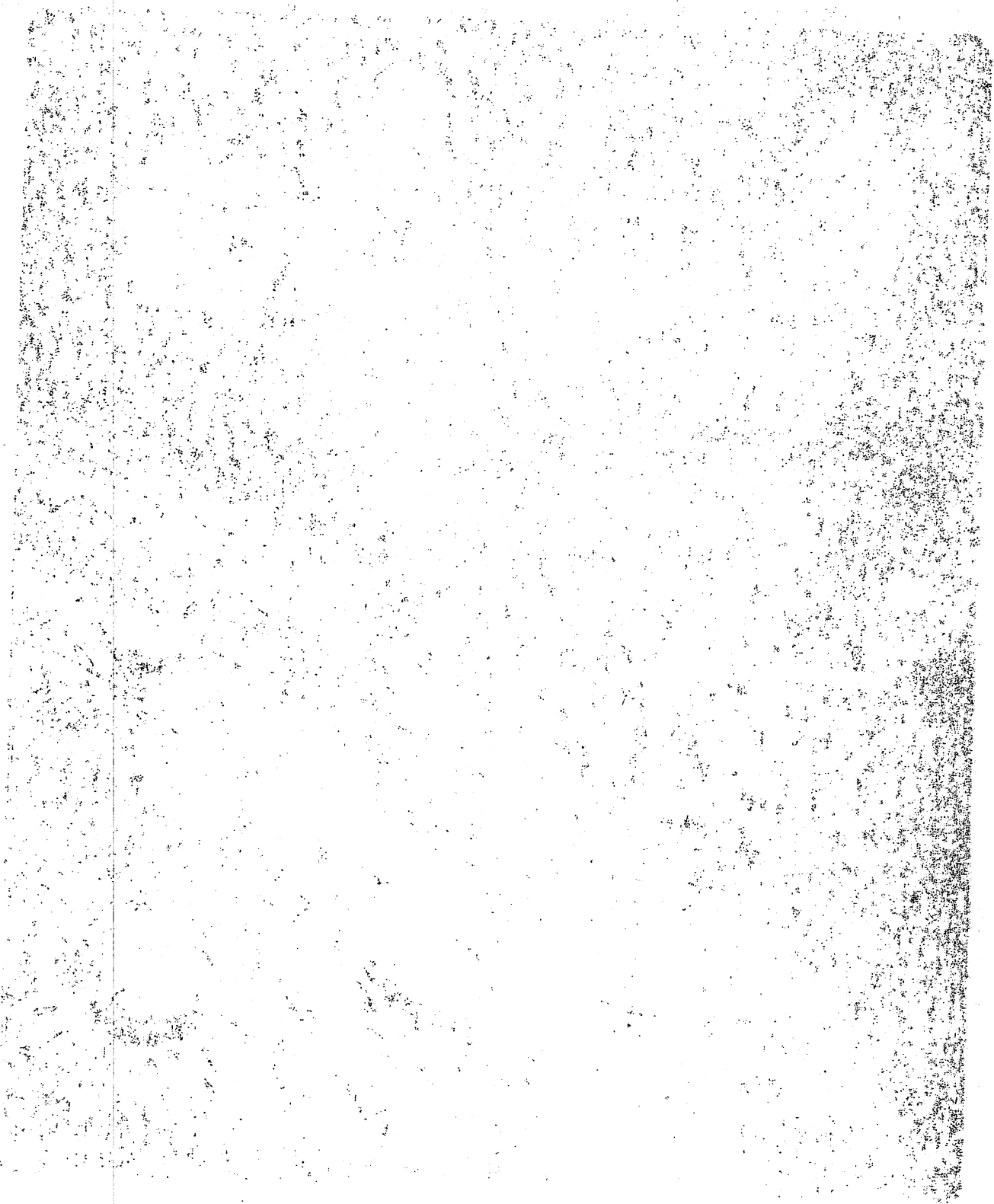


# Godless







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# GODLESS

## FIFTH FIFTH ANNISH

### CONTENTS --

Cover	
Al Sirois.....	cover
Table of Contents.....	1
The King in Plural editorial.....	2
The Frog In God's Throat Rich Bartucci.....	7
Sketchy Thots On Fanart Eric Mayer.....	15
Close to the Edge - RSN and You Mike Kring.....	18
Reviews! Wayne Hooks and Eric Lindsay.....	21
Art Folio Glen Brock.....	insert
Sermon On the Fount Curt Stubbs.....	25
Reply From A Male Humanist Pig D. Gary Grady.....	27
Mindspeak letters.....	29

ART -- Al Sirois - cover, 21, 29, Tim C. Marion - 1, Mike Bracken - 2, 20, 26, 27, Bruce Townley - 7, 13, 32, 33, 38, 39, bacover, Alexis Gilliland - 8, 23, Dave Fryxell - 9, 10, Barry Kent MacKay - 12, 18, 19, 22, Dave Barnett - 14, Eric Mayer - 15, 16, 17, Terry Jeeves - 24, 28, Skip Olson - 25



# THE KING IN PLURAL

HRUMPH! ANOTHER  
ONE OF THOSE  
GODLESS TYPES.



WELCOME TO THE GODLISH This issue of GODLESS marks the fifth year that I've been publishing fanzines. It's changed a great deal from that first, ten-page, dittoed creation with a print run of 75. And I've changed even more, from that insecure, ultra conservative adolescent. But there's one thing that hasn't changed -- it's still fun to publish fanzines. Discouraging at times, yes. Tiring at times, yes. But it's all worth it when those letters start to come in, liking the most recent issue or discussing the subjects raised. I love fandom and fanpubbing, so I wish that the next section of this editorial didn't have to deal with the less enjoyable matters I've ever written about fandom. But, type we must....

OH, WE'LL HANG CRAIG MILLER FROM A SOUR APPLE TREE... As you may have heard from various sources, Phoenix is bidding for the 1978 Worldcon, in competition with Los Angeles. Right here is where I should go into a soft-shoe about how great the Phoenix facilities are and how enthusiastic and hard-working the Phoenix committee is. However, instead I'm going to indulge in some anti-LA propaganda.

Or to be more exact, some anti-Craig Miller propaganda. Which, as anyone would no doubt say, is a dirty trick and unethical and all that. Maybe so, but I'm responding to what I feel are misrepresentations, distortions and innuendoes on Craig's part, designed to prejudice fans against voting for Phoenix to hold the '78 Worldcon -- thereby leaving Los Angeles as the only remaining choice for that Worldcon. Craig Miller is a member of the LA in '78 bidding committee.

Craig Miller also publishes a "newszine" called SFINCTOR. In SFINCTOR #9, Craig devotes all of page 11 to comparing the Phoenix and LA bids. He points out that the LA committee has more experience amongst them, and that this experience is with larger conventions than the Phoenix people have handled to date. He also points out that the Phoenix people's bid is planning on a convention spread over two large hotels and a convention center (all within one block of each other), while LA plans to hold its Worldcon in one mammoth hotel. Which are reasonable points to raise. (Though would it be unfair of me to point out that the Bonaventure, the LA hotel, is still under construction? One workman's strike, or financial troubles among the backers, and the '78 Worldcon might end up being held in a half-completed building.



The Phoenix people know whereof we speak -- the Hyatt Regency, the main hotel we would be using, had such trouble and the first convention held there, for a large cattleman's group, shared the place with carpenters and plasterers.)

But there are also those misrepresentations and distortions I mentioned to consider. Here's a quote from that SFINCTOR --

I may be prejudiced, but I don't think it affects my stating that they don't have the experience to put on a Worldcon. A Worldcon is not 'like putting on a 200 person con, only bigger'. It's a whole different animal, with different needs and problems.

Did you catch the sneaky he pulled in that paragraph? Notice how he put quote marks around the latter part of that one sentence? Notice how it looks like he's actually quoting some specific person there? Who's he quoting, though? From the context, it appears he's quoting a member of the Phoenix bidding committee, doesn't it? Is Craig Miller quoting a member of the Phoenix committee?

No, he is not. Damn it all, we know better than to think a Worldcon can be run just like a small regional! Nobody could make such a dumb statement and be serious about it, and Craig Miller is fully aware of this. C'mon, Craig! Name your sources! Who said it? Where? When? Under what circumstances? Or did anyone at all say it?

Let's try a second quote --

Phoenix is also bidding for the 1978 Westercon, with approximately the same committee. Westercon is only 2 months prior to Worldcon. Not even LA is foolhardy enough to tackle both.

Well, maybe LA isn't foolhardy enough to tackle both, but Craig Miller certainly is. Craig Miller is not only on the LA in '78 Worldcon bidding committee, but he is also on the committee bidding for a '78 Westercon in LA, as is Mike Glycer.

And while we're at it, let's take a look at that LA Westercon bid too. To do that, I'm going to have to indulge in some anti-Mike Glycer propaganda for a moment. Which is a shame, since Mike is a likeable guy and I've always enjoyed his fanzines, but....

Mike is in charge of this year's Westercon publications. This means he's responsible for putting all the material for the Progress Reports together -- including advertising -- and getting it published.

OK, now, Tim Kyger -- who's in charge of advertising and publicity for the Phx Westercon bid -- sent in an ad for our Westercon bid to appear in WESTERCON PR #4. I'll be the first to admit that the ad he came up with...to be blunt...sucked. Unfortunately, due to an eleventh-hour notification from Glycer that the ad deadline for the PR was nearly upon us (we finally received information on what the ad deadlines would be two weeks before that deadline, and only one week after Glycer had been personally asked at Leprecon 2 if he had any vague idea of when the deadline would be and had replied negatively), Tim had no opportunity to show his ad to the rest of the Phx committee -- for which he will probably be beaten over the head with a 2x4 for the next six months by the committee. I'll reproduce the ad below --

SMUTZ!

SMUST?

HUH?

WELL, WHATEVER IT IS

Phoenix has it!

If you want to see a  
Westercon with SMUTZ  
vote for...

PHOENIX IN '78!



FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE  
BID, WRITE PO BOX 1749  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85001

PHOENIX IN '78.

Now that's just awful. Particularly in the last PR before the actual convention, a bid's ad should say something. That ad doesn't, and it places the responsibility upon the reader to write and learn about the bid, instead of the information being given to him, as a decent ad would. The LA ad in the same PR gave that sort of information. But....

But the LA ad appeared on the facing page of the Phx ad, and let's take a look at how it's first line went --

If you're disinterested in Smutz and Putz....

Now it's damned obvious from that line that Glycer, as a member of the opposing Westercon bid, took advantage of his position of publisher of the progress report to hold back publication until the Phoenix ad arrived, then devised an ad specifically designed against the Phoenix bid's ad, and furthermore, placed the ads so that they would be read in the "proper" order. Highly improper, I'd put it myself. Damn near crooked, even.

However, to give Mike Glycer his due, I strongly suspect that the actual ad copy of the LA ad was written by Craig Miller. The ad is loaded with more of the misrepresentations and distortions that I've come to know as Millerisms. An example below --

Craig Miller, our Hotel Liason, is last year's Westercon co-chairman, and with a dozen conventions behind him probably has more hotel experience than anyone. Even our opposition has sought his advice.

When Curt Stubbs of the Phoenix committee, a mild-mannered, pacifistic person, read that last line, steam came out of his ears. Curt Stubbs is the member of the Phx committee who "sought advice" from Craig Miller. Only not in the way Craig Miller implies. The implication of the ad is that we've sought Craig Miller's advice on hotels. Absolutely untrue! We don't need Craig Miller's advice. (And when we remember that the 1975 Westercon -- which Craig Miller was Co-Chairman for -- was held in the Oakland Leamington, one of the most godawful hotels in anyone's experience, we don't even want Craig Miller's advice on hotels!) Curt himself has spent a great many hours learning all he can about hotels, contracts, et cetera. In addition, another local fan is Jim Webbert, an actual Worldcon Committee veteran. Though not serving on the Phoenix Worldcon bid, he is on the Westercon bidding committee, and is fully capable of hotel arrangements. Jim has also been very helpful with and is more or less an "advisor" to our Worldcon bid. The "advice" Curt Stubbs did seek from Craig Miller was simple information on how the working Westercon committee was set up and organized.

Let's have one last quote from the LA Westercon bid's ad --

And we will be speaking for ourselves -- we will have a policy of complete financial disclosure. CONVENTION PROFITS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED BY A VOTE OF THE ATTENDEES, if profits there be.

Now, when they say that "we" will have complete financial disclosure, this implies that somebody else won't. Who, by implication, is that somebody else? Why, the Phoenix Westercon bidding committee, that's who! They're implying that we're a bunch of crooks! And if we object, why, they'll just say that they didn't mean us at all, nosirree.

But who did they mean, then? Well, it's digging up old dirt, but I'll do it



anyway. What the LA ad was referring to was the "Spectre of '72", as one local fan termed it.

See, back in 1972, the Worldcon was held in Los Angeles (incidentally, so was the Westercon that year), and that convention made a sizable profit. Most of the profits were distributed to the next Worldcon, various fan funds, and other worthy causes. But there was about \$2500 dollars that, some fans accused, made its way into the LASFS Building Fund and was eventually spent on the LASFS Clubhouse. The LACon committee denied such accusations, and there were many hard feelings and a great deal of invective. After much time had passed, a financial report was finally issued on that Worldcon, but even this did not satisfy many fans, and the hard feelings continued on, eventually dropping out of the public eye when it had been discussed and argued in so many fanzines for so long that everyone was thoroughly sick of the subject. And that's why Craig Miller and company are so concerned about making it clear that they will clearly account for all funds.

(By the way, LASFS is discussing whether or not they should expand their clubhouse. [Source -- Harry Andruschak, LASFS member.] Such an expansion would cost a great deal of money.)

(That last paragraph was dirty. But true.)

The thing is this -- If you want to make a fair and honest choice for what city the '78 Worldcon or Westercon will be held in, you have to have fair and impartial information on the different bids. When a member of a bid puts out slanted, distorted and prejudicial information concerning the opposing bid, you're not able to make that fair and honest choice.

Our publicity approach for the Phoenix bid (for both cons) has been a major subject of discussion for the committee's members. Our decision has been to avoid any "anti-LA" approach and instead concentrate on Phoenix's assets. We have tried to show that we are making plans and that we will be able to handle a full-fledged Worldcon or Westercon. Even both, if that should happen.

Which is more than the LA bids have been doing. In our Worldcon campaign, for example, we put out a flyer telling who we are, and naming the hotels and facilities we've already lined up. Up until then, there had been almost no information concerning the LA bid other than the fact that they were bidding. After our flyer came out, LA responded with a flyer of its own, concentrating on the experience of its people and stating that they would be using only one hotel, the Bonaventure. I don't know about the rest of fandom, but that bit of news was new to the people here in Phoenix -- we had been under the impression that LA had been planning on using the LA Marriott Hotel. LA had not made its plans and preparations clear to fandom, and so fandom (Phoenix fandom, at least) had been laboring under a misapprehension.

Until now, Phoenix has been quite successful, I'd say, in its policy of avoiding any publicity that would seem to be anti-LA in approach. But when someone like Craig Miller drops a shitload upon us, I will not stand still for it, nor will I go hide under the nearest tree. I'll do my damndest to toss that shitload right back where it belongs, and I think the examples I've quoted have made my point. (Not only that, but the examples I've quoted are what finally convinced me to re-join the Phx Worldcon bid. I had resigned from the committee about two months ago, after a breakdown in communications had left one part of the committee unaware of what the other was doing. However, I've still been attending the meetings in an unofficial capacity, and the breakdown seems to have been fully repaired by a slight reorganization. And after reading the SFINCTOR and WESTERCON PR material and seeing what sort of levels some of LA's people can sink to, my attitude is, frankly, "Anyone but LA.")

All of which is not to say that the Phoenix bid is perfect and good and true. The lack of experience with large conventions among the committee members isn't something that worries just people from LA -- I'll admit to a bit of hesitation on that point myself. But the Phoenix people are willing to try, they're enthusiastic, they've already taken steps to prepare for such a convention in the event they win, and I think that CACTUSCON I (or whatever we'd call it) in 1978 could turn out to



be a very enjoyable Worldcon.

SELECTRIC UBER ALLES! Getting on to a more enjoyable subject for a while, you might have noticed the differing typefaces. Yep, I done got myself a Selectric. And not just a Selectric, but a Selectric II, with six type balls thrown in, and all for only six hundred dollars, which is quite a good price. There's only one major idiosyncrasy about the machine, and that's that when I try to type a ;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;;; or a ::::::::::::::::::::::::::::::, it tends to repeat itself. Ah well. Probably a sticky contact point or somesuch, and shouldn't prove too difficult to have fixed. In the meantime, I'm just avoiding typing those particular symbols.

One of the special features of the Selectric II is its dual pitch, meaning that it can be set for either 12 characters to the inch (like the above paragraph) or for 10 characters per inch, as this paragraph is. (Since I'm using an elite ball at the moment, the letters look a bit more widely spaced than they should.

Does this mean that GODLESS is going to become a Fancy Fanzine, a competitor to OUTWORLDS and ALGOL? Not on your life, buddy. While I find OW and ALGOL lovely to look at, I'm also aware of how much pure work goes into them. I'm more the informal sort.

But that doesn't mean that I don't appreciate the ease of typing on a Selectric, or that I don't recognize that it'll make GODLESS more legible and attractive, even if I don't use it to its full capabilities. (Incidentally, most of this issue was typed before I got the new machine, so is still typed on a manual Smith-Corona with flying capitals. Next issue, tho, will be all-electric.)

THE LAST WORD I want to finish typing this issue up today and start running it off tomorrow, so I'll use the rest of this page for some CoAs --

Alyson Abramowitz, (til 25 Aug 76) 638 Valmont Pl., Elmont, NY 11003, (after 25 August) 4921 Forbes Ave., #205E, Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
Michael Carlson, 3585 Ave. Lorne, #7 (change in apt #), Montreal, PQ, H2X 2A4, CANADA

Wayne Hooks, 2200 Chalfont Dr., #28, Richmond, VA 23224  
Ken Josenhans, 7602 Vicar Place, New Carrollton, MD 20784 (summer)  
Lord Jim Kennedy, 1859 E. Fairfield, Mesa, AZ 85203 (summer)  
Mike Kring, 6250 Indian School Rd. NE, #A-302, Albuquerque, NM 87110  
Gary & Denise Mattingly, PO Box 04097, Detroit, MI 48204  
Melanie Solt, Box 546, Manson, Iowa 50563

And here's a few more CoAs for GODLESS readers I picked up from the latest KARASS --

Ro & Lin Lutz-Nagey, 3773 Parkdale Rd., Cleveland Hts., OH 44121  
David Ginsburg, 801 Kewadin Village, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858 (and I'm afraid I didn't have room after all this issue to include the results of his research on Thomas Crapper. Sorry, Dave.)  
Pete Presford, 2 Maxwell Close, Buckley, Chwyd, Cymru, UNITED KINGDOM  
Jostein Saakvitne, Stasjonsvegen 37, N-5050 Nesttun, NORWAY  
D. Gary Grady, USS Dewey (DDG45), FPO New York, NY 09501 (I presume that this is temporary while Gary's ship is overseas for a few months.)

And that, I think, is it for this issue. I regret I had to spend so much time and paper on a subject so depressing to write about, but I felt it was something that had to be said. Hard feelings may result from it, and I regret that, but I'm not about to stand by while such behavior goes on.

- BRUCE D. ARTHURS



# THE FROG IN GOD'S THROAT



Captain Milord Baron Eustace by the Grace of God Marquis of Inkermann and All the Spaces Thereabouts, Baron Wexler of the House of Wexler and Privy Keeper of the Hegemonic Seal, looked distastefully at the communications flimsy he held twixt thumb and forefinger.

"Are you sure that that's what they found?" he said to the midshipman of the watch.

"Yessir," replied the youngster. "The alien ship was full to the scuppers with empty beer cans and one passenger, dead drunk."

Eustace shook his head grimly. "And you say that the passenger died during the rescue? I thought the ship was captured successfully."

"Oh, it was, Captain. The space tug Truculent was able to slap a tractor

---

RICH BARTUCCI



beam on it before it could plunge into the swimming pool at the New Palermo Hilton. The crew opened it up after they made the recovery and Truculent's pharmacist's mate slugged the passenger with a hypo full of vitamin B to sober him up." The middle made a thumbs-down gesture. "Pfft. He must've been alllergic to thiamine or something."

"Um. Very well, Mr. Theobald; you may return to the communications room."

The midshipman saluted smartly and about-faced, the effect spoiled somewhat as his dress sword got between his legs and brought him to the deck with a dull thud. Wexler tactfully ignored the lad's scramblings and fell to musing.

The Imperial Hegemonic Federation of Man had not until this moment encountered a sapient alien race. Indeed, man had long ago given up the hope of ever finding a companion species with which to share the universe. Intelligence, like venereal disease, seemed to be limited to H. sapiens.

And now -- some kind of scoutcraft containing a single occupant in suspended animation. Or at least so sozzled as to be totally oblivious to the passage of time. The creatures who had launched this unfortunate explorer on his way had been at least as highly civilized as man.

He glanced at the holograph that had accompanied the communication. The flaccid form of the alien spaceman lay spread upon a morgue slab, it's leathery purple skin gleaming wetly. Perhaps two meters tall, it was lopsidedly asymmetrical. The right arm was massively muscled while the left was soda-straw frail. The alien's three eyes, arranged in a squat triangle, were closed in death, and an idiotic alcoholic grin lingered on the broad, fleshy-lipped mouth. A crumpled beer can lay clutched in the powerful right fist.

The Admiralty had made itself clear enough; as the commander of the only major Imperial warship in the sector, the investigation of this uncanny intruder was his responsibility. If possible, he was to follow up any likely leads he might obtain and thereby seek out the alien's homeworld.

Eustace was confident that he would come away from this first encounter with the unnamed aliens in good order. His vessel, the heavy cruiser Westmoreland, was the pride of the Imperial fleet, and his crew was of the finest sort. His only worry was that he might, by some slip, reveal militarily important information to this new -- and possibly hostile -- race.

That was something to worry about later; first, he must find the alien's homeworld, and for that he would need scientific assistance. Reaching down to press a button on his desktop comm unit, Baron Wexler called the bridge. "Mr. Grote," he said, speaking to his first officer, "I expect several scientists from the Technical Institute at New Palermo. When they arrive, please send them down here to my cabin."

With a curt "Aye, aye," Grote acknowledged the order and Eustace turned to study the holograph. He was still staring at it when, ten minutes later, two raps sounded on his door.

At Wexler's "Come in!" the door slid aside to admit Dr. Wenzio Scostumati and Dr. Georg Kledge, both department chiefs at the Institute.

"Sit down, gentlemen," said Eustace, indicating chairs. "I want to know everything you've found out about the passenger of the alien ship."

Kledge, an eminent exobiologist, cleared his throat. "Milord, my department has spent over forty-five hours examining the alien's cadaver. We've discovered that its eyes were severely cataracted -- so much so that it must've been almost blind. Its gender was male





-- as you can guess from the holograph; the external genitalia are enormous -- which implies that there is also a female counterpart in the race. The right hand, which is more heavily muscled, is covered with a fine lanugo or down, and there was much punctuate scarring across the face and back. Two of my anatomists came down with nervous prostration while trying to trace out the digestive tract, which seems to funnel through a complicated series of twists and turns." He cleared his throat again. "It's rather like a waste-processing plant, but with no outlet. Very confusing."

"I understand he was drunk when his ship was captured," said Vexler. "Was his death the result of that damned pharmacist's mate's meddling?"

Kledge shrugged. "The liver -- or what passes for it -- was extensively cirrhotosed, M'Lord. I doubt if a B<sub>1</sub> overdose was the real culprit."

"Um. Thank you, Doctor." Vexler turned to Scostumati. "Your department is Astrophysics, isn't it, sir? What have you been able to learn of the alien's point of origin?"

Scostumati grunted and lifted a portable holographic projector from his briefcase. Setting it on the table, he flipped out the lights in the cabin and turned the device so that it projected against a flat-white expanse of bulkhead. "As nearly as we can determine, M'Lord, the alien came from the star we call the Frog in God's Throat." He slipped a holo into the receiver and a picture of the midnight sky over New Palermo appeared on the opposite wall.

"As you can see, an enormous black nebula, similar to the Coal Sack, is visible through the entire year. Inasmuch as it's bounded by two continuous arcs of first-magnitude stars -- the Uppers and the Loweres, I believe they're called -- it's referred to as the Mouth of God."

Eustace stared at the holo and struggled to suppress an involuntary yawn.

"This green star, almost in the center of the Mouth, is called the Frog. It has never been surveyed, as it is over 42 light-years from New Sicily, the nearest Imperial base. No hyperspace tram lines have been plotted to the Frog as no one thought it to be of any potential use to mankind."

The Zamanigian Drive had enabled humanity to glide instantly from star to star along four-dimensional wrinkles in time and space. These tram lines had been discovered by accident when an Armenian astronaut at Luna Base had incorporated two hundred feet of fine copper, silver and nyluronium wire into a carpet he'd been weaving to pass the time. When he'd finished the last stitch, he found himself in orbit around Sigma Draconis VI.

"Have you put your men to work plotting the tram line to the Frog, sir?" Eustace looked grim. "I understand that such a tram line must exist."

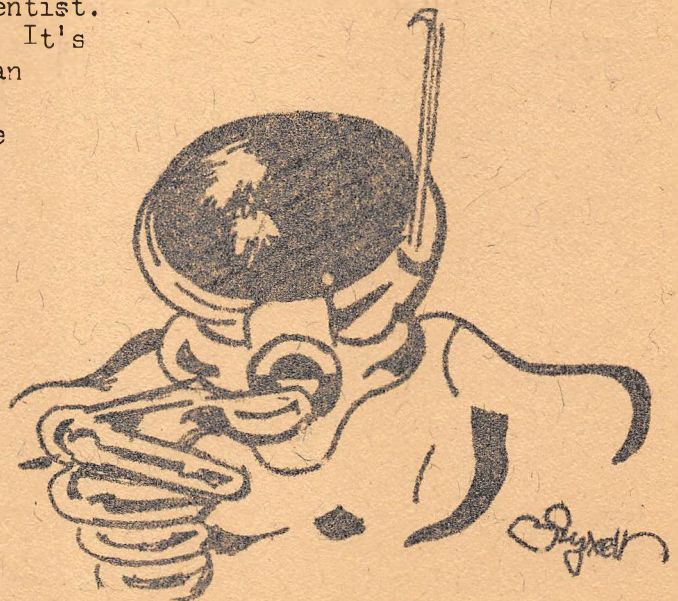
"Oh, true, M'Lord," replied the scientist.

"It's intrinsic to the nature of space. It's simply a matter of finding the Zamanigian Transfer Locus -- the ZTL -- that leads from New Sicily system to the Frog. The distance involved means that the ZTL would be located rather deep within the gravity well of the system -- perhaps even inside a planet or an asteroid."

"Find it," ordered Vexler, his jaw set. "My orders are to seek out the alien's world of origin and investigate it. I intend to take Westmoreland into the Mouth of God."

\* \* \*

The eighty-thousand-ton bulk of





Westmoreland hovered majestically over the rippling surface of the water. Captain Wexler's eyes blazed as he regarded Scostumati.

"Do you mean to tell me that I've got to submerge my ship in that?" He pointed at the viewscreen, his finger trembling with rage.

"I'm afraid so, M'Lord." Scostumati looked phlegmatically at the dark liquid below. "My calculations place the ZTL about fifty meters below the surface and twenty-five meters north of the number-seven pumping station."

Wexler closed his eyes and rubbed at them painfully. From between set teeth came the order: "Helmsman, take 'er down."

Gracefully, silently, Westmoreland sank into the depths of the main holding tank of the New Palermo Municipal Sewage Treatment Center.

\* \* \*

The shifting greys of interspace changed abruptly to the cold, clean blackness of normality and Wexler stared out at the glowing green ember that was the target of his quest.

"Mr. Grote," he said tersely to his first officer, "You will please remember to take out a crew and hose down the hull the very first time we touch ground." The pale-faced exec could only nod.

"Sir," came young Theotald's voice from the comm room. "We're picking up a lot of radio traffic from the fourth planet."

"Hm. Get the cypher specialists to work on it. Maybe we can figure it out before we make contact with the Froggies." Froggies? The word had sprung up out of nowhere, and Eustace instantly regretted uttering it.

"M'Lord," suggested Scostumati, "We might do well to stand off from the planet if it's occupied. The Froggies might take offense at a visit by a warship like Westmoreland."

"Bugger the offense," replied Wexler. "I get my ship crapped up like a cosmic honey-bucket for this mission and you expect me to sit back and wait for them to make the first move? Mr. Grote! Put us in tight orbit around Frog IV, and tell your detector monitors to keep a sharp lookout for any hostile moves on the Froggies' part."

"Aye, aye!" called Grote, who turned to bellow orders at the bridge crew. Westmoreland churned inexorably through the void toward its meeting with destiny.

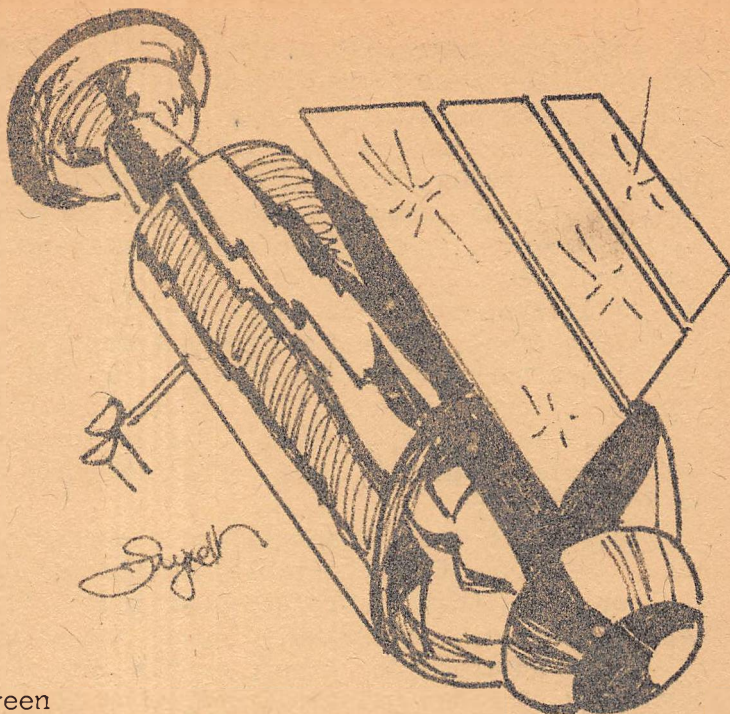
\* \* \*

It didn't take long for the Froggies to spot Westmoreland's reaction-drive flame. An odd-looking concatenation of spheres, cubes, and toroids was swimming into the viewscreens before the Imperial ship could shape orbit.

"What do you think, Mr. Grote?" asked Eustace.

"Damned if I know, Captain," replied the perplexed first officer. "It looks like it was thrown together by a blind shipwright under the influence of strong drink."

"That may well be," interjected Kledge. "As cataracted as their eyes are, they should be able to see very little. And they may imbibe alcohol more frequent-





ly than humans."

"Hm." Eustace stared hard at the image. "Does it carry anything in the way of weaponry, Mr. Grote?"

"How the hell should I know, sir? The whole damned thing could be a weapon -- a flying laser cannon, a torpedo, a wagon full of clapped-up joy-girls -- what the devil have we got to go on?"

"Nothing. We'll see what we can learn from talking to it. Comm room, get me a radio frequency and let's try to hail it."

"Yessir," replied Theobald. "We're ready, sir."

"Ahem! This is Captain Eustace Wexler of the Imperial heavy cruiser Westmoreland. We come in peace." After all, he thought to himself, there's nothing more peaceful than a dead alien....

"Greetings, Westmoreland," came the reply, in surprisingly cheery English. "Being so gracious as to drop all shieldings nicely so as to permit on-coming of visitors, yes?"

"Uk. Ah, yes, uh, whom am I addressing? Er, who are you?"

"Commentator Quasimodo, being so pleased as to open portals, hey?"

Eustace glanced at Grote, and then at Kledge and Scostumati. None of them could do more than shake their heads and shrug. Helplessly, Eustace turned back to the viewscreen.

"Very well, Commentator Quasimodo. You may board by way of cargo port one. Mr. Grote, get 'er open."

The crew of Westmoreland watched in fascination as an oblate spheroid detached itself from the Froggie ship and advanced toward the gaping maw of the port.

"They're in, sir," said Grote at length. Eustace nodded. "Take the conn, then. I'm going below." He looked at the two scientists. "Gentlemen?" They followed him silently as he left the bridge.

A brisk walk brought them to the entrance to the number-one cargo bay. Two Marines waited at the hatch, peering through the quartz bullseye at the Froggie boat.

"Has anything come out yet, Sergeant?"

"Mosir," replied the Marine. "You want I should bounce a couple rounds off'n it? Kinda knockin' on the door, like?"

Eustace shook his head and unsealed the port. With a weary resignation, he stepped into the bay.

The alien boat was silvery-grey and seamless, with no line or protruberance to mar its gleaming surface. Eustace was three meters away when the craft split neatly in half and revealed a two-meter-tall purple creature identical to the one in the captured probe.

"You're Commentator Quasimodo?" asked Eustace.

"Right, fella." The alien advanced on the human with a strange clublike instrument in his left hand. Holding it to the Captain's face he said, "Just into the mike speak, Captain Wexler-Eustace-Westmoreland, please? For home-people, also kiddies. Planetwide coverage we're getting, no stuff."

Eustace was taken aback. "Uh, of course, Commentator. As I said before, we come in peace to open relations between your government and that of the Imperial Hegemonic Federation of Man. If you could direct me to someone in authority..."

"Wanting to talk with Network head, maybe? Big boss-type fella with all sorts authority."

"Network?"

"Hey, sure. Network head runs Network I work for. Powerfulest fella on planet, excepting for other Network heads."

"Your government is divided into broadcasting networks?" Eustace was aghast.

"How do you manage your affairs? How do you run your countries?"

"Too well we're not doing right now, I'm admitting. Own Network, Planetwide Broadcasting System, not getting good ratings. Might get wiped out by Cosmic Communications Company next season. Which is why sent out spaceprobe. Good publicity stunt, hey?"

Eustace opened and closed his mouth several times before he could answer. "You





mean you sent out a star probe and we followed it back here just so you could boost your ratings? What kind of--"

Begging pardon, naval-type person," interrupted the Froggie. "There's maybe a George aboard I could use? You're knowing press-wagons; no conveniences."

"George?" echoed Wexler.

"George not right burble, hey? Harvey? Charlie? John? Yay-bo! John! Perhaps someplace I could my hands washing, catch what I'm driving at?"

"John." Eustace caught his mouth as it was about to fall open and clenched his teeth tightly. "Mr. Theobald," he called to the midshipman standing nearby. "Escort the Commentator to the starboard officer's head, if you please."

Awe-struck, the midshipman motioned the alien to follow, leading the way through the Marine-lined corridors.

Wexler turned to Kledge. "Doctor, didn't you say something about the Froggies having no, ah, outlet? How can they eliminate waste if they lack the, er, organs required?"

The scientist tugged at his collar nervously. "Well, Captain, as I said, the digestive system of the specimen in the probe was extremely complicated. As nearly as we could tell, neither solid nor liquid wastes would be produced. We rather concluded that the waste matter was channeled into the production of spermatozoa."

"So, to a Froggie, the elimination of waste matter is tantamount to sexual intercourse?"

Kledge looked thoughtfully at the deck. "Perhaps.... If so, it'll play hell with Freudian psychology..."

"Damn the psychologists, man! What the hell is that Froggie doing in my officer's head?"

"Captain!" came Grote's voice over the PA system. "Engineering reports that there's something wrong in life support. The water recycling plant seems to be full of highly motile microorganisms. They're punching holes in the filtering section and contaminating our fresh water supply."

"Judas Priest!" bellowed Wexler. "I thought so! That lopsided Onanist is spilling his load into the ship's ecology! Mr. Grote, shut down all scuttlebutts and washrooms! Dr. Kledge, get your technicians to take water samples; find some way of getting those spermatozoa out of the system."

The ensuing hoorah was incredible. A wardroom orderly who had just filled the forward percolator when the water was cut off watched in terror as thousands of tiny holes began to appear in the coffee maker's gleaming sides. The coolant supply lines to the main reactors were punctured in millions of places, and the entire engine room was instantly awash in live steam. Three sailors in the first division were impregnated to death while they showered. The Westmoreland was being treated to an epidemic of microscopic gang rape.

Wexler, meanwhile, was rapping out orders even as he strode grimly toward the closed door of the starboard officer's head. He pounded thunderously on the portal, bellowing, "Quasimodo, goddamn you, drop it! Drop it and come out with your hands up or I'll blow the lock off!" The entire corridor seemed to throb in time to the whocketa-whocketa rhythm of the alien's solitary exercise.

"Last warning, Quasimodo!" Wexler grabbed a recoilless rifle from an astonished Marine. "If you're not out of there by the count of three, I'm going to open that door with high explosives! One! Two! Thr--"

"Okay, okay," came the alien's peevish voice. "Out I'm already coming. Sheesh, but the only can on this tub you'd think I was in." The sound of a closing fly was followed by a fumbling at the latch, and Commentator Quasimodo stood blinking at the purple face of Captain Wexler.



"See?" he said, standing politely aside. "I'm out. Ahead you can go."  
With a low growl, Eustace and three Marines flung themselves on the alien and bore him to the floor.

\* \* \*

"Means this that Imperial Hegemony fol-de-rol is off?"

Captain Wexler glared at the manacled Commentator. The enraged engineers had provided a sort of chastity belt modelled after a baseball catcher's crotch plate. Only the shrieking protests of Dr. Kledge had kept them from lining it with razor-sharp spikes.

"This means that the Imperial Hegemonic Federation of Man wants nothing to do with a race of inveterate pud-pullers -- especially when every escaped spermatozoan can go thru steel plate as if it were so much gelatin! How the hell do you Froggies manage to maintain a civilization when everything you build is riddled by armor-piercing sperm?"

"Oh, only two, three minutes time the wigglers go zoom. Croak P.D.Q, you betcha. Immobilize 'em a little while. Use diamond vaults."

Dr. Scostumati broke in amazedly. "You mean that your toilets are lined with diamond?"

"Sure. Aren't everybody's?"

\* \* \*

With a hissing crash of lightning and a roiling fountain of foulness erupting from the surface, Westmoreland reappeared in the main holding tanks at the Sewage Treatment Center on New Sicily. Ignoring the screams of indignant rage hurled at him from the neighboring farms and houses, Captain Wexler coned his command swiftly back to the New Palermo Navy Base, landing amid the stunned and disbelieving stares of the base personnel.

"Mr. Grote," he said, his eyes tightly shut. "Turn out a dozen work parties with fire hoses and brushes. And a Marine guard. If anybody laughs -- if anybody even smiles -- shoot to kill. I'm going over to the Base Commander's office to make my report."

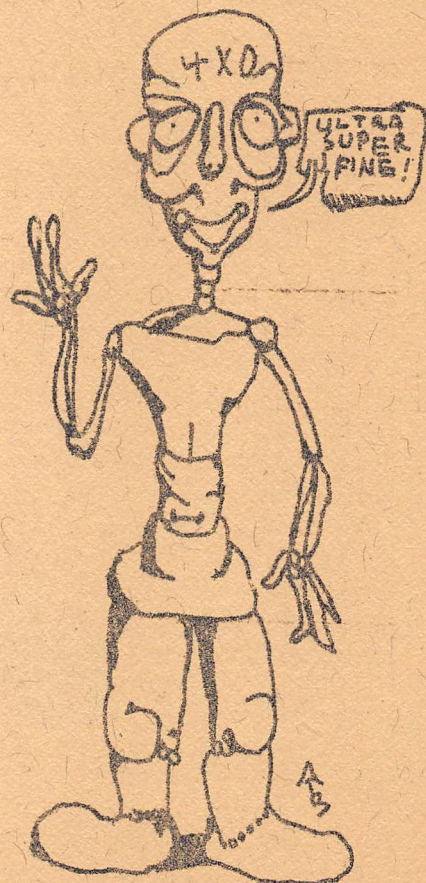
A ground car ferried Wexler, Kledge and Scostumati to the administration building and there, with the astonished Commander D'Annunzio looking on, Wexler delivered his story to the Admiralty via telecom.

"And so," he concluded, "I dismissed Commentator Quasimodo with a message to the Froggie networks that any ship appearing in the New Palermo Municipal Sewage Treatment Center would be destroyed by Imperial gun emplacements. There's no other way they could reach New Sicily, and New Sicily is the only ZTL that leads out of the Frog. I suggest that you direct Commander D'Annunzio to begin installing the guns."

"Very good, Captain," came the Admiralty's reply. "The introduction of a race like the Froggies to our Federation could topple our whole civilization, imperil the morals of our young people, maybe even drive us blind and insane. Commander, you will begin placing a battalion of surface-to-sewage blast cannon around the Center immediately. Imperial Admiralty signing off."

With a tired smile, Eustace turned to shake hands with the Base Commander. "Well, Leo, it's in your lap now. Remember, the price of an intact coffeepot is eternal vigilance."

"Captain!" Eustace turned to see Dr. Klein, his ship's surgeon, standing haggard and pale in the doorway.



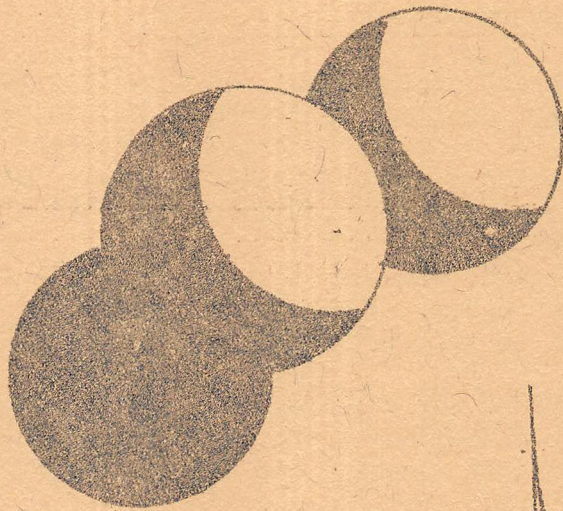


"Doctor!" cried Wexler. "What's the matter? Come on, here, sit down. What happened?"

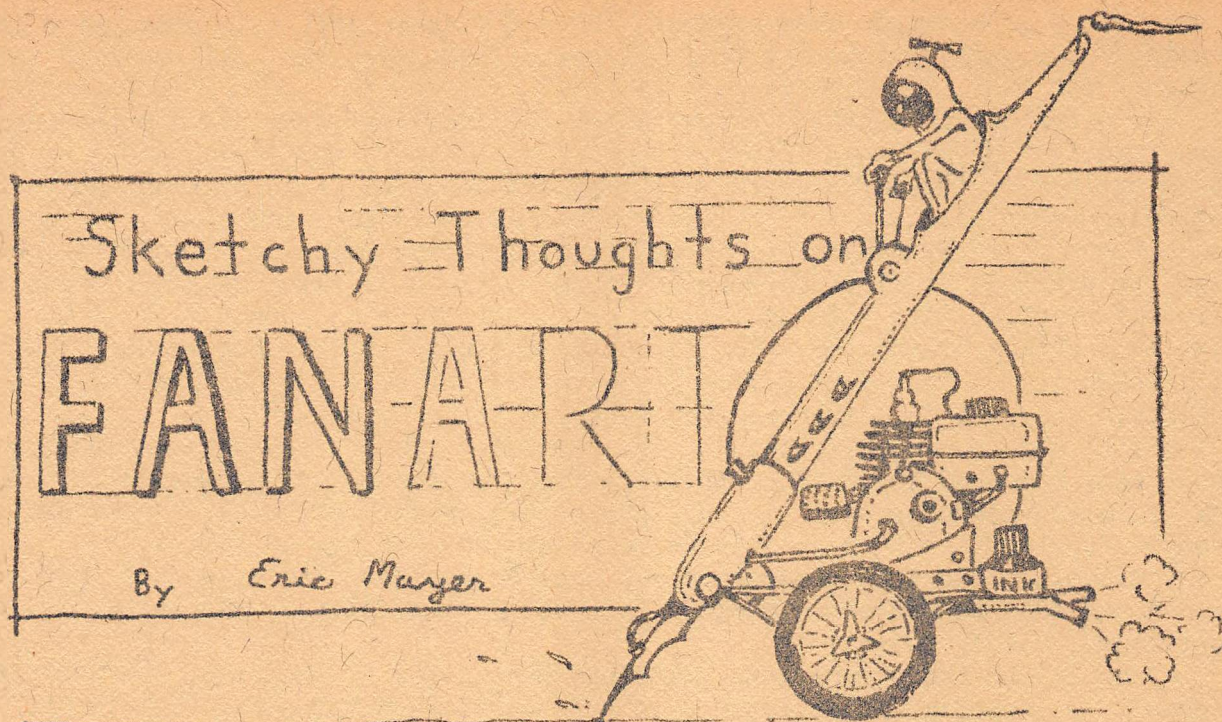
Klein grabbed for Commander D'Annunzio's brandy bottle and took a long pull. Gasping, he said, "Do you know that we've got thirty-four female ratings and officers aboard Westmoreland, Captain? And that they've all been treated with a complex of agents that prevent fertilization? Nothing hit-or-miss, like the old "Pill," no -- methods that are absolutely infallible. No human being could possibly impregnate one of those girls. No human being..."

"Out with it, Doc! What happened?"

Klein looked into Wexler's face and grinned, hysteria bubbling in his voice. "They're pregnant, Captain. Every damned female aboard Westmoreland, down to the Chief Engineer's pet monkey, is pregnant. And guess who -- or, rather, what -- did it?"







As a fanartist, which I've been on more than one occasion, I'm typical. I'm neither William Rotsler nor Grant Canfield and most other fanartists, along with numerous non-drawing fen, let me know it, letter column after letter column. I've even managed to be cited for my shortcomings in absentia. I'm on the verge of becoming the Brad Parks of faanish realism.

Still, I haven't retired my trusty, if somewhat encrusted, crow quills. One might well ask, "why?" Do I entertain Hugo hopes? Asinine! Do I harbor fantasies of breaking into the pro ranks like so many other fanartists? Ridiculous! Am I aiming at OUTWORLDS? Absurd!

I have no artistic ambitions, which is one reason I find drawing so enjoyable. I can turn on records and listen while I sketch and scrape along at a leisurely pace. It's much more relaxing than those life and death struggles I have with my typewriter. I rarely curse my pens!

I've never had any formal art training and ignorance is, indeed, bliss. When it comes to composing a story I immediately start fretting about le mot just and the deadly plague of "wooden dialogue." But how can I worry about perspective or even the pectorals when I know so little about them?

In any other field I'd be done for, but science fiction illustration holds unique advantages for the marginally competent. So what if I never practiced life drawing? Who knows what a native of Vega is supposed to look like anyway? Does the elbow seem out of joint? Is the mouth crooked, the right kneecap too high? How do you know? Have you ever been to Vega?

I admit it. I draw for fun, and to please those faneds who like my work enough to print it. It's as simple as that.

Still, I can't help but be disturbed by the lack of knowledge and critical standards fandom regularly displays in regard to art.

Fanartists, like fanwriters, come in all varieties. We range from teenagers just learning the rudiments of technique, to older amateurs like myself, to established professionals. Obviously, it would be ridiculous to judge such a wide array of individuals by the same standards. But that's exactly what most fans do. The young artist, with perhaps a year or two of actual experience, is regularly put down by comparison with older artists who've been developing their talents for many years, who've gone to art school and even managed to make professional sales. The



young artist is unfairly discouraged. The established artist is encouraged to fill fanzines with work that is far from his best. Such work may still be fine in comparison with that of beginners.

The situation is further aggravated by the fact that artistic shortcomings are more readily apparent than literary ones. We all learn the fundamentals of writing at an early age. Specific artistic skills are acquired at a later age so that most beginning fanartists are not so far advanced as beginning fanwriters. In addition, since the purpose of fanwriting is to convey abstract ideas it is possible, even easy, to overlook stylistic errors en route to the underlying message. Fans have a lot of practice with this sort of thing. Most of us have read E.E. Smith or Van Vogt at one time or another. Art is not an abstract medium like print. The image it invokes is not formed in our forgiving minds but on our sensitive and critical retinas. We can't do nearly as much mental editing to artwork.

All this is bad enough, but when you consider how little fans seem to know about art, compared to writing, the situation becomes rather unpleasant. Lacking any artistic vocabulary most loccers who criticise art fall back on generalities. "Joe Neo's stuff isn't as good as BNF X's" or "Joe Neo has no talent."

Considering the vast experience gap between most Joe Neo's and most BNF X's, we can see that the former statement is usually meaningless. The latter is, in most cases, simply untrue.

A person who lacks experience, who has had no formal training, who doesn't have access to commercial art equipment, is not therefore untalented. Nor is the ability to use zip-a-tone or a ruling pen an indication of talent.

Faanish art standards tend to fall between two extremes -- "commercial art" as represented by Grant Canfield and "spontaneous cartooning" as represented by Bill Rotsler. These two are just about the best artists at work in fandom today. No doubt about it. But their kinds of art shouldn't be adopted as standards for all fanartists.

Rotsler is unique. It's taken him years of practice to achieve the kind of spontaneity he demonstrates in his cartoons. Yet fan after fan tries to imitate him, with the erroneous assumption that his drawings are merely scribbles. Such fans invariably end up, not with neo-Rotsler's but with, alas, scribbles.

Worse yet, many fanartists use "spontaneity" as an excuse for sloppiness. All too often their work becomes increasingly spontaneous as the size and prestige of the zine it appears in diminishes. Their spot illos communicate nothing more than their evident desire to maximize egoboo while minimizing effort.

And fanartists, working in an area of comparative faanish ignorance, are more likely to get away with such maneuvers than fan writers. I admit that in the past I have not been entirely innocent of using this tactic myself.

At the other end of the spectrum we have the "commercial syndrome." Most fans will compliment slickness of technique no matter how devoid of interest a drawing might be otherwise. Any fanartist who inks a meaningless doodle with the flo-master he bought for Illustration 201 is assured of praise. "Great! Excellent! As good as Canfield," loccers will exclaim, forgetting that Canfield's technically slick illos are also well composed and intrinsically interesting. These same fans would tear a beautifully written but utterly cliched convention report to shreds! The two cases are identical. Superficial technique, in art, does not justify lack of content any more than it does in writing.

In the former case, of course, the fanzine the slickly rendered art appears in does present a specious appearance of professionalism. Fans don't expect writing

The Mandibles  
look Wrong.





to conform to professional aesthetics however. Why should they expect fanart to do so?

Perhaps all fans really want is art that's easy on the eyes, that fills up the spaces between articles in a vaguely pleasant manner. Maybe that's all most fanartists are capable of doing. I doubt it. But so long as critical standards remain the same, so will the quality of the art.

I have a few suggestions for fans who wish to criticise and discuss fanart:

- 1) Delete the idea of "talent" from all discussions. Unless you know exactly how much experience and training a fanartist has you can't possibly have any inkling of how much talent is indicated by any given piece of work.
- 2) Don't discourage young artists by invalid comparisons with older ones.
- 3) Don't encourage young artists to emulate older ones by comparison.
- 4) Judge each work of art separately. Forget you ever saw a Rotsler or a Canfield. Don't ask yourself "Who does this drawing remind me of?" Ask "Does it do anything for me?"
- 5) Don't mistake technique for content. It's part of content, to be sure, but only part.
- 6) Don't be conned into considering every lazy doodle you see a "spontaneous creation."
- 7) Insist that fanartists do their best work, not just work that is better than the rest of the work appearing in such and such a zine.
- 8) Try to verbalize your feelings about a piece of art. If you like a drawing or dislike it there has to be some reason. You can put it into words if you try.

I think fanart could be a lot more adventuresome and exciting than it is. The above suggestions aren't the last word on improving fanart criticism. Far from it. But they're all useful, I think. If enough fans started to pay a bit more thoughtful attention to fanart everybody would benefit.

- Eric Mayer





# CLOSE TO THE EDGE

## — RSN AND YOU —

Presented to you on behalf of the International RSN Society ("We Aim to Please, and So Does Louise") by Mike Kring, Vice-President in charge of Information, I.R.S.N.S.



RSN is one of the most dreaded and commonly misunderstood and caught diseases affecting the world today, but especially the Science Fiction Fan. RSN (Real-Soon-Now-itis) is insidious in that its early warning signs are almost undetectable unless the person is aware of them.

RSN has several stages and no known cure. The fan must learn to live with the disease and the fear that it will, perhaps, one day return. It is like malaria in that it has times when it is extremely powerful, and other times when it barely affects the fan.

RSN is transmitted thru the pores of the skin and once the "carrier" infects a person, that person has the disease for life, plus becoming a "carrier" himself. It is possible for the fan to be infected by opening up or just handling the last issue of any fmz. The RSN virus has been known to live upon the ink in any mimeograph paper for years. Thus, a warning should be printed on the outside of any last issue of any fmz. Fans have been infected at convention parties, since most of the fans at cons have the disease. It has been proven that it takes only one "carrier" to come to a con and in not less than 48 hours, everyone at that con is infected with the disease. The virus can live up to 96 hours on the arm of a chair, and longer if the material is vinyl.

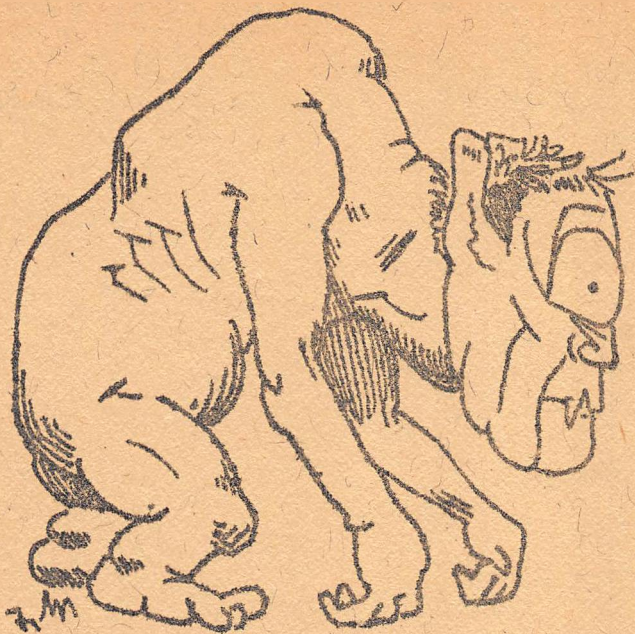
Persons known to be carriers of the disease should be locked up in a safe made of graham crackers and allowed to eat their way out. By the time they have done so, the con will be over and the hapless victims will be long gone.

The most common form of RSN that fans contract is Fafiaus Commonus. This usually lasts only a few weeks, and is only noted by the fan's lack of output. The Fafiaus Commonus form of RSN is merely Stage Twon of the disease. RSN can give the fan many bouts of Fafiaus Commonus without the person affected even realizing he is infected with the disease. The person actually thinks the so-called real world has intruded into his life and makes fanac impossible, for the time being. But it is a commonly known fact that fandom is itself the real world and the Fafiaus Commonus is affecting the fan's ability to think.

The only known cure (if I am permitted to use the word) is for the fan so infected with Fafiaus Commonus to immediately devote at least two hours a night (or morning) to fanac exercises (loccing, article writing, corflu sniffing, etc.). This exercise releases certain enzymes into the bloodstream and forces the disease into its dormant stage, or Stage One. Stage One of RSN has no affect whatever on the fan, but the fan must be ever on the alert and keep his fanac exercises up, or else Stage Two of RSN will come over him once more.

Stage Three (Gafiaus Fatalus) of RSN usually strikes without warning. It is usually because the fan has been lax in his fanac exercises and thus quickly enters





(fan in advanced stage of Gafiaus Fatalus)

fancy. The victim is firmly convinced fandom is evil and unnecessary to his life. Little does the victim realize RSN does not only affect his life in fandom, but sometimes it spills over into the so-called real world. There are times when the victim declares he has no time to do anything but watch television. (This is one of the sure warning signs of Stage Three RSN. It is nature's final warning.)

Gafiaus Fatalus has been described by one person who has had it as "a bleak period in my life. I thought fandom was silly and not worth the powder to blow it to hell." This person (who shall remain nameless) has recovered from RSN and is now engaged in a satisfying career and engages in his fanac exercises three hours every night! But he is aware he must be ever on guard, or Stage Two will sneak up on him.

RSN is being investigated all the time. There are countless laboratories all over the world striving for a cure, but none seems to be forthcoming. Dr. Frederick C. Feghoot (of the Reinhart Institute of Nuttiness) has been the man solely responsible for bringing this dreaded and incurable disease to the attention of the world and the medical profession. Dr. Feghoot (who also has a PhD in Intricate Structures Performed by Basketweaving) has declared the year 1976 as International RSN Awareness Year. Several governments (including our own United States of America) have already agreed to this.

"What we need," Dr. Feghoot declared at a recent meeting of the RSN Investigators of the World, "is for people to become aware of RSN and its danger signs." Quite right, Dr. Feghoot. And in this endeavor, I shall detail the danger signs at the end of this article, which is coming up real soon now.

There are those who scoff at the deadliness of RSN and hint that it's nothing more than the ravings of a bunch of maniacs who've gotten control of the AFIA. There is nothing further from the truth. RSN is always fatal. Yes, RSN leads inevitably and inexorably to death. It usually takes several years, but no matter how diligently the person infected practices his fanac exercises, he is eventually doomed to die. (There have been several instances of it taking over 60 years. You've been warned, chump.)

The International RSN Society is in dire need of funds in order to carry out its much needed research. If you care, or if you think perhaps one of your loved ones is infected with RSN, then contact your local RSN representative, or send \$50 in small, unmarked bills in care of this magazine.

into Stage Two. In Stage Two, the fan will gradually succumb to Stage Three unless taking up fanac exercises once more. Gafiaus Fatalus has several minor stages, such as Fapaus Deadwoodus, and may last for years in one or more of those stages. The usual amount of time in Stage Three is five years, then the fan realizes he has RSN and he once more does his fanac exercises. The enzymes enter his bloodstream, and over the period of several months, it is once again in Stage One arrest. However, once a person has had Gafiaus Fatalus, they are unusually subceptible to Fafiaus Commonus, which can lead back to Stage Three and the cycle repeat itself.

In Stage Three, the symptoms are noted by the refusal to open any fmz that comes into the mailbox, and refusing to loc any zines that might strike the victim's



We thank you. And several million people all across the face of the globe thank you.

- Mike Kring, V.P.i.c.o.I., I.R.S.N.S.

## THE EARLY WARNING SIGNS OF RSN

Stage One: no warnings. This is the "sneaky pete" phase of RSN.

Stage Two: failure to respond to fmz the same day they are received; putting off until tomorrow what needs to be done today, only it's already been put off sixteen times already; television isn't so bad anymore; swelling of the buttocks and abdomen, commonly called "fat"; decided clearing of the eyes as they no longer have to strain to read poorly mimeoed and dittoed fmz.

Stage Three: television looks really fine, and all those sitcoms and cop shows are spiffy; failure to read the newspaper or anything at all for that matter; I LOVE LUCY re-runs are really great, especially is seen over six times; eyes bright and clear; disposition nice and dumb; change in eating habits, corresponding to commercial breaks on television; and no fanac exercises at all.

Remember, RSN strikes someone every five minutes. So for heaven's sake, DUCK!







REVIEW S!

The Stigmata of Dr. Constantine by Tom Dulack, Harper's Magazine Press, 1975, \$8.95. Reviewed by Wayne Hooks

Sophistication is a dangerous attribute. As sophistication increases, the sense of wonder, the willing suspension of disbelief dwindles. Finally, even miracles must have a mundane rational explanation. Anything of a miraculous nature must be a mere charlatan's ruse, a montebank's trick. The Age of Miracles gives way to the Age of Reason and something precious and rare is irretrievably lost. Even if a stray miracle does turn up, it must be explained, not believed, and if it does not conform, be forced into the framework of scientific logic. In sophistication, innocence is lost.

The Stigmata of Dr. Constantine by Tom Dulack is an exploration into the theme of present day miracles. It is a farce, an allegory, a sad, knowledgeable commentary upon our times.

Miracles defy all the precepts of logic. Why else would Dr. Constantine, an atheistic ex-Catholic scientist, be stricken with five gaping wounds corresponding to the wounds Christ received on Golgotha? Why doesn't the blood flowing from the wounds coagulate and why won't the wounds heal? Why don't the wounds become infected? Why a miracle now, of all times, when everyone is much too busy to worry about it? Maybe next year or the year after would be much more suitable. Don't call us, God, we'll call you.

At first, Dr. Constantine attempts to rationalize, but unable to find scientific justification, he flees. Around him, he collects a random group of disciples or social parasites. In the end they flee when the cops break down the door. There is contention over who has jurisdiction of Constantine's miracle. There is the bishop, who is a close parallel to Caiaphas, the High Priest. He is concerned that the mystical import will undermine the progressiveness of his church. Besides, the miracle would surely make offerings fall off. Dr. Constantine was a threat to the budget of the Church.

There is the hematologist who knows a cure for cancer lies in Dr. Constantine's blood. Almost a double for Judas Iscariot, he is not in himself an evil man but his fanaticism drives him to martyr Dr. Constantine. His passion for truth leads him to destroy anything which stands in his way. The psychiatrist is convinced that he can cure the stigmata by helping Constantine adjust psychologically. The stigmata must be psychomatically induced, he fervently declares. Like Pontius Pilate, if he does not understand, then he rationalizes.



Finally, there is Cathy, who loves Dr. Constantine. Like Mary Magdalene, she is a whore, only she became one after meeting her Christ, rather than before.

The Stigmata of Dr. Constantine closely parallels the Gospels in some respect, in others, it burlesques them. It is a fresh insight into what Matthew, Mark, Luke and John may have been covering up.

Characterization is full and the characters come across as complete personalities. The dialogue tends to meander, but is neither stilted nor artificial while the pacing is unhurried. Despite the competency in the handling of the mechanical aspects of the book, the message is the most important part. And it is still as true today as it was centuries ago; the faces are still the same only the crosses have changed.

Orbit 17 edited by Damon Knight, Harper & Row, 1975, \$7.95. Reviewed by Jayne Hooks.

Orbit 17 is a welcome relief from many other anthologies on the market today. The stories are fresh and new as the authors are fresh and new. Instead of relying upon the name of the author, Knight demands and presents talent. R.A. Lafferty has a story here, as does Felix Gotschalk, but the stories are able to stand on their own. That is why they were included, not because the author has been able to churn out enough material that his name is immediately familiar.

The selection of stories runs the entire gamut from serious to absurd. "Fun Palace" by Raylyn Moore is a fun piece about transplanting of human brains into animal bodies. However, underlying the fun is a great deal of truth about research laboratories. "House" by John Barfoot is a harrowing look at submergence of personality, of how material possessions gain intrinsic value, placed upon them artificially. In contrast is "Toto, I Have a Feeling We're Not In Kansas Anymore" by Jeff Villar, the absurd tale of an adolescent genius who plunges an entire town into a very bad 1950s horror movie. The only way he will return everything to normal is for him to personally meet Robert Heinlein.

"The Maze" by Stuart Dybek is a chilling glimpse into monomania and the world of research. What is really being created and developed behind closed doors? "Underneath the Hollywood Sign" by Tom Reamy is the fascinating psychological sketch of a vice squad officer drawn unwillingly by his own needs and desires into homosexuality. Rather than adjusting he rebels against what he considers his own sick desires. But these desires force him to seek the object of his lust. Aliens are introduced in the plot, but the characterization of the protagonist makes this story memorable.

Other stories in this collection are "The Anthropologist" by Kathleen Sidney, "The Man With the Golden Reticulates" by Felix C. Gotschalk, "The Steel Sonnets" by Jeff Duntemann, "Autopsy In Transit" by Steve Chapman, "When We Were Good" by Dave Skal, "Which In the Wood Decays" by Seth McEvoy, "Great Day in the Morning" by R.A. Lafferty, and "Quite Late One Spring Night" by John Curlovich.

Impeccable in his taste, Damon Knight presents a wide array of talent. Orbit 17 is highly recommended to any reader of science fiction, whether neophyte or connoisseur.



The Stochastic Man by Robert Silverberg, Harper & Row, 1975, \$7.95. Reviewed by Wayne Hooks

Man has always wanted that attribute of the gods, second sight. Oracles, prophets and gypsy fortune tellers all are reputed to be blessed with the ability to foretell the future. But is the ability to see the future a blessing or a curse? Is it a gift of the gods or Promethean fire to consume the possessor? Cassandra was given the gift of foreseeing the future but no one believed her.



People prefer to see things as they please and not bother with the truth. Would a modern day fortune teller fare any better than did Cassandra? Besides, of what use is second sight? Can the future be changed or is it immutable? If it can be changed, then what is foreseen is only what may occur. If it cannot be changed, then second sight is certainly a curse, to see disaster and death approaching and be powerless to forestall it. To have second sight would be a form of damnation, of Hell upon earth.

It is this concept which Robert Silverberg explores in The Stochastic Man. The twentieth century is drawing to a close and all the social ills are still prevalent and magnified. New York is a battleground between different ethnic groups. The rich sit securely in their safe towers while the poor wreck havoc below. Marriage as an institution survives, but in a freer sexual context. This is the society in which Lew Nichols works as a stochastic predictor, a kind of computerized prediction of trends.

He had tried to hitch his wagon to a political star, Paul Quinn, only Quinn turned out to be a comet. Personable, reminiscent of Kennedy, Quinn hires Nichols as personal consultant. Into Nichols' comfortable, placid life comes Martin Carajal, a man able to see the future, rather than merely guess about it. Under Carajal's tutelage, Nichols acquires second sight and learns of its frustrating limitation: the future is immutable, nothing he can do or attempt can change any aspect of it. Due to his uncannily accurate prognostications, Quinn comes to view him as a shaman or warlock and fires him. This is the gift of second sight.

As a professional writer of some years standing, Silverberg has an excellent grasp of both writing techniques and the mechanics of writing. The action flows, though in places it tends to become static, upsetting the evenness of the tempo of the story. Characterization is somewhat weak, with the character's type casted and generalized, rather than developed. In addition, in making Nichols the focus of the action, Silverberg has rendered the other characters to the status of foils to Nichols, reacting rather than acting. The dialogue is well handled, though from a linguistical point of view, it should have had more slang, reflecting the evolution of the English language in the next few decades. The conflict is direct and compelling, Nichols against the external world, Nichols against himself. All things taken into account, The Stochastic Man makes very good reading.

Creative Malady by George Pickering, Allen & Unwin, \$15.30. Reviewed by Eric Lindsay.

There have been many attempts to explain the action of the creative artist, writer or scientist. Common to several accounts have been long thought on the subject, followed by sudden inspiration.

In science the textbook example of this is Kekule's dream of the ring structure of benzene while riding on a trolley-bus. James Watson's account of the search for the structure of DNA, in The Double Helix, is another example of the validity of inspiration in creation. These tend to discredit the view that scientists work by completely rational processes: observation, theory to explain the observation, confirmation of the theory. Sir Karl Popper has since the '30s been conducting a campaign against this view, but since his books such as The Logic of Scientific Dis-



Сутипман



covery have tended to concentrate on the importance of disproving theories and have not mentioned the psychological side of discovery, this aspect was little discussed until 1958 when Michael Polanyi's Personal Knowledge was published.

One result of the older view of science is the assumption that it is a means by which everyone can create. In The Farther Reaches of Human Nature psychologist Abraham H. Maslow has suggested that the scientific method is a means by which the uncreative can engage in creative activities. However, he differentiates between primary creativity, examples of which are given above, and the secondary creativity of the careful researcher.

An aspect of the creative process that has not been considered to any great extent is the circumstances under which the activity takes place. Sir George Pickering, Master of Pembroke College at Oxford, Fellow of the Royal Society, and of the Royal College of Surgeons, says that in studying the problem:

"It became evident to me that an illness that is not debilitating or disabling, or threatening to life, may provide the ideal circumstances for creative work."

He examines in detail the lives of six people of creative genius: Charles Darwin, Florence Nightingale, Mary Baker Eddy, Sigmund Freud, Marcel Proust and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. The latter four suffered from a form of psychoneurosis, for which the act of creation was a catharsis. Their creativity manifested itself after periods of turmoil and great stress. Proust's withdrawal into his memories to produce his great work occurred after his mother's death, for which he felt guilty. Readers of the recently published Freud-Jung letters will recall that Freud had a tendency to faint when ideas contrary to his were expressed. His views on hysteria as the fashionable 19th Century illness were an expression and catharsis of his own hysteria.

Florence Nightingale and Charles Darwin are somewhat different.

After her triumphant return from running the British military hospitals in the Crimea, Florence Nightingale, who had proved her endurance and toughness, became an invalid for 53 years, remaining bedridden for the last 24 years of her 92 years of life. In this time she managed, by force of personality, by constant letter writing and briefing, to achieve a complete reform of the army medical service.

Charles Darwin returned from the voyage of the Beagle in his twenties and became a recluse. Again his strength and fitness on the voyage were unquestioned, but on his return he became unable to have even visits from relatives because of palpitations and similar symptoms of illness.

Sir George contends that these individuals used illness as an involuntary excuse to protect themselves from the trivial and distracting nuisance of social obligations. Their work is of such importance to them that all other needs become trivial by comparison. He concludes:

"My exercise...emphasises the single mindedness of many men of genius, their obsession with the object of their passion to the exclusion of the ordinary conventions of daily life."





AN ART FOLIO  
by  
Glen Brock



AN ART FOLIO  
by  
Glen Brock

















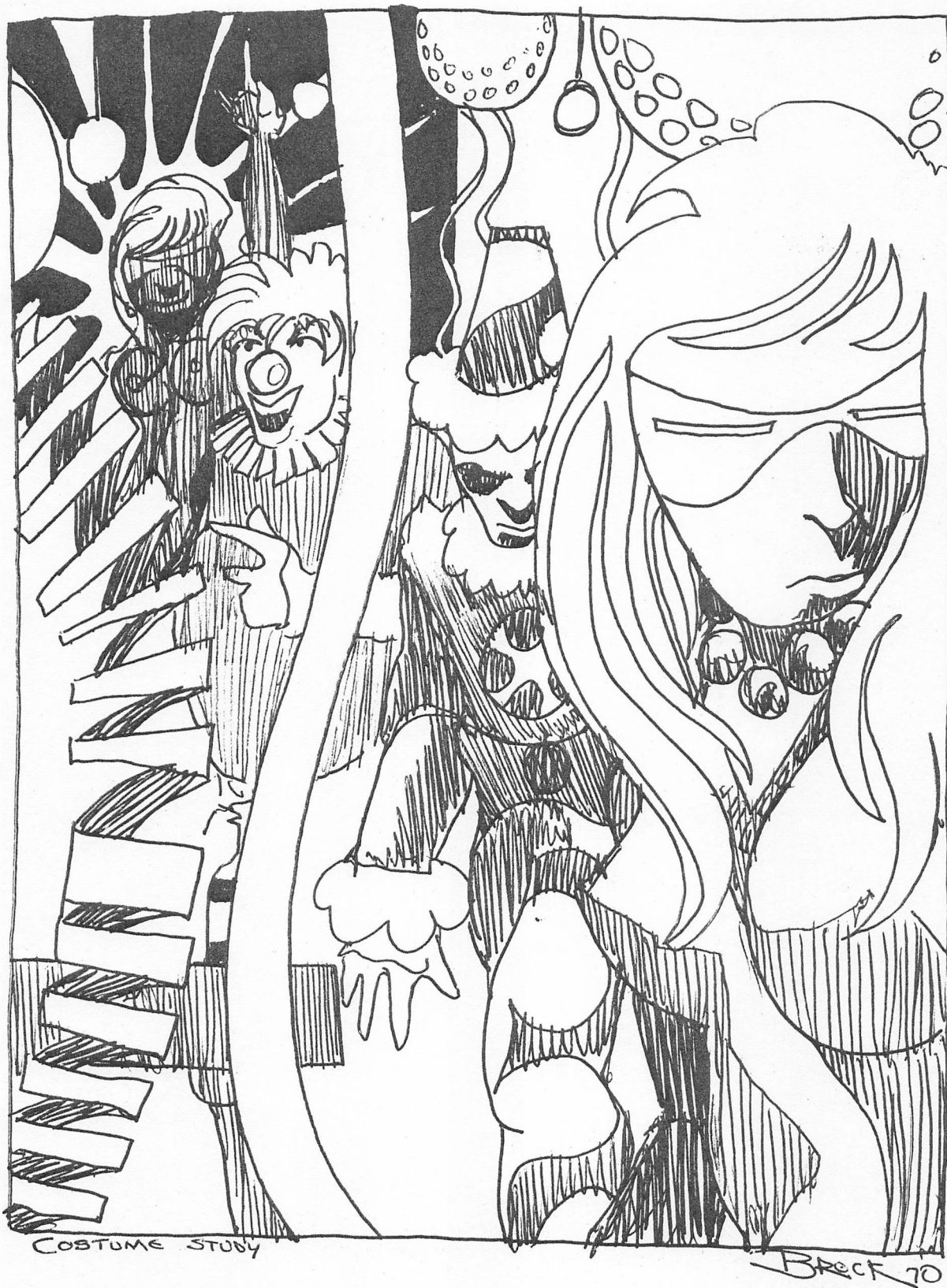


















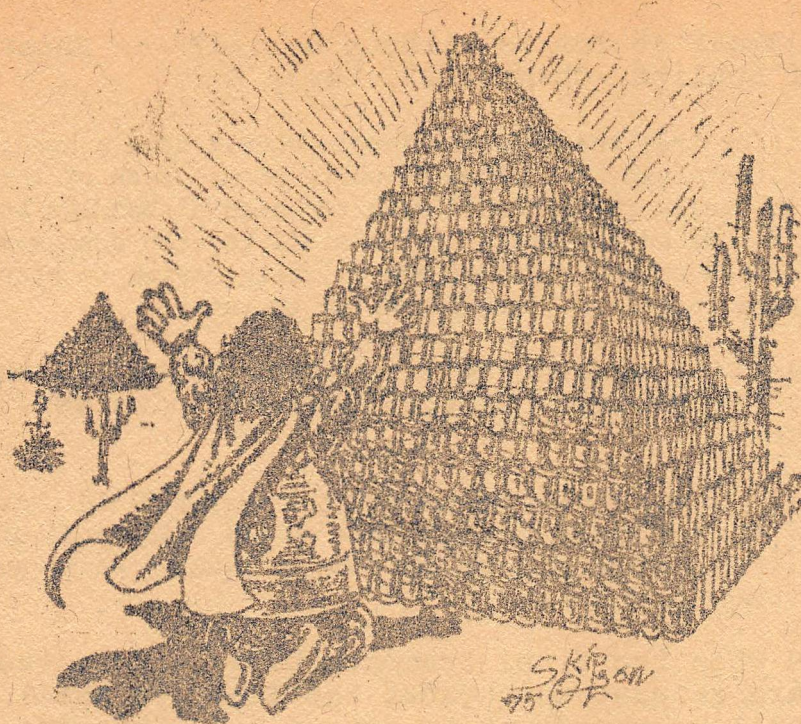


(BRACK 71)









# SERMON ON THE FOUNT

CURT  
("CAPTAIN  
COORS")  
STUBBS

"For Ghu so loved his minions that he sent them his holy bheer for to drink." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of IPA, Chapter 12, Verse 3

Yes, children. Ghu in all his munificence has given us bheer wherein we may worship him. He has given us bheer that we may know his love and wash down sacramental pretzels. He has given us bheer that we may share with each other and throw room parties. And yes, children, he has asked one thing, and one thing only of us. "Let he who is without sin among you be the first stoned."

"For there shall be seven deadly sins, and ye shall not partake of them. 1) Temperance. 2) Abstinence. 3) Minac. 4) Gafiation. 5) Strekism. 6) Mundania. 7) Cheap Rotgut." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Fosters, Chapter 3, Verse 22

I tell you three times it's true. The seven deadly sins are Ghu proscribed and shall be by Ghu punished. Temperance shall be punished by liver problems. Abstinence shall be punished by pregnancy and social disease. Those who practice the deadly sin of minac shall be punished by ever-increasing deadlines. The sin of gafiation shall be punished by mundania, and mundania by gafiation. Those who practice strekism will bring Space 1999 down on their heads, and of course, the sin of Cheap Rotgut will result in hangovers.

"For Ghu caused to be built in the fannish desert called Phoenix a temple for all to worship in, and it was aluminum and recyclable." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Coors, Chapter 2, Verse 15.

It is a glorious structure in which to worship Ghu. The reds and blues of a thousand, nay, a million flashing neon signs reflecting in the bottoms of millions of aluminum bheer cans. An altar of browned glass bottles supports a gilded keg. The whole structure is designed to instill in the worshippers an air of Drunken Revelry.



"For what is a Bheerist Temple without a head?" -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Schlitz, Chapter 22, Verse 8

Of course, it is only fitting that the Bheerist Temple should have a head. It is fully modern, sanitary and tastefully decorated in white foam. Each of the seven fully modern comfortable stalls is furnished with two sets of handles for the overzealous worshipper. One set is on the sides of the stall to ease access and balance. The other set is located on the sides of the Malzberg Device to keep the repentinent sinner from pitching face first into the water therein.

"For all his Bheerist minions fell to their knees and threw up on the lawn." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Budweiser, Chapter 9, Verse 9

And brother, have no fear. If you should partake of the sacred fluid overmuchly, then be not ashamed. For Ghu has given us bheer that we may enjoy and purge ourselves. For does not the sacred Bheer go down and come up equally easy, and does that not relate to all things equally?

"And in the end when the final trumpets blow, and destruction and death are rampant throughout the land, ye shall be saved for ye shall be too drunk to notice." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Guinness Stout, Chapter 7, Verse 11

Yes, children, that is why Ghu has given us Bheer, so that we may face the end, and it is coming, believe you me, with a foggy head and a glazed eye. He has given us Bheer that we may stumble forward into doom with a song in our hearts and a slur on our lips. He has given us Bheer that we may face the final deadline with courage and a weak bladder.

"And Ghu looked on what he had wrought, and said, 'Belch'." -- Bheerist Bibble, Book of Old Milwaukee, Chapter 6, Verse 20





SO MUCH FOR ARTHURS, THE SEXIST BASTARD, NOW LET'S GET GRADY.

Bracken 3.25.76

I seem to have created the impression that I consider women a source of sexual gratification and nothing more. "Slab of meat," I think someone put it. Bullshit. I like a woman to be physically attractive, yes. I try to be physically



attractive myself. (Please note that I make no claims at success.) But physical attractiveness is a bonus, like green stamps. The grocery store I usually go to happens to be the closest one to my house with reasonable prices and a good variety. It also gives stamps, and in a few decades I may acquire enough to get a thermos bottle. But the fact that the store gives stamps has no bearing on why I shop there. Similarly, I do not go hunting for women on a basis of physical attributes (if I can call it "hunting" at all -- I am looking for companionship, not a trophy).

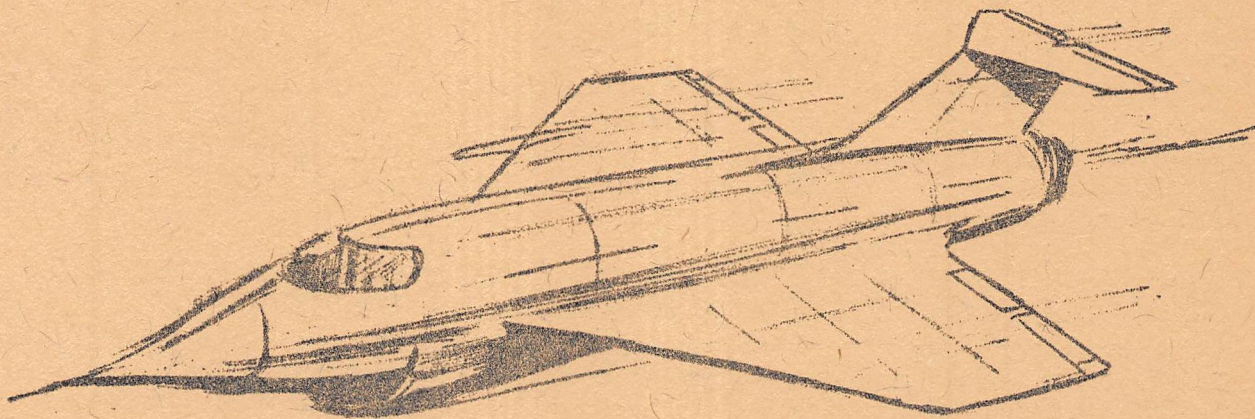
During my first several months in Charleston I went without a date. Why? Certainly not because there is a lack of nice-looking women in the city -- there is, in fact, an overbalance of women to men. But I was unable to find a woman I could talk to. (I recall one fiasco of a date I had with a hot little number who replied, when I asked her what movie she'd like to see, "One at a drive-in." I probably would have agreed, except that she insisted on waiting for me to open doors for her. I don't mind opening doors for someone, but I'll be damned if I'll be expected to do it. We saw Rollerball -- at an indoor theater -- after which I took her to her house and waved bye-bye. So much for sex objects.)

Lest you grow too concerned, allow me to add that I have since found a very talk-to-able young lady who is a math major aiming for a career in engineering. We share some interests and are poles apart on others. She is, overall, a nice person, and she is her own woman. What about here looks? Well, she is rather attractive -- not enough to stop a truck, but very nice looking. On the other hand, I wouldn't give a damn if she looked like Marty Feldman. I like her.

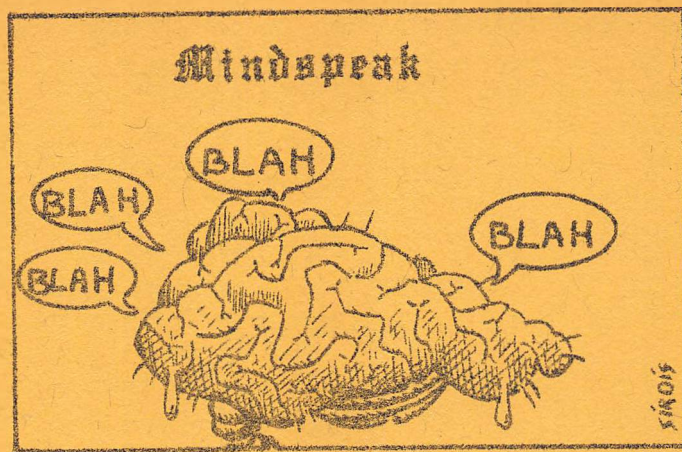
So much for my attitudes. In specific reference to FSP:

It might help clarify matters if I mention that I wrote FSP shortly after seeing Don Rickles in upstate New York last year. No one takes Rickles seriously, of course, and all I was trying to do in FSP was approach the same level of rapid-fire, corny insult humor. I was indeed trying to sound sexist, just as Rickles sounds racist. I also, you should note, poked a fair amount of fun at myself in the process, which is hardly what I would expect of a certified MCP. I did not expect anyone to take me seriously, and I certainly did not conceive that the transparently put-on personality of FSP could be mistaken for me (or any other real person). I stand corrected.

-- D. Cary Grady







Philippe Paine, 206 St. George St.,  
#910, Toronto, Ont. CANADA

I suspect that the unusual hostility towards Brad Parks' art is partly because of the disturbing undercurrents in it. Almost all his faces show anxiety or panic of some sort, and the awkwardness of the bodies is not entirely caused by artistic crudity. I'm no artist, but I have done enough casual drawing and looked at enough things to sense if someone is "faking" with routine tricks or is merely limited in skill (skill, not talent). Brad has something to say with those crude drawings, but it is something damn scary. I realized this when I saw a remarkable piece of his in a Ben Indick apazine. At any rate, it seems ridiculous to have to defend the publication of the stuff, considering the number of zines in existence and the amount of boring art there is in general.

I feel that part of Mike Glicksohn's letter should be commented on. He mentions that "local fen in formerly placid Toronto have attributed the veritable Vesuvius of vitriol to erupt here recently to the arrival of Arizona fan Patrick Hayden"...etc. I'm sure that Mike meant this no more seriously than as a bit of mechanical cuteness, but the fact is that this sort of thing has repeatedly been said, sometimes with deadly and accusatory seriousness -- by people who should know better. It doesn't take many repetitions to turn utter nonsense into something that "everybody knows" or even "has some truth in it." Anyway, it has no truth in it. I know from personal experience -- Mike doesn't; he is somewhat

cut off from Toronto fandom -- that the political crisis in Toronto fandom was well under way before Patrick arrived. He didn't even play a major catalytic role or enter confrontations more than others (if anyone did, it was myself). During that very draining period I was shocked to see otherwise stable and rational people showing intense hostility toward Patrick -- convinced that some newcomer wandering in could somehow be responsible for splitting up a club. Presumably he poked needles in dolls or something.

At any rate, when something like this has been taken seriously by some, it isn't pleasant to see it taken up and perpetuated as "humor."

The aspect really worth looking into is why this sort of notion emerges, in both its aggressive and innocent forms. First of all, for those indirectly involved, a crisis like a club "feud" forces them to make moral evaluations of friends and acquaintances. If a stranger can be made a psychological scapegoat, this painful necessity is avoided. The very word "feud", calling up images of inexplicable and causeless fighting in which no party is better than another, is a reinforcement of this psychology.

About "feuds," then.... There is a rather strange theory (once popular in Hollywood musical biographies) that all conflicts are the result of accidents and misunderstandings. The reality is, however, that club breakups and controversies are brought about by just the same sort of things that have shaped the politics of all human institutions: the desire for power and authority over others, phony respectability, the ego substitute of organizational loyalty, the stake of large



sums of money. In such conflicts there are usually choices and judgements to be made. I can understand someone not wanting to make those choices and maintaining a neutral position -- but I can't understand the psychology behind blaming some poor schmuck who wanders in halfway through.

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

One casual remark of Mike Glicksohn's requires some clarification. What local fen have been attributing the recent rumblings in Toronto to Patrick Hayden? Certainly not the Derelict people. The people who were using OSFiC for their private power trips undoubtedly like to blame someone else for their cozy little boat being rocked, but this is a dishonest explanation.

There is no doubt that if Patrick had never come to Toronto, the fighting over OSFiC and FANFAIR would have been somewhat different. A little less concerned over minor details I would expect, and perhaps a little less impassioned since there would be one less voice adding to the hassle. But to attribute the cause solely to one inflammatory person is to deny that real grievances in the club existed. If Mike considers none of the grievances real it is his opinion only, and not an opinion universally shared.

The fact is that Toronto has had its troubles before, but has always maintained its respectability by keeping it private. TORCON caused many disturbing waves that little is known about, and after TORCON a period of inactivity in the OSFiC executive forced an election with some unpleasantry. Where was Patrick then? Not even in fandom, I'm afraid....

((Well, I knew that Mike meant his ))  
((remarks as humorous, but then, I ))  
((also know Patrick fairly well, and))  
((I can see the humorous intent. I))  
((can also see -- now -- that other ))  
((people who don't know Patrick and ))  
((his soapbox-orator style could ))  
((very well take those remarks seri-))  
((ously. Ah well. I'll try and re-))  
((member to be more foresighted in ))  
((the future -- BDA.))

I remember the controversy Mike Glicksohn refers to about American Im-

perialism. I distinctly remember also how Eric Lindsay weighed his letter column against locs that contradicted his theory that all Canadians were nationalists and anti-American. I know, because I repeatedly wrote him and told him that I knew of very few Canadian nationalists or people who were anti-American. One of those locs was alluded to in a WAHF, but frustratingly all the others disappeared into GEG's outback without an acknowledging splash. Eric seemed intent on proving that Canadians shared his feelings against the States, and now it almost seems as if Mike is trying to create the impression that most Canadians worry about the States. Untrue! If suggested to the average Canadian, he will no doubt pay lip-service to the fashion that America is awful, but they will be totally unconcerned about it 30 seconds later. And if he is capable of a bit of thought he will see how although America isn't a perfect neighbor, there are no more than a handful of other countries who would be anywhere near acceptable as a neighbor.

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

I note that MacDonald and Glicksohn condemn Brad's lack of depth in his work. Apparently they are ignorant of the fact that many schools of art would consider this a virtue. A course in art appreciation might help.

As for Mike Glicksohn's comments on defense, let's see now...argumentum ad hominem, argumenta ad verecundiam et ad populum, ignoratio elenchi, fallacy of emotive language.... Mike's reply to my remarks on Canadian defense is an excellent sourcebook for examples of logical fallacies and sophistry, but it fails to come across with much meat. I do not, of course, buy the "US as Guardian of Democracy" nonsense. I just wish the rest of NATO felt the same way. The fact is that while real arms spending in the West has declined (including in the US) over the past several years, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations have been increasing their budgets in real, inflation-adjusted terms. The United States can ill afford to meet this threat (which is conventional, not nuclear) without massive increases in spending -- unless the prosperous protectorates in NATO start taking their fair share of the load. If Mike can be-



lieve that the US might invade Canada he can surely consider the possibility that the Soviet Union might harbor similar intentions. If it seems ludicrous to suggest a Russian invasion of Canada, is it not possible that the very unlikelihood of it stems from the success of the American deterrent? As is well known, I am strongly in favor of a world government and a dismantling of all war machines. They are a horrible waste of resources. But until a central power becomes available, I'll be damned if I'll trust the good intentions of everybody else in the world.

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

Your point about the US protecting the Canadians is specious. That isn't the real world, and isn't even analogous to the real world. I thought the articles Eric Lindsay published were nonsensical tripe of the most unproductive kind, but that doesn't mean I'm enamoured of the US military posture. Canada and much of the rest of the world may be relatively free of the fear of imminent conventional war, but they pay for it with the perpetual fear of nuclear war. The Third World countries don't even have that protection; they're the battlefields on which the big three (US, USSR, China) play out our petty quarrels. If one of the three neighborhood bullies chooses a bespectacled youngster as his friend and loudly threatens the other bullies if they touch him, this is hardly likely to be viewed by the youngster as being to his advantage.

I don't think Mike Shoemaker and I are vibrating on the same wavelength. My point about the West Virginia controversy was precisely that we should preserve freedom of choice by allowing the students to choose which books they would read. The school board said that these books would be made available to those who wanted to read them, but that others could refrain. The protestors insisted that the schools should not provide these materials to anyone. Mike sides with the protestors, then says I'm defending the elitist point of view. How? I really can't grasp his point. If a majority of people in, say, Kentucky, decide that the communist view of history is correct, does Mike then say they have the right to suppress all

anti-communist views from the school system? Does even a vocal minority -- which was in fact the case in West Virginia -- have this right? In the WV case, as a matter of fact, a poll indicated that only 25% of the parents were opposed to the books, even though the population at large was over 30% opposed. As the controversy raged on and became more violent, there was a larger group opposed, eventually over 50%. But when these people were interviewed, it was found that better than 40% of those opposed voted that way because they wanted the argument ended and the violence stopped, and that they didn't really care about the books one way or another.

I think it is somewhat (more than somewhat) unfair of you to publish a very chauvinistic article, then complain that you really don't want to give space to lengthy responses to it. It's your privilege, after all; it's your fanzine. But there is something intellectually dishonest about it. And certainly Feminists take themselves seriously. I would imagine you would too if you were in a similar fix. You took seriously the poor treatment you got from your insurance agent, didn't you? If this was the normal way you were treated by society, wouldn't you take any attempt to improve things seriously? Yes, I think you're chauvinist, but I think you're even more so than you may consciously realize.

((I won't deny it. But really, the ))  
 ((subject of sexual equality is some-))  
 ((thing that has been discussed in a ))  
 ((great many other fanzines, at great ))  
 ((length and not that much content. ))  
 ((The same arguments and counterargu-))  
 ((ments have been trundled forth time ))  
 ((and time again, until I am bored ))  
 ((out of my mind. It's the fanzine ))  
 ((equivalent of "Sex in Science Fic- ))  
 ((tion" panels at conventions; every- ))  
 ((body has one, even though nobody ))  
 ((gives a damn because they've seen ))  
 ((it all before. Now, I am printing ))  
 ((some remarks on that part of last ))  
 ((issue, but not at great length -- ))  
 ((with a few exceptions -- and I'm ))  
 ((trying not to let those remarks ))  
 ((dominate the rest of the lettercol-))  
 ((umn -- BDA.))

Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6P 2G3, CANADA

Well, it's about bloody time. Over



three weeks ago I got a letter from D. Gary Grady bitching about my letter in GODLESS 12, and I couldn't even remember what I'd been commenting on, let alone what I'd said. A week after that, I encountered Dave Szurek at a gathering in Detroit and he told me he'd heard from Grady too, so I was beginning to wonder what had happened to my copy of your fanzine. Now it is here, and worthy of a few comments, even if it isn't quite as gripping an issue as some of your more recent efforts.

((Apparently quite a few cop-))  
((ies of last issue were ei- ))  
((ther extremely delayed in ))  
((transit or lost altogether.))  
((At Solarcon in El Paso, Don))  
((Thompson still hadn't gotten))  
((his copy either. Good going, USPS.))

In his note to me Grady indicates that he meant his article to be chauvinistic and he seems to think that I didn't realize this. But if he'll read what you quoted from my last letter, he'll see that nowhere did I indicate that I was taking him seriously. I just thought that his attempt at creating humor from that particular situation was a failure. Despite your lucid remarks about the nature of the US military organization and the sort of people it attracts (and the reactions it produces from civilians who come in contact with service personnel) I still found Gary's column a failure. I think I know what he was trying to do, but I lack the necessary frame of reference to be amused by it.

Linda Johnson, on the other hand, over-reacts by not recognizing an attempt at humour when she reads it. Her comments would be cogent indeed if Gary were really a MCP, but as he isn't she sounds a little strident, possibly adding fuel to the anti-Women's Lib camp. I'm also not at all sure that there are more attractive looking women around than attractive men. Even in fandom, where unattractive specimens of all three sexes abound, I'd be hard-pressed to accept such a claim. (Nor am I sure what she means by "there are now more women in fandom." It almost reads as if she thinks there are more women than men, which isn't true. But there are more women than there used to be, that's

for sure.) I can sympathize with Linda's annoyance, but there are much more worthwhile targets than Gary Grady, failed humorist.

Good grief, Michael Carlson moves to Montreal, at least fifteen hundred miles from Edmonton, and merely by being in the same damn country he contracts a terminal case of Barbourish Pretension. I doubt

there's any hope for him: possibly that explains why he hasn't published in months and didn't even bother to file a FAAAA ballot this year.

What a horrible way to gaffiate! Contracted and lower cased to death. Shudder. (Or "shdr", as Mike might prefer.)

I've never been in the military, thank god, but I've been in fandom for almost a decade, and I've seen all sorts of men and women, enough to know that neither of the stereotypes Linda Johnson describes is completely accurate. I've seen predatory men roaming around cons solely for the purpose of trying to bed the best looking women there, and I've known equally rapacious women, some attractive, some not, who've kept charts and ratings on the eligible males in fandom. Fans are just human, and the human race has many more disgusting members than it has exemplary ones, so it's little wonder fandom reflects that. If fannish males have a worse reputation for sexism than fannish females, that might well be because there have traditionally been so many more of them in the past.

I always enjoy your editorial rambles, because they always touch on a variety of topics most fans can relate to. (Like Post Offices, crockpots, lack of time, and accidents: the sort of things that are symptomatic of a fannish way of life!) I was particularly intrigued by your descriptions of the BUC because I hadn't heard about these typically postal service "innovations." From what you say, there is certainly something dramatically wrong with the way they've been set up, but there's a more important test than the mere logic of the construction (or constriction) of a system.

Namely, will the new system be more efficient, despite the fact that it was conceived by a former postal employee who'd been dead for five years? If it's faster to send a parcel to Albuquerque by way of Nome, then the BMCs are an im-





provement. And I doubt many fans would be all that surprised to find that was the situation.

((Since the last postage increase, ))  
((there has been a very noticeable ))  
((and definite decrease in the speed))  
((and accuracy of delivery -- BDA.))

The paragraph that you reproduce as an example of one of your creative writing assignments (a whole paragraph a week, eh? What a demanding course. Weaved any good baskets lately?) is a typical example of what separates you amateur writers from us professionals. Coff, coff. (That would have been much more effective as an example of ludicrous humor of the incongruous if you hadn't had a story in the same damn issue of FANTASTIC as I did!) It lacks subtlety, and believability. Possibly any one of those details might have made a believable character, but all of them at once create a figure that is obviously a figment of your drug-fevered imagination. Unless you can create more believable characters than that I'm afraid you'll never be a successful fiction writer!

((Unfortunately, I won't be able to ))  
((fit any basket weaving courses in-))  
((to my schedule until at least next))  
((spring -- BDA.))

Besides, I rarely use ice in my scotch and even more rarely spill this elixir of life. (I do piss my pants, though, so maybe you can be forgiven.)

In all honesty and seriousness, I thought your descriptive paragraph was poorly written. What sort of mark/comment did you get on it? It's a droll bit of fannish frippery, but it's not good writing by a long shot. The last sentence is about the only one that read really well.

((Here's what the instructor))  
((wrote on the page: "Well ))  
((done. Type and individual))  
((both there. The snake and))  
((tortoise begin to get in ))  
((the way toward the end, ))  
((though. Better keep them ))  
((muted. They should be ad-))  
((juncts to Harry, not grabbing))  
((the spotlight!" See that, Mike!? ))  
((Not only a literary critique, but ))  
((a mini-psychoanalysis! So get off))  
((the reptile schtick and we'll all ))  
((respect you more -- BDA.))

I like the way you segmented and de-

signed the lettercolumn. Nicely done, with the headings adding an attractive touch that helps offset the fact that there's no artwork worth looking at.

As for Dave's thoughts that people might be picking on Brad for personal reasons, I doubt that. I doubt most of the people criticizing his work have ever met Brad. I suspect it's an Emperor's New Clothes sort of thing: the mere fact that people publish Brad's art and defend it so strongly causes many fans to get all het up because they can't see anything of value in what he does. Why, I bet that if no one, anywhere, ever published another piece of Brad Parks artwork, why the whole furor would die down immediately....

((Mike, you're switching challenge &))  
((response around in that paragraph.))  
((The fact is that people didn't ))  
((start defending Brad strongly un- ))  
((til there were already other fans))  
((dropping their shitloads on him. ))  
((And that sort of "criticism" is ))  
((something I don't like to stand ))  
((still for -- BDA.))

Bowers does ask for quite a bit of work, but his reputation is such that a lot of unsolicited good material is sent to him. And Andy Porter works very hard to get both the original and the reprint material he uses. I suspect a far smaller percentage of ALGOL goes to Andy spontaneously than goes to any of the other "major" fanzines."

Ben Indick, 428 Sagamore, Teaneck, NJ 07666

I'm surprised at Michael Carlson. He is usually a reasonable fellow, and has always been above that lower-case, adolescent typing style. Next he'll write at an angle. Once we all did those things. Once.

Brad Parks? Well, I've defended and praised him right along. Brad has lots to learn -- he is far from accomplished, and is also still a very young kid -- the potential is there, because already he has a clear style. What he needs is work, lots of work, and good teaching. Bravo, Jodie. She is truly a Fair Lady, even if she hates fanfic.

I can't fight with Don Ayres' attitude, but the reason Jews point with





seeming chauvinistic pride to Jews who have made a name is a defensive one. That is obvious. Lately we are seeing an exhumation of once unknown black figures from history, many deserving of repute. It helps smooth the edges of minority status, and also gives respect to some who may have been made to feel inferior.

Patrick Hayden, 206 St. George St., Apt 910, Toronto, Ont. CANADA

It seems a bit Pollyanna to espouse the "if-you-can't-think-of-something-nice-to-say-then-don't-say-anything-at-all" philosophy brought up by Jodie Offutt and agreed with by you. The trouble with that is that it emasculates valid praise by robbing the person dealing out praise of any integrity as a critic. Personally, I can think of fanartists, fanwriters, and faneds whose work "suck," to use Jodie's phrase, and I really don't think the foundations of their self-esteem would be undermined if I said so. (For the record, Brad Parks is not one of them -- I enjoy HEARTWORM and I really can't see all this hysterical foofawraw about his artwork, which is no worse than, say, Jay Kinney's...age snobbery, perhaps? I hate to bring it up....)

((Such a policy does not "Emasculate")  
((valid praise" -- it invalidates ))  
((invalid criticism. Anyone can say))  
((that someone's work sucks -- free ))  
((speech and all that -- but it doe-))  
((sn't say anything, and in that in-))  
((stance it is better to say nothing))  
((at all. When you use shock-value ))  
((statements like "this sucks" or ))  
(("this is shit," it's just wasting ))  
((words unless you qualify those ))  
((statements and explain why you ))  
((feel that way. Of course, the ))  
((same thing holds true for empty ))  
((praise -- "this is good," "I like ))  
((it," etc. -- but not in the same ))  
((way; extending legal precedent to ))  
((criticism and praise, one might ))  
((say that fanac should be consid- ))  
((ered "good until proven rotten." ))  
((--BDA.))

To Bill Patterson: "Gracelss doodling" is a valid element in fanzines. So far the zine-pubbing field has successfully avoided being amalgamated into that amorphous mass that various Derelicts have been referring to as

"Monty Hall Fandom," with its Big Time values and showbizzy flavour...give me the casual flavour of a little "graceless doodling," thank you.

John Robinson, 1-101st St., Troy, NY 12180

The Post Awful is a Funny Critter. Recently it threatened to close as many as 12,000 small post offices that failed to even break even. Congress responded by appropriating \$1 billion to keep all those losing propositions open.

That was stupid. That Congress should have done is give the Post Awful a half billion to keep those losing propositions open until feasibility studies could be done to see which could be kept open to best serve the ones that were closed. Now the situation is that those losing propositions will be kept open with a few closing each month. We'll get the same thing only spread over time, and no studies to show which should be kept open to best serve those losing nearby services.

Suppose we have four towns out in the least populated end of the country. These towns are Snowshoe, E. Snowshoe, North Snowshoe and West Snowshoe. The one in the middle is Snowshoe. All the others are within 10 miles, but two are as much as 20 miles apart. Which one would you keep open? Of course, Snowshoe! But with no organization going for you it will end with all of them closed sooner or later, and then where do the people of the Snowshoes go? Thirty-five miles to the nearest big town!

The reason packages from Arizona go to Albuquerque by way of Denver is that it would cost more to hire people to sort out all those packages at all the Arizona offices. This way it's all done in Denver. The same goes for New Mexico. It's cheaper to have someone say, "Oh, those go to Denver," than hire sorters for each office. So it all gets dumped in one gondola and pushed to the Denver truck as long as it's going to a point in the Southwest.

((But it doesn't work that way, John.))  
((Packages aren't sorted at all the ))  
((Arizona offices, but sent to Phoe-))  
((nix for sorting -- except for some))  
((of the further edges, which are ))  
((handled at Tucson or Gallup. All ))  
((the Albuquerque packages are put ))



((into their own sack...and then ))  
((sent to Denver, where the sacks are))  
((dumped onto a conveyor belt and ))  
((sorted once again.))

The scandal in bulk mailing parcel post is that the automated machinery is chewing up all those packages. There were two urns with remains in them lost recently. Neither was insured. The Post Awful paid \$15 in one case. It seems the package arrived without its contents. Nobody could find the contents anywhere, and the survivors of the recently cremated went through trauma. They should have mailed it through UPS, if available. UPS won't go where things are unprofitable. USPS shouldn't go where it can't at least break even (no pun intended).

Would you trust the Post Awful with the remains of your loved ones?

I had fun tossing packages in both Albany and Schenectady. They'd roll down the belt, after being dumped on brutally, and we would toss them into gondolas by zip or firm. Quite a few seemed to have broken open. We put these into a special gondola for others to sort out. The average person should put in at least 15 minutes tossing parcel post before being allowed to mail anything 4th class. That way they would do things up better and not be surprised if things arrive broken. The word FRAGILE on a special label is an open invitation for especially rough treatment.

Where do you get two reams of twil-tone for \$4.25. I paid \$3 by mail per ream through Will Norris, and local stores want more.

((I buy my paper by the case from ))  
((the Graham -- oops, fouled up my ))  
((format -- Paper Company in Phoenix.))  
((Any fan who lives fairly near a ))  
((large town or city and has a sta- ))  
((tion wagon or other vehicle to car-))  
((ry it in should be able to find a ))  
((similar dealer -- BDA.))

David Fryzell, 2716 S. Lincoln, Sioux Falls, SD 57105

It really appalls me to learn that you were making \$6.19 an hour working for the Post Awful. Going to a good cause and all that, I know, but! High salaries are why the cost of mailing a first class letter will be prodding the 25¢ mark in a few years. The starting salaries for postal clerks are well above the pay for most public school teachers, at least in

this area. That is positively warped! Postal work is still basically unskilled labor. How long can it take to learn to run a jackhammer, anyway? A few practice packages mangled, and you've got it. With a little training, anyone can learn to send mail addressed to Butte, Montana to Orlando, Florida.

Fandom must provide a good share of the dedicated membership of N.O.W., judging by recent lettercols in various zines. Does everyone have to have a persecution complex? While I'm largely in agreement with most of the tenets of the Women's Liberation movement, it is irritating when its devotees slip into paranoia. Alright, maybe something or someone is sexist -- that doesn't mean that all Sisterkind has been dealt a terrible blow. Some types of idiocy are best ignored as harmless, rather than dignifying them by reply.

It must be terrible to be a member of an oppressed minority (or even an oppressed majority) and be persecuted all the time. Certainly, all these groups have legitimate complaints, but too many of their tactics and attitudes tend to accentuate, rather than alleviate, their problems.

I guess I just get disgusted at anyone who tries to label me or anyone else. Blacks have come a long way in recent years, for instance, but I feel they'd come a lot farther if they stopped being so self-conscious about being black. There are the "Black All-American" football teams, to cite a case in point. Can you imagine the stink that would be raised -- quite rightly -- over the selection of a "1976 White All-American" squad? Is it really important what color a football player's skin is?

To tie this back into the lettercol, I wish letterhacks would stop viewing themselves and others as "types," parts of groups. I, for one, have never once been offended at any derogatory comments made about Swedish-English-Midwestern-Americans.

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21740

The cover looks very good. It's so simple an idea that I could imagine even my inartistic self creating a cover along these lines and yet I'm sure I could never have thought about this particular idea. I was going to start raving about



this new first-rate fanzine artist on page 2 until I noticed on the index page that you'd taken the illustration from a college publication. Anyway, no matter how much they may grumble about the quality of your paper, I can't imagine small details in a fanzine illustration reproducing any clearer than this sketch did.

Your information about postal service peculiarities gives me much the same satisfaction that some people seem to gain from hearing all the details about a particularly prolonged and messy fatal illness. I just noticed recently another oddity about the mail service. That campaign to get people to mail early in the day seems to be continuing, although perhaps with reduced emphasis. But virtually all the mailboxes in Hagerstown have schedules of collection on them which indicate that the first collection of the day rarely comes before 4 p.m. You'd think that the government would at least tear the mail early propaganda off the edge of the sheets of stamps before sending them to a city like Hagerstown where mail is picked up so late in the day from so many of the mailboxes.

I like the kind things you wrote about Fritz Leiber. Maybe he could be considered the favorite pro of fandom just now. I can't remember the last time anyone wrote scathing criticism of his fiction, and those who are lucky enough at cons to spend some time in his presence invariably are rendered blissful by the experience. I can't recall any serious spats in which he has become engaged in fanzines. And he makes himself available to fans quite often at cons. There are many well-liked pros who can meet several of those qualifications, but I can't think of anyone who qualifies on all those counts. Some people don't like Cliff Simak's style or subject matter, nobody ever sees James Tiptree, and Bob Bloch hasn't been writing much fantasy fiction in recent years, and besides, he's too much of a fan to be thought of as a pro by lots of fans.

((I've always suspected Tiptree of ))  
 ((being Howard Hughes anyway. And ))  
 ((Bloch is enough of a fan that he ))  
 ((will be one of the writers in- ))  
 ((cluded in the FANTHOLOGY '75 I'm ))  
 ((working on -- BDA.))

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

"Ohh, Cathy was a horny lass, she balled six kings and a duke...." Is that an SCA song? If it isn't, then it should be. What are the rest of the words? It would be interesting to see my friends' faces if I could sing the whole song to them.

((Afraid I don't know the other words))  
 ((to the song, if there are any. I ))  
 ((heard them from a extraordinarily ))  
 ((drunken local fan I was driving ))  
 ((home from a club meeting last year.))  
 ((He's a history major, so I presume ))  
 ((the song is supposed to be about ))  
 ((Catherine the Great of Russia. Ex-))  
 ((cept for various obscene remarks ))  
 ((about Schlesweig-Holstein, every- ))  
 ((thing else he said was unintelli- ))  
 ((gible -- BDA.))

You came all the way from Arizona to have dinner with Fritz Leiber, and when it was over, you headed back home?

((I knew somebody would misinterpret))  
 ((that part. If you'll look a para-))  
 ((graph or two before that section, ))  
 ((you'll see that the dinner with ))  
 ((Fritz Leiber was part of the West-))  
 ((con report I had been planning ))  
 ((to put into UNULANT FEVER -- and ))  
 ((speaking of UF, I'm afraid it is ))  
 ((thoroughly dead. Most of the mat-))  
 ((erial that would go into a person-))  
 ((azine has been finding its way ))  
 ((into various apazines instead. Ah))  
 ((well -- BDA.))

Lynne Holdom, 51 Leonard Place, Wayne, NJ 07470

In re Dave Romm -- there are a lot of Christians that, when they hear the word bishop, think of Joey. He does confuse Christianity with Catholicism. I've often thought that books like A Canticle For Liebowitz should have a glossary for us poor Presbyterians and Baptists. (Actually I'm sort of an agnostic but I was raised as a Presbyterian.) In order to be a Presbyterian, you don't have to believe that all non-Christians are damned or even in the virgin birth of Christ. There are other denominations even more liberal such as Congregationalists and Unitarians. Some groups don't even have an ordained clergy. And I couldn't agree more with Don Ayres about the whole Jewish shtick; it doesn't interest me or relate to my ex-



periences.

I particularly enjoyed your comments about your creative writing class as I took a creative writing class in college myself. I still have a lot of what I wrote then. Unfortunately SF as SF was not allowed. The first story I did was SF though. It had the Chinese Commies running the US and an underground movement working to get rid of same. Not the most original plot, eh? It took only 14 pages to get rid of the baddies, too. But the oddest thing was that my prof said that the story wasn't SF! You see he liked it and he knew he didn't like SF. In fact he thought it was the most original idea he'd ever come across. He did tell me that I was about the only person in his classes with any idea of plot. Since he read aloud a lot of class efforts, I think unfortunately he was right. Of course some writers get pretty far without plots. Witness DHAL-GREN. But I think a book should have a plot and feel cheated if it doesn't.

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

Your reference to the writing course you took called to mind my own experiences. The use of Glicksohn for a character study was especially choice. I've used him twice and ~~whether you're interested or not~~ thought I'd quote them to you:

"Notice how this kid doesn't have tangled black hair strewn through with gray. He doesn't stand five-seven. He doesn't wear an Australian bush hat. He doesn't have a dead snake around his neck. He doesn't affect short pants and fatigue jacket, nor does he wear sandals. There is no mimeo ink caked under his nails, and he doesn't come from a city on the edge of Lake Ontario. Do you know what that means?"

"No, John, what's that mean."

"It means we can't get sued."

C'mon."

Then there's the modified version in this charming (ahem) tale of swords and sorcery:

...By firelight the tangled black hair spilled from his forage cap was riddled with gray. A snake's skull dangled on a cord around his neck, almost hidden in his flowing beard.

With everyone working at it we should

manage to make Glicksohn the most famous science fiction leading man since Gregory Elephant flowed from the pen of Larry Niven, based on his knowledge of Bruce Pelz.

Denny Bowden, 917 Tracy St., Daytona Beach, FL 32017

This spring I took a course called WRITING FOR FUN AND PROFIT, but much of the class was spent in those fundamentals you referred to in your editorial. One entire night was devoted to writing a letter to the editor which was a waste of time, I though (but then, I teach that in my high school journalism course where it seems appropriate). Most of those who had signed up for the course wanted to learn techniques applicable to the writing of fiction, both short stories and novels. Instead the class centered all too often on inspirational advice, etd. Few assignments were given, and much of what we wrote was done during classtime which was a DEFINITE waste of time. I was terribly disturbed at times when the instructor explained our next writing assignment and then told us to work on it in the classroom. One particularly upsetting exercise required us to write a letter which explained how we had caused an auto accident that had critically injured someone. First we were to assume we were a college student writing home. Next we had to explain it to a friend and finally to our insurance agents. Of course, these were each somewhat different in slant, which was the purpose of the assignment. Somehow, though, this very basic exercise should have been assigned as work to be done OUTSIDE of class....

Lorde Jim Khennedy, Master of Time & Space, 1859 E. Fairfield, Mesa, AZ 85203 (summer address, effective about June 1st)

I can't honestly imagine how anyone could seriously expect to teach Creative Wrying the way your instructor is teaching it. Whyle it myght be possible to teach a class simple tricks of description by having it do a paragraph per week, but no less important is story (or novel) structure, whych wryting all the paragraphs in the world won't give you an inkling of. I could understand your class if there was a



Creative Wryting "I & II," but, at least as I remember from my days at ASU, there is just the one section.

((Not quite. There's EN 311, which ))  
((is ordinary Creative Writing, then))  
((EN 411 is Advanced CW and finally ))  
((EN 412 is Professional Writing, ))  
((which concentrates on business re-))  
((ports, studies, etc. -- BDA.))

I'm takying a "Basik Screenwryting" course this semester from a genial old coot, who, every week, I become more & more convinced is totally incompetent as a Teacher. For the most part, the class is a Workshop, wyth its members criticyzing each other's screenplays. Of course, my classmates know about as much about wryting for films as I do (and most less), but we supposedly have this Wise Old Sage to co-ordinate and offer the much-needed Professional Advyce. So far, however, the level of this "Professional Advyce" has been about his admonishment to me last week that Flash-backs are an "Old-Fashioned" technique that the Publique "resents" today. Just the way the Publique "resented" KUNG FU, Z, ENTER THE DRAGON, LISTZOMANIA, A FISTFUL OF DYNAMITE, etc. A month ago, he told us that "next week" we would discuss wryting dialogue...the one aspect of film-wryting I need help wyth. And every week synce then, at six O'clock, an hour before the class is supposed to let out, he says, "Well, you're all ghetting pretty tyred now...we'll talk about dialogue next week...." Fortunetly, in my case, there is a "Beginning" and "Advanced" edition of the class.

I don't think that Brett Cox, or you, or even Linda Johnson, have a ryght to firmly state what "Women" look for in "Men." One of the worst things about the so-called sexism, or any form of Ethnocentrism, is clumping people into categories ("Women," "Men," "Blacks," "Chicanos," "Apwruzers") and speaking of them as if they shared some sort of all-prevading gestalt Mynde. The fact is, Bruce, different Women look for different things in Men, and different Men look for different things in Women. Perhaps Linda Johnson and other Femmes do consider Personality, Intelligence, what-have-you more important than Manly Beauty. On the other hand, most

girls & women who've spoken to me about other men don't seem to even consider Men as being "deeper" than the colour of their eyes. Lykewyse, I have the normal psychological/biologikal compulsions, and appreciate, yes, Sexual, beauty in Women, but when I haven't been actually replused by another person's appearance, the only criteria in decyding if I want to pursue a "deeper" relationship is how (intellectually) interesting I fynde that person's company.

I must say that GODLESS #12 must be one of the least attractive mimeographed fanzines I've ever see, and the Mayn Reason is something rarely discussed in talking about zine-graphiks, the paper. Grey has ghot to be the ugliest, most depressing colour there is. Yet, you use grey paper for nearly all of your issue. It makes pages more or less adequately layed out look distinctly unappealing. Roughly framed tytles in the middle of crowded pages, sometymes mixing full and half column (or should that be "single" & "double"?) type lykewyse has a sloppy look.

((Note to Dave Locke: I think I've ))  
((found a suitable subject for your ))  
((next OUTWORLDS column -- BDA.))

Your artwork thish was uniformly average, ranging from Upper-Poor (Myke Bracken's rendition of Mrs. Andy Capp) to Upper-Tayr (the swype from the State Press). It myght, however, merit a little extra discussion in lyght of some of the commentary on the subject of fanart in the long "Mindspeak." To whit:

On its own, the State Press swype is really nothing exceptional: a fair drawing of a rabble-rouser in the University Hall.

However, in the context you put it into, it suddenly acqyres that "idea" backing one of your letterhacks mentioned, and becomes the Faned giving voice to his various complaynts whyle waving a copy of his GODLESS. Both amusing and appropriate to head off your Editorial.

Re Parks: although I've yet to become a fan of his doodles work, it seems unfortunate that you employed only one of his illos wyth all the lengthy loc-discussion on him & his work you saw fit to publish. However, that one illo, a screaming man, was very adroitly placed amidst the enraged comments denouncing





the "Salt Park" article. I hope other readers noticed this. (Ah! And now I finally notice the caption and the figure's hands clutching its crotch! Ahha!)

This one illo myght be looked at in lyght of "ideas" backing cartoons: by itself, the illo is nothing but an abstract sketch of a guy clutching his balls. It seems skillfully enough rendered to justify its own existence, as much as the many similar "screamers" by, say, Picasso -- whose work it may easily be compared to. However, in association wyth the comments on sexism, particulatly wyth its caption on Linda Johnson and "sewing things back on", it gayns genuine Meaning.

((All spelling and punctuatiion))  
((is strictly \*sic\* -- BDA.))

Brett Cox, Box 542, Tabor City, NC 28463

My first impression of the cover was sparseness, but upon closer examination I grew to like ti more. I think it might have been a bit more effective if you'd moved the black figure into the foreground and put Tim's logo over it in a white box -- as it is, at first glance it looks like there's nothing there. Of course, if you did this you'd have to have a totally black background in order for the white figure to be visible...so maybe it's better off as is. Remind me never again to attempt in-depth criticism of fanzine covers.

"The King in Plural" was pleasant and informative. Ah, the joys of honest labor, eh? Thus far my sole experience in the labor force was a brief part-time job I had out at the radio station this fall, which consisted mostly of obtaining some semblance of order from the chaotic record files, as well as occasional gopher-type stuff, such as hitting the nearby Zip-N-Jay whenever the announcer ran out of coffee in order to keep the poor junkie from having a caffiene fit. I got paid minimum wage (slightly over \$2 an hour), which ain't much, but was more than adequate when you consider the lightness of the work. Alas, there were only a finite number of records at the station, and when they were finally brought to rights, the job ended. Now I'm back to cadging off my mother and

worrying about how I'm going to find another job in order to earn the money for Midamericon. Which is another story entirely -- I don't want to even talk about it.

I was surprised by the vehemence of some of the responses to Gary's article. There's a lot to say on the subject, but I'll content myself with sticking by what I said in the loccol. I don't know about Linda Johnson, but it has been my experience, mostly through observation but occasionally through direct involvement, that women do view men on the basis of "physical attributes first." I just can't accent Linda's statement that "we women have to constantly look beyond the physical and judge the mental to a higher degree." I've seen

too many examples of the exact opposite to believe that. Indeed, I know of at least two cases of femmefen (will that soon become a "sexist" phrase also?) making disparaging remarks about the appearance of certain male fen, remarks that were every bit as chauvinistic as anything Gary had in his article. (No, Bruce, they weren't talking about you.)

Also, I can't believe that Linda and Laurine White took exception to Rich's story. Mai Ghod, people, it was a satire, and in a satire you mimic the writing of the author you're lampooning, and if said writing contains anything "offensive" to you, don't blame the author of the parody -- he was only doing his job. (I guess you'd better make that "exaggerately mimic," since Heinlein doesn't really write quite like that. Not all of the time, anyway.)

Final word: I know you wanted short-to-no continuation of the discussion, but if Gary chooses to reply to his critics I hope you give him as much space as he wants. If he chooses to reply, that is -- if I were he, I'd be sorely tempted to tell all of them to go take a hard dive in a shallow pool and let it go at that.

(Oh, yeah, I almost forgot -- your caption for Brad's cartoon was a stroke of semi-genius. Well did.)

K. Allen Bjorke, 3626 Coolidge St. NE,  
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Parks only strikes once this issue,





but despite the fact that the poor fellow depicted isn't as finely detailed as a Canfield or even Bracken's page 11 illo, the idea comes across very clearly, which is the chief purpose (in my mind) of any art -- to communicate something to the audience, whether it be in a cinema house or Joe Phann sitting back chuckling at the poor castratee (as I did!).

Gary Grady is a product of his environment -- no more, no less -- and what he wrote in G11 is something you would more-or-less "expect" to see coming out of the US Army/Navy/etc. In that way, you got an idea of what such a social situation as being in the armed forces, stationed in a strange, faraway place, can do to someone's mind. I "know" Gary Grady, in a subjective sense, through his many other fannish writings, which for the most part bear little resemblance to this. It was the environment that did it. (Though to tell the truth, I enjoyed many parts of it!)

Rich Dartucci, PO Box 75, Cedar Brook, NJ 08018 (summer address)

While I doubt if it would be in keeping with the ethical obligations of my profession and I realize that it would leave me open to considerable criticism from fandom as a whole, might I suppose that Linda Johnson wrote her loc on GODLESS 11 while under the influence of certain cyclical hormonal imbalances which render a state of objectivity impossible? Either that or she was bitten by something small, furry and rabid...

First she explodes at D. Gary Grady's innocent little tale of enforced celibacy. Then she has a hang-fire hissy at my own leeringly exaggerated parody of "We Also Walk Dogs." I wonder, with some little trepidation, whether she intends to follow it with a display of running about in circles trying to bite herself in the small of the back.

While I rather liked your reply to Ms. Johnson, I must say that it was tempered too much to suit me. Had the topic been different -- or had Ms. Johnson's sexual polarity been the reverse -- I would have expected a withering blast from your typer to sweep the topic off the page. Regardless of gender, she is a boor.

I can say this without rancor, of

course, because I am a boor, in my own low, leering, self-satisfied way. Still, it strikes me as pitifully inarticulate to impute that my brains are in my glans penis and that I desire them to be masticated. In the first place, this is physiologically unlikely; in the second, I've no doubt it would be exceedingly painful.

I don't believe that you pointed out to Ms. Johnson the fact that "We Also Spay Cats" was, in its ham-handed way, a parody. In exaggerating the characteristics of the original, I strove to make the damned thing risible. Those characteristics in me she was attacking were those I was trying hardest to ridicule.

Uh, I'm a sexist, too, Bruce. ("Aha! He admits it!") I think it'd be impossible to deny that there are definite differences, both psychological and physiological, between the male and the female of our weary little species. I also admit to considerable discrimination between the sexes. For instance, it is easier for a female applicant to get into medical school than it is for a male applicant of equal qualifications and aptitudes.

And here I cast the flippant attitude aside; Bruce, if you think that the discrimination is all against women, you're wrong. In that one vital case, it was distressingly the other way around; I know -- because I was competing in that marketplace not too long ago, and hating women applicants with a passion so black as to be something disgraceful. I look back upon my emotions at that time with considerable disgust.

I'd like Johnson -- and Szurek and Glicksohn and all the other knee-jerk liberals in the lettercolumn -- to know that their opposition to an objective examination of the subject of sex-based discrimination is a crippling obstacle to the evolution of any solution to the problem. They are perhaps as bad as the sexist "pigs" they putatively oppose in that their first reaction to any point of view other than their own is as reflexive and unthinking as any Male Chauvinist Pig's.

I would expect that in fandom, where exposure to science fiction has certainly engendered exposure to the principles of the scientific method, there would be an attempt at objectivity -- just an at-tempt, damnit!



I am distressed; and because of that distress, I, too, resort to name-calling. I, however, feel that I have a valid reason. The term "boor" fits someone who resorts to ad hominem screams of outrage when his/her prejudices are assaulted. The term "knee-jerk liberal" suits those who apply labels and leap gloriously to incredible conclusions on the basis of paltry data and hair-trigger mouths.

I offer no apology for my imputation that Johnson was "on the rag" when she made her idiotic comments; I assume rather to give her an excuse for her failure to behave in a rational manner and attack "Frozen Salt Pork" and "We Also Spay Cats" in a valid fashion. She exhibited poor logic and damned poor critical sense.

((I've had my doubts about the wisdom of running this letter, since -- as Rich admits -- it's not particularly great an example of enhancedness and calmness. However, there are a couple of reasons I finally did decide to put it in to print: First, since Rich's story was criticized rather vehemently by a few people, he deserves a chance to reply. And, second, I did mean to point out in replying to Linda Johnson's letter last issue that "We Also Spay Cats" was a parody, and as such shouldn't have been judged in the same manner as "Frozen Salt Pork" -- BDA.))

Chris Sherman, 700 Parkview, Minneapolis MN 55416

I appreciate your honesty dealing with your so-called 'sexism.' In America, and indeed, in most of the western world, it is impossible to escape the conditioning of man over women, man sees and man likes, or man sees and doesn't like. The buxom, clear-eyed curvilinear body appears on every television screen, in every publication, everywhere. We are exposed to it constantly, unavoidably, from the moment we can see. Men are conditioned to drool over certain body types and laugh at others.

Both Grady and Johnson are not dealing with each other on a personal, individual level. They are both spewing what is required for them to spew, thanks to what they have been fed all

their lives. Neither are taking the other from where they come from; they simply represent MAN and WOMAN, and both react in completely predictable fashion.

Maybe they truly are as they write -- maybe they have completely thought out what has happened to them without their consent, and maybe they are fully conscious that they hold typical conditioned responses, and are slaivating like Pavlov's dog when the proper bell rings.

I don't know either of these people on a personal level. I don't know where they came from. I am leery of levying these observations upon them. If I am wrong, and they know it, I am greatly sorry for what I have written. But what they have written makes me believe I am right.

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

Your editorial was thoroughly interesting. I am a bit annoyed at your habitual jumping to the conclusion that things that confuse you are stupid. The army, the post office, the courts, what not. You always dig just deep enough to find out what you are looking for, then drop the investigation. I am not saying your conclusion is always wrong, but it is always uncharitable.

((...and always deserved -- BDA.))

Don Ayre's view of the Jewish experience is limited. As any Jew ought to be able to tell him, Jewishness is not more than a religion, it is a way of life. Throughout their history, Jews have not only thought of themselves as a "nation" historically, but been regarded by the people in whose land they lived as "foreigners." In Russia, they are still considered foreigners. I suggest Don read a book called The World of Our Fathers, about the Jewish American immigrant experience.

Mike Kring, 6250 Indian School Rd NE, Apt A-302, Albuquerque, NM 87110 (new address)

All the stuff and bother about the D. Gary Grady article/thingie in G11 was a little strange, to say the least. Being in the military does tend to let you overlook all sorts of relevant things and accept people for what they are. "Sexist!," "Bigot!," and all the others surely exist everywhere else, but they sure don't cause a stink as much as



an article in a fmz, do they? Or at least, that seems the case. I look for all this concern for equality to die down when the world food supplies drop even lower than are today, and the USA and Canada too start suffering things like food riots and stuff. Social reforms go out of the window when you're concerned about eating and making your next meal. But then...I'm a pessimist, and view the droughts of the last two years as a mere warning sign. The worse is yet to come. So why bother? I don't know, I just keep on. It's all a big joke, anyway.

Now, I've solved my problems with women. I don't look for companions to share my life with. I did for awhile (we all have to go through these naive stages in our lives, don't we?), but then I realized it was stupid. I didn't really want a companion, I wanted someone I could lean on. And that's not a companion (or whatever you want to call it). So...I've given up, so to speak. Not that it involved any great deal of soul searching and terrific mental anguish. Nope. I just looked around, and then looked at myself, and realized that (a) I'm a selfish bastard, and just who in the hell would want to live and share their life with me, and (b) I'm a selfish bastard, and I didn't want anyone around all the time, or even part of the time, unless I invite them over to visit, or they just drop by for awhile. I like my privacy too damn much. Maybe I am avoiding people. I don't know. I don't care, either. That's just the way it is. I'm satisfied, and that's all that really counts, ain't it?

((Uhhh...I think I'll hold off my comments for a while on that one --BDA))

And you're definitely right about women in the military (the majority, that is) wanting husbands. I've seen WAFs get married after arriving on good ol' Kirtland AFB in two weeks. That's frightening. Especially considering that the guys most of those women are marrying are in their late teens. There really ought to be a law that prohibits people from getting married until after they're 25 or so. Let 'em live together for awhile. Then get married.

Robert J. Whitaker, PO Box 7649, Newark, DE 19711

Your defense of male chauvinistic

behavior bothered me, even though I didn't read Gary Grady's article which spurred on all the commentary. I don't care what you say, I don't feel male chauvinistic behavior is defensible in any case, not even on the rotten terms you give it. The idea that a human being, a woman, is on the same level as a can of apples or a box of fruit bothers me. I could refer to you as a basketball and ask others how they like bouncing you, but I won't.

((I don't think I was defending male))  
 ((chauvinism. I was just pointing ))  
 ((out that it exists, that it's ))  
 ((there, and that in some situations))  
 ((it's almost inevitable. Wherever ))  
 ((there are two groups, one will try))  
 ((to step on the other; government ))  
 ((taxation, for example, is just an-))  
 ((other form of chauvinism -- BDA.))

What is even stranger is that you say you want to be a writer. And that you do not feel very close to anyone. A writer should know people, and should not be afraid to allow his emotions to flow and not be ashamed to admit being an emotional person. If you are going to continue such shallow behavior, I don't see how you are going to make it as a writer. A writer should not be one of those types of people who judges by appearance. People are totalities, not surfaces.

((First of all, I don't think I've ))  
 ((ever said I wanted to be a writer.))  
 ((I said I'd like to be a writer; ))  
 ((there's a considerable difference.))  
 ((Second, I'm not an emotional per-))  
 ((son. Third, to "make it as a ))  
 ((writer," first I have to try; at ))  
 ((best, I'm a dilettante as far as ))  
 ((writing is concerned -- though I ))  
 ((really should do some serious ))  
 ((thinking about what I want to do ))  
 ((with the rest of my life one of ))  
 ((these days. And fourth, I can ))  
 ((hardly judge myself accurately; ))  
 ((how am I supposed to judge people))  
 ((I barely know accurately? -- BDA.))

It could very well be that since you do not feel close to people, you do not know how people will react in a given situation, do not comprehend another's behavior, do not have any empathy for one, etc...this may be why you are unable to complete a story. You write what you know. You don't know people. Therefore, you can't complete a story without knowing anyone.



Since you do not know a person very well -- how are you going to move that person through the steps you are demanding of him in a story?

((Oh, just fake it, I guess -- BDA.))

Dave Szurek, 4417 Second, Apt B-2, Detroit, MI 48201

Several times in the past you've hinted at having lived a rather isolated life. Here, you go a step further by admitting that you've never been close to anyone of either sex. So, how can you make such firm assertions about men and women? Bruce, women are not alien creatures. The collectivist fairy tales taught by our forebears say this, just as they tell the female that men are alien. But they are fairy tales -- and it's long overdue that the bubble is burst. We are not Poles or Jews or Negroes; we are people! We are not young or old or middle-aged; we are people! And we are not men or women, we are people! Contrary notions are what keep folk apart!

I'd imagine that if you open yourself up and proceed ahead, you'll see this for yourself. More hopeless and less excusable are those individuals so thoroughly conditioned as to remain blind regardless of how much experience transpires. Their experiences are wasted by the unwillingness to open up to them, to instead cloud them with steadfast game playing. While there are definitely women who think and feel differently than yourself, are there not also such men? It depends on the individual, and I would say that even where that difference exists, there isn't necessarily as wide a chasm as we are often prone to think.

Yes, the dating system does leave something to be desired. It is a game whereby we see others not as themselves but merely as people following an assigned task. But there are other ways to meet women. Haven't you ever heard of plain old socializing? If you can restrain a tendency toward over-anxiousness and refrain from approaching the whole thing as a game, I think you'll find that it works and that one is far more likely to find the right person eventually in that function. If two of you grow to feel a mutual attraction, go with it. If not, is there anything wrong with remaining good friends?

Of course, in some instances, an extremely close relationship does lead to difficulty in developing something else. At three points in my life, my closest friend (as opposed to lover) has been of the opposite sex. One of these I feel reasonably certain was the closest, deepest, most meaningful relationship thus far in my life. (So why are we no longer together? I judge things on quality, not quantity. If you'll allow yourself to live in the present, if you can overcome the fear that things will not be permanent -- because damn few things are -- you'll have a better chance at happiness.) There were those who refused to believe that our relationship was purely platonic. There were even a few who stated quite confidently that a close friendship sans sex between members of opposite sexes was a scientific impossibility -- because they perceived men and women as separate species, as "aliens"! Mayhaps it was too much to expect them to accept platonic roommates of differing sexes, but anyway, we did once develop a mutual interest in "something else," and after consummation, found our relationship as "lovers" less rewarding than that we had as "friends."

But Bruce, you've got your chance to experience life now. Why not take advantage of it? (Unless, of course, you simply don't want to, which is as good a reason as any for not doing so.)

((I had a big long comment in reply ))  
((to Dave's letter, but after think- ))  
((ing it over, I think I'd rather ))  
((wait and see what sort of response ))  
((it gets from the readership. At ))  
((any rate, reading over what I had ))  
((intended to write, it looks pretty ))  
((silly now -- BDA.))

WAHF: Reed Andrus, Ray Bowie Jr., Mike Bracken, Jane Fisher, Gil Gaier, Alexis Gilliland, Dennis Jarog, Sam Long, Eric Mayer, Tom Morley, Jodie Offutt, Pauline Palmer, Ron Salomon, Steve Sawicki, Al Sirois, Bruce Townely and Victoria Wayne.



