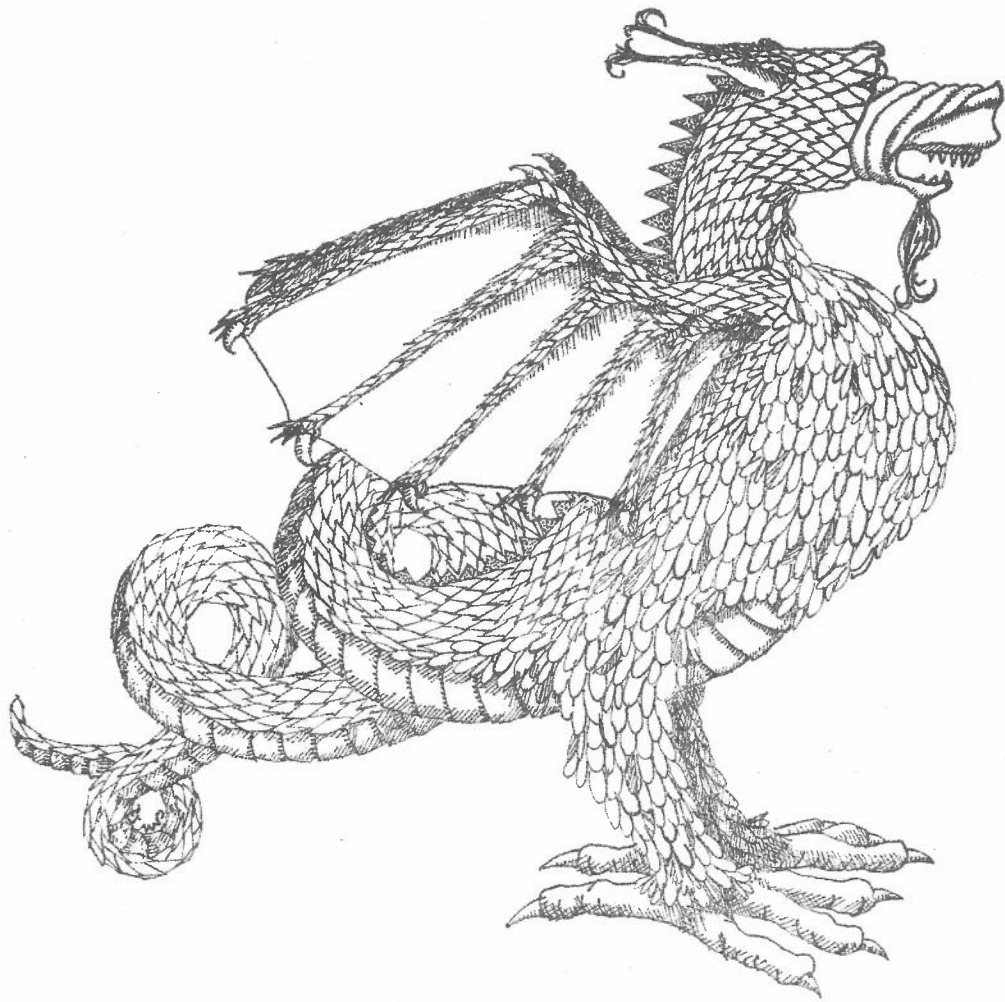


Phazomph



Kratophany

August, 1976

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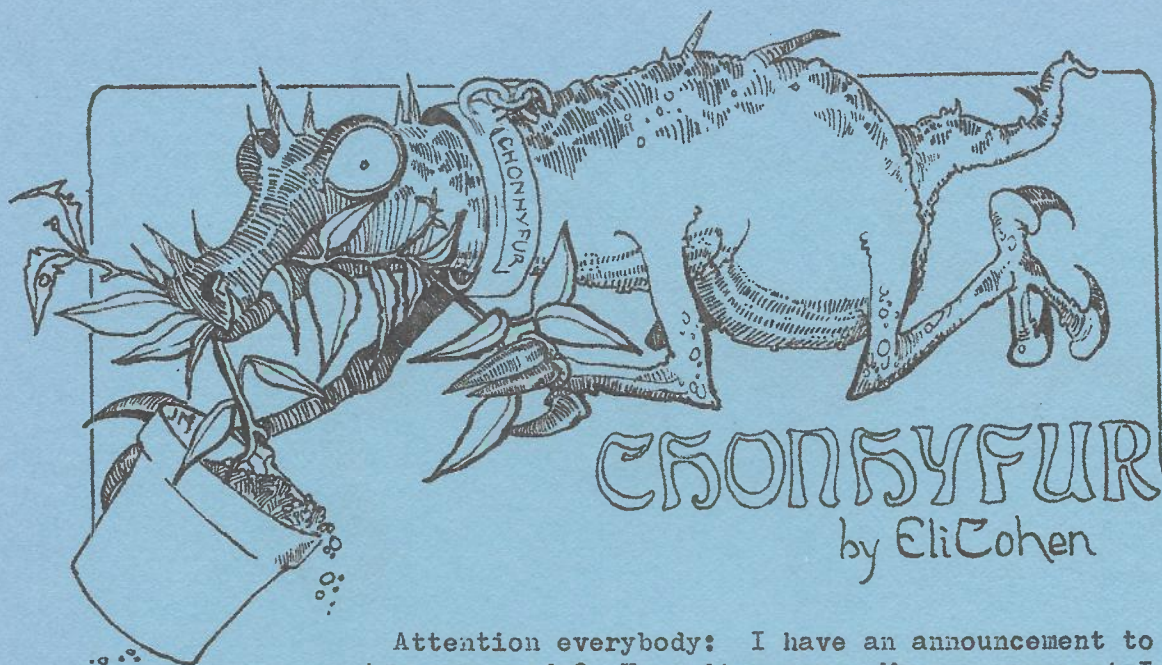
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Gobrin Press Publication #18.



Attention everybody: I have an announcement to make.
Are you ready? Here it comes. My announcement I mean.
This announcement, which is mine, is my announcement, and
is as follows: Ahem. Harumph. Cough, cough. Here it is. My
announcement:

At 8:42 AM, July 12, 1976, I became a Canadian landed immigrant.

Thank you. This concludes my announcement.

We now return you to our fanzine, already in progress.

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It was a total anti-climax. I got a call to go see Immigration; the whole operation took 3 minutes (if you ignore the preceding $2\frac{1}{2}$ years). The Immigration officer took away my lovely Minister's permit with the fancy red seal, and replaced it with an ugly pink 8" x 10" carbon copy of a visa (on which, incidentally, they misspelled my name as "Elie"). I signed here and here and here, he stamped my passport, and that was it. No neat plasticized card, like John Douglas got from American Immigration. No orders to report every January, or keep them informed of my whereabouts. (I don't think Canada cares about us immigrants). No speeches or welcomes (admittedly they would sound silly after I'd been living here for two years). In fact he gave the strong impression of just wanting to be rid of me.

One curious thing -- I had been told we were waiting for an Order-in-Council to bypass the requirement for a visa signed outside of Canada (which I don't have). Well, I guess they gave up on that Order-in-Council, because the bottom of my ugly pink form refers to a "Visa or Letter of Pre-Examination," purportedly issued on June 30, 1976, in Minneapolis, Minnesota. For the record, I would like to state that I have never in my life been in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The officer was also distinctly unhelpful as far as supplying information. For example, when I asked about bringing personal possessions from the US, he said I should talk to Customs about it. He even supplied some misinformation -- I asked about any restrictions other than not being allowed to vote, and he told me I couldn't work for the Federal government. Now, I'm sure it is difficult for a non-citizen to work for the Feds; I know there are preferences in hiring, and there are special problems concerning the usual oath of allegiance for civil servants (which I can't take without losing my American citizenship). But I'm equally sure that it's no more impossible than, oh, becoming a landed immigrant from inside Canada, say. However, I didn't press the point, as it

is clearly dangerous for a non-citizen to work for the Feds: The officer told me that they had had a girl working for them, for Immigration, and because she was a non-citizen, they had to ... terminate her. (I didn't ask for any more details.)

So. It's all over. My favorite reaction is Suzle Tompkins': "I still think 'Landed Immigrant' sounds medieval. Do you get to have serfs?"

By the way, the last I heard, General Quang has a job offer from someone in California, and he'll be deported to the States very soon. Er, as soon as the US authorities process his application for immigrant status ...

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I celebrated the end of the struggle by leaving the country the next day -- for the great Seattle Wagner orgy.

For the second year in a row, the Seattle Opera presented Wagner's Der Ring des Nibelungen, all four operas, one after another, just like at Bayreuth. In fact, they do the whole cycle twice, once in German and once in English. I went with Frank and Anna Jo Denton to the German cycle, which lasted from July 13th to the 18th.

Wow. The cumulative effect is enormous, simply overpowering. And the production was excellent (except for some poor choreography here and there) -- marvellous singers, great orchestra (marred only by the audience's rude habit of drowning out the musical finales with applause as soon as the singing stopped), and some SenseOfWonder special effects. (Fafner the dragon had a head as large as Siegfried -- the head was all you saw -- and when his eyes gleamed redly and he opened his huge jaws, the effect was quite impressive; so much so that my disbelief had a lot of trouble suspending itself when Siegfried killed him with his little toothpick of a sword.)

I must confess that this was the first time I have ever seen any Wagner opera. (I blush to admit, in fact, that this was the first time I had seen

SHUN
7-12-75



any opera.) However, I went well prepared, having listened to Anna Russell's Ring synopsis ahead of time. And I want to apologize now, Frank, for any snickering I did during the performance, as I recalled Anna Russell's very accurate descriptions ("And then Erda sings 'Weiche, Wotan, weiche,' which means 'Be careful, Wotan, be careful.' In the next act she bears him eight daughters..." "Hunding ... who happens to have an ash tree with a sword stuck in it growing through his living room floor..." "Siegfried and Brunnhilde go in for some very competitive singing... Then they fall in love and he gives her the Ring. She's his aunt by the way...")

I had some quibbles. The Valkyries are such an opera cliché that it's hard to see what could be done about it, but all those 450 pound shouting women getting their spears tangled in their cloaks looked pretty ludicrous, and weren't helped by some of the silly poses they had to strike when greeting each other. And Brunnhilde, though she had a beautiful,

tremendous voice, was a lousy actress.

Overall, though, there's no question that it was a magnificent job.

There were some little extra bonuses, too -- like before Das Rheingold, when Frank and I were walking around the Seattle Center (Anna Jo was off acosting men with promises of trips to Acapulco; well, she was selling Opera Society raffle tickets, actually): We ran into Alan E. Nourse, who was also there for the opera, and he introduced us to the lady with him -- Ginny Heinlein. You know, Robert's wife? (She had come up to Seattle just for Wagner.) We chatted for a while about blood. Er, giving it, that is.

(I would tell them about the band playing "O Canada" for me, Frank, but they'd never believe it.)

Anyway, aside from Wagner, I had a great time in Seattle. Susan arrived Thursday (between Die Walküre on Wed. and Siegfried on Friday), and we spent some time wandering around the city with various local fen, like John Berry, Loren MacGregor, and Jerry Kaufman. My most cherished memory, even above the Laserium light show and the Seattle Science Center, was discussing with Loren the necessity of letting a bottle of wine breathe. Loren, by the way, is a respiratory therapist.

"The great theological disputes between Calvinists and Lutherans, Jansenites and Jesuits turned mainly on the question of predestination, or more precisely, on the length of the rope left to man to hang himself."

-- Arthur Koestler, The Act of Creation

Andy Porter recently sent me an article called "101 Things to Love About New York City," by Glenn Collins. Below are some of the items that particularly struck me. (The article originally appeared in the New York Times Magazine, June 13, 1976.)

- Being nostalgic about things in New York that never were so great.
- Habitually fitting your thumbnail in the Y-cutout of a subway token.
- Not writing your Account Number in the box on the Con Edison envelope.
- Hating Con Edison.
- It's 10 PM. Do you know where YOUR children are?
- How no one ever takes the top newspaper off the pile.
- Bus herds.
- Alternate side of the street parking suspended.
- Flipping the change tray in the plastic taxicab divider.
- Thinking that iridescent pigeon necks are beautiful.
- How no one moves to the back of the bus.
- More movies, plays and ballet than anywhere else, and not going.
- Demanding a refund of less than a dollar on Line 25 of the New York City Tax Return ("Amount of \$1.00 or less will be refunded only if requested").
- Hero sandwiches that are called hero sandwiches.
- The background teletype noise on WINS.
- Looking for a place you know on the dirty restaurant list.
- The fourth-floor brontosaurus in the Am. Mus. Nat. Hist.
- The apostrophe missing from DONT WALK.
- Zeppole vans.
- Subway cars with public-address speakers that don't work.
- The rush of relief when you're not mugged after you thought you would be.
- Aviso: La via del tren subterraneo es peligrosa.

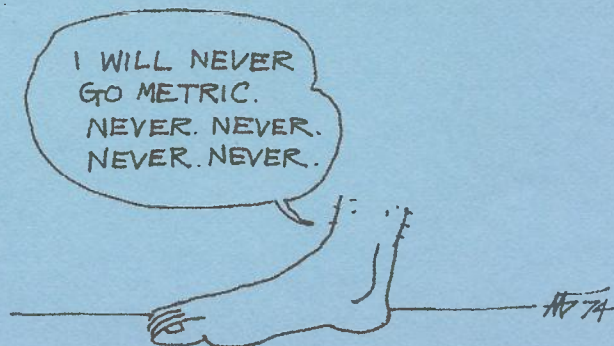
I've had it with metric conversion. The morning temperature in degrees Celsius I was willing to tolerate. When the weather report started giving the wind speed in kilometers per hour, I accepted this. I was even prepared to go along with the pressure in kilopascals. But by God, when they give you the wind-chill factor in watts per square meter!!! ...

I've had a busy summer. I had encounters with three RCMP, including a member of the Saskatoon drug squad, and at one point I found myself stuck alone in a room with three Crown Prosecutors asking me questions. Despite talking to two defense attorneys, and spending two hours in a judge's chambers, I was still in and out of jail all through June.

Oh, maybe I should mention that my job title is Research Officer for Corrections, and I've spent half the summer on a review of probation services in the province. Wouldn't want anyone to get the wrong idea ...

It has been fascinating. In the course of the review, we visited almost every probation unit in the province, and I really got to see Saskatchewan -- places like Weyburn, Yorkton, Melfort, and the ever-famous Moose Jaw. There were a few surprises -- for instance, I found the best Chinese restaurant in the province (and one of the best I've been in) just outside of Swift Current, pop. 10,000. God knows what it's doing there.

The most interesting parts were definitely the interviews we did with



various members of the criminal justice system. The judges were the strangest -- an incredibly wide range of personalities, opinions, and (here risking contempt of court) competency. But I sympathize a lot more with the ridiculous sentences we see at the Corrections end, after finding out about the 6,000 cases a year the typical magistrate must hear. I was very impressed by all the RCMP I talked to -- in general they seemed remarkably competent, and very interested in the probation service -- we had been afraid of a hostile police attitude towards "letting the buggers off with a probation order," but except for one disastrous interview with some city police, there was none of that. Cops and probation officers seemed in most places to work very closely together (in fact, one probation officer I talked to had just gotten married to an RCMP).

Our chief finding, to no one's surprise, was that probation staff are overworked, and there is often a time conflict between their two chief activities, namely supervising probationers and providing Pre-Sentence Reports (PSR's) to the courts to assist in sentencing. It is amazing how the more staff we put in, the more probationers and PSR requests we get, so that caseloads never go down. And our jails still stay full! Clearly, the only solution is to make it illegal to commit crimes.

We also noted some major differences between the cities, which have probation units, and the smaller communities, where often there is only a single probation officer to carry the load. In the latter, the poor guy is in continuous contact with his clients ("tripping over them as they lie in the gutter on your way to work," as one of the more cynical put it) and is more or less on duty all the time. One P.O. was actually sitting in his favorite bar drinking, one evening, when two RCMP came in and hauled him off to night court to deliver a verbal PSR for a judge. One hopes his three beers didn't affect his judgment.

What was most embarrassing about the survey, for me, was having to apologize to everyone for the Corrections Information System not being ready. Implementing this monster, which was supposed to have been finished last April 1st, is what I do with the other half of my time, when I'm not fetching Moshe Feder Coke bottles from Swift Current. The subject is too depressing to go into detail here (with all the bugs in the system, we don't need programmers, we need exterminators). I have, however, coined a new phrase to answer questions about when the statistics will be coming out, and when the case lists will be produced, and when the population projections will be ready, and ... Anyway, as I was saying, I have invented this new phrase: RealSoonNow. Do you think it'll catch on?

"We do not think of our American civilization as something that is particularly discordant or ill-assembled. Yet we speak an Anglo-Saxon form of a Germanic language that contains more original Latin than English words. Our religion is Palestinian, with its specific formulations into denominations made chiefly in Rome, Germany, England, Scotland, and Holland. Our Bible is translated partly from Hebrew, partly from Greek. We drink coffee first grown in Ethiopia and adopted in Arabia, tea discovered in China, beer first brewed in ancient Mesopotamia or Egypt, hard liquor invented in mediaeval Europe. Our bread, beef, and other meats are from plants and animals first domesticated in Asia; our potatoes, corn, tomatoes, and beans were first used by the American Indians; likewise tobacco. We write an Etruscan-Roman variant of a Greek form of an alphabet invented in or near Phoenicia by a Semitic people on the basis of nonalphabetic writing in still more ancient cultures; its first printing took place in Germany, on paper devised in China."

-- Alfred L. Kroeber, Anthropology: Culture Patterns and Processes

THE ELI IS LANDED

BY SUSAN WOOD

Department of Immigration
Division of Procedural Delay
Bureau of Procrastination
Office of Red Tape

Desk of the Assistant
Lower-Echelon Bureaucrat

Dear Mr. Cohen,

You have learned to cope with forty-degree weather. Forty degrees below zero. Celsius.

You have learned to make William Lyon Mackenzie King jokes.

You have learned to curl.

Congratulations, Mr. Cohen. You are learning to be a Canadian.

Welcome to Canada, Mr. Cohen. We trust that you enjoyed your stay in Minneapolis. Now that we, in the name of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, by the grace of God Queen of Canada, have declared you, Eli (or Elie) Cohen, by the grace of God (you wondered what it took?) Landed Immigrant, we here at the Office of Red Tape thought you would like to know exactly what unique Canadian delights await you.

You certainly won't miss New York, Mr. Cohen. Saturday night hockey on TV should remind you pleasantly of rush hour in Times Square subway station: all the fun of the mayhem and gouging, as you sit comfortably in your living room.

For entertainment, you won't want the bright lights of Broadway, what with Wayne and Shuster on TV, and Barbara Frum interviewing John Diefenbaker on the radio.

For informal evenings, gather with your friends for the relaxation and fun of telling Newfie jokes, cursing the goddam frogs, and badmouthing Trudeau, as you sip your Molson's Canadian beer or your rye and coke. For sophisticates, there's a ruby glass of Calona Italian Red or, if you prefer something imported, Turner's Old Sailor Red -- from Ontario.

We have some hints for the true Canadian image you'll want to cultivate. (An agrarian joke. Har, har! Er...) It isn't really necessary to have an opinion about the price of Number One Northern wheat, as long as you have an opinion about Toronto. You hate it. Everyone does, except seventy-six new Torontonians and the travel writer for Holiday magazine.

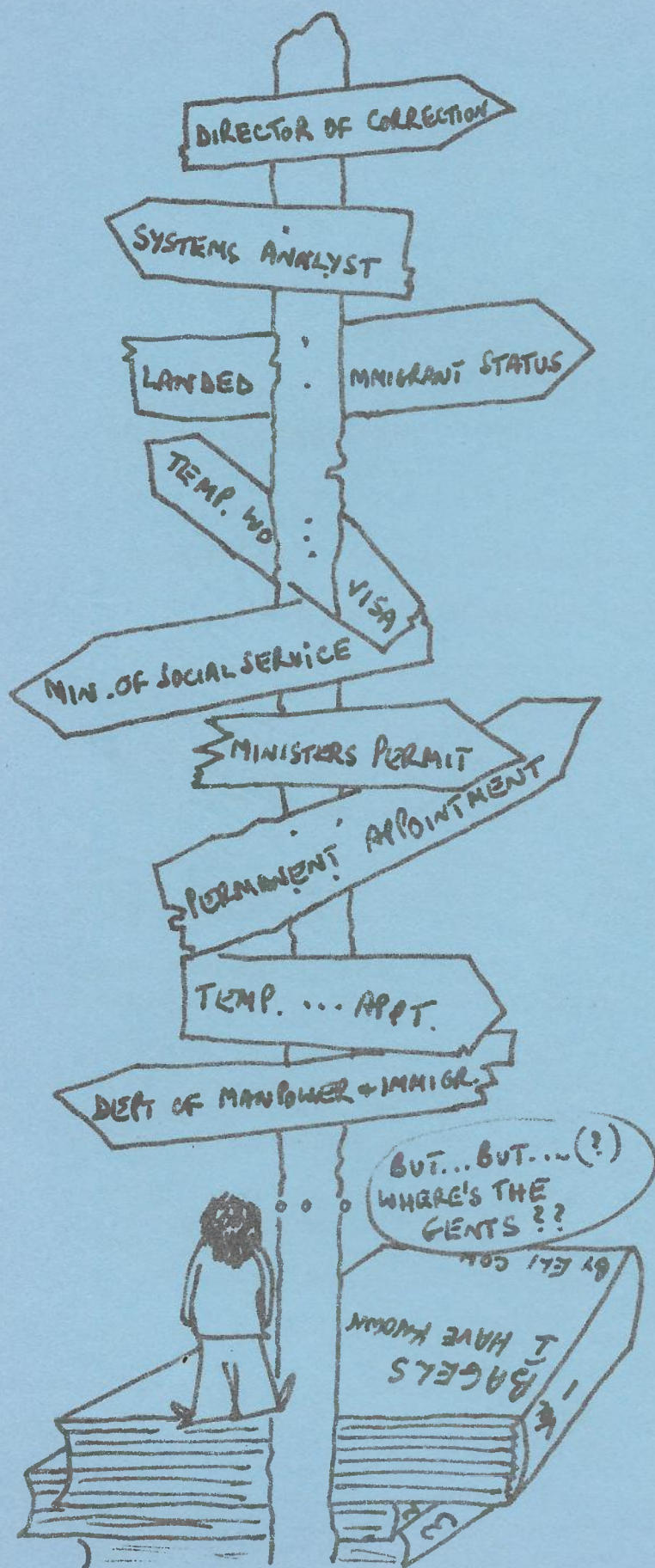
To be truly esoteric, one-up your conversations with statements like: "I know a really great little restaurant... in Ottawa."

Pick an all-Canadian interest. For example, learn to discourse fluently on how great Ian and Sylvia/Joni Mitchell/Gordon Lightfoot were when they still played concerts for The People at North Dundas District High. Before they went commercial, and cut a record.

Own every Murray McLaughlin record. Compare him to Dave Wiffen.

Better yet, own stock in True North Records.

Learn to recite "The Canadian Authors Meet." Faster than Doug Barbour.



As time passes, you will find yourself truly interested in cod fisheries and the 200-mile limit. You'll lose interest in the Democratic primaries; but you'll have strong opinions about B.C. separatism. When you remember that B.C. exists.

In five years time, Mr. Cohen, you will be eligible to apply for Canadian citizenship. That's another matter of simple paperwork, a mere bureaucratic formality. It shouldn't take more than two or three years to process an application, should you decide to make one. You can spend the time learning "O Canada" -- in English and French. It is not necessary to remember how many "we stand on guard"s there are in the chorus.

You will know you are truly a Canadian, Mr. Cohen, not when you receive a slip of pink paper, but on the day when you are talking with a friend from Our Great Neighbor To The South, and observe "Yes, but our money's prettier." When you see a car with Texas license plates, travelling through Regina in June with skis strapped to the roof, and think only, "Oh, tourist season's started again." When you catch yourself really believing that "we're nicer." When each new day begins at midnight -- 12:30 in Newfoundland.

Yes, Mr. Cohen, welcome to Canada. May your visit here be rich and rewarding. May the spirit of our hardy northern population, the beauty of our majestic land, the glory of the verdant woods, the noble sweep of the golden wheatfields and the magnificent amethyst ranges of our mountains enter into your soul, so that at last you become Truly Canadian. Your

eyes will light up with the hope of the one, true, genuine Canadian Dream... yes, Mr. Cohen, someday you too will decide to move to California.

Yours, because we sold out years ago,

Jean-Paul Quelquechose

Jean-Paul Quelquechose
Chief Flunky

sjw/JPQ

THE ADVENTURES OF GRAYSON GREENSWARD

The decades-old rivalry between Seattle and Bayreuth over their Ring productions reached its peak as the 50th Annual Seattle Wagner Festival approached. The music world had consistently given Bayreuth its highest accolades, despite every effort on the part of Seattle, and for this production the American city was going all out. A good deal of energy was also being spent in wining, dining, and generally suborning the world's foremost music critic, Grayson Greensward, bestower of the coveted Greensward Award for Excellence.

Greensward, leader of the Bayreuth advocates, was having a hard time of it, as his rock-like musical integrity was worn away by the food, flattery, and cash payments of the Friends of Seattle (F.O.S.). They even went so far as to offer him a free trip to Acapulco. The culmination of their campaign was a gala banquet in Seattle's famous Space Needle, at which Greensward was to be the Guest of Honor. This lavish seafood lunch was to be the day after the Festival ended, and it was expected that Greensward would here present his award -- to Seattle, of course.

Unfortunately, Greensward was finding it quite difficult to convince himself that Seattle was the best. He reminded himself that it was a very good performance; that the car he had been given was beautiful, not to mention the sound system, the Steinway baby grand, and the trip to Acapulco. But what about his integrity?

He suffered all through lunch, through the caviar and blinis, the lobster stuffed with crabmeat, the saumon a l'orange. And then the last course was brought out: The F.O.S., by assiduous research, had determined Greensward's favorite dish -- and in an extravagant display of theatrics, an entire table piled high with kippers was rolled in and pushed up to the raised platform where Greensward was to speak.

As the completely overcome Grayson was led to the podium, his resistance crumbled.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said to the audience, "I have no hesitation in announcing that my highest Award for Excellence goes to Seattle's Herring-dais Needle luncheon."

--Yarik P. Thrip

(with thanks to Cathryn Miller)

"... the City Council, which distinguishes itself every year or so by banning The Decameron or insisting that male and female authors be kept apart on the shelves of the public libraries, lest an unlicensed pamphlet make its appearance."

--Robertson Davies, The Table Talk of Samuel Marchbanks

an essay on TAOISM

by eli cohen

"The Tao that can be told is not the eternal Tao."

-- Tao Te Ching

From this auspicious beginning, the great Chinese sage Lao Tsu goes on to write 81 chapters attempting to present the central concepts of Taoism.

I mention this merely to point out that the foolish task I have undertaken here -- conveying an essentially non-verbal philosophy via the printed page -- has noble antecedents. But the limitations of static words mean that a lot will inevitably be lost; I don't even have the traditional option of the Zen master, that of clouting his disciples over the head with a rubber chicken. Er, I mean a keisaku. We will just have to do without, since as anyone who has recently been to a convention banquet will testify, the cost of rubber chicken these days is prohibitive.

It is my firm belief that great truths never sound wrong -- only trite, or at the worst meaningless. This is why much of Zen sounds pretty stupid ("Baso said to a monk, 'If I see you have a staff, I will give it to you. If I see you have no staff, I will take it away from you.'"). Mind you, this is a stupidity shared by other religions ("For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Matt. 13:12). The important part of Taoism is its underlying feeling, the particular perception of the universe that gives meaning to all the words. Stimulating that perception is the trick, and the weirdest things may work -- a Zen master raises his finger, or blows out a candle, and his student is enlightened. One of the reasons Zen stories seem so paradoxical, and the methods of Zen masters so lunatic, is that what they are trying to do is trigger a particular reaction in the student, not impose or transmit a philosophy. "The universe exists" can be either a useless tautology or a deeply mystical statement, depending on your attitude. The same is true of " $2 + 2 = 4$."

I tend, by the way, to use the words Zen and Taoism more or less interchangeably, on the grounds that I am ignorant of the formal details of both. If pressed, I would consider Zen the discipline and Taoism the underlying philosophy; nevertheless, such verbal distinctions are hardly suited to a doctrine that preaches the essential unity of the universe. As the Tao Te Ching says, "Once the whole is divided, the parts need names. There are already enough names."

(I myself haven't doubted the essential unity of the universe since the time I found an old Georgie Jessel joke among the 13th century stories collected in Zen Flesh, Zen Bones.)

I discovered Taoism in February, 1972, by the simple expedient of having a religious experience while reading Ursula K. LeGuin's Lathe of Heaven. I'm perfectly serious about this: It was a genuine religious experience which has deeply affected my life (and I speak from the perspective of four and a half years later). It hit me somewhere close to the end of Lathe of Heaven and I finished the book in a condition of total euphoria, the satori produced by sudden insight. Somehow my mental state got re-arranged so that the book's ending, which I'm positive would have aggravated me before the change, seemed precisely right. The book itself acted merely as a catalyst -- its specific contents had very little to do with the experience, and for all I know Jon

Singer's tour of the Wesleyan lab the preceding weekend was just as important. Nevertheless, the basic philosophy I emerged with is similar to that which underlies most of LeGuin's works, which is one of the reasons I admire her so much.

When I tried to tell my roommates at the Avocado Pit what had happened, Jerry (Kaufman) gave me a copy of Psychotherapy East and West, by Alan Watts. Do you remember the joy of recognition when you first discovered fandom? That there were other people who felt the way you did? Watts crystallized a lot of my thoughts, but it was always with that feeling of recognition, of "yes, of course." The sense of agreement I found was so strong, I came out of that book feeling that I could predict his opinions on anything.

This entire period was quite trying for my roommates and friends, as I incessantly attempted to explain to them my marvelous new perception of Truth. I failed to realize the intensely personal nature of the process; in fact, I ignored the importance of the process itself. "...the whole technique of liberation requires that the individual shall find out the truth for himself. Simply to tell it is not convincing," says Alan Watts. Or, to quote the more venerable authority of the Tao Te Ching:

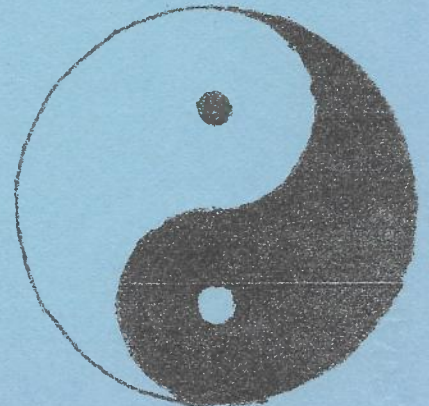
"A description of the Tao
Seems without substance or flavor.
It cannot be seen, it cannot be heard,
And yet it cannot be exhausted."

The latter, however, was far from true for the patience of my friends. I eventually gave up, contenting myself with sticking Zen stories in KRATOPHANY, and talking to my one faithful disciple, my cat. (Cats are all natural Taoists anyway.) I did retain an unfortunate tendency to proselytize at the slightest show of interest, but I think I now have this under control (this article notwithstanding).

The interesting thing about Taoism is that it is completely useless as a practical guide to conduct, since it can be used to justify anything. What it's really good for is affecting your perceptions of what you do, in a manner that automatically moderates extremes without changing your actions in any major way. One of the other things I failed to realize during my brief career as prophet was the highly idiosyncratic nature of those effects. Taoism tends to balance and moderate whatever your particular faults are, so that if you try to explain some concrete applications to someone who doesn't share those faults, they are likely to run screaming from you in horror. "Why does everyone like the Tao so much at first?" asks wise old Lao Tsu, "Isn't it because you find what you seek and are forgiven when you sin?"

Example: My basic disposition is that of a worrier. I worry about the kid I taunted once in second grade. I worry about what I'm going to be doing in five years. I even worry about my Ph.D. thesis, which I have not done an iota of work on in the last two years. One of my major Taoist insights was that things are simply not that important. There is nothing to worry about. "The Taoist's position," says Alan Watts, "...is that while there may be logical problems there are no natural physical problems. Nature or Tao is not pursuing any purpose, and therefore is not meeting any difficulties." When this philosophy is coupled with my natural tendency to brood, a fine balance is achieved.

But this same philosophy makes a great rationalization for an uncaring, callous attitude toward the world -- whether trampling over the feelings of others, or ravaging the Earth itself with no thought for the future. This is where the individualization of the philosophy enters:



If you begin with an uncaring attitude, the important part of Taoism is the connectedness, the unity of the universe; from this logically follows empathy for others and ecological awareness.

It is too easy to seize upon one aspect of the Taoist world-view and extrapolate it to extremes, when the essence of it is moderation. "The stereotyped attitudes of a culture are of course always a parody of the insights of its more gifted members. Not caring is the parody of serenity, just as worrying is the parody of concern." (Watts again.)

"Be content with the moment, and be willing to follow the flow" -- to the hyperactive, this says relax, don't worry, let things happen; but to the timid, it says don't be afraid to take action when necessary. The threat of failure is not so fearsome that it should cause either paralysis or frantic activity (both of which, interestingly enough, are induced by panic). "In practice," says Alan Watts, "it happens that just as soon as one gets used to this feeling and is not afraid of it, it is possible to go on behaving as rationally as ever -- but with a remarkable sense of lightness."

If I had to pick one concept as the core of Taoism, it would be the simple awareness that the universe exists:

The blue hills are simply blue hills.

The white clouds are simply white clouds.

Replace the term "Universe" with the Tao, and the concept sounds mysterious, mystical, and Oriental -- but it has not changed. Replace Tao with "nature," or "natural law," or "God" -- whatever is most meaningful to you -- and the statement remains the same. Once this is accepted, all the rest follows.

Taoism is the perfect religion for a scientist: It has no dogma, and asks you to accept nothing on faith; but it depends entirely upon a mystical belief in the inherent harmony of the Universe, without which science cannot exist. I use "harmony" deliberately, rather than "order" -- the esthetic component of a theory is what makes it good, and it is time for a change when scientific paradigms become ugly (e.g. from epicycles to ellipses, or from periodic tables to particle physics). In mathematics, theorems are ultimately judged not on accuracy but on elegance. And the beautiful thing is that harmony is there when you look for it: the ugly but accurate theorems find elegant proofs; the masses of scientific observations, the lists of exceptional cases, are replaced by explanatory patterns. Man imposing his order on the underlying chaos? Or merely stumbling over the natural balance beneath the superficial disorder? The question is only meaningful when you separate human beings from the rest of the universe, a dubious undertaking for someone composed of yesterday's mashed potatoes, whose every action sends ripples of consequences flowing out to infinity. (I bought a poetic license that gives me permission to break the inverse square law.)

Consider Archimedes leaping from his bathtub shouting "Eureka!" at the discovery of a natural law. Now compare the Taoist:

"This attitude ... exemplified again and again in Chuang Tzu, is but part of a general attitude toward the universal laws of nature, which is one not merely of resignation nor even of acquiescence, but a lyrical, almost ecstatic acceptance ..."

-- Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God

Harmony implies balance; balance implies centering; centering means an awareness of the immediate in the context of the whole: "Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing." "At the still-point in the center of the circle one can see the infinite in all things." (Chuang Tzu, Inner Chapters.)

The universe, no matter how we slice it up with language, is indeed a whole; nor are we ever out of it.

"Dimwits do not understand that no matter how well one hides small things in larger ones, there is

always a chance of losing them. But if you hide the universe in the universe, there is no way to lose it. This is the ultimate reality."

-- Chuang Tsu, Inner Chapters

And lest one doubt the essential connectedness of all things, let me take two rather dissimilar subjects, to wit, Zen and Peter Cooke (of "Beyond the Fringe" fame). A short time after my religious experience, I was browsing in a bookstore on 8th St. in Greenwich Village, and I came across a little book called Zen Buddhism. Opening it at random, I found the very story that Peter Cooke begins to tell in the movie BEDAZZLED, as he sits halfway up a telephone pole in the middle of England. I read it, and I found enlightenment. I present it here as summing up the essence of the Way:

Buddha told this parable: A traveler, fleeing a tiger who was chasing him, ran till he came to the edge of a cliff. There he caught hold of a thick vine, and swung himself over the edge.

Above him the tiger snarled. Below him he heard another snarl, and behold, there was another tiger, peering up at him. The vine suspended him midway between two tigers.

Two mice, a white mouse and a black mouse, began to gnaw at the vine. He could see they were quickly eating it through. Then in front of him on the cliffside he saw a luscious bunch of grapes. Holding onto the vine with one hand, he reached and picked a grape with the other.

How delicious!



Editorial note: My Christmas presents from Susan were the Vintage Books editions of the Tao Te Ching and Chuang Tsu: Inner Chapters, translated by Gia-fu Feng and Jane English. All quotations are from these editions. These books are filled with beautiful photographs and elegant Chinese calligraphy, which accompany a highly lucid translation. I strongly recommend them for anyone with the least interest in either Taoism or photography.

FACTS! FACTS! FACTS!

Electrons quantumleaping on a Sistine ceiling;
A poet's eye dazed by tetrahedonal
Descending molecules of rain; the magic movement
Of mitosis; selective screening of sperm;
Dynamics of DNA prepunched genetic coding;
The terran polarization of alpha-aminos--
All these determine how the mind interprets
Revelations of godhead and the song of water,
And the being of humans, the set of the individual
Filter that screens the retinal image for meaning.

What a piece of work is man!
How?

-- Frances Yorke

BRANCHES



Lord Jim Khennedy
1859 E. Fairfield St.
Mesa, AZ 85203

The door rattled under a shower of official-sounding blows. "Open up, Cohen, we know you're in there!" Reluctantly, the youthful bureaucrat pulled himself up from the cot of his Saskatchewan apartment to unbolt his double-barred door. Instantly it was forced open and three burly men in white trenchcoats pushed their way into the room. Behind them came a fourth, wearing the severe corflu-blue uniform of the Fanzine Control Board. A blue-gloved hand held a thin cigarette to his thin-lipped mouth.

"Mr. Elias Cohen, American, editor of KRATOPHANY #8" he said.

"I don't know what you're talking about," the bureaucrat replied, straining to keep his voice calm even as he clutched desperately at the concealed bottle of corflu in his robe pocket, "My name is Jean-Claude Smith, a perfectly respectable mundane official!"

"FIJAGDNI?" the FCB man asked.

"FIAWOL!" cried the other instinctively. His eyes instantly widened in horror at what he had done. One hand clamped over his traitorous mouth.

"Ah ha!" There was cool triumph in the magistrate's eye. "Let us not play games, Mr. Cohen. We've been watching you for some time, now. As you've probably suspected, it was the SMOF Council who have been holding up your Canadian citizenship. This came into our hands recently." He snapped his gloved fingers. One of the trench coated agents instantly slapped a rolled-up fanzine into his outstretched hand. Cohen shuddered inwardly at the sight of the familiar, typically excellent Shull front and back covers.

"You must realize," continued the FCB man, "that we have certain rules concerning just what classifications of zines may be published under which classifications of format. Did you really think you could get away with putting out a personalzine in the form of a high-quality genzine?"

"But - but, it isn't a perszine!" the exposed faned protested, stepping closer, holding out a hand for his publication, "Look here: Book reviews and fanfic by Yarik P. Thrip, a delightful and all-too-true article by Aljo Svoboda, letter-col ... Shull illos! You don't think he gives those away to just anyone, do you?"

"Hmnnnn." The uniformed man sucked thoughtfully at his cigarette. "That may be so... Very well, I'll have to report this back to my superiors. In the meantime, don't try to gafiater or attend any major Cons." He snapped his fingers again, and almost as suddenly as they had arrived, he and the three subordinates had dashed out the still-open door.

The roaring of the FCB Rotsler-Royce limousine fading into the night, Cohen wiped the sweat from his forehead, rebolted his door, and turned back to bed -- only to freeze in shock at the sight facing him.

Standing before the gaping hole that had once been a window-with-view was a short, ominous figure clad entirely in sinister black. His long cloak waved about his lithe form in the cold night breeze. A black fedora cast its shadow over his face, leaving only a long, aquiline nose and red, sensuous lips framed by well-oiled mustachios. One gloved hand rested on the ornate hilt of a long, cruelly curved scimitar dangling at his side, almost concealed by the cloak. It glittered ominously when hit by the room's pale light.

"Very convincing, Eli," the stranger purred in a cool, vaguely disturbing voice, "But then, those SMOF types are easily convinced."

"What do you want with me?!" the fanned's fingers desperately groped for his bottle of corflu, "I'm just an average genzine publisher, I don't --"

"Oh come now," the cool voice was suddenly icy cold, "You should know I can't be fooled."

"But, but, Thrip -- Svoboda -- loccol --"

"You're a personalzine editor, Cohen, and calling your zine a 'journal of whimsy and bad puns' won't hide the fact."

"But, but, book review --"

"Of a non-existant book, by your own hoax?"

"But, but, Svovoda article --"

"Very amusing, and you almost had me fooled. But we all know that there really is no 'Aljo Svoboda' ('Yarik P. Thrip' is a more believable name!) and anyone could have collected those 'Fannish phrases' at any Fan gathering. Such as yourself."

"But... Letter column!"

"Very clever of you, writing your own loc's to throw us off your trail. But whoever heard of a real Glicksohn loc praising the artwork (even tho your zine's is excellent)? And Harry Warner in the WAIF column? A neo would have known better than that!"

Cohen had no more words for his defense. He stood, paralyzed, as the mysterious intruder advanced, slowly drawing his wickedly edged sword.

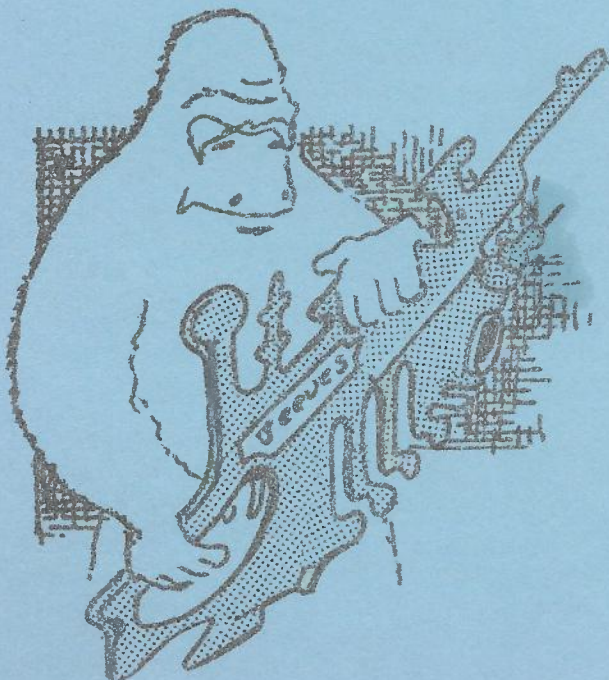
((But -- but, Susan Wood article ...))

Harry Warner, Jr. 423 Summit Ave. Hagerstown, MD. 21740	Your continuing narrative of your struggle to stay in Canada sounds almost fantastic enough to form the basis of a non-fiction book. One thing it does is cause me to suspect that here lies the perfect solution to the problem of what to do with the United States young people who snuck into Canada to avoid the draft. If they were subjected to this barrage of red tape as a condition for staying in Canada, they wouldn't suffer the consequences to their future life that genuine punishment would involve, and yet the United States residents who oppose full amnesty should be satisfied with the doom that had befallen them.
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Jessica Amanda Salmonson P.O. Box 89517 Zenith, Wash. 98188	Two women were hitchhiking across Canada (to get from NY to Seattle, thinking Canada would be less dangerous than the US middle states), staying in parks, hostels, and homes along the way. When they hit Seattle, they called the Lesbian Resource Center to see if they had temporary housing, and as a matter of fact they do. Sherri & I have volunteered our floor to travelling women before, so we received a call, and our decision was "send 'em on over." So we learned from them what it is like hitching across Canada. They claim they never met so many bigoted, red-neck, unfriendly people in their
---	--

whole lives, and this shattered their illusion that Canadians were more together than Americans about things. Racism, says they, is as rampant as in the USofA. I'd never heard the term "rag-head" before, a Canadian term for immigrant workers (Pakistani's who wear turbans), and the only Blacks they saw were waiters. Anyhow, their accounts of experiences along with your chronical of bureaucracy makes that "together" northern nation look as dense as anything in the States.

((It upsets me when people use phrases like "Americans" or "Canadians" in such a general way; I'm sorry your friends were upset with Canada, but I'm curious if what they found was universal or just in certain parts of the country (analogous to regional variations in the US). It's my feeling, after listening for two years to the locals bitching about the damn Easterners, that in general, regional differences outweigh political ones. The Canadian prairie provinces have more in common with the American grain belt than either do with New York or Toronto. For example, almost everything I've heard about Alberta has been negative; not least is a vicious anti-Alberta song by Stringband (a Canadian group) on their "National Melodies" album, implying a lot about redneck attitudes and bigotry in that province. In other words, they seem to have the same sort of reputation as "the US middle states." I've found the people in Saskatchewan generally very friendly and relaxed. After a quarter century in New York, I'm still disconcerted when sales clerks talk to me. As to racism, there seem to be too few Blacks in this province for that variety to exist. The only black I've met is our Chief Probation Officer, in charge of all probation service in the province (a bit above a waiter). On the other hand, a serious conflict is developing between Native people (10% of the population here) and whites, with all the potential for ugliness of the black/white split in the US. People is people all over, I guess. Incidentally, some Canadians attribute the Alberta problem to the enormous number of Americans living there, attached to the oil companies. For example, Calgary has 70,000 Americans, and the annual Calgary Stampede this year was designated an official Bicentennial event.))



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

I admire your patience. It takes, it simply must, an extremely patient

man to absorb all the red tape and bureaucratic nonsense; the only other explanation is, could it be the man is a schmuck? No! NOT our boy. We who live humdrum lives beg you: NEVER SURRENDER! FIGHT, even to defeat, but FIGHT! While we sit back and laugh our heads off, because sometimes it sure is funny... Could it be he is...?

Shull's work is just great. Absolutely great. His draftsmanship is impeccable, and his balance of the sane with the unreal is inspired. Even his breaksmanship in taking the "p" from "phany" and keeping it with "krato" is part of his elliptical approach to a normal world and his own distorted one. Sheer delight, and his Bicentennial Cover is wonderful.

Yeah, Budapest, Bucharest, so long as you're healthy.

Leigh Edmonds
PO Box 76
Carlton, Victoria 3183
Australia

Despite the great
enjoyment I de-
rived from the ish
I could not help
but go back to

the bit about sky diving and read it over and over again. At last I know what the Lunarians must have been like. Or to put it another way, I am all too well acquainted with sky diving fandom since the guy I sit next to at work is also a member of it. And a mad one too. From what I hear about sky divers I get the impression that they are all mad, not crazy like fans but out of their heads mad. At various times I've been tempted to write a series of articles around this character, "Steve the Skydiver" but somehow...creeping laziness I guess... a real pity since I could do with a Fan Writer Hugo too.

Even I don't believe some of the things he's done, even as he tells me about them. I was tempted to show him your little bit about the sport but while I found your definition of "hammering in" as an extreme form of fasia very precise I doubted that he'd see the joke straight off and the explanation would kill it. So I really couldn't tell him what I was really chuckling about at my desk with the blue fanzine.

By the way, strangely geographic differences have changed "hammering in" to be "spearing in" in Australia. It all comes down to the same thing.

The only truly remarkable incident I can remember off hand that Steve has recounted to me was a few years ago when he was jumping up at Bendigo. He still lived in Melbourne but you know what club politics are like so he and some of his buddies drove over 100 miles to Bendigo every weekend to jump. At the time he had had a rig called (if my memory serves me well enough) a Delta V, one of those high performance canopies which glides more than stops you falling.

So he exited and did the usual rel work, but since he wanted to try out his rig he opened up a bit earlier than normal and decided that he'd follow the highway to see how far he could get before he finally hit the ground. The rig amazed him and he went on for miles. He was so busy enjoying himself that he didn't notice that the farm land he had started over had given way to forest and by the time he got to thinking about a place to land the only open space was the highway (not very healthy).

He was beginning to resign himself to getting run over when he landed, but with a couple of hundred feet to go he saw that he was coming up to a large clearing which just suited his purposes beautifully. But as he got closer the little bell in the back of his mind started to ring; there was something wrong about the space and since he drove past it on his way to the DZ he wracked his brains for what it was. Finally out popped the solution on a card marked "Bendigo Rifle Range". Utter Stark Panic! By that time he was coming in over the club house and about to drop to the ground only a few feet from where the shooters were, but right in front of them and a sitting target if he happened to fall at the right instant. So he started screaming and yelling at the top of his voice. At first the voice was ignored and as he got very close the people on the ground started looking around them desperately, but not thinking to look up.

He didn't tell us what happened next but there didn't appear to be any bullet holes in him.

At one time Steve decided that riding motor bikes was good fun and so he



bought himself one. But that lasted only about a month. One weekend he took his bike out on the highways and as he was zooming over the Frankston overpass at over 100 mph it came to him that he could easily kill himself doing that sort of thing. So he sold his bike the next day and dusted off his rig for the next weekend's jumping.

((Yeah. Did I mention that Jane gets sick when an elevator drops too fast? Upsets her stomach, it does.))

Eric B. Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Ave.
Faulconbridge N.S.W. 2776
Australia

Winter has arrived here, unfortunately. Why, only the other day I was forced to put on a pullover when I walked to the railway station at 7 AM. Most disconcerting, as the band leader said when he couldn't get to rehearsal.

((Don't give me any of that stuff about your mild winters. I've talked to survivors of the train to Ballarat.))

No wonder Canadians jump out of planes, if it only costs \$4. I am sure they charge \$10 to do that here, but perhaps the extra is for supplying a parachute -- I've been careful not to enquire too fully on the subject. Still, it is obvious that many sports, but particularly the more individual ones rather than team ones, would have social aspects not totally unlike fandom, complete with their own terminology. Which would originally be mainly technical but later include wider terms.

Michael T. O'Brien I also have an ex-skydiver friend. He gave it up in favor
1642 W. Morse Ave. of getting his teeth knocked out in SCA, a hobby which had
Chicago, IL 60626 nothing to do with his being known among his friends as
 "the mouth." (Once, when his mother was being excessively
chatty at dinner, he was heard to mutter, "Jesus Christ, Mrs. Robinson!") He
is now all set up to marry an elf, so I don't suppose he'll ever lead a normal
life.

Mike Glicksohn "This is LOC-CACOPHONY #8, a journey of whisky and even
141 High Park Ave. worse puns, unedited and written due to irregularity by
Toronto, Ont. M6P 2S3 Mike Glicksohn." Now why does that sound familiar?
 And speaking of sounding familiar, which I was, there
is yet again a strong sense of deja vu (a second cousin of deja thoris, three
time winner of the Miss Barsoom Bazoom title, not to be confused with the great
Martian astrologist deja taurus or the famous Martian topologist deja torus,
neither of whom is simply connected to any of the others) about much of this
issue. ((Your manifold puns, Mike, certainly deserve a measure of approval --
Haar, Haar...)) Reading your editorial I kept thinking I'd Been There Before
and was all set for a mystical epiphany when you spoiled it all by admitting
that you'd already described the events in previous issues of KRAT. Then I re-
called reading almost entire paragraphs of the editorial in issues of your per-
sonalazine, whatever it was called... Wails From The West?...Torrid Tundra Tales?
...I Scream, Cohen?...the name escapes me at the moment. There just isn't any
mystery in life nowadays....

Shull's insect cartoons would delight the famous Martian zoologist deja
thorax as much as they pleased me, I'm sure, and they are matched in artistic
excellence by the work of Freff, McLeod, and Pearson. The MacKay are rather
minor (he only did them sixteen years ago) and the mind boggles at the sight
of 1972 Schalles (not a particularly refined vintage, but you'll be amused by
their pretension) cartoons amidst such visual chef d'oeuvres. We've come to

expect a rather classy fanzine in KRATOPHANY and you haven't let us down with #8.

I have a colleague who pronounces the word "blender" as "blunder" and he simply cannot hear any difference when I say the two words, even though they sound completely different to me. It's enough to make one wender, that's for shaw.

Actually, only 20% of ENERGUEN was printed on blue paper, so KRAT really doesn't have that much of a resemblance to that hallowed old fanzine. (On the other hand, resemblance involving a fifth is something I can relate to.) There's another major difference too: ENERGUEN is probably the only major fanzine of the last half-decade that never published a letter of comment from that asshole Glicksohn. There's truth to the accusation of dilution of fannish standards...

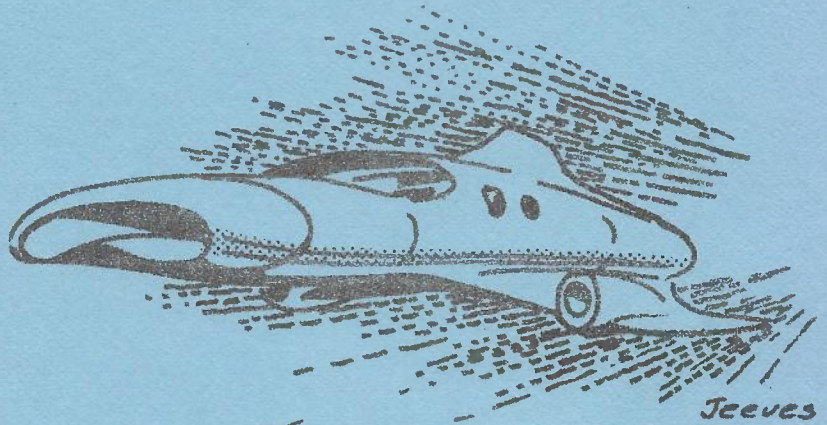
If some people weren't so windy one day Wendy would wend a way across our hearts again. It is to be hoped for!

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

You mean to say people have been telling you to "go take a flying leap" lately, do you not?

There are other fandoms who don't recognize themselves as such. For example, I'd say (and shortly will) that the current CB phenomenon is a group grope toward a verbal fandom. There are plenty enough CB-fannish terms in use

within the in-group and numerous clubs and some prozines, and there must be CB fanzines around too, and cons.



Elizabeth Kimmerly
103 James St.
Ottawa, Ont.

I laughed and laughed at the tragic tale of your run-ins with M&I (as we called it when I was a public servant). Did I ever mention I was once a Manpower counsellor in a little town called Smiths Falls? Mostly I dealt with high school kids. They were simple. There were only about 20 free jobs in town each summer. I told the kids to put shoes on and go ask about them. The ones who believed me about the shoes got the jobs; the rest hung around the pool hall all summer. Oh, except the Ugandan immigrants. Some nitwit in Montreal got the idea that Smiths Falls had a population of 100,000 and sent us the quota for a town that size. Unfortunately SF has only 10,000 pop. And the kind of social attitudes that make it hard to get a job with a French surname. I was considered a great success cause I got one of the girls a job, out of my six Ugandan student clients. She wore shoes.

((It just goes to prove, when you'r looking for work, you can't be too shoesy.))

I read DHALGREN. But I was a civil servant at the time.

Actually, I rather enjoyed it -- very good orgies. Reminded me of some of the co-ops I've lived in. Not the orgies I am after all a respectable married lady but the atmosphere.

The continuing discussion of words in language fascinates me. We had a Dutch girl in our French class who used to go crazy when we got into fine shadings of meaning because Dutch simply had no such shadings. I looked into her French-Dutch dictionary once and was startled to notice that the French words had one Dutch word as translations while the Dutch words had many French translations.

My buddy Marilyn and her partner and I were talking about the things we learned to say as kids. Rhymes and that. She was saying that her little Erik came home from the day care centre the other day and started reciting Eenie Meenie Miney Moe. She gasped and raised her hand for one of the few times she had even considered striking the child. She will not stand for obscene language. Her partner is from California and didn't understand why she was so uptight. I bet as a Yankee yourself you don't either, eh? The kid said, as Charlie the American expected,

Eenie, meenie, miney, moe
Catch a Tiger by the toe
If he hollers let him go
Eenie meenie miney moe



Marilyn and I, and in fact all the Canadians, expected him to have learned it the way we did -- catch a nigger by the toe -- and like I say Marilyn will not stand for obscenities. But all the Americans she's asked about it were surprised; they had never heard that version.

((It seems to me I've come across a reference to your version, sometime in my adult years. I wonder if there are regional variants in the U.S.??))

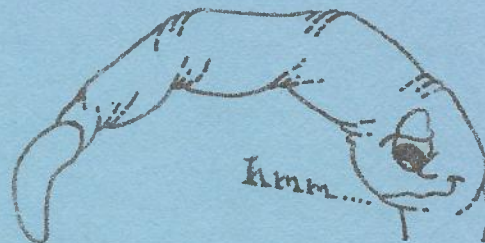
Patrick McGuire
28 Wilton St.
Princeton, NJ 08540

Not too long ago, I came across in a book the curious datum that the word for "pop" (a.k., among the benighted, as "soda," "tonic," or whatever) in England, or parts thereof, is "pop." Why the American Midwest and England should have the same term while the effete East has a different one is unclear. (I just looked in my OED. "pop" is there in that meaning, with the first citation in 1856, while "soda" is not, in that meaning. Surely when the British and the Midwesterners agree on a word, that should settle it, and as soon as I'm dictator I'll act accordingly.)

((My dear Patrick, I hate to fault your research, but whereas my OED records an 1812 reference to "pop" (quoted from an 1856 edition), that reference itself includes a reference to "soda-water" ("A new manufactory of a nectar, between soda-water and ginger-beer, and called pop"); the latter dates back to 1802, and the use of the word "soda" to represent it dates to 1842. The only dispute we might have is whether soda-water, which I grew up with as seltzer, is properly called either pop or soda. It seems to me that given the concept, throwing a little syrup into it hardly constitutes a radical departure, making "soda" the conservative, clinging-to-its-humble-origins word, while "pop" is simply newfangled jargon. Never catch on. ("Tonic", incidentally, doesn't appear at all in that meaning, though its medicinal usage dates back to 1693.))

Re John Carl: I dunno. I learned how to type "correctly" by using a manual (in eight grade -- while in high school I took a summer school course

which improved my speed), and I know others who have done the same. I know some people who are reasonable fast with unorthodox methods, but it seems most people who do it that way either have to look at the keys or can't compose at the typewriter, both severe failings. I think that if nothing else, the method has more potential for improvement with practice. A fact which never fails to fascinate me is that typewriter keys are set up so as to be convenient for English letter usage. E, T, A, N, O, and I, which as any amateur cryptographer knows are the highest-frequency letters, are all struck with different fingers so as to spread out the work, for instance. Yet, so far as I know, all typewriters with Latin alphabets have the same keyboard arrangement nowadays. (Curiously enough, however, English -- i.e., British -- typewriters have the comma key in the wrong place, and some other confusions of punctuation.)



((I understand that one of the faults of the present arrangement, even for English, is that only the single-letter frequencies were taken into account, so that common combinations, which require some fancy finger-work (e.g. "ed", both using the same finger), are more work than they need to be. Lester del Rey reputedly designed his own keyboard taking this into account, and had a typewriter specially made. I guess with Selectrics, there's more room for this sort of experimentation; but Lord, conversion would be even worse than going metric.))

John D. Berry I recognize the conflicting feelings you report having toward New York City. I feel much the same way about it -- 1000 15th Ave. E. ward New York City. I feel much the same way about it -- Seattle, WA 98112 although in my case I'm much more apt to feel hassled and unhappy in the city when I'm hungry, and contented and benign about it after I've had a full meal. I also have a different perspective from yours, since I grew up outside the city, in Westchester County; it's only in my adult life that I've learned to be a city person, but I was always used to being near a big city (the big city), and I have always lived in a more-or-less urban area. I think I've passed the point in my life when I would have loved to live in NYC, and it's slightly sad; in high school, or my early college years, I think I could have lived a NYC existence and enjoyed it thoroughly, but I missed my chance (although I filled those years with quite a fine variety of other experiences, and I wouldn't trade if I could), and I'm beyond the point where I could enjoy NYC except as a place to visit.

((Actually, I grew up outside the city, too -- in Queens. But I had the advantage of living in Manhattan for most of 8 years. Of course as an impoverished student I couldn't take advantage of the more expensive delights of New York (fancy French restaurants, for example); there were, however, sufficient cheap delights to make me quite nostalgic at times (Chinatown restaurants, the Thalia's annual showing of "A Thousand Clowns", souvlaki sandwiches in the Village...).))

My brother was into skydiving when he was in college. I don't remember anything much about it -- I was pretty young at the time -- but I do remember quite well the great big cast he wore on his leg all summer long after he hit a patch of ground of the wrong shape and fractured a bone or three. I believe that was his last jump.

He is presently in court for the trial of the person who ran into him and a couple of other people (and sent him to the hospital) while he was driving

across the Tappan Zee Bridge one rainy night a couple of years ago, which proves that staying on the ground isn't all that safe, either.

There are more Wyomings than Sam Long mentioned. If you're travelling west on the New England Thruway in Rhode Island, one of the last towns before the Connecticut border is Wyoming, RI. I recently read an explanation of the name and its widespread nature, and according to this account, the state was called Wyoming because at the time it was in vogue to use Indian names, and nobody could agree on any name that came from a language spoken in the territory. Things like fashion are not expected to make sense.

Don D'Amassa's tales of varying pronunciation and usage fascinate me, and some of his examples coincide with my own experience, since I alternated my early years between New York and Massachusetts. I am particularly annoyed by the people who can detect no difference between "marry" and "merry," since they are the people who invariably spell my last name as "Barry." My usual response, after correcting them, is to ask, "Would you call the senator from Arizona 'Berry' Goldwater?!" But I suppose most of them would, and do. I first encountered it in California, but I'm becoming convinced that it's true in most of the country. *sigh*

On the other hand, pronouncing "ruin" as "roon," rather than "rue-in", is, as far as I know, strictly a New York City thing.

Nice Shull art. ("Nice Shull art, cute Shull art...*scritch-scratch* scratch under chin...") The rest didn't particularly turn me on (except, of course, the "Chonhyfur" heading).

Hank Heath
250 Dale Dr.
Cassadaga, NY 14718

WYOMING -- I heard an item on the news this morning that a family in that state had gotten a US government grant to the tune of a couple thousand dollars to discover the origins of the state's name. They travelled 6000+ miles, visiting various villages, towns, etc. (like Wyoming, Pennsylvania & Wyoming County in New York) to dig up the roots of the name. Some months later, having spent all the grant, they've released the information that they still have no idea where the name Wyoming came from ...

My wife & I have a marvelous time communicating via the old speech box. It seems that she & I talk a different language -- English. And I don't even speak fannish at home. It would be difficult -- and suicidal -- to list all the instances that we fail to get the message across. But the classical example is "pin--pen."

Julie, my wife, will say to me, "Will you get me a pin?" I look grumpily over the latest issue of Analog, put it down & forage in her pin box to locate the one thing she doesn't keep there -- pins. Frustrated, I pad barefoot back into the living-room to step on discarded mentioned item. After a one-footed version of the Cherokee fertility dance, I pick up the bloodied object, and present it to her.

She'll look at the shiny stainless thing, and, with straight face, say, "Pin. I wanted a pin. That isn't a pin."

To which I'll wittily reply, "Well, just what the hell is it?"

Pitying me almost as much as she does herself for putting up with me, she'll say, "That's a pen. A pen you stick in your foot. A pin you write with."

Aware of all the kiddies in the audience, I won't record the rest of the conversation. Let it alone that my wife says "pin" for pen and vice-versa. Usually like this: "Pin! Dumbhead! P-E-N! Pin!" Etc. No wonder I'm gray-ing at 29.

((There's the story Suzle Tompkins once told me about the initial presentation of a certain famous song. The singer who was to demonstrate it picked up the words, and started to sing, "You say tomato, and I say tomato(?), you say potato and I say potato..." her voice

grew more and more puzzled, "tomato, tomato, potato, potato, let's call the whole thing off??? This song doesn't make any sense!"))

Jackie Franke Seeing that I've just been in a group discussion in an apa
Box 51-A RR 2 with Dean Grennell, in which many of us protested that
Beecher, IL 60401 "mince" and "men's" don't rhyme, I found Digby's comments
 on accents and how they conflict with poet's purposes to
be of some interest. To me, "again" and "been" and "then" rhyme quite well,
but not with "in", which has a different sound entirely. "Spring" and "bring"
most definitely do rhyme, here in the Midwest, at least. "Ruin" (which has
almost two separate syllables here), certainly wouldn't rhyme with "moon"
either. I question your snide comment about Knight's "provincialism" in that
last instance. Just who among us is living in a Province, after all!? Cast
not stones...

((Eric Lindsay: This is why spelling reform will never work.))

Dave Locke Eight issues of KRAT in four and a half years is a remarkable
819 Edie Dr. display of enthusiasm. I hope you don't burn yourself out.
Duarte CA 91010 Rest for at least a couple of years.

((Do I detect a note of sarcasm?))

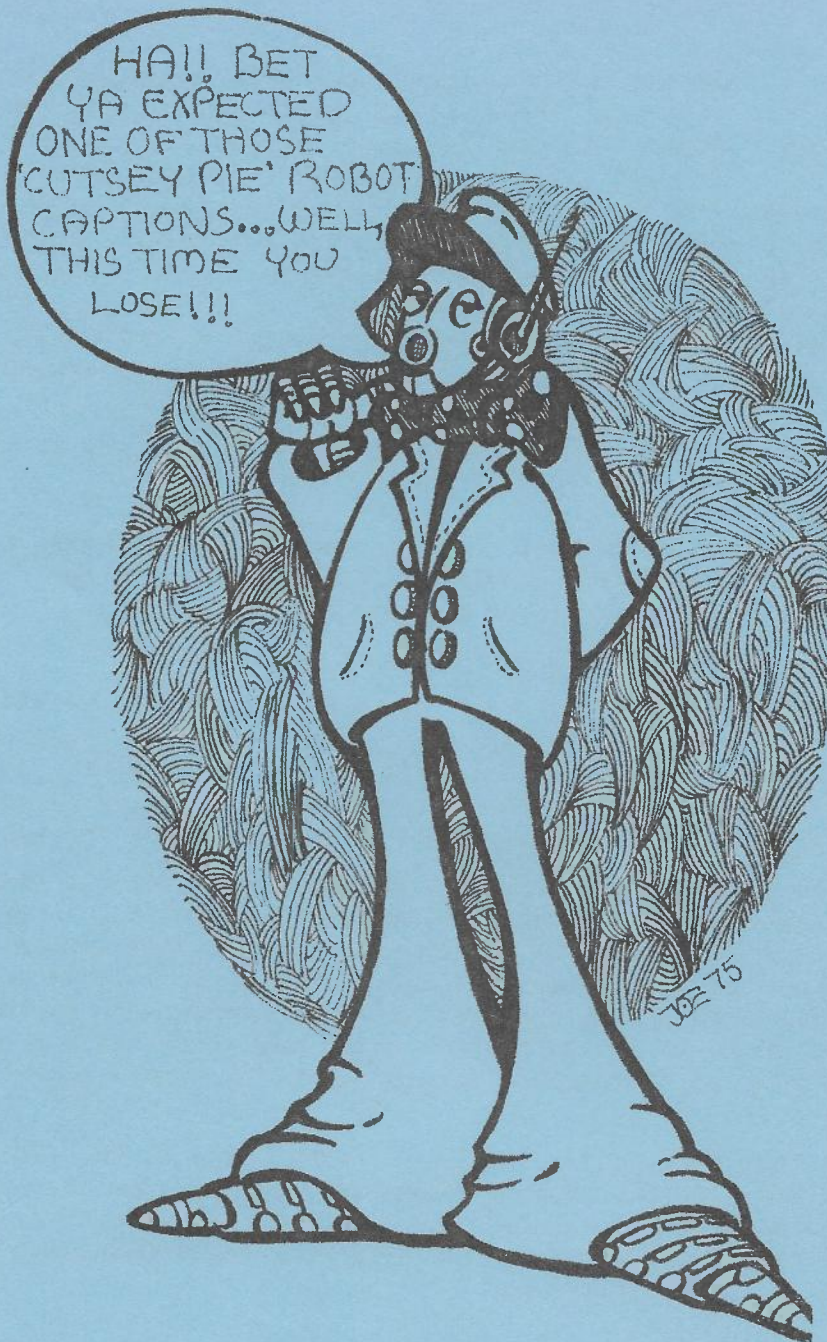
John Carl, by the way, once told me that according to statistics the average
person has one testicle. As you apparently are fandom's resident expert on
statistics, I thought I'd run this by you and get your opinion on the subject.
Please take into account that John said this before Jessica Salmonson had his
operation and became a her, in case such an event has any bearing on the matter.

((John Carl is right; however, the simplistic use of the "average,"
or mean, obscures the variability within a population. A rigorous
statistical analysis shows that whereas the expected number of tes-
ticles possessed by a person grabbed at random is one, at least 95%
of the population can be expected to have between -.96 and 2.96
testicles. This is due to the "standard deviation" of the population.
Including Jessica, of course, merely makes the population a little
more deviant.))

You don't know what you're missing by not living in the States. In cele-
bration of the bicentennial year a condom manufacturer has come out with a red,
white, and blue rubber, and are calling it Old Glory. I thought of buying one,
but decided I'd probably be run out of town if I tried going out to salute a
flag with it.

We Also Heard From: Michael Carlson ("A ten year sentence. Must have a lot of
commas and be a real pisser to type."), Ken Ozanne (who informs Aljo Svoboda
that "(2¹⁹⁹³ - 1)th fandom lives" -- Ken, I wish you'd stop Mersenne around),
Fred Lerner, Andy Porter, Tim C. Marion, Dave Piper, Sheryl Birkhead, George
Wells, Bob Lipton, Fred Phillips, Terry Jeeves, Angus Taylor, Patrick Hayden,
Laurine White, Jodie Offutt, and Bruce Townley (who called, provoked by Norm
Hollyn, to describe to me a culinary horror too nauseating to mention in
print.)

Edible, adj. Good to eat, and wholesome to digest, as a worm to a
toad, a toad to a snake, a snake to a pig, a pig to a man, and a
man to a worm. -- Ambrose Bierce, The Devil's Dictionary



WHY YOU GOT THIS:

- ☐ Trade and/or review
- ☐ It seemed like the thing to do at the time
- ☐ You are mentioned
- ☐ Think of it as an off-beat wedding present
- ☐ You LoCed
- ☐ You gave artwork
- ☐ You gave money
- ☐ You gave blood