

EDITOR PUBLISHER

Dave Locke Jackie Causgrove

EDITORIAL ADDRESS

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Welcome to my humble personalzine.

In this issue you will learn more than you care to know about a game called Boggle, you will of course be given full details on the latest Dave Locke Pain Story, I will divulge everything and tell you the absolutely true tale about the hooks in our bedroom ceiling, and then you will share in the wonderfulness of a Saturday which was spent moving a person despite their protests. After that you get a letter-column of thirty pages which you should cherish because of the quality of its wordsmithing, the self-contained nature of its content, the fact that some of its participants are from out of the woodwork, and because I can't afford quite this big a lettercolumn in the next issue (I can't afford it this time, either, but I went crazy and felt that I had to).

Missing is a more well-rounded view of what's been happening in the gaping interim between issues. For example, you don't get reviews of



This is a personalzine, which means that I talk about me and what I've been doing lately as opposed to making an effort to say something worthwhile. You might find it amusing. A distribution of fifty copies is based solely upon editorial whim (I send this to whoever might be able to cope with it..). Extra copies not available.

books and movies, though I've encountered some interesting ones. There is no room to tell you about Midwestcon, which I went to for the first time, and where a number of amusing things occurred. Nor is there room to talk about Iguanacon, though I'd be hard-pressed to maintain a light tone if there were. The trip to Oklahoma to visit Ed and Sue Cagle was touched upon in SHAMBLES #3, but there's much detail which will have to wait for Jackie's editorial in the next RESOLUTION and/or the next outing of this thing. If Ghod wanted personalzines to run a hundred pages He would make mimeo paper grow on trees and would subsidize the post office.

I've also got stories up the ass about neighbors in particular and our apartment building in general, and a list of article topics the length of which amazes even me. We've had three visiting fans stay with us and there's no room to tell you about that, either. Perhaps if I learned to say hello in less than two hundred words I wouldn't have so much trouble with giving you two cents worth of information wrapped up in five dollars worth of bullshit.

We are passing the middle of an Indian Summer as I write this. California days are very warm, and lately very smoggy, but the nights are unpredictable. They're either a bit too warm, just right, a bit too cold, or freezing (relatively: remember that your blood thins out if you stay here too long. Also your nose goes dead to protect you from the smog and the perennially pollenating posies, and your shoulders grow scales in defense against a sun which seems to hang much closer to the earth out here). Since Jackie is an indoors person, as am I ever since I moved out of the country (to me the most interesting thing about a city is the fact that it converts me to being an indoor person), what it's like outdoors doesn't bother us all that much. Except that I'm getting a tan from lounging around the pool when my son Brian comes to visit. Jackie still has the complexion of a Ku Klux Klan member in uniform.

Our lifestyle, when we aren't working for a living, still resembles a two-person relaxicon. This appears to suit us most of the time, but whenever we feel troubled by an apparent lack of direction or accomplishment we frenziedly get embroiled in some heavy writing or drawing or building a social calendar so crowded it looks to have the consistency of the heart of a small, dwarf star. That out of our system, we go back to lounging around and ironing the wrinkles caused by exposure to our employments.

The content of our "spare time" is something that we often confront from the standpoint of how much entertainment value a given activity might possess. We eschew that which offers too much or too little, and strive to toe the middle line. Given a choice between Scrabble and reading, we might opt to call it a night and go to bed. Given the dilemma of choosing between a movie and staying home to drink ourselves stupid, we might go for the resolution of getting ourselves blown away and then going out to see the movie.

We still do a lot of reading, though mine continues with the tradition of occurring in spurts while Jackie's reading maintains a more constant pace. Theatre attendance has increased of late, which is the normal byproduct in hearing of numerous releases which have the potential to tickle the low end of our thermometers. With these, we win some and we lose some, though interestingly enough we are usually not in accord as to this outcome.

In the area of games, chess has been dropped in favor of Spider (a version of solitaire offering considerable opportunity for manipulative juggling, which we play separately except in those instances where the one playing the game feigns a good-heartedness at the kibitzing attentions of the other), Scrabble (which often possesses a duration exceeding that of my attention span), Mastermind (a logic game

absorbing to one player and requiring regular but unchallenging attention on the part of the other), Othello (a simplified version of Go which stays interesting only if we don't play it too often), Chinese Checkers (I've likely played over a thousand games of this since I was a kid. My mental storage bins indicate that I may never have lost a game. Quick: someone tell me if they hold tournaments and give away heavy prize money), and Boggle.

Ah, Boggle.

If it would amuse you to give consideration to a game which possesses some of the finer points of Scrabble, anagrams, and Word Search, then you might be a potential fan of something called Boggle.

We purchased the game, but you don't need to. For about five bucks you get sixteen lettered dice in a 4x4 compartmentalized tray with a see-through cover. You also get a 3-minute egg-timer, which you can throw away or place in the kitchen, and a list of rules.

To play the game, unless you wish to be fancy all you really need is some paper and a couple of pencils. Draw a square containing sixteen boxes (four rows of four), and drop in some letters at random. Be liberal with vowels.

Now start looking for words made up of three or more letters. Words of three and four letters score 1 point. Five letters scores 2 points, six 3, seven 4, and so on. You're limited to a maximum of sixteen letters, because you can't use the same box (with a letter inside) more than once in a single word. Additionally, you are handicapped in your sequencing: as you go from letter to letter in creating a word you must move to an adjoining (or "touching") box.

In choosing legitimate words, follow Scrabble rules: "any words found in a standard dictionary are permitted except those capitalized, those designated as foreign words, abbreviations, and words requiring apostrophes or hyphens."

Set a time limit or play until you're satisfied you've found all the words you're going to find. Then, you match lists and score only those words which are unique to your own list.

Certainly Boggle is a game which is more fun to play than to be instructed on. Try it, and you might see why it holds some degree of fascination.

You don't? And you've tried it?

Hmmm... Maybe I forgot something.

Did I tell you that you're supposed to get stoned first?

Ahhh.

The noise of sixteen wood cubes being shaken in a plastic box is enough to wake the dead, cause professional concern on the part of your dentist, and attract the attention of someone with even my hearing difficulties. Somehow the noise isn't quite so bad if you shake up the Boggle game yourself. When someone else does it, like Jackie sitting across from me, it sometimes makes me sincerely believe that I am accelerating my already decayed hearing faculty.

We obtained four steno notebooks so we would have big scorepads for tracking points and disallowed words (one of these days we'll get an unabridged dictionary, and Jackie will coup another 150 or so points on words I never heard of before), and for being able to maintain consistency in which words we're not giving credit for.

These are our "Boggle Books". We have decorated the covers with irrelevant wordage and irreverent cartoons. We still haven't filled the first set of notebooks. The other two have an even longer way to go toward getting filled. My son, Brian, has some pretty impressive games in his Boggle Book, but that's because we allow him to keep any words he finds instead of crossing them off if one of us also has them (we're going to have to change his handicap; he's beating us most of the time these days).

Terry Ridgeway, an old friend of mine who comes down Tuesday nights, has a book which is mostly (by proportion) filled with disallowed words. Each one is backed by as much outrageous justification as can be thought up.

"Scid," Terry said, reading off his list.

"There's no 'k' in this game," Jackie advised, glancing at the layout of the wood cubes which nested in the plastic box.

"S-C-I-D," he spelled out.

"No," Jackie said.

"You didn't get it?"

"We didn't get it because there is no such word," I told Terry. "She means "no" as in "no you don't." Or as in "wrong, paleface"."

"The word is spelled S-K-I-D," Jackie noted, "and it means a slide, or to slide."

"No, this is a different "scid"," Terry told her.

"No."

"I'll put a mark by it," Terry muttered. "We'll check it later."

"What's your next word?" I asked him.

"Well, I guess you didn't get "scids", then."

Some of the cubes are hanging point-down in their grids. Jackie is tapping the sides of the box to get them to fall into place, but there always seems to be one more stubborn than all the others. Right now the hangup is a cube that might settle into the grid as either an "E" or a "Z". We're cheering for the "E".

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Of course, sometimes I'll give it the old high-school try, too.

"Sim," I read off my list.

!'What?''

"S-I-M," I spelled out. "It's a type of pulley."

"A type of pulley?" Jackie repeated, with rhetorical cynicism.

"Yes: the Sim-Pulley," I said.

"Next word, please. And no, you can't have the last one."

"Cess," I said.

"Cess?" She dropped the pencil in her Boggle Book.

"It's a type of pool," I explained.

"Are you reading the jokes first," Jackie asked, "or is this typical of your entire list?"

"Sunsetiest," I read.

"It's typical," she groaned.

All the cubes are in place now. Nice selection of letters. None of the consonants are isolated and it looks like a gold-mine of maybe sixty or seventy words. I let my eyes scan the more promising letter combinations and work on extrapolating interesting patterns. There's one. P-A-I-N. Keep going. Drop down to the kittycornered F. P-A-I-N-F-U-L. Don't stop now. P-A-I-N-F-U-L-Y. Will Jackie see all of this, too? One never knows. Some pretty obvious stuff can be easily overlooked.

In the first issue of THE WORKS I thrilled everyone (except maybe the Grennells) with a Dave Locke Pain Arkle about twisting one of my ribs as the result of sleeping on the Grennell's daybed.

You know, whenever I think closely about it, I really feel lucky that I have somehow developed a "peasant touch" which, for example, frequently allows my automobiles to fall apart, and my body to be pulverized so that I may always be provided with material for fanwriting. I mean, this is great. Other fans tell me that "nothing ever happens" to them, and inform me that I am "lucky" when a drunken amazon wanders off the street into my house, sits in the living room, and it takes five cops to get her out of there. Some fans envy me for these "great experiences" which are so much "fun to read".

You don't suppose they're missing the point, do you?

But, as the peasant touch continues to stay with me, it would be a shame not to at least get an occasional article out of it all...

For example, I had another rib incident. The scope of this pain story is not particularly large, nor is it heart-thumpingly colorful in detail. It started with a sharp twinge in my left rib cage whenever I swivelled my upper body to the right. Explaining this to a physician was not easy, because I had trouble keeping a straight face (I kept imagining dialog such as: "Doctor, it hurts when I do this." "Don't do that!").

The doctor who examined me was not the same one I had gone to for the twisted rib problem. He was there that day when I went in, but apparently his objective was to clean up a few details before leaving on vacation and turning the whole workload

over to his partner. The other doctor came into my examination room and asked if I minded his handling this matter, as his colleague wouldn't be around for any subsequent treatment that might be required. I told him it was no problem, and refrained from gauchely adding that it probably made no difference since all doctors were only practicing medicine anyway.

I took off my shirt and stood there in front of the examination table while he played around with his hands in the area of my left rib cage. Though he didn't actually use the words "does it hurt when I do this," he would create eye contact each time he engineered what he presumed to be a significant prodding. I would reward certain of his efforts with an exaggerated grimace, just to let him know that he had hit paydirt.

Apparently content with this phase of the examination, he took three steps to the other side of the room and started jotting a few notations in a folder. While he did this the door to the examination room opened and in trooped a nurse with two small and ancient ladies. Apparently the nurse had decided that this would be an excellent shortcut to one of the other examination rooms, being as they were all interconnected. At the sight of me standing there bare-chested she hesitated just long enough to make it apparent that she recognized an error in judgement, but to her credit she decided to forge ahead rather than make matters worse by trying to turn the troops around for a disorderly retreat.

With dignity and aplomb, and eyes forward, she led them into the room and deftly squeezed through in the two-feet largess which separated my bare chest from the closest wall. The elderly lady behind her played an excellent rendition of follow-the-leader, but the one bringing up the rear was stopped at chest-level when the procession ground to a halt as the doctor stepped in front of the nurse and began addressing her on some off-the-wall business matter.

As the nurse fidgetted, the old lady in front of me appeared to be experiencing a mild puzzlement at being trapped with her nose only two inches away from a hairy male chest.

I maintained a phlegmatic composure, being content to enjoy the awkwardness of the situation as it presented itself rather than make an effort to further develop it. But all this went out the window as the old woman lifted her head to look at my face, giving me an expression which indicated that she hoped to find eye contact more socially acceptable.

In response to this I grinned broadly, and in a mock-seductive voice said "hi..." to her.

For this I got a big, toothless grin together with a sparkling crinkle of blue eyes. We shared this joke until the nurse unencumbered herself from verbalizing with the doctor and impatiently backtracked to prod the dawdler into continued movement.

After getting an x-ray in an adjoining room I was informed by my new doctor that some gristle had pulled away from around a nerve-ending, thus allowing it to get tweaked whenever I twisted around. He advised cortizone and novacane injections if the problem didn't clear up in a few days. This did not thrill me, but under the circumstance that I did not again have a twisted rib I felt quite lucky that I would be able to escape the physical beating which would be necessary to correct such a problem. Or so I thought.

If you will remember, and I know this will be unduly pressing some of you, when I had a twisted rib it was required that I be "cracked" to get it back in its proper

place. My doctor's bedside manner in this regard was to beguile me into believing that I was being examined, while in actuality he was setting me up so that he could leap upon me while I layed on his examination table. The force of his body coming down on mine was sufficient to correctly reposition my rib, knock the wind from my sails, and startle the shit out of me. I remember threatening him with physical violence at the time, which amused him because I was too weak to get off the table.

So here was a different doctor, and I was breathing easier as the result of learning that I had a different problem.

That's when I felt the deja vu.

It started as the new doctor had me sit up on the examination table, and then requested that I position my arms and hands in a rather strange but familiar manner. Very familiar. Just like the other doctor, he was trying to sucker me. I was going to be "cracked" again.

I couldn't help it. I started chuckling. This puzzled him, but I was still chuckling when my regular doctor came through the door and stood there viewing what at first glance must have appeared to be an effort on the part of his colleague to tickle a patient. Upon achieving recognition as to who the patient was, and the nature of the treatment to be administered, and the reason why the patient should be laughing when faced with such sober happenings, he cracked. He went over to a wall and leaned against it so that he could devote full attention to laughing and avoid reserving a part of himself to the task of not falling down.

Needless to say, all of this served only to enhance the state of befuddlement, as evidenced by the fact that my new doctor was beginning to shed the facial expressions which denoted his professional demeanor. In their place appeared a look which might normally be reserved for someone who suspects himself of incurring a fast case of paranoia, but refuses to embarrass himself by publicly checking to see if he has ripped the crotch out of his trousers.

When this tender moment had passed, following a cryptic explanation on the part of my regular doctor together with a promise of more detail to follow, the two of us found ourselves alone once more and I got cracked without further dallying.

Just like sex, the technique varies. Though the bedside manner of both doctors was basically the same, centering around trickery and deceit, the actual cracking was performed in a whole different style. Whereas the first doctor relied on the impact of his body weight to do the job, the second doctor employed a bear hug and counted upon the strength of his arms. Whether this is the reason he failed to accomplish the results he was looking for, I don't know. I do know that after thirty seconds of poking and prodding around in the area of my discomfort he decided to crack me again. We both grunted at the effort involved.

Afterwards, while he made entries in a folder marked "Locke," I layed on my back on the examination table and, while in a mild daze, reminisced about the time that I had lost a bar fight as the result of an alcoholic disagreement with three gentlemen. I believe they had wanted my barstool. Though I had wanted to retain it, I had wound up in a position just like the one in the doctor's office, and feeling remarkably similar. The parallel was depressing, so I switched to counting the spots on the ceiling. I stayed with that until my strength returned in a degree sufficient to clear up my vision, at which point the spots disappeared and I got off the table.

"Are you going to charge me for your dry run?" I asked him, as he finished his

notations and closed the folder.

He hesitated a second while trying to comprehend my question, then set down his pencil. "You'll get two line entries on your billing," he told me, his distaste showing at the impertinence of my query. "One for the office call and one for the x-ray."

"I see," I said, glancing up at the ceiling to verify that the spots were still missing. "Is there anything further?"

"Put your shirt back on," he advised, without looking at me.

"Thank you."

"Don't mention it."

"That will be harder," I suggested, with an eye toward writing another pain story.

There are almost as many words hidden in this setup as there are in a vest-pocket dictionary. The normal outcome of such a game is that each of us finds a handbasket full of words that the other doesn't, and the one who wins is usually the one who can sustain their interest or their determination over the long haul, with enough left over to carry them through a final review. I'm pausing to take mental note of the "R-E" combination, which will require that I go back through the list to see how many words this prefix can be applied to. But that's for later, as part of the final review. Right now I'm into finding words starting with "R-E" where those letters are not used as a prefix. There's one: R-E-A-M. Here's another, and it's more likely to be a point-getter: R-E-S-U-M-E.

The letter that follows, which I directed to one of the hundreds of anonymous L.A. Times want ads, is pretty much self-explanatory. Before you go into it you might want to know that I've been less than pleased at hooking up with a company that became, and continues to work at being, a parody of a real company. Life does have its moments there, but those moments have a tendency to grow older through bonewearying repetition and sometimes I lose the capacity to be amused. Jackie tells me that when normal people come home from the office they prefer to open the door, not kick it down.

As a byproduct of this rising tide of discontent, I am sending out resumes. Not franticly, because this job pays well for the privilege of pissing me off occasionally, but regularly, because I've been around enough to know that on the other side of the fence there are places where the grass is tended more carefully.

In my search to find such a place, I responded to this ad during a moment when tiredness and my wiseass nature combined to make me too weak-willed to avoid the temptations that presented themselves.

MANAGEMENT

\* BIONIC COPILOT

If you have extraordinary energy, are slightly crazy, very well organized, educated, personable, diplomatic, highly versatile and have a proven track record then we need each other. Write Box X-145, Times.

L.A. Times Box X-145

Hello!

Now that I've finished sending off cover letters and resumes directed toward such jobs as Branch Manager, Plant Manager, Administrative Services Manager, Material Control Manager, Import Manager, Manager of Operating Procedures, and Purchasing Manager, I'm left with the clipping of an advertisement for a Bionic Copilot which for one reason or another I shuffled to the bottom of the stack. However, there's nothing else left to respond to and I'm tired of merely staring at your ad (with my bare face hanging out, wondering what to do with my hands). This is a Sunday, and I could go back to reading PSYCHOBABBLE (a well-wordsmithed, witty putdown of est, co-counselling, primal scream therapy, and several other mindfuck pseudo-sciences), where I could put your ad to good use as a makeshift bookmark.

Something tells me that I'm not taking this opportunity in the serious and constructive spirit in which it was not offered. Let's start over again.

Speaking directly to the areas noted in your advertisement, which was somewhat strange (to say that your ad was strange is sort of like saying that King Kong was a monkey), I'd have to say that, yes, I do have extraordinary energy. Not right at the moment I don't, because I'm fighting the tail end of a battle with mononucleosis (don't worry, you won't catch it unless I kiss you), a disease which is characterized by alternately feeling fine or feeling aggravatingly weak. As a consequence, when I have to take a leak it's always a mystery as to whether or not I'll have enough strength to unzip, but it's the little uncertainties in life that keep you on your toes. Ordinarily though, yes, I do have extraordinary energy. I'm not certain just how much of it I'd be willing to let you tap, but it would be a point for conversational grist if we ever get so far along that you would require an interview. (This shows how far-sighted I am. You should also know that I'm realistic enough to be aware that quite likely no one has gotten this far into my letter and there is every possibility that I am now talking to myself.)

Your next requirement is that the applicant be slightly crazy. You're not a mental health clinic suffering from a business slowdown, are you? It bothers my idle curiosity that someone would find this qualification useful to them. Why would it be useful? Because normal, sane people might feel out of place working with the rest of you? Because the job function being offered will drive a person crazy anyway? (I'm trying to visualize the dialog in a personnel office: "This job will drive a person crazy, George." "Well, hell, Tom, why should we sit around waiting for them to flip? Let's hire them that way!") All I can say in this regard is that I'm responding to your ad; does this qualify me?

Oh yes, I'm very well organized. That's one of my main strengths. I'm not formally educated (by and high school, where I graduated salutatorian. Don't let this overly impress you, though, as there were only eighteen of us in my graduating class...), and beyond that I don't ever expect to be; it's too late now -- I already know how to do it. Personable? My friends have indicated that I am somewhat manipulative, persuasive, and occasionally silver-tongued. Does that mean I'm personable? Yes, I'm diplomatic, except when being diplomatic doesn't get the job done. Then I'm whatever I have to be to meet the objective (besides being true, this is what you want to hear, isn't it?). And certainly I'm versatile. Even highly versatile sometimes. Other times, like when I wake up in the morning, I have trouble remembering my name and have to wait until I've resolved the question before I can get up and put my slippers on.

I think I have a proven track record, though in all honesty I should mention that I got into jogging a few weeks back and gave it up because I couldn't see deliberately boring myself for a half-hour every day (after all, no one was paying me

for it, like they do at my present job). Feel free to contact me, and I'll give you a goodly number of business and personal references.

Incidentally, if you do contact me please let me know what this strange job is that you're offering. My curiosity is palpitating.

I have now applied for a job as a Bionic Copilot. Actually, the most I've probably accomplished with this missive is to amuse myself at your expense. The least that I've accomplished is to amuse you at my expense. Sounds fair. I think I'll go back to reading PSYCHOBABBLE now.

However, if you do have a job to offer I'd love to hear from you. I'd like to get another job, you see. The one I'm at now has been driving me crazy, and it would be nice to justify it all by saying that I've merely been in training for the posttion which you need to fill.

My office telephone is (213) xxx-xxxx, ext. 15. Please be discreet when making contact at this number. Somehow it wouldn't do, when my secretary asks you to state your business, to actually tell her. Might make her nervous.

Thank you for your consideration of my qualifications.

Cordially,

The letters are beginning to blur rather than flow. Boggle games have a tendency to cause that when the shake is so fruitful that you wind up staring at the letters for a prolonged period. Time to go put on some music. The Alan Parsons Project would appear suitable. Fix a drink. Fix two drinks. Back to the list and the sixteen cubes. H-O-O-K. H-O-O-K-S, too. Glad I took the break, as I thought I was finished with the "H" words. Now I wonder what other obvious things I've overlooked.

Before moving to Torrance (southern Torrance, which is called Walteria by the residents and the mapmakers, and called Torrance by the Post Office) we picked up the basically useless piece of information that a single woman was vacating the apartment that we had placed a deposit on (ala Winston Churchill, and not like a dog on a fire hydrant). After occupying the premises we discovered a potentially contributing reason for her single status.

When we moved in here, after choosing which bedroom would be the fan den (the larger one) and which bedroom would be the bedroom (the room that came equipped with a shoehorn), we did not have much choice with regard to where we would locate the double bed. It doesn't fit particularly well in any position other than where it is now, and we presume the previous occupant would also have found this to be the way things worked out.

We hadn't been living here very long before one day we found ourselves lying in bed and contemplating the ceiling.

"You know," Jackie mused, "it might look better in here if we hung a swag lamp."

"You might be right," I responded, "but I'm not too thrilled with the location of those two hooks in the middle of the ceiling. Hanging a swag lamp over the foot of the bed, at either corner, wouldn't appear to be too practical."

"I was thinking of using one of these hooks," she said, pointing directly overhead at the pair which hung above each corner at the head of the bed, "but they're too damn close to the wall."

"You're right."

"Why would anyone put ceiling hooks that close to the wall?" Jackie asked, a note of peevishness creeping into her tone.

"Must have been some reason for it all, I presume."

We layed there and mused at the four hooks which flanked the corners of our bed.

"You don't suppose..." she began, and then let it hang.

"Certainly it would be a distinct possibility," I said.

Jackie's eyes measured the positioning of the hooks. "Unfortunately I can't think of any other possibilities," she advised, giving the impression that if there was one it would likely be

more desireable.

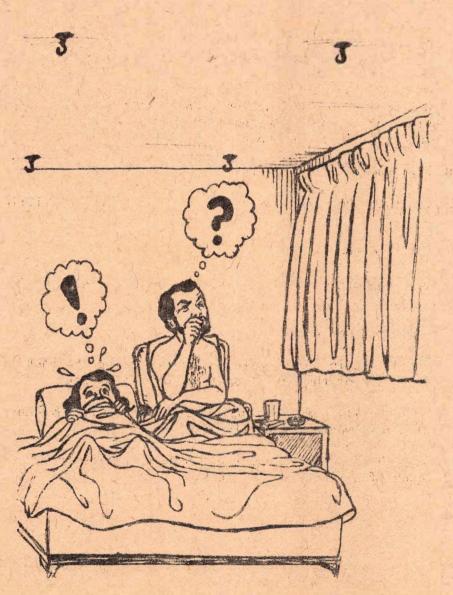
"Perhaps the woman was handicapped," I suggested, "and needed some kind of pulley apparatus to hoist herself out of bed."

"No and yes," she said, looking at me. "A handicapped person wouldn't live in a two-story townhouse. While she might use this setup to hoist herself out of bed, the question is: for what purpose?"

'Well, maybe she hung curtains around the bed. Could be that she was trying for a canopy effect."

"You don't use ceiling hooks to hang curtains," Jackie informed me, in a conversational manner usually reserved for children and congenital idiots.

"You don't suppose that she used them to hang a fishnet around the bed for decorative purposes, do you?"



"No."

"How about the likelihood that she was too povertystricken to afford a bed, after paying the rent on this place, and decided to string-up a hammock?"

"How about applying a little more logic to the potentials involved," she said, rhetorically.

I assumed an injured expression. "I'm only trying to help," I said. "However, if you require realism I could rethink the matter."

"Don't strain yourself, now."



I studied the ceiling. "With a modicum of imagination I can envision two possibilities, based on whether it's the man or the woman who uses the pulley apparatus to suspend themself above the other. If it's the woman who is raised--"

"I don't want to hear about it," she told me, rolling over on her stomach.

"We can presume," I continued, "that she maintains a posture reminiscent of sitting on a swing."

"That's enough," Jackie mumbled into the pillow.

"Naturally, the actual points of support would be under the arms and legs, leaving the 'seat' open for access."

She took my pillow and placed it over her head.

I remained quiet for a few seconds, laying there with my hands cupping the back of my head. Finally, giving up my train of thought, I snatched my pillow back.

I turned out the light, thereby visually removing the hooks from my scrutiny, and settled back to stare at the darkness where the ceiling used to be.

Barely did I notice the movement which preceded Jackie's head appearing on my shoulder. I felt the light touch of a finger on my cheek.

"Dave," she whispered.

"Hello," I said.

"Dave," she whispered again.

"What?"

"Tell me how it might work if it were the man being suspended."

"I don't want to hear about it," I said.

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A good technique in Boggle is to take the letters one at a time, exhausting their potential as starting points, and to keep your list in sequence by letter. Makes life easier when you disremember whether you've already recorded a particular word. Working left-to-right from the top down, I have intrepidly made my way though half of the letters, and already the list is enormous. Jackie is staring at the cubes as though she were watching something move in there. Maybe she is. Or maybe she's mesmerized and lost in there someplace. I hope she sends a postcard. The next letter for me is "M". And there's the first word: M-O-V-E.

We didn't have anything planned for that Saturday after I picked Brian up. We didn't even plan to have an absence of planning, so it seemed only fitting that serendipity should step in and, with a little wasted motion, book us up. It was just that kind of a day.

Serendipity came in the guise of a phone call, and I wasn't here to take it.

"Terry called," Jackie told me as I walked in behind a small boy with his large blue suitcase. "Did he get in touch with you at Phoebe's?"

"Nope."

"I think he was trying to recruit for a moving party. Wants you to call if he missed you in Duarte."

I dialed Eagle Rock.

"What's up, Screwloose?"

"My brother crapped out on me," his big voice returned. "I'm stuck here with only two arms to move all this shit."

"We can be up in about an hour and a half."

"Nah, forget it," he said in a resigned tone. "You've already been on the road for two hours. If I'd reached you at Phoebe's place I'd have felt reasonable in asking you to come over from there. But not now."

"We had nothing planned."

"It's too much," he sighed. "Relax and enjoy your Saturday."

"Fuck you," I told him. "We'll be up in an hour and a half."

"No really, Dave, it's airight. I can handle it."

"You've helped me move twice," I patiently explained to Terry, "and you've moved three times without accepting my offer to help. We expected today to sit around this apartment doing questionable things like trying to keep each other awake, and now we have an excuse to do something. Something useful, even. It gladdens our hearts, Mokus, that you have provided a direction for our lives today." I turned the phone away, and coughed.

"Well, if you're sure it wouldn't be too much of an inconvenience," he said with a note of spirited concern.

"Our pleasure."

"Bring a change of clothing. I'll take you out to dinner."

"I refuse to change clothing for any reason other than that I might offend myself, and I avoid deliberately preparing for the possibility. Wouldn't do me much good anyway, as I still haven't got my sense of smell back from that last cold."

"I know," he said.

"Besides," I continued, ignoring him, "I never bribed you that way. We'll pick up some burgers afterward."

Jackie, sitting at the kitchen table, blanched. After some more frivolous dialog with Terry I hung up and she said: "Why did you have to cajole him into accepting the help that he called up to ask for?"

I sat down at my usual place across from her, and lit up a cigarette.

"That's simple," I said, dismissing any potential puzzlement with a wave of my hand. "Terry would give you the shirt off his back even if he were just taking off on a vacation to go ice fishing. On the other hand," I showed her my other hand and she stared at it, "Terry might be freezing to death, but wouldn't accept a shirt from a trunkful of shirts unless he allowed you to convince him that you really disliked the shirt and were pleased that someone might have a use for it."

"I understand."

"You do?" I asked, incredulous.

She stared at me.

"Personally," I said, "I've never seen the purpose of such an approach."

She continued staring at me.

"Well, shall we get ready?" I suggested.

Terry showed up about ten minutes after the three of us had let ourselves into his unlocked home. He'd been living on the ground floor of a two story house that he was co-owner of. His partner lived elsewhere; the upstairs was rented to a Chicano family of four people and one large dog. Terry was moving to a smaller and cheaper place, so he could rent this one.

The house itself was California stucco, adequate but typical, with even less yard than the normal postage-stamp lot common to the middle-class suburbs out here. This was because his house was shoved up to the base of a hill so steep that the view from his back window extended only about three feet and could be described as basically uninspiring.

Terry had said he might be out when we got there, but his new place was only a couple of miles away and he wouldn't be long between trips. Besides which, you can't haul much in a VW Beetle, although Terry holds great potential for being

famous if stuffing Volkswagens ever becomes a prominent artform.

We let ourselves in and were greeted by a view of disorder only slightly worse than usual. Terry is a confirmed batchelor and almost singlehandedly perpetuates the stereotype of what a batchelor's quarters is expected to look like, complete to the six-day supply of unwashed dishes which mounded out of the single-basin sink. If it hadn't been for the fact that he had his bed disassembled, it might have been difficult to observe that he was in the process of moving.

When Terry came walking in we all sprawled around in the living room and shot the shit for a few minutes, but as usual we kept getting interrupted by the neighborhood children who have adopted this very tall, thin but muscular mid-thirtyish fellow for being some sort of an amusing adult. This seems to work out well, as he appears equally amused by their attentions.

"Terry, you got any popsicles?" Hollered from just outside the screen door. "Yes, but I have to defrost the freezer before I can find them." "Won't they melt?" "I defrost the freezer with a hatchet. As long as I've got room for a couple of trays of icecubes I figure that's good enough."

"Terry?" Another boy's voice. Spanish accent. "What?" Hollered from the living room to the screen door off the kitchen. "Can we have your empty cigarette-pack collection when you go?" "Buzz off, Tommy."

"Terry?" A little girl's voice. "Marvin is unrolling your garden hose." "Tell Marvin to put it back, or Marvin will be beaten with it."

"Terry," I said, "it impresses me that all of these impertinent little mother-fuckers have chosen you upon which to dump their charming attentions. You must feel quite honored, somehow."

"Buzz off, Dave."

Terry and I left to rent a small box-trailer. Jackie and Brian stayed behind because even Terry lacks that much talent at packing a Volkswagen. For some reason I was amused at riding back with a trailer that took up more square footage of road than the car did, but it was even more amusing to contemplate what we would look like when the trailer got loaded.

Terry doesn't like to start with the easy shit. He wanted to haul the refrigerator first, so that we could be worn out all day long. As inflation had driven the rental of a dolly to the point where we felt strong enough to do the job without one, I was not especially pleased with his eagerness to give me a hernia so early in the afternoon.

"Are you going to move both refrigerators?" I asked, looking at one of medium size and a significantly larger unit standing next to it in his kitchen.

"I'm not sure which to take, but I'll leave one for my new tenant."

"How big is your new place?"

"Hardly big enough to cough in. If I want to scratch my ass I'll have to go outside."

I was beginning to feel relief that the smaller refrigerator would be the more suitable choice.

"Let's take the bigger unit," he said.

I opened it and started handing him things to place in the other refrigerator. Few of them made it. Nost got thrown in the trash.

There was the remains of a pan of stew which Terry had probably cooked two years ago. A white fungus had grown out of the stew and was threatening to crawl over the lip of the pan.

"Yuccch," Terry said, and pitched the pan and everything into the trash.

"What's this?" I asked, handing him half a loaf of brown bread which had turned white and fuzzy. He took it, delicately, and dropped it on top of the stew. It made a fluffy noise upon impact.

There was a small jungle in the vegetable bin, caused by potatoes and carrots and other former edibles which had bowed to the urge to procreate. Terry upended the bin into the wastebasket, and then held it arms' length from his nose to put it back in the refrigerator.

I opened the freezer compartment and stared at a fifty pound block of ice and snow. In the center of it someone had tunnelled out enough of a hole to insert an icecube tray. I handed the tray to Terry. "This is all that's in there," I told him.

"Nonsense," he said, and pawed through the snow to come up with two TV dinners and half a dozen popsicles. He transferred the former to the other refrigerator and passed out the latter to all of us and to the usual quantity of kids playing outside, but not before breaking the popsicles in half so they would stretch to meet the demand.

We chewed or sucked on our popsicles, depending upon our inclinations, until we were finished with them. At that point there was nothing to do but move the refrigerator. Fifty pound block of ice, and all. Without a dolly. Through doorways so narrow we had to juggle and turn as we went. Clint Eastwood, Charles Bronson, and Superman would have been proud of us. All the while I kept thinking that maybe Terry would stop for a rest and find some more popsicles.

Terry was moving to a house located in someone's backyard, which is a fairly common circumstance here in sunny Califurnace. I think it has to do with the local phenomenon which might be called Lawn Fixation. Many try their damndest to turn their lawns into showcases, while at the same time doing everything possible to reduce the amount of lawn which requires tending. Most people don't have enough property surrounding their homes to worry about it, but others will put in pools, jacuzzies, patios, rock gardens, fountains, streams, tennis courts, or, if the property is large enough, a small house to provide them with a little extra income and a few tax advantages. They call them "backhouses," which means something altogether different in the upstate New York area where I grew up, and I still get a twinge of amusement when I think of someone "living" in an outdoor privvy.

I was somewhat dismayed, upon carrying my half of the refrigerator into Terry's rented backhouse, to discover that there was already a refrigerator in there, albeit one that didn't work, and that we had to carry it out to the garage.

The prime source of my dismay was over the size of the damned thing. We had just moved an oversized unit in, but in comparison to the one already there we were in the position of having conquered Frankenstein only to be confronted by Godzilla.

It was a humungus unit, old beyond belief, manufactured in the days when you could not indent a side with your fingertip, when products were built solid, by Ghod. I groaned, suddenly feeling much older than 34, and eyed the beast with great trepidation.

"Why do you have the refrigerator plug running into your bedroom?" I asked Terry, as I eyed the cord that disappeared through the doorway off the kitchen.

"Because there aren't any outlets in the kitchen."

"That's ridiculous," I told him, and began immediately to peer along the baseboards behind the stove and refrigerator. Terry sighed as I got down on my knees, opened the cabinet under the sink, and peered inside. Finally I finished my exhaustive inspection of a kitchen which must have measured all of six by eight feet. I went up to Terry and confronted him in an accusatory manner.

"This is ridiculous," I explained, as he regarded me with a patient expression.

"I know."

"Somebody had their thumb up their nose when they put the electric in this place."

"I know," he said.

Just then Brian walked in carrying four pair of shoes, followed by Jackie with thirty pounds of clothes on hangers. In four steps they crossed the largess of Terry's living room, squeaked by us in the kitchen, and deposited their loads in the bedroom. We heard them grunt as they did it. Terry doesn't believe in wasting boxes on carryable items like clothing.

There was a small exclamation of surprise, followed by the view of Jackie coming through the doorway as she held an electric cord in her hands and traced it until it disappeared behind the refrigerator.

"Terry," she said, dropping the cord, "why is your refrigerator plugged into the bedroom?"

"There aren't any outlets in the kitchen," I explained to her, shaking my head to signify the ridiculousness of it. Terry leaned against a counter and sighed.

"That's ridiculous," Jackie said, dismissing the idea with a hardening of her eyes. She began peering behind appliances. Brian crawled into the cupboard beneath the sink. We could see his sneakers twitch as he searched the walls in there. In a short time they both gave up and confronted Terry with the absurdity of renting a backhouse where you had to plug the refrigerator cord into a bedroom outlet. He sighed again.

Getting the old clunker out of the house and into the garage was a job and a half. I don't know about Terry, but I can't offhand recall ever lifting anything quite that heavy before, nor anything with less of what might be called "handholds" (a good word, not found in the two-volume Lexicon Webster, nor on this refrigerator). We got the job done, and it took every ounce of strength possessed by the both of us. If a falling leaf had dropped on the refrigerator, we never would have made it.

We didn't transport Terry's dirty dishes. Terry has moved around a fair amount in the past three or four years, and he refused to move a sinkload of dirty dishes again. He didn't wash them, either, at least not that day. When the move was as complete as he desired it to be, we went to a local Two Guys From Italy, a chain that serves the best pizza to my taste, and we three had pizza while Jackie tried the cannolloni, and we all found the food delicious. This may have been because it was delicious, or maybe because it was good and we were all starving. The place also had a nice atmosphere, thanks to Terry loaning me a clean teeshirt.

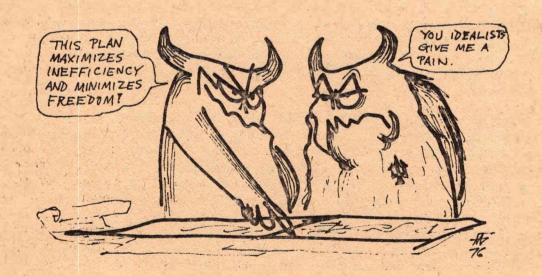
After that we took in ANIMAL HOUSE, and laughed ourselves stupid. The movie was a tad uneven, mixing humor that worked with attempts that didn't, but the balance was on the positive side and we enjoyed the hell out of the movie. All of us. With a group like us, that's hard to do. In fact, being familiar with our tastes, I'd have thought it next to impossible.

We got home late, very late, and had no particular trouble getting to sleep six or seven minutes later. Like, we were tired. We were also agreed that, for some strange reason, it was as much fun to move somebody else as it was a pain in the ass to get ourselves moved. If we can ever figure out why this is, we may find ourselves the proud owners of one of the secrets to the universe. In the meantime, we'll ponder it.

Not a typical Saturday, but certainly an amusing one. We feel it kind of serendipity to occasionally combine productivity with entertainment.

Still, I hope Terry finds his new place liveable for a few months.

It's sometimes frustrating to find out which words you've overlooked. I'll give a nod to someone who scores a seven or eight-letter word that I missed. If it's a real charmer I might even applaud. It's missing words like C-A-T that pisses me off, especially when the letters lie in a perfect horizontal sequence and do everything except jump off the tray onto my list. In this particular game we had a tie score, with Jackie's big find being N-A-P-A-L-M, and mine being M-A-I-L-B-A-G.





Your words are in this nifty "LIGHT ITALIC" typeface. My words are in this consummate and superb "DUAL GOTHIC". And your names and addresses will be shouted out in this magnificent "ORATOR". Typing elements and IBM Selectric courtesy of one J. Causgrove, who keeps telling me that I needn't ask permission before using any of these things (but a fan's typer is their castle, aren't it?).

## 

## DEAN GUENNELL -- BOX DG, DANA POINT, CALIFORNIA 92629

When you come right down to it, as a friend of mine once observed, there are never more than 12 really <u>bad</u> months in any year; so far. He also used to say that 1912 was the Indian Summer of Western Civilization; before they came and took him away, that is.

I didn't find 1977 much of a vintage either but I'm coming to regard such things as a paraphrase of the old USAAF cliche about landings: Any one you can walk away from could have been worse.

There are a few years regarding which, should I ever gain possession and/or control of a workable time-travelling device, I plan to burn their crystals out of the circuit board, or whatever, just to prevent inadvertant re-visits.

One such doom-ensorcell'd year was and shall forever be 1972. That was the year of the escrow proceedings on the present domicile and sooner than re-experience that particular midden heap of trauma, I'd cheerily volunteer to give birth to an adult porcupine (breech delivery) and any other unlikely project that might be proposed.

Real estate transactions have never been my bag -- an observation fully as incontrovertible as that beaver-barf contains wood chips or owl turds, mouse bones. In the most recent fiasco, the real estateperson who showed us this house got the bright idea that, if she sold us this house and bought our previous house (thereby having 'sold' it for us) her commissions on the two sales would tot up to a sum large enough to equal the down payment on the house she was buying from us. It reminded me a little of the (I hope) apocryphal account of the South Sea island where each native makes his/her living by taking in the laundry of other natives of the same island.

Besides, she had a boyfriend at the time and she felt that what he needed to remedy the more obvious defects in his character was some responsibility to Make Him Face Life. By roping him into the transaction, she hoped to Make A Man Of Him. Just what I really needed right then, getting embroiled in halfass, bootstrap psychotherapy.

She persuaded us to move from the old house to this one and that was when, as we were wont to say whilst spraying the Royal Iranian palace with insecticide, the Flit hit the Shah. Once they took possession, the first thing they did was to have the electricity shut off, to conserve funds they really didn't have. Which meant the next time I visited the place, what was out back was not the pool you may recall but somewhat over 20,000 gallons of a fluid resembling a bad batch of split pea soup, only thicker, of course.

Along the way, I remember going up there to perform maintenance chores one weekend and the pool water was down (we had got the current turned back on and a carload of diatomaceous earth got the water reasonably translucent again) so I turned on the fill valve to bring it to normal level. Returning home, I got a frantic call from my real estateperson (not the one who caused all the shemozzle; a different one) saying the next door neighbor was having one colonic miscarriage after another over all that chlorine water trickling into his garden. Yes, I'd forgot to turn off the bloody water valve. So I drove back and rectified the omission and the fat slug came trumpeting over, talking about damage suits.

"Yes," I assured him, "and while we're at it, we'll discuss people who set out poison for their neighbor's cats." It must have struck a raw nerve or perhaps it was the obsidian glint in my eye -- normally the mellow luster of well chilled bock beer -- but he retreated to his sodden turnip patch like a King Kong fashioned out of silly putty.

It went on and on, with Ossa atop Pelion in an endless sandwich. The guy who owned the present house kept calling me up at all odd hours, blubbering and whinnying, "I want my muhnneee!" I used to dream of administering it to him as a suppository; in red-hot pennies, all of it.

But all things come to an end, even the bad ones. I'll never write the full, unexpurgated account of The Summer of '72 because I'd have to remember it all and I'd as soon swim in vulture-vomit.

The shrine of family memorabilia bears an empty Tullamore Dew bottle with a small strip of blue label tape on it. The legend on the label tape is simple: 11 Aug 72. That was the day we got out from under, clawing



like a gin-crazed cateagle, right down to the finish line. By that time, I had gotten so adroit at pulling miracles from my coat sleeve it would have been child's play to walk on water, though I usually sink in halfway to my knees when I try that. [1]

Regarding the recent fad for referring to a book as 'an immensely good read,' I've been re-reading Thurber's LANTERNS & LANCES and at least one of the entries, 'Friends, Romans, Countrymen, Lend Me Your Ear Muffs,' leads me to suspect that Thurber would have regarded such forms of usage as a smashing great infuriate. I recall a line therein, commenting on the cigarette commercial that told how the product 'travels and gentles the smoke,' (Jackie's brand, come to think of it), leading Thurber (we never call him Jimmy) to comment about a house that, '...sleeps twenty, but it only eats fourteen.' Ah, Thurber, where are you, now that we need you? Gone to join Nineveh, Tyre and Lucky Strike Green, eheu! [2]

Film fans do it in the dark.

Gestetner owners like lots of holes.

- [1] I am frequently content with a side-stroke, Dean, though a fast boat can't be beat when all you're after is transportation.
- [2] Oh, I don't know. Saying that a book is "a good read" communicates something that cannot be so concisely expressed with an alternative choice of wordage. I find it a useful expression. Of course, I probably haven't encountered it quite so often as you apparently have (I don't read that many book reviews). When the time comes that I look upon it was being time-worn, I'll probably drop it. A shame. Seems funny somehow that we will often go out of our way to avoid the use of a cliche, rather in the manner of a taxi-driver who takes someone on a turn around the city when their destination is only a block from where they started.

You know, I wonder what Jimmy would have thought about Dean Grennell's playfulness with the language? He'd probably have found it to be as much fun as we do, unless ten thousand other people imitated you in which case he'd find that to be "a smashing great infuriate" too. If the masses use it, then it can't be worth a shit, right? Except for likker and sex, of course, and maybe one or two other things.

Pros will do it for money.

SMOFs like to do it secretly.

# LLOYD BIGGLE, Jr. -- 569 DUBIE, YPSILANTI, MICHIGAN 48197

You talked about drinking on airplanes. Airlines have this peculiar notion that no matter how much they goof up a flight, the whole thing can be put right by passing out a few free drinks. But they're cagy about it. They don't announce on the PA system, "Because of Blank Airlines's corporate stupidity and mismanagement, all of you are going to miss your connections in St. Louis by two hours and forty minutes, and therefore the drinks on this flight are free." They keep very quiet about it. They come around and take orders for drinks in the usual manner, and deliver them, and it's only when you've already got your wallet out to pay that they let you know that the drink is free because of the inconvenience you've suffered or are going to suffer. That limits the free drinks to those who'd be drinking anyway, and they're able to inconvenience the rest of the passengers for free. If they announced it,

everyone on board would order drinks. I've seen some goofups that would even put members of the W.C.I.U. in the mood to order drinks, just for spite. So only those who order without knowing the drink is going to be free collect the bribe; and with one exception, it's been one drink.

That one exception was an American Airlines flight out of Chicago. Not even a computer expertly programmed for goofups could have managed what happened that night at O'Hare. At first there was no plane to get on, and no one knew anything about anything. Then we were directed to another gate, where there was a plane that it turned out wasn't going anywhere. Then to a third gate. We finally got on a plane and sat on the ground. And sat. We were still sitting there long after we were supposed to have landed in Detroit, and the thing was artfully arranged so that it wasn't possible to call the people who were supposed to meet me and tell them I'd be late and how much -- no one knew how much -- with the result that while I sat on the ground in Chicago, they sat in the Detroit terminal waiting for me to arrive. They sat there for a couple of hours. Of course no one in Detroit knew anything, either. I don't usually drink on airplanes, but by the time that plane finally took off I needed either alcohol or a tranquilizer, and they weren't selling tranquilizers. So I ordered a drink. It was no surprise to me that it turned out to be free. It was a surprise that the moment I finished it, the girl was there to refill the glass. All the way to Detroit.

The moral is this: If you're watching the arrival gates in an airport, and you see a mob of furiously angry, drunk passengers disembarking, you can guess that you're seeing the tail end of a king-sized goofup.

Bridge fans look for good partners, and do it with finesse. Apafen do it together.

The last king-sized goofup I suffered which had any pleasing compensations to it was the time that a barely pubescent Dave Locke was taken by his mother to lunch at a restaurant in Gloversville, New York, during a shopping expedition which had been mounted in the wilds of Indian Lake some hundred or so miles upstate in the "Northwoods". Whoever mounted the wall mirrors above each booth should have had his union card burned. The one above us, which originally possessed as much square footage as the table, came down and smashed itself to holy smithereens on top of our lunch. Neither of us got cut, but it did serve to jostle the forks out of our hands (as I recall, she jammed hers into the side of her booth, and mine got inelegantly tossed up to the ceiling). The incident also served to get us another table as well as tray upon tray of the finest preparations which their chef could be flogged into providing. Rather than sue their ass off we shamefully allowed ourselves to be surrounded by a half-dozen waiters whose every facial expression spoke for their concern that we be pleased with this sudden and frenzied burst of service. I recall a mild disappointment that a mirror did not fall into my table the next time I had occasion to eat there.

Hekto pubbers do it sloppily.

Aussiefen like it down under.

# ALEXIS GILLILAID -- 4030 SOUTH 8TH STREET, ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22204

I enclose four cartoons (in addition to those below) as an expression of interest, solidarity and flakiness.

My interest in your fanzine, my solidarity with fandom, and my personal flakiness are what lead me into drawing silly pictures instead of Sistine chapels. Well, the Sistine chapel would look silly too, if I covered it with 3x5 cartoons, even biblical ones, so perhaps the Vatican is just as happy.



From your continuing saga of minor to major to epic pain, I wonder if Jackie is doing the right thing moving in on you. Perhaps you are exaggerating a bit when you write it up, but even so... Perhaps your high pain tolerance lets you ignore warning signals that would keep a normal person from harms way.

Book reviewers like to talk about it, but they don't give the end away.

I resent your implication that I am not normal merely because I frequently suffer a shitload of physical pain. It's not my fault that Life treats me like a guinea pig in a Chinese torture mill. Excluding my paranoia I'm as normal as the next person, except that if the next person is really normal then I might have cause to be worried about the poor bastard.

Fan humorists know how to tickle you.

# DEINY LIEU -- 2408 SO. DUPONT AVE., APT. #1, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55405

"Don't tell me how much you liked or dislike the zine; tell me something interesting." Interesting is in the eye of the bereader. Did you know that the walrus has a bone in its penis (if male, that is?) (If the walrus had a bone in the eye of its beholder, would it be more interesting? For whom?) Do you suppose beholders of walri ought to be licensed and Watched Carefully? [1]

I faced the same qualms about learning to "date" again last year, though I never got so desperate as to attempt dancing. (I have been known to attempt same when I am fairly drunk. I have also been known to attempt to carry a tune and play drums with a couple of empty beercans against the floor at the same time when  $\overline{I}$  am fairly drunk

too. People tend to get Nervous when I get fairly drunk. ((Fortunately I usually proceed to get very drunk and go to sleep before I can do too much damage to the state of the performing arts in Minnesota (((except insofar as I tend at these times to be a minor performing art myself)))))). The secret, of course, is to date only other fans. You're already going to the parties and the latest GIANT ANTS THAT DE-VOURED ANTWERP movie anyway, and going together to same is a \*\*Nedy\*\* TruFannish date. Dancing, ptui. [2]

Have to say I find your titles for gay love songs (and the "Roto-Rooter" comment) fairly offensive. You seem to assume that all gays are male and that all male gays practice anal intercourse, swish, lisp, and are into drag. Not true, of course, but a handy stereotype for humor -- except that the air of smug hetero superiority implicit in the piece makes for more offense than humor. [3]

Of course, maybe I wouldn't have reacted so if I hadn't first read this a few days after the St. Paul vote. So it goes.

Even if you like the term "sci-fi" (blench), surely using it in print like that where 50 innocent (nominally) fans are going to run into it suddenly is Unethical? Like the kid in 5th grade who didn't mind the sound of his fingernails on the blackboard, and enjoyed nauseating those in the class who did... [4]

I liked STAR WARS without going berserk; didn't like CLOSE ENCOUNTERS. Now ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW on the other hand ... unfortunately, the Outside World has discovered it and it's no fun anymore. (I hear a rumor the Outside World has also discovered sex, but I refuse to listen to it.) [5]

# Fanartists have finer lines.

- [1] Yes, definitely. And at the first sign of untoward behavior I think they should be cited for mopery with intent to gawk.
- [2] I tend to be more occasionally "wild" when sober than during the course of drinking. I'm not sure what this means, though I often interpret it as a reason for drinking more often.

Before I was married there was no opportunity to date any fans. Indian Lake, Nyok is likely to never again be even a one-person hotbed of crifanac.

After the separation, and before setting up housekeeping with Jackie, most of my "dating" was done out of pickup parlors. There were repeat dates generated outside that starting environment, and dates generated elsewhere, but quite frequently bars and dancing would fit into the picture anyway. I had a tendency to not look upon the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because it that it is the following for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable source for female companionship, mainly because if the local fan scene as a viable scene as a viab

[3] Sometimes there are reasons why stereotypes exist. I've met a lot of people who just fell out of one mold or another, as I'm sure you have.

Of course the piece was offensive. The question is: to whom was it offensive, and why? You've stated your own reasons, and there's no arguing with them. My view is that all humor offends somebody, somewhere. Everybody likes a little irreverence, but nobody can like it on every possible topic. Humor is as much a tool as it is an entertainment, and a problem occurs when motivation is called into question.

- [4] No, not like the kid in class. You see, if using "sci-fi" for shock value is "unethical", then fingernails across a blackboard doesn't make a simile (that I would describe as being neither ethical nor unethical; it's merely childish). That I wasn't using it for shock value, but rather using it because I eventually determined that my own earlier antipathy toward the word was irrational, says only that the word is well enough integrated into my vocabulary that I'd better warn people that I'm really going to be using it...
- [5] Haven't seen ROCKY HORROR yet, but both of us intend to catch it sometime. As for sex, yes, this has been discovered by the Outside World. Even before April, 1926 and the first issue of AMAZING, as I understand it...

Travelling Jiants cover a lot more ground.

## JOSEPH NICHOLAS -- 2 WILMOT WAY, CAMBERLEY, SURREY GUIS 1JA, ENGLAND

Your song titles are clever; I particularly liked the one about Apple Bottom Time. Do I sound vaguely anti-gay? I hope not. The trouble is that, up until a few months ago, I actually had a gay boss, who used to disrupt my lunch hours with diatribes about how homosexuality was the natural state for humankind -- i.e., that all men should love other men, and all women should love other women. I did try, once or twice, to get him to rationalise this point of view, but he never took the bait I offered, and it all got a bit tedious in the end. I mean, he was just so damn inconsistent -- not varying from day to day, but holding mutually contradictory views at one and the same time. I ask you -- how can a gay who advocates equal rights for homosexuals, including lesbians, at the same time be advocating the denial of equal rights for non-homosexual women? Women are women ... are women, no matter whom or how they love. But I could never get this inconsistency through to him, so I eventually gave up altogether. I just wish he'd given up trying to convert me to his point of view ... maybe this is what Mary Whitehouse meant by "the corrupting influence of homosexuality", even though such language reveals a complete lack of know-ledge about language itself. To be corrupting, something has to be attractive -- and I'm afraid I don't find the idea of a prick shoved up my ass particularly attractive.

Apropos that couple on your flight back from Chicago who expressed a desire to screw while airborne -- I've always wondered how anyone can screw on an airplane without being noticed, and stopped from doing so by the cabin staff. I mean, you can do it standing up in the toilets, for sure, but aircraft bogs are so damn small that the male's backside would keep thumping against the door on the downstroke ... and the female's head knocking against the ceiling every time her partner made the upstroke -- all of which would bring the cabin staff running to the assistance of the person they thought was trapped in there. Never mind giving the female a headache

and rendering the male unable to sit down for a week. And if you don't screw in the toilet, and try the seats instead ... well, then you've got to put up with a barrage of camera flash bulbs, and all sorts of remarks from the less inventive passengers. Unless the airplane in question is flying practically empty, and the air hostesses are up in the galley helping the steward get his rocks off. All of which doesn't mean that I wouldn't mind trying it one day, and thus joining the famed Mile High Club... provided I can ever afford to fly. I mean, we British aren't as rich as you Americans; no sir! Just because we've got a Labour Government and double figure inflation...

Video games freaks do it for a quarter.

# TIME GLIGGOIL - 141 HIGH PARK AVE., TORONTO, UNTARIO PUP 25, CANADA



It's typical of a first-time faned that you'd set such a ridiculous requirement as "tell me something interesting" as a medium of exchange for getting THE WORKS from you. Do I demand such strenuous activity from you in return for my fanzine? Of course not, I instruct recipients of XENIUM not to LoC it unless they have something wondrous to say and you've proven yourself how easy it is for fans to follow such suggestions. But I have to tell you something interesting. Still, you didn't say interesting to whom, which might leave things wide open... [1]

Okay: the indefinite integral of cos<sup>3</sup>u sinudu is -½cos<sup>4</sup>u + C. (My twenty two Calculus students failed to see the interest in that today so it's up for grabs.) Yesterday I spent fifteen minutes talking to Harlan Ellison in my

bath. What/Hat/KIliden/bat/deing/// Some people might find that interesting even if you and I don't. I've got several thousand dollars in my savings account and registered retirement savings plan. That's good for a fair amount of interest. And that's all you deserve, in the face of your oppressive and all-encompassing transcontinental silence of late. [2]

Actually, I've nothing to say on the topics you write about so entertainingly. I haven't moved in almost a lustrum. House, I mean. I move to the kitchen each time the glass gets empty, which I see it has done again. Here I am writing to some faned in California and someone's stealing my scotch while my fingers are turned. There's no honesty among fans any more! Actually, I did gain a roommate fairly recently and last week I discovered two cockroaches in the kitchen but I expect these facts are unrelated, not unlike the parents of people who don't respond to letters and tapes from their friends. [3]

And pain was never my pleasure or inspiration so that's out too. But I do have something interesting I can send you, now that I think of it! It's inspired by the first paragraph in the second box on page three and is quoted from XENIUM 2.2, where it was quoted from a Bruce Gillespie apa-45 fanzine: "When people ask me 'How are you?', usually I tell them. That shuts them up." [4]

I'll tell you something else interesting, as per your instructions. (We teachers take orders well.) When I got to the end of your fanzine (and the large glass of scotch that mellowly accompanied the reading thereof) and read the comment "I wonder if eighteen pages of a Dave Locke personalzine..." I snorted to myself (it's cheaper that way) and thought, "That was never eighteen pages!" So I counted them. I had a little trouble when I got past ten but I dug out my calculator and persevered. By Johnny Walker, it is eighteen pages long. But it certainly doesn't read like eighteen pages. It slides smoothly and reads like a much shorter fanzine. Reading just the title of a Garth Danielson fanzine seems to take longer. I found that to be an interesting observation upon the nature of fanzines. Hoping you are the same. [5]

## Mystery fans wonder how it's done.

- [1] True, I didn't say interesting to whom, but when I state "tell me something interesting," I am expecting my students to instinctively follow the meaning of my request as opposed to mentally requiring a statement that says "tell me something interesting to me" before they are capable of comprehending my meaning. This is my method, you see, for weeding the slow learners into a separate area in my little classroom of life. Exceptions are made, naturally, for students who make humorous capital of my request in an effort to be amusing. These go in yet another section of the classroom, and are categorized as people who have a nice eye for the absurd. I count on these people heavily to come forth with material that makes for a good read. (Note my technique of placing this loose point in a teacher/student context. In using this approach I may have confused you. Hope not...)
- [2] We're sorry; we know we owe you some kind of communique. It's just that we've been so busy lately. We've been drinking, and smoking, and going out, and playing chess, and working on fanzines. Like right now I'm frittering away my "free time" by communicating with Mike Glicksohn somewhere amongst the scattered minutes and hours that I spend in working on the lettercolumn, instead of sitting down at my typewriter to catch up on some back correspondence. I feel suitably guilty, berlieve me. I should be doing a letter, telling you that I appreciated your LoC on THE WORKS, and maybe send you a few words on the last XENIUM which I enjoyed (if I could remember which one that was). Instead, I sit here toying in a much less spontaneous medium (I mean, you might not get to see these words for a couple of months), feeling guilty of Priority Failure as I drop every word onto this page. Please don't press this point any harder or I might not be able to stand myself.
- [3] My Ghod, Mike, we're sorry we haven't written or sent a tape recently. I swear to Christ that we're guilty as all hell. Jackie is off in the den working on RESOLUTION (I think she's composing a response to your words in the lettercolumn), and I'm lounging at the kitchen table and with pencil and paper I'm drafting out my responses to the LoCs on THE WORKS (I think I'm composing an apology to someone), and there's just no excuse for such negligent behavior on our part. If we promise that we'll send you a tape, soon, will you stop sulking and stop saying disagreeable

things about our parentage and start becoming more like the pleasant but besotted toper that we like to think of you as? That's a good fellow (sound of shoulder being given a friendly slap by an open palm). Let's go get another drink separately together, shall we?

- [4] Bruce is One Of Those, eh? Definitely, though, you have provided something interesting. Pause for a moment, and contemplate the character of a person who would deliberately be boring to suppress the possibility of incurring a worthwhile conversation with someone. I apologize to anyone if this pause had made them tired in the head (as opposed to barefoot).
- [5] I am, and thank you. Thank you also for those sections of your letter which are not seeing print here. This does not mean that I didn't appreciate the clever effort to make such a great glop of egoboo printable, but it takes more professional talent than is likely in the possession of all of fandom's wordsmithers to make what amounts to strictly a two-person communication seem, for one reason or another, justifiable for public consumption. I'll print just this much of it (so you won't be too hurt...), and restate that I appreciate the rest. Or maybe I should add the comment that you are a silver-tongued sonuvabitch and yet still I can indeed trust you for as far as I can throw you, if only because I'm quite strong and you're quite short and I can probably throw you a great distance.

Anarchists are radical in their approach.

# MARCIA HULAN -- 3313 SOUTH PARK DRIVE, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92707

Consider yourself forewarned. If you decide to use this LoC, and if you don't clean up the typos, misspellings and horrible grammar, I will never forgive you. This is NOT a fate to be desired.

I won't tell you that I enjoyed your zine. Nice, aren't I. Instead, I will tell you all about the trials and tribulations that happen when you buy a house with a plum tree in the back yard. This is not to be confused with the t&t of having one in the front yard; that I shudder to think about. (All the ratty little kids picking them and throwing them and squashing them...)



The major problem with this stupid tree is that it doesn't know when to quit! We don't try to pick the plums because we're too busy getting the ones off the ground (these plums are amazingly prolific -- we spend hours cutting down all the baby plum trees. It seems like out of every ten plums we leave lying on the ground eight trees try to grow up. Believe me, one is enough). This past week (they have just now started to ripen) we have picked up on the average of 10-15 pounds of plums a day. So far I have made ten quarts of jam, and taken in several boxes of the things

to the office. And its only just begun.

I have thought of several tactics. The obvious one is to invite people over to pick (up) plums. I've done that (with a definite lack of takers). Friends have suggested trying to sell them (I can just see me now: "Would you like to buy some plums?" "Are you kidding?" "Would you like me to give you some plums?" "Look, lady, I'm allergic to the damn things; besides, I don't like them." "Neither do I. Tell you what. I'll make you a deal. If you take this bag of plums I'll pay you.") I'm not known for my hard-sell technique.

The other alternative is to make jam. I do hope that <u>all</u> our friends like plum jam. And that all the people we don't much care for hate the stuff. Because EVERYONE I can think of is going to get jam this year.

You don't know what goes into making jam. (Even if you do make jam, you really can't picture the true glory of Marcia making jam. I have this certain flair.) First I come home from work exhausted. (I think this is the most important part -- otherwise I can't explain why, when I eat jam maybe four times a year, that I would be compelled to use this extraneous fruit. It's not that I abhor waste. No one would accuse me of that. It's just that I don't understand this compulsion.)

After coming home and before making myself a nice refreshing (and alcoholic) drink I go out and pick up all the plums, carefully sorting them into two batches: those I can palm off on people and those which are destined for the jam pot. So far the ratio seems to be about half and half, but I'm beginning to think I'm too particular about the ones that go to work. This is not a trivial undertaking. I don't like being outside (the one exception to that being the beach at night), and I don't much care for heat. And, aside from that, plums attract all kinds of insects. Especially wasps. I don't like wasps. I'm not too crazy about the other insects, either.

After bringing in the plums the fun begins. Have you ever bathed your hands in vine-gar? After pitting many pounds of plums that's exactly what you feel like you've been doing. It's fortunate that I'm not crazy enough to peel all of them, too.

After pitting all the bloody things (and incidentally spilling plum juice all over the kitchen floor) you start to cook the mess. Cooking seems to take on the order of about one and half hours. During this time I am unable to relax and continually visit the kitchen to stir the pot. Meanwhile the pot bubbles. In fact, the pot bubbleth over. Over the stove and the floor and the person stirring the pot.

I have a jam-making dress. It used to be blue and white. Now it's pink.

Finally, it's over. The jam is really jam. You know this because it sticks to everything, everywhere. The house reeks of it. (And I never did care for plums much.) The happy glow of accomplishment is present. Until I look outside and see all the fruit which has fallen. Sigh.

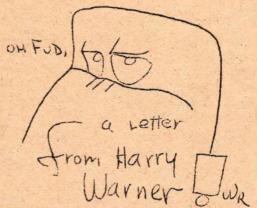
_	1	-	7 .7.	. 7	
I	nope	you	like	plum	Jam.

Bob sometimes gets plumb tuckered out.

HARRY MARKER, JR. - 423 SUMMIT AVENUE, HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND 2174U

My surgeon likes to provide the little surprises that you experienced on the second vinyl table. My most vivid memory is his unexpected behavior the time I was in traction with a broken hip and suffering from an impacted bowel.

But your philosophizing on pain brings to mind something that has been nagging at my thoughts. For about ten years, I was plagued each winter by sinus attacks, not the nasty headaches that generally come from sinus problems, but a



vicious, frightening stabbing behind one eye that came on suddenly, usually around dawn, made me absolutely helpless while it lasted, and gave me the certainty that I had a brain tumor until after about six years I realized I was still alive. The only thing that brought relief were green pills my doctor prescribed for me. They took about twenty minutes to act, and then they killed the pain within three or four minutes. I was horrified one day to find myself wondering when I would get another sinus spell, after a reprieve of several days. All of a sudden I was half-wishing another would come, because there was nothing else in my way of life that was comparable with the wonderful sensation as I could feel that stabbing losing strength, gradually growing less painful, finally vanishing altogether. Since I am the worrying type, I next started to fear that I was getting hooked on whatever is in the pills. Then I got an unusually mild attack, hardly noticeable, took the prescribed two pills anyway to see if they were giving me a high, and I felt nothing at all, no good sensations, no happiness, because the pain hadn't been severe enough that time. For the past three years, I haven't had this winter problem and I've forgotten that sensation of release from pain sufficiently that I don't miss the lack of moments when severe pain goes away. So now I'm wondering if there isn't an important message in this: to the effect that religious people might be justified when they claim that all the awful things that happen in life are compensated for by transition to a hereafter. [1]

I can't compare any of my bad years with your bad year or 1977 for the simple reason that I don't have bad years. I'm having a bad century. And I can't think of any songs to add to your list, except the one which I'm surprised you didn't include, the old Bea Lillie smash hit, THERE ARE FAIRIES AT THE BOTTOM. I share your admiration for Beverly Kanter's little article, which I well remember having read before. I also feel much as you do about cons being too much of a good thing on occasion, although my reasons for feeling that way must be different from yours. (I covered so many mundane cons as part of my newspaper job that a fannish con reminds me of work, tobacco smoke is something I'm less and less able to tolerate as time passes, the insurance on this house lapses if I'm away from it for more than 72 hours, and so on.) It is rather surprising to find Jackie mimeographing such heretical statements, however, when I think back on her unparalleled feats of congoing during the past few years. [2]

- [1] Don't think so. I'm with George Carlin: I believe that when you die your soul goes to a garage in Bakersfield.
- [2] Jackie has been exposed to my opinions on such things since we first began corresponding back in 1972. I would find it hard to believe that she might be surprised at something I would print in a fanzine; certainly not on that subject, anyway. What surprises me, however, is this insurance policy you have which expires if you leave the house for more than 72 hours. Can't you afford a policy which provides a little more extensive coverage than that...? It occurs to me that your agent must limit the number of such policies in effect at any one time, or he'd be spending too much time on surveillance...

Apies like to monkey around.

# TINA HEISEL JOHES -- 335 WEST 6TH STREET, AZUSA, CALIFORNIA 91702

After spending several years (yes, really. I'm a slow reader) perusing Dave Locke arkles about pain, I have come to a rather startling conclusion. You won't believe this, but pain is funny.

It wasn't until I realized that it was physically impossible to read Dave's pain stories without a BIG bowl of popcorn that I made the connection: silent movies with pratfalls, bananas and banana peels, and Dave Locke's pain all require popcorn to be properly appreciated. Ergo, pain (at least Dave's pain) must be absolutely hilarious.

But I like bed stories better. Possibly this is because I have an evil mind, but I like to think it's because there's something inherently ridiculous about beds. Remember THE NIGHT THE BED FELL?

Anyhoo, Ed and I bought a bed. Boy, did we ever buy a bed. It seems that the Jones', of keeping-up-with fame, nourished a secret desire to snooze upon a layer of liquid. So they purchased a water bed.

I want to tell you: what you see is not what you get. We saw a beautiful, well polished, soft and sloshy piece of "bedroom decor." What we got was an assemblage of boards, screws, vinyl and plywood.

Undeterred, we took it home and began assembling (all the while carefully reading the directions). Hours later we finished filling the mattress. "Okay, that's it. Gimme the plug."

"Plug," I murmured. "What plug? What does it say in the directions?" We both reread the Liberty Mattress Company's clear-as-mud directions. "It doesn't say anything about a plug. Maybe you're supposed to let it breathe," I suggested.

"Try sitting on it." Ed unhooked the hose and regarded the mattress hopefully.

Gouts of algicide-treated water gushed forth.

"It's not supposed to do that." Ed stuffed the hose back in.

"Well, maybe it is. After all, there's that vinyl insert between the mattress and

the frame," I pointed out.

"Get me the plug!" Ed ordered.

Ever hopeful, I pawed through assorted waterbed wrappings. "It's not here."

So I called the store. "I know this is going to sound like a dumb question," I sighed, "but we bought a water bed from you, and I was wondering: isn't there supposed to be a plug?"

"Plug?" Bedrooms, Inc. murmurred in plummy tones. "What model is it?" Since I happened to be sitting on the cardboard carton it was an easy matter to rattle off the serial number. Dead silence. Then Bedrooms, Inc. spoke in scandalized accents: "Don't you have one? There should be a little white jobbie that screws on. Are you sure you haven't overlooked it?"

Clutching the phone twixt shoulder and ear I pawed through the trash again. "No, it's not here."

"Well, you'll have to come down and get one," Bedrooms, Inc. huffed. "All the water runs out, you know."

So, we got the plug, turned on the heater, and made the bed. Did you know that not all floors are level? I didn't.

It seems that if you are one of the unfortunate folks that possess water beds and floors that are more than three inches off level, all the water sloshes over to one side, forming a giant pimple.

I got in bed first. The mattress seemed firm, but quite comfortable. Then Ed got in. My neck and head were fine, because the pillow offset some of the swell, but from the shoulders down it was pure misery. "Wanna switch sides?" I suggested.

"What for? You've been sleeping over there for 3½ years," Ed groused, half-asleep.

"I'd like to try the other side for a change. Do you mind?" I think I whined a little.

"Alright," Ed sighed as I gratefully leapt out of bed. He slurshed on over and disposed himself. "King-size," he gloated. "At last I can stretch out."

"It's so neat," he blissed, as I crawled back into bed. Then: "What the hell is that?" he snarled, sitting up. "Now I know why you wanted to switch. There's a goddamn lump in the goddamn middle of the fucking bed."

"Yes," I agreed. "But it's not nearly as bad as it was. Honest," I soothed.
"Think about it scientifically. My weight is less than yours, so I'm not displacing as much water and forcing it over on your side." I settled down to the most comfortable sleep of my life.

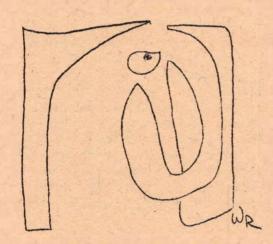
We ended up letting out about 25 gallons of H2O, and now there's only a gentle swell on one side of the bed. Of course, if only one person tries to lie down his ass hits the plywood pedestal base.

Believing that everything is for the best and that, like Job, we suffer for a purpose, I looked for the bright side and silver lining. Sure enough, I found it. Talk about a money-making proposition. I'm going to start a Marriage Clinic.

I'll start by looking for a lopsided motel. I figure partially filled water beds and sloping floors will solve the problems of the world. After all, no matter how mad you may be, ain't no way a quarreling couple can avoid going to bed with one another. Unless, of course, one is a masochist and likes having his ass against the plywood.

Club fans like to get right down to business.

# ED CAGLE -- STAR ROUTE SOUTH, BOX 80, LOCUST GROVE, OKLAHOMA 74352



Stole an illo from me, didn't you, turkey? [1]

Goddam chickenshit yaller paper... [2]

Great story about the drunken couple on your flight East. It reminded me of a stag party I attended long ago. About 500 of us were drunkenly assembling for the cunt show (to be precise), and a well-dressed, immaculately groomed, apparently half-sober gentleman of latin extraction was wending his patient way through the seated drunks toward his own seat near the rear of the throng. Suddenly he stumbled, but caught himself with a marvelous exhibition of Laurel and Hardy gymnastics. The crowd rewarded him with a moderate guffaw, to which he responded in a booming voice: "WATCH OUT FOR THE DRUNKEN MEXICAN!" He

then took three graceful steps and fell flat on his ass, out for the night.

The OSBI caught the alleged girl scout killer the other day, some 30 miles from here. He was being sheltered by an old Cherokee who is one of our 'foresters' (raises pine seedlings). Naturally the benefactor was jailed for aiding and abetting, and when asked why he harbored the fugitive he said, "Because he didn't do it." Of all the possible reactions the old man could have tendered, you gotta stop and think about him giving that one.

Last weekend approximately four feet of young boy walked up to me carrying approximately three and one half feet of exceedingly angry copperhead by the tail. He asked "What kind is it" and I said "Drop it!" The dreaded Drop It snake...

Neighbor Curt and I were butchering a dozen tame rabbits one evening last week, while his extremely old hound stood nearby devouring the guts and feet and heads as soon as they hit the ground. The old dog was not falling behind, and Curt and I are PDQ at such pursuits. In the process a dressed carcass fell off the table, right in front of Old Red. Curt and I watched in fascination as Old Red gently picked up the carcass and, instead of gobbling it like he had been the rest of the offal, put it aside and went back to his previous activity. This is either a demonstration of superior training or an expression of taste that may bear second thoughts. Of all the carnivores, only homo sap doesn't eat the guts first.

Well, actually my wife has some relatives that might, but...

"Word" reached me yesterday that soon I will host 60-odd (probably very odd) cub scout leaders. The ratio in cubbing is 2 to 1 women ... so ... I was requested to add temporary facilities to the tune of some \$1,500. That's for the additional plumbing alone, and that's only for the cost of the fittings. Jesus freaking christ. I say if we gotta work and camp together we should shit together. What a load of old codswallop. [3]

### Concoms like lots of meetings.

- [1] You know, a couple of years ago when you sent me that stash of KWALHIOQUAS, I really admired that illo. So I traced it out, inked it in, filed it away for possible future use, and reminded myself to talk with you about it the next time I wrote. I wrote to you about 30 times before deciding that illo would look good on the title page of THE WORKS, at which time I reminded myself that I should write to you about this. When I tipped my copy of the illo into the paste-up, prior to electrostencilling, I was concerned with myself that I should hit you with the formality of getting an ok to use this and additionally to get the artist's name and address. After I mailed the issue off it came to me that I wouldn't have to hold onto this one extra copy of THE WORKS if I could remember to ask (in a letter or tape) for an address to mail it to. And now that we've sent several such communications in your direction (and even visited your home) without my remembering to do this little thing, I find myself in the position of having to deal with the subject right here in this mass-market publication. I'm embarassed, I really am. Ed, what is this person's fucking address?
- [2] I believe that "goldenrod" is the precise name for that color of paper. I'm sorry I forgot to talk with you about that illo...
- [3] Somewhere I read that when Civilization came to Japan, it demanded that men and women not approach a restroom door as though they were walking into a party together. The Japanese hurriedly tried to please the apparent face value of this request by providing men and women with separate doors which led into the same shithouse. Must have puzzled them fiercely as to why they should have been so intimidated as to do such a crazy thing. I'll bet they still haven't figured it out.

"Chess fans make better mates." - Dean Grennell

# GARY BROWN -- 9423 SW 76TH STREET WILL, MIAMI, FLORIDA 33173

Your experience with the drunken couple onboard your homeward flight is not, as I hear it, an uncommon occurance. People get loaded to the gills regularly due to fear of flying; availability of free/cheap liquor or for want of anything else to do 33,000 feet in the air. Especially long, long flights usually have a few stumble off never to be heard from again. So much, in fact, that I understand there is a serious problem in this regard. Future flights will probably include AA literature in the seat pockets.

Your plane story, however, reminds me of a great tale involving Allen Funt of CANDID CAMERA. About a year ago he was on a flight from Chicago to Los Angeles when the man across the aisle from him recognized him and commented on how much he enjoyed watching his show. Funt thanked the man and went about his business (most likely getting loaded with the rest of the passengers). A few minutes later a man stood up, pulled out a gun and announced he was hijacking the plane. The stewardess was used as a hostage as the man forced his way into the pilot's cabin. Everyone was silent, when suddenly this man sitting across from Funt stood up and declared that Allen Funt was onboard and this was all obviously a Candid Camera gag. The rest of the plane sighed in relief as Funt started getting nervous. He tried to explain to the man that this was not a Candid Camera gag and that the guy was serious. In fact, if this didn't stop he would probably get the plane in more trouble. Everyone began laughing even harder and Funt was befuddled. At the sound of the laughter the hijacker stuck his head out the cabin door and wanted to know what was going on. After being told, he too tried to convince the passengers that this was indeed a very REAL hijacking. His hard-as-nails speech brought roars of laughter from the passengers. He retreated back into the cabin and after several hours was taken into custody, a harmless man with mental problems. Nonetheless, this was possibly the best Candid Camera gag ever -- it even had Funt convinced.

As you'll undoubtedly be told more than once, the Bill Stafford song MY GIRL BILL is not a gay love song. Stafford, who had hits with SPIDERS AND SNAKES and the delightful WILDWOOD WEED, is a tongue-in-cheek songwriter who used the MY GIRL BILL ploy to sell a lot of records. The song is a well-written piece which ends up purely as a conversation between two men who love the same girl. "She's my girl, Bill." Bill ends up a loser in the song -- probably from both ends.

Then there is Jimmy Buffett's line in CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE which goes something like: "Not zuccini, fetachini or bulgar wheat, but a big warm bun and a huge hunk of meat." What was it that Peter, Paul and Mary said about laying it between the lines?

Fanzines are a bitch to store, aren't they? You can't set them up like paperback or hardback books, and rarely are there enough issues of one title to merit piling them in distinct piles on a shelf. You sort of have to put them in a hit n' miss fashion and hope you'll never have to look a certain issue up. [1]

I enjoyed THE GOODBYE GIRL quite a bit myself. You are right about them being unlike normal people, but if they had been less than exceptional it would have made for a pretty dull film. Besides, I feel that such a situation (as most of Simon's situations) would bring the "best" out in a person. Verbal dueling, when done right, can be enjoyable. I thought THE GOODBYE GIRL was done right. [2]

I once dated one of those meter maid girls who drive around in those mailman carts putting chalk marks on tires and giving out parking tickets. She told me that sometimes at the end of the day she would need four or five tickets yet to meet her quota, so she'd stick them on any old car. They always paid the fine she said. Maybe she moved to California? I stopped seeing her after our second date -- I let the time run out on my meter and she gave me a ticket. Claimed she'd get an early start for the next day. I paid it, too.

Monster movie	busss	like	to	see it	done	in	Tokyo.
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- [1] I find it easy to store fanzines. I have handy recepticles all over the apartment.
- [2] I agree that THE GOODBYE GIRL was "done right." It's merely a byproduct of this effort which resulted in the characters being stylized. To have made them a couple of real people would have required a whole different approach to the scripting.



Appreciated your recent agonies of moving. We haven't recently, but did just get done painting. Don't know which is worse. At least when you're moving you have boxes or such to shift the stuff and junk into. When painting, it has to just get set down "elsewhere" for the duration. Which in Kent's case may take a while ... he is usually an energetic sort, but it takes his spirit a long time to move him to paint. He had me strip the walls and counters in the kitchen and master bath on a Sunday; it was the next Saturday before he actually put roller to wall. Have you ever tried to cook and/or perform your daily ablutions (got that from fancy English novels) with not one square inch of counter space? I do not recommend it.

Would you commission an arkle on someone else's pain? I recently took up ballet at my advanced age. Now there's pain!! Fifteen or twenty overage, overweight women in leotards, pretending they're eight years old, is a sight to behold. Fortunately, it is the only class the studio does not permit to be visited by civilians, as we can in our kids' classes.

When I first started classes, about six weeks ago, I felt and no doubt looked like a water buffalo; now I have progressed to the state of feeling and looking like a jackass (or jenny, for you sticklers). However, if you want to firm up your 30+ bod, and get quite a glow of accomplishment, I strongly recommend ballet. If you survive you'll look and feel better, and the ol'ego gets a boost for attempting and at least half-doing something so utterly ridiculous. [1]

Re: STAR WARS. Doggone it, Dave ... you were still looking for some innovation or message, or important insight on the human condition, or something'. You scifi purists miss a helluva lot of FUN... Besides, Harrison Ford is sexy, but perhaps that

wouldn't appeal to you. The droids were cute, Carrie Fisher is pretty, Mark Hamil is sweet, Alec Guinness is superb, and the villains were villainous. Now I ask you, what more could you want? Aside from some nit-picky details about technology, weren't the effects fantastic ... I mean the execution of same? Damn! Just fell through my soapbox... [2]

Re: CE3K. Believe it or not, will wonders never cease, and golly gee -- I agree with your evaluations 100%. Loved the thing right up to the last twenty minutes or so. I think, since the creatures really didn't have any particular part to play in the plot, their appearance should have been left to one's own imagination. Why force on man's (or a few ... and they may have been women) conception of extraterrestrials on us. Personally, I had a much more exciting and intriguing picture of them until the white silly-putties showed up. And, it got awfully heavy at the end with mysticisms and symbolisms and all kinds of isms. You gotta admit, STAR WARS may have been vapid, in your opinion, but at least it was consistent. Technically, in every way it was a superior movie. [3]

I know the zine was addressed to both Kent and me, but if I do all the correspondence, dammit, my name goes on the letter. He hasn't set pen to paper since he came home from Viet  $\overline{N}$ am, except to write his brother when  $\underline{he}$  was there. He reads incoming mail, sometimes, but never answers any. So there! [4]

# Drinking fans require bonding.

- [1] You've got more guts than I, Gunga Din, and let me hasten to point out that I mean this in the sense that I lack the fortitude to get involved in such a thing as exercise. Luckily my old bod is in fairly decent shape (great shape compared to the way I let it go for so many years), and I add to this the rationalization that I should try to be a type of person who isn't difficult to please...
- [2] Nice try, Becky!
- [3] You're right: we do agree.
- [4] Right. But, shit, I haven't the heart to strike old "Garbage Gut's" name from the mailing label. The poor bastard has a great capacity for amusing me with his sparkling wit, his native good humor, and the worst fucking puns I've ever heard anywhere except from Grennell. Plus the fact that he reads this zine and, on occasion, probably even snorts in the proper places (I hope this doesn't result in your house appearing untidy; it's long been my contention that people should snort at home, where they need to). And, Kent, congratulations on getting rid of all that weight! I think It's great that you finally talked Becky into taking ballet. And congratulations on your own weight loss, as well!

#### I think I'm in a lot of trouble...

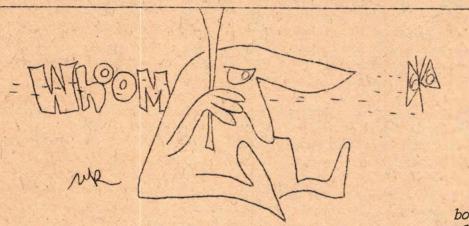
One thing that I editted out of Becky's letter, and which I'll put on stencil right here, is a line which reads: "With all due apologies for the split infinitives above ... poor devils." Why apologize? It might tell you where I'm at if I confess my limited awareness that a split infinitive is something frowned upon with reference to English Grammar, a subject to which I applied a lack of Interest, and subseqently failed, when in high school. It even makes me feel Ignorant when some-

one tells me I have a split infinitive, because I can't avoid instinctively checking to see if I've ripped the crotch out of my trousers.

So don't nobody apologize for grammar...

Scrabble players use a lot of words.

## DAVE PIPER -- 7 CRANLEY DRIVE, RUISLIP, MIDDLESEX HAY GBZ, ENGLAND



When I was in Cyprus
I used to frequent,
when I got browned
doing it meself, a
small select establishment comprising
a small "dance" floor
around which were
placed small round
tables and at which
sat specimens of the
Local Talent. For a five
bob note you could get a
real exciting wrist-job.

Under the table. Whilst the

talen slurped her whiskey-sour for which you also had to shell out. Romance-wise, I guess, it left something to be desired.

And that, up until last week, was my total experience of stag/strip/you-name-it-type activity. One of me mates phoned up and said he had some spare tickets (@ 3 quid a go) for a stag show. And would I like to come? (I don't think he meant that!) My original reaction was to turn it down but then I thought "stuff it. Why not? I might just as well go one time." So I did. We did. We had a few beers and then poodled into the hall. I'd been getting quite excited all day and had visions of tits in me beer, fanny in me face, and all like that! So I grabbed a seat right at the front and settled down in a high state of anticipation. With me hand in me pocket!

A "comedian" came on whose sole line of patter seemed to comprise calling everybody in the audience a "fucking cunt" and complaining about the sexual activity of his wife. Real original, y'know.

A second ditto came on who was slightly funnier. He had one joke that he seemed to repeat. I can't remember it.

We then broke for refills and chicken 'n chips, and after that a third geezer came on whose act consisted of talking the piss out of members of the audience who got up to go and have a slash whilst he was on. We then broke for more refills and the second bloke returned. He thanked us for being a good audience, hoped we'd enjoyed it, announced that the stripper hadn't turned up, and said goodnight. I couldn't believe it!!!

So that's what I've been doing lately ... not seeing naked ladies. \*sniff\*

## Stencil cutters like to make a good impression

DAVE HULAI -- 3313 SOUTH PARK DRIVE, SANTA ANA, CALIFORNIA 92707



Ok, I won't say anything about how I liked or disliked THE WORKS, though I'd of course like to stay on your ML (but rather assume I would whether I wrote or not ... I still have that copy of ALTAIR #1. don't forget). [1]

On the other hand, thinking of something interesting to say isn't always easy. But I recollect a couple of idly-dropped sentences over at the Atkins' last week, and thought I might natter on along those lines for a page or so, for whatever it may be worth.

The remark in question was when you asked me some-

thing about when I was going to get off the dime on PELF and I said "No telling; right now I'm too busy with Creative Writing," and you sort of remarked to all and sundry, "Yeah, Dave doesn't think fanzines are creative writing."

From that we passed on to other things -- I think someone arrived with food at that time or something -- but I did remember it, and have given the idea some thought since then. And strictly speaking, it isn't true; it's not that I don't consider fanzines creative writing, necessarily, but only that I don't consider my own fanzine work creative writing.

There are quite a few people I know of in fandom -- you're one, Lon's another -- who do, at least fairly often, put a good deal of creative effort into their fan writing. That's great, if you get your kicks that way, and I enjoy reading that kind of fan work, even though I tend to think of it as a relatively uneconomical practice. I'd be the last to try to discourage anyone from writing for a market that comes to me free, and switch to something that I'd have to pay for. (Of course, there are plenty of fanzines that would cost me more per worthwhile item than most professional publications, if I got them, but I don't get that kind of fanzine. And if anyone I had any influence with -- assuming I had any influence with anyone -- spent much effort writing for fanzines that were available only for money, I'd probably try to discourage them from it. But so far I haven't been aware of such people, if there are any. Most of the money-only zines seem to be sercon, Trekkie, or comics zines, and I'm not interested in any of those even when they're well-done of their kind.)

For my own part, however, I just can't see it. I would no more spend a lot of creative effort on something for a fanzine than I would preparing for a conversation at a party. Sure, when I'm talking to people at parties I try to be interesting, clever, witty, or at least not boring, and when I'm writing for a fanzine I try to do the same thing. Writing for a fanzine, as I'm doing now, involves sticking a piece of paper in a typewriter and rattling off whatever is on my mind at the moment. I think I have a reasonably coherent mind, and a reasonable facility with the language, and so what I write usually (if by no means always) expresses what I want to express, but if I miss -- so nu? At worst, I don't get my letter or article published -which, since it didn't take any particular effort, is no loss. I like to write, and would do it anyhow just to collect my own thoughts on paper (it helps their coherence to see them that way sometimes); if faneds think their readers would be interested by them, that's fine, and if they don't, I've still accomplished my major purpose.

In some sense, of course, all writing is creative -- at least, anything short of maybe organizing some kind of table of statistics from one format fixed by someone else into another one, also fixed by someone else. But when I talk of "creative writing", at least with reference to myself, I mean something that I've decided to put a fair amount of effort into. And I do that only for things that I think I can sell.

That's not strictly fair. I might do it if I wanted some other return, like defending my reputation or something of the sort. But not simply to garner the small additional egoboo available for writing as well as I can instead of as well as I can without trying hard. I'm not, for one thing, entirely convinced that it makes much difference; I get as much egoboo from things I toss off the top of my head as things I work fairly hard on, usually, although this may just mean that no matter how hard I try, I can't exceed a certain level. There have been times when I've put a good bit of effort into a fan piece (though the last time was a goodly while back), yet the two items I've written that have gotten the most egoboo were "Of Worms and Unicorns", a top-of-the-head review I did to fill a few pages of PELF #4 and that was later reprinted in AMRA and THE CONAN GRIMOIRE (my one real professional sale so far), and "Booze I Have Known", again something I did to fill up a few pages of my first Stobzine when there wasn't a mailing to do MCs on, that was reprinted in AWRY and then in FANTHOLOGY '75. Some of the things I've put a lot more work into sank without a trace. (It's interesting in its own way that those items were both reprinted in zines with considerably larger circulations than the one I wrote them for, and then further reprinted from those zines; it may be that I could get more egoboo if I directed my writing elsewhere instead of doing it mostly for my own apazines. I know, you've been trying to tell me that for years. But when I have done things for genzines, they haven't by and large been all that well received. seem to do best if someone else picks up something I write for an apazine or smallcirculation personalzine and reprints it.)

Probably I ought to have saved this for my next PELF editorial or something, if I ever do another issue of PELF. (I will, I will -- but not till I've got the current novel finished and in shape to start on the rounds. Say maybe this summer...) But you wanted a letter, and this is the only thing I can think of that I felt like writing about and thought you might be interested in printing. [2]

## Sturgeon fans like IT

[1] Whether or not you have a copy of that very early fanzine of mine says nothing toward your name's status on my mailing list. However, if you wind up not having a copy of it and if the reason you don't is not because you decide to pass it along to me, then that would say much toward the future status of your health. Marcia wouldn't be able to protect you forever...

[2] And I've printed every word. Obviously your thoughts were correct on the subject of what I might find to be interesting; and come to think of it they should be, after all these years.

What you've said here is a fine statement on where you personally stand with regard to the amount of effort that can be plowed into fanwriting. Your comment that "I would no more spend a lot of creative effort on something for a fanzine than I would preparing for a conversation at a party" is actually the key to understanding where

your feelings come from. I believe this is how a goodly number of fans approach their fanwriting. Until just a couple of years ago that was basically the way that I approached my own written efforts. I would never state that there's anything wrong with this. I do, however, possess a somewhat different viewpoint now, and I'd like to explore that for a bit.

When one considers the value of the medium (fanzines), and the purpose behind a specific piece of fanwriting which is directed to that medium (communication, therapy, fellowship, experimentation with wordsmithing, or just a way to kill time), together with one's ability with regard to the quality of their writing (some people should rewrite their material even if they're only doing a grocery list, whereas others can seemingly make only insignificant improvements to a first draft), they have all the factors necessary to tell them how much effort they should expend on a particular piece of fanwriting.

For example, I would spend only a negligible amount of time rewriting something that was aimed at an apazine. The print run is small, my purpose in a apa is to communicate, and I can manage to get my thoughts in order on a first pass with little more than minor touchup being required before transferring the material to stencil. Sometimes I do apazines directly on stencil, and to hell with the touchup. Depends on how I feel when I first approach doing an apazine, and whether or not I plan to get heavily into a topic.

When I'm writing a fanarkle I look at things a trifle differently. A genzine has a larger distribution than an apazine. My purpose in writing an article is more to entertain (myself, and the readers) and to experiment with my wordsmithing than it is to merely communicate. How I say something becomes at least equally as important as what it is that I'm saying, and this juggling of style and content dictates that I either put some effort into rewriting this kind of material or be satisfied that my output will yield many more turkeys. Since I do not possess the first-draft talents of a Dean Grennell (for example), and because I'm quite heavily into the kind of fanwriting where the quality of the wordsmithing either makes or breaks what I'm dolng, I rewrite.

It hasn't always been so. Until a couple of years ago I rewrote nothing. Then one day I rewrote an article and bodily lifted it from garbage to mediocrity. Then I rewrote it again, accomplishing little but enjoying the process. In a column that I wrote for Jackie's fanzine I stated: "Having eventually grasped the concept that a major advantage in using the written communications medium is the capacity to diddle around with words until one is reasonably pleased with the way they hang together, I now find myself less than satisfied when letting anything other than correspondence leave my hands without having been diddled." I rewrote that line at least six times... I'm still not totally thrilled with it, but it does say that I now have more interest in the pure mechanics of writing and enjoy writing for its own sake more than ever before. I'm on an interesting learning curve and this provides much of the impetus to actually sit down and write something, especially in those instances where the other reasons for writing do not weigh very heavily on me.

In case none of this seems even vaguely close to the response you looked at when you were over here one day, it's probably because l've rewritten it...

- 2	Vitto	users	have a	colorful	approach.	te .	



ERIC PAYER -- 175 CONGRESS ST. 15F, BROOKLYN, LEW YORK 11201

Naturally any story about the incompetance of a utility interests me (they're lousy in MONOPOLY, too). Getting bills from Con Ed is like getting mugged every month. But Kathy and I have recently got back at The Phone Company. They turned our phone off for nonpayment for a few months. But about a week after the turn off -- while messing around with the wires outside our apartment, they turned the phone back on for outgoing calls. So throughout the period of disconnection we had free long distance. Ha! These are the sorts of things that keep me going in this city. Coming from the country the lack of privacy you have in an apartment drives me up the wall.

If two people are going to stay together it seems to me that there has to be some overlap of taste-but enough differences to keep things interesting. Unfortunately, perhaps, the interests I have in common with fans -- as a whole -- i.e. SF/fandom/writing is where Kathy and I differ.

I keep trying to introduce her to SF. No use. She prefers Jane Austen or Thomas Hardy or even -- gag

-- George Sand. I try to see her point of view: "Well," I say, "I like Hardy's ideas but his style is a bit much." "Oh," she replies, "but that's what I like." Interesting.

Trouble is, her reasons for not liking SF are excellent. She was sickened by Delany's pretentiousness years before he wrote DULLGREN. And she only read the first page of OPHIUCHI HOTLINE before describing it, accurately I thought after wading through it all, as phoney, shallow and ridiculous. She seems to think a lot of SF writers pretend to be better writers than they are. Maybe so. [Would you disagree with that?]

Of course we do both like mysteries and someday I'm going to convince her that a blood dripping knife is just as ridiculous a cover as a BEM.

What we both do like is rock music -- especially nowadays with new wave/punk. Refreshing energy.

My ideas about fandom are maybe similar to yours in that I definitely consider myself a "mundane" who enjoys fandom as a hobby. But then, is there anyone who really considers himself a FAN except when he's fanning?

Yes, by Degler, and there are lots of them. In fact, I'm living with one.

Most people have at least a touch of the herd instinct in them, and like to find a group they can identify with. If that group is large and diverse enough to offer itself as a substitute to the more standard lifestyle of multi-group dilettantism,

there will always be people who will opt to devote all divertable energies to just the one group. Thus, fandom can be a way of life and can act as a badge behind which one confronts the rest of society.

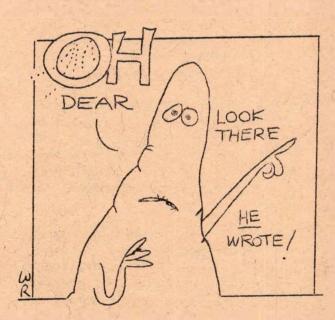
Fandom is hardly unique in this aspect, but it does have the saving grace of not being so inbred that conversations would deal mainly with the tools of the trade (as is the case with CB and ham-radio fandom), nor is it unnecessarily tied in too closely with its origins (science fiction does not permeate it as a basis for existence the way that chess and stamps are all-important to chess fandom and philately groups). Science fiction fans who treat fandom as a way of life generally do so from the presumption that they are, for the most part, like-minded individuals, which gives them more leeway for interaction than a fandom which rallies around a specific interest.

Of course, people who treat fandom as a way of life have a tendency to believe that they are more clever and intelligent than most of the people whom they would categorize as "mundanes"/"non-fans". For some reason they do not find this belief at odds with the oft-mentioned fact that most of them had socially awkward backgrounds and, indeed, that many of them do not possess the wherewithal to cope even reasonably well in those non-fan social situations which the world thrusts at them from time to time. To someone like me the self-image of the average FIAWOLEr appears to be one of inferior superiorism, if that makes any sense. I envision a person who believes they could go and turn the universe on its ear if only they could figure out how to tie their shoelaces.

In truth, FIAWOLers come in all shapes and sizes and capacities. I am not mentally or emotionally attuned to very many of them, though I like several and love one.

Has any of this drivvel been enlightening to you?

Costume fans like to get it on.



## ANDY OFFUTT -- FUNNY FARM, HALDEMAN, KENTUCKY 40329

I read every word at 17,000 feet enroute to New York. People leave one the hell alone when one reads a weird-looking Thing on yaller paper with weirder line drawings. Matter of fact, they not only leave one alone, they cringe away.

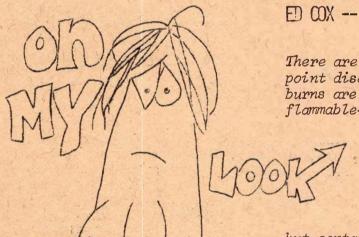
This is being written at 17,000 feet, too. No, lower; we're coming in to Pittsburgh. There went the bell. Here goes the cigarette. Here come the wiggleshakes. I've had some interesting flights, Dave, but never such as yours. The stewards really let that couple get drunk? And you didn't tape the aged woman's gamie narrative?

I think I'm with you in being a mundane many of whose friends and interests are in fandom. (Well, that's almost what you said.) I can get overdoses. I think I did once, at WilCon, and so haven't gone again. If you can be bugged, and can get tired of some people, or many people (and/or the Loudies & the Toxic Personalities) pretty swiftly, I'd recommend MidWestCon and skip WilCon. I believe Jackie can "handle" such as WilCon better; so can Jodie. Maybe we should pack them both off for the Stopas', after MWC in Cincy, whilst you return home with me. There's plenty of room, and we're getting this groovy daybed from some people in California...

Your letter arrived a mite too late to be used as input, but I did decide to take in MWC and skip WilCon. I was idly contemplating doing just the reverse in 1979, but now I'll think on that again.

I'm not certain that "Loudies" and "Toxic Personalities" serves well to describe the type of people I was referring to. I'd call it a bit off the mark. That fits a few of them, though.

Fantasy writers make you wonder if it really happened.



### ED COX -- 14524 FILMORE STREET, ARLETA, CALIFORNIA 91331

There are other pain stories. Like the pinpoint discomfort of skinned elbows. Friction burns are possibly as painful as the other, flammable-based type. I get these at times in

the night where a quick but careful shifting of position, or adjusting thereto, requires logistical shiftings that cause the elbows to move rapidly across the sheet, thereby causing what the next morning reveals as a sort of burn. Painful

but certainly not noticed in the -- uh -- heat of acquisition. Or something like that.

One might hope and expect that the general public does not recognize them for what they are, or from which they are accrued. Much like why one, if one removed tee-shirt while mowing the front lawn during a hot San Inferno Valley day, suddenly realizes that there are scratches along ones shoulder-blades in multiple furrows. I hastily redonned said tee-shirt upon realizing this one summer... And pinned her hands down to the mattress in subsequent evenings.

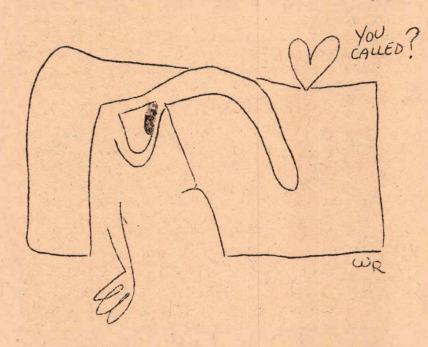
And one night when in a long stint of cooperative effort with a young lady, I found myself on my back while she assumed a controlling position which gave her the utmost freedom to utilize me to the fullest extent, which of course gave me great altruistic satisfaction of Helping A Fellow, if Opposite Gendre, Human in Their Endeavor, and my goddam foot got this Charlie-Horse of the most unbearable kind. It was like somebody slipped a hot boulder under the skin of the arch of my foot. But I couldn't move or dare to think to otherwise deter a great progression that was taking place and with, if you will pardon the expression, with Mixed Feelings, endured through a progression

of sensation, the equal of which I have not yet again experienced. You might say that I came through that experience with the same end observation as the young girl who rode her bicycle through a muddy, pot-holed shortcut and vowed never to come that way again...

If you're bothered by friction burns on your elbows, you might possibly give consideration to changing your style... I have never in my life gotten friction burns on my elbows, but one time I did manage to get a case of frostbite on my nuts. It's a long story, and you are spared the telling of it. Cherish the fact.

Hearts players like to plot for someone else to get it.

## RICHARD BRAIDT -- 4013 SIERRA DRIVE, MOBILE, ALABAMA 36609



Am now separated from the first girl who didn't drop me when I didn't want her to, or when I wanted to drop her. If you can't decipher the syntax there, it means there's a girl in Colorado whose company I prefer to my own, but we are presently restrained by the mere inconvenience of 800 miles or so.

A couple of weeks ago, we unexpectedly got married. Seems Jo (that's her name, Jo -- this ain't one of them thar fag songs, son), well, I was saying, Jo was explaining an odd common law statute in the state of Texas, where-

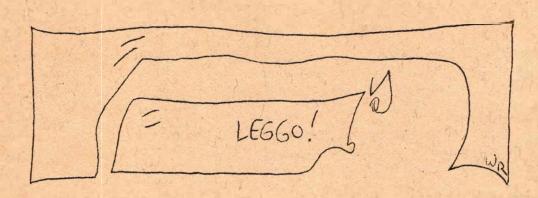
by all that is necessary for a couple to be legally married is for the man to say she is his wife, and the woman to say he is her hubby.

Unfortunately, Jo made a mistake in grammar, and on correcting herself, left off a qualifier. Instead of saying "If I say, he's my husband," she said, "He's my husband." The opportunity was too good to pass up.

This process requires witnesses, and since two fellow students, a programs and services staffer, and a security guard were present at my declaration, Jo and I became legally married in the state of Texas. But, the ceremony isn't binding outside state lines, and I think we may now be legally separated. In any case, Jo keeps screaming about a divorce.

It was still worth it, because Jo was the first person to promise to take me seriously. Not about the marriage, though, which was too bad. (Oddly enough, most folks in Texas don't seem aware of this statute, though they do know that a couple is legally married if they ever register at a hotel as man and wife...).

LON ATKINS -- 3342 VOYAGER CIRCLE, HUNTINGTON BEACH, CALIFORNIA 92046



Dave, please don't take it personally when I tell you that I'm not going to comment on your excellent personalzine THE WORKS. This hurts me as much as it hurts you (at least). I have a deep nostalgic fondness for that phrase "the works." It reaches back in time to my neofan days last year. Back then, the bunch of BNFs and pros I played poker with would wander over to Herschel's Hamburger Heaven after the game broke up. You may have heard of Herschel's and how prestigious it was with the crowd. I'm sure you've never been there, but that's beside the point.

Down at Herschel's we'd all get one of those eighty-two kinds of superburgers and a big orange. My favorite was the Raunchburger: onions (ungrilled), garlic cloves, Limberger cheese, chopped liver, pickled okra and the usual stuff. The waitress got to know me. Every time I'd smile big and order a Raunchburger, she'd grimmace in kind of a cute way and say, "The works!"

So you can see why I really did want to comment on your fanzine, even if it is against my policy. It brought back memories.

One of the things I might have commented on briefly, but I won't, was the song MY GIRL BILL. Back in my neofan days five years ago I'd listen to Dr. Demento on KPPC and then KMET. His show was on Sundays. I doubt if you've ever heard it because I've never seen you sober enough on a Sunday to fine tune the radio dial. But that's neither here nor there and I certainly don't want to bring personalities or personal habits into this brief note telling you "tough shit" on the LoC you've been bugging me to do. Good luck on that, Locke.

Anyhoo, Demento plays all this weird stuff. Crazy songs. Funky numbers. Perverted music. I'm sure you can ask Cagle about it if you want to know more. (Maybe you can get Jackie to tune the radio dial for you.)

I'm surprised that somebody like you -- somebody that's practically admitted to being an avid listener to Dr. Pimento Demento -- could claim to play chess. True, chess can be played at any level and enjoyed immensely exactly there. But Eddy Arnold! Jeez, when I was a neofan ten years ago and was astonishing the Western world with feats of blindfold chess that boggled the best minds of LASFS, I never listened to Eddy Arnold!

Almost got me, Locke. Thought you had me commenting there, but I caught myself.

(Of course, you're welcome to that short sample of brilliant expository prose for which I am so very famous. Think what you would have had on your hands if I'd actually commented on the entire zine. Eat your heart out.)

Then there are the inevitable Dave Locke pain stories. Twenty years ago when I was a neofan I was experiencing more pain. The crudzines that poured into my mail box -- they were pain. (We had hecto in those days, Locke.) Fortunately, I've grown inured over the years.

When THE WORKS arrived, postage due, I thought I could handle it easily. Yes, the paper was this cute orange-gold. The repro was mimeo, not the fashionable offset of modern times. There were  $\underline{no}$  photo inserts from the latest convention. The zine was stapled, not bound.

A SMOF like me, who's been swore off reading fanzines for almost thirty years, should have been able to carry this slim innocent-appearing zine from my desk to the recycling stack. Unfortunately, nature called. "Well," I thought, "I'll take it along. If there aren't any good illos I'll find another use, the price of wiping paper being what it is these days."

I read the whole damn thing, Locke, and blew a string of thirty years! That's pain.

Then the true pain began. First it was your subtle hints at parties.

Locke: "When you gonna comment on THE WORKS, Lon, ole buddy?"
Atkins: "Eat a FAPA mailing, Locke."

Next you abandoned the soft sell.

Locke: "Pretty please with saccharin on it, will you do a dazzling LoC

in superb style on THE WORKS? The zine needs humor."

Atkins: "Copulate with a syphilitic porcupine, Locke."

Locke: "That's it! Genius! Only Ed Cagle could top that."

Blandishments didn't work. I held the line -- no letter of comment. So you resorted to postcards, letters, bribes. I read the pathetic imploring words of the neofan fanzine editor. I sent back the \$40,000 in small unmarked bills. I refused to sign for the registered letters. I even endured the phone calls. I know it was you, Locke. Heavy breathing. Muffled words of unrequited lust after a corruscating letter of comment. Small endearments. Promises of reciprocation.

My final word is still "NO!" And I don't know how you fixed the zoning laws, but I want that gawddamn billboard facing my fanden window taken down. I'm not writing you a LoC on THE WORKS no matter how frigging good it is. This brief note should make that clear. In the future please correspond through my agent.

May the Bluebird of Happiness fly up your mimeograph. And wedge.

It occurs to me, because I'm not as thick as my funny Eastern accent would allow that my action to dispense with casual, polite, easily-obliged egoboo had the unexpected effect of spurring some people to work harder to get the egoboo in anyway. Even though I do edit out the bulk of it. The egoboo means more as a consequence. And makes me feel somewhat guilty for putting people to that much trouble...



# DEC 19 1984

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Dr. Demento doesn't sound too familiar. With the exception of Gary Owen's weekday afternoon show, which I try to catch when I'm driving home and sometimes continue listening to after I get there, I haven't been much for following any particular radio "show". Nor any particular station: In the car I've got all the push-button tuning locked into various listenable stations (and If I do It, that's definitely the correct verb to indicate that specific action) and will never hesitate to jump from one to another If the commercials or music are of a lesser caliber than what I would require my ears to endure. And it's usually the music and commercial level that determine listenability to me. The host usually is innocuous. Occasionally one of them is too strident, too stupid, or otherwise too undesirable for my taste, and I avoid them when I encounter them with my station-hopping. Even less occasionally, an amusing and witty fellow like Owens will come along with a nice bag of tricks and I'll seek him out whenever opportunity and interest present themselves.

I should mention, as he is not well-known to most of those on the mailing list, that Lon is a long-time fan who has chosen SFPA and SoCal barbeques as his major fannish way of life. Much to the loss of general fanzine fandom, Lon is a major fannish wordsmith who, not unlike Bob Leman when he was in FAPA, plies his trade only to a small but appreciate audience. However, he's not anti-social. His address is up there. If you occasionally send out zines on speculation, try a copy on him.

Among those WE ALSO HEARD FROM (and I have no turd in my pocket; many of these LoCs were addressed -- not just in the endearing salutation, but in content and tone also -- to the both of us, and I'd like to lift my finger and state that I'm all for it. Jackle has to take a great amount of credit, in my mind, for the existence of this godawfully sublime fanzine, and it's pleasing to me that people recognize this by the way they aim their response): MARTHA BECK graces our mailbox with what amounts to her very first LoC. "Never, never have I in 20 years written one!" Careful, sweetheart, of leaving clues to those relatively newer fans who might have a tendency to date you from this disclosure. Forinstance, I try to avoid mentioning that I got into fandom 18 years ago, for fear that someone might notice. Martha also mentions that she's been pining away ever since Thorne Smith died, and then embarrasses me by proposing (never mind what). You're sweet, Martha, and I dig you, too. ALAN HUTCHI SON sends a note ("B-flat", he says) agreeing to a trade arrangement. Alan publishes one of the better apazines in one of the better apas (SFPA), so I made certain to express the fact that, as I was no longer in SFPA, I felt deprived with regard to some of the good writing that was passing me by. If Alan has the time and inclination, I'd like to share a sample of that writing quality in the next issue's lettercol. Alan is also a top-caliber fanartist, which disturbs me because I feel there should be a law against a comics-fan possessing that much talent... JOHN BANGSUND drops a postcard at the both of us, and tells me that "I can't tell you how much I enjoyed THE WORKS, Dave. I would like to, but you said not to, so I can't." John also puts things in the proper perspective by noting that he's pleased Jackie and I got together because "All my old-friends-by-mail should be happy, especially when they get together and save me postage."

From a copy distribution of fifty I received a 42% comment response. Including trades the percentage of response jumps up to 56%. That's the best yield of any fanzine I've done, which isn't too surprising when you consider that the mailing! list was not compiled with much of an eye toward ser\_ling out copies on speculation. However, the quality of the letter response pleases me no end (though most everyone bitched about the "tell me something interesting" lettercol policy, it seems to have served its purpose surprisingly well). Do it again. I will if you will.