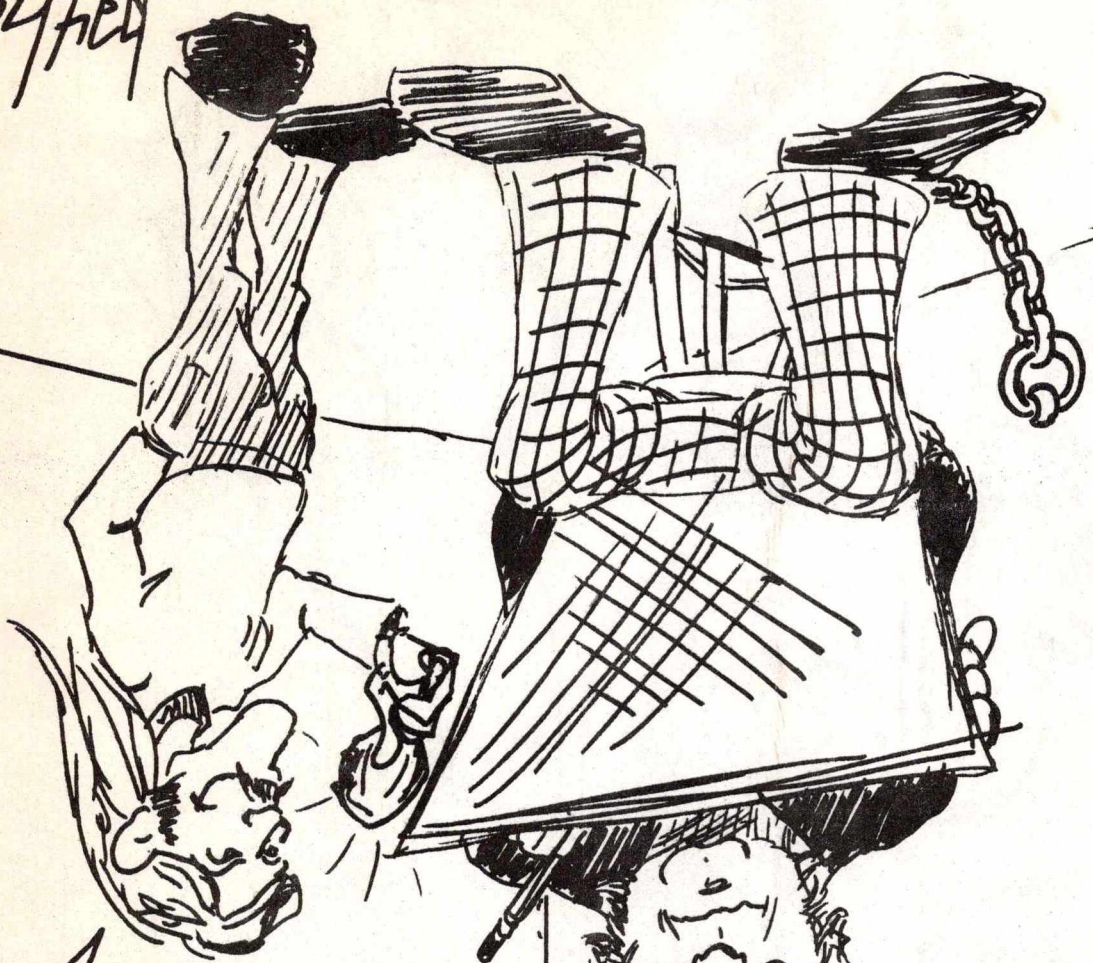
But my arms weren't strong enough to hold you
Your dreams were of far distant stars
You were still a young child
When your dreams did come true
And now you have reached even Mars

But remember, sweet child
And dream of me sometimes
Return to the place of your birth
Remember the joys only I have to offer
The sunsets, the flowers, the birds
Dream of me, child, wherever you wander
Return to thy sweet Mother Earth

— Zita Kutkus



WYHBY



Boy is this
good chicken.

WHERE IS RO LUTZ-NAGY
WHEN YOU NEED HIM?