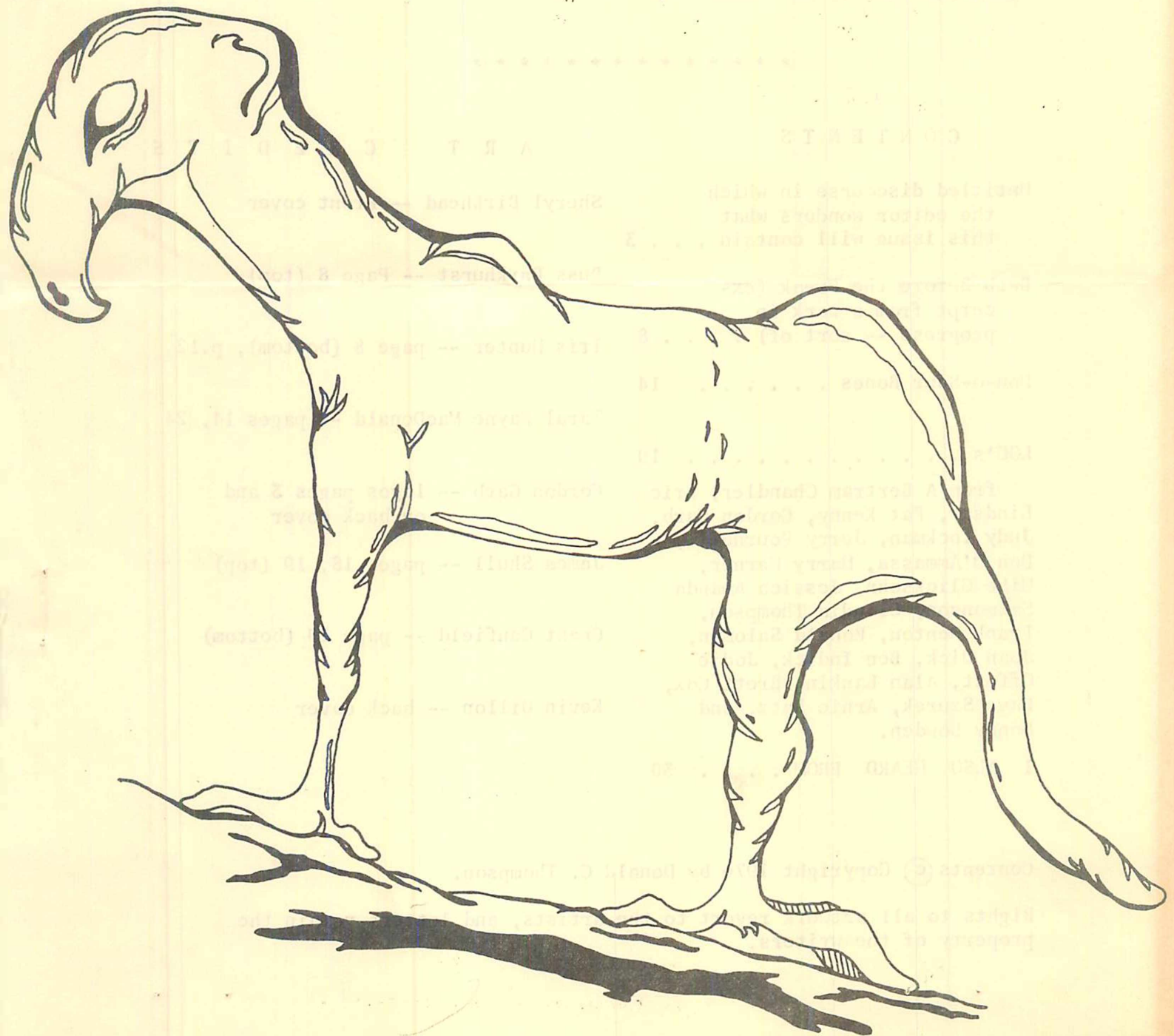


DON—O—SAUR

45



This is D O N - o - S A U R 4 5, a highly personal science fiction and fantasy (oh, and reality too, for that matter) fanzine published bi-monthly by Don C. Thompson of 7498 Canosa Court, Westminster, CO 80030 (and CO stands for Colorado, not Connecticut, the postal abbreviation of which is CT and which has a ZIP number starting with zero). DON-o-SAUR is available for trade with other fanzines, for letters of comment, for artwork, or for money. The price is still 35¢ per issue, a six-issue subscription for \$2, or a 12-issue subscription for \$3.50.

The following back issues are still available, for 35¢ each:
Nos. 22, 23, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 38, 42, 43, 44.

Press run this issue: 450

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Don-O-Saur

No. 45

April
1976

Oh, I don't know what this issue is going to be like and I've decided that the only way I'll find out is to start putting words on the stencil to see where they lead. And I can't even give myself much time to think about it, because I have established an absolute deadline by which the writing portion of the issue must be finished; and my only chance of getting finished by then is to start it now. Would have been much better to have started two or three weeks ago, but you know how that is.

Now is the midnight between Monday, March 29 and Tuesday, March 30. Then (the deadline) is Saturday, April 10, and that absolute deadline can, in dire emergency, be extended until Monday, April 12, but I'm not supposed to let myself know that; so please don't tell.

Yeah, it's an arbitrary deadline, entirely self-imposed, and the world would not dissolve in tears of grief and disappointment if I should be forced to miss it. But there is a certain logic to the deadline, quite apart from the fact that without one I might not even get started.

The logic has to do with SOLARCON in El Paso, which I will be attending (as fan-goh!) over the Easter weekend. Many of the people who'll be at SOLARCON know nothing at all about Don-o-Saur, and I take it as almost a duty to enlighten them in the most effective way possible-- providing-- the most recent issue for their inspection. The February issue is neither recent enough nor plentiful enough to serve that purpose any longer. So there's no choice but to publish a more recent issue, right?

But a mere 12 days (or two weeks) is not much, though I seem to recall that in the earlier days of DoS I used to turn out a 20-page issue every month (sometimes) in no more than a week. (Wish to hell I could remember how I managed that!).

This issue of DoS could be very easy, if I could bring myself to do something the easy way. I have enough material on hand to produce two or three special issues consisting almost entirely of other people's work. All I'd have to contribute would be some brief introductory and explanatory paragraphs.

One of those special issues would be (will be before this year is out, if plans mature) a general non-fiction issue which would include a variety of articles, artwork and poetry. For example, there's a piece by Don Ayres taking Bob Silverberg's departure from SF as its starting point. Intellectually stimulating and provocative. Then there's a sort of mood piece by Keith Curtis of Australia, written while I was there (also a short but moving poem by Keith). There's an article that my son Bruce wrote several months ago, on the subject of why he is NOT a science fiction fan (this one guaranteed to arouse the fighting spirit of all trufans for much the same reason that it arouses in me a deep reluctance to print the article and reveal myself as a total failure as a father:-- Bruce shows in the article an appalling ^{also} misunderstanding of just what science fiction is; and if I was never to explain something so basic to my own son . . .). In addition, I have a thing by Pete Chronis, my colleague at the Rocky Mountain News, which he originally wrote as an editorial page column for the paper, only to have it rejected. I think

it's amusing, and Pete even provided a sketch. -- a sort of self portrait-- to go with it (and I've got quite a number of unpublished poems by Pete Chronis as well that I would not hesitate to include). Finally, quite a number of the letters that I've received in the past couple of years from Don-o-Saur readers either are in themselves or contain complete and stimulating articles on a wide variety of subjects. Wouldn't take too much scrounging through my correspondence files (that's a euphemism) to find plenty of good unpublished material.

Another possible special issue (not just possible; inevitable, because I have promised some of my students that it will happen) is the fiction one (DON-o-SAUR TALES, I suppose, unless someone has a better idea). The story behind this is that during this past Winter Quarter, I conducted a class in science fiction writing, in the course of which, as the final exercise, in fact, I outlined a basic situation in rather general terms and asked the students to take that as a starting point and see what they could do with it. The writing was done during a single 1½-hour class period. Some of the stories and vignettes that resulted were of such high quality that I asked the authors' permission to print them in a special issue of DoS. I very carefully didn't say when this would be done.

I was very strongly tempted and seriously considered making this a special Music Issue of Don-o-Saur, using some of the large number of scholarly, perceptive and (occasionally) controversial article-locs I have received on the subject in response to my rather brief and cursory comments on the subject in Dos 44. All those letters, portions of which you will be reading in this issue's Loc-col but probably NOT in a special issue, conveyed a strong but unspoken hint to me. I understood the hint. I got the message. And I would like very much, in a way, to comply with it. But I probably won't; at least not fully.

The hint, the message (I said it was unspoken, but it has been stated pretty explicitly in at least a few letters) is that a largish number of readers would greatly appreciate it if I would either tone down a bit or else do a little less of the personal and sometimes intensely emotional kind of writing that I so often devote vast stretches of Don-o-Saur to. And at the same time perhaps devote somewhat more time and space to more abstract, impersonal matters such as music, books, art, movies, etc. I fully understand this desire on the part of some for a shift in emphasis. At least I think I do. I sympathize with it.

Quite a few recent letters go something like this (I'll try to avoid quoting anyone verbatim): "I greatly enjoyed the account of your meeting with Jackie and Bud, but I find I have nothing to say about it, since you haven't left any room for comment. About your tastes in music, however... (The subject of grass smoking is another one in which I apparently left plenty of room for comment, though not nearly as much as on music).

Not everyone is comfortable with highly personal, deeply emotional subjects. (I'm quite sure that it's embarrassing for some people just to read some of the personal, emotional things that I write, and the very thought of a reply in the same tone or style is simply out of the question).

Music is a lovely subject to write about -- especially in response to my expressions of taste and preference. For one thing, nearly every-

one can claim with full justification to know more about it than I do and to have more refined and sophisticated perceptions of it than I. More important, music is a subject that it's possible to become emotional (impassioned, even!) about and yet to avoid revealing more of one's self than one wishes.

I really wish (on one level, at least) that I could comply with the desire to moderate the emotional intensity of Don-o-Saur. A good many interesting, relevant and fannish topics are being neglected while I have indulged in an exhibitionistic orgy of self-revelation. I would like very much, for instance, to discuss matters of politics and economics again. This is, after all, an election year. WorldCon is going to be held in the leftover debris of the Republican National Convention, and so fans have reason to be even more than usually interested in the marvelous mechanisms by which our republic picks its nominal leaders. The Great Catastrophic Depression that I had been predicting (it was supposed to have started happening about a year ago) never did come about, quite; and I somehow never got around to offering my ~~explanations~~ explanations for why not. The GCD, I am firmly convinced, is still on Destiny's agenda; it's just been moved back a few years and will probably be all the more catastrophic because of the delay. It could be triggered by the Great Dust Bowl (which is practically upon us right now) and it will surely overlap the Great California Earthquake of 1981 . . .

Yes, yes! I would like very much to discuss some of these matters at length. But I'm not going to here or now. They don't happen to be what's uppermost in my mind.

The things that are uppermost in my mind happen to be of a personal, private, intensely emotional nature, and in writing about them I'm going to leave myself vulnerable to charges of exhibitionism, and it's quite likely to embarrass some people, and they'll be wishing to hell that I'd talk about art or architecture or archaeology instead -- something that would enable them to get in on the conversation.

My apologies.

But maybe I have a sort of semi-solution to our problem. I think I see a way for me to write what I want to write, but to frame it in such a context that those who wish may respond with intelligent comments, observations and criticism of the frame while practically ignoring the content.

To begin an explanation of that, here's a prognostication. A forecast. A prophecy, if you don't mind the term.

DON-o-SAUR will die within the next 18 months. It could go for as long as two years, or it could be extinct in one year or less. That 18 month figure is just a median estimate.

And to begin an explanation of that . . .

How seriously do you take Tarot? No need to answer that (but do if you wish); it's a rhetorical question. For myself, I have never taken any of that kind of thing -- Tarot, I Ching, astrology, palmistry, ouija boards, crystal balls, tea leaves . . . I haven't been able to take any of it very seriously. Still can't say that I believe in any of it in the literal sense, but as I get older I have become a bit more open minded and a bit more favorably disposed toward mysticism in general.

Tarot comes into this discussion because my daughter Claudia is away from home this school year (off studying in Scotland, as I mentioned in DoS 44), and for the past couple of months her place has been taken (literally) by Pat Kenney. Pat and Claudia have been friends since high school, and Pat has been sort of an extra daughter to us for that same period. Pat had been going to school in France, but her term was over at Christmas. She and Claudia spent the Christmas holiday together, spending a lot of money in Sweden, mostly. Then Claudia went back to Aberdeen and Pat came home.

Well, Claudia's room was vacant and we were sadly missing a daughter.

Pat learned Tarot from somebody in France.

A week or so after settling in with us, Pat offered to do a Tarot reading for me, and so I suspended my disbelief and willingly cooperated, figuring that at the very least I might learn enough about the Tarot symbolism to be better able to appreciate Charles Williams' *The Greater Trumps* the next time I have a go at it. (I doubt that I did).

It was an interesting session. I phrased a question in my mind, didn't tell Pat what it was, and the cards seemed to provide a surprisingly definite, specific and unexpectedly affirmative answer. The key word there is seemed, because the Tarot symbolism is a matter of interpretation, and I assumed that there was a lot of simple wish-fulfillment involved. We tried one more time in that same session. I phrased another question, again not telling Pat what it was -- and this time there seemed to be no pattern, no consistency, no "message" in the cards at all.

"You're probably still thinking about the first question," Pat said, and I confessed that I had been, though I couldn't see how that could influence what cards came up; still can't.

I thought no more about that Tarot session until just about a month ago, in the first week of March, when what seemed to be the embodiment of that affirmative answer to my first question surprisingly, suddenly and quite unexpectedly showed up.

Shortly thereafter, I allowed (or persuaded?) Pat to do another Tarot reading on me. I asked an entirely different type of question this time, and after all the symbolism had been explained and the interpretations made and the answer seemingly formulated, I revealed my question.

The answer (grossly oversimplified simply because I don't remember all the details) was something like this:

Your attitude toward the question is almost totally passive; on one level you have a strong desire or strong pressure toward important creativity, but on another level you are caught up in frivolous games and time-consuming distractions. The outcome is strongly positive if you take action to bring it about.

The question was: Will I or should I quit one or more of my jobs and turn more of my energies toward writing ?

Here is my understanding of how Tarot works (and the other things like Tarot that I've mentioned): Each of the symbols offers a range of possible meanings or interpretations, always expressed in rather general terms. The subject selects the meaning or interpretation that applies to his specific situation. If nothing fits or makes sense, it's because you're not concentrating on the matter at hand -- a very accurate explanation! (I would like to be a mystic; sometimes I try hard, but nearly always when I examine the mystical element more closely, I manage to find a materialistic explanation. It's discouraging).

I certainly did not need a Tarot reading to tell me that I consider my teaching career and my work at the Rocky Mountain News time-consuming frivolities or that DON-o-SAUR is really nothing but a game and a distraction, keeping me from the serious and important creations I must produce. I already knew all that.

However . . . the Tarot reading did, somehow, crystalize the issues in my mind. It provided a focus, enabling me to look at the situation and the problems and the possible courses of action, and the obstacles.

I have looked. I still do not see exactly what I'm going to do or when or how. I cannot yet tell which of my jobs is going to be first to go, but I've dropped strong hints at both the News and at Metro that if conditions don't improve soon they're likely to find themselves short an employee. Maybe I'll keep both positions but work only part-time at each; or maybe I'll drop them both at once. I cannot yet tell exactly how long DON-o-SAUR will last, but it's obvious that it must give way when I start writing "seriously." Or maybe not. Hell, I don't know.

What I do know, finally, is the kind of writing I must do, and I have learned that not from Tarot or any other form of mystical dabbling. Rather the understanding has grown gradually, naturally, organically through four years of dabbling with DON-o-SAUR.

Apparently I won't write fiction; no short stories, no novels. What I write will be a combination of journalism, personal reminiscence, biography, and commentary -- very much the sort of things I write for DoS, only perhaps (once I start getting paid for it) with a little more thought in advance and a little more time spent in polishing.

I even know specifically what I am going to write first. In order to explain to you exactly how I happen to know that, it would almost be necessary for me to show you what I've written already.

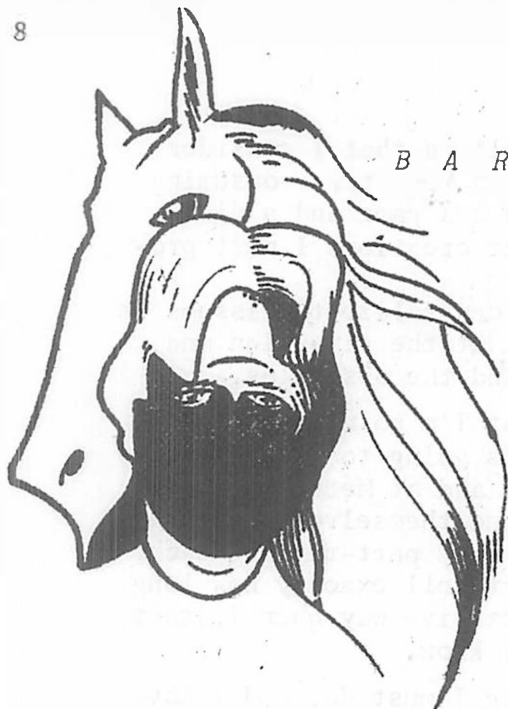
Which, in fact, is exactly what I have in mind.

Starting on the next page is what we might as well call an excerpt from a work in progress, even though that may not be exactly what it is. It might be more accurate to say that it's "Notes Toward a Projected Non-Fiction Novel," but at this stage I don't see that it matters much what kind of label it has. In essence it is my first fumbling attempt to tell the story of my very dear friend, Barb Feltz, the young woman who will either be a famous jockey someday or perish in the attempt.

(If she succeeds, and if I actually get the book written and published first, then I will be hailed as a prophet. If she perishes, a part of me will perish too, but a part of Barb will live on).

Barb left here in early July last year, spent eight months as a groom with Sared Stables in Illinois, Kentucky and Florida. About the first of March of this year, against all my rational expectations (though in conformance with what a Tarot reading a few weeks earlier had seemed to predict), Barb returned to Denver. She was here for three weeks -- actually under my roof for one week! ("What? We're running a home for wayward girls?" was Carolyn's observation). And then she was gone again. To get the full explanation of that, you may have to wait and read the book. The following excerpt begins more or less at the beginning and doesn't get around to much in the way of explanation.

I've even thought of a tentative working title for this opus:



B A R B B E F O R E

T H E B R E A K

I've never known anyone like Barb, so it's not surprising that my feelings about her are unlike any feelings I've ever had about anyone else. She is unique, at least in my life. It isn't easy to write about her.

I first became aware that there was such a person as Barb Feltz when Greg Pearson, Jim Steele and I, the three English profs who were teaching English 100/101 during the 1 to 3 p.m. Tuesday-Thursday time slot during spring quarter 1975, got together to sort out which students were to go in which classes. Steele was to teach the 100 class (remedial)

and Greg and I were doing the 101 sections -- the standard freshman composition classes.

All the students by this time were supposed to have produced an in-class writing sample and to have taken the STEP test in composition. The method of division was that students who scored below 27 on the STEP and did poorly on the writing sample would be assigned to Steele; Greg and I would arbitrarily and more or less equally divide up the others.

This should be a fairly cut and dried process and usually is, but there are always borderline cases -- students who score 30, say, on the test and write a just barely adequate paper. Their fate depends on whim. And there are other exceptions.

Jim and Greg and I had gotten to the stage of considering the borderline cases.

"I've got one really weird one here," Jim said. "On the basis of her paper I was about to put her in 100 because it's such a strange thing. Practically incoherent; kind of wild and crazy. But then she scored 49 on the STEP, so I guess she has to go into 101, huh?"

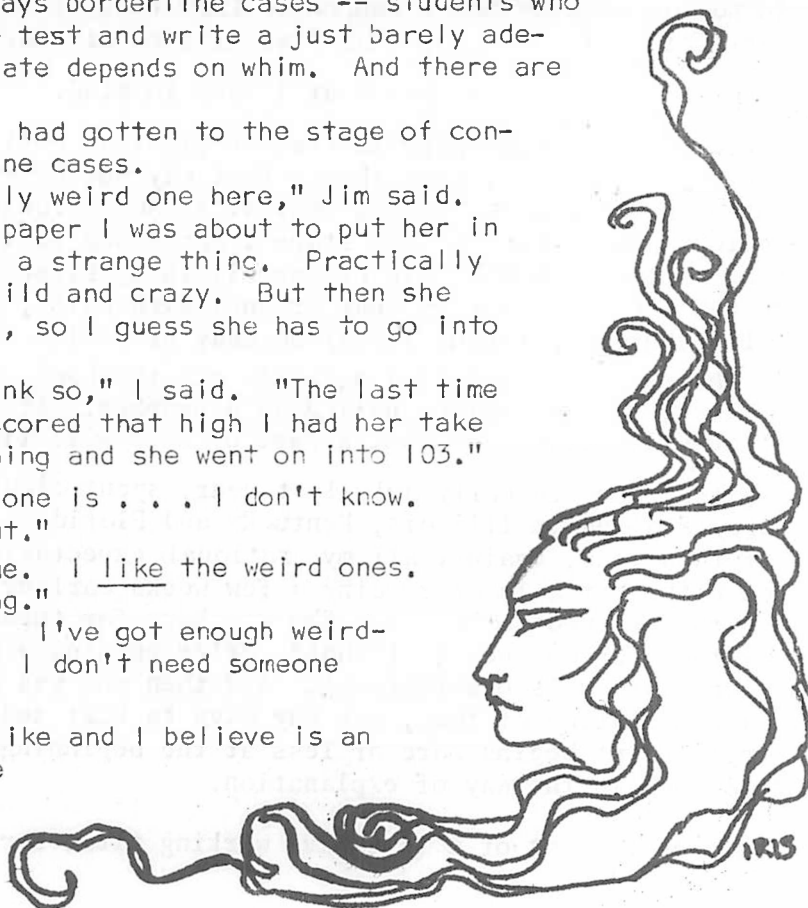
"Well I should think so," I said. "The last time I had a student who scored that high I had her take the credit-by-exam thing and she went on into 103."

"Humm. But this one is . . . I don't know. Wild. Weird. Far out."

"Well give her to me. I like the weird ones. She sounds interesting."

"You can have her. I've got enough weirdness in my own head. I don't need someone else's"

Jim Steele looks like and I believe is an ex-boxer. He has the characteristic flat nose and



and scarred, tough-looking face. He's neither tall nor heavy but he has massive shoulders and muscular arms and chest and hard, hairy fists. He's an alcoholic.

I didn't know that until the beginning of the school year, during the first English faculty meeting, when Jim, who had been on medical leave for part of the preceding year, took part of the session time to apologize to anyone who had been hurt or inconvenienced by his illness. He explained that his absence had been caused by his drinking and subsequent treatment for alcoholism. He said it was part of his therapy to make the public apology.

It was a damned impressive little speech -- presented with sincerity but without undue emotionalism; with extreme candor, with no indication that he was suffering agonies of remorseful recrimination. It was just a simple, straightforward apology.

I heard several comments afterward to the effect that "it takes a real man to do that." I was impressed myself, and it gave me a feeling of identification with Jim, because I am an alcoholic myself, that I'd never had before. Survivors of hell are automatically companions.

So I was a little surprised at Jim's reaction to weirdness. For some reason I thought our feelings on something like that would be similar. I love the strange, the wild, the weird, the surreal; I've found that I can delve deeply into the trans-rational realms and return not only unscathed but strengthened.

I thought about Jim's recent ordeal, and I decided it would perhaps be natural for him to be constantly on guard now against being lured into any kind of madness. And I felt a deep surge of pity for him. How sad it was, how horrible, that anyone should have to be afraid of thoughts -- of the workings of his own mind.

* * * * *

Oct. 6, 1975

That was written five months ago -- in May -- during an in-class writing assignment. Barb was still here then; I may have seen her on the same day that I wrote that. She has been absent from my life, physically, for three months already, but emotionally she still fills a large part of it, and the events during the time that I knew her are among the most important of my life, so I must continue trying to tell about them. About her.

Jim Steele makes no further appearance in this narration. He has played his role. It was pivotal -- he swung Barb to me. I thank him for it. And I might just mention that as far as I know Jim has had no further drinking problems.

He gave me Barb's paper along with those of the other students who were coming to me from his class, and of course I read hers first.

Again I was puzzled by Jim's reaction to it. It wasn't all that weird or strange. It was entitled "Just a Bad Dream." (I suppose that the assignment was to write about some memorable personal experience). Here's the first paragraph of Barb's paper -- just enough to indicate the general nature of it:

The picture frames hung, - empty. The dusty room seemed to hold no earthly forms. Yet, I could feel, rather than hear, echoes of forgotten voices, speaking through my memories with tongues of truth. I no longer wanted to blindly wander aimlessly

through reality's mistaken purposes. Against the far eastern wall, an elaborate mirror, which self-suspended itself, began to spin in counter-clockwise circles. I began to feel myself levitating. An inner sense, more powerful than any other human instinct I'd ever experienced, drew me magnetically inside the mysterious mirror.

There were minor errors sprinkled through the paper -- "levitating" had been spelled "leva" for instance -- and occasional incorrect word usages -- "unmeasurable" instead of "immeasurable." Jim had marked all the errors, and his additional comment was: "Too imaginative for the assignment."

I felt a flash of bitter resentment at that. I work hard trying to get students to use imagination, and I did not (do not) appreciate instructors who mistake their own neuroses for critical standards which they then try to impose on their students.

Nevertheless, I was more amused by Jim's being upset by the paper than I was angry at him.

During the third class session the sorting-out process was completed. Two of the original students in my class were banished to Jim Steele's Eng. 100 as a result of their tests. And I'm sure they thought of themselves as being banished, but then so did the five students from Steele's class who trudged through the same amount of spring slush to get to my room in the Cherokee Building, one of the more remote outposts of the MSC "campus."

They trooped in, shaking snow off their coats, stamping their feet and trailing dirty puddles across the floor.

The small, stark room is on the second floor, just off the stairway. The footsteps of anyone going up or down the stairs resound through the room, which has a hollow, empty feel to it anyway, especially with the desk-chairs shoved back against the windowless gray walls in a sort of square circle.

When they got themselves settled, I called the names of the new students, making a mental note as to which one was Barb Feltz, but I don't recall forming any vivid first impressions.

A lot of class-procedure details had to be taken care of. I had to do a certain amount of talking -- explaining again some of the technicalities of the course -- the required text, the amount of work to be done, some of the special requirements that I insisted on (as well as some of the liberties I permit that other instructors don't). And then in returning the writing samples to the students, there were certain things that I wanted to point out to some of them, requiring mini-conferences.

I dismissed the students whose papers did not require any particular attention. As I got to Barb's paper, I was about to hand it back to her and let her go, but instead I sort of waved it at her and said, "I would like to talk to you about your paper, Barb, if you can stick around for a while?"

She had been starting to arrange her books and seemed ready to slip her coat on. She nodded and settled back while I talked with Olive Keverer.

Olive was a major participant in the dramatic events of that school quarter. In a way, I would like to leave her out in writing my recollections of Barb. She was a complicating factor -- a distraction. Which of course is exactly the reason I can't leave her out.

Olive is in her middle or late 50s, probably, and looks older. Her paper reflected her maturity. It was an excellent paper, nearly flawless technically and written with a grace and style that is rare indeed among freshman compositions (rare enough anywhere!), and I just wanted to let her know that I appreciated it and to give her any kind of encouragement I could.

Our conference was brief and to the point. As Olive returned to her seat to gather up her coat and books, she was saying something (by way of explanation for why she was starting back to school again at her age) about having spent 20 years trying to drink all the whisky in the world.

I said something like, "Well, you're in good company. I'm an alcoholic, and so is Jim Steele -- the professor who sent you over here."

Barb, by now the only other person in the room, had been listening attentively. She entered the conversation by naming a few famous people who were also alcoholics, and somehow a more general conversation developed between Barb and Olive; I tuned out momentarily and just sat watching them, becoming only gradually aware that the talk was about philosophy (Olive must have said something about the philosophy class she was taking, and Barb's response was an animated outburst against philosophy in general -- her point being, as nearly as I could determine, that philosophy made it possible to look at any question so many different ways that you ended by not knowing what to believe about anything).

Olive had her coat on, her books bundled in her arms and was edging toward the door. Barb also was standing, holding her coat and books, ready to come sit in the conference seat beside me. They made a vivid contrast, Barb and Olive.

Barb was very small and compact. She is barely five feet tall, but as she stood there in that room with her head held high and thrown back, I did not get the impression of shortness. The element of defiance in her posture and in her voice somehow made her seem taller. It was her voice I think that struck me most vividly at first. She had an unmistakable Midwestern accent, but what was most noticeable was the quality of her voice -- very high pitched, thin but not quite shrill or squeaky. It was a little girl's voice, but an angry little girl, one filled with indignation at the insults and injuries she'd had to put up with. Especially annoying to me was the fact that each utterance of hers contained at least one interjection of "You know?" She seemed very young. But all her actions either were or seemed to be very quick, energetic, decisive, defiant. Each toss of her blonde head conveyed a feeling of intensity, a straining against something invisible but powerful and unbearably confining.

Her face was very fair, unblemished, unlined, undeveloped -- not exactly a round face, but more that than oval. It's an open face, with no attempt by either art or nature to disguise or conceal any of the features. Her eyes were a clear, cool blue, with brows and lashes so blonde as to be almost invisible against the pale skin. Her hair, dark-honey colored at the roots and fading to a pale yellow at the tips, was pulled straight back from her forehead (a rather low forehead, I observed) and allowed to hang, straight and stringy, to well below her shoulders.



served) and allowed to hang, straight and stringy, to well below her shoulders.

Her hands, surprisingly, were short and stubby, brown and chapped looking, with closely trimmed, unpainted nails. Not a little girl's hands -- more like a little boy's hands.

Olive was the opposite of Barb in almost every way. She was tall, angular, with dark-olive skin and coal-black hair. Her motions were slow, cautious, controlled and her voice was soft, almost husky. I noticed that she seemed to walk carefully and learned only much later that it was because of a foot that was once crushed under the wheel of a city bus. If Barb is the compact, economy model, then Olive was extravagance. There was more of her than necessary. She was too tall, too heavy, her breasts too full and pendulous, her abdomen distended. Her face was too long and each of the features too large. Her eyes, either dark brown or black, were sunk too deeply in dark sockets, and her nose was not only too large and sharp, it had too many bends in it. Her mouth, too wide of course, seemed also more flexible than necessary, and her smile revealed large, crooked, yellowed teeth. Her skin was wrinkled and leathery, her hands like over-sized eagle's talons.

And, yes, I might have been able to formulate this impression even at that first meeting, just on the basis of her paper and the few minutes conversation -- that she had perhaps too much brain for the amount of education she's had; too much experience for the amount of use she was able to make of it; and more sensitivity than anyone needs.

Olive left. Barb sat beside me and I placed her paper where she could see the marks that had been made on it.

I said, "Your paper really shook up Jim Steele. I'm still not sure why. I enjoyed it. But there are a few spelling errors and things like that that I ought to . . ."

"That's what I mean," Barb said. "That mirror in the paper, you know? About there being so many different way of looking at anything? You know? I called it just a bad dream, but that's only one way of looking at it. Somebody else could say that it's real. And maybe they could even make you believe that it's real -- you know?"

I nodded and shrugged. "Oh sure. Because on one level, maybe it is real. I wouldn't have any trouble believing it, at least temporarily, if somebody wanted to convince me of it."

"But how can you do that? Either something's true or it isn't -- isn't it? How can anybody say that something is both real and not real?"

I couldn't help being both amused and impressed at Barb's intensity, her genuine concern over this ancient issue that I had long ago come to regard as nothing more than a fascinating exercise, a game. And I couldn't help reflecting that Jim Steele had probably had a sound instinct for self-preservation in not wanting her in his class.

Almost certainly, she would not have been good for his head.

That isn't the end of the chapter, nor is it even quite as far as I've gotten, but it seemed a good enough place to stop. Some of the preceding was written within the past week or two, even though dated last October. That seems hardly worth mentioning. I probably won't use the dates or the journal framework in the final version anyway.

What worries me a little is this: If it has taken me nearly a year to write just those few pages, how long will it take me to write the book?

But that's nothing to fret over. Hell, I didn't realize until very recently that I was even writing a book. Virtually all of it that's been done so far was written during class periods, when I've given an assignment to the students and I always go on the assumption that they'll feel a little better about it if the professor is scribbling away like everybody else instead of staring into space or reading a book or something. I was writing about Barb just because she happened to be very much on my mind, not because I had any great literary aspirations.

Maybe that's the way the whole book will be written.

And maybe it'll be a better book if it's done that way than if I cut back deliberately on my other activities to give myself more time for a major writing project.

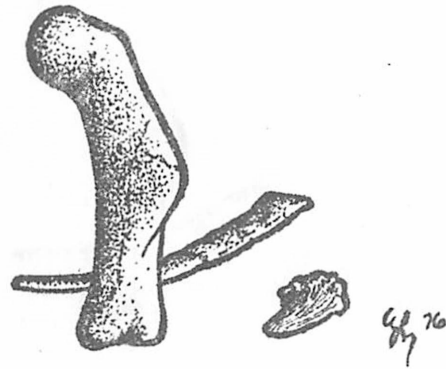
That's nightmare material -- the thought of quitting work, going into seclusion, cutting myself off from friends and family in order to devote my total energies to writing . . . and then not being able to write, anyway.

Starting on the next page is another DON-o-SAUR BONES, this one selected because I'm going to be attending a con very soon. Since I can't include a report on it in this issue, I'll do the next best thing (a debatable designation certainly) and offer you a four-year-old con report.

This has some historic interest. Even though the con I'm reporting on is MileHiCon 4, it was the first year (1972) that "MileHiCon" was the name of it. The first two years it was called Mini-Con because it was truly mini -- and not really a con at all but just a demonstration at our October meeting of some of the events of a real con. We had an art show, the costume show, a few huckster tables, and an auction -- and that was about it. (Oh, yes, the writing contest). The third year, the name was changed (because someone had heard about Minneapolis) to Octo-Con. We held it at a motel and added a number of events, most notably the Multi-Media Room and a feature movie. The chief attractions were still the costume show and the auction, and all the programmed activities took place between about noon Saturday and midnight -- though I seem to recall a rather lively Dead Dog that didn't succumb until about 5 a.m. The fourth year, the name was changed again, because someone had heard of another OctoCon and because MileHiCon seemed like the most logical name for ours anyway. We moved to a different motel, added more events, most notably the Trivia Bowl and a Games Room (plus panels), and this time we decided to go all the way: The con opened at noon Saturday and concluded with a feature film late Sunday night. And there were outsiders -- people from Colorado Springs, Albuquerque, Kansas City, and a bus load of students from Wyoming. There was a brunch, and a guest of honor (Ed Bryant) and a toastmaster (Bob Vardeman). Judith Brownlee was con chairman, assisted by Ted Peak. Caz was auctioneer for the fourth year in a row (just about his final service for DASFA before he moved away).

don-o-saur

BONES



Somehow, since MileHiCon 4, I just haven't felt the same urgent need to do things that was driving me before.

FROM DON-o-SAUR COPROLITES No. 14
November 1972

This of course is a common reaction to cons, especially among the sponsors. So much energy goes into the planning, preparation and smooth functioning of the con that the reserves are exhausted, and it takes a while to recharge the batteries. I wasn't nearly as involved in the preparations as many others were, but I too felt the drain.

I'm beginning to recover now, but just in time.

The excitement of MileHiCon 4 began for me as soon as I got off work from The Denver Post at 2:10 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 21. I had started the day at 5:30 a.m. and had worked straight through, not even taking a lunch break, in order to get off earlier.

First I had to stop at the Denver Public Library to pick up the film I was to show my science fiction class on Monday morning. I had thought I might show it at the Con but there proved to be no need for it.

There was a small problem at the library -- they couldn't find the film right away. It turned out to be on the shelf, right where it belonged, all the time, but for some reason the librarian skipped over it, not just once but repeatedly. It took nearly 20 minutes for her to find it, so it was 3 pm.. before I got to the motel, feeling, at this stage, only mildly frustrated.

I stopped first at the registration desk because I had reserved a room and wanted to get the formalities out of the way. There was a slight problem. Oh no, they had the room reserved and all that; I was the one who caused the problem. You see, I knew I was going to want to spend some money; I didn't have a great deal of cash, but I had a newly issued payroll check for \$54 from The Post. I somehow expected the motel to be delighted to cash it for me. So when I finished registering, I moved over to the cashier's desk and waved the check tantalizingly and the man behind the desk said, "Yes, sir, what can I do for you?"

"I'd like to cash a payroll check."

"Oh, I'm sorry. We're not supposed to accept personal checks or even payroll checks. However . . . do you have a room here?"

I waved my key. "Room 120."

The clerk nodded, turned and burrowed through the file of registrations, pausing long enough to ask my name. I told him. He turned back. "I'm sorry, I don't seem to have you listed. You say you want to check out?"

"No, no, no. I'm just checking in."

"But you wanted to cash a payroll check?"

"Yes, you see, I hope to spend some money while I'm here."

He nodded. "Humm. Oh. Well, we can possibly accept the check when you leave. But it says here you want to put the room on your credit card?"

I said, "Look, do you suppose the bar might be willing to cash a small payroll check?"

"Oh. That could be. They have more money. And it's Saturday. And there's some sort of strange convention going on here . . ."

I said, "Yes, I'm director of the group that's having the strange convention." And I walked stiffly away.

Once I got downstairs and in the midst of semi-rational beings again, that particular surge of exasperation quickly faded, but my troubles were far from over.

What with the formalities of Con registration and the hard work of hauling boxes of books in from the car to set up my table in the Huckster Room (with invaluable help from Al Ellis, Fred Goldstein and Phil Rose), and with my duties as a huckster, it was a couple of hours before I was able to take possession of the room I'd been given. It was a really nice room, with big sliding-door windows opening to the swimming pool. Perfect for a party later, I thought. The bathroom had soggy towels scattered all over, but that didn't particularly bother me. It should be easy enough to get fresh towels, but there was no hurry. Then I noticed that the bedside lamp didn't work. I turned the switch and the bulb flickered. I turned it again. Click-click-click-click, and finally the light turned on. I shut it off and repeated the process. This time it took 15 or 20 clicks.

For some reason that stupid light irritated me more than the soggy towels; more than the stupidity of the motel cashier; more than the blind librarian; more than the fact that I hadn't eaten since 5:30 that morning.

I called the motel housekeeping number and complained -- not, I think, in unreasonable terms. To the motel's credit, the response was prompt and decisive. A polite executive arrived in a very short time, looked in the bathroom, tested the lamp and informed me that the only thing to do was move me to another room. So I accompanied him upstairs, went through the registration procedure again, was given a different key; then we went back downstairs and the polite executive helped me move my things across the hall.

The new room smelled like the Denver Broncos' locker room; the bedside lamp worked but the bureau lamp did not. However, there were clean towels in the bathroom. I opened the window as wide as possible and left the door open for a couple of hours and that took care of the odor. The burned-out lamp continued to be a problem but I put up with it partly because I had met Ted Peak in the hall a few minutes earlier and he had almost pleaded with me not to complain too loudly because the motel had been very cooperative with Con arrangements.

Anyway, by this time I was more intent on supper.

My wife and daughter were supposed to meet me at about 5:30 so we could eat and have plenty of time to get into costume for the masquerade party. By 6:30 they hadn't arrived, so I called home. They thought they might be able to make it by 7:30, but said I'd better go ahead and eat.

I'd been informed that the motel restaurant was expensive and the service slow, so I walked up the street to a coffee shop that was reputed

to be cheaper. A half dozen tables were occupied; no one was at the counter so I sat there. Two waitresses were scurrying back and forth between the tables and the kitchen. They didn't seem to notice me. I began to get nervous, but after about five minutes one of the girls did give me a glass of water. She asked, with a note of panic in her voice, what I wanted. I decided I'd better keep my order simple so I asked for the house special, a giant hot dog, and a glass of milk. The milk came promptly, but half an hour later the hot dog was nowhere in evidence. The atmosphere of panic in the coffee shop was becoming thicker by the moment, arising partly from my own inner feeling of desperation, partly from increasingly restive customers at the tables who also weren't getting what they'd ordered, and mostly caused by the shrill words being exchanged by the waitresses and the cook. They blamed him; he blamed them. I caught one of the waitresses, told her to cancel my hot dog, gulped down my milk and departed, irritably offering the cash register girl a ten-dollar bill (the largest I had) in payment for the 15¢ glass of milk.

I think that was the turning point of the whole con for me. Until then it had been like struggling upward on a steep, slippery inclined plane, with people throwing enormous bricks at me from unexpected directions.

But then the cashier girl waved the bill aside with profuse apologies; she couldn't dream of charging for the glass of milk.

And suddenly the inclined plane evened out and the footing became firm and the barrage of bricks ceased. The milk felt good in my stomach. I felt good.

Nothing disturbed me unduly from then on. Frustrating and irritating things continued to happen but they failed to disturb me.

- - -

Have I been boring you with this purely subjective account of my purely personal and extremely petty problems? Well, I'm thinking of apologizing, but don't push me. I'm also trying to build up to something of somewhat greater significance. If I make it, I'll refrain from groveling.

- - -

My memories of the con are jumbled. It still seems incredible that I did as many things as I did in only a day and a half -- less than that, actually, since I didn't even get there until half the first afternoon was gone. But I spent hours being a Huckster (and feeling a horrifying satisfaction as the money rolled in) and I spent many more hours in conversation with many different individuals, some old friends, many I'd never met before, including some of the students from Wyoming. I wish I'd gotten the names of all those I talked with.

And so many other things!

One of the highlights of the Con, for me, was the purchase of seven early Astoundings from Bob Peterson for only \$15 total; and of course I'm eternally indebted to Fred Goldstein for that. Fred collects magazines too. He had the opportunity to buy those zines before I got to the con -- and he deliberately left them for me!

And then there was the masquerade party, which Carolyn and I got to barely in time (No pun intended); getting an honorable mention was a surprising and gratifying experience. Even more gratifying were the refreshments -- that popcorn was the first solid food I'd had in 15 hours.

There were disappointments -- four, to be precise. Or four and a half, to be even more precise:

1. I had to miss the Trivia Bowl because of my Huckster duties.
2. I had to miss the early SF films because of my presence on the SF-in-the-Curriculum panel.
3. I had to miss the SF and Religion discussion because of the History of Fandom panel.
4. The Fandom panel itself was a minor disappointment on two counts: (a) the small size of the audience and (b) the limited material we were able to cover in the limited time. (Probably the fandom panel should have been an informal discussion, leaving the games room available for games).

4½. The final auction had me worried at first. So many people were already gone; the bidding was extremely slow and apathetic; the atmosphere seemed charged, with sparks of hostility flashing about. But Caz kept magnificent control of his composure, and little by little the mood softened.

I thoroughly enjoyed the banquet, or brunch, or whatever it was, and I've heard that the food was good; I couldn't say. I had just finished a big breakfast 15 minutes before. Yes, I ate again at the banquet, but I was forcing the food down, not tasting it.

A memorable conversation occurred while I was standing in line to get into the banquet room.

One of the people from Kansas City began asking my advice on how a science fiction club and convention should be run -- or, in his words, how we managed to make things go so smoothly.

I told him the secret to our success was the large number of people willing to share the work.

(Did I oversimplify? Is it anything more complicated?)

* * *

The dramatic, emotional climax came late Sunday night, during the movie, "Five Million Years to Earth."

First some background:

Calvin Dodge had taken a Huckster table. He spent a few hours with it Saturday afternoon, then left. All day Sunday his table stood unattended. When the time came to clear the room, Cal Dodge had still not appeared. There was some debate as to what to do with his books--leave them for the motel to dispose of, divide them among the other Hucksters (not seriously considered) or dump them in the swimming pool (seriously considered). The consensus was to pack them up and haul them out to a car.

[A little more background is needed here. Cal Dodge was the son of a Fundamentalist minister, and Cal's main purpose in DASFA seemed to be to convert us all to the Biblical/Velikovskian view of the Creation. In a way, he was DASFA's own Claude Degler. About as popular, anyhow.]

Okay. At about 11:30, right at the end of the first reel of the movie, Cal Dodge appeared in the Multi-Media Room with his father, wanting his books.

Judith provided a spectacular display of rhetorical fireworks. Her righteous indignation flared brilliantly. She let Cal know (so that everyone in earshot knew she was letting him know) that he had caused her and other members great inconvenience; she hinted rather broadly that he owed the members an apology and an explanation. She refused to tell where his books were until a mumbled apology was forthcoming. And when Cal's father said, "Ma'am, I am not here to argue with you, I am here to get my son's property," Judith responded fiercely: "Well, I am here to argue!"

I have not always sympathized with Judith's outbursts of temper. On occasion I have been embarrassed and otherwise made uncomfortable by them, and I know of at least one person who had that reaction this time.

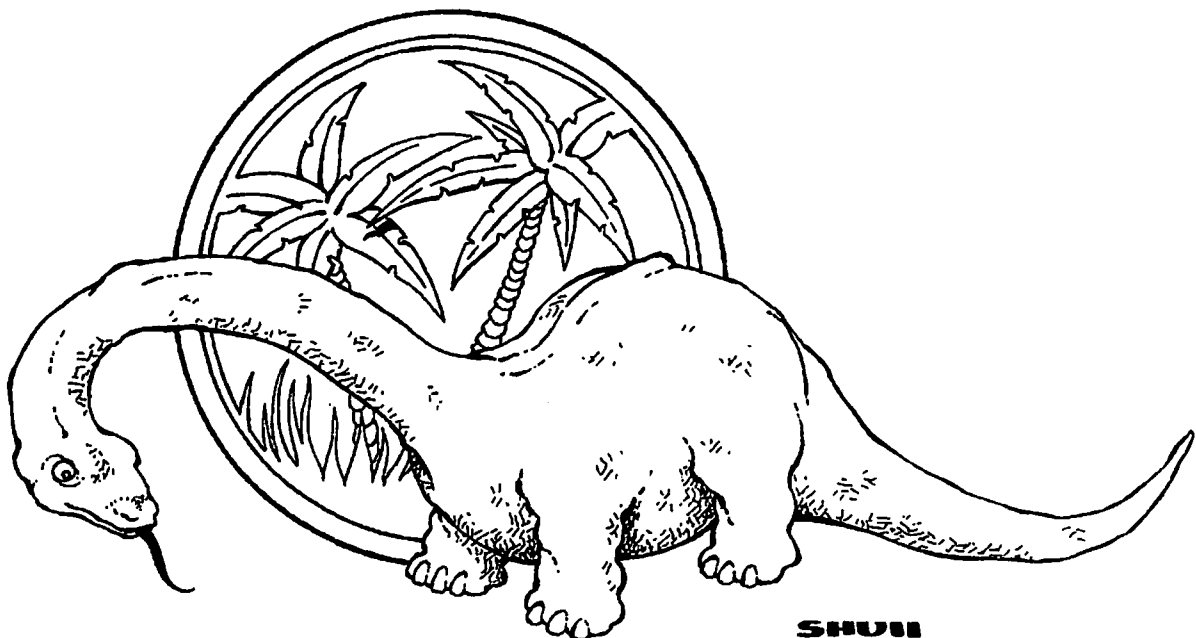
But I did not.

And I've finally gotten around to the point behind my narration of the trivial personal frustrations that beset me early in the Con. The point is that they were trivial and personal; and yet I was on the verge of some kind of temper tantrum before the sympathetic coffee shop cashier leveled me off with a free glass of milk.

I've mentioned that I was not deeply involved in the Con preparations. But I knew that those who were must have experienced tensions and irritations on a scale and scope that reduced mine to utter inconsequentiality. And I also knew how much work and energy Judith had invested.

Obviously I can't quite explain it, but when she exploded at Cal, she was somehow, at the same time, giving vent to my pent-up exasperations. It had a scouring effect on my psyche.

Anyway, I enjoyed it. It did not spoil the con for me. On the contrary, it seemed a suitable and altogether satisfying culmination.



SHUN
5-19-75

Here's a letter that arrived just hours too late to be included in DoS 44:

A. Bertram Chandler
Flat 23, Kanimbla Hall
19 Tusculum Street
Potts Point
NSW 2011 Australia

I was saddened to learn of Polly's death; she was so young and had so much to live for. I admired the

courage with which she faced the end. Also rather saddening was your supplement, with its tribute to Vaughn Bode. In the good old days when Fred Pohl was editing IF and Galaxy I always liked it when Bode did the illos for my stories. Somehow he invariably gave ships - surface ships, that is - a very definite character (mainly bad). And I loved Dead Bone Mountain...Bode, in fact, was the only reason for my buying CAVALIER.

Reverting to DoS - it was interesting to be able to see ourselves as others see us (and hear us). An Australian accent? Surely you have to be joking...Of course, all you other people, Yanks and Poms and such, have accents, but we don't.

(As a matter of fact, on the occasions when I was in command of vessels under the New Zealand Flag, the only Australian in a ship full of Kiwis, I used deliberately to adopt as vile an Orstrylian accent as possible, really hamming up the part of the Ugly Orstrylian... In Australian ships I tended to be too, too English).

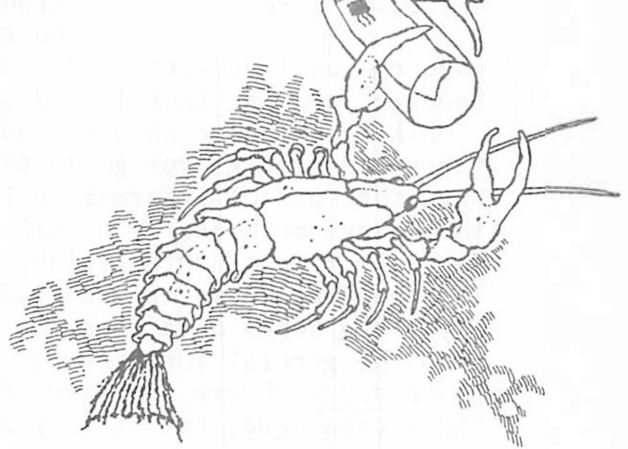
I must take you to task for misquoting me. The joke about "three hours difference between Sydney and Melbourne is: our 'arbour, our Bridge, and our Opera House. . .

Will you be attending SF/EXPO/76? I am hoping very much to be there. It will be my first time in New York since 1946. What I am thinking of doing is flying as far as San Francisco and then zig-zagging east by Greyhound.

This being summer I'm spending most of my time at our nudist club where I have a caravan [trailer house?] with all the mod cons, including typewriter. Some of the ladies whose noses tend to peel make liberal use of zinc oxide; they walk around looking like Vaughn Bode's barbaric chicks. (So when I'm working I sit with my back to the open door of the caravan).

There's the answer to the critics of SF/EXPO -- Anything that brings A. Bertram Chandler to the U.S. can't be all bad. I hope one of those zigs or zags brings him close to the Denver area. I won't be at EXPO. Solar-Con, AutoClave, Big MAC and MileHiCon.

LAC's



SHUN
7-28-75



GRANT

Eric B. Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Ave.
Faulconbridge NSW
Australia 2776

Never, never get a house ready for a party in the traditional sense (I mean in the traditional sense of cleaning house, not in the traditional sense of party). Rearranging books to provide a better, which is to say more egoboosting view of your collection, is a very fannish thing to do however, and one that I readily admit to.

Like you I have an aversion to libraries (I only have membership in three and hardly ever go in them - not least of all because they don't have the sort of information I want to look up in any case), but do try to arrange my books in a semi-systematic manner. SF together, with a separate file of anthologies, and a separate bunch of "other" fiction. The non-fiction is in modified Dewey system order (by modified I mean that I put big books on a separate shelf, and have a few sections separate from the general run because I refer to them more often - for example, books about SF are separate from literature, where they belong). I once had a catalogue, but it is years and years behind.

I can sympathize with Chuck's feelings about pot parties, being cautious myself about being in places likely to be raided, although as a problem, I blame the stupid laws rather than the people who like pot. I'm not keen I admit, on being in smoke filled rooms, but that is because of the eye troubles and headaches I get from that sort of atmosphere rather than for any other reason.

You really do like Jackie Hilles, although since you mention in your party report behaviour demonstrative of affection towards Carol Van Natta and Stevie Barnes, maybe I'm reading more there than you intend. Susan Wood gave me a little Saskatchewan polished rock, with eyes, while she was here, and that is sitting on a desk upstairs - I was going to put it on the typewriter, but I thought it would reproach me for not writing better, so I don't keep it near a typer. Still, symbols are a good reminder of a personality.

As I get older too fast and wiser too slowly and achieve a somewhat clearer understanding of my own true nature, I find that I am basically an affectionate and demonstrative sort of individual. I don't much like people in general, but there are an increasingly large number of persons that I like-admire-respect-love and toward whom I feel a strong impulse to demonstrate my affection with hugs and kisses. Some of the persons that I like-admire-respect-love are male, some female. Our society, our culture, and my conditioning permit me to demonstrate my affection toward the females with no penalty save the reputation of being a Dirty Old Man. I'm much more restrained usually in my expressions of affection toward the males because I'm not prepared to deal with a reputation for being that kind of Dirty Old Man. But, no; you did not read more into the account of my meeting with Jackie than I intended. Probably the opposite, if anything. I like-admire-respect-love her very much.

Following is something to sort of balance Bert Chandler's loc on an out-of-date issue. This one's on the current issue. Someday I'll be able to publish a loc on a future issue.

Pat Kenny
7498 Canosa Ct.
Westminster, CO
80030

I really enjoyed the excerpt from the book you are writing about Barb. It's interesting that you have found yourself suited to that particular kind of writing style; I prefer accounts and insights dealing with real people and life as it is lived, always believing the old cliché that the truth is stranger than fiction. The book about Barb is the kind that I would read, and the kind that I would write, too, given the material and the motivation.

A few miniscule points: my name is spelled "Kenny" and I learned Tarot from a friend who is bilingual, living in New York, and a witch. The connection with France and Tarot is the beaded bag in which the cards are stored, which I bought from a gypsy-philosopher in Paris, who also predicted that soon I would be able to read the cards properly.

(You, a newspaper man, fucking up the facts and spelling your "extra daughter's" name wrong. Tsk, tsk).

Any attempt to write the "truth" almost automatically turns into fiction because of the artistic necessity to rearrange the facts, to simplify them, make them less confusing, more plausible. (And all newspapermen are required to take an advanced course in Spelling Names Wrong). And memory can be such a tricky damn thing, as Gordon Garb happened to notice.

Gordon Garb
B-108 Corbett Hall
Fort Collins, CO
80521

I like the Bones column. Keep it.
Note on Page 5, in the Bones section, you mention that you were glad that you were not working extra that week at the Denver Post. On Page 7, in the discussion, you mention that you "muddled through my regular shift at the Rocky Mountain News that post-party Sunday afternoon and evening." Do I get some sort of prize for pointing out this contradiction?

[Just the satisfaction of finding it will have to be reward enough. I thought I remembered working the day after that party, but I was still at the Post then and nobody at the Post works on Sunday. Nice catch].

Yes, yes, please ban all smoking at the 1976 Christmas party. Smoking is SO obnoxious, to non-smokers anyway. Also, wasn't I the one who 'got sick' at the 1973 party? I seem to recall having a Godawful asthma attack, and asking for cough medicine and everything. While it is possible that your cats may have been partially responsible for the attack, I am pretty sure that the majority of the blame rests with cigarette (and jarijuana) smoke. With the great outdoors being as polluted as it is, what sense does it make to pollute indoors as well?

Judy Toelman
1241 Prospect St. #16
La Jolla, CA 92037

Your recollections of assorted DASFA Christmas parties sure brought back a lot of memories. I guess quite a few people remember how sick I got at that first one. I guess I'd sort of asked for it since I'd been breaking all the rules -- drinking on an empty stomach, mixing cheap wine and gin, and not stopping when I started feeling good, because of the mistaken notion that after another drink I'd feel even better. The whole episode proved to be such a strong case of aversive conditioning that, to this day, I shudder at the thought of

drinking anything made with gin. One whopping post-party hangover was enough to do it.

I was sorry to find out that Chuck Hansen, of whom I too am very fond, was so upset by the dope smoking at the parties. So many dear, intelligent people get so flustered by the mere idea of the stuff, which they immediately associate with raids and busts, hallucinations and all kinds of bizarre behavior. Yet I can understand how Chuck felt -- I remember a party I went to during my sophomore year at CU, where everyone was drinking whisky and no one was 21 yet, and I was certain the police were going to end it all. At that time I didn't know anyone who smoked grass, and I was certain that it was something only Mafia types touched. Later, as a graduate student, when I first saw some housemates passing a joint, I remember waiting tensely for some kind of behavioral explosion. Not until a few parties later did I realize that marijuana is nothing to get excited or alarmed about.

Jerry Pournelle
12051 Laurel Terrace
Studio City, CA 91604

Jackie Hilles is an amazing young lady, is she not? I have had a short correspondence with her and although we've never met I feel about the same as if we had known each other for years; not many have that knack.

As to the Awful Weed at one's parties, it was a considerable problem for me at one time -- after all, one doesn't need a felony charge on one's record (it plays hell with keeping a Press Pass) and I worried excessively over what to do when a guest whips out the stuff, especially if the party's loud enough that the neighbors might complain; even though only one person has it going, there was some accessory rule or another that could make the householder liable. I presume that's no longer true in Calif where possession of less than an ounce is now a simple \$100 fine with ticket issued, no arrest and no other hassles, which is probably the best way to handle the subject and certainly makes it easier on householders.

Don D'Anmassa
19 Angell Drive
East Providence
R.I. 02914

I'm probably going to sound a bit huffy. Sobeit. I personally favor the legalization of marijuana for a variety of reasons not worth going into here. On the other hand, that and all other illegal drugs are banned from our house, including at the twice monthly RISFA meetings. Pot would be banned even if I hadn't banned all smoking. Part of the reason, a small part, is that I obviously don't want to get busted. But the big reason is that it is illegal.

Don't get me wrong. I don't believe in a slavish obedience to the law. If that were true, bad laws would rarely be changed. But I believe that you have to have a damned good reason to break a law, and that transitory personal pleasure is not a good and sufficient reason. I agree, with some reservations, in a symbolic breaking of the law for the express purpose of being arrested in order to demonstrate the bad aspects of a law, but I don't agree with and will not tolerate in my home people who believe they have to obey only the laws they agree with.

As I mentioned, I think the current laws about marijuana are dumb. Nevertheless, if you encourage people to disobey this law, you are hard

put to explain later why it is wrong for them to obey another law about which you may personally feel the opposite. And I don't really think a society can work in which every individual goes around deciding which laws he shall and shall not obey.

I don't like the results of this very much. I admit it has often made me uncomfortable. My total inability to get this point across recently forced me to drop out of an apa because I was tired of trying to convince people that knowingly cheating on postal rates was a crime, that it was wrong, that even if they were pressured by circumstances into doing it, they should at least refrain from bragging about it. I guess I'm living in an outmoded world, but it strikes me as hypocritical to break laws by smoking pot, or allowing its use in your home, or by cheating on postal rates, and then to criticize Richard Nixon's tactics, government snooping, or suchlike.

Perhaps even hypocrisy has its place? I'm strongly tempted to stop and write a long essay trying to analyze my disagreement with Don on this issue, but I'll wait.

Harry Warner
423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown, MD
21740

The old and new material about the Christmas parties made fine reading. It also gave a lot of miscellaneous information about Denver area fandom which I knew only vaguely or not at all.

I imagine I might have acted just about as Chuck Hansen did when he realized there was a lot of marijuana smoking in progress: disapprove and then fail to follow the first impulse to dramatize that disapproval by walking out.

You wrote so vividly about the Jackie Hilles episode that I still feel as if I'd just come back to the house after seeing it as the basis for the feature at the movie house where I'd gone tonight. You also made me feel bad, inadvertently. You see, a quarter-century ago, Lee Hoffman entered fandom. She made an impact similar to that which Jackie Hilles made on you, with the slight difference that Lee caused this kind of reaction in almost every male fan of her era. Why I feel morose tonight is because I realize now that I have failed to get across in my new fan history manuscript the impression that Lee made on us with anything like the clarity that you describe how Jackie impressed you. Maybe I'll try to rewrite that section, or maybe I'll let it go as is on the grounds that nobody in 1976 would believe the effect of one young lady on virtually all of fandom, no matter how convincingly I described it.

Mike Glicksohn
141 High Park Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M6P 2S3

I met Jackie in Boston [at Boskone] after exchanging a few letters. It was not the most appropriate set of circumstances for a first meeting, but perhaps the shared adversity forged a bond stronger than might otherwise have formed. She needed someone to talk to and I was able to provide that for a while and I suspect we helped each other in mutual quests for personal morality. Since we'd only just met, and I tend not to be the sort of person who confides in others easily, this is additional evidence of Jackie's openness and empathy. I hope she doesn't get hurt by being too trusting, but I think not: for all her ingenuousness, Jackie is an aware young lady. (And anyone who quotes Dorothy Parker as often or as appropriately as she does is obviously equipped to handle herself okay).

I think Jessica's speculations as to the nature of male and female

sexuality might have some basis but they seem to be rather broad generalizations. There are basic physiological differences which come into it too, after all: men are far more easily aroused than women, hence it takes far less to get a man ready for sex. (A nice pair of boobs or a cunt, to use Jessica's euphemisms, can often be all that's needed). And men are much more easily satisfied, and hence lose interest faster, which means they're far more likely to engage in sex without any romantic interest. Jessica notes this, but puts it down, or at least wonders if she should, to the male psyche. I wonder if it isn't physical in nature and related to racial survival, so that early man would get horny easily, fuck whatever was available and, hopefully, produce lots of kids to replace those lost to the dinosaurs in all those Universal pictures. Besides, if God had meant men to be gay he never would have given women all that neat stuff in the first place.

Jessica Amanda Salmonson
 Post Office Box 89517
 Zenith, WA 98188

I ain't mad at ya, understand, because I know your comments on my comments were well-meant, and thou art trying thine best to be a Liberal Chap, but I must cor-

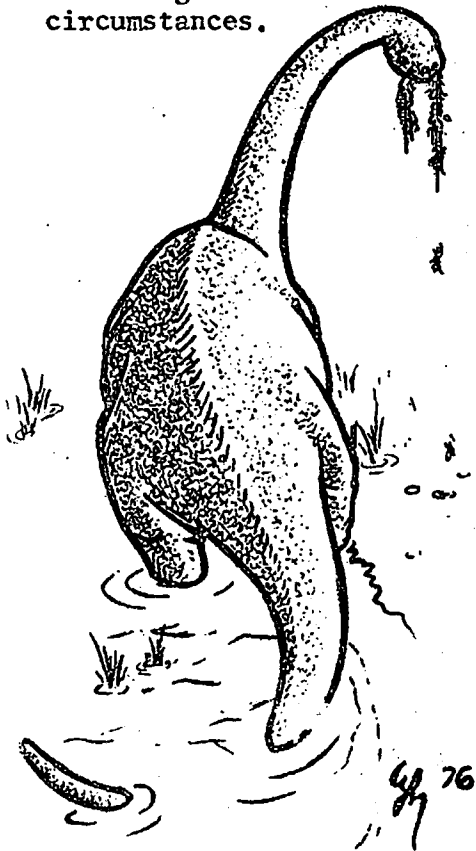
rect the misconceptions your small paragraph of response contains.

You state that before my surgery for sex reassignment, I was a "male homosexual." Now I don't get riled when people think that; perhaps it makes it easier for some people to understand transsexualism if they think of it in terms of homosexual and heterosexual. But there are a lot of gay men around who are trying very hard to defeat the horrendous myth that they are women in the wrong bodies. A male homosexual is a man who wants to relate to other men, ideally in physically-emotionally-spiritually rewarding circumstances.

They don't want to be women. They are men who want to be men and love men.

The only men I've been involved with were strongly heterosexual, and for a while I thought I was destined to be heterosexual as a woman. But I thought this mostly because I thought that was what my role in society had to be, that if I were to go through the pain and expense of sex reassignment it was only right/moral/preferable that I become and remain a staid and straight middle class housewife. I suffered from the myths too. It might have been difficult for me to confront the fact, then, that I was always strongly attracted to women.

What you must try to comprehend is that one's GENDER and one's SEXUAL ATTRACTIONS are not related. If a woman loves a woman, it does not mean she wants to be a man. Heaven forbid; chances are, she doesn't even LIKE men. So, I love women. But it never altered my conviction that my gender was meant to be female. I realize this retrospectively. It wasn't until the day after surgery, drugged and in the hospital, that I finally told myself, flatly and irrevocably, that I wasn't attracted to men. (I was very



attracted to the night nurse). I disappointed myself at first. I wanted to be a heterosexual woman. I had convinced myself for years that, in spite of the fact that I never had loved a man, it only took one Galahad to change all that. There are cities full of women who live under that same delusion right now, and they had no special obstacles to overcome, as I did, to stop believing that - and yet there they are, awaiting Galahads, and hating their husbands, and wasting away in a sexist society, doing nothing, feeling nothing . . .

So, no, I was never a male homosexual. I was never a male anything. I was a woman with a rather startling birth defect -- male organs. No more is that true; surgeons corrected the defect.

Which brings me to your second dreadful statement; a semantic error perhaps. You use the phrase "the problem is" when referring to my lesbianism. There was a time I myself thought this was a problem, but now I see it as a positive trait. I am healthy, normal lesbian. No problem there. But as I said, I ain't mad at ya. My roommate Sherri, now, she's mad at ya. She suggests I call you a pig or something, but then she doesn't understand fandom; she just understands that she doesn't like to see the words "lesbian" and "problem" in the same sentence.

And lastly, I deny being any champion of sexual deviation. Firstly, I dislike the term "deviation" applied to common variations of human sexuality. Secondly, I write about these normal variations because they interest me the way archaeology interests some people, or astrology, or science fiction -- not because I want to bring it out of the closet (as you put it). Have fans written about SF all these years so it would become palatable to mainstream readers? No. If I educate someone, I'm pleased; I have done lectures and educationals at colleges and clinics (and even a seminary) just for that purpose. But I'm telling you about it because we're both fans, and presumably fans share their interests and lives. This is mine.

Thank you, Jessica. I am grateful for the corrections, as well as for the gentleness, the restraint, the fannish friendliness with which you administer the slap on the wrist. I'm willing to learn; I'll try. Thank you particularly for that next-to-last sentence; that says it all. (Please see if your roommate will accept my apologies).

And now I suggest we move on to a perhaps less intense topic:

*Claudia Thompson
Crombie Hall
College Bounds
Old Aberdeen,
Scotland AB9 2TS*

It seems I had better lodge an early protest against the theft of my record-player; and not just the record player: I always knew about your unfortunate taste for Dylan, but Haydn's Sturm und Drang symphonies? Gordon Lightfoot? and just where have you been getting Steeleye Span records from? If you have been raiding my record collection, you might try Gordon Bok, the greatest and most under-appreciated poet of our time. I also recommend Bach, Mozart and Vivaldi. Much of the rest of the collection is hard-core folk and utterly unintelligible until you have read the wee bit bookies, ye ken? fae ower Scotland, which explain, for instance, what an airt is. (airt: Scot., one of the four points of the compass, e.g. of a' the airts the wind can blaw . . .)

Anything I could say might tend to incriminate me. So . . .

Frank Denton

14654 - 8th Ave. S.W.
Seattle, WA 98166

Your musical tastes are almost as eclectic as my own. Although many years ago I decided that quality of music reproduction was probably the #1 priority in my life (yes, even before Anna Jo and the kids -- sshhhh!), I don't have the megabuck systems that some people have; but I've always tried to invest intelligently in good equipment to meet my aural needs. And I do spend a lot on records. Have an excellent selection from which to choose as the mood hits me. Just as I enjoy finding out others' tastes in books, sf writers particularly, I also enjoy finding out where my paths cross musically with others. We seem to intersect in a couple of places, and that's nice to know. Judy Collins, The Doors, Steeleye Span. More recently I've been ferreting out groups that are near to Steeleye, and having a great deal of fun at it. Loren MacGregor and I delight in finding new groups that fit the mold, and try to play one-upmanship with it. My latest find is Bob Pegg's ANCIENT MAPS, a series of songs in the folk mode with a story continuity throughout the entire record. Very good.

Ronald M. Salomon
1014 Concord St.
Framingham, MA
01701

Although your Zenith may still work, you must be horrendously damaging your records by using such aged equipment. I've stopped using my 10-year-old Miracord turntable because it tracks at 4 grams, a weight which I find unacceptable now 'cause I want my records to sound like new not just years but decades from now. So for the sake of your records, pop for a new turntable at least if you can manage it; at \$70-\$80 you can pick up a nice Pioneer that'll track at 1-2 grams, minimizing wear (and splurge on a nice Discwasher and keep 'em clean.

I guess you figured out by now I'm a closet audiophile with some traces of latent quadrophilia thrown in. But I will come out someday, and I will tell the world, yes, I'm on the needle and I'm proud of it because it's a Shibata stylus.

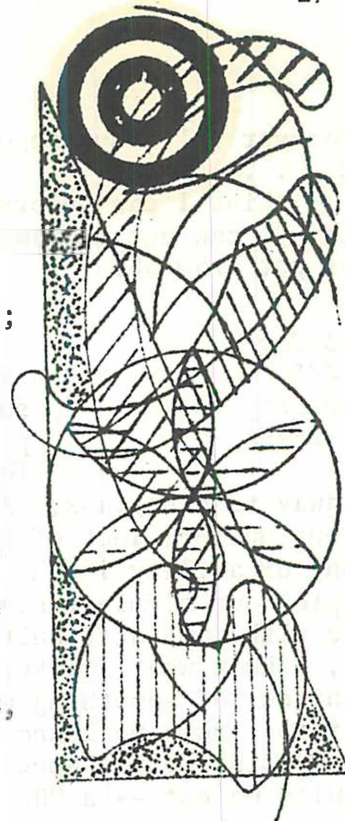
Mrs. Joan Dick
379 Wantigong St.
Albury, NSW
Australia 2640

Anne McCaffrey must like Dylan also. In The Ship Who Sang there is a story called "The Ship Who Killed." It features Dylanising. Darn good story, but that gives away my female leanings in SF. My son Brian likes music. Way out . . . far out . . . and good and loud. "You can't hear the undertones if it's not loud," but I object to the whole house rocking in time to the music and when the people a street block away can hear also then I turn it down. Also when he plays it about 12:30 a.m. His hi-fi is wired into the walls of his room. He also has another smaller edition installed in his car. I dare not go driving with him. We fight over how loud the music is.

Ben P. Indick
428 Sagamore Ave
Teaneck, N.J. 07666

Music. I've spoken about it in Bud Webster's zine; I'll only add here that one of my major unhappinesses is my son's giving up to a large extent on his music. He is a good pianist and organist, and I have no regrets for the years of lessons; but how happy I'd be to see him stay with it seriously, at least when he is home. His attitude is that he cannot be great, but this seems to me to be defeatist and defensive. I'll never forget his playing of a Brahms rhapsody at a

school recital. Many, many mistakes, but verve, such positive attitude, emotion, panache! I told his teacher afterward that even with the mistakes it was dazzling. The teacher smiled; it was, he said, an interesting collaboration between Michael and Brahms! My daughter is good too, not his equal; she excelled him on fiddle, for which his interest was at best perfunctory, but a high school teacher turned her off the instrument forever. Yet, I cherish a memory of her as a musician; maybe five years ago, just growing interested in singing, she accompanied herself on guitar in "I'd Rather Be etc." in our living room, for a party of relatives, and it was beautiful and gentle. I recall her ambition was to be a soprano, and how overjoyed she was when a choral leader told her she was one. (She decided later she is an alto with soprano pretensions). The kids are now near-21 and near-18, and must go their own ways, in spite of a sentimental father's memories. I do not push.



Jodie Offutt
 Funny Farm
 Haldeman, KY
 40329

My taste in music is much the same as yours, Don: not much. Two of my children play in their high school band and it simply amazes me to hear them make music with those instruments. For some reason I find it utterly fascinating that a child I produced and did for can do something that I cannot do. I feel the same way about my son who can draw. I can't and I just sit and stare in wonder at his art. This, despite the fact that Andy played the clarinet and draws rather well. My attitude is very strange and interesting, I think.

We have a running joke around here having to do with Bob Dylan. My 17-year-old son, Chris, is a BIG Dylan fan. The rest of us range from tolerant to indifferent to antagonistic. I like what the man says, but I often wish he'd stuck to poetry and left his harmonica, guitar and whiney voice in the garage.

Simon and Garfunkel are particular favorites of mine. Their records can soothe me when I don't even know I need relaxing. The Moodies are the only group all of whose records I have. I think they're beautiful musicians and marvelous poets. I think I'm becoming a Joni Mitchell fan.

Alan Lankin
 1117 New Pear St.
 Vineland, NJ 08360

Ah yes, Dylan! His songs continue to amaze me. Even if I don't listen to him for a long time, his music comes to mind at all sorts of odd moments. And DESIRE! Really amazing! I've been listening to the album a lot lately, fabulous! . . . I don't know, I sort of like John Wesley Harding. Especially striking is "The Ballad of Frankie Lee and Judas Priest." I can visualize this song as some sort of surrealistic, 'flowing' picture.

I also like a lot of the other groups you mention. Baez, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young; The Beatles; The Doors (esp. Morrison Hotel); The Dead; Starship; Moody Blues; Stones; Simon and Garfunkel; Steeleye Span; The Who . . . There are also a few individuals not mentioned that I particularly like, such as Jackson Brown; Yes; Chick Corea and Return

to Forever (although anyone who would dedicate an album to L. Ron Hubbard . . .)

I think I can understand what you mean by getting intoxicated by music. I can get the same sense of wonder from certain music that I sometimes get from SF.

Brett Cox
Box 542
Tabor City
N.C. 28463

Ah, music! Now you're talking my language. I'm a freak for music in any way, shape or form, and I suppose I get drunk on it like you say you do. My primary knowledge and interests are in rock and folk, but I can get into all kinds of stuff, from

Broadway to bluegrass. Although my family is somewhat musical (making up for our uniform lack of artistic talent on any level) and I have a small amount of ability in the field (I know most of the basic guitar chords, can pick out simple tunes on a piano one note at a time, and can read sheet music with some difficulty) my approach to music is much the same as yours, i.e., I know what I like. (Although lots of times I can appreciate the worthiness of something without actually liking it, and conversely really get into something I know is trash).

Getting to the specifics of your discussion: My own stereo system is quite modest -- a "Realistic Clarinette-40 AM/FM Stereo Music System," a turntable-radio in one unit with two speakers -- but it's more than adequate for my needs. Frankly, I don't see how any civilized human being can exist without a stereo system of some sort. It's a staple of life, like food and fanzines.

I too am a Dylan admirer. I can see why others might not be able to appreciate his singing, but it never bothers me any. I'm not as familiar with his work as I should be, but I've heard a lot of it and have liked most. (I never have cared much for his NASHVILLE SKYLINE stuff like "Lay Lady Lay," though. My favorite Dylan can be found on his mid -60s recordings when he began to turn more to rock -- BRINGING IT ALL BACK HOME, HIGHWAY 61 REVISITED and BLONDE ON BLONDE contain some absolutely fantastic material. As for DESIRE, I was fortunate enough to hear it in its entirety a few weeks ago over an area FM station, and while I cannot fully concur with your ecstatic praise, I do think it's the best thing Dylan has done in ages and far superior to the vastly overrated BLOOD ON THE TRACKS (which contained only two songs I really liked -- "Tangled Up in Blue" and "Lily, Rosemary and the Jack of Hearts").

[But . . . Well, I don't understand at all. How could anyone NOT like "Idiot Wind" and "Simple Twist of Fate"?]

Judging from the other artists you mentioned, it would seem that you have excellent taste in music (that is, similar to my own) . . .

Dave Szurek
4417 2nd, Apt. B2
Detroit, MI 48201

So many fen have been writing lately about classical music that I automatically suspected more of the same. It's what you call conditioned response, something which

I usually try to avoid with varying degrees of success. I know what you mean about "getting high" on music. Just to get the record straight and the matter out of the way, classical music generally doesn't do it for me. That's not saying that I'm incapable of appreciating it (in the proper mood) nor does it indicate that I'm among the prejudiced multitude. The widespread prejudice against classical music is actually a misdirected reaction against the self-righteous attitude of certain academics and

pseudo intellectuals. From grade school on, these clowns preach an absolute and a dogma that classical music is the one true way. They force it down our throats that the genre is infinitely superior to anything else possible, and dub its appeal to the individual a reliable yardstick of his or her intelligence. In so doing, they perform a grotesque disservice to classical music. When folk realize, usually at a young age, that it does less for them than forms considered a sign of lower mentality, they're likely to rebel into a state of reverse-snobbery.

I'm sorry to have to chop off Dave's letter (as well as nearly everyone else's, and to leave so many cut entirely, but I've got to wrap this up; I'm past my deadline.

Here's a name that's been absent from fanzines too long:

Arnie Katz
59 Livingston St.
Apartment 6B
Brooklyn, NY 11201

When Bill and Charlene Kunkel, Joyce and I started MAIN EVENT (a wrestling magazine sold in most arenas in the Northeast) I promised myself I would give the project a minimum of one year of undivided attention. I found myself avoiding any significant contact with fandom, lest my natural urge to take part in things sabotage my plans. Whenever I did break down and skim one of the trickle of fanzines that kindhearted folks continued to send, it was almost like receiving a communication from another world. I knew that fandom was continuing on its way, but the people, places and events took on an aura of unreality. Of course now that the need to devote quite so much time to MAIN EVENT has passed, things are normalizing, and fandom has taken on its former reality for me. It's nice to be back.

This next one seems highly appropriate to close with and so I've been deliberately holding it back for that purpose.

Denny Bowden
917 Tracy St.
Daytona Beach
FL 32017

I wanted to share a heartwarming experience with you.

In one of my classes we had completed a chapter in the journalism text and I just couldn't see making the kids work during the last 10-15 minutes so I mentioned zines to them (one guy in the class is getting into fandom by drawing for my zine).

Anyway, I had Don-o-Saur 43 on my desk and the idea popped into my head to tell the students about Polly. When I began, of course, they were captivated by the selfless love that Polly showed, and the students wanted to hear the letter from her husband so I read it in those final minutes of Journalism I. Before the end of the letter I could notice my voice beginning to crackle, but somehow I didn't mind. Feelings were too important to cover.

About halfway through the letter I asked the class if they were interested or if they would rather that I stop reading it. Their enthusiastic response convinced me to complete the letter.

I'm glad this happened. Polly's love has reached out again and touched the hearts of my students through your fanzine. Thanks for sharing this with us . . .

1 A L E O H E A R D F R O M

Don Ayres, Claire Beck (thanks for the extra copies), Carl Bennett, Sheryl Birkhead, Mark Blackman, Robert Bloch, Bill Bowers, Richard Brandt, Howard John Brazee III, Bill Breiding, John Carl, Michael Carlson, Ann Chamberlin, Tony Cvetko, Graham England, Mark Finlay, Stu Gilson, D. Gary Grady (my apologies; it truly was not my intent to offend); Hank Heath, Maurice Harter, Jackie Hilles (the enchanting), Tom Jackson, Alan R. Jones, Steve Lang (PMN reporter, whose note was technically the first loc I received on #44); Phil Paine, John Robinson, Alan Sandercock, Mark Sharpe, David Singer, John Thiel, Jake Thomson, Bruce Townley, William C. Wagner, Dr. A. D. Wallace, and Angelo Zaccane (of Venezuela)

* * *

A few COAs, since there's room:

Dr. A.D. Wallace from 306 E. Gatehouse Dr. Apt. H Metairie, LA 70001
to: 2119 NW 21 St., Gainesville, FL 32605

George Senda from 437½ Hyde St. #195, San Francisco 94109
to: 681 Ellis St. #211 San Francisco 94109

Vic Kostrikin (new school address): Box 4206 6515 Wydown Blvd.
Clayton, MO 63105

((NEBULA congratulations to Tom Reamy!))



Don
C
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