

III

THE UNY-ABLE FAM



Edited by Avedon Carol, with a little help from my friends

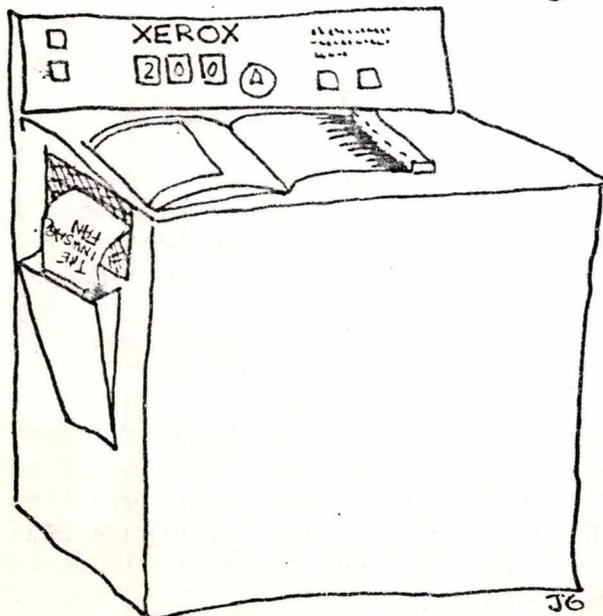
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Illustrations: Cover--Dan Steffan
 Page 1--Jeanne Gomoll
 Page 3--Steve Stiles
 Pages 5, 15, 19, 21--Dan Steffan
 Pages 6, 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24--A. Gilliland
 Page 12--Joes Mayhew
 Back Cover--Gilliland



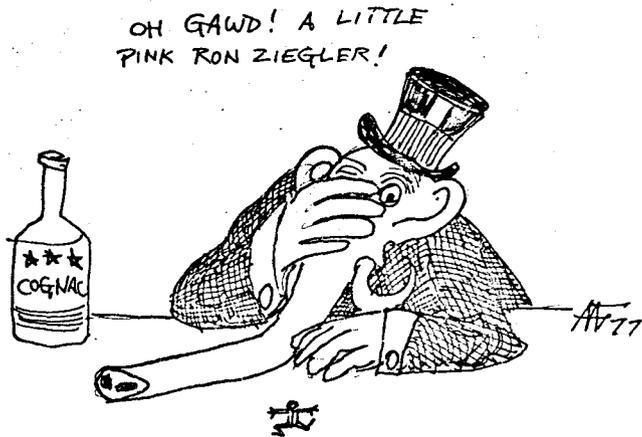
The Invisible Fan is available for LoC, trade, contribution, or three 11¢ stamps U.S. (money if you have to, I'll take) from

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D.C. in 1984



Welcome to Issue Number Three of *The Invisible Fan*. You are now on page two, where I am telling you what is in this issue. I am your alleged editor, and will continue to be so while you are in this zine.

As we continue through the rag, you will see numerous illustrations in between all of the boring little characters on the page which are known as "print". some of these illustrations are by Alexis Gilliland, who really ought to have a Hugo by now. One of them is by Jeanne Gomoll, some are by Dan Steffan, and something which was contributed as, "I don't know, a LoC or something," came from Joe Mayhew, a person about whom you may know nothing, or you may know some very unusual things. This is because he is a very unusual thing.

You may also find that there is an article of some sort by Mr. Mayhew. It is so short that any comment might be an overstatement by sheer virtue of its length.

Jessica Amanda Salmonson is making her first appearance in TIF this time. Some people don't take astrology very seriously, but it's hard to tell whether Jessica is or not.

You may be pleased to know that The

Archival Gilliland has made it again, this time with a short fantasy which should bring tears to your eyes. Actually, I see no reason at all why it ought to bring tears to your eyes. Why did I say that?

As we venture further, we will come across an excerpt from the letters of Helen Berrotini. Who is Helen Berrotini? That is a good question. This excerpt contains a review of sorts of a recent movie which I understand may fall under the heading of "Science Fiction" or "SF" or something. Therefore, in the interest of keeping you educated and informed, I am including it in this tour.

For the same reason, I will also be showing you George Andrews' impressions of another film, which has had mixed reviews so far in my experience. This is to alleviate the problem which occurred last time when I had a review of a book called *Imperial Earth*, about which everyone agreed. That's boring. I hope that you will not all agree this time. (If you do, I will have to do something drastic--like get John Shirley, maybe?)

Some of you may remember Steve Brown from previous issues of TIF. he appeared as a roving reporter in issue One, providing a preview of Miami. He appeared more anonymously in issue two, as my invisible guide to the circus. Well, he's back again folks, with a book review column, kind of.

Letters and stuff like that are also back, much the same way they were last time. I'm not really gonna comment on that much, except to tell you that I had a really rotten winter (well, who didn't?), and I don't want any trouble out of anyone. As you know, it was quite cold this year. It took several more hours than is normal to get to Philcon from DC, perhaps because it was necessary to make the trip in second gear. I do not like this sort of thing. For that matter, I have never been fond of Winter. It gives me an intense desire to stay home and watch TV. This is a recording...

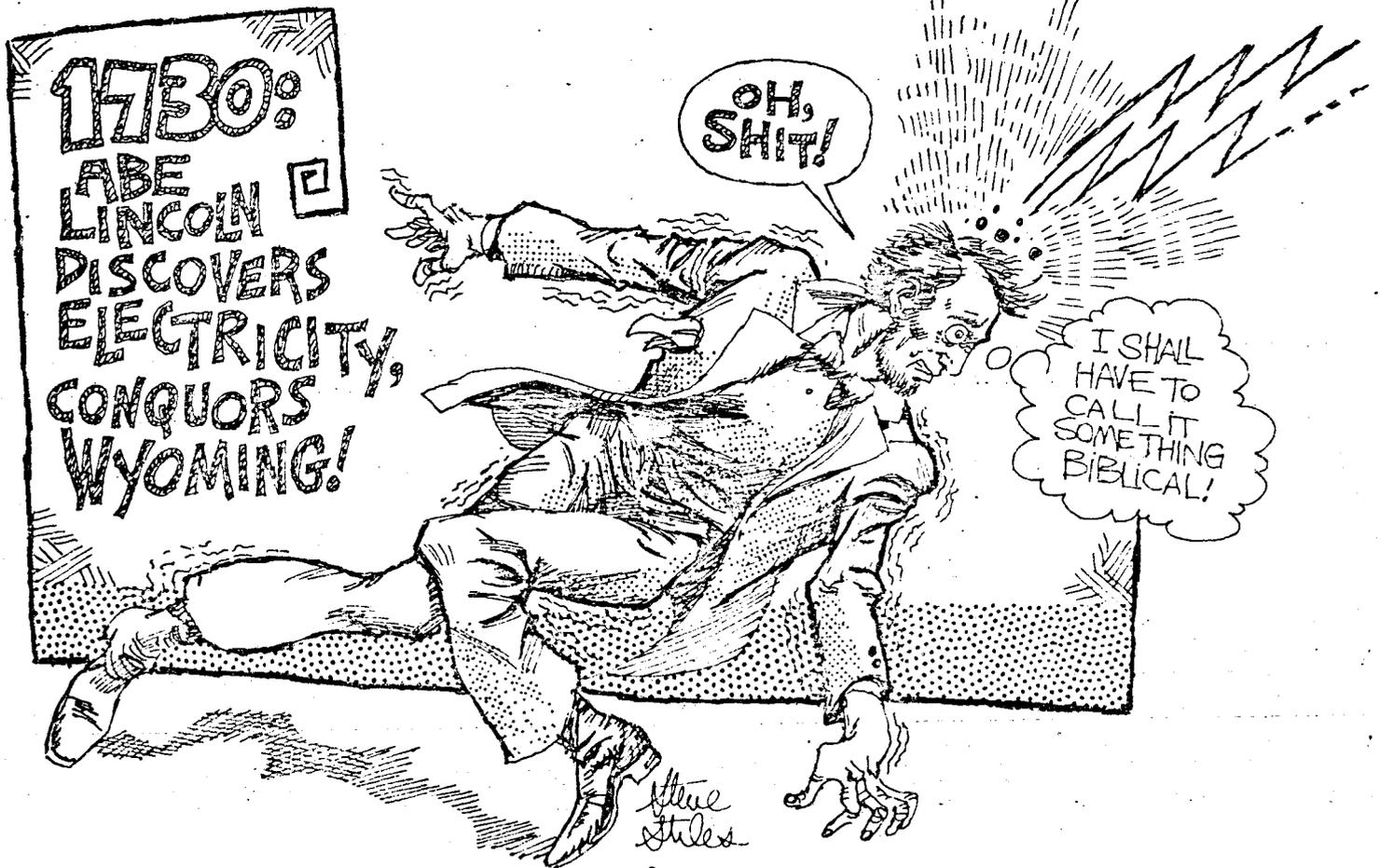
ABOVE THE BICENTENNIAL SURFACE

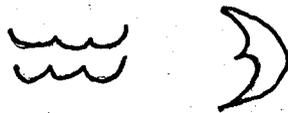
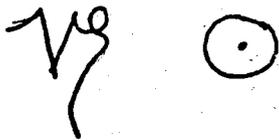
-Joe Mayhew

We must not criticise our ancestors for living in the past; some of them were way ahead of us. For example, Christopher Columbus was a foreigner, and yet he came over before the American Revolution. So did Captain John Smith. While Columbus had a famous name, Smith didn't and so he was afraid to propose until Pocahontas said, "Speak for yourself, John." Her father sold the United States to the Pilgrims for \$24.00 and then the Americans moved in. But the British wanted to tax us and so George Washington prayed to Valley Forge while his ragged army sang "Yankee Doodle". One night they crossed Delaware and signed the Constitution. Some people get George Washington confused with King George the Third.

Gilbert Stuart painted him with his head in the clouds in every schoolroom.

American "know-how" is famous. Abe Lincoln, for example, was born in a log cabin and Ben Franklin found out how to get electricity from kites. Eli Whitney invented cotton gin and do-it-yourself guns so we could have the Civil War, Robert E. Lee, and his mighty horse "silver". Meanwhile, the cowboys went out west and shot the bad guys and Indians with funny names. During a Depression FDR became President and fought Nazis and killed all the bad Japanese. John F. Kennedy was a good guy after he was shot in Dallas, while, on the other hand, Richard M. Nixon was a bad guy because he taped the Watergate break-in.





HORROR SCOPE

by Jessica Amanda Salmonson

What do the stars say will be your most likely cause of death? For those bold enough to glimpse their fates, the following horror scope has been prepared by a comparative study of star-data and statistically established death patterns.

PISCES: A large percentage of people who come into the world under the sign of the fish meet their doom by suffocation. This can be in any form from drowning to a pillow pressed tightly against the face to getting trapped in an air-tight area such as the interior of a refrigerator. In any event, a Pisces is unlikely to die without some sort of vain struggle.

ARIES: Here, so many factors must be taken into account that it is hard to generalize the most likely cause of death for the ram-born. They are a variable lot who tend to die in unusual circumstances. If a woman is trampled by circus elephants in a city street, or a man accidentally decapitates himself with a band saw, or a child drowns

in a small mud puddle, they are invariably born under Aries. At least they of the Ram can look forward to a unique demise.

TAURUS: Those cursed with the bull as their birthsign may have to accept death through the efforts of a beast. The Taurus-born may fall victim to the bite of a rabid skunk, or be gored by a wounded game animal. Those who avoid wild environments and zoos are more likely to be killed by vicious dogs, or any wild pet upon which attempted domestication was only partially successful.

GEMINI: Many are the people born under the sign of the twins who suffer from schizophrenic tendencies. They can look forward to a quick death, at the hand of their mad alter ego, who will not realize she is also killing herself.

CANCER: Those of you born under the crab have more than an excellent chance at slow and costly death. Your last month of life, if not more, will be spent in grievous agony and inability

to communicate.

LEO: Death by rage may seem a bit far-fetched, yet it is a fact that a great many people with the lion as their birthsign die as a direct or indirect result of losing their tempers. It may be as simple as a head-on auto collision while cursing over one's shoulder, or as complex as kicking some object angrily, splintering the bone in the toe, having a splinter of that bone find its way into the circulatory system, days later being lodged in the heart. Too, a large number of Leos die at the hand of other people forced to kill in self-defense.

VIRGO: Virgos are prey to all kinds of phobias and usually die by whatever they fear most. It is uncertain whether death is the result of these fears or whether their phobias are the result of subconscious precognition. With the exception of Virgos who fear crowded places, most die in lonely situations.

LIBRA: Libras are most susceptible to death from supernatural causes. Often their deaths are surrounded by mystery, or cause is left entirely unknown. Libras give coroners the willies. Many are the Librans who vanish forever without a trace. Quite likely, many of Libran heart attack victims were in actuality frightened to death by something unfathomable.

SAGGITARIUS: People born under the archer had best prepare for a painful if quick death. They had best wear their identification engraved in solid steel, otherwise their recovered remains may never be identified. Mutilation could be by fire, being crushed, blown up, half-eaten, or falling from a great height. One way or another, mutilation is more than a slight possibility for Saggitarians.

CAPRICORN: Capricorns generally find death the least agonizing for they frequently succumb to complete madness. Pain may be experienced as pleasure and fear seems akin to ecstasy. The term "died laughing" is especially applicable to Capricorns.

AQUARIUS: If anyone dies a peaceful death, it is certainly not the Aquarian. The restlessness may be as intangible as dying with a lifelong goal unfulfilled, or as metaphysical as dying with one's theories or works or inventions ridiculed. Aquarians often die ostracized from the ranks of conventional society, mentally tortured. In other ages, they were burned as heretics and witches. Today they are allowed to live out their lives in lonely desperation, and die the most horrifying death of all: the death of a spirit never allowed to fully live.



THE DESTRUCTION OF HARLAN ELLISON

This segment of THE ARCHIVAL GILLILAND was first published in The WSFA Journal #49, December, 1967.

A certain fan, who shall remain nameless, came upon a djinn bottle, sealed with the Seal of Solomon. Being a rash, impetuous fool he opened it, and to his skeptical amazement, there appeared before him a large and repulsive djinni.

"Yar", said the djinn, "whattya want, mortal?"

"Wealth, women, more wishes!" said the greedy, randy, crafty fan.

"Come off it, bub", said the djinn, "we got a strong union, and nobody messes like that wit' the contract any more. Besides, what wit' the balance of payments, wealth is out. One wish is all you get."

"Oh!" said the fan, and thought about his one wish.

"I am a malevolent spirit", the djinn added helpfully, "and I like to hurt people." The fan had a sudden vision of himself drowning in a vat of beer, or having to satisfy a harem of aged English teachers, and swallowed with some difficulty.

"You like to hurt people?" he muttered as he thought about whom he would like to revenge himself upon. "Well, how about destroying Harlan Ellison as a writer!"

"Haw!" roared the djinn, and evil forces blazed from his fingers, destroying Harlan Ellison as a writer.

"So", murmured the wicked spirit surveying his handwork, "you are now 6'5" tall, and you weigh 240 pounds. You can run 100 yards in 9.2 and turn on a dime without making change. Magnets in your fingers will pull a football down when it's three feet overthrown, and you have a fumbleproof grip. Keep on writing, baby, and it all turns to flab!"

Exit djinni, laughing.

A year later, the fan met the djinn in a bar. On the television set, the announcer was counting down the final seconds of the Jets-Packers game. "Seven, six...there goes the bomb. it's for Ellison, two men on him... his voice rose to an excited squeak. "he leaps into the air, makes a fantastic one-handed catch, and drags the defenders into the end-zone! The Jets win 34 to 33..."

"Cheez", said the fan in disgust, "a nice job you did on Harlan Ellison, djinni. Thanks a lot, sport!"

"Well, now", replied the evil spirit, "didn't I destroy him as a writer?"

"Ye-es", conceded the fan reluctantly, "but that wasn't exactly what I had in mind."

"I *told* you I was a malevolent spirit", the djinni reminded him.

"You should destroy me as a writer sometime!" grumped the fan.

"Haw!" bellowed the djinni, and the whole bar turned to look. "Who said you was a writer?"

ITS A ROCK STATION
OUTSIDE L.A.



THIS MUST BE WHAT THEY MEAN BY "SCI-FI"

Taken from the letters of Helen Berrotini?

Helen Berrotini is the old-style pseudonym of Heron Libertine, well known to all in the Resistance as one of the founders of Revisionist Hysteriography. Libertine, also known as Heron XY², was born on Furpiece in the year DXII of the post-millennium. He was early afflicted by False Consciousness at the New Mobe but overcame it while hiding out in a night club act imitating Feenamint, the Wonder Dog. Despite the Unitarian Proof, he remains convinced that there are Hidden Meanings. Heron attributes his success.

God only knows how SF gets by, considering the many hands it gets mangled by. Recently I saw *Logan's Run*, touted as the greatest sci-fi epic since 2001. Herewith some comments:

Most decidedly not an epic; more likely an aspic, if you refer to the logical firmness and consistency of its plot, or an Olmec, if you mean how far back the ideas go. Not that tried-and-true is a bad idea for a sci-fi flick, but if they must, why can't they do something more original than boy-and-girl-escaping-from-all-powerful-computer-in-enclosed-city-to-freedom-in-outside-world, or the even worse tack-on of human-brain-outwits-computer-with-logical-conundrum? Really, have they no respect? Why, those plots have been recycled at least three times each on *Star Trek* alone; and at least Gene and Co. have the excuses of having been under time and budgetary pressures. Thank god for Arthur Clarke, who knows enough to tell us that the only way to outwit the logical beasts of the future will be to *take them apart*. Ah, well.

And yet, and yet...the real comparison to 2001 is in the special effects, which are usually the only point of SF movies anyway. These weren't all *that* bad, and the illusion that we were romping around in a California shopping mall was only rarely broken. Unfortunately, none of the outside shots of the great enclosed city were convincing, since the trees and hills that were supposed to give perspective looked too much like cotton fluffs on sand piles; and the inside shots were painfully

reminiscent of model railroading magazine covers. The problem is that there was never any mixture, for contrast, of a human scale and real people with the great buildings and overhead tube-cars of the future city. There was none of the fantastic editing which produced the space-ship-landing-on-the-moon-base scene of 2001, where if you remember we watched the Orion settle into a large hangar around the sides of which there were people staring out through glass. Maybe it's just that what we'll believe on the moon we become much more demanding over on Earth. Still, the effects were more worthy of television than cinema.

Imagine life in the future as a great game of pubescent adults who emerge from savagery at the age of fifteen to spend fifteen years wandering around in various states of undress and naivete, to be wiped out in a hokey religious rite upon reaching the magic age of 30. Society is divided into only two classes, the controllers and everybody else; but controllers don't do anything more than chase around after the recalcitrant few who refuse to appreciate the social importance of their own demise. Otherwise, everyone is peaceful and serene. They all have little crystals embedded in the palms of their hands: red means a-ok; flashing red means your number's just about up; black means you're overdue for ritual suicide and are game for the police--oops, controllers (I hesitate to say "fair" game, since like most utopias, this one is run by an omniscient compu-

ter which can track down anyone and tell their status, at least when it is convenient for the plot). Most people are well-socialized: they accept their status, go to the arena, self-destruct with dignity. Only a handful of malcontents pollute the mass of young, hedonistic zombies. A B.F. Skinner utopia.

Imagine a thousand Trekkies shuffling around the floor in a costume ball at the Peachtree Plaza.

So here we are stuck in the 23rd century with nothing but a bunch of Californians gaggling about in various psychic nonexistences in a bunch of sets created from a Disney-Hyatt glitter-pizzaz polished-chrome utopia. They must have filmed it in every shopping mall and post-1970 hotel in the whole damned country. Wow! Isn't it amazing how there's never any dirt in the future? I suppose those robots that go around melting the playfully "terminated" bodies of deserters may pick up the garbage and polish the stair rails in their spare time?

We all live under a set of translucent domes that interconnect to form the "city", which peculiarly is not also the word for "world" or "universe", considering that it is theoretically all that anyone has ever known. Why is not clear, although it seems that the inhabitants of once-upon-a-time were shielding themselves from a radioactive or eco-catastrophized outside environment. But wait! There is an outside which seems to be known as the "sanctuary", both to a sect of about-to-be-thirty's who have an elaborate underground, and to our vaguely incompetent (and female) central computer which (who?) benignantly neglects everything beyond the merciless persecution of anyone who might want to escape. In a bit of pop etymology, it is revealed that "sanctuary" is identified with, derived from, and otherwise beholden to a curious piece of symbolic jewelry we all recognize as the ancient Egyptian goddess of the pregnant cow, or "ankh", so known from the sound of giving birth. Or something like that; I didn't really follow the dubbed-in sound track too well.

Anyway, our Hero, Logan, who spends most of his time as a cop, finally gets a job which is more serious than playing frisbee with the deserters under the fountains at Century Plaza. Seems he has to infiltrate the underground, locate "sanctuary", and give a little plot to the picture. Tall order, enough to do in a lesser man, like his buddy, who would prefer gunning down anybody with a sweaty palm. So Logan dials up on his holograph set a pretty young thing, who happens to be in the underground, and after a bit of hemming and hawing designed to show us how successfully the producers found every chrome-plated hotel lobby in creation, he falls for her. And of course is converted. Then they escape, pursued every step of the way by Logan's trigger-happy ex-buddy, through a laser-beam beauty parlor, an unfortunately much-too-dimly-lit orgy, into the bowels of the domes, out through a deep-freeze embalming igloo presided over by a robot straight out of *Lost In Space* or *Dr. Who*, and into a miraculously verdant outside world, where first thing they get to watch is the sun come up. Dyn-a-mite! They stumble onto the ivy-covered ruins of Washington D.C., which are remarkably well-preserved if a bit overgrown (there goes the nuclear war hypothesis), where they find an old (!) man busy feeding cats under the dome of the Capitol. Honestly. So then they return to the city, with the mission of enlightening its inhabitants, where Logan unwittingly outwits the computer by --get this!--so doggedly telling the unacceptable truth that there is no "sanctuary" that the computer self-destructs in worry over the logical contradiction. Uh-huh. The city is destroyed, but most of its people escape to face the glories of old age. Lawrence Welk music to the fade-out...

I would have called it *The Day the Shopping Mall Blew Up*.

Still, Michael York is handsome, and none of the women wore very many clothes, and you must respect anyone who even wants to do a reasonably serious sci-fi picture. Why oh why do they have to be so unbearably bad about it?

WIZARDS

Reviewed by George Andrews

Several million years hence, after the Earth has been all but destroyed by a nuclear war, magic and magical beings reappear. Elves, fairies, and the like populate the "good" areas, horrible mutants and darker beings inhabit the spaces of lingering radioactivity. Two brothers personify this polarization, wizards by birth and by inclination.

Ralph Bakshi's *Wizards* is one of those strange, haphazard works that manages to be disappointing on several levels. Produced, directed, and written by Bakshi, the film is an artistic travesty of fantasy, the story offers nothing of note from its unconvincing beginning to its imaginatively bankrupt climax.

The odyssey which precedes the final confrontation between the two wizards is hopelessly pointless. The "good" brother, Avatar, is displayed as a lazy, confused, almost pathetic creation whose only seeming talent is to produce

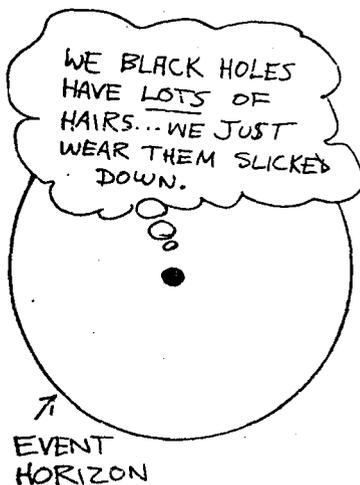
a gag for any occasion. His "mad" brother, on the other hand, is resourceful, determined, and only a little weird in his fascination with the Nazi mystique.

Sitting and watching the scenes in which the mad wizard incites his armies with images of Nazi *blitzkrieg*, I suddenly realized what is really the most offensive thing about this film: Bakshi always opts for the pat, the obvious, the mundane. He refuses to allow the viewer any involvement in the story whatsoever. The audience *must* respond according to plan, and Bakshi resists any participation, any sense of wonder or imagination on their part. As is shown in the brothers' final confrontation, he denies us the dream, and thereby destroys the illusion.

The animation, which should be Bakshi's strong suit, also requires comment. No unifying artistic style exists. The tale unfolds with real-time animation in alternation with a meandering photography of what looks like the film's original storyboards. This format serves to point out the lack of craft apparent in Bakshi's work as compared with Vaughn Bode's original art in the storyboards.

Another effect used extensively is the inclusion of what I assume to be live film footage which has been posterized, solarized, and otherwise doctored before matting it in with the animated characters. The end result is one of underscoring the disappointments in Bakshi's own crew's drawing.

Inevitably, any animated film will be compared with the Disney classics which were the high water mark of this artform. I would discourage such comparisons in discussing this film. With the exception of much of the background work, and Bode's creations, *Wizards* is closer to Fred Flintstone than *Fantasia*.



AG
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THE INACTIVATED SYNAPSE

by Steve Brown

SIMULTANEOUS ACTIVITY by Philip K. Dick, Ace, 1978; 187 pp, \$2.25; *THE MAN WHO STOOD PERFECTLY STILL* by Philip K. Dick, Ace, 1978; 187 pp, \$2.25.

At first glance, these two books appear to be exactly the same. On closer examination we find that Dick is up to his usual reality-shuffling tricks. The only difference between the two is that in *Simultaneous Activity* the names of the owners and their pets are reversed from those in *The Man Who...* I interpret this as a sardonic comment on the owner-pet relationship, and, in a larger sense, a telling statement about slavery. This is true on one level, but Dick is never content to make his point the easy way. He disguises this name-switching (and by implication, role-switching) by giving his owners and their pets the *same names!* As usual the actual plot of the books is negligible, secondary to the concept.

CORWIN'S FOLLY by Roger Zelazny, Doubleday, 1995; 1085 pp, \$19.95.

This is the 35th novel in the acclaimed Amber series, and Zelazny has reached a point telegraphed thirty novels ago. He continues his practice of bringing the reader up-to-date (as if this were the first Amber book encountered by the reader) by means of a lengthy expository dialogue between the Princes. At this stage in the series so much has happened that there is no room for further plot development. So for the first time we are presented with a complete recap without any continuation of the story whatsoever. It is hoped that forthcoming breakthroughs in the art of bookbinding will allow Doubleday to publish a volume enough larger that we are able to learn more of this fascinating saga.

RIVETS ed. by Ben Bova, DAW, 1980; 354 pp, \$2.25.

Here is the anthology Bova has been threatening to publish for years. Smarting under an irreverent universal labelling of his magazine, he has risen to the occasion. This is a theme anthology of stories based on the concept of rivets, those tubular plugs of metal that join two sheets of steel. Given the limitations of the theme, I thought that the authors acquitted themselves surprisingly well. I was impressed by Joe Haldeman's wry short based on the sexual implications of the act of riveting. Dr. Asimov's story *Rivets of Steel* was interesting, but I couldn't seem to develop any empathy toward a piece of positronic plate steel, though the climactic scene where the protagonist was forcibly and painfully amalgamated into the hull of humanity's first starship was gripping.

FLAMEWORLD by Larry Niven, Doubleday, 1985; 278 pp, \$12.95.

Niven seems to be scraping the bottom of his barrel. Having written about every large-scale construction imaginable, this book falls short in contrast. I can't accept the premise of a planet situated at the core of a star and populated by sentient photonic beings. Though he tries, and desperately, there just isn't anything for his characters to do down there except radiate.

THE RATS OF CIMMERIA by de Camp & Carter, Arkham, 1979; 375 pp, \$12.95.

This latest Conan novel is based on a fragment of a postcard sent by Robert Howard to H.P. Lovecraft. The authors are fanatically attempting to keep the flavor of the original source, but I find the scene where Conan safely nego-

tiates the Postmarkal Maelstrom to be washed ashore in one of the dozens of identical semi-circular bays of the Isle of Postage to be hard to swallow.

THE ANNOTATED ASIMOV by Isaac Asimov, Dell, 2013; 18,067 pp, 38 bound volumes @ \$212.95/set.

This is the project Dr. Asimov has been working on for the last few years. Eight years ago, it became apparent that Dr. Asimov had written about Everything There Is, thus ending a long and illustrious career. But, not being one to rest on his laurels, he has begun the Augean task of annotating his complete works with amusing commentary and updates. This 38-volume set consists of Everything beginning with the letter "A". Asimov fans everywhere will be eagerly awaiting further installments.

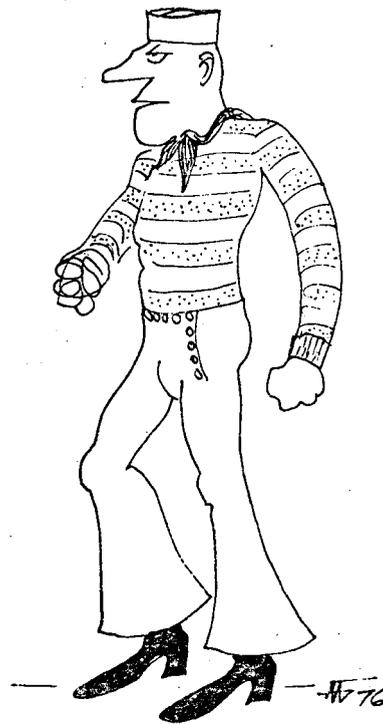
LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS ed. by Harlan Ellison, Dell, Ace, Ballantine, Doubleday, et. al., 2042 AD; 508,687 pp, 493 bound volumes; \$7,634.95/set.

When Mr. Ellison died last year of a fatal accumulation of bile, he left behind him an enormous ms. whose origins are lost in prehistory. His estate, after a lengthy court battle, has finally published this thing through a deal made with every publisher in the country. Most of the stories seem quaint and outdated, though there are a few real gems here. Herin you will find the complete lifetime output of some very good (though unpublished outside of *Last DV*) writers who had the misfortune to sign a contract with Ellison; such as Bruce Sterling, represented by 253 short stories and 17 novels. The last hundred or so volumes of the anthology are not as interesting. Ellison apparently lost his critical facility in his dotage, and began buying anything sent to him with a fervor bordering on monomania. The discerning reader may want to skip these volumes as they consist of complete slush piles, 376 drafts of an Ellisonian TV script that was never aired, grocery lists, and the total output of the last twenty Clarion workshops.

ANGST by Samuel Delany, Ballantine, 1999; 42,954 little pieces of paper, \$2.25.

Delany has at last created his magnum opus, fulfilling the promise that began so long ago with *Dhalgren*. This "novel" comes in a cardboard box, and consists of loose bits of paper with a short phrase printed on each. The phrases are so cleverly constructed that any arrangement makes a completely different novel, with a new theme and different characters. I cannot review this yet, as I am honor-bound to explore all the possibilities before commenting. Therefore this will have to be my last review column. I will spend the rest of my life reading *Angst*, and will bequeath the book and the task to my descendents in perpetuity. If there are any immortals reading this column, look for the definitive Brown review of *Angst*, hopefully before the sun novas.

♪ I'D RATHER BE AN A.B.
THAN A DICK... I WOULD...
YES, I WOULD... I REALLY
WOULD.



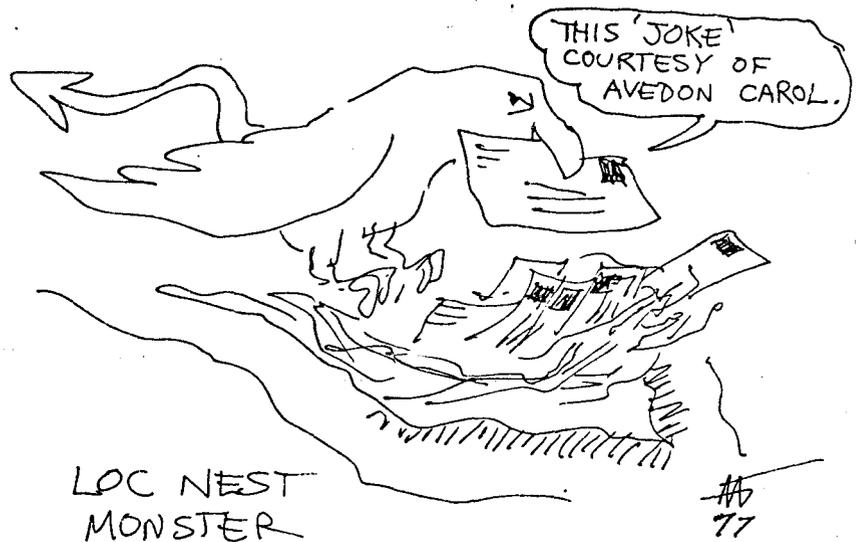
The Hardest Act to Follow is Your Own.

Studies show that people drive like their parents. My father drives like a maniac, and my mother is over cautious. I should be a nice, even synthesis between the two, right? Wrong. I alternate driving like a maniac and waiting for stop signs to turn green. So maybe I shouldn't have gotten a grown-up car with a manual shift. But I did, and I love it, but I am even more of maniac behind the wheel than ever. My biggest problem, though, is trying to figure out how to tune the radio while shifting gears. I suppose it would help if my reception was better, and I could at least find the bloody stations.

So there I was, playing grand prix and tripping over my own image (images, we all know, are constructed to hide our insecurities. If you have enough insecurities, you can construct a bigger than life image. Then people fall for it, and are surprised when you turn out to be human. Oh, well.), and waiting for section four of the "young adult crisis" to get itself over with. I have enough problems already, and then I discover a real humdinger--staplers refuse to work for me. No, there's not a thing anyone can do about it, it's just a fact. Everytime I try to staple a couple of pieces of paper together, the stupid device jams. I've gone thru four staplers since Christmas, including an old stand-by that's been faithful for years without causing me any trouble. It's Karma, I guess.

And just to make my life miserable, this typewriter refuses to work with anything but IBM cartridges.

I want some sort of government-approved certificate that entitles me to act like just as much of an ass as everyone else and get away with it. I may just take a doctorate in that field. I



think it's about time this facet of human behavior was given the same status as, say, medicine, or martyrdom, or the other areas of priesthood. I don't see why I should have to be rich before I'm allowed to act like an idiot when ever I feel like it. That's why I like to go to conventions.

Another thing I'd like is to improve my memory, get to the point where I can not remember anything prior to *this* bridge hand. Then I could expand it to just remembering what I have planned for the future. My problem is that I remember too much stuff I can't use any more.

Along about now, I figure it is time to can the introspection and get around to the LetterColumn, which is probably a lot more interesting, at least to the people who wrote.

Steve Miller

Now that I am recovered from the double-shock of getting both

TIF and a cold at Philadelphia, I can comment on a few things on TIF 2. The first is my amazement that TIF came out about the time you said it would--a real achievement.

Yes I liked the AG artwork and ar-

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ticle. Being relatively ignorant of D&D, I don't know if the Attack Lawyers are a good idea or not. You realize of course if they are instituted you then have to have a Supreme Court of some kind or another...because when lawyers grow too old and senile to fight a good case they get Peter-principled up to a judgeship--a kind of unemployment insurance for the barristers.

A small complaint--I like the habit of including addresses with locs, if only because I don't have a complete file of all fannish addresses at hand. It makes it difficult to send immediate or DNQ correspondence...

Harry Warner's loc inspired quite a bit of thought. It's hard for me to know what Clarion has done to other fans but I think some fans who attend Clarion have a problem because they attend as *fans* rather than as writers or writers-to-be. Since Clarions seem to engender their own particular brand of "ingroupness" which is similar in some regards to "fannishness" it is possible to get lost in the experience, acting as if Clarion is nothing more than an extended convention with assignments due on occasion. I have no quibble at all with Harry's observation that all aspiring writers might not be best served by going to Clarion--in fact the element of egobruise has the potential of destroying someone's will to write. I

hope I didn't give the impression that only those who manage to get through Clarion can be writers. I also hope enough potential Clarion workshoppers will read the various Clarion stories and will know in advance if they are suited to the high-pressure atmosphere generated there.

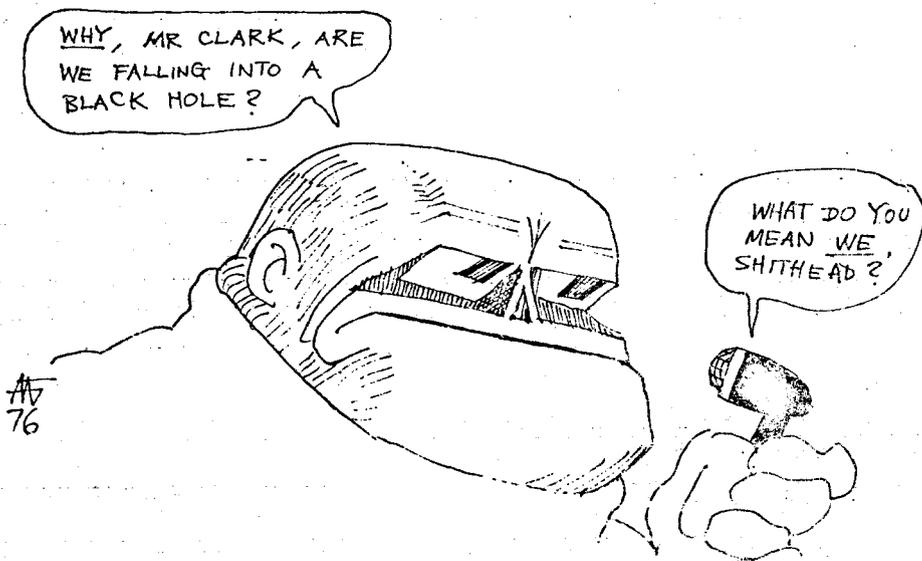
I might also add that I attended my first convention only after I went to Clarion--and when I got there I felt right at home, since so much of what goes on at Clarion seems to go on in fandom--the one-upmanship (and one-up-womanship), calling to art (fannishness to cover inadequacy in writing, etc. In fact at the Clarion I attended the randy round-robin fiction and the Clarion West Spotted Pig Breeder's Gazette were the focus of several able but otherwise "blocked" writers, these things being the closest things to fanzines without *being* fanzines that I've ever seen. Like going to college, or a convention, by picking and choosing where you go, what you do, and who you see can make Clarion worthwhile, or worthless.

Elaine Normandy sums up the flaws in *IE* very well. Maybe in two or three hundred years it will be recognized as a classic--but I hope not.

A final question on your policy of changing he to she? OK, I suppose, unless someone writes long passages of dialogue or uses un-introduced characters differentiated by sex. Then what?

♀ All right, Sapienza, so where is that article you were going to give me on the advancement of the Attack Lawyer? You just can't trust fans to give you material they promise you.

Ok, Ok, Steve, you win about the addresses. What the hell, if you don't know Harry Warner's address by now, someone has to give it to you.



Huh? I'm talking about the *generic* pronoun, which means the people we're talking about are not differentiated by sex. "if a person finds her socks have been torn up by the cat..." Now, you might say it would be ridiculous to use a phrase like, "if a person finds her jock strap has been chewed up by the cat...", but then Ursula Le Guin once used the phrase, "...unless he is pregnant." And she meant it. Which is the whole point. This is just an extreme example of the absurdity of insisting upon the male generic, and I mean to point it up continually by using the female generic. Of course, I won't be so inflexible as to stoop to the equivalent of "unless he is pregnant," such as, "when she releases sperm." However, I do have very definite plans to use examples in this rag of just why having a male generic is so objectionable. It would be nice to have started from a position of assuming that "people" can be of either sex, but we didn't.

What I want to know is, when did I say TIF #2 would be out? I'll have to be more careful about committing myself to deadlines. I do my best not to, you know...



Brian Earl Brown
"And watching
Brian Earl Brown
eat...".....?

55521 Elder Rd.
Mishawaka, Ind.
46544

.....Are you implying that I eat funny?
Or is this an example of your reverse-

sexism wherein all women are interesting people and men entertaining shows?

Or were you really starving that much at Windycon? In any case your somewhat bizzare reference to me warmed the cockles of my heart (whatever a 'cockle' is). I'll take egoboo any way I can get it.

And speaking of egoboo, *The Invisible Fan #2* is at hand and well worth lauding some egoboo on. I dare say that it's even better than the first issue.

The highpoint of this issue was your personalzine within a genzine, "life is too Complex." "Some men's lives are more interesting than the novels they wrote." This quote I think was attributed to J.G. Ballard but it comes from some time before and was said by one mainstream novelist to another and about a month ago I knew who they were. All forgotten now.

You've certainly had a full and hectic life this past year and I enjoyed reading your glimpses of it. You make it sound like circus' are rife with power politics. The performers disdain the workingmen and the workingmen disdain the concessionaires and I suppose the concessionaires disdain the audience. You succeeded in painting a romantic picture of the Circus even then listing all the shortcomings of it. Or maybe the Circus is incurable romantic, being one giant romantic fantasy. It must have been something to have, seemingly, the whole circus performing just for you.

The intermingling of letters and your long responses to them in your travelogue works very well and makes for an enjoyable lettercolumn even tho many of the letters tend to be a bit repetitive. (I did something like that in *B.M.# 5*, and think that was my best lettercol). The long responses make for a sense of dialog, which is much more interesting than a series of short speeches.

So your first LOC was from Harry Warner. It took him three months to get around to LOCing *MSD*. I told you first



will, like wine, improve in savor.

The Archival Gilliland was fun to read. As you know, Mr. Mind finally did get a TV series for Captain Marvel (on every Saturday morning, the *Shazam/Isis Hour*) and it is another triumph of Bad over goof, er good.

Susan Petro's "Nothing is Revealed" drawing is quite striking in its simplicity.

issues get better response than later issues.

Speaking about the improvements of xerox, I've heard somewhere that the latest color xerox machine can all but forge a dollar bill. Gad! The foundation of paper currency lay on the basis that one couldn't print a decent bill except with the real plates. Think what it would do to the "War on Inflation" if everyone could print their own money.

"Are all telephone operators black women?" Couldn't be, there wouldn't be so many of them unemployed. But didn't Uhura remind you not a little of an executive council secretary. 'Take a memo, Uhura...' or 'Send a report to Federation, Uhura...'

And a year that felt like it was written by Harlan Ellison...Just as long as you don't have a year that feels like it was written by John (Gor) Norman.

Don't worry about your 12th issue not looking any better than your 1st. There is little you can do with graphics or appearance in a fanzine. Neatness, legibility, improve with experience and the other big improvement of most fanzines is a better grade of art and articles. I don't know how you can get much better art than Alexis Gilliland and you're a better than average writer already. Future issues of TIF

either love it or hate it, and I'm not one who loves it. I can't help but admire a character who will argue the rules with the Dungeon Master. That's true grit.

I didn't really read this review of *Imperial Earth*. I've read so many already that said the same thing. It may help to look at it in this light: *I.E.* like *Rendezvous With Rama*, like *2001* have surprisingly bland plots and characters, particularly for Clarke. But *2001*, we know, was a movie novelization. And the overriding impression I had of *Rama* was "God, wouldn't that be something to see in technicolor!" And I think the same is true of *IE*. I think this is the novelization of an unsold movie script. It's a 70's version of *Things To Come*.

Somehow I don't recognize you as The Editor as Odalisque. But I so envy those people who can so surely draw a line where they want it.

Steve Stiles ought to get together with Todd Blake. Todd has it in for Jesus Freaks. Todd's cover for *Mishap* #24 has a lecture that reads: As you know, in 1974 Comet Kohoutek raped Mother Earth, causing vast earthquakes and various other nasty phenomena. This was, of course, an omen of coming armegeddon and stuff like that there. All the faithful were called up to heaven to be with Jesus--after that came the

millenium, 1000 years of peace. We could never have got it with all them dippy Jesus Freaks still down here.

Alexis Gilliland must give you all good stuff he comes up with. The one on the contents page sounds like my company. I do at least half my fanac at work because of the spare time. And now they've hired a second chemist to work at nights. And his Shivers Regal made me burst out laughing. As did his "Southern Drawl" on page 23.

Your own artwork is, like mine, an unpretentious exercise in good gag writing. I know what you mean by nagging backache.

A last comment: After spending two weeks actually with a circus, you're better qualified to write the Family D'Alembert series than is Stephin Goldin. This is a Space Opera series starring a couple superhero spies that was created by E.E. (Doc) Smith before he died. The Spies cunningly disguise themselves as part of a circus. (The only good thing I can really say about the series is that George Barr has been doing some knock-out covers for it.

♀ I'm always starving at cons, Brian. Maybe that's why all I remember is them rare occasions upon which I get to feed my face--or why I remember watching you feed yours. Gosh, it was just my way of saying I considered your being there a significant part of my convention. I suppose I did mean to warm the cockles of your heart--If I knew what a cockle was. That's a terrible word. What's it mean?

I didn't recognize me as The Editor as Odalisque either, but Alex says that I project an image that's a cross between "the Marlboro fellow and Harry Truman." Somehow this is supposed to all tie together, I think, but I can't say I really get it.

I think it's about time we really did something about those damn Jesus Freaks, and if Todd wants to contribute any anti-Kristian propaganda to this here publication, I'd be real pleased

to print it. I'm very down on Kristianity in general, and those damn street-corner wierdos in particular. The ones I really hate, tho, are those fool Jehova's Witnesses who come pounding on the door at 8:00 on Saturday morning with their little books and magazines.

Well, the truth is, I hang around the Gilliland's a lot and try to get first pick out of everything Alexis has produced lately. Geis is giving me a lot of competition, tho. Soon I'll have to start sneaking around and looking for Alexis' stash of cartoons before he sends them off to *SFR*.

Steve Brown is much better qualified to write all that circus stuff. After being Ringling's lighting director for a year (preceeded by a stint as some kind of shit-shoveler for them), he probably knows more about it than anyone--at least among those people who don't love it enough to stay with it for the rest of their lives. There are people in this world who simply can't



conceive of leaving the show. Steve's left it, though, and I don't think they will ever forgive him. His story is an interesting one, and I hope I can get him to write it down some time.

Harry Warner Jr. 423 Summit Avenue
I'm glad to see that *The Invisible Fan* is surviving better than the recent television series based on *The Invisible Man*. I always did say that when I've seen one invisible man, I've seen them all, but I never get tired of more fanzines.

Kent Bloom told me more about the worldcon drama than any other essay I've read about the Kansas City event. I hope nobody is inspired to make a professional-type drama a new worldcon tradition. The odds are so very much against creating something that the majority of fans will enjoy thoroughly. Maybe one out of a thousand new plays written in a year for mundane purposes gets produced and only a tiny percentage of the new ones that reach production ever become genuine successes. What are the odds against creating something just right for fannish tastes, if it's as hard as that to put on a first-rate play for mundanes? It might be better for worldcons to think about fan-written, fan-produced dramatic features,

which would be watched with an entirely different attitude. The laurels that *The Mimeo Man* has won prove that this can be done successfully with hard work.

Your material about the circus was entertaining for a couple of reasons. It's very well written, it deals with a subject that seems dear to the hearts of most fans, and I've been in contact off and on with circus fandom, through my employment at the local newspaper factory. The national circus fans' group staged its annual convention in Hagerstown one year, and my coverage of it involved my attendance at a special performance of a small circus just for the conventioners. On that evening, a tremendous thunderstorm hit Hagerstown, accompanied by high winds. The tent kept threatening to transform itself into an airborne moebius strip, the animals and performers looked almost as terrified as I was, and the circus fans were oblivious to everything except what was left of the performance. The owner of Ringling Brothers grew up in Hagerstown, created a scandal by disparaging remarks about this city in an interview in a national magazine, then came back to talk to the local chapter of circus fans and charmed everyone into forgiveness by explaining that it was all a mistake and he really loved this city. That makes him unique, in all probability. Did you know that Marion Zimmer Bradley is an ardent circus enthusiast? She used to publish all sorts of complicated articles about acrobats and their feats in her fanzines and once when a circus came to town she served as the knifethrower's target. I can't remember if the thrower had used up his previous target or if she had started to throw knives back at him or what it was that caused Marion to be pressed into service.



If pronouns really bother you, there are a couple of alternatives to using she as the indefinite pronoun. There's always the danger of starting a counter-revolution, you know. You could always revive the use of "one" as the upper class British used to use it. Unless, come to think of it, one has been tainted by its use as a symbol by male homosexuals. Or you could substitute "they" which has already become familiar in many constructions where technically a singular pronoun is needed, like "A person should be free to do what they please in a democracy" or "Everyone got up from where they were sitting."

Actually, I didn't completely assume you were male. When I saw your name, it occurred to me that you might be Carol Avedon and altering the word order pour épater les bourgeois. I could also point to the cunning way in which I referred to Lee Hoffman at the start of my loc, as a signal that I suspected you were female but I really didn't, and that was just an accident. The only difference the sex of a fan made to me was in the distant past when somehow I always wrote a loc to fanzines published by females on the day of arrival. Since galloping senility struck, I somehow don't feel such a strong urge to do that. Now I don't know whether I'm becoming more or less sexist in my fanac.

I can't conscientiously say wise and penetrating things about some of the other things in this issue. I haven't read *Imperial Earth* so there's no way to compare reactions. But it does seem to me that many of Arthur Clarke's books have received lukewarm reviews when new and have grown more respected after a few years have gone by. I don't know anything about Dungeons and Dragons so I undoubtedly miss altogether the main thrust of page seven. I enjoyed the Gilliland reprint, although the snide remark about the Edsel sounds a bit outdated, now that this make of auto is the subject of a fandom all its own and is becoming almost as dear to the nostalgia enthusiasts as the St. Louis Browns and depression glass.



The illustrations are fine. I particularly liked the operatic CB cartoon (and why do people complain about fans using their own jargon while the CB owners do it to a much greater extent without suffering the same scoldings?). Plumber cartoons, however, aren't suitable for me just now. Within the past six months I've had frozen water pipes, a clogged sewer line, and a break in the line bringing water from the main in the street to the house, not to mention a broken water level gauge on the furnace which gave me a burn on one finger which is still sore after a month of healing efforts.

♀ Give that man a copy of the script for *2001: A Space Opera*, by Alexis A. Gilliland. It was performed at Discon II and got a rousing response, I must say. There is a rumor that, in fact, the Big Mac committee produced their professional presentation as a response to our amateurish fan production. Now

Alexis is working on another production, *Worldcon*.

Yeah, I figured the circus would be interesting to some of you romantics out there. Actually, I was only there because (and surely you've noticed the relationship by now, so I won't feel too exhibitionistic referring to it) of Steve Brown, never having had much real enthusiasm for the circus, myself. And yes, as a matter of fact, I do know about Bradley's thing for circus. That may have saved her life at *Worldcon*. Because at lunch I ran out of diplomatic things to say while we were discussing politics, and tried changing the subject to something less charged, got



her launched on some discussion of the woman I admired so much who did those things on the trapeze in ring 3, so I didn't have to restrain myself anymore.

Discussions of using new pronouns, like "co", "yr", "te", and so on, have gone on and on and produced no results, except that certain writers, most notably Kate Wilhelm (at Big Mac) and Ursula Le Guin (*Is Gender Necessary?*) have found all sorts of reasons to object. Kate's objection was something to the effect that nobody would understand what she was talking about, and 100 years from now, when the articles on finding new non-specific pronouns no

longer are making their way into the pages of major magazines, stories using those pronouns will make no sense at all to readers. My response to that is that "she" will still be comprehensible when "yr" is not. Ursula said that "he" is proper, and he it will be, and none of this messing around with our language, no matter how absurd it may sound to talk about Man's pregnancies and so on. To which I say, the psychic damage that such usage does to women is not justifiable merely for the sake of not "damaging" the language. The problem with "they" and "one" is not their clumsiness or any alleged "taint" by homosexuals, but rather the persistent assumption that "they" are still male. I

once read off a list of references to persons of no specific gender ("my doctor", "a person I met at a party", "my college prof", etc.) to every avowed feminist I knew, and asked them to describe the people they imagined as I spoke the word or phrase, and almost every description was of a male. And I still do it myself. *My doctor* is a woman, as is my mech-

anic, and as my prospective dean at school is. But if you talk about *your* doctor, mechanic, or dean, I will probably still picture a male in my mind. Using "she" forces an awareness that you could be speaking of females, while "they" could merely be chalked off to sloppy usage, "one" to elitist affectation.

You have my sympathies on your plumbing difficulties, Harry. This wierd weather has had everyone and everything acting crazy all winter, and I doubt there is anyone who is sorry to see the spring chasing it away. (Hey, were *you* going to start that counterrevolution?)

Terry Garey

I recieved *The Invisible Fan II* last week and I

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Daly City, Calif
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like this one even better than the last. The illos were fine, especially page 16 with Wotan's Baby. My Nordic blood (and all the other kinds) got a big kick out of that one. (Assorted corpuscles for every occasion).

"Life is too Complex" was a very nice piece of writing. I enjoyed the narrative very much. The glimpse of circus life rang true. Has anyone ever done an ethnology on the circus?

The Archival Gilliland was a wonderful idea. I would like to see more of that sort of thing done. Attack Lawyer approached brilliant.

The biggest surprise was reading the letter column. I understood about 95% of it. I was also surprised to see my letter. After I reread it and found that it wasn't garbage I was actually pleased. As for types, I *know* I can be typed. People do it all the time. They rarely get it right, but that's alright because I rarely do, either. In fact, if you think about it, typing saves a lot of wear and tear on people. If people knew what I am really like, underneath their tidy little lables, they would tear me to shreds. Or typewriter ribbon, or something.

Types seem to be nebulous, to me. They can be changed or adjusted with ease and are easily reversed. Catagorizing seems much more organized and inflexible. Catagorizing involves files and charts and indelible ink whereas typing is as wispy as a piece of onion skin floating from occasion to occasion.

(Those are both definitions from my personal dictionary, so don't throw Webster's at me. I don't give a hoot about Webster's.)

When I find someone really great, though, it is wonderful to throw away all of that silly garbage and just enjoy them in all their glory.

♀ Yeah, me too, I like to enjoy people like that too--until they revert to type.

Susan Wheeler

I enjoyed the second issue of *The Invisible Fan*,

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Baltimore, Md.
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greatly due to the fact that this time you had the decency to leave out ethnic jokes. American Indian motorists, indeed. I always say, the only good motorist is an Ukrainian motorist.

In reading over Harry Warner Jr.'s letter, I was reminded of something I recently learned that may be of interest to him. Here in Baltimore, off the 7000 block of Harford Road, behind the gas station and before you get to the fleamarket, is a building which, according to its sign, houses the Loc Mfg. Co. You know, the more I think about it, the more familiar-looking some of those skulking figures appear. Don D'Amassa?

I will look forward to seeing more of the Archival Gilliland. Don't forget, "Penicillin cures SFWA."

Jeanne Gomoll

Thanks for *The Invisible Fan 2*. I really enjoyed

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#303
Madison, WI. 53703

reading it. There were so many clues to what TIF #1 must have been like that I find myself wishing that I hadn't missed it. The fake letters sounded



like it must have been a neat column. You wouldn't happen to have an extra copy lying around would you? I thought the title of the Mac play review was perfect. I was one of the few people who stayed for the bitter end of the thing and most of my memories have to do with the headache I acquired trying to stay awake. It was so incredibly boring. I had the impression that the stories weren't adapted to the stage at all, but simply transferred narrative and all onto the script. They didn't think of *showing* us: they seemed to think it more effective to *tell* us--at length.

I also enjoyed Alexis Gilliland's cartoons. He's got an incredible imagination. I wonder: does he sometimes draw a character and come up with the caption afterwards? Some of the drawings seem to suggest that--the joke being secondary (and complimentary) to the humor of the character. Tell him I would dearly love to print some of his cartoons. Or: I'll trade you an illo of mine for one of his. You might even prevail upon me to do a cover for you... (Alexis' drawings, to get back to the subject at hand, are perfect for your xerox format too.)

I enjoyed, too, your combination con/circus report, though it is hard for me to identify with your love for circuses. They've always really bored me. When I was young my father used to drag

all of us along to the circus and parades, *determined* that we would all have a good time. It was a while before we convinced him that it was OK for him to like circuses and parades, but that it wasn't necessary for him to drag us all along for "covers."

♀ That's exactly how Alexis does his cartoons. How did you guess? He also says that he perfected that particular style precisely because it is so easy to reproduce. Lucky me.

Hey, I've never been too crazy about circus myself, to tell the truth. To me it falls into the same category with sightseeing, church affairs, and all of those other activities which seem designed to consume time, money, and energy, without much of the kind of return I am interested in. But two weeks of circus did provide a fascinating sociological study, for sure. And I never wish to be subjected to such a thing again. Occasionally visiting for a few hours is one thing (I *did* meet a couple of people I liked), but the circus is no place for a feminist to live, even for only two weeks.

Peter Edick

230 Boone Avenue

The signature
may resemble mine,
but you can thank

Toronto, Ontario
Canada M6E 3Z8

Brian Earl Brown for this letter.

I wasn't going to write you about TIF 2. Let's face it, this issue doesn't have the style of the last one. However, Mr. Brown's comment about fans who've never *Loced* again, gave me pause.

My first reaction was, 'There doesn't seem to be much here, aside from the letter column.'

Upon later reflection--Would I rather see another ten pages of filler?

I'm glad you did it the way you did it.

PS. I think I'm getting into this.



Buz Owen's reply:

Dear Mr. Edick--Welcome to the many of those who are glad Avedon did it the way she did.

♀ What is this? Guest editorials is one thing, but guest answers for no apparent reason? What the hell does that mean, anyway, Peter? Should I really thank you for that, Brian? Is Klaatu the Beatles? Is Paul dead?

David C. Merkel College Station
I really liked Williamsburg, Va.
TIF #2! Most of 23186
AG's illos were
very good, especially pp: 1, 4, 7 & 7
(hilarious), 8, 12, and 16. Since I
didn't make it to MAC I found Kent
Bloom's piece a little dull, Gilliland's
reprint was funny but didn't seem to
hold the attention very well. From the
Notebook...was excellent; I never real-
ly knew anything about circuses before,
and it seems that many of my preconcep-
tions were wrong. However, weren't you
just a bit more negative than warranted?
Your LoCCol was good too, you certainly
attracted a lot of letters. The best I
think was Mike Glicksohn's. So you are
a D&Der too! I really love the game!
One drawback of it, at least at William
and Mary, is that very few women seem
to want to play. I think, though, that
D&D was designed for a type of mentali-
ty more often found in men in our cul-
ture than women. I can't seem to find
where you were talking about pronouns.
Ah, here it is! I really would prefer
the introduction of a new, neuter pro-
noun, but as that does not seem very
feasible in the immediate future with
our present society, I think your solu-
tion is probably the best for those who
feel strongly about it. I have not been
able to bring myself to do the same,
but it no longer surprises me to see
She used in that sense. I sort of wish
I had more room to comment on TIF but I
don't so I'll end here. Good Luck on
#3 and life in general.



♀ Postcards kill me. I used to hate them, but I'm starting to get used to it.

Nah, I don't think I was so hard on the circus. I thought, as a matter of fact, that I showed amazing restraint. I did my best not to let my political interpretation color my respect for the performers; but I can't forget what sexism and racism are, and what they do to people.

Don't you think "love" is a little bit more than D&D deserves? Addicted, maybe, but do you really love the game? I admit I was pretty hung up on it when I first discovered it, but as time goes by it becomes more and more like monopoly. I can pretty much take or leave it, and when I do take it, I bring a book along so I won't get too bored in between rolls.

On the page facing this one you will find a sort of letter, or plea, from Alex Eisenstein, to consider a film for the Hugos. I assume that this issue will be out too late to make the nominations, but the film, *Carrie*, should be on the ballot. I'm not sure I agree with Alex that it is better than *The Man Who Fell To Earth*, but I think they are both worthy contenders.

And as long as I'm on the subject, I'd like to point out that there are a few other possibilities for the Hugo which, if you've a mind to, you ought to take a good look at. I'm sure you have already figured out that I consider Alexis Gilliland a top flight fan artist, and you can see for yourself that it is so. If you're still having trouble thinking of people, it's about time for Steve Stiles and Grant Canfield, I think. Look around, no more of this Tim Kirk stuff.

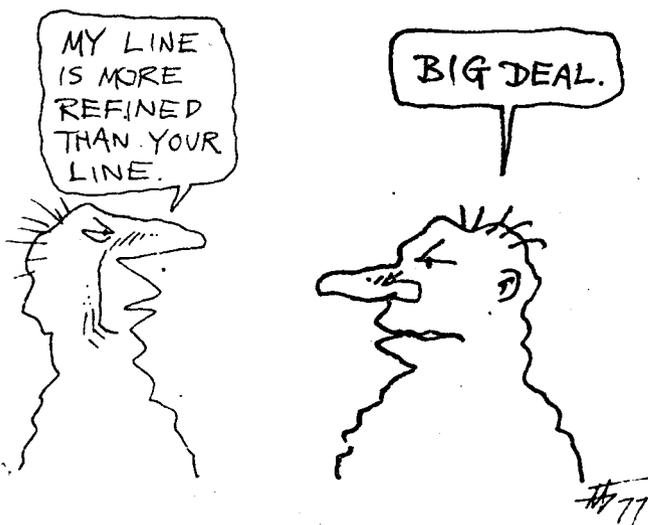
Whether they are nominated for Hugos or not, John Varley has written a number of stories which are eligible this year and I'd like to recommend. *Gotta Sing*, *Gotta Dance* and *The Phantom of Kansas* (*Galaxy*, July, and February, respectively) seem the most likely choices for nomination, but I like nearly all of his stuff. *Overdrawn at the Memory Bank* (*Galaxy* May), is another that I got a kick out of, if you need another suggestion. Oh, and some of

you might appreciate *Manikins* (*Amazing Jan*), but I doubt it will get a place on the ballot. And if you're making notes for next year, *Good-bye, Robinson Crusoe* (*Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine* No. 1) and *In the Hall of the Martian Kings* (*F&SF* Feb 77) have some really nice touches. And he has a novel, *The Ophiuchi Hotline*, coming out any minute now.

The thing I like about Varley--I mean *beside* the fact he does some pretty nice writing and invents a lot of interesting stuff--is that his world has women in it. In fact, almost everyone in his world seems to have been a woman at one time or another. You see, they have this nifty medical situation where you can change you're sex almost as easily as you can change your clothes, and it would seem they usually do. Everyone can be a mother this way, and none of that nasty paternity business and womb envy to mess things up. You can sire a hundred children and never even know about it, but you can *have* one kid and that's all. Which takes care of the whole thing very nicely, I think. In addition to which, what with people able to live as long as they do, ya don't really have to start planning that kid until you're, oh, say 200 or so, and by that time you've made enough money to support the little brat.

Instead of a WAHF list, I'm going to take this opportunity to thank the people who helped me through my recent illness and therefore made this issue possible. Elaine Normandy, Jack Hennigan (X), and Alexis and Dolly Gilliland kept me from starving to death, George and Kathleen Andrews helped get me back onto solid food, and I got some much-needed support from Kent Bloom, Josy Catoggio, Ctein, Rich Dale, Alex Eisenstein, Trina King, Terry Garey, Cameron Tapley, Bruce Miller, Jessica Salmonson, John Sapienza, Dan Steffan, Diane White, Tom Whitmore; and special thanx to Kathleen Aronyosi.

And, as usual, you can expect to see the next issue of TIF about the time I get around to it.



March 25, 1977 -- Chicago, Illinois

Some weeks ago, on the recommendation of a friend whose taste I do not automatically trust (because I do not share all his enthusiasms), I went to see a certain movie. Formerly, I had scorned this film, because it is the screen rendition of a mediocre book that centers on an adolescent revenge-fantasy. The film, I thought, could hardly be more than a vulgar re-tread.

My friend, noted for his wild, exclamatory appreciations, did not urge me to go see it; he merely said that, for the kind of thing it was, he thought it fairly well-handled, a pretty good piece of work. The director, I soon learned, was one in whom I'd recently taken some interest, after seeing a film he did about two years ago, a neon-baroque revision of Faust. I'd missed his latest effort, an intricate homage to Hitchcock, and so I decided I would have a look at this other piece.

And so I saw Brian de Palma's version of Carrie.

Perhaps the timing here is bad, perhaps I am much too late with this appeal. (For this is an appeal, not the circuitous opening of a critique or a belated review.) Few films have had so profound an effect on me . . . especially sf films, and Carrie is definitely an sf film, whatever else it may be. Few films take such chances with calculated structure and style, and few succeed so handsomely, so completely, so marvelously as this one does. Hollywood will not give de Palma, or his scenarist, any awards or recognition for this film, nor have the hidebound critics of the newsmedia (local film pundit Gene Siskel has termed Carrie a "crude little shocker"). The truth of these assertions notwithstanding, two of its stars, miraculously enough, have been nominated for Oscars, which doubtless they have precious small chance of winning. Such, at least, has been the general impact of the film, that a virtual unknown contends this year against Faye Dunaway for "Best Actress," and a virtual has-been is in the running for "Best Supporting Actress."

If you have an opportunity soon to see Carrie, I urge you most earnestly to do so. If you've already seen it, I urge you to nominate it for the Hugo. Those who will see it, I likewise urge. It is better by far than The Man Who Fell to Earth; it is indeed better than most pictures, of any type, that have appeared in the last ten years. It is more, so much more, than a "crude shocker," and I hope, I trust, I will see it listed on the final Hugo ballot. If you are a member of SunCon, and you vote for nothing else . . . you should, if you've seen it, vote for Carrie.

Sincerely,



Alex Eisenstein

THIS IS A
REALLY GREAT
SHOT OF WORLDS
IN COLLISION,
WALTER! THE
EASTERN SEABOARD
IS JUST SPLASHING
UP, DISTORTED BUT
STILL IDENTIFIABLE...

~~NEW YORK~~
NEW YORK
IS REALLY
IN TROUBLE
THIS TIME!

