



GODLESS

GODLESS
#11
SEPT 1974

* * * * *

CONTENTS:

THE KING IN PLURAL

tempestuous editorial by Bruce D. Arthurs.

page 3

FROZEN SALT PORK

titillating memoirs by D. Gary Grady ----- page 7

WE ALSO SPAY CATS

turbulent parody by Rich Bartucci ----- page 11

MINDSPEAK

tedious letters of comment ----- page 15

*fillers are quoted from "Scientific Literacy in the Junior High"

* * * * *

ARTWORK:

Tim Powers ----- cover

Brad Parks ----- 2 (logo), 17

Alexis Gilliland ----- 2, 3, 9, 10

Barry Kent McKay ----- 7

Mike Bracken ----- 8

Jeff Kipper ----- 11, 13

Dept. of the Army ----- 15, 19, 20

Bruce Townley ----- 23

* * * * *

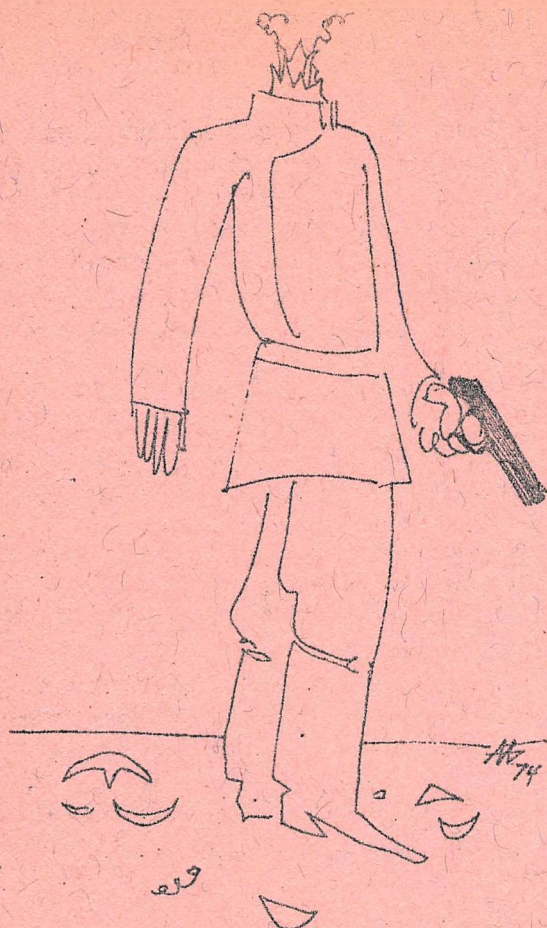
GODLESS is published irregularly by Bruce D. Arthurs, 920 N. 82nd St., H-201, Scottsdale, AZ 85257 USA. Available for the usual, 50¢ each, or 5 for \$2.00 (for overseas, equivalent in International Reply Coupons).

* * * * *

SHOULDN'T THERE BE A
"COMMUNISM" AFTER
GODLESS?



THE KING IN PLURAL



The gentleman pictured on the left has just completed what I've felt like doing while typing up the stencils for this issue.

A few weeks ago, at a local business store, I found a stack of stencil quires on sale for \$2.98 a box. Since the cheapest stencils I've been able to find otherwise cost \$4.45 a quire, I immediately began to drool, grabbed up ten boxes, and wrote out a check to the store.

Why was I such a fool as to buy ten quires, two hundred forty stencils? Two hundred forty of the worst damn stencils I have ever encountered.

I got out one of my lettering guides, a drawing plate, and tried to draw in a title. RIIIIIPPPPPPP!! No matter how careful I was with the stencils, using a stylus ripped the things to shreds.

Even worse, though, was when I typed on one of the stencils. I took the typed stencil out of the typewriter, lifted the stencil from the backing sheet...and watched all the cut-out o's fall to the floor.

Even with the typer set on lightest pressure and the stencil scribed with a typing plate behind it (supposedly giving the lightest copy), the o's still fell out. I took the protective film off of another stencil and put it over the first one. Even doubly protected like that.... Finally, after a good deal of experimentation and some stencils that gave results even a neo would be hard put to love, I found that by using the typing plate, two films, and by leaving a tissue sheet between the stencil and the films, I was able to come up with stencils that usually didn't have more than half a dozen punched out o's.

I should really have suspected something about the quality of the stencils when I noticed that there was no brand name on the stencils or the box they came in. The makers apparently don't want the stencils traced back to them, and I certainly don't blame them. The stencils were packed in a green & black box that read "STENCILS" and nothing more.

I figure it'll take me between six and eight months to use up the ten quires of Brand X stencils, so I'm afraid you will have to suffer along with some punched out o's for a while. For this issue, I'll be using my silk-screen mimeo to run the pages off on, since that type of machine doesn't "fill-in" spaces as much as a pad mimeo would. For pages requiring stylus work, like the above, I'm using the higher quality \$4.45 stencils. *sigh* Life is a series of compromises.

Actually, I've only got eight quires left of Brand X by now. I was able to sell one of the quires to Lord Jim Kennedy, ~~who used to be a friend of mine~~. Unbeknownst to me, however, Lord Jim has been distributing those same stencils to various members of Phoenix fandom, and telling them where he got them.

I've been getting a lot of dirty looks from Phoenix Fandom lately.

* * *

As long as I'm talking about reproduction problems (I don't care if it's not properly fannish material; I enjoy it!), I should mention my new mimeograph. About a week before I found the Brand X stencils, I saw an ad in a local ad-paper that read, "mimeograph, \$15". I said to myself, "Fifteen dollars? Must be an old hand-cranked model." Still, if it was in working condition, fifteen dollars was a fantastic bargain, since even the simplest handcranks can hardly be gotten for less than a hundred locally, even second-hand. I called the phone number listed and made an appointment.

It was not an old model. It was not a hand-crank model. It was an almost new AB Dick 525 electric pad mimeo. "!" I said, as I closed the deal quickly. The new mimeo, despite being a pad-type (which does not give quite as good repro as a silk-screen machine), has numerous advantages over my beat-up old Rex-Rotary. It's easier to load, has a receiving basket that works, has variable speed, doesn't take in several sheets of paper at a time, and the registration is near-perfect. (On the Rex-Rotary, the print can vary up and down on the sheet as much as 1/4 inch between sheets.) With good registration, I'll be able to experiment with doing multi-color artwork. (Ease of color change is another advantage of the pad mimeo.)

This issue, however, is still being printed on the Rex. See, the ink pad on the AB Dick was quite worn, with a few bald spots. So, before I do any large runs on it (I've done a few apazines), I want to put on a new ink pad. In the Phoenix metropolitan area, an area of one million people or thereabouts, there is no one who has AB Dick 525 ink pads in stock right now, not even the AB Dick distributor. Several places have them on order, but there's no telling when the pads will actually arrive. *sigh* Life is still a series of compromises.

* * *

Some of those apazines I mentioned have been for the new local apa, AZAPA. I ran for OE in the elections held last month, with no opposition, and so far the ballots I've gotten back (three, including my own) have been unanimous in acclaiming the new boss.

I'm glad that people put such trust and faith in me. Why, just listen to what Lord Jim Kennedy wrote about my election (and please remember that I sold him a box of Brand X stencils before he wrote this):

"Lynde you, I stayte this not as a potentially libelous 'fact', but I do urge that we all consider the possibility that our dear friend Bruce, behynde his fannishly grinning exterior, is actually a powermad, godless, raving paranoid fascist, possibly suffering from undulant fevers of the brain. It does indeed sound (as the yippie element would phrayse it) Far Out, but consider this: he is, after all, a veteran. And, as we have learned from ADAM 12, MARCUS WELBY, CANNON, and yeah, even GILLIGANS ISLAND, vets returning from the field of Stryfe and Conflict are unable to fully cope wyth civilian lyfe...are, in fact, raging madmen. r. Arthurs may protest that his was a relatively secure and sayfe desk job...but, wyth the brutal frankness the importance of the precious OEsip forces upon us, we must ask ourselves: do we believe that shit? Aren't his tayles of being totally removed from the discipline and trayning of all Army Camps a bit much? Doesn't the Private Room, the veritable Hilton Suite, discrybed in his Army Personalzine, sound lyke a bit of wish fulfillment? Indeed, now that I think back on it, it does seem that some of the souvenirs he sent me whyle in the service seem rather unlikely items for an East Virginia PX to carry...items such as the schrapnel-torn Viet Cong flag, the Laotian Army uniform reeking slyghtly of napalm, or even the seemingly innocent Korean hand gernaydes and bayonets. Could it be that the mentally-torn Arthurs, to escaype the Horros of the Asian Battlefield, invented the great fantasy of his lyfe of

Base and Luxury in a virtual modern McHale's Navy?

Of course, this is all speculation...I by no means state it as fact, insisting only that we consider the possibility. Remember: we have no way of knowing what feats of Putrid Insanity this Possibly Insane Fughead may become capable of if left with the responsibilities of OC.

* * *

A FEW SHORT NOTES:

Tim Power's cover was something I came into possession of at Estercon in July. I believe Jim McLeod was the one responsible for starting the ESTERCON FUNNIES, a round-robin comic strip by numerous artists that eventually ended up in the greedy hands of Bill Bowers, who will be pubbing all nine pages in OUT-OF-WORLD one of these days.

At any rate, while the frenzy was going on, just about anyone who could recognize the business end of a writing instrument was drawling and scrawling and doodling all over the place. Tim's cover is a piece that didn't make it into the FUNNIES, but I thought it was a fine piece of work regardless (somewhat better in the original; the more lightly drawn lines didn't electro well) and managed to get ahold of it for GODLESS. Hopefully he'll feel inclined to contribute more work to future issues.

After much thought, I've finally decided to give my TAPP vote to Horrible Old Roy Tackett. (I've met Tackett a few times, and he's not that old.) I think Bill Bowers is a better fanzine editor, but the thought of Tackett in full combat uniform, M-1 in one hand and a grenade in the other, dashing out of a landing craft on the coast of Britain, screaming "Let's get the hell off this beach!", is just too irresistible to pass up.

As a follow-up to my postal editorial last issue, from the approximately 160 copies sent back, three were returned. Bill Kuntel's was marked "Moved - Not Forwardable"; any up-to-date address would be appreciated. The copies sent to P.H. Frames and Jake Thompson both came back marked UNKNOWN. As another sterling example of the Postal Service's great efficiency, the postage due charges on the returned fanzines were 10¢ for one, 16¢ for another, and 26¢ for the last.

I also received back three change-of-address forms: Jon Singer, 2503 Avenue J, Brooklyn, NY 11210; James Hyle Beatty, RFD #1, Fulton, MO 65251; and Byron Surasky, 97 Harrison St., New Haven, CT 06515. Two of those cost me 10¢ apiece and the third no charge.

In the letter column, you'll also find a CoA for Dave Romm, returning to college. The same address will also be effective for Frank Balazs.

I've got various back issues of my various fanzines available for sale. The price includes postage, naturally:

GODLESS #10 (24 copies) - 50¢ each
GODLESS #9 (1 copy) - 75¢
GODLESS #8 (3 copies) - 75¢
GODLESS #7 (4 copies) - 50¢
GODLESS #6 (2 copies) - 35¢
GODLESS #5 (6 copies) - 35¢
GODLESS #4 (2 copies) - 35¢
GODLESS #3 (40 copies) - 40¢
GODLESS #2 (2 copies) - 35¢
GODLESS #1 (1 copy) - highest bidder

Personalzines - 25¢ or two stamps
UNDULANT FEVER #2 (20 copies)
UNDULANT FEVER #1 (32 copies)
POWERED #9 (3 copies)
POWERED #8 (17 copies)
POWERED #7 (1 copy)
POWERED #6 (7 copies)
POWERED #5 (2 copies)
POWERED #3, 3.5 & 4 - sold out
POWERED #2 (3 copies)
POWERED #1 (2 copies)
RAVING PARANOID FASCIST #1 (10)

I got a few responses from my request last issue for possible writings to be included in the FANTHOLOGY I'm planning on bringing out early next year. Unfortunately, some people didn't read my request carefully enough or haven't kept track of when a fanzine is published. I'm looking for the best fanzine writing to appear in 1975. Not 1974! My notice last issue was not just a straight request for suggestions, it was also a notification that I'm working on this project, something that I hoped would put people on their guard and keep a lookout for good fanwriting. But still I get suggestions for stuff published in 1974. (Some good stuff, tho, I admit, and if I was doing a 1974 anthology I'd include some of the suggestions.)

At any rate, so far I've got two pieces of writing that I absolutely want to put into the FANTHOLOGY: Bill Fesselmeyer's "How the Grinch Stole Worldcon" in MIDAMERICAN PROGRESS REPORT #2, and Henry Holtzman's "There is No Wyoming" in KRATOPHANY #7. I've also got a mental list of other possible inclosures, but those two are at the top of my list.

I also got only slight response on my suggestion about reprinting stuff from various apas. Come on! If volumes of THE BEST FROM APA-L can be published, surely there must be printable stuff from FAPA, et al, and there are quite a few FAPA members on my mailing list. With SAPS I'm slightly luckier: the OEs of that august organization are Doreen and Jim Webbert, who live over in west Phoenix. I've already asked them for suggestions from SAPS, and I definitely want to take a closer look at Art Rapp's fannish version of Monopoly.

What I'm basically trying to make clear is that I'm serious about the FANTHOLOGY project. This isn't just some neo spouting grandiose, nonsensical plans; this is something I think fandom needs and I think that I'm a person who can accomplish it within a reasonable time. (If I remember correctly, it wasn't until 1972 that Terry Carr finally published a FANTHOLOGY for 1964! I hope to have it out by May or June of 1976.)

* * *

Gee, I certainly seem belligerent when I reply to Tim Kyger in this issue's letter column. Actually, I seem to be losing my temper more and more often in matters fannish lately. My comments to Tim (and a few angry locs to people who've expressed similar sentiments about Brad in other fanzines), some dirty looks toward David Gerrold in UNDULANT FEVER #3 (in preparation), apa mailing comments that are more blunt and pointed (yes, I know it's a strange combination) than usual, etc.

I know what the reason behind it all is, though. While I was in the Army, I was an easy-going, unargumentative guy, a veritable Harry Warner. It wasn't until I was released from the service and returned home to the Phoenix area that I began to act like Mr. Hyde. Obviously, I've been associating with too much with local fandom, which has been notoriously feud-ridden for years. All those angry feelings are being transferred over to me! They're all turning into nice people, and I'm turning into a shit.

But I don't know how to deal with it. Gafiate? Move to a small town and hermitize like Harry Warner? Try to get local fandom feuding again so the empathic flow will reverse? Or just accept it and proclaim myself the new Ted White?

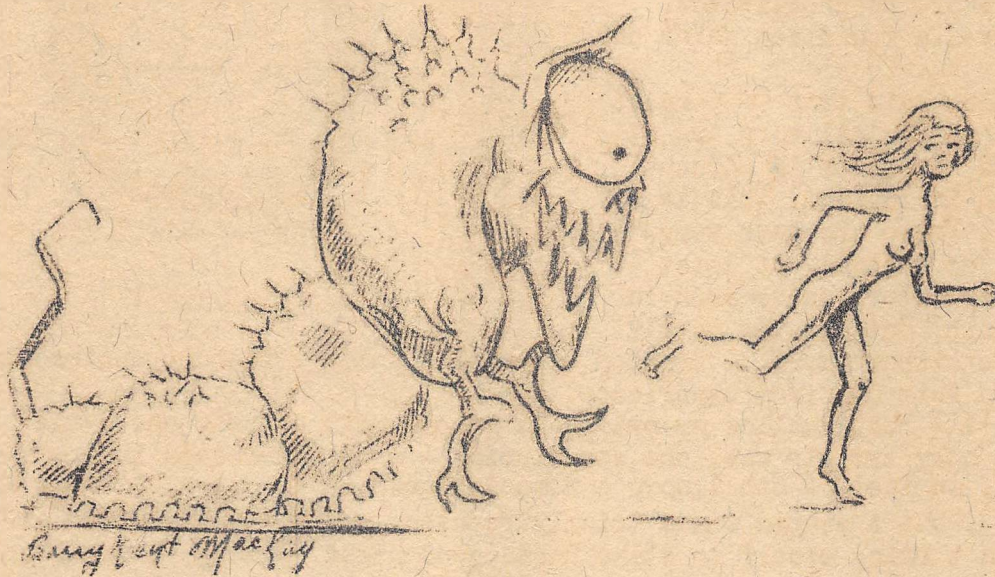
How do I come up with these nutty problems?

- Bruce D. Arthurs

FROZEN SALT PORK

MEMOIRS OF A YEAR IN ICELAND

— D. GARY GRADY



(Chapter One - Frigid Women)

From October of 1973 until October of 1974 I was a resident of Iceland, courtesy of the US Navy.

Iceland is neither the ice-covered wilderness the name implies nor the fertile paradise Icelandic Airlines (Loftleidir) seems determined to convince people of. There are a couple of forests, a ridiculously inaccurate article in HOLIDAY notwithstanding, but most of the populated region of the country is characterized by bare lava with occasional patches of moss, lichen, or grass for variety. The countryside is rather beautiful, in a rugged sort of way.

Iceland was settled by incurably optimistic Vikings sometime in 974. (The really optimistic ones went on to Greenland. None of them, though, were optimistic enough to permanently settle in New England.) In 1030 they got together on the plain at þingvellir (pronounced "THINGvehrtleer") and decided to have a parliament. This started the longest continuous argument in the history of the world, proceeding almost unabated since that date.

I'm not sure whether Icelanders are the most civilized people on Earth or the most lunatical. Few countries approach Iceland for political factionalism. Currently holding a plurality in the Alþing is the Independence Party, which publishes the cleverly-named newspaper Morgunblaðið (literally, "Morning-paper-the"). They support the presence of US forces in Iceland (as, according to the polls, do the majority of the people). One of the smallest parties is a disproportionately vocal opponent of the American presence. Formerly the Communist Party of Iceland, they have changed their name to "The People's Alliance" and they publish bjodvilliin ("people's-will-the").

The poor US serviceman is caught in the middle. By order of the Icelandic government, members of the lower three pay grades must wear a uniform when venturing into major cities, and, in fact, must obtain special passes to leave the base at all. A 10 p.m. curfew also applies to most personnel.

If you think that hurts morale, you're right. And it aggravates the major morale problem: women. Icelandic girls are almost universally beautiful and intelligent, but they are difficult to get to know. The curfew makes it harder. And, for the record, there are no prostitutes.

This leaves a few dozen WAVES and WAFs.

It has been said that 90 percent of the women in the military are attractive, and the other 10 percent are stationed in Iceland. This is not exactly true. There are some very nice looking ones there. At least they look good after you've been in Iceland a month. But all the really nice ones are either married, engaged, or hooked solid for their entire tour of duty. I found this out from experience.

Why didn't I just swallow my pride and go out with an ugly one? Well, I did -- once. The only trouble was, she was stupid. I'm as interested in a woman's mind as her looks. In fact, I can ignore a woman's looks (I'll put a bag over her head if I have to), but a stupid woman totally repulses me. I was so turned off by her that I couldn't bring myself to shake hands good night. I mean, she was no threat to the Nobel Prize for Smarts.

What did she look like? Well, I wouldn't say she was a dog, but another guy who took her out had to get an ointment for getting rid of the fleas. Her shot record had several rabies vaccinations stamped in it. I heard they kicked her off the girl's softball team because the first baseman didn't like saliva on the ball. I mean, I'm not saying she was a dog, but the Post Office was scared to let her in the building. And whenever a trashcan was mysteriously overturned, she was brought in for questioning. And acne! God, did she have it. Her face looked like the wrong side of the moon.

Now, don't get the wrong idea. I'm afraid you might think I'm trying to say all available women in Iceland are just plain ugly. Some aren't. Some are fat and ugly.

We had one you would not believe. As a WAVE, you could surf on her. She used to get quantity discounts at the mess hall. One time she fell asleep outside and someone painted "Goodyear" on her side. In high winds we had to tie her down. Russian reconnaissance aircraft would circle over her. Some guys would cross the street to avoid meeting her. Others would do it just to get around.

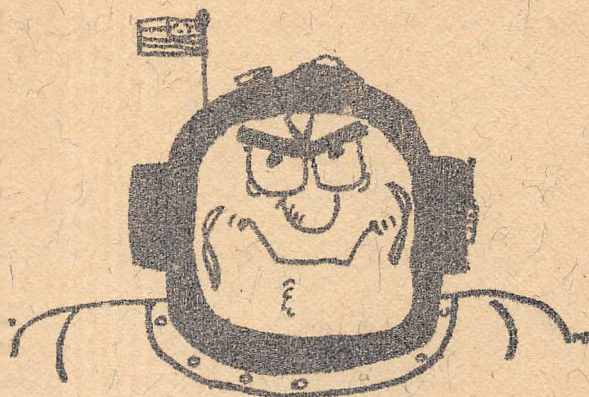
It used to take her two lights to cross an intersection. Once in Reykjavik a cab driver hit her. "Why didn't you drive around me?" she yelled.

"Couldn't afford the gas!" he replied.

This led to a wild argument culminating in a nasty lawsuit. The judge refused to award more than token damages to the driver.

And so far, I haven't even mentioned the girl who went around showing everyone her gum disease.

It's great to be back in the real world.



(Chapter Two - The Lassie Show)

Trying to find a girl is not nearly so bleak in other European nations. France

is a sort-of exception, as I found that many women there practically insist that you speak French.

In fact, things are not too bad in Iceland, if you're lucky. I knew one guy who had it made. His girl friend was a stewardess for Loftleidir and as intelligent as she was beautiful. For some reason, though, he insisted on pulling the old we're-gonna-get-married routine on her. Of course, when he left Iceland she never heard from him again. It really hurt the girl, I think.

The odd thing is, the deception was totally unnecessary. Icelandic women are not the marital vultures many others are. In fact, one Icelfander told me why they no longer drown women who give birth to illegitimate children in a river near the Parliament Plain of þingvellir (the Hvita River, I think). The reason? The river isn't big enough.

There is no doubt, though, that women are much easier to get to know in the United Kingdom. When I visited Scotland I got a deal on a flight and a room in Glasgow that was cheaper than the air fare alone. Consequently, I stayed in Glasgow and commuted to Edinburgh by train to do my sightseeing. On one of the trips back to Glasgow, I noticed an attractive Scottish thing standing near me as I waited to get aboard. I gave her the old sexy, fishy stare and, to my total astonishment, she agreed to sit with me on the train.

Well, this girl was brilliant. (Remember, I'm the one that likes bright broads.) She could rattle off Scottish history, statistics, etc. at an amazing rate. I was totally fascinated by her. I even kept my mouth shut for two minutes at a stretch.

When we (along with the train, of course) started pulling into the station at Glasgow, I suggested we go see a film, any film. She recommended GOLD (this was before its release in the US. Did you care?) and I said fine.

I didn't really like the theaters of London, but this one in Glasgow was very nice. A lot like an American cinema, but better run. The only bad thing about it was the interminable march of short subjects.

One of these was about a home for Battle of Britain vets. Afterward representatives of whatever the Scots use for the American legion swept thru the audience with collection boxes. I gave about 50p and mentally noted to deduct that from my income tax next time around.

By the time the film got started, then, it was late. Halfway thru my lovely ~~little~~ companion informed me she would have to leave because the youth hostel's deadline was approaching fast. I magnaminously volunteered to provide her a room in my hotel. By ghu, she accepted!

Back at the hotel, I put away my camera and coat in my room and went over to hers (which the hotel management had put as close to mine as possible). We talked a while and watched some tv.

I'll interject here that there is no comparison between British and American television. Imagine PBS and National Public Radio, but on a far grander scale. That's almost the BBC. You're nuts if you visit Britain without watching tv.

We talked until sign-off. At that time she faced away from the tv and announced that she was not about to look at a slide of Elizabeth II and listen to God Save the Queen. That would be unpatriotic. She was a Scottish National Party member and was completely convinced that North Sea oil would make an independent Scotland one



"...the old sexy, fishy stare..."

of the wealthiest nations on Earth. I momentarily envisioned people wearing kilts and bedouin headdresses working on an oil rig....

Anyway, the telly was off and the fun began. Inexplicable restraint prevents a detailed account, but suffice it to say that we were enjoying ourselves until she suddenly ruined everything.

"I don't meet many real men," she breathed.

"Uh, no?" I replied with my usual flare for choosing the right words.

"No. Mainly laddies."

"Laddies, huh?"

"Aye. I'm only sixteen."

I can't win. I just can't win.

- D. Gary Grady



The theory of evolution was greatly objected to because it made men think.

A litre is a nest of young baby animals.

The cuckoo does not lay its own eggs.

Algebra was the wife of Euclid.

An axiom is a thing that is so visible that it is not necessary to see it.

The pistol of a flower is its only protection against insects.

An example of animal breeding is the farmer who mated a bull that gave a great deal of milk with a bull with good meat.

Sea water has the formula CH_2O

We get our supply of steel wool from the hydraulic ram.

A universal joint is a tavern in outer space.

The abdomen is a cavity containing the bowels, of which there are five: a, e, i, o, and u.

WE ALSO SPAY CATS

by
RICH
BARTUCCI

In the middle
of the bustling
main office of
General Procurers,
Inc., a pert young
lass sat behind
the busiest desk
of all. Cluttered
with sophisticated

instrumentation and every ancillary device of the secretary's trade, the desktop was without a single clear space. She was engaged in writing a letter on a folding TV dinner tray.

Vincent Grobish stepped into the doorway before her and harumph'd delicately. A man of his seniority in the Diplomatic Service tends to receive considerable attention wherever he goes, and the young lady's refusal to acknowledge his presence irked him.

When at last she'd dotted her i's and crossed her t's and SWAK'd the back of the envelope, she chose to notice him. Grobish felt his disgruntlement fade away as she did so. The eyes she brought to bear on him were as icy-blue as a censor's pencil. Her hair was of such incandescent redness that an imaginative man might easily develop hearthurn. Her skin was of such smoothness that overwrought dermatologists would grind their teeth as she walked by. She was, in fact, some kind of dish.

Which, of course, was at least half the reason why Miss Betty Hern occupied her busy receptionist's desk. The other half was that, in her shy, demure, womanly way she was as cunning as a Republican.

Grobish drank in her loveliness, of course. He swallowed gulpingly and harumph'd again, a little more weakly than before. "Uh, Miss, my name is Grobish, and I'm with --"

"--the Diplomatic Service?" She smiled, revealing a set of teeth a man would pay five dollars to get bitten by. "Of course. We've been expecting you."

"Expecting me?" The visitor was taken aback. "Why, I came here under an Omega-Prime security cover. My meeting with Mr. Mercator was supposed to be top secret!"

Miss Hern smiled warmly. "Now, now, Mr. Grobish; we here at General Procurers know everything. Everything," she repeated with an emphasis that made Grobish wonder if that charge account he maintained at Madam LeFebvre's House of Refreshment

was all that tightly-kept a secret.

He harumphed again, a bit more desperately. "Nonetheless, I must speak to Mr. Mercator immediately. It's a matter of the greatest importance."

"That's what they all say," Betty mumbled under her breath. There was a ring from beneath a pile of papers on the desktop. "Excuse me, please," she said. "This won't take a minute." Burrowing into the papers, she emerged with a telephone of a sickly green color. Lifting the receiver, she said "Hello?"

Grobish watched in growing incredulity as Miss Hern's face alternated between astonishment, indignity and embarrassment. She said, "Oh, my!" quite often, and, occasionally, "Why, you filthy man!" With a final "I ought to call the Telephone Company about you!" she slammed the phone back into its cradle and sat back, her face composed.

"Uh, beg pardon, but -- who was that?"

"Oh, just an obscene phone call."

"Hmph!" Grobish said. "Why don't you call the Telephone Company, Miss?"

"That was the Telephone Company," she replied, smiling. "General Procurers will provide and service for the right price." She glanced at a flashing red light on her desk and said, "Mr. Mercator will see you now, sir." She pointed. "Through that door."

Muttering to himself, Grobish opened the door and stepped into the presence of Victor Mercator, the founder and president of General Procurers, Inc. The office's design was lifted from Benito Mussolini, and Mercator sat at the other end of a barren expanse of ankle-deep carpeting, behind a desk that looked to be made of pure platinum.

As he waded toward the glowing-eyed figure behind the desk, Grobish thought hard on what he knew of the career of Victor Mercator. The man had started building his financial empire in college, when he'd played piano in a call house to pay his tuition. Moving up to the coveted position of quality control tester in that same establishment, he'd made so much money that by his junior year he was able to withdraw from college and buy his own university. Since then, he'd done a little of everything -- all focused on the provision of certain services to those who'd pay for them.

He'd handled stocks and bonds for nervous brokers, executed contracts for reluctant Mafiosi, run countries for indecisive dictators -- anything and everything to turn a profit. Even the company motto, "We Also Spay Cats," spoke of what the man would do to make a buck; when but a child, he'd seen how badly the lemonade stands in his neighborhood were doing, and, after lifting a few scalpels from the local high school's labs, he'd set himself up in the cat-sterilizing business. Despite a few initial failures, he made a bundle.

Grobish remembered as he neared the desk that Mercator was reputed to have retained one of those scalpels. He was thought to keep it in a special pocket in his vest. Grobish peered at Mercator and decided that the man was patently mad. Still...

"You are Vincent Grobish," Mercator declared without rising from his chair. "You require help with the Grand Conclave of the Federation."

"Grobish looked pained. "That was supposed to be top secret."

Mercator smiled. "We here at General Procurers know everything, Mr. Grobish. Everything."

The visitor thought back to that innocent game of "Doctor" he and Amy Lou Wimple had played beneath the porch when they were in fourth grade. He gulped hard and staggered on.

"The fact of the matter, sir, is that we will have gathered here on Earth the representatives of thirty-two of the most powerful planets in the entire Federation. Yggglites and Zygotts, Puk'k and Equerries, folk whose names are conglomerations of consonants that sound like a draining bathtub.

"In spite of their multifarious origins, we of the Diplomatic Service have been able to engineer proper living quarters for each and every delegate, even the one from Hoon, the fellow with the lithium metabolism."

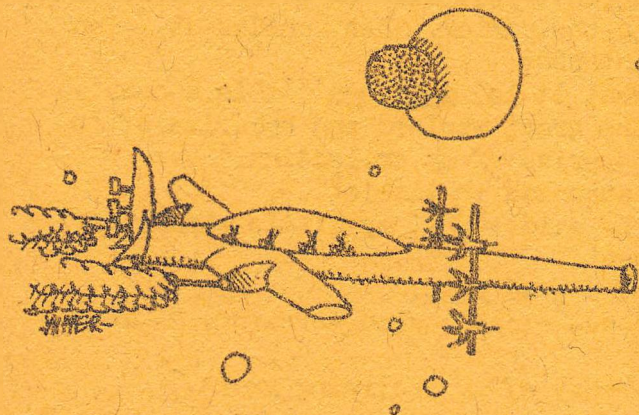
He grunted remorsefully. "What we have not been able to do is provide a suitable

dish for the great banquet that is to climax the Conclave. The main course must be compatible with the metabolic processes of each and every delegate."

"Surely," said Mercator, "You could provide each representative with a dish imported from his own home world?"

"No, no, no!" Grobish grimaced. "Clearly, you have never been embroiled in the world of state affairs. One trifling inconsistency -- one delegate rising to his pseudopodia and shouting 'Why did he get all the goodies?' -- could precipitate interstellar war. It must be the same meal that is set before each and every being."

* * *



After Grobish had gone, Mercator called in his council of war. Gene Quilty, genius scientist and head of General Procurer's battery of research labs attended, as did Joseph Burymore, chief of the company's legal section. In one corner sat Hiram Orthopod, the number-one public relations man in the nation, and Betty Hern sat worshipfully behind the imposing company president, tapping on a stenotyper and nibbling at his ear as the meeting progressed.

"I don't see why we can't just doctor up the food to look like everybody's getting the same flavor of oatmeal," put in Orthopod.

"No," said Quilty, "That won't work. Some of the delegates have vision ranging into the microwave region. An entity from Quarc, for example, can scribble out a spectrogram as easily as you'd write your name. As a matter of fact, that's how they sign their own names. I knew one fellow, Uranium-235..."

"That's neither here nor there, gentlemen," interrupted Mercator. "It's obvious that deceit won't serve in this situation. What we require is a foodstuff that is absolutely neutral."

"Sawdust?" suggested Burymore, who'd once worked in the haking industry.

"No," replied Quilty. "The Kruckle of Alemain VII are dendroids; they'd claim it was cannibalism."

"Why don't we hire M. Gonfles-du-Colon?" inquired Betty.

"Beg pardon?" replied Mercator.

"M. Gongles-du-Colon. I read an article about him in Cosmopolitan."

"Yes!" exclaimed Quilty. "I recall him now. He's a Cordon Bleu chef with PhD degrees in xenobiology and exotic biochemistries. He can cook a meal that any being can consume. They call him 'The Cosmic Nabob of Nosh 'n Nibbles.'"

"Well, then," asked Mercator, "Why haven't the Diplomatic Service people gone to him directly?"

"Well, sir, he's very temperamental. Twelve years ago, he retired to his chalet in the Apermines with a loyal Lithmanian servant. He's not been heard from since."

"Why should a Frenchman want a Lithuanian servant?" asked Burymore.

Quilty shrugged. They say that Gonfles-du-Colon is still experimenting with exotic cookery up there in the mountains, and a Lithuanian is the best possible test medium. A Lithuanian, you know, will eat anything, up to and including another Lithuanian."

"That," Mercator said coolly, "Is neither here nor there. Do you think that Gonfles-du-Colon is the man to see about this matter?"

Quilty nodded.

"Then get me a helicopter. And a map of the Apermines."

"No!" shouted M. Gonfles-du-Colon in his harsh peasant's voice. "And again, no! I shall not emerge from my retreat. I must purify myself in contemplation and labor."

Money hadn't done it. Appeals to the man's patriotism hadn't torn him away from his steadfastness. Promises of beautiful women, sheep, little boys -- the man was adamant.

"This goddam Frog just doesn't have a handle!" Mercator whispered to Betty Hern, who alone of the war council had accompanied him. "If he's got a price, I don't know what it is."

Miss Hern was absently examining something that resembled an oversized bottle brush she'd found sitting on a coffee table in the parlor. When Gonfles-du-Colon turned from his ranting, he noticed Betty's interest.

"Ah," he said. "You are curious to know what it is, mais non? It is a boar's-bristle tickler from the court of Bung Hoy, the great warlord and sybarite of the Fungchoo Province in the Thirteenth Century. A prize of my collection."

"Tickler?" queried Miss Hern. "What's it supposed to tickle?"

The chef guffawed merrily. "C'est drol!" he said. "Why, my little asparagus, what would be best tickled by such an instrument?"

"Oh. Oh!" Betty's face turned the color of a good ragu.

"You collect such instruments, M. Gonfles-du-Colon?" asked Mercator, a gleam growing in his eyes.

The Frenchman nodded. "It is but a small hobby of my declining years."

"It must be quite complete, eh?"

"Ah, no," the protly fellow sighed. "Still do I lack the crowning glory of all Chinese erotic tools -- the phallus of Hswing Lo. It was constructed in 1233 AD by the finest craftsmen in all of Cathay. A true work of art." His face fell. "But, alas, cete instrument formidable shall never become a part of my collection. It resides in an English museum, and no amount of cajolery will wrest it from their bourgeois grasp."

"Hmmm. If it could be gotten for you, could you prepare the required dish for the Conclave banquet?"

"For the phallus of Hswing Lo? I could prepare anything."

"Then," Mercator said grimly, "I'll get it for you."

"I don't know how you did it, Mr. Mercator, but you succeeded in bringing off the banquet." Grobish was beside himself in a transport of beaureaucratic joy. "It's the diplomatic coup of the century!"

Mercator looked out at the many closed-environment chambers gathered round the main table. "I presume, then, that the Conclave was a success."

"Quite," replied Grobish, almost wriggling in delight. "Three planets have been sold into slavery, two major alliances have been undermined, and I don't know how many assassinations have been agreed to. I owe you a great deal, Mr. Mercator."

"Uh-huh," agreed the businessman, "And in small bills, if you please."

As Grobish walked away, Mercator saw M. Gonfles-du-Colon approaching. The chef gave a gallant bow to Miss Hern, who faithfully shadowed Mercator everywhere, and shook hands with his employer.

"Well, maitre, have you inspected your pay yet? Is it satisfactory?"

Gonfles-du-Colon smiled happily at Mercator and nodded. He reached into his white jacket and partly withdrew the prized instrument. "It is more beautiful than ever I had imagined, Mr. Mercator. How can I thank you enough?"

While Mercator was making the required pish-and-tush motions, Betty stepped boldly forward, a strange light in her eyes. Mercator recalled that she'd been like that ever since he'd given the Hswing Lo phallus over into her care three days before. She stared at the bulge in the chef's coat.

"If you don't mind, M. Gonfles-du-Colon, I have a favor I'd like to ask of you."

(continued on page 23...)



Tim Kyger, 1700 S. College, #23, Tempe, AZ 85281

((on G#9)) I must castigate you on your art. The cover was...hidious. As was the Brad Parks illo, so-called, on the baccover. In fact, all of Parks' illos in this ish are, in a word, bad. The title page layout left much to be desired, and the layout of the whole zine where art is concerned left a lot to be desired. But your layout looks nice -- as long as there is no art involved. The local, for instance, looks great. But the art in thish -- uggh! Try to get better; here in Phoenix you can; Carver, Roberts, Olsen, Anthony, Danforth -- the number of fine fan artists in our city are legion. USE them!

((And on G#10...)) Do you have to run Brad Parks' art? At the risk of making a potential enemy out of a potential good friend, Brad Parks' artwork in a word -- sucks. At this time, anyway. He has potential but his art isn't going to be printable for several years, I'm afraid. He needs time to develop. So, until then, may I propose a Brad Parks' artwork moratorium? What you need to do is to encourage his fanwriting; that is good stuff/humor that he writes.

((I must castigate you on your complete lack of tact. Not only you, but all the others who have been dismissing Brad's art with one word, usually "crud", "bad", "ick" and others of that ilk. Frankly, I am sick and tired of seeing Brad Parks given such shit. Obviously if I felt his work was so poor as to be "unprintable", I wouldn't print it! I'm not ashamed of any of Brad's (or anyone else's) artwork that I've printed.

No, I don't consider Brad to be the best fanartist around. Some of the early work he sent me set my teeth on edge, and I therefore didn't use it. But he HAS improved, IMMENSELY, since those early efforts. Let me offer some specifics, something that you and the other "critics" of Brad's work have never bothered to do. Just some of the ways in which Brad's work has improved are:

1) Subject matter: All of Brad's early drawings were basically just the same drawing done over, a "Screaming Leaper" character. Since then, he's largely abandoned such restrictions, and can now draw on a variety of subjects, including specially commissioned drawings.

2) Line width: All of Brad's early work was done with ballpoint pen, which gave the work a monotonous appearance, to say the least. Now, he uses pen, fountain pen, magic marker, ink brush, and other graphic materials to vary the appearance of his work.

MINDSPEAK

3) Texture & Shading: Again, Brad's early work used no shading effects or dark areas. Take a look at his illo-loc on the right-hand page. In that piece of work, he uses linework, cross-hatching and other shading effects, and I think it's a very effective piece of work.

4) Humor: You seem to have difficulty discerning the differences between an "artist" and a "cartoonist". The measure of a cartoonist's talent lies in the humor he injects into his work. Jay Kinney, for instance, is a fanartist whose work, considered as "art", is often very crude; but his work is also hilarious, and as a cartoonist, he's great. I consider Brad to be primarily a cartoonist right now, and I wish I had come up with some of the ideas he's had. Not perfect, no, but improving all the time. Take another look at his loc; the expressions on the characters show definite polish and a dawning sophistication at rendering cartoon expressions.

Now, why don't you get specific and tell me what's so bad about Brad's work?

As for your remarks about me, I have a reason for not using any artwork from local artists. None of them have expressed an interest in this fanzine, that's why. With only one or two exceptions (some Rotsler art for the early issues and Jackie Franke's commissioned illo for Dave Locke's article in #7), I have never specifically requested that an artist do artwork for me. All the art I've received has been because the artists have been impressed by GODLESS and have wanted to contribute, or, in a few cases, because they've heard GODLESS was a good zine and sent some art by way of introduction.

Case in point: Grant Canfield. I sent Grant two or three issues after I revived GODLESS in 1973. Just that, the issues. No letter of request or other begging. Grant never made any response, by word or art. OK, apparently he didn't feel impressed enough by a minor zine like this to want to become part of it, so he just didn't contribute. He also hasn't gotten any more issues of GODLESS.

My prime requirement is that an artist, or a writer, has to want to contribute to the zine, not because of any begging or pleading on my part, but because of the fanzine itself. It's that simple, and I think I've gotten some very good material by (or in spite of) this policy. So if you want to see some of those local artists appearing in GODLESS, you'll have to get them to show some interest in what I'm doing. (And at any rate, I feel Rob Carver in particular to be overrated. To say "ughh!" to artwork including work by Terry Jeeves and Alexis Gilliland, and then propose Carver as a replacement is just...dumb.)

And as for my "poor" layout, I scoff in your face. I've never gotten too fancy with layout, and drawing boxes around everything is a drag anyway, but I think my fanzines have always been quite readable and the art has never interfered with the text. (The complete opposite, in fact: I've always tried to choose artwork that will compliment the written material.)

I note also that once again you avoid specifics. What is wrong about my layout? A little hollow criticism I don't mind, but I think it's about time that you and others start ~~supplying~~ some constructive criticism to artwork, layout, or whatever you dislike. Now get off my chest so I can go to another letter.))

((And here's a late loc on G#9...))

Gary Hubbard, Apt. 2, 208 Hubbard Ct., Westland, MI 48185

Congratulations on your release from the Army. I spent four years in that situation myself. Four years I consider a total waste of my time. I only joined, now that I think on it, to avoid looking for a job. One problem about getting out, tho, is that there is a kind of syndrome that accompanies it. First there's a brief period of euphoria at being out, then there are periods of depression caused by an unsettled mental state. Getting away from that iron-clad security blanket does cause problems no matter how negatively you may feel about the army. ((Unless you're the type who keeps his security in the savings account he's built up during his enlistment.))

Judging from the lines on the hand of Tomalay's lover, I'd say that this hand

(continued after next page)

GODLESS

THE LOGO



BY BRAD PARKS

WOW! ONLY 2 ARTICLES YOU REALIZE, OF COURSE, THIS PUTS A STRAIN ON MY BRAIN TO CREATE! (OF COURSE!)

NOTE NEW CLIPPING CONFLICTING STYLES ON PANEL I, ELONGATED CHIN AND MOP OF HAIR



TELL ME SIR, WHAT DO YOU THINK OF GODLESS 10?

WELL, I THINK IT WAS A VERY GOOD ISSUE, EVEN IF THE LETTER-COLUMN WAS A BIT OVERDONE IN LENGTH. AL SORRIS MAY NOT, LIKE PARKS'S ARTWORK, BUT I LIKE IT. (sometimes)

OLD WAYNE W. MARTIN PRO: DON'T TRY 2 IF YOU HAVE KNOCKED I



I WILL BE AT MY 2ST CONVENTION, THE MY SECOND A WEEK LATER. A-KON and CROTONCON.

PEACE PARKS

is the hand of a person who is very rationalistic and level-headed. His headline is straighter than you find in most people. Also, there is a wide gap between his headline and his lifeline. This would indicate that he is very aloof and not affected very much by his external environment. His heartline, too, follows along in this vein. It indicates an exceptionally uneventful emotional life. This person may be married, but it will be of short duration and no children will result therefrom. ((All persons who have met Bruce Townley are now shrieking and rolling on the floor with laughter.))

Some palmists also read the fingers, but all I could make from those fingers is that this person needs a manicure badly.

Paul Walker, 128 Montgomery St., Bloomfield, NJ 07003

I don't have that last issue of GODLESS in which I apparently accused Damon Knight of being "detrimental" to the field. I don't remember saying that, but if I did I take it back, at least in the sense that fans have taken it as. What I should have said, and have been saying for a long time, is that Knight has not gotten the credit he deserves for Orbit, which I think is the most influential bookzine of the past ten years. What Knight, and Ellison, have done, independent of one another, is to alter sf's traditional editorial policies in favor of the writers; making them writer-oriented rather than editor-oriented as in the years of Campbell-Gold-Baucher.

In previous times, a prozine had a definite editorial bias in favor of certain kinds of stories which came to constitute a kind of genre of their own: the ASTOUNDING/ANALOG story, the GALAXY story, the literary fantasy of F&SF. Ellison left his bias in DV (allegedly) to the writers by asking them to submit their most "dangerous visions" and it was Knight's belief that he could effect a renaissance in sf by allowing the "best writers" to go as far as they wished to go. His criteria, he claimed, was innovation, expanding the horizons of sf. And it seems to me that the other new editors in the field have followed Ellison's and Knight's lead, having little or no bias of their own, with the novel exception of Elwood who can no longer be taken seriously. In my opinion, what this has done is not expand the horizons of sf but narrowed them to so-called literary boundaries in which writers compete to provide the best imitation mainstream sf they are capable of.

Fans disagree that all the bookzines read alike, but if they compare them to the differences between GALAXY and IF, etc., they will see what I mean. There seems to me no real alternative editorial policy to what Ellison and Knight began years ago; at least, no meaningful one. But regardless of my dislike of Orbit, it has been a very real achievement and I think Knight deserves more credit than he has received.

Dave Romm, 2484 Indian, SUNYA, Albany, NY 12222 ((new address))

Wow! Locs in reaction to my loc. I'll make neo yet. Seriously, they all made good, valid points and I would like to answer some of them. Brett Cox said "The tone of Dave Romm's loc disturbed me." Well, it disturbed me, too. I was somewhat surprised I wrote such an emotional letter, but I couldn't find anything in there that I didn't actually believe. His remarks do not leave him open for a charge of anti-Semitism, while mine are definitely anti-Christian. And you, Christians I don't object to: my three best friends are Catholic. However, I object to Christianity as a religion. It has just too many principles that a man I would consider intelligent could not believe in. Even granting these on faith alone, its very principles are not conducive to friendship. It says specifically that if you don't believe Joshua Ben Joseph (alias Jesus) was The Messiah then you will go to Hell. Furthermore, if you believe that anyone not believing him to be the Messiah can possibly go to Heaven, then you will go to Hell. This is not a view shared by Judaism, where it says specifically the opposite.

Sam Long says, "Judaism has not cornered the logic market, lacking as it does a theology, or, more accurately, a dogma." I don't understand what he is trying

to say in the second part of the sentence, but he is right about not cornering the logic market. However, Judaism, being more a way of life than a religion, has over the years built up one of (if not the) best set of laws dealing with people's interaction. When you atone for your sins on the most holy day, Yom Kippur, you can only atone for your sins against God. Sins against your fellow men you have to deal with only with the men, unlike the "confessions" which allow you to get away with anything if you pray hard enough afterward in christianity. Study Talmud a bit sometime, Sam. Not capitalizing "christian" being "petulant and silly"; I couldn't agree with you more. It is my own private way of getting back at everything, and I realize it is simply a way of getting me into an argument over religion. I had thought for years that arguments on religion couldn't be lost by either party, since it always boiled down to a matter of faith. However, one Purim we invited a couple of catholic Fathers to join us. One of them sat next to me. During the course of the dinner (not the service, naturally) I started a discussion. Everything would have worked out fine, with me remaining unconvinced of christianities worthyness and him thinking me a bratty know-nothing kid. Unfortunately, there was an expert in the Bible sitting on the other side of him. He backed up all my arguments, even though he is a christian himself. The Father was visibly shaken afterwards, though I doubt I converted him.

Anthony Prester Tree is not a hoax. However, the loc in archtype was not to be taken too seriously. Robinson had very little to do with it. It started out as an idea by Will Norris, and eventually the whole club got into it. He needed a name no one had heard of before, and as Tony is not a fanpubber we used his name, with his permission. To further confuse matters we used Ben Sano's address.

Darrell Schweitzer, 113 Deepdale Road,
Strafford, PA 19087

Your editorial on the PO was very useful. I generally find it best to go shopping for Post Offices to mail things at. There are five within easy bicycle range of me, so I have a wide selection. Regional variations in rule interpretations and even costs are very common.

For example, I do a lot of overseas book dealing. The local PO insists that book parcels sent overseas be unsealed, which of course means they'll fall apart in mid-Atlantic. Also, they don't know about overseas book rates, so prices of mailing a package to Britain are substantially higher. I have to go elsewhere. Of the other four, 2 have lower overseas book rates and ask no questions. So I patronise these two when mailing books to Britain. The local PO also has never heard of international money orders. This is a new thing, because I used to buy them there. Then about a year ago they started to deny that such a thing had ever existed. ((Maybe you've slipped sideways into a parallel world where they never did sell the money orders, Darrell.))

The local PO is also significantly slower in mailing things, so much so that if you tell someone (a creditor) "I mailed it out of X" they'll understand the late bill. For important mail one goes elsewhere.

However, there are advantages. The local PO knows nothing about 3rd and 4th class. Last time I mailed a batch of fanzines I found that the other POs insisted that printed matter be unsealed. This meant falling out of envelopes. Also, at least 2 of the others would not let me mail a fmz as a book. The local one did, so I always mailed fanzines there of which maybe 10 would come back "improperly prepared" or something (which would mean a new envelope and try again). Also if one was undelivered a "return requested" was sufficient to get it back without charge. No one cared about the envelopes and postage due was not collected. I've never heard of such a thing. How is it supposed to be collected? (I dunno. Maybe if you habitually fail to pay up, they start wrapping your mail around a brick



and chucking it thru the front window. Myself, I'm wondering what this "improperly prepared" garbage is; If I ever got so much as 10¢ of a mailing back, I'd be tempted to go to UPS.))

I also find that "manuscript rate" can be used to one's advantage. The loss rate is still high, but not significantly higher than when I was sending them first class. Apparently no one knows that mss. rate is 4th class and sent by donkey. If I mark a large manila envelope "Miss Rate" they know it's a special rate, so they let it pass. The manuscripts seem to be arriving in the normal amount of time. (E.g., Jessie Salmonson in Zenith, Washington, gets one in about 10 days.)

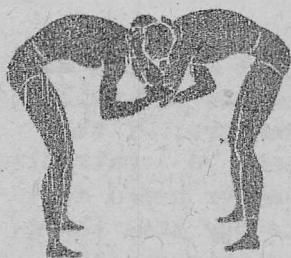
I guess I am lucky, but between the various PO's around I do pretty well. The one horror story I can tell is the time when another family went on vacation and came back to find a grocery bag full of our mail awaiting them. He didn't get theirs, so one wonders what happened to it.

John Carl, 3750 Green Lane, Butte, MT 59701

The information on the postal system was fascinating and informative. I suspect that the PO is not comprised totally of half-assed bastards, but that those who have control of the postal rates are the only ones to blame. I recently went on a tour of the local post office, and I was astounded to see how hard those fellows worked, and how seriously they took their jobs. If the system wasn't racked constantly by rate increases and layoffs and ever-increasing mail loads, we would have a most efficient system. ((Those hard-working fellows you saw were probably temporaries like I was, who were told by management, "If you work hard and don't complain during your ninety days, we might give you a permanent job when your time is up." Sur-r-r-r-r-e they will.))

Bravo to Mike Shoemaker's gentle put-down of adolescents who consider themselves adults. Speaking as a fairly young fan, I am extremely acutely aware of my youth and I don't really consider myself mature enough to take on the responsibilities that would be entailed by my leading a life away from home. So, with childish enthusiasm, I am awaiting the day that I become an adult. I hope I can do it before I die.

Brett Cox, Box 542, Tabor City, NC 28463



I wish I could think of something terribly witty and profound to say in reply to Mike Shoemaker's comment on my use of the phrase "technical adult," but I can't. Suffice it to say that I've never respected or admired anybody merely because he or she was older than I am. Age in itself is no more deserving of respect than youth in itself is. If I respect someone, be he Harlan Ellison or Teddy Kennedy or Keith Emerson (to use three highly diverse examples), it's because of his (or her) accomplishments as a human being, not his/her age. All age implies is age. I know a lot of my elders

who don't have enough sense to come in out of the rain, much less the kind of wisdom that people have been trained to expect in the aged. I will be polite to such people, simply because it's easier to be polite than it is to be honest. But don't expect me to respect them.

The above comments don't mean that I hate old people, or that I believe that the young are society's salvation. Far from it. There are just as many stupid young people as there are stupid old people. What I'm trying to say is that I strive to deal with everybody on an individual basis, ignoring (for the most part, anyway) whatever artificial (usually) subgrouping society has thrust them into. Which means that I don't automatically respect and/or admire someone merely because he or she is my elder, and I doubt that I ever will.

Getting on to less weighty matters: Regarding Mike Bracken's illo on page 27, "Doesn't really look my type" is a masterly understatement. If anything like that approached me, at a con or elsewhere, I'd run. In the other direction. Fast.

Wayne W. Martin, 4623 E. Inyo, Apt. E, Fresno, CA 93702

D'Amassa's article on you and Glicksohn's takeover of the February FANTASTIC was one of the best things I've seen in fanzines recently. Not only is it an amusing account of your stories, but it's a good self-parody. Uh, he was doing a parody of his writing, wasn't he? He wasn't? You mean he.... I see. ((Actually, I did ask Don to write the article specifically as a parody of his own "minor writers" series of articles, but he chose to lampoon the "hidden meaning" school of criticism instead. But people liked it just as well, it seemed.))

You know something, you were right in your editorial section. There aren't many comment hooks. I did, of course, like Brad's cover. The other artwork in this issue was good too. ((SEE, TH!, SEE, SEE? I'm not the only one who likes Brad's work!))

Glicksohn stepped into my arena with his comment on wrestling. I might note that he said Elwood found out that wrestling was "fixed", he didn't say it was fake. There is a bit of difference. For those who think it is fake, they might want to look up a few hospital records. In the last few years several wrestlers have died from ring injuries. Apparently they didn't fix those matches well enough. One man, Ox Baker, has killed two men in the last five years. I guess no one told him he'd win anyway.

As far as being fixed, there's no profit in most of it. In over 75% there is no purpose to fixing the match -- there is a professionally trained athlete going against someone who doesn't make a good amateur. You no more need to fix that match than you would a football game between the Miami Dolphins and the local high school team of your choice. In another 20% of the matches, it doesn't matter who wins, because regardless the loser can scream foul or fast count or something and get a rematch. One misconception is the idea that things are "fixed" so the good guy always wins. In actual fact, the bad guy, the "villian", has a tendency to win more frequently than they lose.

Locally they have changed several of the villians to good guys simply because no competition could be found to make a good fight of it. That's where the fix is. The promoter sets the matches and tells them who is the good guy and who is the bad guy (but he keeps it consistent within an area unless he makes a "nig change"). The titles are also hoaxes, of course. Other than five or six major titles, every city has their own set of champions billing them from everything from state champs to world champs in some areas.

((But, Wayne, if the wrestling isn't faked, why does it look so fake? During the last Olympics, some of the wrestling matches were televised and that looked real. It also held my interest. The last time I saw some tv wrestlers, tho, for just one instance, in the middle of a match, the referee turned his back on the "wrestlers" and pointedly stared at the ceiling while the bad guy gave sucker punches to the good guy. That sort of thing isn't fake? That sort of thing isn't fixed? I find that hard to believe.))

Elst Weinstein, APDO 6-869, Guadalajara 6, Jalisco, MEXICO

I am tempted to try to explain Mexican Postal systems, but I am constantly reminded that no such entity exists. I once sent a letter to somebody in New York with a first class postage stamp, but marked "By Airmail" only. I know it usually takes about four days or so for cross-country mail, but this letter took over two weeks. Someone actually does read the things people put on letters.

Gary A. Arthurs, 815 N. Hayden Rd., #D-15, Scottsdale, AZ 85257

The section on postal markings was enlightening. I have used 2nd class. When I was selling comics thru RBCC the clerk at the local post office insisted that I send them 2nd class because NPP (National Periodical Publications, Inc. -- the DC/Superman people) had a 2nd class permit. I was going to explain that I wasn't NPP and that I was reselling the comics but right next to the permit statement he was reading was the NOT FOR RESALE statement. I was afraid that he'd misinterpret that too. It worked out OK. I got cheap rates and no complaints from customers.

Ben P. Indick, 428 Sagamore Ave., Teaneck, NJ 07666

How about sending letters "collect", like phone calls or COD packages? It would open up fan-pubbing tremendously. Faneds, frightened of high postage, could concentrate on the zines (their proper focus anyway) and leave the acceptance up to the recipient. Thus, my GODLESS ~~FX~~ comes, postage collect 16¢. I debate refusing it or accepting it, and finally take it. It costs me a mere few pennies, but your 150 x 16¢ amounts to a fair savings, which can be applied to taking the gang at the PO out to MacDonald's for what passes for hamburgers. ((That's the most diabolical thing I've heard in my life, Ben. I can just see it now, when the body of a crudzine editor is found, an empty sleeping pill bottle at his side, and a note: "I knew there was no reason to go on when my zine came back from Harry Garner marked REFUSED."))

D. Gary Grady, 3309 Spruill Ave., #5, Charleston, SC 29405

There is nothing, and I mean nothing lower than someone who steals books from libraries. I have gone looking for a book any number of times and found it to be (a) in the card catalog, (b) stolen, and (c) out of print.

The Canadian armed forces are not all that bad. They have an outstanding sense of humor. A few crewmembers off HMCS MARGAREE put Salvo tablets in the fountain at the Federal Building in Wilmington, NC, a few years back.

Actually, Canada has another military service: ours. It must be nice to be able to sit back and spend most of your budget on useful things and let someone else carry the vast expense of a military machine to defend your country. And then act superior about it all!

Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Dr., East Providence, RI 02914

Mike Shoemaker has twice insisted now that the West Virginia school board was forcing people to read books. (1) All of the news accounts I read said that the controversial books were on the optional reading lists. This may, of course, be and error. (2) I was forced to read Silas Marner, Joby Dick, David Copperfield, and various other things I didn't like. So what? Public education by its very nature implies that people will have to listen to things they don't want to hear. If Mike means that we should do away with the current public education system, then I agree with him completely. If he means that the West Va school board was acting above its authority, he's completely, totally wrong. If I need medicine, I take a doctor's word for it, even if I don't like the medicine. Similarly, I would have to be awfully upset before I would take my child out of a school system because of a text book. If I didn't like what my child was being told, I'd make sure he heard an alternate viewpoint at home. But I wouldn't deprive other children of material that they might want to read on that basis. The rights of the non-protesting parents, and of all the children involved, seems to be totally forgotten by the protestors. (Does Mike know, incidentally, as a not too relevant point, that the protest was financed chiefly by the John Birch Society and ~~UNK~~?)

Al Sirois, 533 Chapel St., New Haven, CT 06511

I tried Larry Downes' method of finding a working soda machine at Discon (isn't it odd that he and I both arrived at the same solution independently?), but after screaming "Fiawol!" six times, the only thing that happened was that the wall to my left opened up magically, and Mike Gorra appeared and smacked me in the mouth. After which he tried to shake me down to sub to RANDOM.

I think I'll stick to bheer at cons. Worldoons, anyway....

Laurine White, 5408 Leader Ave., Sacramento, CA 95841

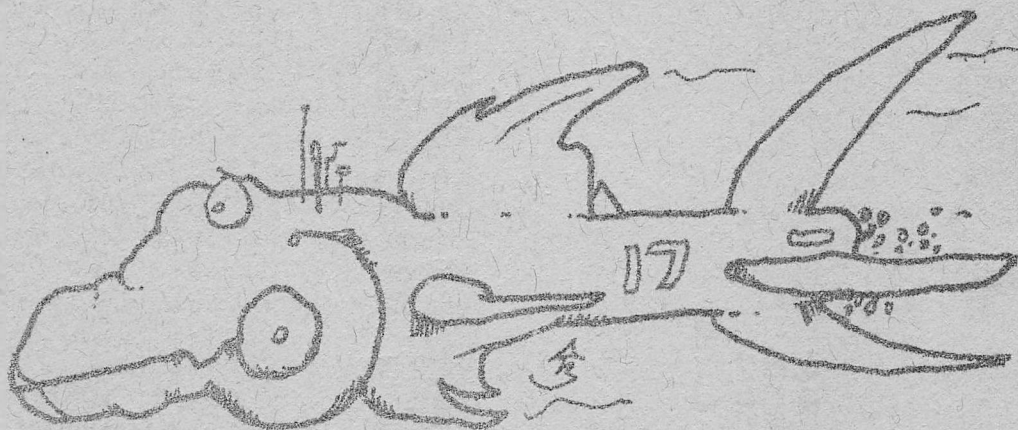
If Ray Bowie wants a female s&s barbarian, he could read Jirel of Joiry by C.L. Moore or look for Red Sonja in Marvel Comics. ((I have been on the lookout for the Jirel book for years, ever since I first heard of it; I have yet to see a copy.)) Some of the old Italian sword & sandal epics had female-female fights

in the arena. Those weren't the better films though. And Pam Grier was in a movie last year called "The Arena", which had girls fighting in a Roman arena. He might enjoy the fight scenes if he could sit through the rest of this turkey. ((When I was in the army, I remember seeing one of those Italian flicks at the post theater. There was this one scene where one of the Amazons was hung by her feet from a post over a bunch of sharpened stakes on the ground, her hands tied and a torch slowly burning thru the rope. To escape, she had to get out of the upside-down position and climb up the rope with her hands tied before it burned thru. This was not easy for her, since she was also half-naked, well-built, and her breasts kept hanging down in her face...and why does this subject keep coming up whenever I get a letter from you?)) ((The Amazon didn't make it, incidentally; they used a lot of ketchup in the flick.))

Sam Long, Box 4946, Patrick AFB, FL 32925

I know what Glicksohn means when he says he's found himself reported as being in room parties he doesn't remember -- and vice versa. At Discon, I was -- or must have been -- sitting right opposite Mike Gorra, listening to Bob Tucker ramble on at an Aussiecon party. Yet neither of us remembers the other. Actually, Mike Glicksohn needs little introduction these days -- tho at Seacon in Coventry, England this past easter, I was asked a couple of times, "Who's that Yank in the Aussie hat?" I had to reply that that was no Yank, that was Mike G., a subject of HM QE II just like everybody else at the con except the "real" Yanks and the dozen or so Continentals.

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Mike Bracken, Sutton Breiding, Gil Gaier, David D. Ginsburg, Dave Jenrette, Mike Kring, Tim Marion, Bill Morris, Ron Salomon, Chris Sherman, Steve Simmons, Dave Szurek, Bruce Townley, Neal Vilgus, and anyone else who I've forgotten to mention. Considering the amount of cutting and slicing I did to keep the locs down to nine pages, I wouldn't be surprised to find I'm a descendant of Jack the Ripper and/or Fannie Ruth Judd. This is the most tightly edited lettercolumn I've ever done, and I'm not particularly happy with it. To me, it reads something like the Creature would look if Baron Frankenstein had only used half the available parts. Well, as most people say.



* * * * *

(WE ALSO SPAY CATS, continued...)

Do you think that -- just occasionally -- I could borrow that lovely instrument? Just to, er, admire it?"

Mercator stared at the chef, who returned his gaze. Both men came to an instant understanding and, as one, they grabbed Miss Hern and headed for the nearby coat-room. Mercator felt for his scalpel and tried to remember the old techniques he'd learned so long ago.

After all, he reasoned, a woman's anatomy couldn't be too unlike a cat's.

—Rich Bartucci

LAST MINUTE NOTES:

I also heard from: Don Ayres, Steve Beatty, Dennis Bowden, David Ginsburg, Lynne Holdom, Eric Lindsay, Steve Sawicki, Steve Simmons, Paul Skelton, and Neal Wilgus. I'll probably print part of these late locs next issue.

Changes of Address:

Don Ayres, c/o Gregory Productions, 6565 Fountain Ave., #10, Hollywood, CA 90028

Michael Carlson, 3577 Lorne Ave., #9, Montreal PQ, CANADA

Gordon Garb, PO Box 1866, Ft. Collins, CO 80522

Mike Glycer, 14974 Osceola St., Sylmar, CA 91342

Patrick Hayden, 206 St. George St., #910, Toronto, Ontario M5R 2N6, CANADA

Miscellaneous: I encountered a few repro problems running this issue off. I procrastinated long enough to get new ink pads and use the new electric machine after all. Then I found out that this put greater tension on the stencils, and these Brand X stencils tended to split and tear.... *sigh* I've decided to use these cheap stencils only on short run apazines from here on, and go back to the good stencils for GODLESS and UNDULANT FEVER.

I've been writing fewer and fewer locs for the last month or so, and it's down to about zero. I feel somewhat guilty about it, and there's a possibility that I'll switch over to pu bing yet another zine, devoted to short zine reviews and comments, meanwhile using my irregular column in KARASS to do a more in-depth look at one or two zines. But of course, all this is only a possibility, and I'm sure I'll make up my mind Real Soon Now....

Bruce D. Arthurs
920 N. 82nd St., H-201
Scottsdale, AZ 85257
USA

Wayne MacDonald
1284 York Mills Rd., #410
Don Mills, Ont. M3A 1Z2
CANADA

THIRD CLASS MAIL
Printed Matter Only
ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTS
Forwarding & Return
Postage Guaranteed

