





# XENIUM ..... 12

creeps tortoise-like towards your mailboxes in a vain effort to arrive before the rapidly-descending curtain snuffs out the decade. It appears a mere eighteen months after its predecessor and is still being infrequently published by Mike Glicksohn from 141 High Park Avenue, Toronto Ontario M6P 2S3, Canada. As always, XENIUM is available by editorial whim only and cannot be purchased for all the money in Cleveland. ~~Not for sale~~ It goes to good friends, good people, good faneds and the occasional person I want to impress for some reason. Letters of comment are always nice but seldom get printed. Buying the editor large amounts of good drink is a traditional way of rendering him whimsical. Also forgetful. Happy New Decade.

SSScotch Press #55



December, 1979

## CONTENTS: THE TRADITIONAL DEREK CARTER COVER

TIPTOE THROUGH THE SHOEBOX	-- The Editor as Explorer	Pg 2
MY SECRET WEAPON	-- Spider Robinson as CONFUSION GoH	Pg 8
NOTHING EXCEEDS LIKE EXCESS	-- Profligate Prose by Polluted Pros as Pulp Pornographers	Pg 17

## THE JIM ODBERT BACK COVER

XENIUM: The Fanzine That Gives You Something Extra Copyright © 1979  
 All rights returned to the contributors.





*tiptoe  
through  
the  
shoebox*

A fanzine editor is just a bit like the old movie Mad Scientist: he takes a chunk of this and a bit of that, sews on a few shreds of something else, plucks a suitable component from yet-another source and tries to breathe life into this motley assortment of pieces. Of course, the results are often varied, depending on the skill of the editor: there are a few real wizards among us (note the oh-so-subtle justification of the title illustration) whose creations do indeed exceed the sum of their parts but the majority of us are mere cobblers. It seems appropriate, then, that my fanzines are created from the contents of a shoebox.

If there are still any old-time readers of my fanzines with good memories reading this, they may recall that shoebox. Aeons ago I mentioned it as the repository of the odds and ends I accumulate throughout the year and out of which I occasionally put together -- Frankensteinlike -- what passes for a fanzine. It also receives the occasional formal contribution from outsiders desperate to raise the quality of XENIUM, unusual items that mysteriously appear in the mailbox from time to time, amusing or insightful quotations from whatever books I happen to read, cartoons I'm willing to violate the copyright laws for and anything else I think might eventually be of use. In fact, it's been so long since I actually went through that shoebox that I'm not even sure exactly what is in there. Perhaps it's time for a nostalgic look, complete with commentary where necessary... I reach in my hand and come out with...

...nothing as eloquent as Dylan Thomas and his recollections of Christmas in Wales, just a bunch of cancelled checks. Hardly the stuff of which fanzines are made, one might think. But this box gives birth to XENIUM and when XENIUM underwent its transition from an apa-45 zine and became the whimsical genzine it still (occasionally) is, it picked up a subtitle. I called it XENIUM: The Fanzine That Gives You Something Extra (honest, I did: you can look it up if you like. I'll wait...) And ever since August of 1973 each issue of the fanzine has had some little lagniappe riding with it, an extra touch to make it just a bit different from the other fanzines people get.

Undoubtedly the most unusual "extra" was a piece of skin from Larson E's discards. That one earned me a mention in Geis's column in GALAXY even. (It is intriguing to realize that there are probably a couple of generations of fans who've never heard of Larson E and don't know what I'm talking about. So it goes.) And I've always been

rather fond of the swizzle sticks myself. But after eight issues it's getting a bit tricky to find "extras" which relate directly to my lifestyle and yet can still be mailed out in the fanzine. (You're not interested in my collection of 8½ x 11 color glossy photos of Bill Bowers in the nude, right?) Hence the cancelled checks: never throw out something that might someday grace the back page of a XENIUM, that's one of my mottos. (I'd tell you some of the others but they might one day grace the back page of a XENIUM so I'm saving them.)

Next I find a filing card with a quotation I must have liked enough to want to use as an interlineation in some future fanzine. There are a lot of those in the box: scraps of paper or pieces of card with things typed or printed on them. Funny lines, or bizarre lines, or poignant lines that I might have written about myself if I were a better writer. Eventually they'll all be used, the order of their publication dictated primarily by the vicissitude of what passes for layout when XENIUM is being produced. ("Hey, Mike, we need a six line filler to reach the bottom of the page." "Right, Mike, I'll look in the shoebox...")

This particular one reads *"I abhor liquor and detest games of cards, but because I have a fine reputation of "big time fan" to maintain, it is my wont to frequent rooms and groups where such commodities may be had, to partake sparingly of the offerings, and early in the evening make my way to my lonely bed."* Glicksohn, 1979? No: Tucker, 1948. Plus ça change, plus c'est la meme chose!

Here's a postcard of a nondescript statue in Cheltenham, England. Hardly significant enough to merit preservation for posterity, you might think, but it happens to be signed by almost the entire membership of the Fourth World Faan Con (the English, having lost an empire, cling to such vestiges of self-styled glory as they can.) I've received many such souvenirs of conventions I wasn't able to attend and I've signed a lot for absent friends myself. It's one of the more unselfish acts that fans do and several examples reside in the box. I'm especially fascinated by two recent additions: a message-covered bra from CONCLAVE (about a 36-C, I'd guess) and an equally well ornamented pair of panties from ICON. I'm hoping that if I stay away from enough conventions the young lady who can wear them will eventually show up here, covered with signatures and little else.

Also in the box are a great many Jokers, each one from a deck of cards I've used in a fannish card game and each one eventually destined for XENIUM. The idea behind the "extras" was that they'd somehow relate to some aspect of my life and I can think of no more appropriate symbol of my recent activities at conventions than these Jokers. (Not since I had the vasectomy, that is.) Besides, I don't mind at all being known as the fan who brought poker-playing back to Midwestern conventions during the last half of the seventies; it sure beats putting out a fanzine as a way of securing a niche in future histories of fandom!

(The other thing about the "extras" is that they really are extra. They're not something that I go out and buy just to paste into XENIUM. Nor can I accept things that friends have saved for me because they know I'm collecting similar items of my own. Every Joker that appears in XENIUM will come from a deck I've put money on. In this age of moral decay and dishonesty, this is the least I can do for the cause of personal integrity. It's also about the *most* I can do but we needn't go into that.)

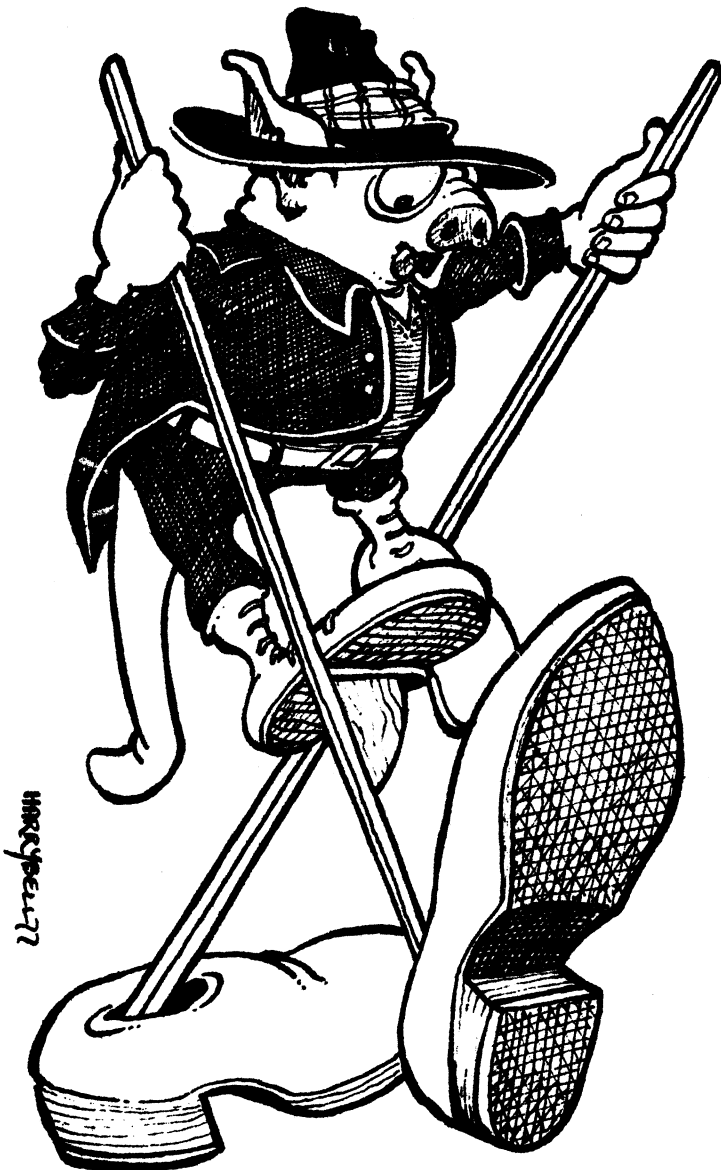
Here and there in the box are newspaper clippings, real and fake convention badges and sundry pieces of fannish esoterica which were originally intended to inspire articles for XENIUM. Most have outlived their usefulness, I'm afraid. With SEACON already just a fuzzy fannish memory, my humorous but trenchant articles on STUNCON and KUMQUATKON seem decidedly unnecessary. Thus does Realsoonnnowitis make procrastinators and non-writers of us all.

Sometimes I get odd things in the mail. I mean *other* than fanzines! As often as not, they appear anonymously and there are several bewildering items that no-one has ever admitted sending me. They end up in the box. I sometimes wonder if whoever had The New England Fish Company in Seattle send a copy of their salmon recipe booklet to "Mike Degler Glicksohn" was the same kind soul who gave my name to The General Israel Orphans Home for Girls/Jerusalem who annually send me calendars for years such as 5735 and request contributions from me for doing so? I may never know, unless Jerry Kaufman decides to shed some light on the matter.

But at least Redd Boggs was kind enough to attach a signed note when he forwarded me a copy of a printed advert from Berkeley, California which reads "Give a MASSAGE for the holidays with a gift certificate from *michael glicksohn*" and then goes on to describe this unique gift in loving terms. There are more things than are dreamt of in my philosophy, Meyer!

Another "extra" I recently started saving (after wasting several years by being astonishingly short-sighted) are the boarding passes that many airlines hand out when one flies to a convention. (Actually, they hand them out on other occasions too but that's more or less coincidental.) What could more perfectly represent the near-insanity of being a con fan? They are definitely personal, and they are definitely extra! I certainly didn't fly to thirteen or so conventions last year at an average cost of well over a hundred dollars a flight just to acquire a few possible paste-ins for a fanzine! (Did you ever stop to consider how much your involvement in fandom actually costs you each year? I'd more or less stayed away from such a calculation because I have a great fear of large numbers but for a recent article I had to write I tried to approximate last year's expenses for things like transportation, accommodation, books, paintings, etc. The conservative final answer was literally staggering. If I'd had to include postage, fanzine production costs and bar-bills, I think I'd have gafiated immediately.)

If I've earned any sort of reputation as a fanzine publisher it has been because talented people who've become my friends have allowed me to ride their coattails to whatever it is that passes for fannish glory. Periodically, I still get that opportunity; even if I don't seize it as frequently as I used to. (Even I am hard-pressed to recognize in this old-and-tired, once-a-year publisher the gung-ho youth who once published six fat issues of a quarterly genzine



in a single year. *Sic gloria transit mundi.*) So even today there are potential fanzine contributions gathering dust in the shoebox. There's an eminently publishable letter from George Barr, for example, reacting to the Bowers speech in the last issue and describing his own experiences as a Worldcon Fan Guest of Honour. But the chairman of BIG MAC never responded with *his* (promised) side of things and the year and a half that has elapsed since George wrote to me has tended to lessen the impact of the item. Still, it rests in the box just in case; waste not, want not is a damn fine motto for a faned. Even one who can't quite remember how to publish a fanzine.

Fans like to flood the mails with unusual items, a proclivity which may not be indicative of slannishness but which at least shows they aren't quite normal. I've saved an odd postcard that was waiting for me when I registered at the desk of the 1977 worldcon hotel in Florida. It was entirely written backwards by half a dozen fans and requires a mirror to read it and a bizarre sense of humour to understand it.

There's even a tacky looking Christmas card which is signed "From Uncles Bill and John and Dave" and goes on to say "Seeing as you think it's such a good idea" and "How's your memory, Mike?" I *think* this is probably a reference to an anecdote from my childhood I related in a loc one time but with fans one can never be sure. And since I don't recall more than about a third of the things I write to fanzines, it might be based on just about anything. Maybe somebody reading this will confess. Just as someone may take responsibility for the envelope of wine and beer labels mailed to me anonymously from Boskone 11 in March of 1974 or the postcard made from a section of an Ohio road map showing the town of Xenia (plural of XENIUM?) and actually mailed from that Midwestern boondock. It's the thought that I might eventually solve these little mysteries that keeps me going in trying times, such as when another fanzine arrives from Cincinnati.

Much of the rest of the kipple in the box is only personally memorable, the odds and ends of detritus one naturally holds onto during a life freely abandoned to alcohol, fandom and the pursuit of egoboo. But occasionally there's an item of somewhat wider interest. Such as an envelope containing the complete publishing history of my entire output of science fiction: the rejection letter from the fanzine STARLING, Ted White's acceptance note when he bought it for FANTASTIC along with copies of the two rejection letters Ultimate was using at the time which I'd requested when I submitted the manuscript, and even Sol Cohen's envelope (white) with the pasted on 10¢ stamp on its little square of paper (dark grey) which brought my check to me. After Sol had drawn two lines through the hand-written "Garner R. Dubious" and written "Michael Glicksohn" below it, of course.

For several years I've kept a xerox copy of the Chinese astrological descriptions which supposedly apply to me. As I had originally planned to write an article for XENIUM about where the hits and misses came, the shoebox was the obvious place to store it. Happily, I'm Year of the Dog: I'd have preferred to be a Snake, but *anything's* better than being a Cat!

I've also kept a remarkable letter (dated January 20th, 1976) from would-be science-fantasy writer Robert Adams. In a single page, without ever having met me, and in reaction to a letter of comment to a fanzine, he calls me "unknown", "hidebound", "hypocritical arch-liberal", "probably a Marxist", "supercilious", "pantywaist", "narrow minded", "an utter ass", "a faex", "chump", and "a smarmy, liberal cockroach." Anytime I get to thinking that Fans are Slans and Fandom is A Big Happy Family, I reread Robert Adams and he reminds me that one doesn't have to have a brain to read (or even write) sci-fi.

Probably the best example of anonymous kitsch I've received since becoming a fan is

-----

the cheap brass-coloured plastic keychain which was part of the "Keep Israel Alive PASSOVER CAMPAIGN" of the Israel Educational and Benevolent Relief Society. I've kept this little gimcrack since April, 1974 and I'd appreciate it if the person who put my name on their mailing list would reclaim it. I can throw in several only slightly dated calendars of a similar ilk as an inducement, if you like.

In my never-ending (and slightly desperate) search for possible things to write about in XENIUM, I stored the plastic identification armband which is the only visible souvenir of my not-so-recent vasectomy. (The hospital obviously borrowed the idea from MidAmeriCon; just another example of fandom influencing the real world.) I had hoped that the experience might generate an amusing fannish article, possibly even MOTA-quality material but, alas, nothing humorous or even particularly interesting happened. And I doubt that there are many fans who know who Ramanujan was or who would understand the significance of the fact that my number, 95259, had a certain mathematical elegance. The connection would have been a tenuous one anyway.

Finally, underneath all the rest, at the very bottom of the shoebox, buried by the bits and pieces already mentioned along with dozens of things too boring even for this article, there lies half of an old paper bag. A brown paper bag. A small brown paper bag. About five years old. It used to reside inside a cheap little ukelele and was taken out especially so the words *To Mr Glicksohn and his boa, Cheers always* could be (poorly) written on it. And then was added the probably long-forgotten signature, *Tiny Tim*. It certainly is a wonderful thing. It belongs in the shoebox.

And now at least a few of you know where the title of this piece comes from.

---



---

## GREAT INTERLINEATIONS FROM THE PAST

Brought To You By The Vast XENIUM Publishing Empire

*Uneasily I recalled the tribute paid the speeches of former American President, Warren G. Harding. "They leave the impression of an army of pompous phrases moving over the landscape in search of an idea: sometimes these meandering ideas would actually capture a straggling thought and bear it triumphantly, a prisoner in their midst, until it died of servitude and overwork."*

---



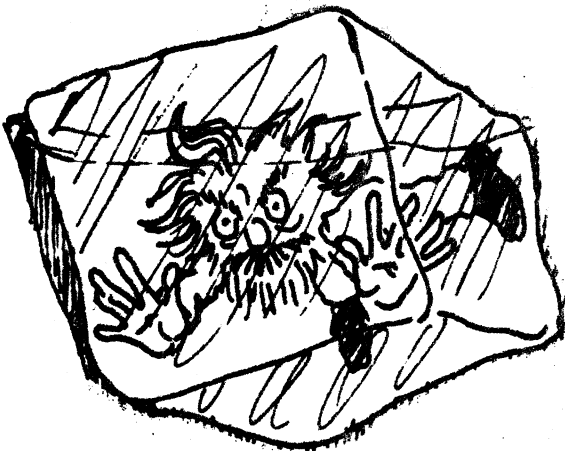
---

# CONFUSION IS A WAY OF LIFE

is the sub-title and philosophy of Ann Arbor's annual January convention (and the little fellow floating in the ice cube to my left is an apt symbol of this yearly confrontation with winter's most inimical weekend.) It might also be the sub-title and philosophy of this fanzine.

This issue was supposed to be ready for E/c<sup>2</sup> CONFUSION in January of this year, over ten months ago. It was aimed at that con

---





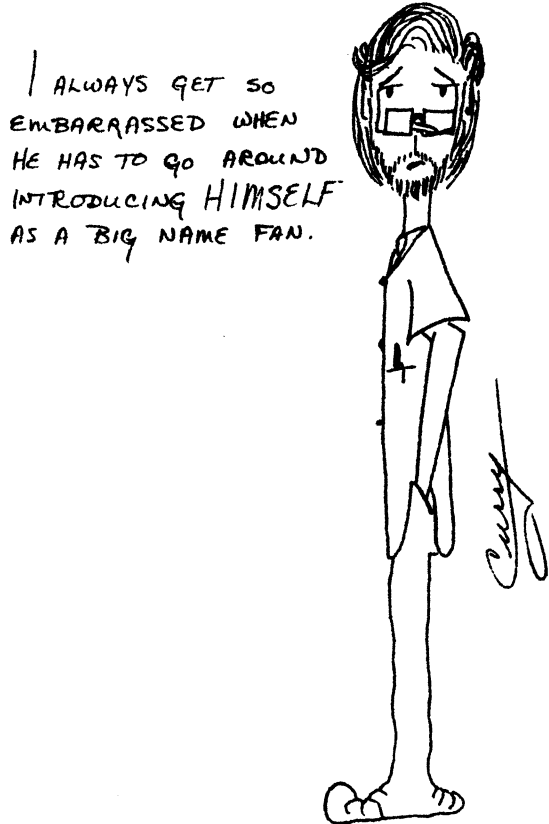
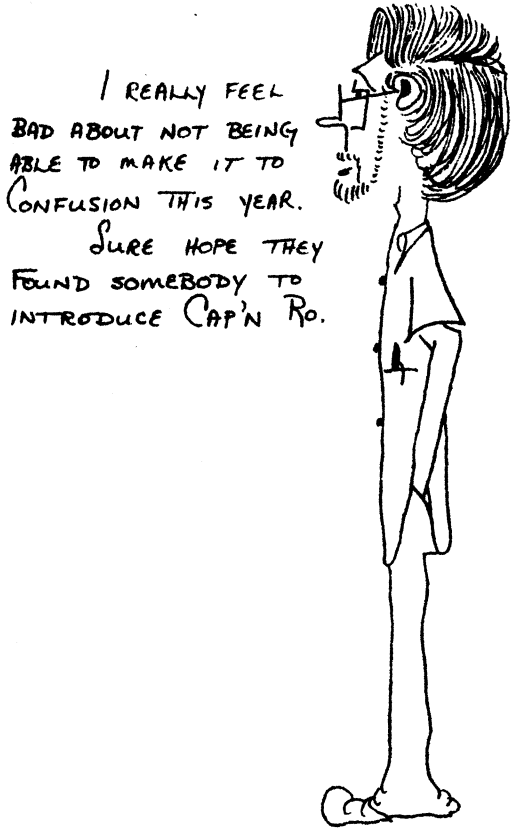
because I'd promised a certain shortish, hirsute would-be fanartist from Cincinnati that a certain cartoon which penetrated to the heart of a certain tall, slimming would-be writer and/or editor in Cleveland would make its oh-so-appropriate appearance at that con after a certain tall, wishy-washy former faneditor from Cincinnati had refused to have anything to do with publishing it. (We believe in Telling All and Naming Names here at the Half-Vast XENIUM Publishing Empire.)

Well, as William Claude Dukinfield was wont to say, Things Happened.

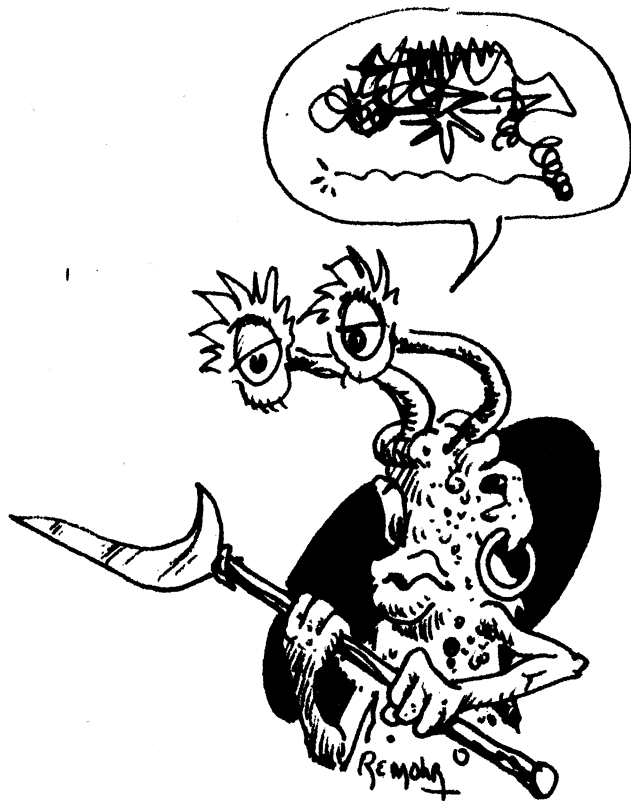
Somehow or other the planets weren't in the right configuration or the biorhythms didn't peak at the right time or the karmic flow got temporarily dammed up and XENIUM 13 wasn't ready for MASS CONFUSION. So instead of being inundated with ego-boo for the publishing event of the year (admittedly only two weeks old at the time but why not grab what glory you can?) I spent the con losing money at poker to Lou Tabakow, freezing my caftan-covered balls off in the unheated hotel corridors and wasting almost an entire day trying to straighten out an unfortunate *contretemps* in the con suite.

But all was not lost. I still had the cartoon, and like laboratory rats which continue to get electric shocks just because they can't give up eating, the Ann Arbor fans have a convention every year!! With my Broad Mental Horizons, the path was clearly visible to me: all I had to do was manfully resist the urge to publish for about ten months, then prepare XENIUM 13 for distribution at the 1980 version of Michigan's midwinter merrymaking. Ten months...that's not too many.

And I got a very definite bonus too. Spider and Jeanne Robinson were the GoH team at the con and in the bar just before the banquet I asked Spider who was publishing his speech... A few seconds later it turned out that I was. So immediately following Mr. Curry's long-awaited cartoon, you'll find an excellent GoH speech by Spider.



Curry



# MY SECRET WEAPON

*spider  
robinson*

Gee, it was really nice to have Jeanne standing up here. I've sat at these head tables once or twice before but somehow or other I'd never goosed a Guest of Honor. All right, the speech-making is

up to me... The topic that I selected for the evening...well, briefly I considered speaking to you at great length about the state of science fiction today; then I ran across an old gypsy proverb which I commend to you. It runs "Na may kharundi, kai tchi khal tut." It translates as "Do not scratch where it does not itch." That being the case, my topic tonight is: my secret weapon.

It is my perhaps immodest theory that, since I seem to have achieved more than I set out to, in less time than I would have believed it possible, I must have, unbeknownst even to me, a secret weapon.

You should not infer from this that I belong to the Society For Creative Anachronism. I can't afford to -- why, one of their suits alone costs 15¢ an ounce -- that's for first-class mail, of course.

All right, that's silly. So let's begin by digressing onto the topic of silly weapons -- silly weapons throughout history. This is an excerpt from Antinomy, my first short story collection (if you don't count the Callahan book) which Dell will publish in paperback along about March, 1980. As well as stories, the book will feature cartoons, song lyrics, essays, dumb puns and the following:

*People keep sending me their fanzines -- amateur publications concerning sf and related subjects -- and spanning the spectrum from mimeographed to four color offset. As with amateur efforts of any kind, some are just dreadful and some are sublime. One of the most piquant I have seen is a little 'zine out of Florida called The Tabebuian. It is the size of a pocket-calculator instruction pamphlet, much better printed, published by Mensa members Dave and Mardi Jenrette. I can attest to the fact that David's sense of humor is D. Jenrette. I wrote him a letter asking why, if Mensa people were so smart, they had named their organization after the Latin word for table ("mensa") rather than mind ("mens," an early example of unconscious sexism). He re-*

plied that the club's name is in fact derived from "menses," and refers to their periodic meetings. (I gave this riposte a standing ovulation.)

Anyread, one of the Tab's running departments for a while was a feature called "Silly Weapons Throughout History." The first one I saw was the Jello Sword, a short-lived weapon rendered obsolete by the subsequent invention (a week later) of the bronze sword. Inspired, I retired to my Fantasy Workbench, and over the next few days I hammered out the following Silly Weapons:

THE SWORDBROAD: invented by a tribe of fanatical male chauvinists, the Prix, this armament consisted of a wife gripped by the ankles and flung like a flail (Prix warriors made frequent jocular allusion to the sharp cutting edge of their wives' tongues). The weapon died out, along with the Prix, in a single generation -- for tolerably obvious reasons.

THE ROTATOR: a handgun in which the bullets are designed to rotate as well as revolve, presenting an approximately even chance of suicide with each use. likewise out of fashion these days.

THE BULLISTA: a weapon of admittedly limited range which attempted to sow confusion among the enemy by firing live cows into their midst, placing them upon a dilemma of the horns. (Also called the Cattling Gun.)

THE ARBALUST: a modification of the bullista, which sought to demoralize and distract the enemy by peppering their encampments with pornographic pictures and literature -- yet another dilemma of the horns.

THE DOGAPULT: another modification of the bullista; self explanatory. (cf German Mauser)

THE CROSS 'BO: yet another modification of the bullista, this weapon delivered a payload of enraged hobos. Thus gunnery officers had a choice between teats, tits, mastiffs and bindlestiffs.

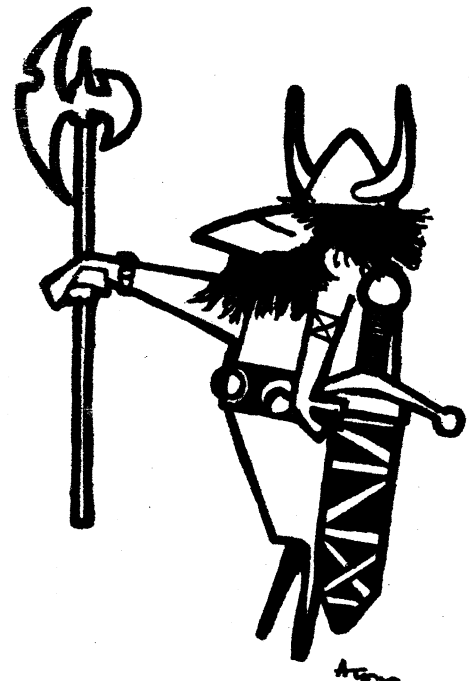
THE BLUNDERBUS: a hunter-seeker weapon which destroys the steering box in surface mass transit.

THE GUIDED MISSAL: originally developed as a specific deterrent to the Arbalust; as however it is hellishly more destructive, its use is now restricted by international convention to Sundays.

THE SLINGSHIT: self-explanatory; still used today in politics and in fandom.

And of course such obvious losers as the foot ax, relish gas, studded mice and the effective but disgusting snotgun. (Almost forgot the dread phlegmthrower.)

Ironically enough, since I wrote the above I have learned that the U.S. has recently been bombed several times by commercial airliners. Honest to God. True fact, documentation available. Airliner toilet holding tanks often leak, resulting in accumulations of blue ice on the



fuselage during high-altitude flight. The blue ice is composed of roughly equal parts of urine, feces and blue liquid disinfectant. If the plane is required to make its landing descent rapidly enough, chunks of blue ice ranging to upwards of two hundred pounds can -- and do -- break loose and shell the countryside. I have seen a photograph of a roofless, floorless apartment that was demolished by a one hundred and fifty pound chunk of Blue Ice. It pulped an electric range in the apartment below. Scared the hell out of an elderly couple living there. All the occupants escaped unscathed, but considerably unnerved.

Now if that ain't a silly weapon, I don't know what is.

So it doesn't matter if you were cautious enough not to make your home near any strategic military targets. If you live anywhere near a commercial airport, you stand a chance of being attacked by an Icy B.M.

OK, that's enough digression. Let me get to what I had in mind when I selected as my topic, "My Secret Weapon." I have been writing professionally for seven years. In that seven years I have somehow contrived to accumulate a John W. Campbell Award, a Skylark, a Locus, a Hugo, and the Sydney SF Foundation's Pat Terry Memorial Award for Humorous Writing. With the help of Jeanne has been added to those another pair of Hugos, another pair of Locuses, and a pair of Nebulas. Now I submit that there are people writing -- there are people in this room, I believe -- who have been writing stuff better than mine, for far more than seven years, without acquiring anywhere near that many gewgaws for the mantelpiece and temptations for the ego. Awards force you to introspect -- at the very least you have to think of something modest-sounding to say to the people who congratulate you -- and I will tell you that I have spent many hours pondering this paradox. I will not mislead you: I am not within shouting distance of an inferiority complex. I am perfectly willing to admit that my stick ain't half bad. But there are men and women in this business who no question write *circles* around me, write me under the table, who have not gotten as much good feedback as I've been given in the seven years since I gave up being night watchman on a sewer. Consider that Theodore Sturgeon has one Hugo and one Nebula, consider that Edgar Pangborn, one of the very finest writers who ever worked this genre, died in 1976 with no Hugos and no Nebulas.

That's okay, you know. There are other and better kinds of feedback, than those little trophies that get dusty on the bookshelves, and sooner or later all the good writers get it. I know Edgar got it; I know Theodore gets it. I don't for a moment entertain the delusion that I have achieved anything like 10% of the stature of either of those men. If Ted Sturgeon were giving a speech right there out in the snow, you would not be here listening to me. Chiefly because I wouldn't be here; I'd be out there listening.

But I do tell you all, with deep gratitude, with profound thanks, that all those dusty trophies on my bookcase and stereo speakers do make it possible for me to earn a decent living at this trade, they do make it possible for me to write science fiction and do nothing else. At this point, this year -- it has not always been so -- thanks to those of you who took the trouble to send in your Hugo ballots, I can now write a novel that takes me a year and expect to get enough from it to feed myself and my family for a year. After only seven years... In this profession, that qualifies as almost criminally precocious.

And so I am forced to conclude that since writers as good as or better than me are not doing as well as I am -- this year, I hasten to add -- I must therefore have a secret weapon or weapons.

Having reasoned this far, I began to wonder what it or they could be. Part of the

answer came at once. How many of you are familiar with a now defunct TV cartoon series called *George of the Jungle*? All right! I might have known. For those two of you who have never seen the show, it was the show that the creators of *Rocky and Bullwinkle* did for their heads. Marvelous puns: it was the only period of my life, bar the acid days, when I was ever awake on Saturday mornings. The hero was a Tarzan surrogate, only he was a total, quintessential oaf. He made Ted Baxter look like Socrates. And yet somehow every ridiculous mess he got himself into always turned out right in the end. One day his girlfriend -- whom he called "Fella" because he wasn't bright, you understand -- asked him how come?

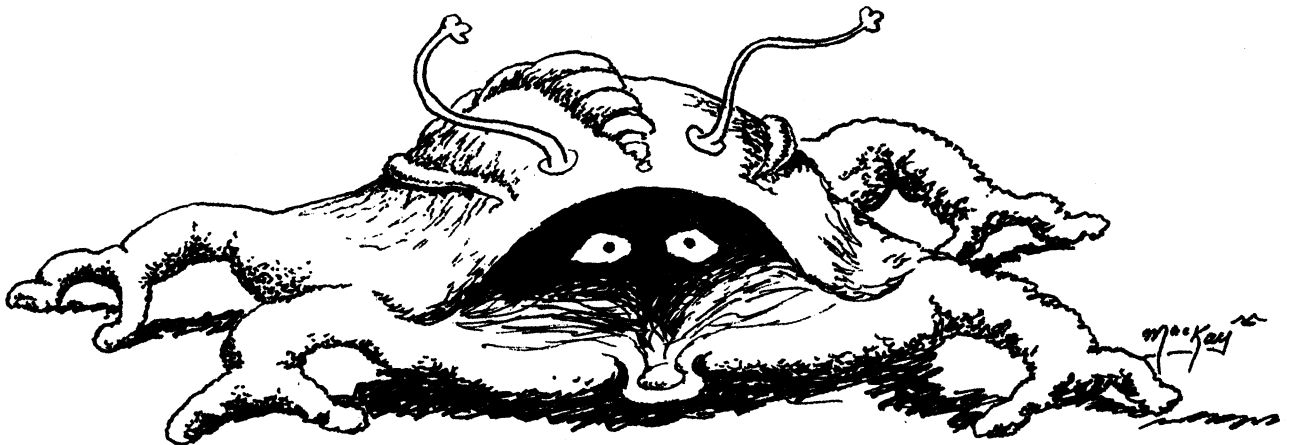
"George have secret weapon," he replied brightly. "Dumb luck."

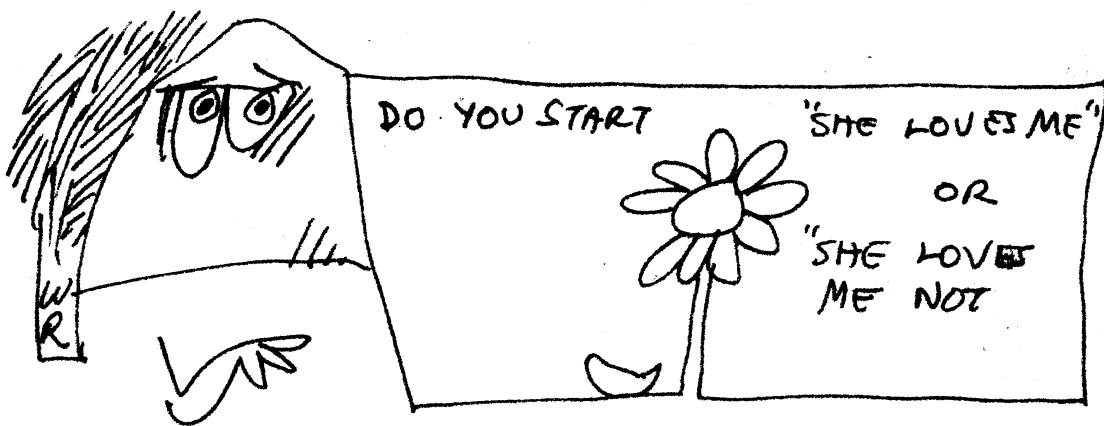
Seven years ago I was guarding a hole in the ground to prevent its theft. Out of boredom, and disgust with the rotten science fiction I was buying to alleviate the boredom, I wrote a story. I knew next to nothing about science fiction magazines, the only ones I'd ever read more than once a year were Fred Pohl's *Galaxies*, and Ejler Jakobbson's when he had a decent budget. I knew nothing about submitting a story, or which magazine bought what kind of story. I looked in the *Writer's Guide*; they said *Analog* paid the most. I sent it there and Ben bought it.

You see your first story on your first submission, first draft, to *Analog*? This, I submit, is clearly Dumb Luck.

And I can prove it because I proceeded to write seven more stories in the next year and a half and none of *them* sold anywhere. I was pretty discouraged at the end of that year and a half. But that was okay, you see, because the original Dumb Luck held: it was Ben Bova to whom I had sold that story. It was Ben that I got to know, and Ben who saw to it that I got introduced to people I needed to meet. In that year and a half Ben introduced me to Gordie, introduced me to Lester, introduced me to Joe...all these people...and between them they taught me how to write. Some of the best secret weapons are people; mixed with Dumb Luck.

Dumb Luck continued to operate. One day I happened to call up Jim Baen, who was then the editor of *Galaxy* -- and perhaps the best it ever had. I happened to call up Baen to chat about ten minutes after Theodore Sturgeon quit his job as *Galaxy* book reviewer. "Saaaayyyy..." Baen says off-handedly, "have you ever thought of doing book reviews?" "Oh, I don't know," I said, and for the next two years my name is on the cover of every issue of *Galaxy*, where 80,000 people cannot help but see it even if they don't read it and they bought this for their collection. That cannot help but help. Not only that, I believe you me learned a little something about writing from being forced to read 180 science fiction novels, collections and an-





thologies a year and then talk about 'em. That, too, is Dumb Luck.

I happened to go to college with the man who eventually bought both Callahan's Cross-time Saloon and the Stardance novel, Jim Frenkel. That's Dumb Luck, combined with people.

But I have to tell you the truth: the best, most stupendous, most incredible life-turn-around, jackpot, hallelujah, tax return from God, Dumb Lucky Break I ever got, as a writer or as a human bean, is sitting right here beside me in her fitting place as co-Guest of Honor.

It was Dumb Luck that brought us together on the North Mountain of the Annapolis Valley in Nova Scotia. Jeanne is from Massachusetts, I am from New York, and wildly implausible circumstances conspired to bring us together at the precise moment when each of us was dying from the other's lack. She was divorcing a man who belittled both dance and her passion and talent for it, and I was hopelessly looking for somebody who could understand that when I'm laying on the couch reading a second-hand paperback, I'm working. I think it is safe to say that everything I have in life that I care a damn about is due in large part to Jeanne. It was Jeanne who taught me how to hope when I had just about reached the edge of despair. It was Jeanne who pulled me back right from the lip of terminal cynicism and who reminded me what joy was, when I had nearly forgotten. It was from Jeanne that I learned the only really important thing I've ever learned without reading it somewhere: that when you share joy, there's more of it. (I think that's the answer to entropy, right there.) I had been wasting my time pursuing pleasure, exclusively; pleasure is only one of the components of joy, and a non-essential one when you come right down to it.

If you examine my stories chronologically, which you can't really do because some of the earliest ones just saw print in the last year or two (heavily rewritten), you will notice a sharp and distinct division into two groups, (which I think of as my First Period and my First Intercourse.) The older stories are okay, some of 'em are even maybe a little better than okay, but when you take 'em together you notice that their keynote is cynicism, is a kind of a "sophisticated irony" flavour. Even that first Callahan's Place story, when you think about it: the premise in "The Guy With The Eyes" was, now that I think about it, that the alien scout Mickey Finn could observe love *nowhere else on earth* but in Callahan's Bar. When you think about it, that's kinda strange. Other stories of that period, "Nobody Likes To Be Lonely", "When No Man Pursueth", were characterized by heavy irony and sardonic humor and a kind of a contempt -- *fond* contempt, but contempt -- for my own characters.

Then I met Jeanne and I started to blossom like a flower. I started growing up, I decided I'd rather be Edgar Pangborn than Harlan Ellison, Theodore Sturgeon than

Robert Sheckley, although I love all four of these men and I'm putting none of them down. I found out what my own personal flavor was. I started caring more and I started writing about people I cared about. Callahan's Place began to grow on me...

And then, one day, desperately broke and dying for a check, I sat down to write a story as fast as possible. *Write what you know*, they all say. What do I know? I said. Aha, I know a dancer. Jeanne has taught me a lot and I've learned a lot from watching her. I could write about dance. Yeah, but how do I sell it to Analog? Hey, how about *zero gravity dance*?

So I sat down and after one 800-word false start, I began to write a story called "Stardance." All by myself.

"What're you working on?" Jeanne says over supper that night.

"Story about a zero gravity dancer." Her ears grew points.

An hour later I was back in my mother-in-law's cellar working, when I became aware that I was not alone. Someone was peering over my shoulder. As I always had until then with anyone who peered over my shoulder when I was working, I growled a Gypsy obscenity and went back into the fog. A half hour went by. I was writing away...

"That's wrong," she said.

"Huh?"

"That's not the right term."

She was my resource person: I corrected the nomenclature. Another 20 minutes went by.

"A dancer wouldn't *do* a movement like that. That's gymnastics."

"Oh." Scratch, scratch. Ten minutes goes by.

"Shara would never do that."

"*What!!*"

"Shara would never do that. She respects herself too much. And Charlie's being a little bit too flip for a guy his age."

Long pause. Blank stare. I move over on the couch.

"Siddown."

I did all the actual typing, but the story that eventually saw print as "Stardance", and the balance of the story that Ben Bova titled as "Stardance II" (our title was "Starseed") and the novel that Jim Frenkel will be bringing out in a couple of months (also called Stardance) are probably more Jeanne's than mine. Now we've talked about this and she says that that's weird, because it was half and half. Well...I couldn't have contributed the parts I did without her, and she couldn't have contributed the parts she did without her... I rest my case.

She's my main secret weapon, and I'll tell ya it's even better than Dumb Luck.

And so, if not for that reason, and if not for the reason that as far as I know she is the first woman ever to win a Hugo and a Nebula with her first story, then because

-----

she is the first Guest of Honor in the history of fandom with the sense and the compassion to decline to give a speech, I ask you now to rise and put your hands together for my main secret weapon, Jeanne Robinson.

*This version of the GoH speech from MASS CONFUSION, January 1979 was prepared directly from Spider Robinson's hand-written notes as amended by a tape of the speech provided by Larry Tucker.*

*It is better to go swaggering through the cates of life loose-lipped and genial and greedy, embracing pleasures and suffering pains, than to find one's self, in the midst of caution, incontinently slain by chance and eaten by worms.*

Don Marquis, PREFACE TO A COOKBOOK

## SIX AUTHORS IN SEARCH OF SOME CHARACTER



A long time ago, when I was still young and naive, before I really discovered fandom and conventions and sex and poker and Spayed Gerbils, I used to wonder what the writers did while we mere fans were getting drunk and making fools of ourselves at parties. Now, of course, I know the answer: they're getting drunk and making fools of themselves at their own parties.

Before the Haldeman clan moved to Florida, it was traditional for most of them to gather together and share the New Year celebrations with many of their friends at the Tarrytown, New York home of Jack and Lorena Haldeman, parents of Jay and Joe. I spent several holiday seasons there and since the friends of the Haldeman offspring were mostly science fiction writers and editors, I had the chance to observe this strange breed letting its collective hair down. It certainly was a wonderful thing.

Most fans are familiar with the phenomenon of the one-shot. Get enough fanzine types together and render them sufficiently drunk and tired and happy and someone will suggest a one shot. The same holds true for science fiction writers! Get enough of them together and get them drunk and wired out enough and someone will drag out a typewriter and start a "story."

Over the New Year holiday in 1976, Jay Haldeman, Joe Haldeman, Jack Dann, Gardner Dozois, Rick Sternbach, Mike Glicksohn and a bunch of other people were definitely drunk enough and tired enough and happy enough to consider such a project. They created the manuscript which follows, with help from Asenath Hammond-Sternbach, Bev Macdonald, Stephanie Oberembt, Gay Haldeman and probably a few others. Not one of them is willing to accept credit for what follows, presented to you in the true spirit of the pulps which provided the essential inspiration for this exercise in creativity. If nothing else, it should render our writer/hero figures very human!



EXOTIC

PEPPY

EXCITING

New

15.  
cent

# STARBUCKS

*Omega stories*

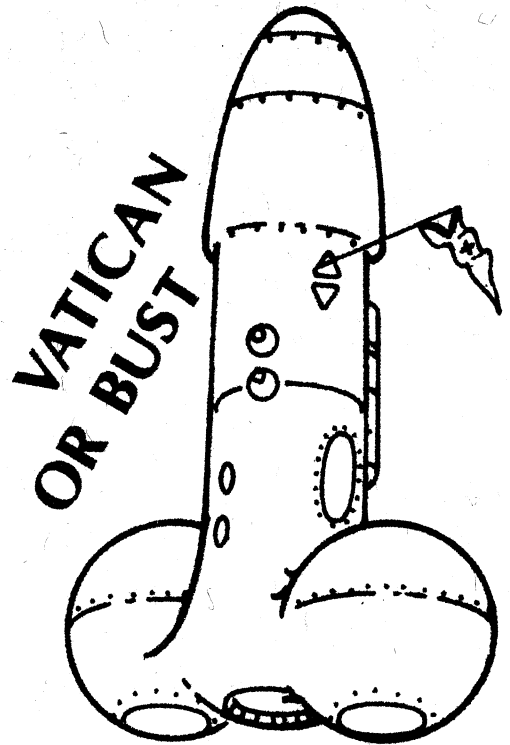


# NOTHING EXCEEDS LIKE EXCESS

by

ALAN SUNDRY

ILLUSTRATED BY RICK STERNBACH



"Oh, but it's so big," Joe Halaman said as he ran his fingers through the jungle of his pubic hair; out of the jungle leapt wildebeests, camels, hippos, lions, and mangy tigers, gasping and choking from the smell, covered with lice and smegma. "Yuck!" they shouted in chorus.

Pressing against the huge stem of his pulsating penis, then shaking his massive, sweat-beaded head, he constricted his sphincter and screamed, "I can do it."

And thus was Gardner born . . .

Meanwhile, half a world away...

It was a dark and stormy night. She crouched in the garbage pit with the exiled Pope. Waves crashed on the shore, pounding and raping the land with their massive masculine bulk. Thunder boomed overhead. "Oh God!" the Pope screamed, his hand tightening convulsively on her thigh; light glinted from the papal ring. They screwed like lions. They screwed like starving tigers. They screwed like cockroaches. They screwed like wildebeests. They screwed like flatworms. They screwed like gefilte fish. They screwed gefilte fish.

They came, and the world went nova.

"Thank you," sighed the grateful gefilte fish.

Meanwhile, crawling slowly from the sucking slime from the bottom of the garbage pit, Reggie Rubbish, longtime resident and friend of trashy rats everywhere, oozed up the Pope's thigh, panting obsequiously, and asked, "Table for two?"

Seating himself at the head of the table, looking R. Rubbish straight in the jaundiced eye located in the center of his green-tinged forehead, Joe Halaman pronounced: "There are but seven silent ways to perform fellatio upon Robert A. Heinlein."

"And six of them don't work."

# # # # #

Panting heavily, Gardner knocked his balls together. Knock, knock, knock. At last

he dragged his detumescent form from the nether depths of the baize green pool and sprawled exhausted upon the cement of the bordello floor. His mother would not have been proud. At last he was supplanted at his task by the turgid tool of Binghamton's finest hour.

(Meanwhile, in a shoddy basement miles away from the scene, nothing much of import was happening, so Gardner, still recovering from the night's labours, slogged over to the wading pool and released the sheep from its pen.)

The door fell under the combined weight of Jack and Gardner while Joe jumped over their prone bodies, brandishing his mighty tool in his left hand, shouting into the looming darkness, "Is this a baggot far?"

"What?" yelled the Girl under the blanket. "Is it safe?"

"Safe?" said Jack. "You're always safe with me." Silently he groped on the mantle for his Sheepskin Triple X. His hand grabbed something soft and limp. "Too late," he cried.

"Too bad," she said.

And Gardner leapt from the closet with the whipped cream, slipping on three wasted bodies, finally landing next to Jack. Into the setting sun they walked hand in hand and, well, thing in . . . . .

"How the hell did it land in there?" Jack exclaimed as he slipped another cog of determinacy and found his schlong lopped gratefully in a warm pool-table pocket of rancid whipped cream that pulsated with a life of its own. On the other end of the table, Joe Halaman, in much the same condition as his friend, gazed with bleary eyes down the length of the six-inch-too-long table, and said, "God, man, that was beautiful, thank you, you crazy fucker, you."

Jack raised his eyes in surprise and said, "...". But before the words could leap from between his slavering lips, there was a bright flash as they were once again set adrift upon the seas of the atmospheric continuum. "World well lust." he finally managed to gasp out before unconsciousness welled over him.

When he awoke, he found that his body had been strangely altered. For now, in addition to that proud member that had seen him through many a sleepless night, pendulous alabaster globes hung like twin mountains from his once manly chest. They were as white as if they had been washed in Tide and tipped with succulent cherry roseate nipples.

Gardner gazed with lust at the alabaster globes. "Only one more and I could open a pawn shop," he thought to himself. "But I don't know anyone who plays pool."

Out of the void came a voice that was not a voice, but a non-sound that rang in his brain like chimes in a summer wind. "Best two out of three," it breathed through his cortex. "You can break..."

fuck, fuck, fuck.....

#### CHAPTER TOO

"Beat me, beat me," Gardner screamed, as Mad Michael the Creaming Canadian lashed him with the long, sinuous elk skin whip. His bound body writhed piteously on the floor, leaving a trail of semen contaminated peanut butter. Vicious clips dug into the pale flesh of his tender breasts, hempen cords constrained his lush frame.

"You lack discipline!" shrieked the Gruesome Glick. "Grovel, beg -- submit as you would to the Editor."

Gardner's nipples became erect. He raised an eyebrow. His glasses fell off. "Are you really an editor?" he asked, kneeling, his alabaster globes hanging, softly palpating against his massive stomach, grazing his massive penis, erecting it higher and higher, higher and higher, until, higher and higher, ohmygod, higher and higher-, please help me I can't stop, higher and higher, higherandhigher. . .

(Editor's note: due to circumstances beyond the author's control, this section of Chapter Two will be completed by, higher and higher, higher and higher, ohmygod, please help me, it's catching, catch--arh...)

And it's a fly ball high out in left field...no, actually it's two balls in play. . .

(Editor's note: "I'm coming. Higher and higher. . .")

. . .this is really remarkable, ladies and gentlemen, in all my years of announcing I've never quite seen a play like this on the old diamond field, no sir, two, dare I say pendulous, glistening white and, could it be, yes, they are distinctly hairy balls, and the two outfielders are racing towards each other, panting, at breakneck speed, gasping and drooling, each trying to catch the rapidly descending orbs, what is this?, they're throwing away their gloves, they're tearing off their clothes, my God, ladies and gentlemen, they're trying to catch the balls in their open mouths...

"Oh, Gardner, ah. . ."

"Jack, Jack, Jack. . ."

"Oh my God, Joe. . ."

And from across the sperm-sodden diamond strode Daved Carleton; stopping before the writhing threesome, he tore open his sweatpants and, withdrawing a seventeen inch penis, said, "Have a taste of this, maties. Arh, arh, arh."

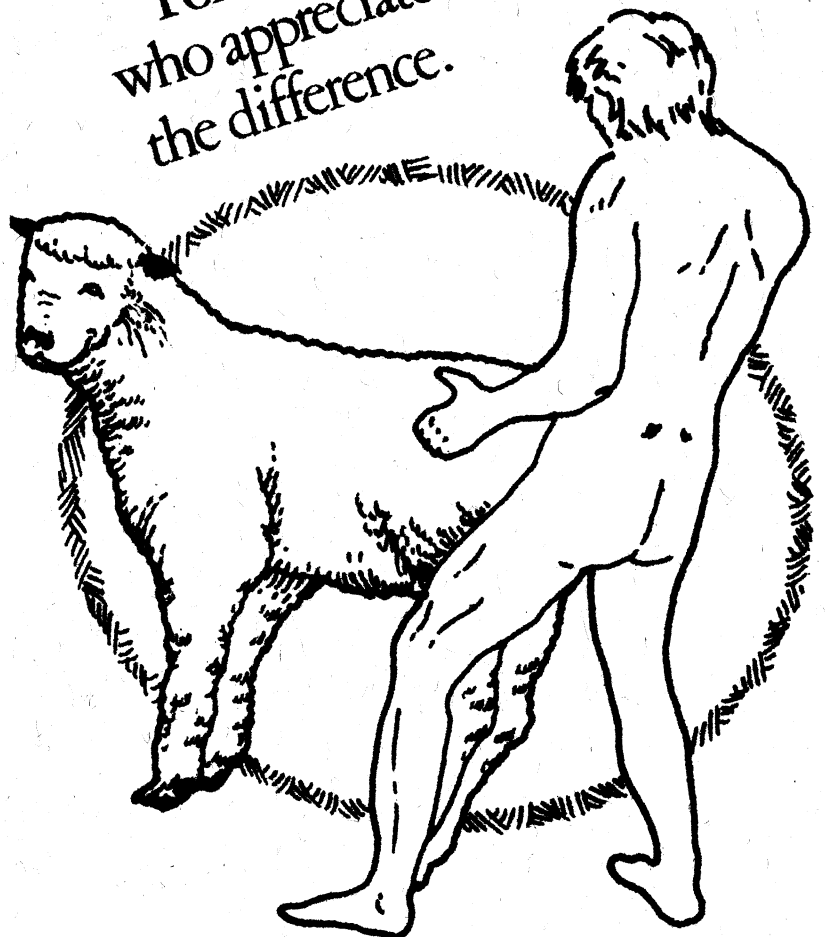
(Is all lost for our heroes? Will they survive this on-slaughter? Will help come in time? Stay tuned, same time, same eustachian.)

\* \* \* \*

"And that's how we escaped," Gardner finished with a deep sigh. "Now, sir, as you promised, recount to us your tale of adventure." Tamping the tobacco into his pipe, he stared across the short distance that separated his overstuffed chair from that of John Damm, Esq. Damm let his gaze travel to the flickering flames in the fireplace. As it traveled back, he spoke.

"It was in my early days of

For those  
who appreciate  
the difference.



university that I first met her," he said. "Pustulent Polly, the fairest jade to skulk down the hallways of Kappa Ypsilon. I was still an untried lad when first I fell into the slatternly scum-stained hands of that heavenly whore. I still remember the pox-scarred loveliness of her heaving bosom and the lice-infested jungle of reeking tendrils that sprang from the juncture of her all too willing thighs."

"That must have been before she had the boa constrictor grafted into her cunt," remarked Jock Denn, the sphincter that walks like a man. At that moment the bottle of peanut butter burst from the tremendous pressure, covering all of them with a thick coating of sticky brown pseudo-seminal fluid and pieces of nuts. "Oh, mighod," ejaculated Gardner. "I'm not impotent any more!"

"I've got my pet pig," said Stuffy, rubbing turkey gravy into the nearest bodily orifice. "And what are friends for, after all?"

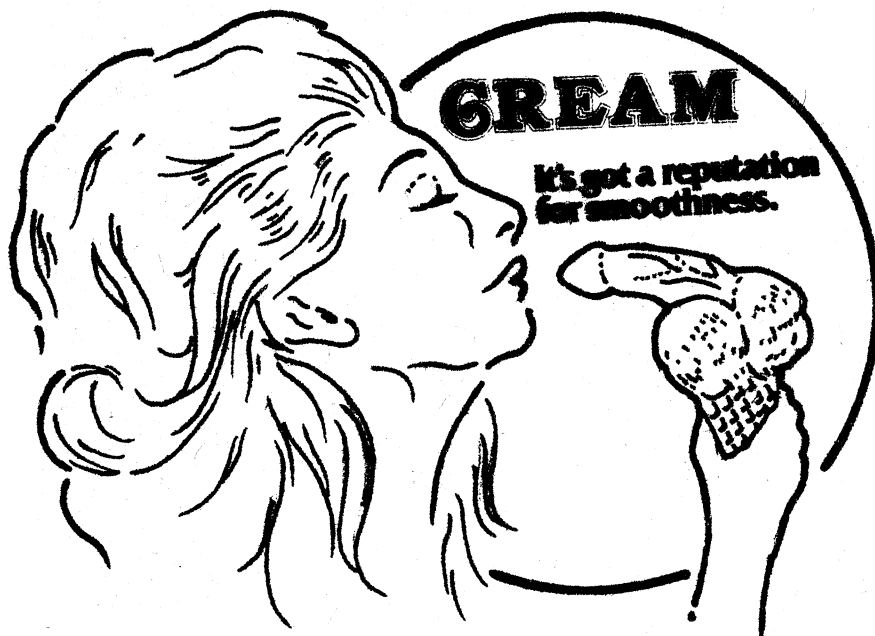
"What are friends for?" said Sue, removing the coat hanger from Jack's rectum. "Why, peanut butter sandwiches have been better because of you." Michael and Jack followed a pulsing piece of pulchritudinous pussy as she undulated dry-headedly out the door. "My Gawd, this is what life is all about," Michael dulcited.

The woman turned around as she neared the end of the hallway. Her golden globes swinging with the force of her swing she taunted, "No man can take me like Kirby the Goat Boy."

"Ah ha! That reminds me of the time I was in London, performing all manner of disgusting sex acts upon unsuspecting young dancing girls," Michael suddenly reminisced.

"But -- but I thought --" she stuttered.

"Yes! It was ten years ago, before sex was officially recognized as an art form! I remember, or rather, remember now. I was playing the outer islands, practicing during the day on anything from schoolgirls waiting to go off to college and find out for themselves what boys were, to infants, mere babes, for my perversions had known no bounds." He reached into his pocket, withdrawing a tiny golden penis on a chain. "One exhausted pretty gave this to me before she...uh, well, that's another tale. Tail! I wanted it so badly. She put her hands on my thighs, sticky with the residue of steak and kidney pie! Yum!" Suddenly, without warning, the sun went nova.



Meanwhile, in a universe synchronous with our own, Gardner fellated himself whilst simultaneously a lone, heart-broken sheep lingered on the edge of Lover's Leap, soulfully eyeing Joe Halaman who was, at that exact moment, violently screwing an anemic lamb with jaundiced, bulging eyes and nits in its wool. The suicidal sheep paused briefly, glanced towards the star-struck lovers in the meadow of thistle and poison ivy, and bleated "Goodbye, Joe."

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \*

# WAHFILES AND I SCREAM

FANDOM'S MOST ELITE NON LETTER-COLUMN

Don't ask me what the title means, I just type here. And by this late in the issue this is all spirit writing anyway. About eighty proof spirit writing, actually.

Despite the fact that XENIUM doesn't have a lettercolumn and appears at such infrequent intervals as to render most serious commentary superfluous, people still tend to send me letters of comment or to include remarks about XENIUM in their regular letters to me. As far as I remember to do so, I file these comments so that at the very least their writers can see their names writ large in a back page of another issue of XENIUM. Because I do appreciate the fact that people take the time to send me their thoughts on what I and my contributors have done. In the last eighteen months, the following friendly folks have reacted to previous issues of this fanzine thereby earning my gratitude, a tip of any one of my six hats, and the following disappearingly small flash of momentary egoboo...

JOHN ALDERSON, WILLIAM BAINS, R.I.BARYCZ, BOB BLOCH, MIKE BRACKEN, NED BROOKS, BRIAN EARL BROWN, JAN BROWN, AVEDON CAROL, LEE CARSON, BRETT COX, DON D'AMMASSA, GARTH DANIELSON, CAROLYN DOYLE, LEIGH EDMONDS, GRAHAM ENGLAND, GEORGE FLYNN, GIL GAIER, ROB JACKSON, VIC KOSTRIKIN, GEORGE LASKOWSKI, MARY LONG, SAM LONG, GARY MATTINGLY, DARLENE MICHAEL, RANDY MOHR, TIM MARION, JODIE OFFUTT, LYNN PARKS, DENISE PARSLEY-LEIGH, BOB PAVLAT, RON SALOMON, JON SINGER, AL SIR-OIS, PHIL STEPHENSEN-PAYNE, TARAL, ANGUS TAYLOR, IRA THORNHILL, HARRY WARNER JR., and TERRY WHITTIER.

Thank you, one and all, and keep those cards and letters coming. I may not have a lettercolumn but I do collect stamps.

*Personally I like tastes that know their own minds. The reason that people who detest fish often tolerate sole is that sole doesn't taste very much like fish, and even this degree of resemblance disappears when it is submerged in the kind of sauce that patrons of Piedmontese restaurants in London and New York think characteristically French. People with the same apathy towards decided flavor relish "South African lobster" tails - frozen as long as the Siberian mammoth - because they don't taste lobster. They prefer processed cheese because it isn't cheesy, and synthetic vanilla extract because it isn't vanillary. They have made a triumph of the Delicious apple because it doesn't taste like an apple, and of the Golden Delicious because it doesn't taste like anything.*

*In a related field, "dry" (non-beery) beer and "light" (non-Scotchlike) scotch are more of the same. The standard of perfection for vodka (no color, no taste, no smell) was expounded to me long ago by the then Estonian Consul General in New York, and it accounts perfectly for the drink's rising popularity with those who like their alcohol in conjunction with the reassuring tastes of infancy -- tomato juice, orange juice, chicken broth. It is the ideal intoxicant for the drinker who wants no reminder of how hurt Mother would be if she knew what he was doing.*

A. J. Liebling, THE MOST OF A. J. LIEBLING

SOMETHING EXTRA? I'LL CHECK BUT IT  
MAY HAVE BEEN CANCELLED THIS ISSUE....

MIKE GLICKSOHN  
141 HIGH PARK AVE.  
TORONTO, ONT. M6P 2S3  
CANADA

110

August 2 1978

PAY TO THE ORDER OF THE TORONTO-DOMINION BANK

\$ 15.00

/100 DOLLARS

THE TORONTO-DOMINION BANK  
2854 DUNDAS ST. W. & KEELE ST.  
TORONTO, ONT. M6P 1Y7  
JUN 24 1978  
1312  
TORONTO, ONTARIO M6P 1Y7

Mike Glicksohn

⑆ 13122⑈004⑆ 2362⑈505⑈

⑈000000⑆1500⑈

CUSTOMIZED CHECKS

There's a saying that "rich or poor, it's nice to have money" and the fact is that a little coin of the realm certainly greases the wheels of one's fanac -- provided they haven't fallen off, of course -- be it fanzine publishing, convention attending or even (gasp!) buying science fiction. And in this automated society of ours, it isn't surprising that paper dominates our finances just as it dominates our fanac. So this time around, XENIUM, The Fanzine That Brings You Something Extra, offers up a few reasons behind my own personal recession. Some of them are quintessentially fannish and besides, I'll do anything to relieve the congestion in that damn shoebox!

<b>ART CREDITS:</b>	Randy Bathurst	6	Harry Bell	4	Derek Carter	2
	Al Curry	7	Jay Kinney	14	Barry MacKay	11
	Randy Mohr	8	Bill Rotsler	12	James Shull	1
	Rick Sternbach	17,19,20	Joan Hanke Woods	15		

I am Jack the Lad when it comes to talking about man's relationship with his four feathered friends. This comes about because I am a Small Man and the S. M. is indeed a special case when it comes to pets, because he, more than most, often needs a companion he can turn to for instant affection and no funny answers, and the obvious choice must be either one of God's creatures or a deaf and dumb nymphomaniac.

Ronnie Corbett, THE SMALL MAN'S GUIDE

Columbus is a depressing place. The All-American City, as it likes to call itself, is exactly that: a homely melange of all America's late-twentieth century problems. Grottesque shopping centers sprout with the predictability of goldenrod in August; the old inner-city single-family frame houses seem to decay before your eyes; the once sedate Ohio State University is in a thrumming fettle of rush-hour traffic, as its generally undistinguished 45,000 students spend far too much of their time simply hunting for parking space...

Burton Bernstein, THURBER







ODBERT

## Xenium 12 Original Colour Paper

**Xenium 12 Original Colour Paper**  
(Pages 18 to 20)

MIKE GLICKSOHN  
141 HIGH PARK AVE.  
TORONTO, ONT. M6P 2S3  
CANADA

110

August 2 1978

PAY TO THE  
ORDER OF

THE TORONTO-DOMINION BANK

*RYAN DIAZ*

\$ 15.00

*Aug 24 1978*

*20*  
/100 DOLLARS

THE TORONTO-DOMINION BANK

2854 DUNDAS ST. W. & KEELE ST.  
TORONTO, ONT. M6P 1Y7  
1312  
TORONTO, ONTARIO M6P 1Y7

*Mike Glicksohn*

⑆ 13 12 2 004 ⑆ 536 2 23 50 5 ⑆

⑆ 000000 1500 ⑆