

uollo ullouho yllo ohou lloclhho ollollu cynollo ulloueyc  
tho yllo oho ohou llo clhho ollollu cynollo ullouho yllo  
clhho ollol lucynollo ullouho yllo ohou llo clhho ollollu  
nollo ullouho yllo ohou lloclhho ollollu cynollo ulloueyc  
tho yllo oho ohou llo clhho ollollu cynollo ullouho yllo

**GRAYMALKIN**

NOT BORROWED FROM STEVE LEIGH!

BOWLES



## Contents

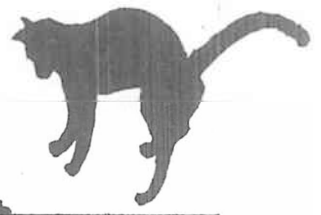
Getting Familiar = Denise Parsley Leigh	2
from "The Highballs Are On Me": Lou Tabakow = Don Ford	2
Three Poems For My Father = Steven Federle	5
Caterwauling = Stephen Leigh	6
Bill Bowers' First "This Is Not A Speech" = Bill Bowers	10
Poesia Mystica = Luke McGuff	13
The Fannish Art of Time Binding = Wilson Bob Tucker	14
The Masters of Fandom = Jodie Offutt	15
Locs = Mike Glicksohn, Don Carter, Arthur Metzger, Don D'Ammassa, Brian Earl Brown, Jodie Offutt, Andrew J. Offutt, Bill Breiding, Eric Lindsay, Alex Eisenstein, Lee Pelton, Harry Warner, Jr, Stephanie Oberembt, Dana B. Siegel, Ned Brooks, Paula Gold Franke, Jeanne Gomoll, George R R Martin, Luke McGuff, Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Roger "R <sup>2</sup> " Reynolds, Arthur D Hlavaty, Bill Colsher, Carolyn "C.D." Doyle, Phillip Davis, Robert Bloch, Michael Harper, Barney Neufeld, Scarecrow (Rex Oz), and the WAHFs	18
Reviews	43

## Artists

Terry Jeeves = 24  
 Frank Johnson = 4,  
 Stephen Leigh = 2, 7, 17, 38, 43, 46, 48  
 Eric B. Lindsay = 45  
 Linda Michaels = 11, 19, 30  
 Mike Streff = 23, 32, 41  
 Jeff Kleiman = 16,  
 cover by Bill Bowers  
 bacover by Marla Gold  
 calligraphy, headings, graphics by Stephen Leigh

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## getting familiar

This will not be your usual Denise Parsley Leigh editorial. I have nothing crucial to get off my chest and I won't try to force it...what I have to say that *I* feel is important (notice how I stress the word I) is hidden within the zine...this means you'll have to read it if you're interested.

Money has been tight the past six months and because of that I've only been to two cons since last issue...Confusion, which was exactly that, and Marcon, which was slightly better. However I spent most of Friday night sick in bed because I had a bit too much to drink...I have since given up Rusty Nails and taken to straight

scotch instead. Another Glicksohn convert.

And speaking of Mr. Glicksohn, he and Bill Bowers pulled off a surprise for my birthday last month. I was told I had to go to Hap's Irish Pub because a "surprise" guest would be there. I hate surprises. I spent the entire evening worrying about who it would be and wondering if I should clean up my house in case of overnight guests, and hating Steve for not telling me about it sooner.

But I did finally show up at the bar and was immediately greeted by "C.D." Doyle, who I expected; but hidden behind her was this strange looking, slightly hairy, Canadian, complete with funny hat and bottle of Guinness in hand, muttering Rule Britannia under his breath. I have to admit that seeing Mike in a situation other than at a con was worth all the mental anguish I go through when someone is staying at my house. It was an enjoyable weekend...I had a CFG meeting the next night and an all night penny ante poker game took place. (We told Tabakow that after one o'clock the meeting was over and the party started.) Tanya Curry blew Steve's cover when she informed the group that he was bluffing, much to Steve's chagrin. (Tanya has Mike to thank for disabling her husband, Al, the night before when they decided to race down W. Liberty at four a.m. after half killing a bottle of Jamison.) The weekend ended up being much like a convention except that we got less sleep than usual. Anyway, onward to more important things...

---

This MidWestCon will mark our second anniversary in fandom. It will also mark the thirtieth anniversary of MidWestCon. Somehow it seems appropriate to reprint an article by the late Don Ford which appeared in July of 1957 in The CFG clubzine. Bowers' mentions it in his "First: This Is Not A Speech", goading me to find a copy and reprint it. So, with the permission of Margaret Ford Keifer, I present:

### Lou Tabakow by Don Ford

Some people have actually been shocked when they discover Lou and I are friends. We needle each other so violently that those who do not know us very well expect to see blood flowing any moment.

One predominant theme runs through Lou's mind. You'd think an old time fan would come up with time travel, space warps, giant brains, psi or something like that.



Not Lou. Lou is more basic. Sex is his theme. If someone would publish a magazine like Spicy Spaceship Stories Lou could be happy.

Lou also shares the January 14th birthdate of Ken Bulmer and myself along with other great men of history. For years the CFG has held a birthday meeting and combined reunion on the nearest Saturday to that date. However since 1953, when that girl at the Philcon asked me who that nice grey-haired old man was, Lou has had his hair cut close in an attempt to shave off the 6 years difference in our ages. (6 years chronologically and 16 physically.)

At Chicago we all went to a chinese restaurant. Lou ordered southern fried chicken as any true gourmet should.

There are several ways of getting a word in edgeways with Lou. One is to keep talking louder and louder without stopping. Practice talking on the intake, too, and you will prevent those split second pauses which are so deadly. Doc simply say, "Lou, shut up!" One gambit I've found quite effective is to move my lips without actually saying anything. When Lou lowers his voice to hear what you're saying, come in loud and strong.

Lou has musical taste. With my old record player he used to say that was the kind of music he liked to hear and then proceed to drown it out. This forced me into Hi-Fi. Now, with a simple twist of the volume control, counter force is applied. However I'm still one behind in this game of 'oneupmanship'. Right in the middle of a jazz session, Lou says, "My favorite song is Ave Maria, sung by Marian Anderson." Yeah, that cat really sends me.

After 15 years delivering dry cleaning, Lou swore that nothing interesting had ever happened on his route. He sold out and started driving a taxi while looking around for another business venture. Immediately all sorts of things began to happen. Women climbed over from the back seat and threw their arms around him. Movie stars and visiting celebrities rode in his hack. Northern Kentucky gambling houses and other houses started giving him a cut for bringing them customers. All of this had such a narcotic effect that it took us two years to rescue him and put him into the honest profession he has today...a traveling salesman.

Several stories of Lou's have been published: Other Worlds, Spaceways, Astounding, and coming up, the Magazine of Fantasy. However these outside activities have sapped Lou's strength to the point where writing comes hard these days. In fact, Carrie Tabakow does all of the writing anymore.

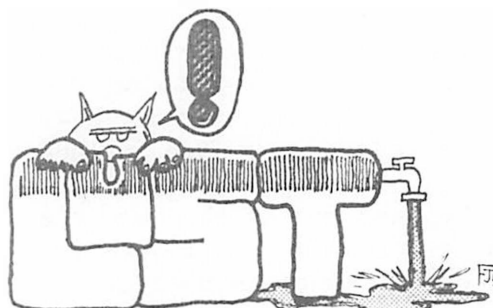
Ever since Lou sold her a typewriter (By God, I call that salesmanship!) Carrie has been forced to write in order to meet the payments on the typewriter. So, when she switches over to science fiction, a new writer will join the field. Maybe there's a method in Lou's madness. He sends Carrie to writing school one night a week. In a few years he'll probably retire, letting her support him.

---

This, folks is our president. Something has to be done about that. Bowers has already started a campaign to oust Tabakow and replace him with Sean Curry. I think we should back him. I mean, when you read the above article and realize that the only thing about Lou that has changed in the past twenty-two years is his clothing, and we aren't really certain about that...

But, all kidding aside, we really do love Lou. I mean, who else would put Sid Altus up when he comes to town? Who else would spend more time on the West Coast than in Cincinnati doing his presidential duties? Who else would do all the work on Midwest-Con practically singlehandedly? Only Lou. And for that, I thank him.

Another thing that Bowers mentions in his non-speech is the fact that we have a local celebrity in our midst, Frank Johnson. Frank is a DJ for a local FM radio station, WEBN, and usually ends up missing most of the CFG meetings because he tends to work Saturday nights. Our loss, not his. Well, in his free time Frank doodles. Last MidWestCon, when I found out that there was another local artist, I immediately pounced upon him, begging for artwork. Of course, at that time the only thing I had to show for myself was G#1, which, admittedly, left something to be desired...namely, experience. But Frank promised artwork anyway, and even showed me a copy of a fanzine he and Joel Zakum did some years back which made me feel a lot better about G#1.



THE DEMON IN US ALL!

Along about last Christmas Frank gave me the drawing on the left. I have no idea why he thought this would be appropriate for my zine. Just because lust and affection and flirting have been primary topics for the past issues...Anyway, I like the drawing and I'm working on Frank for more artwork. (Does this warrant a plug on 'EBN, Frank? After all, Curry got one.)

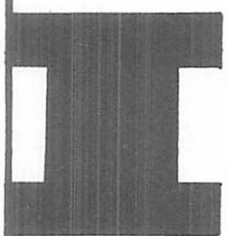
The response for #3 was tremendous, and I thank all of you who cared enough to write. As a matter of fact the response has been so good that I am going to be forced to cut down on the number of locs that I print. In the future, it will also be my policy to give copies of Graymalkin for *printed* locs. Finances and postal rates are doing me in, so rather than give up fanediting I will have to resort to doing more real editing, something I hate to do. I receive so many good letters from so many good people...I started cutting down the locs this issue, but I still had tons of letters. I decided to go ahead with it though because the other day I received a phone call from this person known only as Marla Gold. It seems she works at this printing shop and for only one day's work at collating a major print job she will print my fanzine for paper costs only. Well, tomorrow's the day and we shall see whether or not it was worth it. I'm a lousy collator, and know very little about operating machinery...even this typer.

Credit has to go to Bill Bowers for the use of his typewriter this past month and for his proposed help in doing the collating job with Marla. And then there's Tanya Curry, who doesn't read fanzines, just prints them. Tanya got me the paper to print this issue on at her cost. Tanya is also trying to sell her press, so if you know anyone who's interested...And Al Curry, for *trying* to get my artwork reduced. It wasn't his fault the machine broke down. And Margaret Ford Keifer for allowing me to reprint Don Ford's article, and to Lou Tabakow for just being Lou. And all the contributors within.

And, of course, to my biggest contributor and supporter and advisor and friend/life mate (stolen from Lee Pelton), Stephen, without whose goading, chastising, encouragement and hard work this fanzine would never have been published.

So, have a good MidWestCon...we're trying to find a cheaper hotel...

DENVER IN '81 DETROIT IN '82 AUSTRALIA IN '83



3 poems  
for my  
father

When I last saw you  
your hands were clenched  
with a rage foreign to your voice  
and you were rushing inward  
away from the moon, beyond  
the glowing night  
of my grief.

Yet on my way home  
I saw the moon rise.

Where have you gone, then  
if not to that land behind the moon?

In the emptiness above the earth  
in the terrific clashing  
of jet with atmosphere  
I heard your new voice

I saw your new hands  
tearing at cold, hurtling steel,  
casting off silk shroud  
for dark soil  
and even darker rivers.

If stars loom too large  
is not my window too small?

-Steven Federle

SLEIGH



by Stephen Leigh

## THE "BANG, YOU'RE DEAD" REPRISE

I'd just been most thoroughly killed --- one of life's more annoying situations.

The forces of Evil Ken had pushed through the one weak spot on my border (near the geraniums) and marched without great resistance to the other end of the porch. I stood up, brushing dust from the knees of my jeans. The tang and blue smoke of caps was being smeared across the backyards of the

neighborhood. My soldiers lay in plastic carnage: the snipers still valiantly holding their rifles as they lay on their backs, the machine gunners strewn about an earthen bunker, the tanks and jeeps scattered like olive green leaves -- one of them would not be found again until disdainfully flung aside by a rampant mower.

Evil Ken was grinning. He still held a bomb in his hand -- a cast-iron dart with a cap under its weighted head. He threw it down into the battlefield; there was a sharp *crack* and a few of his own soldiers tumbled over to join the bloodless dead. "Boom," Ken said. Very softly.

As we set the soldiers up once more, I made a suggestion: we would organize the game a bit. Each of us could move our men once each turn, and -- as I picked up a stick of the appropriate length from the ground -- they could move no further than this. It would be more realistic, I argued, than the haphazard way we did things now. What I didn't say was that I was tired and our present way of playing put a premium on agility, the ability to move quickly from one part of the porch to another.

I knew then that I was either an incurable games fanatic or a Machiavellian manipulator.

There were phases: the *RISK* phase (in which I learned the fine art of revenge, and the even finer art of temporary alliance), the Chess phase (where I found that even a player whose skill is greater than your own might be susceptible to psychological maneuvering -- have you ever seen a player's confidence in his strategy collapse simply because you chose to ignore the fine and subtle attack he'd just mounted? Ahh, 'tis a grand sight. Watch the sudden squinting of his eyes as he stares at your hand moving your knight *away* from the attack, the contemplative rubbing of hand on chin as you push your pawn into the trap laid for it and *then* smile and shake your head at him. *What has he seen that I missed?* You can nearly hear your opponent saying it aloud. And you have no plan at all...). And one cannot slight the fannish-get-together phase, where we played various games simply for the sake of being together -- at least in the beginning -- and the D & D phase in which your humble narrator gets to fulfill his fantasy of being God. And of course, none of the games -- with the exception of chess -- ended up free of my tampering with rules. *RISK* was expanded until the board ended up nearly the size of our kitchen table and the game took several hours to complete -- but my, it was a Fine Game when it reached its last form. The fannish gatherings at Bea Mahaffey's started with a LOTR rip-off called the Quest For The Magic Ring or somedamnsuch, and also ended up expanded quite liberally. And as for D & D, the current phase...

Well, I *have* to enjoy a game which allows the players to reveal their inner personalities so well, and which is so free-form that it *invites* a person to tamper



that's being unnecessarily cruel to the game of chess. It *has* been my observation that chess players are rather arrogantly proud of their abilities -- assuming any such exist. The game being devoid of the element of chance, victory depends entirely upon the skills of the two players. Ideally, the best ('best' being defined by chess players as 'the more intellectually sharp') will win. After all, once the rudiments of the game are learned, the players are given the identical number, type, and location of pieces, the only difference being that white moves first. And white, given two players of equal skill, will always win because of that initial move. So you lose any game you play because *you weren't as smart as the other fellow*. From such snobbish and egotistical thoughts is arrogance born. Savor that too much, and you'll quickly find it reflected outwardly, and none of your friends will care to play chess with you. It doesn't surprise me that Bobby Fischer is a social boor, nor that the Russians take great pride in the prowess of their players.

And then there was LOTR. You learn much about the hidden tendencies of your friends and acquaintances by playing weekly with them... I can yet hear Ric Bergman, his fist clenched and pumping, shouting "One! One!" as you took your damage roll after a combat (one being the number that indicated your man had gone to the Eternal Game and would be removed from play). I'd look up at him, rolling the die casually in my hand, with a look of careful disdain on my face that indicated *I* would never stoop to such vulgar displays.

"No way this is going to be a one, Ric. That foolish chanting won't do you a bit of good." *You can't psych me out, Ric. That yelling isn't doing anything but getting on my nerves.* I'd roll. A one. Booming laughter would rise from the other side of the table as Ric's large hand (he keeps the smaller one in his pocket) would delicately place one of my pieces in the box.

"Ahh," he'd say. "Did it again." I'd look mildly amused at his assumption that his chant had had anything to do with the results. And inside...

Later... "One! One! One!"

"Yeah, yeah, Ric. We know." *This'd better not be a one. Christ, that's irritating.*

One. "Ah, worked once more." He deftly plucks a piece from the pile on the board where the black orcs have encountered the men of Rohan. I think vicious thoughts of Ric interred in a large die and forced to roll himself everywhere; he merely looks pleased. And Bea hides a smile -- she is playing Saruman and is rather pleased herself with the elimination of a potential enemy piece. "Too bad," she says, and doesn't mean a word of it.

And a little later, Ric is rolling damage himself. I sit quietly, showing Ric how a polite player remains stoic. And inside... *One! One! One!* At a mental volume far exceeding Ric's.

And there were the interminable arguments about the rules. One quickly discovers how many people cannot regard a game as simple entertainment or something merely to pass the time. No, there is very little on earth more serious than a game. The number of western gunfights over a game of cards -- chronicled in far too many movies and books -- once struck me as rather unrealistic, though I knew money was involved. But I came to the realization that the money was only secondary. The fatal encounters were caused by playing the games, and would have occurred even if the cowfolk had been playing for buffalo chips. After I came to this conclusion, it all made sense.

Games are not sublimated reality. The reverse is true.

[illegible]

Dungeons and Dragons. Role-playing. The game that incorporates a living god in the guise of Dungeon Master and lets him mediate disputes from characters under





I was never much for writing articles

--which is probably why, less than a year after its original appearance, I reprinted the only one I was ever pleased with. It was called "The Making of a Fanzine" and, from what I've seen of the current crop, it's due for another airing real soon now!

I was never much for making speeches

[I evaded taking "Effective Speaking"...it was finally dropped as a requisite]  
--which is probably why, when first faced with the necessity of doing such things--and later, after getting into doing the schtick...my "speeches" were written and read (rather than being "given")...and later published as fanzine "articles"...

I was never much for writing LoCs

[certainly not to fanzine titles starting with the letter "X" that don't even have a lettercolumn]

--which is probably why my "speech/articles" are more like personal letters to friends, rather than being proper examples of their respective genres.

Therefore, this is obviously not an article.

Nor will it be read aloud in front of an audience.

And it's certainly not a LoC--Denise gets more of those than I do, already!

In fact, I'm not at all certain of what it will turn out to be, but, for the moment, let's call it:

### **BILL BOWERS' FIRST "THIS IS NOT A SPEECH"**

Only one subject has come close to equalling the amount of time I've devoted to myself in the things I've written/"spoken" over the past couple of years: Conventions.

My first convention was a Worldcon.

But my second convention was the 1963 Midwestcon.

Now obviously there's no way I could depict *my* first Midwestcon with nearly the exactitude that Steve detailed his in these pages (before I gave it the wider exposure it so obviously deserved). My memory is not nearly so all-encompassing as some would have you believe--it's just that I have a tendency for remembering exactly the happenings that others wish I would forget, or at least ignore.

No, it wasn't my "First Contact": I'd already become somewhat active in fanzine fandom and, despite myself, had managed to meet a number of people in Chicago the preceeding fall. Besides, I came with a friend so uninhibited that, beside him, Denise would seem to be the archtypical wallflower...or the classicly shy fan: there was no way I could help meeting people. (Whatever did happen to Bill Mallardi?)

Still, I was sufficiently aware of the nature of things to be properly impressed when I was introduced to the "Bill Bowers'" of the early sixties; not at all like the disrespect with which these current upstart fans approach such "elder statesmen of fandom" [Copyright (C) 1978, for Renée Seiber].

With the possible exception of Octocon (mandatory qualifier: "the Real One"), Midwestcons are my favorite conventions. Enough so that I've really regretted the ones I couldn't make...even tho this year *will* mark the eleventh one I've attended over the interveaning decade and a half.

No, I didn't move to Cincinnati just to be close to my favorite convention; it just happens to be one of several very nice side-benefits accruing from that move. (And, if you give me a moment, I'm sure I'll be able to think of another one or two of those other pluses resulting from what was, without a doubt, the best 'move' of my life...)

Something to add to your trivia file: this June (1979) will mark the 30th annual Midwestcon... which makes it the third or fourth oldest continuing convention (after the Worldcon and Westercon; I'm not sure about Philcons).

A while back I had the idea that this would be an appropriate occasion to 'honor' those most responsible for making the CFG, and its auxiliaries -- Midwestcon and Octocon -- the enjoyable entities they are. In particular: Lou Tabakow, Margaret Keifer, Dale Tarr, and Bea Mahaffey. I mentioned this to a few of the others of Tabakow's minions.

Unfortunately, they expect *me* to do something about it.

Listen, folks, I'm the *idea* man. You people are the drones. (Just so that we should all know our proper places...)

...not that all of my ideas are greeted with the proper appreciation: Steve was noticeably less than enthusiastic about my suggestion for a script for "WCRG in Cincinnati".

(In fact, all that came of that inspiration was one Al Curry sketch -- which is the equivalent of a Marla Gold painting-without-an-animal... Still, you see, we *do* have our own literal Venus Flytrap. But we all do like Frank Johnson... even if he is a personal friend of Brad Balfour's...)

I don't know that much of the early history of the CFG and Midwestcons -- I met Don Ford briefly, and I know who Doc Barrett is -- but I'm not noted for researching the topics I discuss. Well, at least most of the 'research' I've engaged in over the past few years has little to do with organizations -- or people who become living testimonials to Grecian Formula 66.

But we'll leave Lou until his place. Last.

Margaret Ford Keifer is a lady. That's the only word I find appropriate. She is, at least the times I've been around her, gracious, quiet, and unassuming. And yet, in her own way, she picks on Tabakow almost as much as I do!

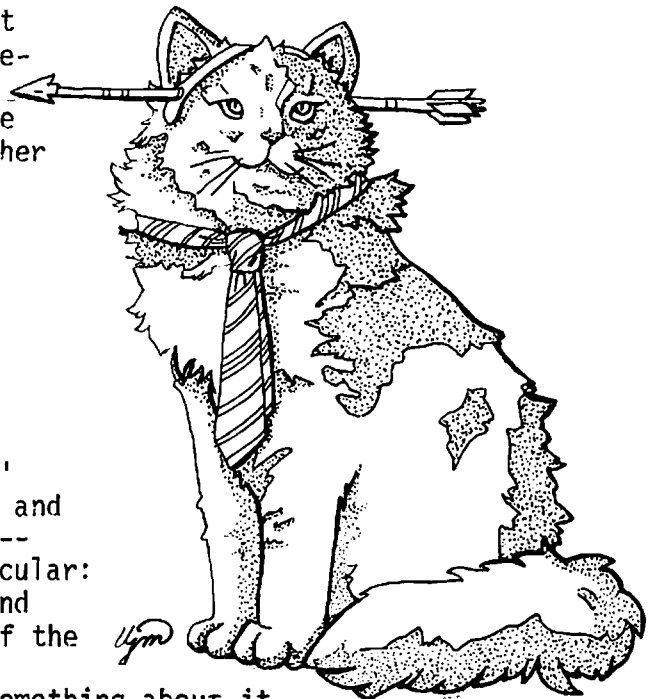
And, at Kubla Khan a few years back, she became the only person (to my knowledge) ever to 'correct' Harlan in public... and get away with it! If I hadn't seen it...

Dale Tarr maintains a low profile. But then, with Tabakow and me 'dominating' the meetings (if we bother to show up), I suppose that description would fit most of the CFGer's -- with the possible exception of Al Curry (who certainly doesn't know *his* place!).

Dale is known as the CFG 'recruiter'. Steve has already told of the phone call he received from Dale. In addition, Dale 'haunts' the local bookstores, and anyone he finds spending time in the science fiction racks get told about the CFG. In fact, even though he probably doesn't realize it (I've never told him), Dale is probably directly responsible for my moving to Cincinnati... rather than Chicago. Yes, it's his fault -- which will probably relieve Ric Bergman's mind... err, 'haze' -- immensely.

Thank you, Dale.

(even though I'm not sure Other People will do so!)





Bea Mahaffey is beautiful. In every sense of the word. I spend far less time with her than I should, could... want to... but that's me; not her.

Bea... like Gay and Jodie (... and Tanya -- fortunately *she* doesn't read what she prints)...is one of those purely 'good people' who may exist outside of fandom... but I've never encountered any.

Besides, she'd the only one I know of who can come close to keeping Grandpa in line...

He has such nice sons.

I never knew their mother, but I have no doubt whatsoever of where Phil and David received their heritage.

...which is probably where I should stop in my description of Lou Tabakow but, well, discretion is only a recently-learned virtue on my part -- and it's so much fun to backslide every once in-a while.

If there wasn't a Lou Tabakow, some idiot (or Sid Altus) would probably find it necessary to invent him. And make no mistake about it: if David Steinberg makes the perfect psychiatrist, Lou would make his perfect subject.

But let's leave Lou's delusions of being a 'Writer' to the other members of the "Cincinnati Would-Be Writer's Workshop" -- a Steve Leigh Sanctioned Organization. (You will note that I did not, kindly, mention Al Curry by name.)

The things I *could* tell you about Lou Tabakow; assuming you were interested. Even if you weren't; that's never stopped me before.

Lou is the Absolute Dictator of the Cincinnati Fantasy Group; rumor has it that the only way he can be replaced is during a business meeting. (Even death will not spare us!) Further rumor has it that the last such business meeting was called in 1949... or some other Dark Age that even I don't remember.

You see, Lou is the only person who can call a business meeting.

(And they accuse *me* of living off past glories!)

...of course, having an absolute dictator who has recently been attending roughly the same number of meetings as the Shah of Iran has been seen at meetings of the Persian Parliament is the height of ridiculousness.

But then, so is Lou.

I suppose one man's San Clemente is another man's Los Angeles.

Before she abdicated her position of "assistant Dictator" (by running off with one of the many Bill Bowers-look-alikes) (but then, any one of Wally's 'kids' is like the others) -- Paula Gold showed me a CFG publication from (I think) the mid-fifties. I recall it containing an article by Don Ford.

The title of the article was: "Shutting Lou Tabakow Up".

Somebody should reprint that article as a Public Service. Somebody like Denise. Or Al Curry.

I'm certainly not going to waste that much of *my* space on Lou Tabakow.

No matter how much I might agree with the sentiments of that title.

(Even though it was obviously a fantasy tale.)

Now I never suggested that these four were the only reasons that the CFG survived, or that Midwestcons became *the* Relaxacons of fannish legend: there are several other neat people (well, if you can call George Wagner 'neat' -- as opposed to 'unique') (and it is certainly one of the miracles of the 20th Century that Bill Cavin has survived -- in spite of being a Lou Tabakow 'trainee') who were here long before I arrived, and who continue to be here in spite of my arrival --

--It was really a thrill to have Mike Glicksohn (obligatory mention, for those who missed the earlier esoteric reference) sitting on my front porch precisely a month after my arrival here, accusing me of having "plunged all of Cincinnati fandom into war" --

(not that I didn't)

-- but those four are the ones who are, and have been, the mainstays. And for that, all of us Billy-come-latelies owe more than we'll ever be able to adequately repay.

Unfortunately, the 'nice' three of that foursome are not nearly so well known fandom-wide as is Tabakow. Which is a shame.

Bea and Margaret are so obviously far too young to be considered contemporaries of Tabakow's in any sense of the word.

And Dale obviously doesn't require artificial aids to keep *his* hair dark.

Thank you all... Bea, Margaret, Dale -- just for being. We love you.

And... damn this hurts... that goes for you too, Lou...

(Even though I want it made perfectly clear -- if Midge hasn't told you -- that the only reason I wasn't at this year's Minicon was because of Lou Tabakow...)

I fight dirty.

I've learned from masters. (The only Johnson's I know are nice people.)

I started a schtick a couple of years ago; it is no longer an idle threat.

Lou Tabakow's replacement has been selected.

Sean Curry.

You remember Sean Curry?

Zero Population Growth's Poster Boy of the ~~Month~~... Year... Decade?

...besides, it's so obvious:

Both Lou and Sean talk about as much.

...and say about as much of significance.

Final paragraph.

My apologies to Sean Curry.

...for the unfair comparison.

-- Bill Bowers: 4/28/79-4/30/79

### POESIA MYSTICA

*My muse is a part-time lover.  
For six months, she is gone;  
Then she returns, all luggage and smiles.  
The tales she tells of the worlds unseen,  
The invisible art, the silent music,  
Leave me enthralled, impatient, and breathless.  
She knows her secrets, and hides them well;  
She smiles at what she says, at what she leaves unsaid.  
Then she goes, in some thundercloud sunset.  
All that remains are shallow words,  
Scattered typings, rough-edged manuscripts,  
And my empty soul, afraid of the dark.*

-- Luke McGuff

Robert Heinlein introduced the concept of time-binding into fandom at the 1941 Denver World Science Fiction Convention. He had encountered the concept in some mundane sociological discipline and believed that it could very well carry over into fandom: the art of mentally binding the past, the present, and the future into one cohesive whole. He suggested that fans, of all people, had the ability to perceive the past as well as the future while living in the present. Time-binding.

E. E. Evans, an active fan of that era was especially entranced with the concept and published eight issues of a fanzine called *THE TIME BINDER* in 1944-46. Due in large part to his efforts the term and concept of time-binding came into fandom to stay -- well, it stayed as long as that generation lived and remembered. Fans were supposed to be time-binders supreme, perhaps because they had broad mental horizons and downward-slanting eyes.

I will cheerfully attest to the idea of time-binding. It happens to me when I am least expecting it, and it happened again last January in a Chattanooga hotel lobby. I was left standing there agape. Pleasantly agape, of course.

This story begins 23 years ago.

In 1956, I was again standing in the lobby of a New York hotel waiting for the famous New York World Convention to open. That was Dave Kyle's convention, the infamous NYcon where the phrase "Dave Kyle says you can't sit there" originated. There were two or three long lines of fans inching their way up to the tables to register and I was standing beside one line talking to a New Jersey fan named Karl Olsen; he was an active fan publisher of that day and I was probably trying to cadge a free copy.

Karl asked a favor of me.

There was an attractive woman in the adjoining line he wanted to meet, but he lacked the nerve to simply barge over and introduce himself so he asked me to make the connection for him. He supposed that I knew her. I didn't, she was also a stranger to me, but I am nothing if not brash so I approached the young woman, slipped my arms around her waist and said in my suave, urbane way: "Hi, there. What's your name? Are you married?"

It is to the woman's credit that she didn't scream, knee me in the groin, nor call Kyle's Gorillas to have me pitched out into the street. She replied that her name was Lyn Something, that she wasn't married, and why did I want to know? I explained to Lyn that I was playing John Alden (or was it Miles Standish?) and introduced her to Karl. They went together well. In fact, they went together for the remainder of the convention and later got married. They're still married, and 23 years is a pretty decent record for fandom. Call me Cupid.

Last year they and I both attended the Disclave in Washington and we partied together telling each other wonderful lies about the good old days. They have two or three children but the offspring weren't at the convention. A fine reunion, but it was only the first chapter of this time-binding saga.

Leap forward in the time machine to 1979, and the Chattanooga at a downtown hotel in Chattanooga. Once again I'm standing in the lobby watching the fans register at the tables, when suddenly, behind me, a young woman cries: "Mr. Tucker! I'm Rondinella. You introduced my parents to each other in New York." That's when I fell agape.

Rondinella (named after a science-fictional heroine) was about nineteen or twenty years old and had made the journey to Chattanooga from New Jersey just to see me. Mary Elizabeth Counselman was sitting at one of the tables with Perry Chapdelaine. The four of us spent the remainder of the afternoon there. I was ecstatic.



Mary Elizabeth Counselman is a writer from prehistoric times; I first read her in *WEIRD TALES* about 1933, and immediately sat down and wrote a fan letter gosh-wow-ing over the story I'd read. Perhaps the editor of *WEIRD TALES* didn't forward my letter, or perhaps he did but Mary Elizabeth couldn't bring herself to answer what must have seemed a fawning, incoherent letter from an unlettered teenager. But now, 46 years later, I couldn't bring myself to ask about that letter; I didn't want to embarrass her or myself. Mary Elizabeth is just short of seventy years old, wears a splendid and healthy body, and has very long, very black hair. She is still writing.

Time-binding is the art of bringing two people together at one convention, partying with them, and then meeting and partying with their daughter 23 years later -- all the while holding an exciting conversation with a favorite writer from the prehistoric past.

The Masters of Fandom
SMOFSMOFSMOFS  
SMOFSMOFSMOFS  
SMOFSMOFSMOFS  
SMOFSMOFSMOFS

— Jodie Offutt
SMOFSMOFSMOFSMOFSMOFSMOFSMOFSMOFS  
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This year I become a ten-year veteran of fandom. Those ten years have been the best of my life, partly because of fandom.

I'm very happy with the way my fan life has progressed, and except for a few instances that I'd handle differently, I'd do it all over again. During the past decade I've spent a lot of weekends in hotel bars, lobbies, halls, rooms, and con suites, talking with and making friends with people.

I've spent a lot of time observing, too. Noticing situations and watching people. (I'm a people-watcher.) It's interesting and fun and I've made some fascinating discoveries. In celebration of my tenth fannish anniversary, I'm going to share one of those observations with you.

This is a biggie: please pay attention.

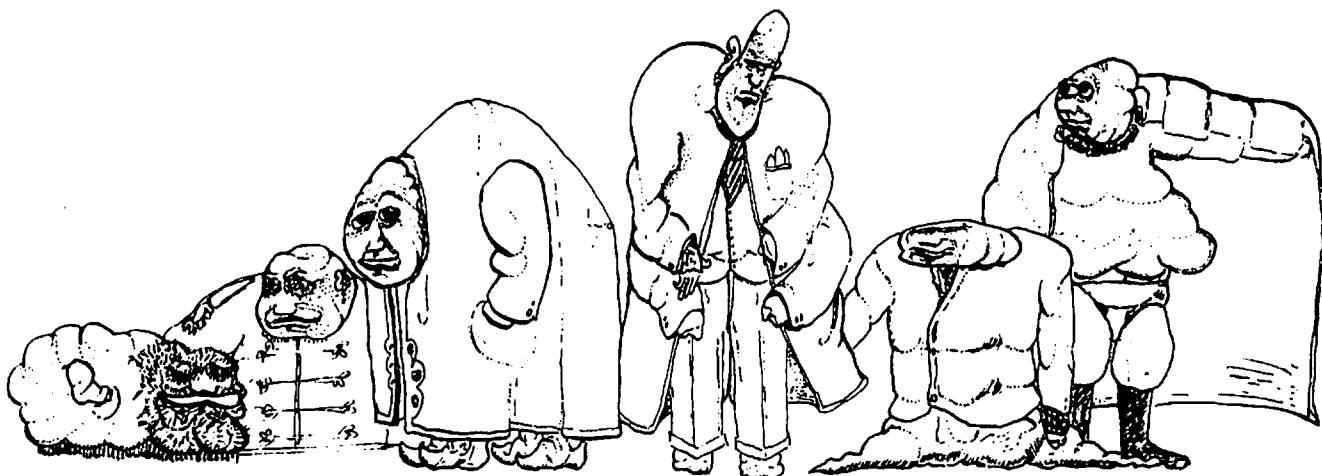
We're all aware of the Front Men of Fandom. And Women. They are the ones who manage our cons. They see that they are very visible about it. They also do a fair amount of smoffing (fannish buzz-word meaning politicking).

You've seen them; they're everywhere. East and West Coasts. In the Midwest. Even in the South, which is making a comeback, fan- and con-wise. They bustle. They hurry along. They're not like the rest of us who amble (occasionally stagger) from one party in search of the next, sometimes taking wrong turns and eventually saying the hell with it, and sliding slowly down the wall to sit on the floor, finishing a conversation and creating a hall party.

These Bigwigs always have very serious, intense looks on their faces. They seldom smile, especially at each other. If they come into a con suite, it's all business. They'll come four or five steps into the room and look all around, like Secret Service spotters. It's unusual for them to find who they're looking for, and if they do, they give a curt nod, one beckon, then turn and leave, knowing they'll be followed by the beckonee.

Sometimes you see them standing -- never sitting -- in halls, toe to toe and head to head, talking quietly and intently. You never can get close enough to hear what they're saying because they simply hush when you come near. It puts one in mind of Mafia bosses discussing the next takeover.

Don't worry, they're not talking about anything serious. When it's time for the heavy stuff, they disappear (by ones and twos) behind some unnumbered door someplace, and nobody knows where they are or sees them for hours.



Or you see them in the hotel restaurant. They're the only fans who are being quiet. They never laugh, give the waitress a hard way to go, or holler across the room at anybody.

They never go to bars.

Some few of our fannish politicians carry briefcases. Now don't confuse these un-Secret Masters of Fandom with the backgammon fans among us who carry their boards around, always ready for a game. Every now and then a backgammon player will leave his board beside his chair or on the table when he leaves the bar or dining room. Not for long, though. In two or three minutes, he'll be back for it.

The Briefcase Boys *never* leave their satchels. Never. It's as if there is an invisible chain from wrist to handle. If they eat or drink, the case is laid on the lap with a napkin on top. *Never* set beside the chair. Or left behind. God knows what's in them! Probably peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, fifteen-cent bags of Doritos, and little plastic bottles of orange-ade, fortification for when they vanish behind those closed doors.

These Up-Front Fans deserve a lot of credit, and I want you to realize that, too. They do a lot of work for the rest of us.

They deal with hotel managements. Perhaps not always as we'd like, but they're *doing* it and we don't have to. They arrange con dates, banquets, films, programs. They don't clutter up the con suites and hall with their *seriousness*. They and their busywork free the rest of us to do what we do best, and want to do most: sit around con suites and party rooms, on floors and beds, talking to each other, touching and rubbing and getting to know one another, entertaining and listening to each other. The business of fandom.

Now comes the revelation.

A few years ago, at a Khubla Khan, Meade Frierson and I stood in the khan suite, just outside the bathroom door. While we stood and talked, we watched the constant parade of fans going into the john and fishing for beer in the tub of ice.

Finally Meade shook his head and said, "You know what keeps fandom alive? Beer and ice."

You know, that's true. Can you imagine a con suite or bidding party without its tub of iced beer? Take away the banquet, the films, the panels, the art show, even the huckster room and we'd still have a convention. Fans gather to be together.

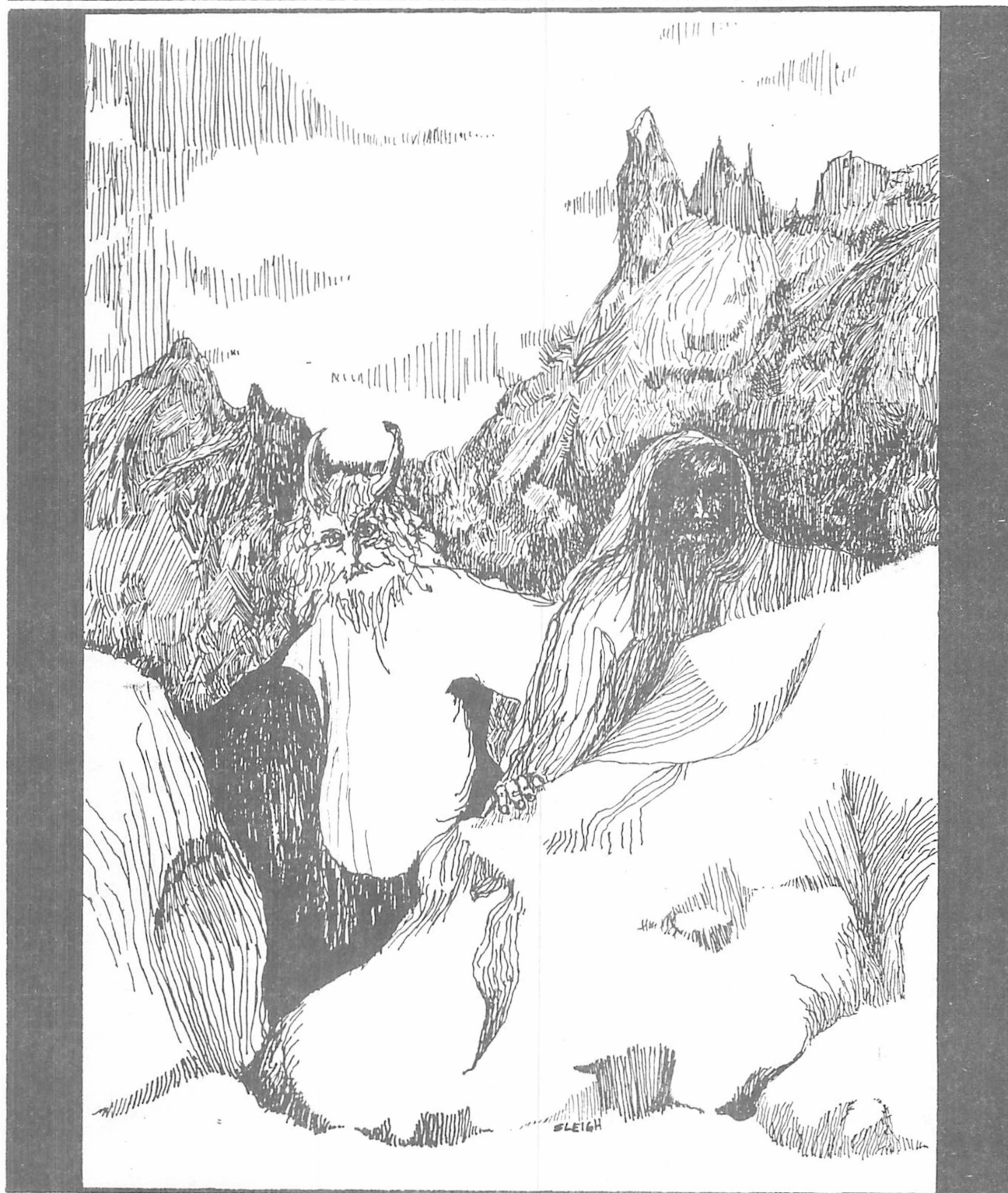
If those bathtubs are left empty, though, fans will go someplace else to gather, sure as hell.

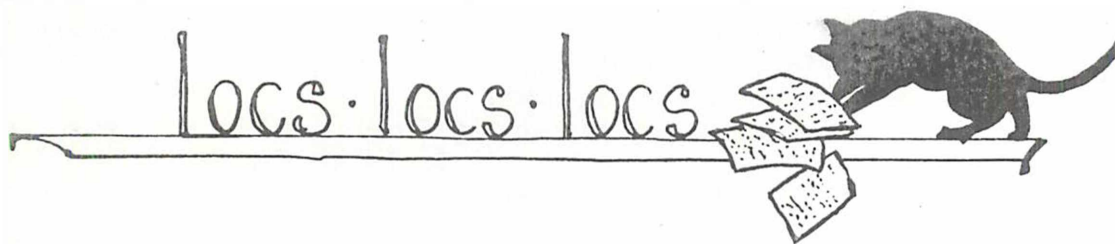
If beer and ice keep fandom alive, then it follows that the Secret Masters of Fandom are those who fill the tubs to keep us happy!

These people are often listed as gofers and their names are all run together at the end of the page in the program book. Their names are often misspelled or left out all together. At banquet acknowledgements, they're asked to stand up as

a group -- "the rest of the committee" -- for a round of applause. These providers for all of fandom often go a step or two further for us. Those of us who are less hardy can often find soft drinks and light beer in the tubs. The chicken-shit among us are happy to see sugar-free drinks iced down.

There you have it. The *real* secret masters of fandom. Without them to keep those tubs filled, the rest of us wouldn't be able to do our fannish jobs: filling up con suites, holding down beds, holding up walls, talking, laughing, and quenching our thirsts.





Mike Glicksohn, 141 High Park Ave. Toronto, Ontario, M6P 2S3 - January 28, 1979

The third *GAYMERKIN* is such an unusual combination of the serious and the frivolous, the important and the silly that I find it a little hard to know exactly what tone to adopt in replying to it.

Oddly enough, now seems like the perfect time to read the more serious parts of this issue. I seem to be surrounded by death and by the effects of death on those I associate with. Two days ago a busload of highschool students on their way to a skiing trip smashed into a truck killing several students and critically injuring several others. They were not students from my school but I found yesterday that many of my students had friends or relatives on the bus and there was a definite pall over the school as a result of the tragedy. Also yesterday I asked one of my favorite students what was upsetting her and she told me one of her best friends had just fallen down some stairs and died of a broken neck. And when I came home my landlady was in tears because her daughter-in-law died yesterday morning. They say that bad news comes in threes but yesterday was the first time I'd had the experience of facing three reports of sudden death; needless to say, it was not a very cheerful day.

Then this morning I read your third GM and find that concerns about mortality seem to be widespread among my friends. A few of my own thoughts might not be inappropriate and expressing them may help me throw off the melancholy of the last few hours.

I've been lucky, if that's the word, in my experiences with death. I've only had one really close encounter with it. Undoubtedly that colours my own reactions. My mother died when I was twenty-three. I was almost there, but I'd gone to get a cup of coffee after sitting at her hospital bed for some time. I wasn't gone more than half an hour but when I came back I could see my father down a couple of hundred feet of corridor and I knew immediately that while I'd been away my mother had died. I cried that night, out of grief and anger and frustration. I was angry that I hadn't been there; I was angry at myself for all the things I hadn't done and all the things I hadn't said when she was alive; I was angry that she had died so young; I was angry that my father and my brother seemed so calm in the face of our loss even though I knew their grief was as great as mine and only their deep religious convictions gave them the strength to carry on so outwardly at peace. I was also ashamed at myself for harboring some of the types of thoughts that Denise recalls having as a child, those selfish and self-centered but seemingly very human reactions to death in one's family. It was the first and the only time that I can remember really being stricken by the tragedy of death.

Three of my grandparents died before I reached my teens and at that age one doesn't really comprehend the loss. The fourth died when I was eighteen but I hadn't seen her for many years and only really had vague memories of her from my childhood in England. Since then, with the exception of my mother, death has only involved ~~mere~~ casual acquaintances, the friends or relatives of people I cared about but who were not especially important to me, and others equally far removed. Nobody I've



really loved has died. In a way, I've become rather unconcerned about death. I'm not even sure I know how to relate to it.

Which brings one rather logically to thoughts of one's own death. I've never been particularly afraid of dying. In fact, as somewhat of a nihilist I've always envisioned eventually welcoming it. When the attractions of life no longer outweigh the drawbacks I don't think I'd find it all that hard to embrace death. (I'm also lucky in being *very* easily amused so that it really doesn't take much to make life seem attractive to me.) In fact, when I'm given to such speculation the only thing that bothers me about my own death is that I won't be around to see what effect it has on the friends and the society I leave behind me.

I don't think it's especially morbid of me to have given some thought to how I'd like my demise to be treated. If anything, I think too many people simply postpone such thoughts and end up dying in a shockingly unprepared fashion. You're probably not familiar with a bizarre and obscure English singer by the name of Jake Thackray but he has a song that completely encapsulates how one should be feted after death. A grand, glorious party with lots to eat and drink, much singing and dancing, and "no regrets, boys." That seems to me to be the only way to take note of the passing of a dear friend whose life was devoted to that sort of living. I envision a massive con party, totally catered by the money I'd set aside for the purpose, of course, filled with nothing but the very best of whiskey and other lesser drinks, food galore, where everyone would be encouraged to bring guitars and sing and chase members of the opposite sex and occasionally sit down for a few hands of poker or a paragraph or two on a one-shot fanzine, go skinny dipping, make bad puns, and enjoy themselves completely. The sort of party I'd want to be at if I were still around. And I'd want Spider Robinson to start things off by singing "The Last Will And Testament of Jake Thackray" just to set the tone. Now *there* would be a party!

Which, I suppose, brings us back to the fact that this is still a fanzine I have before me and perhaps a loc would be in order. I do recall promising I'd send one and as we all know I *always* remember everything I do or say at cons and I never renege on a promise.

It's a good looking issue, of course, and Steve's cover and interior calligraphy are impressive indeed. As I intimated before, I found the range of contents somewhat unsettling but one would certainly have to agree that there's something here for everybody! You'll pardon me, I hope, if I restrict my remarks to carefully chosen items rather than trying to reply to the entire issue.

It was your editorial commentary that moved me to write the above, Denise, so perhaps you ought not to worry quite so much about your ability with words. (In particular your comment about the Syrian wake being "almost pleasant" led me to mention my own thoughts on the matter which previously I'd kept pretty well to myself.) And what about those of us who envy *both* of you? You for your way with people and Steve for his way with words. You see, things are never as bad as they could be...

The tendency to create macabre humour in the face of death is a very common one but two mentions in this very issue brought home to me the fact that one tends to distance death that lacks immediacy with this technique whereas death that strikes one personally is somehow "above" it. (This is entirely illogical and therefore





wonderfully human.) Steve's little anecdote about "doing Elvis" caused me to burst out laughing. I found it really funny in a very black sort of way (much like the SNL Franco jokes) but Elvis's death did not touch me in any personal way. Yet when I read Lee's (or Steve's) comment about Tom Reamy's bad sense of timing in dying when he did my instinctive reaction was "What a tacky thing to say." I knew Tom, not all that well admittedly but I knew him, and his death seemed more "real" to me than that of Presley. Hence it "shouldn't" have been used as the butt of a gagline. I realized right away that my reactions were contradictory and thought about it a little more. Making jokes about death is just a defense mechanism and doesn't imply any lack of feeling on the part of the commentator. (They *may* arise from a lack of feeling, or course, but equally well they may not.) Since I concur completely with everything the two of you say about the awkwardness of having to face the death of someone important to a friend I can also understand this sort of seemingly-irreverent reaction to tragedy. Death is one of the hardest things we ever have to come to grips with: anything that makes handling it a little easier is acceptable to me. (My friends may take that as carte blanche to be properly raucous and irreverent if I'm ever unreasonable enough to die when there are still women to be kissed, scotch bottles to be emptied and inside straights to be drawn to!)

Speaking of conventions (and somebody must have been so doing somewhere) I want to point out that (a) if the Octocon poker game seemed to go on for hours for those of you watching it you ought to have been *playing* the thing! There's something about trying to decide if a high pair is worth forty bucks that ages a man, and (b) I want it to be registered and notarized right here and now that the question I asked Ms. Dotti during the RHPS panel was only at the urging and pestering of one Suzi Stefl. I certainly wouldn't have been so crude all by myself.

Friendly advice from a friend and former fanzine fanatic: leave the alter ego stuff to Geis. Even he has trouble making it seem other than inane. (((But Mike, it was supposed to be inane. I never promised good! Anyway, advice taken.)))

I've often wondered whether or not the fact that I have very little in the way of a temper is because there are practically no ideals or beliefs in life that I care strongly enough about to get violent over or because I'm a coward and scared of getting the shit kicked out of me. Perhaps it's a combination of the two. Whatever, I've never been in a serious fight and I hope I can continue to be able to say that.

I don't have a great memory for the plotlines of the few sf stories I've read but when Steve challenged us to think of a well-known sf novel in which there were no violent deaths I thought immediately of *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON*. I'm glad he didn't ask us for *two* of them though!

I could have forgiven Steve his "lean to port" joke but the "Gallo's humor" was really stretching things. Undoubtedly it sent a ripple of laughter through tipplers everywhere, etc, etc, etc.

I've seen other people suggest that Joe's first two novels were similar and when I asked him what he thought of such an idea he was most adamant about its wrongness. This doesn't necessarily mean that such similarities don't exist but it does tend to suggest that Joe certainly didn't put them there from some deliberate overview of the human condition. (I've also read that all the plots in the known universe can be sub-divided into some six basic outlines--of which one is indeed "man-confronts-great-odds-and-triumphs! -- so Howard's remarks on what he sees as similarities in the gross structure of the two novels really isn't all that significant.) Any response to his other seeming criticism is contained in Howard's own qualifiers and counterpoints. He seems to be intellectually aware of the fact that the need to create a successful conflict and resolution must to some extent dictate the structure of a novel but continues to imply that he can interpret the author's beliefs and feelings by watching what the characters in his books do. Everyone knows this to be a fallacy and it needs no further rebuttal. And anyone who knows Joe is aware of the fact that if there *is* an underlying message to TFW and MB it isn't "This is where we should be heading" but rather "Watch out, folks, or it might end up this way."

If Mister Curry doesn't like driving through all that nasty city traffic he should do what I do and live a pleasant three minute walk away from work... It's altogether a calmer way of life: not to mention the fact that I can get up at eight-fifteen and still be into work by eight-thirty. Assuming the snow isn't too deep, of course.

I love Suzanna but I'm afraid I think her story would have been improved if she'd taken a leaf from my own book: twice as good at half the length...

I don't think I'll comment on IGGYconreports but yours was enjoyable and contained many of the same positive impressions as my own would have if I'd written one. (I stopped writing worldconreports some time ago when I ran out of snappy titles myself. I'm biased, of course, but I still think my Torconreport had one of the best titles of any conrep I've seen. How could I ever top "Would You Please Take Those Little Old Ladies Out Of The Hotel, They're Scaring My Snake?")

Myself, I bought THE MAGIC GOES AWAY entirely for the Maroto illustrations, stats of which I'd seen at the Ace party in Phoenix. That the story was an entertaining fantasy was an added bonus. But I'm a little disappointed in your reviewer, Mister Stephen Lee, who apparently failed to notice that the occasional rather crude drawing with the bold lines was a blowup of a detail from a larger drawing elsewhere in the book. Perhaps your husband, Mister Steve Leigh, could point this out to him. He is an artist, after all.

It doesn't happen often but I find myself in complete agreement with Jessica about the matter of the societal pressures against being thought a "whore" or a "lesbian". If one can dismiss as irrelevant those who think the former then one ought to be able to do the same for the latter.

One of the remarkable things about this issue is the number of unexpected locs you managed to obtain. This is perhaps the first Cavin loc I can recall and while Po occasionally appears in letter columns it certainly hasn't made his name a household word of late. And then there's Donn Brazier who rarely appears in other people's fanzines. What if you start to receive lengthy missives from the likes of Dave Carldon, Bill Bridget, and Leland Sapiro? From there it would be but a short step to hearing from Francis Laney and Claude Deglar!... As long as you don't hear from Bowers we're all still safe.

I must be about loded out when I read the rest of the letters and bypass all the argumentative items in order to muse on Harry's remark about the size of house numbers. In thirty-two years I've never lived anywhere higher than a 267, and the current 141 is the second highest address I've ever had. Most of the time I've lived in houses that had two-digit addresses. Now isn't that thrilling to know? I think I should go have a drink and watch some TV to revitalize my mind. (((As far as Lee Stevens' abilities to judge artwork...look at the things he does. He has been severely chastised for the blunder. And why do you keep making these references to Lee being Steve? You of all people should know better. After all, you did share a room with Lee at Iggycon. Or is that another of the blurs of the convention? Really, Mike, you shouldn't let yourself get into such states...it could get you into trouble. Just wait till Bowers and I get you into your room at this year's Midwestcon. The fact that you'll probably be reading this after the con will serve as a memory jogger.

You may not realize it but I did severely edit your loc. It's very difficult to tell and probably no one will believe it. And only two cats this time. Oh, and you can count on me at your wake. Consider this as my r.s.v.p. But then again, you'll probably outlive us all (except maybe Bowers...he's ancient, you know.)))

important dates in fandom, no. 1: Jan. 6, 1873

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Don Carter of Mars, formerly at 1171 Neeb Road, Cinti., OH 45238, present address  
unknown - December, 1978

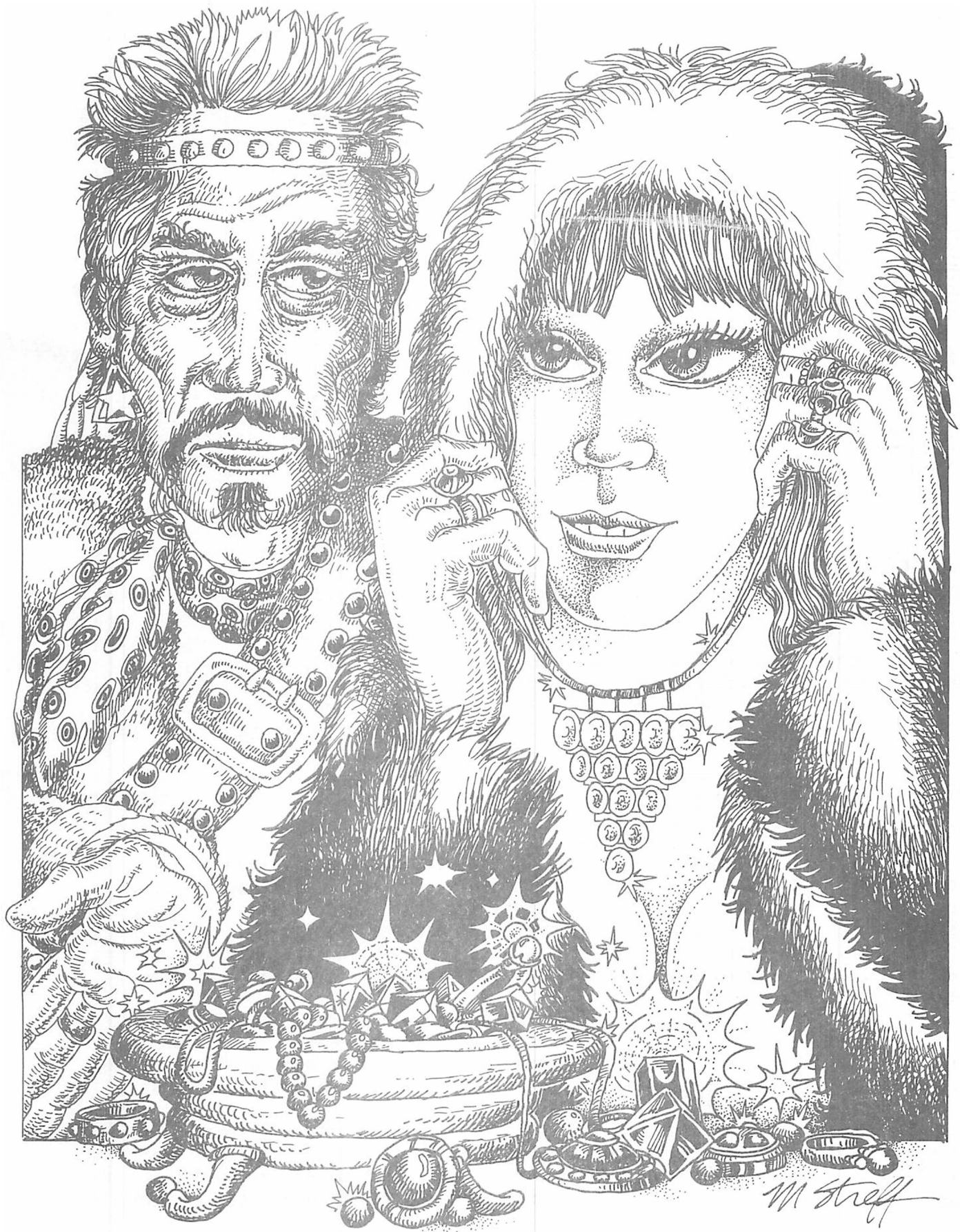
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I think it's high time I added my "goshwows" to the growing list of responses. You probably have forgotten the reserved comment of long ago about G#1 (I forget just exactly what, but something like "very good" or an equally incisive remark). Well, that was partly shock (that the zine ever appeared at all) and partly to avoid giving you such a fat head that the following issues might suffer in quality. Now I see there was no need to worry. You have a real talent for this sort of thing, and G#3 was the first fanzine I have ever read cover-to-cover at one sitting (not counting some one-page perzines, of course). Those first two articles were a little heavy on the morbidity and slightly depressing, but at the same time they were honest, real-life expressions that people can relate to. I suspect you will both get comments from people who were offended by the stark morbidity, but you said it like you felt at the time, said it well, and I appreciated the insights. We all feel like sticking it to the world a few times a year. (And if you thought *A SONG FOR LYA* was depressing milady, stay away from *MEATHOUSE MAN* by the same author. Incidentally, was I really the first person to discover the typo in Line #1? (((Yes, Mr. Carter, you were the first, and the only one indiscrete enough to mention it.))) Oh well, Father Bill and Steve, you can both draw better than I can, and any remarks to Art (Metzger) could leave me on the streets, looking for another house with a vast library for walls. Did I hear an evil chuckle?)

Skipping lightly over con reports and poetry, *Thank Ghawd* the George Howard article finally got into print! It laid around the old Quantum files, somehow never got into Laughing Ossiris either, but occasionally I would pull out the ms. for a real chuckle and a grim appreciation of Howard's abilities as a critic. The man is a treat; I hope we hear from him again ASAP. (((There follows a somewhat blatant request for more articles for some fanzine called Quantum at an address which is no longer valid, and since no one can locate George Howard anyway...)))

Al's article was totally misleading. Luck indeed! Anyone who has ridden home with him once can tell you that luck has nothing to do with the incidents he describes. It would take three fighter planes and a couple of computer-controlled lasers to have any chance of touching him on his way back from work. Even then I'd put my money on the Flying Irishman. As proud as I am of certain modest skills in negotiating Columbia Parkway at high speed, it is well documented that mysterious sonic booms of terrifying force can be heard along this route, just a few seconds after 4:30 p.m. every weekday except holidays. One can only speculate, of course, but to me the explanation seems obvious.

Steve's material somehow leaves me wishing I hadn't been so lazy about writing of late. I mean, I know how this sounds but I was going to crank out a review of *BLIND VOICES* for the new and revived Quantum at Art's request (request, hell: nag, nag, nag). I really gave it lots of thought and had some observations to set down, but when I saw this review the project got trashed. Mine would have been a carbon copy, honesta Ghawd: (However, please note that I *did* review *LUCIFER'S HAMMER* months before Steve did, and again we came so close as to be indistinguishable. Steve never saw my review in Laughing Ossiris so there was no chance of collusion. This is starting to give me cold chills.) Similar reaction to "D.E.M." It is the kind of thing I could have poked away at with comparable results. Certainly every so often someone should take another jab at the famous Catholic accounting system of redemption. (Murder? Oh, sure, but that'll cost you a few hundred Hail Mary's. Want your virginity back, lady? All right, two full hours on your knees, and try hard not to do it again, won't you? That sort of thing.) Needless to say, I enjoyed Steve's contributions greatly, but if only conflicting emotions wouldn't get mixed in the appreciation would be a lot purer. Isn't it enough that he turns out great artwork, probably





plays the guitar a lot better than I play the synthesizer, actually *sells* complete, very polished stories for real (ohmigosh) money on the open market, and is working on a novel? That he does all this for a living instead of having to slave over a hot office out there in the real world like most of us? Isn't all that enough? But no, he has to go and do reviews and all and I tell you there's no justice and mankind was never meant to and even if he was...rant, rave, buzz, mumble, croak.

Where were we? Oh yes, Suzie Stefl's short discourse on ET love affairs should not be overlooked. It may be "A Brief Examination" but has a message which gets delivered neatly and with impact. A clever piece, this, and I would like to see more from her. (That was no pun, really, just a lousy choice of words.)

What else can I say, O luscious flirt, except why badger me to write locs when you've got stacks of rave reviews already? Art is verily squirming under the challenge of advanced competition, with a new Quantum about ready for release. I may even be forced to get with it and knock a few more pounds of rust off the typewriter.

Continued success, naturally, and when are you going to have your clone ready for me? Not before January, I hope, because (here goes) I'm resolved not to accept any additional D. Leighs until after the holidays. *((( Well, Don, it was a nice loc. It was such a nice loc that I decided to go on and let you make a fool of yourself by making such outrageous statements about Steve doing book reviews for Graymalkin. EVERYONE knows that Lee Stevens does most of my book reviews, after all, they met him at Iggycon. Ask Mike Glicksohn...they shared a room there. I'm certain that Mike's lucid recollections of the worldcon will give credence to Lee's existence. So the jokes on you. But still, Steve liked all the nice things you said about him, even if he did have to put up with Lee's badgering.)))*

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Arthur Metzger, formerly at 1171 Neeb Road, Cinti., OH 45238, present address unknown  
December 18, 1978

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First of all, Graymalkin #3 is easily the best fanzine I've ever read. I didn't read it straight through like Don did his copy but I did read it, and it's excellent. In fact, the only thing in the issue that I didn't like was the illustration on page 41, but that's just a matter of personal taste.

The best things in the issue were Steve's Caterwauling and your own editorial. They reawakened memories that, for good or ill, are never that far away from me in the best of times.

In my entire life I've only had two recurring nightmares. The first is hard to describe, it's merely a feeling of nameless dread that makes me wake up and scream and go on screaming until I realize that even the screams are part of the dream. It's like the old joke about the person who was always tired because he dreamed he spent all night trying to fall asleep.

The other dream is much more simple and much more morbid. I dream that my father is still alive. Either that I'm upstairs doing something and he's calling me, or that he's in bed hacking away from the cigarettes he always told me he had smoked since his early teens and was proud of it and wasn't about to stop now, or



that he's at the kitchen table with his bottle of beer that he cared more for than anything or anyone else, and when I wake up it takes me a few minutes to realize that it was just a dream, and when I do, an incredible feeling of relief sweeps over me. Much the way you felt when your sister died -- the only thing I thought of when he died was that it looked like I would have a few days off work.

A whole editorial about death and not a single mention of our new funeral parlor, Remains To Be Seen.

There were a couple of other things I was going to mention but since I've written this out I don't really feel the need to. Maybe sometime late at night when I'm feeling like I was all day yesterday I'll tell you about them. (((Art, I was really glad that you decided to let me print this letter...it may well be the first time a lot of people see a part of the Art Metzger I'm coming to know and love. Things have changed a great deal since you wrote this letter...you're finally moving away from home, ON YOUR OWN and seem to be much more at ease with yourself. I'm certain that everything will work out well for you and am glad to have helped in any way I could.)))

Don D'Amassa, 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, RI 02914 - March 21, 1979:

Death. There's a subject for you, one that was going to be the subject of a "Myth" in one issue or another. I have always been fairly distant from death. No close relative has died since I was too small to notice. A close friend from high school died, but I was 1000 miles away at the time. In fact, until about six weeks ago, I had never attended either a wake or a funeral. The 21 year old daughter of a friend from work died of leukemia recently, only one week after it was diagnosed.

Feelings of one's own mortality obviously are provoked by such an incident, particularly to those of us who are not comforted by the belief in an afterlife (a concept I consider an obvious bribe/threat to enforce conformity of the "faithful"). Although not irreligious, I just cannot accept that an afterlife is probable. I am actually somewhat satisfied with Vonnegut's statement in *SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE*, that we are all alive some time, and so is everyone else.

Stephen comments on the occasionally irresistible urge to lose one's temper. Well, mine is fairly well under control now. In the business world, one learns to lose one's temper on command, and control it otherwise. But it was not always so. Back when I was in, let's see, 5th or 6th grade, I was harassed for a while by the local bully, named Mickey. Every day I dreaded the wait at the bus stop. Mickey was two years older, big for his age, an experienced fighter, and very aggressive.

Mickey had already thrashed nearly everyone in the neighborhood, asserting his own particular brand of dominance. Inevitably, the day came when I had to stand my ground, and I got trounced with little difficulty. But I was not to be denied. I spent every night for the next week crouched in the bushes in front of Mickey's house. Eventually I spotted him alone. I rose in ambush, armed with a baseball bat, and gave him a minor concussion. He never bothered me again.

You challenge me to name a major SF novel without a violent death. Ok, *CHILDHOOD'S END*, *DYING INSIDE*, *RENDEZVOUS WITH RAMA*, *THE SILVER EGGHEADS*, *MISSION OF GRAVITY* (I think), *VENUS PLUS X*, *WAY STATION*, *FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON*, *WHEN HARLIE WAS ONE*, *HEROVIT'S WORLD*, etc. But I grant you the point in any case. SF is a literature of violence.

I don't agree with a lot of what "Lee Stevens" says in his review of *BLIND VOICES*. First of all, it shouldn't be compared to *SOMETHING WICKED THIS WAY COMES*. It is closer to Sturgeon's *THE DREAMING JEWELS*, or even Finney's *THE CIRCUS OF DR. LAO*. It is very find, though, and I'm very sorry Reamy never lived to write more. (((I find that I very seldom lose my temper, but when I do I tend to almost get vicious. That's why I try not to fight with Stephen. Anger usually gets talked and/or cried out. As a child I was very rarely spanked in anger, but we sure yelled a lot. My family (mother's side, mostly) was noted for its hollering sessions.)))

At the time I read Stephen's challenge to find an SF novel without a violent death I thought he had a valid point. He does, really. I had to really think to come up with something and most of what I thought of were fantasy novels, not SF. I'm glad to see that so many readers could meet the challenge.

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Brian Earl Brown, 16711 Burt Road, Apt. #207, Detroit, MI 48219 - Jan. 19, 1979:

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It's driving me crazy! All through Graymalkin #3 you wonder about who is Scarecrow, Rex Oz of Box 69 Barrington, Illinois but...but do you really *not* know who it is, or are a number of people having a little joke. I'd feel awfully embarrassed if I were to burst into print with "Scarecrow? I know him. He's really..." Only to have people like you and Bowers, Glicksohn, Warner, etc. nod their heads sagely at the silly little (little?) neo. "Of course we know that, you silly little twit!" they'd reply and I -- feeling totally crushed and stupid would go drink myself to death (600 cans of diet pepsi a day for five years should just about finish me off with John Wayne's disease.)

So, if you do know, would you tell me so I can join in on the game. And if you don't -- the answer is *Λεγε Δωμ(ε. Λεγε* is just fannish enough to do something like those postcards. You should have heard his *Νεστορωαχε* GOH speech, -- brilliant, hilarious, convulsively funny. There was a mad rush to secure reprint rights afterwards. Only I don't recall who got it and I'm sure no one has ever published it. \*sigh\*

Graymalkin #3 was lovely. Each issue looks better and better. Oddly enough I think your typeface would look better if slightly reduced, to maybe 90% of original size. Usually I'm telling faneds that they've reduced their type too much. But then most faneds believe in using 65-50% reduction, which is much too small.

Lovely front cover. My complements to the author -- I mean, artist.

Your mention of innocent play with a girlfriend as a child reminds me of a vivid memory I have of some neighborhood kids playing house (I was about six at the time) that was more than just "playing house." Only I don't know if it is a real memory or a wet dream from later years projected into my past for psychological reasons. Today I can't see us doing the things I think we do. Was it real, or was it Memorex?

Al Curry's illo on page six is one of his better ones -- or at least more humorously understandable. With in-jokes it helps to know the people involved.

Enjoyed Steve's column. When he asked "quick think of one novel that doesn't have a violent death" I immediately thought of Asimov's *A Pebble In The Sky*. I don't know for sure if there was or wasn't a violent death in that book, but knowing Asimov, I suspect there wasn't. Asimov wasn't one to use action-filled plots -- the sort of plots that lead to violent deaths. *Against The Fall Of Darkness* by Arthur Clarke I'm sure has no violent deaths. See? It can be done.

Last night on the premier episode of *Delta House* I thought I heard Dean Wormer say he didn't want to find a tub full of lime jello again. Lime Jello? Does this mean that one of the show's writers is *fannish*? Or are tubs of lime jello a familiar frat prank and hence not at all fannish? (((A local amusement park recently had a contest where they filled huge tubs with lime jello and had people diving into them in order to find prizes in the fruit-filling. Fannish?)))

If George S. Howard is worried because Haldeman seems to want the human race to merge into one, keep him away from Jack Chalker who seems to want to change the human race into everything *but* human.

Quite liked the *Deus Ex Machina* ad. If I were religious (only my mimeo is) I'd keep its palms well greased.

Nice illo by Jeff Kleiman on page 23.

Now that Ro describes it, I remember *Fondlecon* at Confusion 13. I remember walking into this lobby and finding hordes of people laying across sofa's and chairs, sometimes stacked two and three high. And even tho it was only my second con, I

was by then already so jaded by the uninhibited life(less)-style of fans that I didn't even react to that vast mass of fondeling. I mean -- so what else was new?

But I did meet Mike Glicksohn there -- shot him dead with a .45 caliber magnum rubberband. And if Mike can remember the details of *that* he's got a better mind for crudzines than I.

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Jodie Offutt, Funny Farm, Haldeman, KY. 40329 - Feb. 4, 1979:

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Having spent a good portion of my life in "Catholic confinement" (Jimmy Buffett's phrase) and finally "graduating from Catholicism" (Richard Burton's phrase) when I realized I did not care to "saddle my children with its guilt" (my *own* phrase!), I have to report that I was never aware of any funny stuff going on between priests and/or nuns and girls and/or boys. There was on priest who seemed to be extra friendly with the cheerleaders in high school, but I'm sure nothing more serious than his own sexual fantasies occurred. That in itself, as you pointed out, is a matter of confession, but not of scandal. (Come to think, he was from Cincinnati...)

When my mother died I shared many of your feelings at the death of your sister. What would I wear to the funeral home and the funeral? I was aware of the attention I'd get. How soon would I get to go back to school? I was eighteen at the time-- older and (supposedly) more mature than you were when your sister died. I think when a death is expected (Mother had been sick a long time.), the grieving has already been done and the death is usually a relief (a source of guilt right there), and you think about practical matters.

As recent as a few months ago my father had two serious heart attacks and I remember driving home from the hospital in Lexington with the sure knowledge that he would not live another twenty-four hours. My thoughts were of appropriate clothing for the kids, how much conforming should I coach them to during the Mass to make them the most comfortable and least self-conscious. How much of it should *I* do? And I confess, I thought of an Irish wake where I'd see people I hadn't seen for years.

That night, Dad's heart stopped beating -- twice!-- and they pounded his chest and gave him a shot in the muscle. Now he's home, out of bed, going out a couple of times a week and doing fine.

I've had much the same experience as Ro with getting touchy with people back home. Just isn't done, you know.

I think we tend to be so physical in fandom because we don't see each other for weeks (sometimes) at a time and it is natural to greet one another with touches, hugs and kisses. This is automatic when you haven't seen friends for a while.

With some few fans I get the feeling it is more ritualistic than genuinely sincere; others are pretending a familiarity that doesn't really exist. And, frankly, sometimes I think guys are simply trying to cop a feel. I'm not comfortable with prolonged and intimate displays of affection in public. Deep kissing and fanny rubbing, for instance.

Our experience in fandom has certainly made us as a family more openly affectionate toward each other, particularly Andy and the boys. Whenever I put an arm around (or whatever) one of my children in public I am always aware of other kids or adults noticing and often looking surprised.

I'm sure anyone seeing Jackie Causgrove and I at MWC last summer when we first saw each other, witnessed what looked like a lesbian encounter. I pulled a chair up close to hers and we kept touching each other. Holding hands. I touched her hair, she put her hands on my thigh. We looked at each other. We were very moved and happy to see each other. We didn't talk much; there wasn't any catching up to do -- we write letters to each other. It was very emotional.

The Howard essay on Joe Haldeman's books seems antagonistic to me. I would suggest that he find a copy of Joe's *War Year* and read it.

Know how you can always tell a Cincinnati fanzine? There are locs from Bill Cavin and Art Metzger. Sort of incestuous loccking. (((Totally ignoring your final comment...Steve and I recently went to a mundane picnic. Most of the people were those who we'd been fairly close to over the past ten years, in one way or another. Now usually I have a grand old time at these funtions and Steve is bored stiff. This time I was so uncomfortable that I asked Steve to leave much sooner than normal. The problem was that we had very little to talk about. And when we did talk it was about very domestic things, houses and babies...."Are you pregnant yet, Denise? Have you bought new furniture for your new house? Is Steve still writing that sci-fi junk? When are you going to make him get a real job so you can stay at home and have kids?" etc., etc. Now these are supposedly intelligent women who basically thought a lot like I do a few years ago, but apparently when they got married, they magically became the stereootypical housewife. These same women, several of whom used to quite often plop themselves onto Steve's lap (and I might do the same thing with their boyfriends) looked at me askance when I tended to spend most of my time with the men because I found their conversations boring. Now, I ask you, did they change or have I? For the most part I've been married a bit longer than they have and I have little or no hang-ups about Steve spending his time with other women, so does that make me a freak? The only woman who I felt some kinship with was the guest of honor, and maybe that was because she's still the same as she was when she lived here a few years ago. She and her husband are still having fun, being very "irresponsible" because she's "letting" her husband pursue a career in music, which is probably as insecure a lifestyle as writing, and kids are for later. And, to get back to your loc, we could be genuinely affectionate with each other. Hugging and touching. She was the only one that Steve felt he could be affectionate with without everyone thinking he was putting the make on her, and I could do the same with her husband and not worry. Fandom has spoiled us. Immediately upon returning home I called Al and Tanya Curry, telling them that we'd just spent an entire afternoon with mundanes and needed a fix. Could we come over? So at ten o'clock on a worknight (for them) we dragged our tired bodies to their home and stayed till well past one (sorry, Al) basking in their fannish auras.

I think that somewhere in that mess was a response to your loc and I thank you.)))

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Andrew J. Offutt, The Funny Farm, Haldeman, KY 40329 - Feb. 13, 1979:

If you and your familiar wouldn't mind o'ermuch just easing aside, Denise, everything here has to do with what Sir Stephen wrote in the last issue. (On which I love the work of your cover artist, Slay!)

That which we all surely fear most is death or Death -- or dying.

Thus it excites us.

So does sex, but a religious cultus founded in Abram and the lonely, consortless god of a neurotic desert tribe and proceeding through Paul the woman-despising apostle to and through O. Cromwell (who did Death on King Charles) and his fellow Puritans who founded our country...this has made it unacceptable to write of sex, hear, or read of it -- or admit that one has done either. (My gracious, I'd certainly never admit anything of the sort.) We are left, then, with death, and its dark adrenal companion, violence.

You asked us, in Denise Parsleigh's *Familiar*, to name an sf novel in which no one died. I actually started to do -- and then firmly pressed down the knee you had tapped, and did my own thinking. Name ANY majorish novel in which no one dies,

usually by violence. Start with the *Iliad* and proceed through the chansons and all of Shakespeare (Christ, which of us could dare equal the body count in *Coriolanus*, or so clutter the stage as in the final act of *Hamlet*!), through Dumas and Tolstoi, *Frankenstein* and poor dead Heathcliff's poor dead wife... Admittedly one hell of a lot of the novel I think is the all time best, *Tom Jones*, sustains itself and grips the reader without runnels of crimson. It does, however, contain and feature death, both violent and otherwise. In the gentle books of thrice-gentle Tom Swann, people hunt and hurt, strive and die, and slay.

What is humankind's dream? Immortality. Disgruntled, what do we show when we write of it? That it is a curse, or at best a negative 'blessing'. Sourgrapes!

Sex, fear, violence and death are the central facts of human existence -- and they are inextricably intermingled. Sweet gentle Leigh writes of dying and death, and quite non-violent Offutt habitually writes sanguineous heroic fantasy with heads flying on wakes of scarlet.

(Most writers come from unhappy childhoods; most of us have repressed violence and bitterness to get off; we write it out, and thus elude the gas chamber, the electric chair, or the ministrations of those gummit sociologists to which I'd prefer the chair or the gas.)

I know this is pretty heavy, Steve and Denise; so was your discussion. (Discussions via mail and fanzine are best; we don't have some dummy sitting there endeavoring to plow in with "Yeah but--") And what'd you expect from a man who is writing this at 2:04 AM after two Scotches-and-soda and a Strohs, and who is now sipping a Miller's Lite? (It is rude to abandon a fireplace that has not yet gotten tired of entertaining me.)

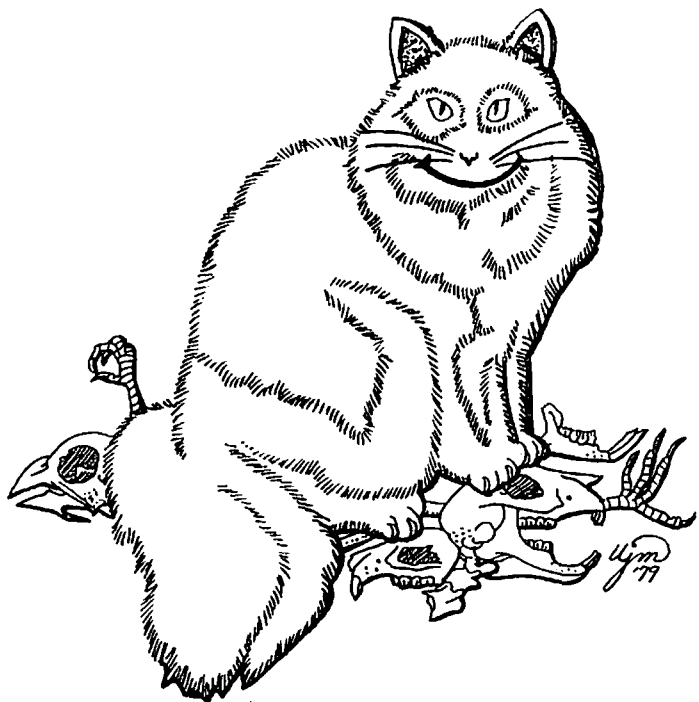
I enjoyed your writing, Steve, as I have aforenow. No one opens up as you do and I love it -- and warn you: when one bares entrails, some display their hunger. My own are gnawed.

Gee, Steve, it's wonderful to know someone who can do Presley better than all those poor greasehaired imitators with the git-boxes and St. Vitus Dance. Dare I ask whether, in addition to Presleigh, you can also do Il Papa Gian-Paolo and Clark Gable and Dwight Eisenhower and Nelson Rockefeller and Debbie Boone? ((and both Bobby and Jack Kennedy and Hemingway and William Faulkner and... Steve here, and yes, I think I can manage a fair imitation of any personage who has decided to determine the veracity of Captain Stormfield's afterlife. It does become more difficult the longer dead they are, as I carry a fair amount of flesh and looking emaciated requires a certain amount of imagination on the part of the viewer.

As you point out, Andy, the point I was making by asking for examples of non-violent sf was simply that it does require some thought, which is indicative of the way it -- and any genre of literature -- tend to be written. Violence is one way humans react to situations. When confronted with literary violence, the reader accepts it as a viable response, and (because we also find it fascinating) is also entertained. Unfortunately, most people seemed to miss that: Denise, in frustration at receiving tons of lists naming non-violent novels, muttered that she wished I hadn't written that phrase. Gee, folk, I wasn't really unable to think of any such writing... as Andy notes, it was intended to make a point. Examples of novels without violent death are rampant, but when placed against the far greater bulk of those with murder and rapine, they shrink in abject terror and cower in the shadows. And I'm not saying that such violent tendencies are wrong, either. The historical precedents, some of which are stated above, seem to indicate otherwise. (And gee -- it being what I get for first-drafting responses -- let's ignore that 'wrong' three lines above. I don't intend to make moral judgements here, and I especially dislike arguing semantics.)

Thank you, Andy, for a most discerning response...)))





Bill Breiding, 3343 20th Street, San Francisco,  
CA 94110 - March 6, 1979:

I was really impressed by your editorial, particularly. I was never much of a Loccer (ask Bowers) but I did want to let you know that it had been read as well as received -- and quite enjoyed as well.

I don't know Ro. I've heard tales. Of both types. But his loc really set off a series of nods. Especially about work.

Most of the people I work with are over forty. All of them male. Most of them so homophobic that a mere accidental touch is bound to give them shakes. They think it odd that I'm not married. I told them I was living with someone. They thought me even odder.

One day I started touching these men. I'd just made that decision. I work with them eight hours a day, see them more than my friends. I

get lonely at work. I knew the chances I was taking when I went from merely touching them to flirting with them. I was tired and sick of their crass fag jokes. When it went from touching them on the arm to quick hugs to tweeking them on the ass they started "wondering" about me. Which is just what I wanted. In one way it's manipulation which I detest, but it was necessary to my own survival. They've become used to me touching them a bit, but I have them in a state of confusion as to my sexual orientation. Someday I hope to make them understand that it's OK for men to touch other men. And that touching does not mean sex, though I have centuated the sexuality of it to make them realize I was not like them nor that I agreed with their conditioned views of "fruits", and that I could very well be gay myself. Keeps them on their toes.

*((My personal feeling is that most of the population is either latently bisexual or, as Woody Allen stated, "latent hetrossexuals". I am a firm believer that bisexuality is by far the sanest way to be. Too many hetros that I know are so intent on avowing their hetrossexuality that I tend to wonder who they're trying to convince and so many of the gays that I know are having the same problem. I spent the better part of an afternoon trying to explain to my fellow workers that just because I found the lesbian sequences in PENTHOUSE sensual does not mean I am a lesbian. It means that I have good taste. And probably that I'm a latent bisexual. I say latent because although I am a proponent of bisexuality I am also a first class chicken shit. I find that I am so heavily indoctrinated with male/female relationships that I have a difficult time merging from them into bisexual relationships. I have mental hangups about the mechanics of gay sex, so I don't function well with that type of situation. I can flirt with women and am learning to be more physically affectionate but...))*

I too am trying to be more physical at work. For seven years I've been afraid to touch anyone because a) if they are male everyone would think I was on the make and b) if they are female everyone would think I was gay. I am overcoming this in much the same way you are, by occassionally hugging or making jokes/innuendoes when we touch. I think I've talked about my physical orientation long and loud enough that it doesn't really bother anyone anymore.

I think it's about time that people quit worrying about what everyone else is thinking and started doing just what they want to do. I'm sure that I might make someone a bit uncomfortable by being the way I am but as long as I'm not actively trying to hurt anyone then to hell with them. I hope your problems at work can be solved by your attempts at physical contact, but if not, just be yourself. Easier said than done, I know. The next time we share Bowers' suite at a Worldcon maybe we can get to know each other.

Eric Lindsay, 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge NSW 2776, Australia - Jan. 18, 1979:

Another fine issue is number 3. Spoiled a little perhaps by poor locs from strange people from foreign lands (I mean Mike Glicksohn, not me).

The western countries (nice sweeping phrase there) have a culture that is really against touching, even (especially?) the innocent touching of children at play. Meanwhile psychologists find that monkeys nursed by a mechanical "mother" develop strange behaviour patterns, and are unable to demonstrate affection. Of course, human beings are different, that is why it is OK to raise children in front of a TV screen, thus ensuring total non-contact...welcome to the mad house.

You make much mention of me in your editorial; wish I could get bits of trip memories down in response, but I seem to be lazier than you. Mind you, you have Dotti to give you art work...I'm trying hard not to think about death. Too much of a final solution to life's problems.

People should die in stories. After all, it helps release agressions, and is healthy and all that, and stirs the action along a mite, and after all, they aren't really real, and if it even happens in real life you can picture yourself as the hero, who never even gets scratched, and ignore all the mess and agony and live with yourself much more easily. Anger isn't all that dangerous to the person who is angry; after all, you ended up on top. Looking at the matter logically, the dangerous thing, and that only to your mental health, is the worry about being on top, or the remorse about hurting someone else. But most people seem able to work on that, and after a bit they don't worry about hurting other people, so then they can happily get angry and bust up people and things. After all, for them, people are only things.

If there is no god, then respecting god-given things, like laws and morality, is pointless. And if there is a god, and that god could change the suffering that exists in the world, but does not, then who could possibly give said god any respect or honour? Either way, you can ignore gods. Unless of course you are worried about heaven and hell, and want to hedge your bets...however if I understand most theologies, acting the part because of future rewards is not sufficient to get a ticket in. I tend to suspect that the original assassins had the right idea, by giving the followers a taste of heaven now. Mind you, I'm probably too cynical for it to work. (((Hullo, Eric. You foreigners sure do spell things funny. Don't you know you're not supposed to put a "u" in words like color and honor? You'll just have to come to the states more often so Amerenglish will wear off on you...As far as gods go, well, I always thought that if there is a god he/she would have to be a god of love for me to believe and no god of love would have a hell so I've eliminated that threat. Now all I have to do is come up with more rationalization for the rest. Don't worry, I'll think of something.)))

I hate your Gallo's humor. I suppose I can drag out a few old jokes, just to make you wine, except they are all so tired; they suffer from bottle fatigue. As Mike Glicksohn said, "It's enough tequilla person who enjoys jokes." Still, I'm prepared to gin and beer it, and even get messages from departed spirits, in the form of hiccoughs.

I hadn't thought of Joe Haldeman's novels as being propaganda pieces for an overmind concept as the end of all intelligent life. Still don't, now that the point is raised. The future depicted seems not the one desired, but rather the one that is feared. SF can be cautionary.

Unlike Al Curry, I never speed in cars. Not because our speed limits are realistically high (for this, read "death rate nudging the tolerance level") but because my car is terminally slow. Except downhill; then it goes pretty well. The problem then is stopping it. Or even slowing it down...

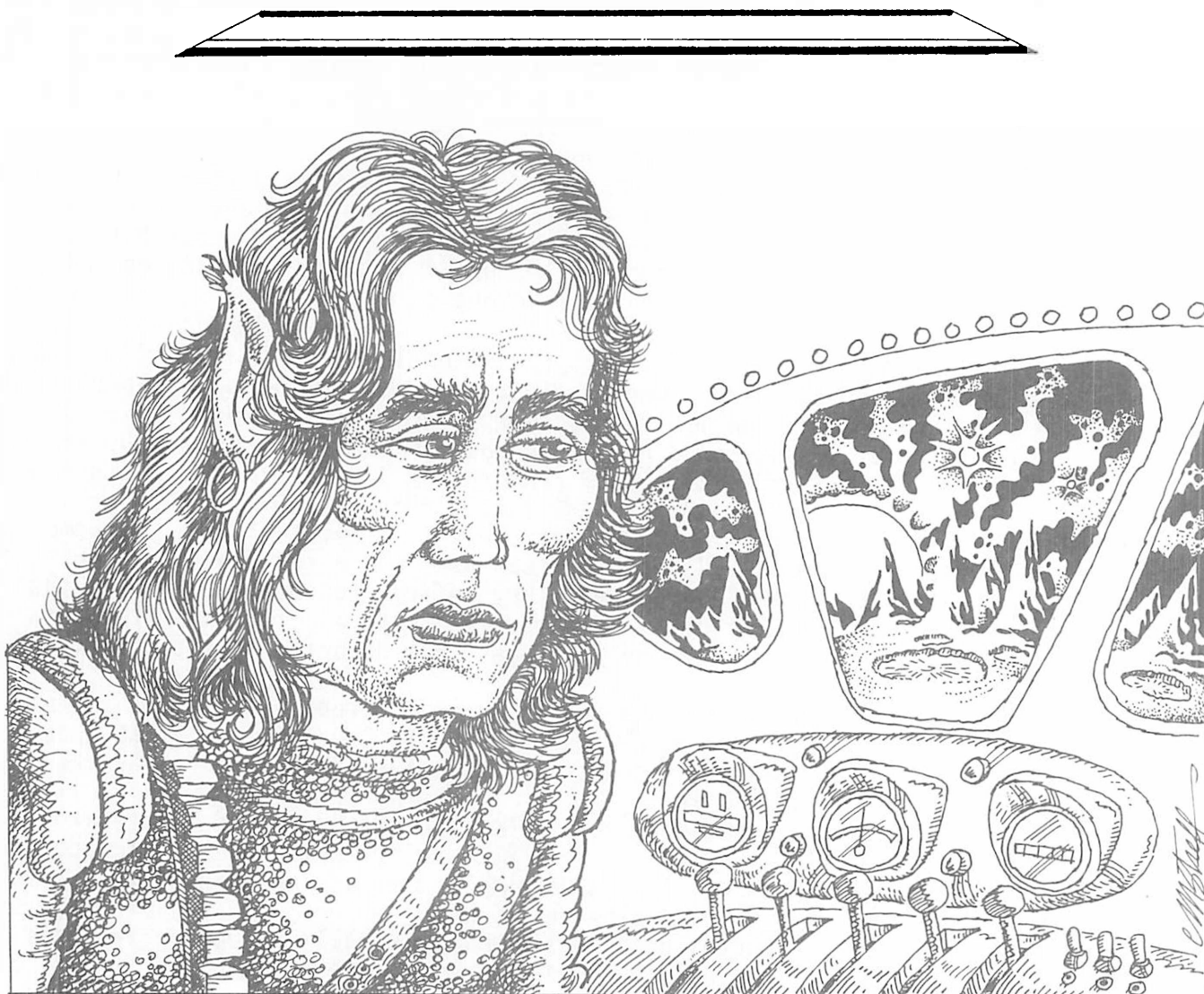
I've stayed at Bower's house and didn't notice the walls quavering from his snoring, as you describe. Mind you, there was an earthquake going on all night, mixed up with a hurricane, but I was having problems with the cats trying to eat me, so I didn't notice them.

I didn't even see Ellison at the con, but the biggest disappointment for me was not seeing Bill Bowers give his speech. I had intended getting to it, right until I found out you were supposed to have tickets to get in. I was even willing to stand in a queue, but woke up too late. Still, Bill will forgive me. In fact I just got a packet from him. It is making a funny ticking sound...

Like you I doubt that Harlan really wants to have fandom go away, although I'm sure there are great segments of it he can do without. I mentioned Terry Carr a while ago as passing through this area (he was running a writers workshop). He mentioned that Harlan had said to say hallo. Now I don't know Harlan as anything but a writer whose work I enjoy. Had one letter from him objecting to my quoting of a book blurb attributed (incorrectly) to him, and he once quoted me briefly in an introduction to a book by another writer. In short, there was no reason to expect any sort of comment even of the "say hi to x if you happen to see them". I therefore tend to think that Harlan protests just a little too much to be totally down on all of fandom. Although he obviously has good reason to be put out by some people in fandom -- after all, who needs to go through life as a target.

Jessica Salmonson makes some good points; isn't it annoying when someone tells you that you haven't thought deeply enough about something...and they are right.

I'm staggered. You have a letter from Ro Lutz-Nagey. Been sending him zines on and off since 1976, and never a word (although he says Real Soon Now).



Alex Eisenstein, 2061 Birchwood, Chicago, Ill. 60645 - 4-1-79:

Who in the *hell* is George S. Howard? I know, I know...you stole him from Art Metzger. But really, seriously: the guy has a mean way with words, how to set 'em up to tell us how he feels and what he thinks about...well, in this case, Joe Haldeman's two major novels, and by blatant inference, Joe himself. There are parts that are a little too allusive, that beg a bit for a little elaboration, but this *review*, this slice of insight, is a hell of a piece of writing, and a hell of a critique. Especially if George never met Joe. Maybe it's a case of kismet, right place to land and so forth...But it is shockingly good, and leaves on (*this* one, anyway) at the end clamoring for it *not* to end, not so *soon*. Oh my goodness... I hope he can do other things besides (I mean, other writer-type things). If this is a fluke, it's a beauty.

Al's little article on his highway "luck" brings to mind my one Al Curry story...it's a very personal story in a way, and one that Al doesn't even know about, I think, except for the beginning. And it's one of those things that makes you think about the wheels within the wheels, the meshing of gears, fate and fortune.

End of last Midwestcon: outside, walking back from lunch with Phyllis and several other folks; I notice Al Loading his trunk, and he spots me...and he smiles genially, right at me, waves, and with a small gesture and the fewest words, calls me over...I saunter over and Phyllis, as I recall, begins to follow, and a few people follow her. When I arrive, he shows me what's in his trunk. A gorgeously blown out tire, all hanging threads on the topmost side. And he talks to me about the incident...you know, casual, but kind of personal, and with a certain wry way. Well, you know Al, right? But this is not the joking Al, I don't think, he is musing on something, imparting something...even then I feel it, though I don't make sense of it. And he is looking at me all the time, in my eyes,...and maybe with an occasional glance at Phyllis...

As it happens...Phyl was at the wheel when IT happened to *us*. After the storms, after the tornadoes, but on a stretch of road that was narrowed down and detoured for highway repair. As it narrowed to one single lane, on pavement still slick, the left rear went out, like a cannon-shot, a total blow-out. The thing that's not really supposed to happen with these new fangled tires...exactly what happened to Al's, just like the one he showed me. Phyllis managed to keep the car on an even keel, slow down, and pull off on the shoulder; no catastrophe, we made it, and we even got help from a passing motorist, a fortyish black man, small business owner type, with a family in his car. Gave us a much-needed hand, as all us disaster-victims were dead tired.

And I'm so glad it was the *rear* tire and not the front.

And I *wonder* about Al, I really do. And I wonder about the world, and the powers, and the unnamable things that fly through the air and the warp and woof of existence. (((I, too, have always wondered about Mr. Curry. He is getting more and more like that little gnomencreature he uses in his fanzine, everyday. Blue smoke has started coming out of his pipe and he seems to be shrinking a bit. Oh, wait a minute, I think that was Sean I saw. No difference anyway.)))

Lee Pelton, 1204 Harmon Place, #10, Mpls., MN 55403 - May, 1979:

So, at the time of Graymalkin 3, you had only been in fandom for a year and a half? That's really not that strange to think of yourself as a newcomer, even with fanzines for working credit (fanac lives!) and a husband that is one of the fannish Ghods, a pro. Carol and I have been in fandom for approximately the same time as you, and we still feel as though we have some ways to go before we feel we will

have "arrived" to the automatic acceptance level people like Glicksohn, Bowers, and Fred Haskell are at. So I still feel like a newcomer. It is a combination of feeling, "Hey, I *really* like being a member of fandom" and "If people really get to know the real me, they'll hate me" syndrome. Kind of like being happy while being uncomfortable, if you know what I mean.

I'm sorry that you missed Ted Sturgeon's GoH speech at ConClave. To cheer you up, I'll let you know that RUNE 57 will have a transcript of Ted's MINICON 15 GoH speech. I, too, have always held Ted in the highest regard as both a human being and as a writer and found being on a panel with him and getting a brief chance to talk with him to be big hi-lites of my convention. If I aspire to emulate any one person now living or dead, Ted Sturgeon is that man.

I also heard about Jeanne Gomoll's response to your information concerning how one goes about acquiring Jeff Kleiman's art. Funny stuff. *((Jeff was so upset when he saw what I'd printed that he swore revenge. And in the next breath, as I handed him a box of rubbers, he gave me more artwork. I hope he sends Jeanne some artwork. I did forward her contribution.)))*

CATERWAULINGS: Another rock n' roller turned writer? There's hope for me yet. Seriously, though, I recognize Steve's feelings of anger, especially the physical reaction I have every time I get really wound up. It is akin to the ever-popular cliché, "cold fury", and I find myself holding me in check totally against the actions that go on in my mind. What I do to a person who upsets me enough to get angry in my mental movie-screen is dreadful, vicious, cruel, and full of righteous indignation. Fortunately this is the only place I tend to damage anyone, including me. When I was young, I was regionally famous (the local neighborhood, anyways) for my quick and violent temper. As I grew older, I learned to hold my most explosive feelings in check but that has resulted in explosions at little things that are all out of proportion to the mitigating act. With a bit of maturity, even this will go away, but I still have those times where I am so tense and "controlled" that I feel as if I could destroy the defensive line of the Bengals. As I weigh over 200 pounds, the feeling gets re-enforced mentally. So I do know how you feel, Steve.

I wonder if I could get Lee Stevens to review a book or two for RUNE. Steve Glennon, a budding reviewer of our acquaintance gets this pained look everytime I give him a book to review. Editor's choice, of course, which is the cause of his discomfort. As Lee seems to thrive under such an atmosphere it does give me pause (or paws, either will work)...*((I asked Lee if he would be interested in doing reviews for RUNE but he says he can't bear to break ~~up~~ in another editor right now. Maybe sometime in the not too distant future.)))*

Lettercol: On growing up going to school at an all-Catholic school. My roommate/lifemate Carol Kennedy has a theory that one reason strong women come out of those Catholic schools (regardless of their sexual orientation) is that for role models they get women (nuns) teachers who have made life decisions other than mother/wife, the traditional roles women assume. With strong counter examples, I suspect that Catholic women get a more accurate and unbiased basis for deciding what *they* want to do with their lives. *((I think Carol is right about the nuns as role models, but they're still human and as imperfect as the rest of us. For example, the guidance counselor at my school was a nun. There was this one girl who was brilliant and she wanted to become a doctor. The counselor told her that it was too tough for a woman to make it in medicine and advised her to become a lab technician because women were accepted there. The girl bought it and because of this counselor the world is now without what could have been a great asset to the medical field. The counselor has since been transferred elsewhere, after a great deal of complaints from irate parents. (She never bothered to advise me, and several others, that we could have gotten financial aid for college, so consequently, naive as we were, we didn't apply for any. Dumb.) I do think I was better educated than friends who went to public schools. Except for music. The catholic school systems around here do not have a good music*

program.)))

Gee, has there been a discussion of touching in fandom going on? Well, sign me up on whatever side it is that is in favor of it. Touching is a way of expressing feelings that has nothing quite like it for comparison. Of course, it need not be sexual in content, although holding someone good-looking, male or female, does give you good vibes about *yourself* if nothing else. I find it easier at times to express my emotions by holding, hugging, kissing, than by using mere words. There is no other way to describe the reasons why I'm a toucher, instead of an onlooker.

Mike Glicksohn's comment about the postcard out of Barrington, IL is a bald-faced lie. Of course, Mike is somewhat unfamiliar with bald-faces (uh...this is getting a bit hairy, I think I'll stop now).

And I guess I am, having nothing else to add. Graymalkin is a good fanzine. Only Arthur D. Hlavaty's deceased MULTILOG has garnered longer LOC's from me so, for what it's worth, you have stimulated me to talk about things from a personal point of view, something that always succeeds in illuminating something about that which makes up me. I thank you.

---

Harry Warner, Jr., 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown, MD 21730 - Feb. 15, 1979:

The first thing I started wondering when I looked at the third Graymalkin, newly emerged from its envelope, was: are the similarities between the two covers significant and intentional? It looks as if the two artists had set about working out the same general scene and composition, in their own very different styles. If it was just an accident, it's a strange coincidence, and if it was done on purpose, the two illustrations are so different that nobody would have noticed any similarity without this particular form of propinquity. *(((I am so glad that somebody noticed! When Nancy came out to visit last winter she brought the bacover...at the time we remarked about how similar it was to Steve's front cover. Absolutely unintentional, but Nancy and Steve are close friends and studied under the same art teachers, and both tend to use bright colors when they paint. Totally different styles but because of the color similarities Steve's grandmother can't tell whose is whose. Nancy was delighted that you noticed.)))*

I was luckier than you about death while I was growing up. One grandfather and one grandmother died while I was too small to understand properly what was going on. Then there were no deaths among close relatives for maybe twenty years or more, except for one uncle whom I'd never seen because he lived a couple hundred miles away and never paid visits to Hagerstown. On the other hand, I lost both my parents within three years when I was in my thirties and adjustment to being alone in the world was harder than it would have been if I'd been younger. Incredibly, my other grandmother lived until just five or six years ago when she died at the age of 97 after just a few days of illness. She had always been so healthy and active, living alone up to that final illness, that nobody could honestly feel anything other than happiness that inevitable death had come so quickly when it was time, saving her from the long illness or incapacitation she couldn't have wanted. I was also lucky with friends and acquaintances. One classmate died while I was in elementary school and one girl in my neighborhood was killed accidentally in my boyhood, but I hadn't been really close to either of them, and the people I knew best after I grew up had a common knack of staying alive.

So maybe that accounts for why I enjoyed so much playing killing games long ago. The carnage was as great as it is in Stephen's fiction. In my case, I suppose it was because I had had no emotional scars from death and death was just something that filled up one column in the newspaper and created cemeteries which I occasionally



walked past and happened painlessly and cleanly on the movie screen. I've changed: I just can't endure watching violent death on the tube nowadays, and I've come close to getting into trouble on the job because of my reluctance to write on subjects connected with war. Fortunately, opera is still a make-believe world for me, and I haven't found these scruples preventing me from enjoying even the goriest music dramas. (But I may be on the way. Sometimes I find myself playing my records of Ernani and Simon Boccanegra to the end of the next to last act, and skipping the tragic final acts.)

All the conreports were splendid reading. Roy Lavender's revelation that John Myers-Myers was at Phoenix makes me wonder if down through the years, we'll continue to learn from this or that fanzine about some previously unpublicized person's presence there. I'd guess that every three months or so, I'll discover in this or that newly arrived fanzine that among the previously unrecognized Iguanacon participants was Henry Kissinger or Pearl White or T. O'Connor Sloane or some other equally improbable individual. Nothing could surprise me after the recent report that Natalie Wood was on hand (and you'd think that her forthcoming new film would be reshot because the con must have been more chaotic than the effects of the meteor on that city in the original script).

I've grown very conscientious about observing speed limits. In 29 years of driving, I've been stopped for speeding only once, and that was after a patrolman followed my car for five miles during which I was very careful about the speedometer reading. It's the result of observation of what happens to autos involved in crashes at really high speeds and of how many people manage to walk away from autos after an accident which occurred at a moderate speed. Besides, I don't feel that I have the auto under control if it's going much faster than 50 miles per hour. I don't like the fact that there will be a period of several seconds in which there won't be much effect from whatever I may try to do with the brakes or the steering wheel if I'm on the verge of a mile a minute or beyond that speed.

Mike Glicksohn reminds me of my wild old days when I too wrote locs and mailed them off without reading them over first. Eventually I got tired of growing angry with fanzine editors for twisting my remarks and preparing to write a strong protest but looking first at my carbon copy to make sure it was the fanzine editors' fault and always discovering that I had been the one who had typed it wrong originally. I have a bad habit of writing typographical errors which consist of the wrong word, not the obvious kind of misspellings within words.

I seem to detect a bit more touching in the mundane world than there used to be. It never used to happen in restaurants with the waitress as the toucher and me as the touchee and now it occurs with fair frequency. I don't think I've grown less repulsive as the years have passed so it's hardly my fault.

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Stephanie Oberembt, 3333 Nichols Drive, Texarkana, TX 75503 :

...Strange, you mentioning not touching your friend again. I don't know if there is something about Midwesterners but there is a tendency not to be openly affectionate especially with members of the same sex. I've known times when trying to comfort friends, I've awkwardly reached out both physically and emotionally to them. I still find it hard to put my arm around another girl but I'm getting over it. I guess we all need to be held and hugged, in order to know someone cares.

...Oh my gosh. Ira Thornhill might be talking about me; I qualify as a female person and ate dinner one night with Mike Glicksohn at Midwestcon. *(((And now that that mystery is solved...)))*

Dana B. Siegel, P.O. Box 7, Grande Anse, St. George's, Grenada, West Indies -  
January 18, 1979:

Steve -- I really enjoy your *slightly* morbid sense of humor. That is in contrast to my being a true pacifist...I could *never* hurt or kill another human being. But at the same time I have a very 'sick' sense of humor -- seems to be quite a contradiction.

I really agree with George Howard about Joe Haldeman's books. I *don't like* reading about tough macho men going out and committing murder and mayhem -- no matter what their reasons (I don't believe violence is *ever* justified). Unfortunately, as much as I like Joe, I feel he is just rewriting the same book over and over -- and I hope he finally gets it out of his system and moves on to another topic. This is the same thing that happened to many authors (Tanith Lee being the first and foremost to come to my mind) -- they find a successful format for a book and then spend the rest of their lives writing it over and over.

Ned Brooks, 713 Paul Stree, Newport New, VA 23605 - Feb. 7, 1979:

...I agree with Steve about killing -- I'm not in favor of it, in general, but I suspect most of us are capable of it, given sufficient provocation. I do rather doubt that I could kill 'in cold blood', for money or some political notion....What Joe Haldeman "really thinks" about war and killing I have no idea -- he may not know himself. But George Howard is right about his books, his heroes are always willing to do whatever the local system requires as the price of "success"...

Paula Gold Franke, Box 51A RR2, Beecher, IL 60401 - Feb. 12, 1979:

Re: touching and flirting. I never was sure what exactly "flirting" encompassed, so I guess I can't have an opinion on the subject. Touching, on the other hand (could that be a pun?), is a worthwhile pasttime. It is unfortunate that most people feel funny or uneasy even at the thought. I'm sure many people have had experiences similar to the one you had with your girlfriend, they just don't talk about it. I had a couple of memorable moments, but I haven't talked about them simply because the subject never came up. I still enjoy touching, but living out in the boonies sort of limits my range of friendships. The sad thing about it is that a lot of people tend to misconstrue the meaning of the simple gesture making a potential good situation very awkward.

There seems to be quite a bit that the Great Glick doesn't "remember" about that certain Cincinnati weekend in June. (Is he still making regular payments or will you be telling all, soon?) (*(((I'll tell all when Randy Bathurst illustrates it.)))*)

Jeanne Gomoll, 2018 Jenifer, Madison, WI 53704:

As I was last issue, I am fascinated by the table of contents page: I wouldn't have thought a handwritten page could have been *nearly* as attractive as it is. I was almost disappointed when I turned the page and found that the rest of the issue was not so done. Really, the whole effect of delicate handwriting and the dark areas of the cat silhouette and dividing lines is quite effective and really lively. (But!) But, it is *certainly* worth an artist's credit and I think you ought to say who is responsible for the work. (*(((Jeanne, if you will look at the bottom of the contents page of #3 you will note that it says "headings and contents page -- Stephen Leigh". Steve say's it's too much work to hand letter everything, but I'm working on him.)))*)

George R R Martin, Burnick-Martin Manor, 2266 Jackson, Dubuque, Iowa - Feb. 25, 1979:

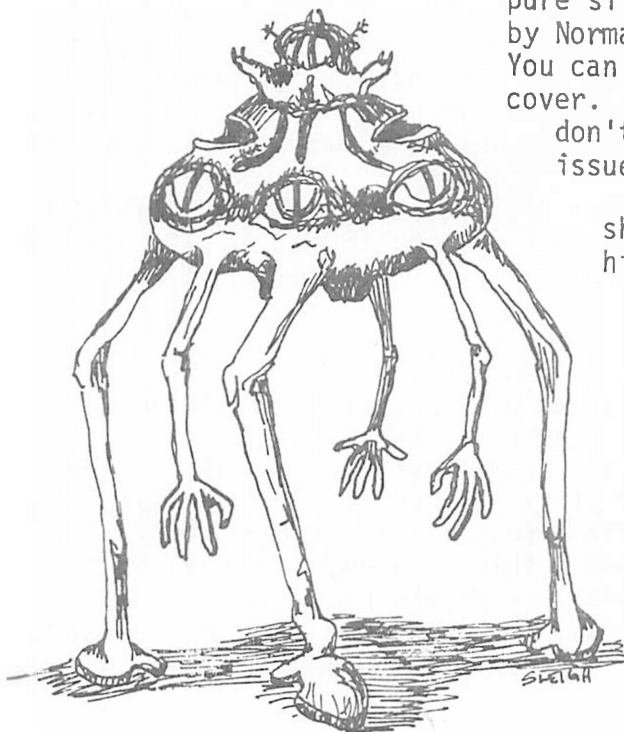
I've enjoyed the GRAYMALKINS you sent. Don't know whether to be pleased or sorry that *A Song For Lya* left you in such a melancholy mood -- pleased, I guess, since that was the kind of emotion I tried to put into it. Besides, the fact that you tried to enhance the mood with Joni Mitchell indicates you have a certain affinity for it. I think that people *should* be melancholy from time to time; that particular kind of sadness has its virtues, and can actually be...well, pleasant, in an odd sense. I'm continually surprised by the number of people who seem to feel that any mood besides moronic good cheer is an Evil that people have to be "gotten out of." Feh. Oh, of course, melancholy is a very different thing from real depression. Someday I'll have to address that in fiction...

It was grape kool-aid and amaretto as the Jonestown-in-'82 drink.

George Howard's article on Joe Haldeman has a major error of fact; there *is* in fact a draft in *The Forever War*, whether he remembers it or not. He should have gone back to check, since he makes a good deal of the point. It is not fair to the writer to build theses on mistaken impressions and half-memories. A reviewer is entitled to any opinion he or she cares to espouse, but there is an obligation to get the facts right. (((To address the George Howard issue...well, it appears that George has vanished off the face of the earth. Reed Andrus, who was our original contact with Mr. Howard, has informed us that George has moved and will not give out his address or phone number to anyone. The contributor's copy of #3 was returned unopened so he has never seen his essay in print and will never know what anyone thinks about it. The only thing we do know about him is that he is apparently alive as he called Reed not long ago. If anyone out there knows George Howard please tell him to contact me if he's interested in a copy of his article.)))

Luke McGuff, 2217 N. Hoyne, Chicago, IL 60647 - November, 1979:

...That Barrington Bomber a/k/a Scarecrow Rex Oz. HMMMMM. I have a feeling he's the editor of that super-luxurious zine *The Barrington Barometer* that Andy Porter mentioned several issues ago in *Algol*. It costs \$50.00 to subscribe, printed on pure silk paper. Fillos by Picasso, Chagall; covers by Norman Rockwell, bacovers by Andrew Wyeth and c. You can tell he has this thing about numbers on the cover. Usually he has a few choice 1's, but they don't have anything to do with the sequence of the issue.



I've run into the Scarecrow myself, I should add. He was running around, looking for his Phil Silvers clone, and yelled at me "Number your pages!!!"

Now, about your editorial...my dad died when I was sixteen. It was quite a shock; cousins had come in from Ann Arbor and other points east and we went to a restaurant in Oak Lawn. He had his favorite meal, a couple cigarettes, a couple of his favorite drinks, his favorite dessert and his fifth or sixth heart attack. It was sudden, quick, super-painful. Like when the doctor says "Doing it fast and getting it over with is the best way," before he rips off the bandaging.

I went into an emotional vacuum. I didn't cry until the priest came in and said he had died; I stopped crying when I saw the corpse. The cold blue body, eyes shrunken, mouth open, face more wrinkled than ever because the smile lines were relaxed...A door opened and closed inside me, I helped my mother out of the room.

Through the years, I've thought a lot about death. Especially now, with the machinery to prolong breathing and other automatic functions beyond the brain's life, a Thanatology 101 course is no joke.

I liked Steve's Christmas card and Elvis Presley imitations. That lady is probably now going to see the local Elvis clone, buying picture discs and memorabilia...*She's* morbid, and morbidity leaves no room for humor.

Jessica Amanda Salmonson, Box 5688 University Station, Seattle, Washington 98105:

I couldn't have walked out on a Harlan performance!! I am not easily captured by his prose -- but his performance! I think Harlan's stories are *made* to be *heard*, not read. He writes Ace Number One twilight zone segments, or top-notch radio plays. He performs all the roles himself. It's incredible. And his raps, I don't see as Don Rickles impersonations at all. Harlan is a flawed man. More like Lenny Bruce, however. I don't believe he deserves to be idolized the way many worship his foot pads and corns -- but clever little digs at Harlan are beneath the dignity of intelligent people. Take careful note of the kinds of folks who dump on him most. Bimbos all. When he writes angry letters to fanzines, he sounds like a dummy on occasion (dumb for responding to utter assholes -- but I know the need, it's easy to be baited by bean-brains into a fool's battle), yet in person, he can say the same things, nasty mean things, and if you're perceptive you'll be able to see in the person of Harlan a real love for people. I may project from my own responses, be totally off the wall, but from my own feelings I think I understand at least a little part of the man. It's so fucking hard to *let* people be stupid ignorant prejudiced little shits (as most fans are, and most other people as well) because it's so hard to accept that they're really inherently that way. People who love hardest fight hardest; these are rare, beautiful, powerful, shapers and thinkers -- egotists as well -- and vulnerable as all hell. *((I personally do not want to drag out the entire Iggycon-Ellison-ERA bit again, but for the record, I think Harlan is a commendable writer and performer and felt his stand on the ERA was valid...for him. I walked out on his performance mainly because I'd been there for an hour and a half and since there seemed to be no end in sight I went on to do other things. I go to conventions to be with my friends and to try to get to know people. This is practically impossible with Harlan as he is always surrounded by his groupies, and I seriously doubt that Harlan needs one more to add to his harem. But given the opportunity to talk with him in a one-to-one situation I am certain I would find him quite enjoyable, even likable. ...And speaking of the ERA, in the Detroit vs. Chicago bid for the '82 worldcon, Michigan has ratified the ERA and Illinois has not. Here we go again.)))*

Elinor Busby's name isn't spelled Eleanor, tell Roy Lavender. Harlan was taken off the I, ROBOT project and someone else is presently tampering with the manuscript -- that should excite Roy too.

...Your artists are mostly exceeding fine. The hand-lettered content page and titles lend the most personal appearance, and you might use less and less of those transfer letters and use more and more of the hand-drawn lettering. A fanzine that looks like itself and none other is a very important factor, distinguishing, and the more wonderful for just "happening" rather than being forced.

Roger R Reynolds, 1303 Bernard Avenue, Findlay, OH 45840:

I want to say thanks for reminding me of Eric Lindsay. He was the first NonNorthAmeriFan I've met and after the couple of hours he and I spent in the bar at OctoCon I was convinced he had a wooden leg, a book I never read by Edgar Rice Burroughs, an insatiable thirst, and a terrific personality. Thank Ghod for people like him.

Regarding the article by George S. Howard...What was he trying to say? I gathered he either enjoyed the Vietnam War and hated Joe's books or vice versa, sometimes, sort of...

I was never eligible for the draft -- they tried in 1970 but even the army couldn't fit me with clothes. (Fat Fandom lives!) Could anyone give me the name of any given intranational conflict that cannot be blamed on one government or both or several?

I am not a military expert nor am I an expert on the writing of Joe Haldeman but in speaking to Joe (when he was in Findlay, OH prior to OctoCon) the VietNam War was no turkey-shoot. Joe was left with a 40% disability and somehow making \$90 billion writing from its memory seems appropriate.

Where can I get the Deus Ex Machina? All my friends want one. (Can one buy stock in the Holy Trinity Corporation?) (((Sorry, Roger, but Steve says he can't sell stock in The HT Corp. as he's afraid the government will start looking into his other assets, and we can't afford that. However, if there isn't one already, I'm certain that your local church will come up with one Real Soon Now.)))

Arthur D. Hlavaty, 250 Coligni Avenue, New Rochelle, N.Y. 10801 - Jan. 23, 1979:

Your story about Jeff Kleiman deserved condemnation. (See Mike Glicksohn's letter.)(((????)))

I enjoyed Stephen's morbid thoughts. I can't think of an sf classic with no violent deaths in it, either, but then almost any mainstream book with a lot of events in it includes some violent death. Certainly it is not central to *The Dispossessed*. As to holiday cards, I prefer an old one from *The Realist*. It says, "There's only one way to keep Christ in Christmas," and on the inside there's a crucified Santa Claus.

George Howard might wish to read *All My Sins Remembered*. It has the standard Haldeman protagonist, but not the happy ending. Perhaps Haldeman is saying that his Green Beret types are human, but the uses they are put to are not. (But I would like to see him use a different type of viewpoint character just once, to show he can do it.)

If I were a writer and Lee Stevens gave me a bad review, I'd have a handy explanation -- masochist/victim finally getting the whip<sup>h</sup>and and going after someone who can't fight back. But maybe some think that of all reviewers.

I agree with most of what Jessica Salmonson said, but one point bothers me: Jessica is not the first to use the word "whore" to mean a woman who has a lot of sex because she enjoys it, but it's always struck me as singularly inappropriate. Another minor point: An Orthodox Jewish upbringing can be about as strict as a Catholic one, but Reform Judaism tends to be hardly religious at all.

Ira Thornhill's letter reminds me of something they said about Vienna in Freud's time: If a man and a woman walked down the street together, everyone assumed they were lovers; if two men walked down the street together, everyone assumed they were homosexuals; if a man walked down the street alone, everyone assumed he masturbated. Still, I find that touching is accepted by the people I know and like in fandom, and it is not assumed to be foreplay, and I like that.

((I've always detested the word whore, and agree that the use of it for a woman who enjoys sex with many people is inappropriate. The key word seems to be enjoy. It seems to me that to a whore/prostitute having sex is just part of her job and is not likely to be all that enjoyable...at least not as a regular thing. Nympho is not the right word, either, as that implies a psychological need/addiction. I just asked Stephen what he would call a woman who enjoys sex with many men and he immediately replied "a nymphomaniac." But then I reminded him of the women we know who might be in that situation who we would definitely not categorize that way and he couldn't think of anything. So, now we're at a standstill. It pays to not categorize people...too many variables.)))

Bill Colsher, 4328 Nutmeg Lane, Apt. #111, Lisle, IL 60532 - March 21, 1979:

George Howard's article/review on Haldeman's books is a goodie. I had never really thought about Joe's stuff like that but George is at least partly right. I can identify with the characters easily too but I don't think Joe's the biggest commie the world has ever known...Those books scare me *because* I can identify, because anyone that cares to look can see this stuff coming down *today*. I don't want to be a killer and those books are saying "Oh yeah? Tell me about it." "WE CAN MAKE YOU ANYTHING WE WANT YOU TO BE!" That kind of attitude I don't like from anyone but I can't do anything about it. Shit.

Carolyn "C.D." Doyle, 1949 N. Spencer, Indianapolis, IN 46218 - 12-31-78:

My opinion of death is simple -- it's Evil Incarnate. It must be kept from happening -- with no loss of enjoyment from life. (This is no crazier a goal than landing on the moon -- but, for some strange reason, it's not a largely popular goal.) ((I have very mixed feelings about prolonging life. I am emphatically against keeping a "vegetable" alive, and Stephen knows that if it happens to me he should pull the plug. And then I read about societies where people would live to be several hundred years old and I think, wow, that'd be really neat, and then I think, how boring. There's only so much you can do with your life and only so much room for so many people. I figure that if I live to the ripe old age of 102 and am in reasonably good health I won't be too upset to give it up...after all, I'll probably come back as a moose in my next life.)))

Phillip Davis, 576 Lincoln Ave. Evanston, IL 60201:

...I really don't see how Stephen can make light of death and suffering so easily in this issue's Caterwauling. From descriptions of him that I've read, he seems to be trying to make the most out of his life. Yet, he shows a callous attitude towards the opposite of life -- killing and death -- in his article, and by his own admission, in his fiction. So, despite the wonderful things he's done with his life his flippant attitude towards its negation seems to indicate that he doesn't attach much meaning to it. (But, this is just a first impression, and first impressions are often wrong.)((Read Steve's comments to Andy Offutt and maybe you'll understand him better. He is far from callous...)))





Robert Bloch, 2111 Sunset Crest Drive, LA, CA 90046 - Jan. 20, 1979:

I don't know if you touched me when we met, but your editorial article certainly did.

Michael Harper, 47 Bowden Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4K 2X3 - Dec. 27, 1979:

It is interesting to note that while you were encouraged to be tactile by being a product of the segregated RC school system, I was discouraged by the same and only became so as a result of trying to be totally open to my friends. And it is rather laughable to see what mundanes do when one acts so openly in public; it is something they don't understand, primarily because of their cattle instinct of associating affection among the same sex with homosexuality. I can kiss men full on the lips without the slightest bit of apprehension since, in these instances, it is an affectionate greeting and not a sexual act, but, to try this "outside" would cause one hell of a furor and immediately label one...

Barney Neufeld, 3357 Silsby Rd., Cleveland Heights, OH 44118 - March 23, 1979:

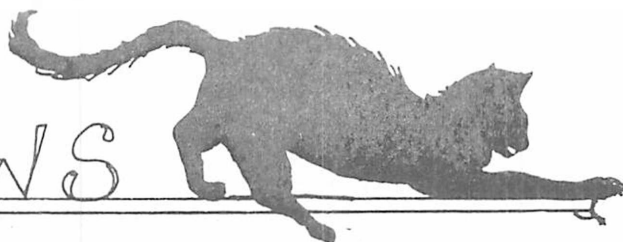
My eyes linger lovingly upon your excellent front cover. The mind throws up all sorts of half-forgotten associations: Jonathon Swift's Laputa; Dr. Doolittle watching Africa bump into the floating island, a reunion gleefully anticipated for generations; Star Trek's Stratos, and the strange events that transpired there. Ah, the flights of youthful fancy...

Scarecrow, Rex Oz, P.O. Box 69, Barrington, IL 60010 - February 6, 1979:

<p><i>...in which the Rex Oz waves penance in the breeze and a committee member dis- covers his altar ego.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: right;">2</p> <p>Dear DPL: We have received another complaint against <del>GRAYMALKIN</del>. A member of the Committee was speeding down a Cincinnati freeway when he spotted a traffic cop lurking in the coin slot of a small cathedral (A). Recalling what he had recently read in <del>GRAYMALKIN</del>, he sent his Scallywagon darting down (B) expecting to find himself in Fountain Square. Conceive (if you can!) of his dismay when he entered a loudspeaker horn and emerged on a black spiral highway which (apparently) led to Needles, California. And was the cop (C) ever <u>cross</u>! Please explain what you intend to do about this.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">SCARECROW, REX OZ</p> <p>PS: They can't ostracize me, I am chairthing. And it's <del>GRAYMALKIN</del> who's clawed.</p>

WAHF: Jan Brown, Clint Hyde, Raul Garcia Capella, Graham England, James Dean Schofield, Marty Levine, Ronald M. Salomon, Andrew Porter, and Sarah S. Prince.

# 2 reviews



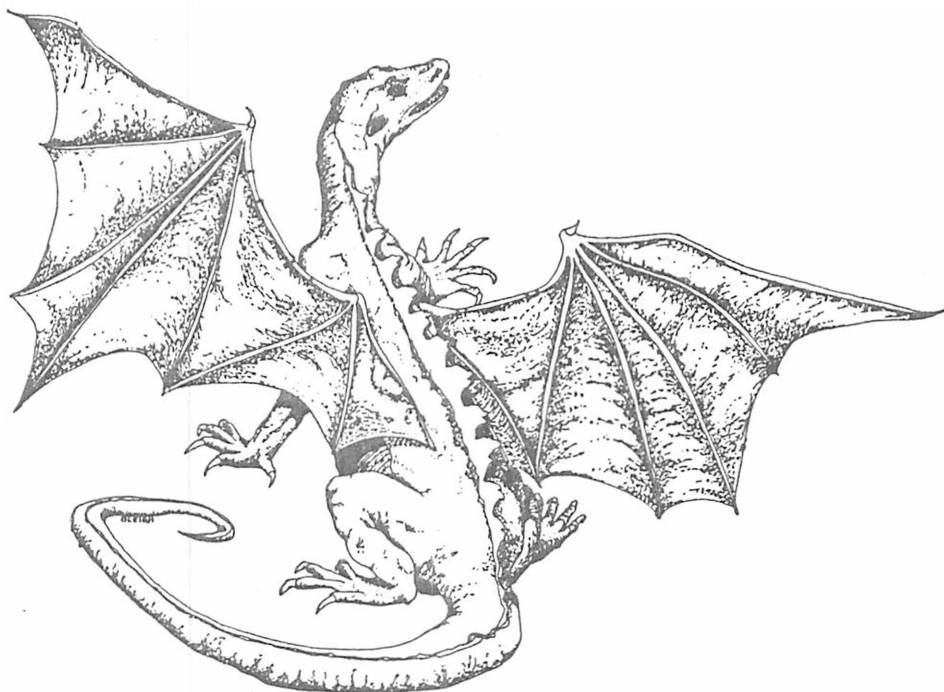
*BORN TO EXILE* by Phyllis Eisenstein -- Arkham House, 1978; \$8.95. Illustrated by Stephen Fabian.

Heroic fantasy -- sword and sorcery -- has always held a certain fascination for me. In my generation, the male children tended to play at army, happily zapping the enemy (who was most likely your best friend from two doors down the street) and laying waste to entire platoons with frenzied, high-pitched "rat-a-tat-a-tats" and screamed "ka-blooms" that left the throat sore and the phantom troops very sorry they'd ever opposed you.

Then you'd go home, smiling and unscathed, to be yelled at by mother for having gotten your clothes soiled.

For myself, I preferred the more personal methods of killing my imagination-figments. Not for me the throaty chatter of machine guns and the orange fury of grenades. No, I was a romantic. I'd choose a limber branch, strip it of its leaves, and sheath it in a belt loop. Sword-bearer. Knight. A rogue of royal blood. The fog of the Middle Ages drifted through my play. It has never quite left -- one of my cherished daydreams is of an alternate world where firearms have never been invented. I mean, after all, if you're gonna kill someone, you might as well do it up close and very personal by impaling him on a rapier. That way you get to see the look of agony as interior organs are pierced and maybe even be splattered with blood from a severed artery...

We digress. It is sufficient to say that yes, fantasy has always been a favored genre of mine. It is also prone to be one of the most hackneyed. I suspect there are more poor writers being published in fantasy than in any other field of literature. I mean, look people, that name on the book over there is *Lin Carter*, whose level of competence is only slightly higher than that of my oldest cat. Many of the better writers tend to steer away from fantasy since there is little money in it, especially for writers of short fiction. There are few professional markets, and the semi-pro outlets are prone to sudden deaths and very small payments.



So a new and good fantasy is a genuine treat, a thing to be savored. And I have one for you, folk. *BORN TO EXILE* qualifies. Thank you, Phyllis. (I bet you thought I'd never get to the review...)

Alaric, the protagonist, manages to skirt his way around most of the cliches

of the genre. Yes, he does carry an excellent sword with him, strapped to his back. Carries it the whole book, too... and never once draws it. Alaric is a wandering minstrel, blessed with certain powers, and his response to danger is to minstrel (to create a new verb from that noun just sitting about) his way out of it or to simply leave. Abruptly. He goes *around* situations, rather than utilizing the hard-head-and-brick-wall method of the Conans of the world. It makes for an unusual character, quite well-fleshed and sympathetic,

Couple that with the fact that Phyllis Eisenstein knows her craft -- she can use the language instead of letting it use her -- and you have a book that extends prickly pseudopods and refuses to let you go until you've turned the last page -- a rather pushy type of book, but well worth the abuse. And couple *that* with Fabian illustrations (he is one of the best sf illustrators currently working) and handsome bindings with decent paper, and you have an excellent package.

Of course, I'm not without some quibbles (heaven forbid that we not have quibbles...). The book is a rough-hewn novel. Originally, Al's adventures were a series of short stories. Some of the seams are a bit rough as Alaric travels from one adventure to the next. And coincidence plays a heavy-handed role. Al was found as a baby on a hilltop with a severed hand grasping one ankle. Ya see, Al is capable of teleportation: when he goes, he can take with him that which touches him. In his adventuring, Alaric happens upon Artuva, an old woman who served as midwife for a village until thrown into a dry well as a witch. Artuva (surprise!) has but one hand. The other, she tells Alaric, was lost when she was delivering the child of Baron Garlenon, back in her homeland. She slapped the child on the rump and the kid screamed and vanished, taking her hand with him. Yes...

And the ending is a bit too abrupt, a bit too contrived. Alaric is placed in a prison supposedly impregnable to even those with his gifts; he finds that he, quite handily, is blessed with more power than others of his ilk. Ummm...

Still in all, this is a Good Book. Read it.

--reviewed by Lee Stevens. For the curious, Lee Stevens provides the following information about himself: In an earlier reincarnation, Lee Stevens was a horse; more precisely, a gelded Palomino. Mr. Stevens makes a living selling renderings of the Cincinnati skyline painted on various sports paraphernalia. He lives in a three room apartment over a glue factory in Reading, Ohio and thinks far too much about death and where we go afterward. He has had a vasectomy.

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--DREAMSNAKE by Vonda N. McIntyre -- Houghton Mifflin, Science Fiction Book Club, and probably Dell by the time you read this.

This is the first book review I've written in the past few years, and it has been even longer since I've written for a fanzine. Several pieces were attempted, but I always seem to get sidetracked. But occasionally a book comes along that so knocks me out that I feel I have to shout its praises to other people. Consider this my shout for *Dreamsnake*.

*Dreamsnake* is Ms. McIntyre's second novel, an expansion of her Nebula-winning short story "Of Mist, And Grass, And Sand," and a much more realized book than her earlier *The Exile Waiting*. It follows Snake, a young healer on a quest through a post-holocaust society.

In Snake, Ms. McIntyre has created one of the most engaging characters I've

recently encountered in speculative fiction; a resourceful young woman, tormented by doubts, yet confident enough to assert herself in a society where she might have lost her place.

In Snake's world, healers rely on the power of three snakes for their work. Drugs are taken from cobras and rattlers, while an alien serpent, the dreamsnake, is used to psychically anesthetize the patient. Early in the book, Snake's dreamsnake is killed, and without the rare alien serpent, her healing skills are partially crippled.

The rest of the book follows Snake on a duel quest. She travels across the future landscape searching for a new dreamsnake rather than returning to her teachers to confess her loss. But in a larger sense she is on a more important quest, one in which she is searching for her own humanity and attempting to find her place as a person instead of as a role.

Early in the book, Snake comes across as brash and arrogant, contemptuous to the villagers she is aiding. And after the death of Grass, the dreamsnake, she becomes bitter...

*"I'm crippled," she said. "Without Grass, if I can't heal a person, I can't help at all. We don't have many dreamsnakes. I have to go home and tell my teachers that I've lost one, and hope they forgive my stupidity. They seldom give the name I bear, but they gave it to me, and they'll be disappointed."* (p. 22)

And by the end of the book, she is able to look at her loss in clearer terms, realizing that while the dreamsnake was an important tool, it was her own self that was important...

*Then, more calmly, Snake said, "Arevin, I wish Grass were still alive. I can't pretend I don't. But my negligence killed him, nothing else."* (p. 276)

*Dreamsnake* is not a political tract, though. I don't consider Snake a stereotype or a symbol. In the book she comes across as a real person who, through events which shape her life, matures during the course of this novel.

The fact that the hero, and the author, or the book are women may be significant, but in the book I was more captivated by Snake's humanity than her 'womanhood.'

Snake is not the only fully realized character in the book. Ms. McIntyre makes the supporting cast live too. Arevin, Snake's lover and friend; Melissa, her found daughter; and the other characters that run through the book not only support Snake and help the reader get a better picture of her, but they have a life of their own. Even North, the piece's villain possesses his own brand of humanity.

*Dreamsnake* is an optimistic book, one that is full of hope. It also points towards a sequel, for though Snake's surface quest reaches a climax in this book, another book is needed to show how she confronts the world with the fruits of her quest. Besides, she doesn't deserve to exist in limbo. She is too good a character to be forgotten.

Before reading *Dreamsnake*, I wasn't very aware of Ms. McIntyre's writing. I had read a few short stories (not the one that gave this novel its basis, though) by her, but while I enjoyed most of them, they did not prepare me for *Dreamsnake's* impact.

I read a lot, but few books (and fewer still in SF) involve me as totally as



*Dreamsnake*. I enjoy SF because it is the best escape literature I've found. I enjoyed *Dreamsnake* because it succeeded in being something more.

-- reviewed by Joel D. Zakem. It should also be noted that since this review was written, *Dreamsnake* has gone on to win the Nebula Award.

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*FAERIES* -- described and illustrated by Brian Froud and Alan Lee; edited and designed by David Larkin -- Published by Abrams, 1978



*Faeries* is one of the most beautifully planned and produced books I've ever seen. Published as a companion volume to their previous bestseller, *Gnomes*, which was an unprecedented -- and in my opinion, undeserved -- success, it is by far the better of the two books. Where the first took the gnomes out of the mystery in which they had been enshrouded and stripped them and pinned them to an examination table, showed us every detail of every facet of their lives under the bright white light of Analysis, *Faeries* leaves its creatures surrounded by all the mystery, legend, and wonder that is a necessary part of the true land of Faerie.

The artwork throughout the book is lovely, varying from haunting to whimsical. The book is full of authentic faerie legends and folklore, most of it recounted as it was handed down through the years, by word of mouth and the great oral tradition of the British Isles.

Also present are faerie legends of literature. Sir Walter Scott, William Shakespeare, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and other all provide brief looks into

the strange land of Faerie.

We are also allowed glimpses of the gentle faerie folk of the plant world -- the faerie spirits of trees -- ash, rowan and oak -- and of the flowers -- foxglove, cowslip, primrose, and thyme.

And finally there are two samples of faerie legends as they were most often handed down through the generations: ballads. *Thomas the Rhymer*, which tells of a poet's meeting with the Queen of Elfland and the gifts she gave him, and *Tam Lin*, the tale of an earthly knight captured by faeries who wins his freedom and his true love in faerie battle, are both included in their entirety. The latter, *Tam Lin*, has some similarities to the French legend, *Beauty and the Beast*.

This is definitely not a book to be read once and then set aside and forgotten. It, like the land of Faerie itself, should be entered cautiously -- a little at a time, so that it can be savored and still remain new and mysterious the next time.

-- reviewed by Arthur Metzger

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*DRAGONDRUMS* by Anne McCaffrey -- Atheneum, 1979; \$8.95



When I started reading *DRAGONDRUMS* I kept having this gnawing suspicion that I'd read this all before, or at least something quite similar. Then it dawned on

me that this was... I'd say *paralleling* but that's not quite right... *DRAGONDRUMS* fits somewhere right before and in the early stages of *THE WHITE DRAGON*, which is the third in the adult books of the dragon series. Remember where Lord Jaxom meets Piemur riding Stupid in the cove on the southern continent? This is where he finds Stupid and starts exploring Southern. *DRAGONDRUMS* is the third book in McCaffrey's juvenile series.

Now don't balk at the term 'juvenile'. To my way of thinking, McCaffrey is far superior in the juvenile genre. But then I *like* children's fantasy. It doesn't have to be pretentious so it doesn't bother trying.

Anyway, back to *DRAGONDRUMS*: the plot involves Piemur, the lovable but somewhat mischevious boy-sporano who befriends Menolly at the Harperhall. Piemur has an incredible voice but just before a crucial concert his voice changes and he is forced to leave the chorus, much to everyone's disappointment. Piemur dejectedly leaves Harperhall, only to find that he is to be apprenticed to Master Robinton and positioned in the drum heights as a cover for being an agent for Harperhall.

Amidst much quarrelling and more than mischevious pranks played upon him by the other drum apprentices, Piemur endures until he gets sent on an errand of "Harper business" where he revels in his freedom from the drudgery of his life on the drum heights.

The remainder of the story deals with Piemur's adventures and parallels the problems outlined in previous books with the southern weyr. He is reminiscent of Lord Jaxom in *THE WHITE DRAGON*, even down to stealing dragon eggs. The story also gives more body to the character of Menolly and her relationship with Sebell -- not enough detail for most adult fantasy, but enough to foster the imagination of the younger readership. (They both *do* have firelizards and firelizards are like miniature firedragons, even down to their mating rites...)

If you liked *DRAGONSONG* and *DRAGONSLINGER* you're sure to like this one. And if you haven't read those because you were scared off by the juvenile label, note that Patricia McKillip's *RIDDLE MASTER OF HED* series -- the third and final volume, *HARPIST IN THE WIND*, will be reviewed in a later issue -- is also published under Atheneum's juvenile listing. And if you think *that* series is for kids then you must have been a lot more precocious than I. 'Nuff said.

-- reviewed by DPL

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A review of the movie *ALIEN*: "...a corker, a walloper, a rouser, a screecher and a ton of fun..." -Gene Shalit, NBC TV. "Terrific fun for everyone... *Alien* will scare the peanuts right out of your M&M's." -Jack Kroll, *NEWSWEEK*

It was the Sunday matinee... the first Sunday that the movie was in Cincinnati. We got there a half an hour early and there wasn't much of a line yet. We had heard and read a lot about the movie, and we knew that it was definitely not going to be another *STAR WARS*. We knew that it was "R" rated, that the rating was not because of sex. It was going to be a fairly violent, possibly upsetting, movie.

Which was one of the reasons we marvelled, as we stood out there in line, at all the people who were bringing five and six year old kids to see the movie. But their parents, most likely, didn't want to bother finding something else to do with them. So they carted them off, more than likely thinking that it couldn't hurt anything, probably figuring that if there were maybe one or two sex scenes in the movie they could send them out for popcorn. If these were the reasons for the children being there, fine, it was none of our concern.



But the parents could have read the two review excerpts in the ad for the movie (quoted above) and honestly thought that it was going to be *STAR WARS*, a "...ton of fun."

Whatever the reason, they were wrong. *ALIEN* is definitely not a movie to take children to see. It is one of the tensest, most terrifying, most upsetting movies I have ever seen in my entire life. The tension is constant; it doesn't let up from the beginning until sometime after you have left the theatre. It is definitely *not* "terrific fun for everyone."

In fact, unless the two reviewers were quoted out of context from longer reviews, they are certainly two of the most senseless, irresponsible comments I have ever read. I find it hard to believe that Shalit and Kroll even saw the same movie I did.

And *ALIEN* is already a quite popular movie. What this means is a full theatre for the next several months. So that if someone does bring young children to the movie and are toward the end of the line for that particular showing they are likely to pay their admission and then go into the theatre to find only scattered single seats. So a young child of six or seven may well find himself separated, seated between two strangers, away from the parents who brought him. That's what happened to several children when we went. We noticed it as the theatre filled and we heard them crying not all that far into the movie.

But that's enough of personal gripes. On to the movie itself.

The sets, especially on the planet, are astonishing. The alien ship in the beginning of the movie is frightening by itself. And this movie carries on one thing that was begun by *STAR WARS*: the days of the "clean" space craft are over.

The acting is also excellent throughout, even though there is only one "name" actor in the film.

The plot is your basic SF fare. The cargo ship *NOSTROMO*, complete with small crew in suspended animation, is voyaging through space when the ship's computer receives an alien distress call. The

computer immediately revives the crew and they set down on an uncharted planet to attempt to make contact. They find a deserted alien ship, and are exploring when a horrible parasitic creature attaches itself to the face of one of the crew members. They manage to get the man back to the *NOSTROMO*, and it is there that the true nightmare begins.

All in all, *ALIEN* is certainly the best movie I've seen, and there is just as certainly no way in the world I would go see it a second time.

-- reviewed by Art Metzger





