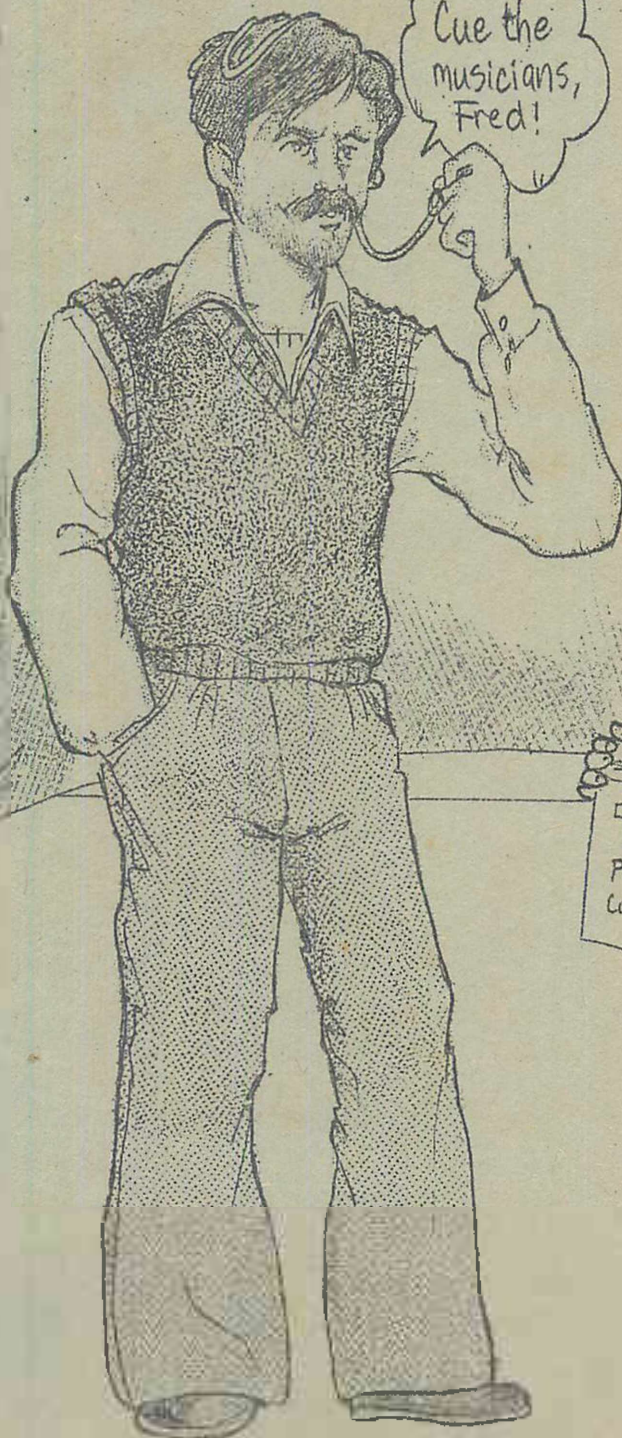


# Mainstream







# MAINSTREAM

It's time now for the 8th issue of Mainstream, from Jerry Kaufman and Suzle, 4326 Winslow Place N., Seattle, WA 98103, USA (206-633-2375). Available for \$1, trade, letter, contribution or any strenuous expression of interest. March 1983.

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Thanks to: Collators for #7: Chris Bates, Judy Blinder, David Bratman, Gary Farber, Lucy Huntzinger, Patrick Nielsen Hayden, Teresa Nielsen Hayden, Kate Schaefer, Anna Vargo, Theo Williams & Cliff Wind (with on-lookers and late arrivals John Berry, Denys Howard, Janice Murray & Joanna Russ)

Other extreme assistance: Bob Doyle for use of his mimeo and typer, Northwest Science Fiction Society for mailing privileges, Cliff Wind for mailing mechanics, Marilyn Holt for driving, Rick Mikkelsen for slipsheeting, Patrick Nielsen Hayden for technical advice.

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Random, although engendered by sf, is a thing apart--in much the same way that alcoholic drinks contain no yeast although it is yeast which makes them what they are.

Bob Shaw, "When Fandoms Collide," The Zine That Has No Name

# BEWITCHED, BOTHERED, and BEMILDRIED STUFF BY JERRY KAUFMAN

I sat in my living room, reading a book called Star Maker, by Olaf Stapledon, as ordered by our Fearless Aesthetic Leader, Don Keller, for future discussion in Babble-17, a monthly sf discussion group. It seemed to be about a man whose astral travels take him all over the universe to examine the birth of stars, the clash of cultures, and the death of prose. Probably one of the world's most original books, if you don't count Doc Smith, and just incredibly profound in its vision of stars with personality problems and aliens with class struggles. I found myself drifting from the book at times...in fact, I realized, I was drifting about six feet over the book and my own body, and beginning to move right through the ceiling.

I floated up through the house, and there in the sky saw distant bodies, burning brightly. The largest were stately glowing books. About them revolved sparkling fanzines in ones or twos or whole clouds. I could see streams of bright letters flowing in all directions from fanzine to fanzine, forming a vast network of communication.

One such stream passed through my "body" and I could sense (with a sense beyond sight or hearing, even beyond sense) that it was the group of letters that had arrived at our home (that little chip of community we on earth call "co-editing"), full of commentary on Gary Farber's impassioned plea for changes in the Hugo rules concerning fanzines. We had chosen not to print the vast majority of these comments because our next issue would appear long after the changes had been decided on. We did show each to Gary before he fared off to Chicago, so each had its infinitesimal, if unmeasurable, effect on the final shape of the new Hugo rules. Please note, I said to myself, that those rules must be ratified in Baltimore this year.

I also felt myself grow a little depressed, a little despondent, as I realized we would not be able to use most of the comments on Jon Singer's blue food musings, though of blueberries, cabbages, fish, and flowers, there were many mentions. Such life, such diversity, such a pity that we couldn't print forty pages of letters!

And out of this stream of life, two specks of consciousness stood out, crying pityfully of negligence in my last editorial. One called itself Terry Carr, and pointed out that it had been writing reports of convention experiences for years in such apazines as Gilgamesh and Diaspar. True, I thought, and they are excellent and entertaining, and the zines have



some currency outside the apas they were intended for. The other was called Ted White, and it commended to my attention, not itself, but a being named "Wally 'the Snake' Mind," which was of another species, and which wrote for Pong. Also true, I thought.

To free myself from this introspective revery, I cast about for some other subject, some more momentous matter, and I began to move through space with great swiftness, as though I were being drawn by some great force. The fanzines and books began to flash past me, but soon I noticed that one fanzine grew in my sight (or my "sight") as I approached, and instead of passing, I began to orbit it. The Jeanne Gomoll cover was unmistakeable, as was its eighty-page bulk: it was The Best of Susan Wood. Then I realized there were hundreds of them in the neighborhood. "If only we could communicate with them, I thought. I immediately received a telepathic message from the copy I was orbiting. "Readers may send \$2 (and may also include something for postage, if they wish) to Jerry Kaufman, and thus discover our innermost thoughts. The money will go to the Susan Wood Memorial Scholarship Fund, at Carleton University."

This establishment of mental contact so awed me that, without noticing it, I drifted away. When I came to myself I was moving steadily through a space in which new books were being born in the quiet of interstellar space: here was The Citadel of the Autarch, there Neveryona, and around the bend was Oolong. But they were disappearing as quietly as they appeared. "Unless Babble-17 (the world-mind of earth) insists on paying them attention, they always die like that," another mind suddenly said to me. "Who are you?", I enquired in momentary terror. "Olaf Tablespoon. I wrote Stir Maker, a book which your Babble-17 has caused to survive through its attentions."

It transpired that Tablespoon and I were now to travel together. I had attracted him through our likenesses of mind, and we were soon to think almost as one. Thus, I will not have to refer to him again.

I passed through a cluster of fanzines, all of which seemed to be dependents of one great fanzine in their center. They were of great variety, and impressed me with their various tones of wit, warmth and charm.

There was Izzard, with its tiny type and Lucy Huntzinger art, calling for an end to controversy and new strides in understanding, and, near it, a nebulous cloud slowly solidifying, called Telos, with Bertie MacAvoy's tale of her trip to Ireland. There was Wing Window, adorned by Terry Hughes and Bill Gibson, and as mellow as old slippers. Near them was On Company Time, with tales of baseball and model airplanes.

Over here were three newer additions to the cluster: Inscape and its study of science fiction, music, and spoonerisms; Rhetorical Device and its study of the great questions of our time (the readers were expected to supply the answers); and Some Luck/It Figures and its study of love, death, and science fiction fandom. Great cosmical flows of letters wove a web of relationship between them and the rest of the paper universe.

And in the center of them, looming larger yet more large in my notice, was Mainstream.

I found myself attracted more and more swiftly to its surface and, briefly, I lighted upon it. In that moment I noted that the front cover by Stu Shiffman was actually cut by hand into a wax stencil before printing. "Amazing," I murmured. "The man is an artist. This 'obsolete' process achieves effects no other method does. It must truly be 'fannish' in the fullest sense of that word."

Then--before I could engage in internal debate over what I meant by "fannish"--I penetrated to the interior of that majestic object. I found, among other marvels too many and complex to discuss, Greg Benford's article. I should have told him, I thought, that, indeed, some-

one other than a fan could consider Japanese monster movies with some degree of serious intent. Susan Sontag did, in her collection of essays, Against Interpretation, and she is a serious woman. Completely.

I examined another marvel: Jon Singer's remarks on Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain. I realized that I, too, was struggling to learn to draw with the aid of that august and padded volume (why, it is nearly as padded with "relevant" quotes in the margins as this editorial is padded with Stapledon parody). But it is teaching me to draw, I thought, and remembered my upside-down sketches of Stravinsky and right-side-up rendering of Alice to prove it to myself.

But after passing through these wonders I found myself irresistably drawn to the first pages of the fanzines. I found myself reading a strange narrative...it seemed so dream-like and unreal that, after the first several paragraphs had almost put me to sleep, I threw down the fanzine, tossed aside Star Maker, and suggested to Suzle that we find Patrick and Teresa, and go out for a beer.

"They're typing Telos," she said. "Shelley's phone is still out, Anna and Gary are at work, Bob's already gone to bed, the Kellers can't get a baby-sitter, Cliff's out at a movie...and I'm tired. Let's see what's on tv."

So much for the myth of hyper-social Seattle, I thought. And the Star Maker line wasn't even original: Willis to Cline to Kaufman. With a sigh, I turned on the set, and we settled in to watch a new comedy show, Fantocracy. It was about an apartment house completely cocupied by science fiction fans, and in the first episode they were trying to get free long distance service and ARPANET hookups for the whole building.

No, wait just one moment...

(The following are, of course, all recommended:

Izzard (monthly) and Telos (erratic)--Patrick and Teresa Nielsen Hayden, 4337 15th Avenue N.E., #411, Seattle, WA 98105. Available for the usual or \$1 (Izzard) or \$2 (Telos). U.K. agents: Malcolm Edwards and Chris Atkinson, 28 Duckett Rd., London W4 1BN; Izzard available from them for 75p.

Wing Window--John D. Berry, 525 19th Avenue E., Seattle, WA 98112. No availabilty shown. Try asking nicely.

On Company Time--Steven Bryan Bieler, P.O. Box 1870, Seattle, WA 98111. Again, no availability shown. Try begging or sending baseball cards.

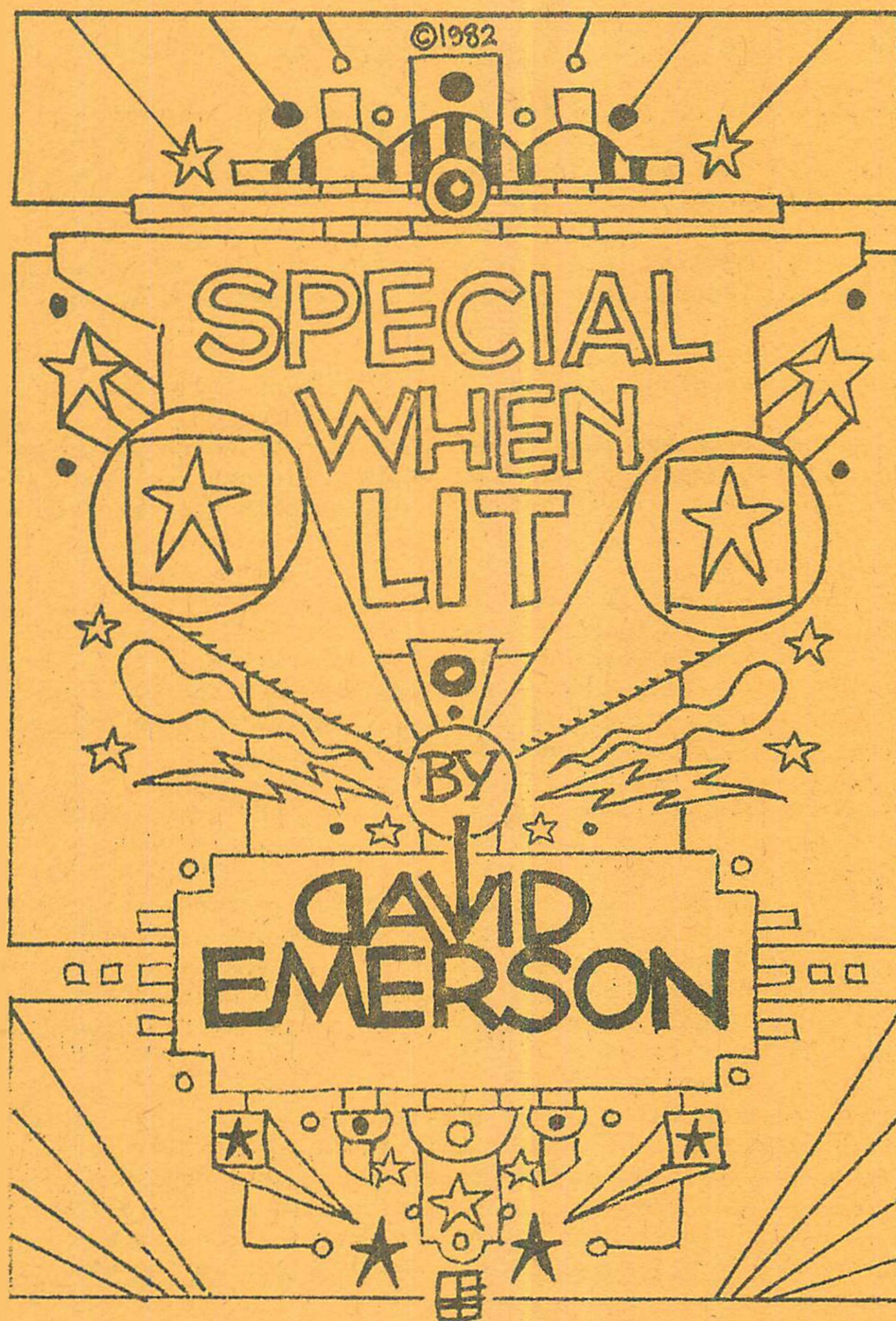
Inscape--Donald G. Keller, 943 N. 80th Street, Seattle, WA 98103. Available for the usual.

Rhetorical Device--Clifford R. Wind, 308 Summit E., #206, Seattle, WA 98102. Available by editorial whim or for "discourse"--money is acceptable, but he doesn't say how much.

Some Luck/It Figures--Linda Blanchard, 23509 Hedlund Avenue, Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043. Available for 50¢ or the usual.)

###





Ultimately, of course, it's all Eli Cohen's fault. After all, Eli got me into fandom in the first place, and much of my life since then has been a direct result of my being a fan. For example, if I hadn't been a fan, I never would have met Nate Bucklin at Torcon II and been persuaded to move to Minneapolis.

And if I hadn't been a fan, I wouldn't have found myself in a crowd of 50 or 60 fans at an elaborate, seven-course meal (complete with extensive wine list, thank you) given by Bob Doyle and Clifford Wind in Seattle, and I wouldn't have seen Anna Vargo walk up to me out of that crowd, and I wouldn't have heard her say, in properly puzzled tones, "What are you doing here?"

And I wouldn't have answered, "I heard there was free food."<sup>3</sup>

Actually, that wasn't really why I was there. I had just quit my job and was following the Grateful Dead on their midwest tour, the final concert of which was in Boulder, Colorado.<sup>5</sup> I called up Jon Singer and said, "I'm thinking of coming to your town for a Grateful Dead concert on the ninth."

"Just in time, Day-vidd," he said in his jonsingerish way, "on accounta how I'm leaving for Seattle on da tenth. There's this dinner party, you see..." I saw. I'd received an invitation myself.

"Oh," I said, a sly grin creeping across my face. "I Think I'll Come With You."

So I came to this fabulous fannish food event, the likes of which would have impressed even Joyce Katz and the legendary gourmands of Brooklyn insurgency; and I managed it without telling Seattle fandom that I was coming. Which surprised a few people. Don't you just love surprises?

But that's not why I went to Seattle. Just how.

Now, there are lots of perfectly good reasons to be in Seattle. It's a lovely city. The people are, um, groovy. A large number of fanzine fans live there. There's a Chinatown, featuring the King Cafe and its excellent dim sum. Not to mention Uwajimaya, the only grocery store in the world that sells geoduck tempura.<sup>7</sup>

But none of these are the reason I went to Seattle. No, the real reason was that I had to go back to Goldie's.

On my previous visit to Seattle, I was exploring the Wallingford area, finding nifty books, tacky postcards, and authentic croissants, when my eye was caught by the telltale phrase on a bar sign: "GAME ROOM." I went in, expecting the usual setup of a few worn pinball machines, a Space Invaders or suchlike, and a bunch of people sitting around and drinking (and not playing pinball) and wondering why a long-haired hippie was coming in and playing pinball (and not drinking).

Instead, I found about a dozen well-kept pinball tables, all of them current faves on the arcade scene, just as many different video games, and a dollar bill changer that worked. Also a bar, of course, but the bar (and hamburger grill, too, apparently) was a convenience for the gamers, rather than the games being a diversion for the drinkers. There was also an area with tables and chairs for eating and drinking and a nice fireplace to gather around and be cosy. Now this, I said to myself, this is the place to play pinball.

It must have been a profitable venture for the owners, too. I mean, I myself dropped five or six bucks into the machines right then and there, and spent a few more on beers.<sup>8</sup> Why, if they'd had laundry machines, too, I'd have been there every day.<sup>11</sup> And when I left, I promised myself I'd be back.

Four months later, I was back. They had cut back on the pinball in favor of more Pac-Mans, but the tables they did have were, again, the latest and most popular. One notable addition was Black Hole, with one of the new innovations--a lower level, set underneath the regular playfield (which is transparent), with its own set of flippers. In Black Hole, the lower level is slanted away from the player and the flippers are at the far end; the effect is like playing a table that you can only see in a mirror. Sure it's gimmicky, but what do you expect for a quarter?<sup>12</sup>

Goldie's is still the closest I've seen to the ideal pinball parlor. Or would be, if they



had more pin machines and fewer video screens. But that's a subject for another column: The Invasion of the Computer Chips, or David Becomes a Tempest Addict, in which I explain that it's all Ben Zuhl's fault.

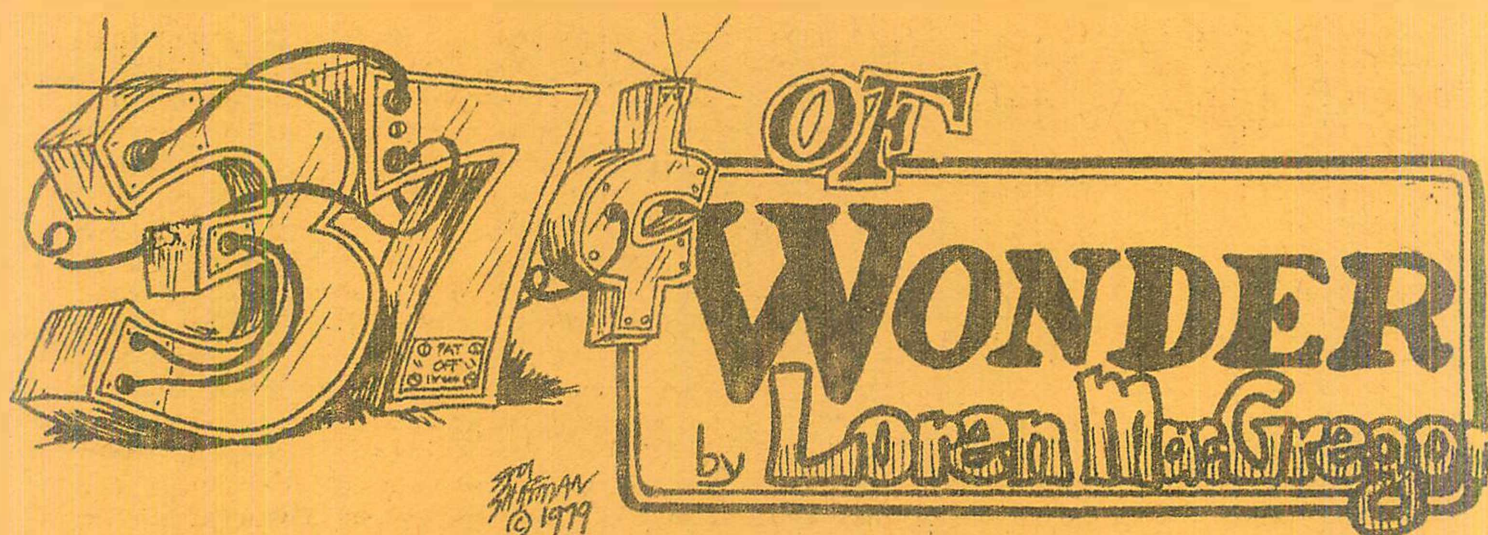
So I guess Eli is not totally responsible after all.

-----

1. Eli naturally denies that it's all his fault, and steadfastly maintains that it's all Fred Lerner's fault.
2. At Jerry's & Suzle's & Bob's house, which is still standing.
3. I lay awake all night thinking that one up, and it turns out to be stolen. Cf. Bob Vardeman in Rune #48.
4. Eight concerts in a week and a half. A Recommended Experience.
5. How do you know Boulder isn't in the midwest? Have you had your hallucinogens today?
6. Egg tarts yes.
7. Jim Young take note.
8. Mind you, I didn't actually see anyone eat or drink the table and chairs.
9. I don't always not drink.<sup>10</sup>
10. Take that, Edwin Newman.
11. Don't laugh. Bars in New Orleans really do have laundry machines in them. It's great. Come in loaded with dirty clothes, and leave loaded.
12. Five balls?

###





Early Sunday afternoon, I was carrying on a desultory conversation with two of the regular customers at Fantasy, Etc., a science-fiction, fantasy, mystery, horror, adventure, etcetara bookstore where I work. ~~BRADBURY & SWOPE FANS WERE~~ I was interrupted by the telephone.

"Excuse me," a voice said. "I need a Ray Bradbury story with a switch in it." "What?" I asked.

"I need a Bradbury story with a switch in it, someone throwing a switch. Oh." There was a brief pause during which I could hear gears grinding. "Yeah. I'm Carlton Greene, from People magazine, and I just took a picture of Mr. Bradbury--you knew Ray Bradbury was in town, didn't you? Did you see him?" I said no. "Yeah, well, he's really a genius, isn't he, you know?" I said yes. "Yeah, and I just took a picture of him in front of a switch, and, you know, I want to know if he's got a story with a switch in it?"

A switch. Right. I turned to two of the store regulars. "Anybody know a Bradbury story with a switch in it?" "What?" they asked.

"Look," I said to Mr. Carlton Greene (of People magazine), "I've got a couple of ideas, but I'll have to look them up. Can you call back in fifteen minutes?"

"Fifteen minutes?" I said yes. "Yeah, right."

For the next few minutes I looked. "There Will Come Soft Rains"? No. Lots of switches; very few people. "The Pocket Man"? Well, it had a switch, all right, but somehow pushing a button to summon breakfast seemed --well--unPeople-like. But there was something....

Got it. I put back the Currey First Edition book, the Twentieth Century Science Fiction Writers book, the guide to anthologies, the collection of stories, the other collection of stories, the other collection of stories, the OTHER collection of stories, and kept one containing "The Rocket." "The Rocket" is a perfect People story, full of warm, human concern, a nice Italian junkman named Fiorello Bodoni, and dreams. It also has a switch, or, at the least, a lever.

While I waited for People magazine (in the person of Mr. Carlton Greene) to call back, I



played Bouncing Babies, one of those hand-held digital games. There's this burning building, see, and an ambulance, and there's these two guys with a stretcher. And what you've got to do, see, is have the guys with the stretcher catch the babies as they're thrown out the top story of the building. Not only that, they've got to catch each baby three times, before the little tyke finally bounces into the ambulance and safety. The thing is, if you got really good at catching babies, suddenly two will be thrown out at once, and then three. Every once in a while, of course, you'll drop one, which will go \*splat\* on the pavement and then reappear in the upper right hand corner, equipped with tiny little wings. If you drop three babies, you have to hang up your stretcher.

Mr. Greene called back a few minutes later. "Hey, did you get it?" he asked somewhat breathlessly. "I've got a couple stories I think you'll like," I said. "But the one with the switch in it is called 'The Rocket'." "'The Rocket,' yeah, I got it. When was that published?" I told him almost exactly thirty years ago, in February, 1951. "Fe brew air e," I heard him say, his typewriter keeping pace in the background. He typed slowly. "Nine teen fif tea one. Right. It's held up pretty good, has it?" I agreed that it had held up pretty good. "Right," he said, typing out another sentence. "Hey, this Bradbury guy is kind of a genius, isn't he? What else has he done?" I told Greene about Bradbury's plays--"Any of them ever produced on Broadway?" "Off-Broadway," I answered--and his movie scripts. (I mentioned Moby Dick; I didn't mention It Came From Outer Space.) I talked about Icarus Montgolfier Wright ("Hey! How do you spell that? Ih car russ Mont golf e er...yeah, got it."), which I referred to offhand as "An allegory about the development of flight."

"An allegory about the development of light, huh? Hey, that's great." Tap tap tap taptaptap tapapapaptap. "Let's get back to that later. What else can you tell me about him, you know, like off-the-wall stuff?"

My customers were looking at me with a somewhat pained fascination. "Say, hold on for a minute, okay? I've got to make a sale." I put him on hold. "This is Mr. Carlton Greene," I said. "Of People magazine. He wants to know about Ray Bradbury." I sold a copy of Sword of the Lictor, by Gene Wolfe. I sold a copy of Twilight Zone magazine. I took Mr. Greene off hold. "Right. Off-the-wall Stuff. Well, he doesn't like to fly," I said.

"Doesn't like to fly, right. Hey, I thought that was the other guy, the science writer--" Isaac Asimov, I said. "yeah, that one." Actually, it's both of them; they both write about the future, and both of them are firmly rooted in 1937. "Any reason for that?" Mr. Greene asked. I told him I didn't know about Asimov, but Bradbury didn't like machinery. He didn't have a driver's license. "Hey, that's great. Yeah, that's the kind of stuff I want." Mr. Carlton Greene (of...oh, never mind) was fairly easy to please.

After a time we returned to the photograph that started the whole thing. "Well, you see," said Greene, "I took Bradbury down to the Herbst Theater and had him standing in front of a lighting panel, which looks futuristic, you know, and I figured we could work it into one of his stories..."

"Hold it," I said. "You took his picture in front of a light panel, and you're trying to work it into one of his stories?" Yeah, said Greene. "But for Christ's sake! The guy's been working in the theater for over thirty years, he had one of his first plays selected for Best One-Act Plays of 1947-48, and..." "Hold it," said Greene. "'Best One-act...' Is that 'Best' or 'The Best'?" "'Best'," I said. "Right....'Plays of...' What Year was that? 1947-48? Right." Tap tap. "Has he done any stage work on any of this? I mean, backstage, directing, you know." I said I didn't know but thought maybe

he had.

We talked a little more. Yeah, a crater on the moon named Dandelion Crater. He was a "consultant" for city planning, but I didn't know what that meant. Religious. Nostalgic. Likes Hemingway. Right. "I wanna tell you, what's going to happen with this, see. See, we got a local here, this girl, see, and she's got to approve everything before it goes back east. Like, if she likes it, she okays the photos and they get sent back, and if they like it, then they ask for more copy, see? It'll just be a paragraph in about two or three weeks if it happens. But you've been a lot of help. That guy Bradbury, he's really a genius, isn't he?"

I said yeah. I said goodbye. I replaced the receiver. "That," I said, "was Mr. Carlton Greene, of People magazine."

###

=====

Dear Miss Manners:

This may sound silly, but I'm serious. When someone suffers a particularly embarrassing accident in front of you and many others, what is the socially appropriate response? My husband and I got into an argument about this. We recently visited Boston, and while we were there, we attended a large party where everyone was elegantly dressed. At the party, a lady in a low-cut gown tripped, stumbled, lurched across a table, falling face first into a bowl of guacamole dip, and in the process "popped out" of her top. After an initial stunned silence, practically everyone in the room burst out laughing, even though it was obvious that the lady was terribly embarrassed. Then the hostess rushed over to help her and ushered her upstairs.

After we left the party, I criticized my husband for laughing and told him I thought it was very bad manners. But he said that it was not impolite for people to laugh at something like that as long as they meant no harm and didn't "overdo" it. I said it was inconsiderate of the person's feelings to laugh at all. He said it's the social custom. Could you settle the argument?

Gentle Reader:

What do you mean "something like that"? Miss Manners doubts that there is anything in the world like an elegantly dressed Bostonian lurching across the room and diving face first into a guacamole dip while simultaneously disengaging her bodice from her bosom. Therefore, Miss Manners has a wee bit of trouble preparing a general rule for dealing with this eventuality. Nor, if she were your husband, would she attempt to justify a reaction on grounds other than direct cause and effect.

One might try to ignore a less spectacular accident. If, say, it were avocado dip, rather than guacamole, and the lady had merely trailed her sleeve in it, one could pretend not to have noticed. To pretend not to have noticed a performance such as you have described--even if it were humanly possible--would be to suggest that the lady did it all the time and her friends have gotten used to it. It is far better to comfort her later by telling stories of your own about hilariously embarrassing accidents you have survived.

Judith Martin, Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly  
Correct Behavior, page 468-469





#### AUNTIE MAKES AN AFGHAN

The last time (which was the first time) I was an Aunt, I was so overwhelmed by the responsibility that the reality occurred before I was capable of doing more than putting a few pastel lazy-daisy flowers on some plain infant undershirts. However, I was ashamed, because this went against my notions of the function of an Aunt, and I determined to do better, next time, if there was one.

Well, there was. My brother and his wife announced that not only had they been thinking of parenthood, but they had achieved a positive beginning. This time, I vowed, I was going to be ahead of the game.

James said, "Nothing silly," and Jan said, "Nothing pink," and I said, "I'll try."

What they really needed, I thought, was a baby blanket of some kind: simple, yet tasteful; something that could later be used as a knee covering or a dog blanket or a car wax buffer.

My knitting is of the variety which always ends up looking like medieval armor, no matter what pattern or colors I use. And if one needs medieval armor, that's fine, but baby blankets are supposed to look less formidable, even if they are intended to have a Life After Baby.

I thought of crocheting the kid an afghan and was drearily thinking of the fate of my father's crocheted scarf from two Christmases ago (you know, the one that was unintentionally scalloped and never finished) when I happened to pick up on the 59¢ women's magazines at the store, the kind with coupons, and Twenty Easy Low Cost Meals With Leftovers.



The big feature this month, along with the usual beauty makeovers, helpful hints, and a houseplant feature, was, "Make This Beautiful Shawl With Our Wonderful Gadget, FREE INSIDE" or words to that effect.

Well, now, I must say this little magazine has always had my respect. It is the more liberal and positive of that genre and sometimes it has nifty little things tucked away inside it, like embroidery transfers or seed packets.

So I bought it and turned to the proper section. The Wonderful Gadget was a simple cardboard square with evenly spaced notches along the sides. I recognized the principle from my long gone days as a recreation leader. The editors cheerfully admitted that it was cheap, that you could trace your own if you wanted to, and that any fool could do it. They showed photos of absolute acres of soft, fluffy shawls, blankets, scarves, and hats, and threw in some single square raffia coasters for the craft show crowd.

Now, so far, the day had gone rather badly. I was out of step with the rest of the world, and hadn't accomplished a thing except going to the store. I had started a letter which began "Dear j"--and I left it right there. I sought solace with my sewing machine and spent a frustrating hour looking for the sewing machine oil, the booklet with the oiling points, the right size needle, and the pattern for the collar of the shirt I was working on. When I finally started to sew, I forgot that my last project had been the installation of a zipper and so I broke the needle against the foot before it could pierce the cloth.

Ah, I thought, I can't write, and I dare not proceed further in the sewing room. If I try to work in the garden I might chop off a foot and if I go for a walk I might fall down the cliff. I know, I'll start that baby blanket. The materials are soft and harmless and the magazine says that any fool can do it, and I certainly qualify today.

So I gathered the necessities and sat down grimly to begin. I followed the Directions minutely, looping the yarn around the card, making the proper turns and keeping the numbered corners in the exact positions required by the text and shown in the illustrations. Then I tied all of the tedious little slipknots with contrasting yarn, reflecting that bright orange was certainly not the forbidden pink and that the white knots looked rather nice against it.

My housemate wandered by a few times on his way to and from the darkroom and looked askance. I explained patiently that I was making a baby blanket and was in no way to be disturbed. He continued to look askance and I continued to weave and knot. The cat woke up and supervised.

Finally the square was done and I carefully slipped it from the cardboard loom. It was thin, skimpy, and totally lacking in sophistication. It was in no way soft and fluffy. But it was, by gosh, complete in itself and had come out square--no scallops.

It also looked exactly like a crafts project from summer camp and the colors helped this effect along by reminding me strongly of that frozen confection known as a Half and Half, orange and vanilla. My housemate snorted.

Referring to the magazine as objectively as possible, I realized that I had done many things wrong. I had pulled the loops too tightly; I had knotted the knots too firmly. The yarn should have been something fluffy, like mohair, and I should have used the pastels shown in the illustrations or all one color.

I laid the square on the arm of the sofa. The cat looked at it, took pity on me, and sat on it.

(cont. on page 37)



# THE TECHNOCRAT OF THE BREAKFAST TABLE

JON SINGER

## It's Those Tibetans Again, Harry

In the late sixties, in fact, just about the time I got into fandom, I heard a story.

According to this juicy bit of mystic gossip, there was some sect or other in China or Tibet which had a bizarre ritual: a person was set out, naked, in the mountains in the winter, wrapped in a wet sheet. They had to dry out the sheet, by some means which was imputed to be somehow para-normal. I wished I could believe it, at the time, and I wondered, if it were true, just how a person could do such a thing.

It is now 1982, and in Nature (a quietly prestigious British scientific journal, somewhat like our Science) I find a report...certain Tibetan Buddhists (of which we have a large number here in Boulder, and of which there are also a very large number in Seattle) practice something called g Tum-mo Yoga. In this g Tum-mo Yoga, there is a ritual. It is even worse than the story I heard in the sixties, and that surprises me...basically the idea is the same, except that the whole thing is a sort of competition, and goes on from dusk till dawn. As soon as someone gets a sheet dried out, it is dipped in water again, and handed back...whoever dries out the largest number of sheets in the day, wins. (!!!) The report in Nature concerns an investigation of three practitioners of g Tum-mo Yoga living in India, who were asked by the Dalai Lama to assist. If you are a Tibetan Buddhist, and the Dalai Lama asks a favor of you.... The investigators found that these three fellows could voluntarily produce a temperature rise of up to 0.3 degrees celcius in their finger and toes. Voluntarily! We think highly of people who, doing biofeedback, can get 3 or 4 degrees C. I guess that if you practice enough, you actually CAN learn to do things like drying out wet sheets in your backyard, naked amid the snow at 2300 meters altitude... moreover, it doesn't seem to require any para-normal assistance. I am left, however, with a question: it takes a fair amount of energy to dry out a sheet. It takes a lot more to dry out, say, ten sheets. I wonder just how much those guys eat. "Hey, lady, dry yer sheets for ya?" Little does the unsuspecting housewife realize that the pay for this handy exercise is half a ton of potatoes!

Incidentally, the investigators report that "The subjects in the current experiment exhibited a greater capacity to warm fingers than has been previously recorded during hypnosis and after biofeedback training." (Seven references cited; if you are curious, either write me, or check with your noble editors, to whom I have sent a copy of the article.)

## Drawing on the Right Side of the Outter: My Continuing Experiences in Cognitive Mode-shifting

I was recently given a copy of Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain. This book both delights and annoys me, and I have decided that it is worthwhile for me to explain my feelings. First, the source of my annoyance: the author explains some of the results of split-brain experiments, and comments that people seem, in the main, to use two major cognitive modes. One mode is relatively nonverbal, synthetic, simultaneous, timeless,

integrative, and spatial. The other is verbal, analytic, sequential, dissective, and spaceless (as 'twere). This is fine: I am sure that many of you can recognize parts of your experience in those descriptions. Moreover, if you can't, that's ok as well. What bothers me is the fact that even after she points out that these are localized in the right and left hemispheres to a large extent in most people (but not entirely, and not in everyone), she proceeds to give exercises in which one does things like "Think about the Left mode. Put your hand on the Left side of your head to help you localize this."

I burn. I quiver with rage. Granted, my reaction is out of proportion to the magnitude of the injustice, but there it is. I am royally ticked off by this. Nobody has put me in a CAT scanner or an NMR scanner, nobody knows which side of me is which (by the way: a few people seem to have language on both sides; this is not even mentioned in the book, though it is stated that some lefthanded people whose mothers are also lefthanded seem to have reversed cerebral organization), and NOBODY is going to make me lateralize anything I don't want to lateralize (NB: lateralize--assign to one side or another--in this case, assign given mental functions to one or another side of the brain). I guess I would be less put off if she hadn't devoted several pages to pointing out how lefthanders are despised in many cultures, and how our language and many others discriminate against them. At this point, I give you three guesses about my own handedness and the first two don't count.

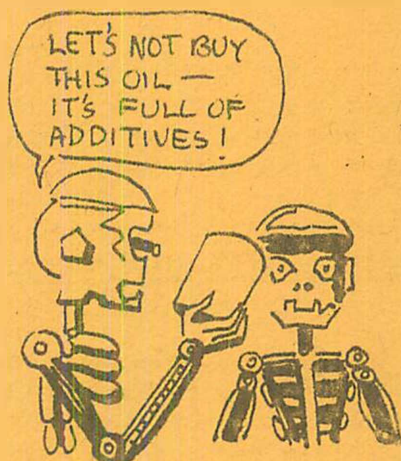
Enough complaint. The main point of that particular section of the book, by the way, is to develop facility in switching between the two modes. Why learn to switch? Because the synthetic/simultaneous/holistic mode is the one that you need for drawing, but the sequential/analytic/verbal mode is the one you get taught to use in school, and it is the one which seems to dominate in most of us most of the time. Moreover, if some people are predominately simultaneous, they can happily learn to switch modes too. More flexibility is generally a very pleasant and useful attribute. I am really pleased with the increased ease of switching that the book is helping me develop. I am also getting a lot better at drawing things, and this is still early days: I am only at about page 60. I would recommend this book without reservation to anyone who is known to have ordinary righthanded cerebral organization, and with only the one reservation I noted to anyone else who wants either to learn to draw better, or who wants improved cognitive flexibility.

By the way, in those of us whose brains are not split, it would seem to be possible for us to learn to operate in both modes simultaneously on occasion, and that should be a very interesting extension to one's ordinary capabilities...I am looking forward to trying that. I am also looking forward to further improvements in my drawing ability as I continue to go through the book. If I get good enough, you may see some stuff in art-shows, which should be recommendation enough in itself.

(Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain, Betty Edwards, 1979, J.P. Tarcher, Inc., \$9.95, Paperback, 207 pages.)

Late Flash!! Regarding the first part of this column: I have a possible new Blue Food--blue potatoes. I have some on order to test. You'll read my report in these pages.

###





# WHICH CAME FIRST, THE CHICKEN OR THE EGG?

DAVID BRATMAN

When discussing vague philosophical questions like this one, it's always a good idea to begin by defining your terms: what chicken? And what egg? If you hand me a chicken and an egg and ask me which came first, I'll run laboratory tests on them. (Never you mind that I don't have a laboratory; this is all theoretical.) Your standard grocery-store chicken was probably hatched before your standard grocery-store egg was laid, seeing as it takes longer to produce a full-grown chicken than a full-grown egg. So from this point of view, the answer varies in each individual case, but it's usually "the chicken."

See how easy it is? And we've only just started.

You're probably saying, the puzzle doesn't refer to this chicken and this egg, but to the basic conceptual "chicken" and "egg." The Platonic archetypes, if you want to get fancy about it.

Well, that makes sense. Nobody is actually interested in comparing the ages of individual chickens and eggs. They are just using the question as a metaphor for the insoluble problems of life. If you ask someone an unanswerable question, you're likely to get the reply, "That's like asking which came first, the chicken or the egg"--or, more simply, that there is no answer.

But there is an answer. It's merely necessary to think about it.

The one serious description of the chicken/egg problem that I've seen went something like:

Take a chicken. Any average chicken.

It hatched from an egg.

Which was laid by a chicken.

Which hatched from an egg.

Which was laid by a chicken...

And so on.

Apparently, the idea of this description is to boggle the mind with this long chain extending back through time, like an infinite series of mirrors reflecting infinite pairs of chickens and eggs. But there's a fallacy in this infinite series. The chain does extend back quite a ways, but not infinitely. There has to be a first point somewhere. So: which came first, the chicken or the egg?

There is no reason to be puzzled by this. You believe in evolution, don't you? Chickens are birds, and birds are descended from the dinosaurs.

And dinosaurs laid eggs. Recognizable eggs, long before such a thing as a chicken existed

in the world.

The answer to the question, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?", then, is the egg.

Hold on a moment. We aren't finished yet.

Maybe you don't believe in evolution. Perhaps you are content with some sacred text to the effect that God created the beasts of the field and the birds of the air, but nothing about their eggs. (Actually, the chicken does not fall into either of these categories, being a bird of the field, but the broad generalization is clearly intended to cover such minor quibbles.) This shouldn't be much of a puzzle either. If the birds were created, but their eggs weren't, then the first egg was laid by the first chicken, and the Biblical answer to our question is the chicken. This could lead to some wonderful theological arguments between theists and atheists on this burning question.

There is another matter to be dealt with. Some people aren't satisfied with either of these lines of reasoning. They say the question is really meant to be "Which came first, the chicken or the chicken egg?" I consider this to be a different question. For one thing, instead of focusing attention on the beginning point of that hypnotizing series of mirrors, this question leads the mind to thought about the details of the evolutionary process. For another, an "egg" and a "chicken egg" are not necessarily the same thing, and if you don't specify, you shouldn't complain when someone gives you a duck egg instead.

But this different question is a good one, so let's try answering it anyway. For the first question, the definition of "chicken" didn't really matter. Somewhere along the line the dinosaurs developed into chickens, and as long as it actually happened, it doesn't matter where. But for this question it matters a lot indeed. Let us assume that, somewhere along the line of descent, a non-chicken animal laid an egg that hatched into an animal recognizably different from itself, one that we can call a chicken. Here's the schematic of it:

Non-chicken--

Egg--

Chicken.

The egg is still an egg. To look at, it might not seem different from any other eggs of the non-chicken species, but it is different inside. We know what laid it, and what it will hatch into, and they're different things. So, is it a chicken egg, or not?

Consider a similar situation, in reverse. Once there was a children's fantasy novel called The Enormous Egg, by Oliver Butterworth. It told of a domestic chicken that laid an enormous egg which hatched into a triceratops. With cheerily slapdash biology, this was called "regression." Think about that egg for a minute. It was laid by a chicken, but it could not possibly be called a chicken egg. The change in the genes took place in the parent chicken, and was only carried over into the egg.

On that basis, I would draw the tentative conclusion that our semantic definition of "a --- egg" is based on what it hatches into, not what laid it. It's hard to be sure, because the problem doesn't occur in everyday life; and in any case, most of our domestic chicken eggs are sterile and won't hatch into anything (except perhaps an omelet). But if I am correct, then the answer to this question is the egg.



# STOCHASTICITIES

GREG BENFORD

I was visiting Charlie Brown recently, at the vast citadel where Locus slouches into being, rough beast that it is. Phil Dick's death was on our minds, but after the somber silence passed I began to think of other matters--of obituaries, status, and Locus-space. I slyly asked him how much of a writeup I'd get when my time came.

"Well, if your fame rested on editing Void, not much of course...but now you've won two Nebulas and some other awards...ummm..."

"I'd make the front page, right?"

"Probably."

"One column or two? And what about a picture?"

"Ummm...BSFA in 1971. Campbell Award, too, right? Let's see..."

"Well?"

"One column for sure." He looked away. "Picture, too. We've got a couple good shots of you in the, uh, morgue. Yeah, I'll throw in the picture."

"Thanks, but...gee...only one column? How can I get two?"

He looked at me sideways. "Ummm...hard to see how.... Y'know, there's lots of news to cover."

"Look, we're old friends, Charlie. Remember when Locus was just a mimeoed rag, reporting on traffic accidents that happened on the way to cons and who married who in New York and other hot stuff? I wrote the first big review of Locus, right? We're talking tradition. I mean, we got roots going here, Charlie--"

"Huh." He looked at me out of the corners of his eyes. "This is a business, though, Greg." A pause. "Of course," he murmured casually, "if it were a suicide..."

\*\*\*\*\*

I was watching a Japanese monster flick yesterday with my son. He'd never seen Godzilla before. These obvious miniature creatures were shooting laser beams at each other and downing jet planes and wallowing around in glistening mud and terrifying the mere humans and it suddenly occurred to me: why do the Japanese have a virtual corner on this market? My son had a theory: "They're small people, Dad. Bound to be more scared of huge things."

I mulled on and struck a further thought: why, in all these movies, does no one ever say, "Let's drop a tactical nuke on the damned thing!"? Would that be too easy? Or is it the fact that the Japanese don't want to think about what is to them a very real experience?

Fantasy is supposed to take us away from reality, after all. (Sf does more than that, using

fantastic elements to comment on real issues, but let's not get into definitions, Meyer.) I suspect that the rest of us can think about nuclear war in a rather more abstract way.

Sitting there, watching the miniature battleships being snapped in half as waves sloshed unbelievably (the easiest way to spot special effects), I understood a small bit of international moods and unspoken patterns of thought. Geez, I said to myself, this could be pretty deep stuff. My son didn't even look up from the screen when I pointed this out. I guess he was thinking it over.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'd like to see a revised version of Star Wars. In my movie, Luke and the others would be provided with dialog about class warfare, the labor theory of value, economic imperialism and other Marxist homilies. Darth Vader, on the other hand, would laugh cruelly at the death of millions, and then invoke free enterprise and democratic values. Parallels with Central America would be unavoidable. I'd change not a frame of the film, just some of the talk. I wonder how people would feel about it then?

\*\*\*\*\*

Why are fans addicted to putdowns?

I've always wondered. I came into fandom in the archetypal way, reading The Stuff in junior high school and noticing the lettercols in Imagination (no snotty highclass reader, I) and writing away for fanzines reviewed in Mari Wolf's column and getting more and more wound up in that paper world. All this was in counterpoint with the moves about the planet my family made, from Tokyo to Atlanta to Germany to Dallas. No doubt this periodic uprooting destroyed the normal social roots that make typical teenagers, and made fandom a more permanent kind of connection. Of course, I had my twin brother, and I could ruminate here about how publishing a fanzine had a sibling-bonding role, too, if I wanted to wax all sociological on you.

I also followed a familiar pattern in my tastes. I had by this time (age 13) noticed a certain verbal fluency and quick-wittedness. (I can still never remember a joke, but give me a straight line and I can make some sort of play on it.) In the shifting sands of high school society, my weapons were few. I had ordinary looks and no particular social grace. My better-than-average athletic ability at baseball, football and other sports was quite effectively squashed by my dislike of showing up for scheduled practices. (Also, I got injured in football early on, which saved me a lot of eventual pain, I'm sure.) I discovered no endearing warmth in my character, no class-clown extroversion, no bent for "leadership" (a trait I never did understand).

So I became Class Cynic. It was easy. I'd been trained by the Derogations of A Pas, the slicing fmz review columns of the '50s, the skilled dagger-thrusts of Redd Boggs.

I was making up for my inadequacies, of course--every adolescent has plenty to cover up. I extended my fannish techniques into the supposedly real world of high school, and contrariwise, that experience fed back into fandom. My editorials for Void up until about #14 (the first issue coedited with Ted White, coming in my senior year of high school) were rather mellow; after that, they got increasingly barbed.

A quick, sharp tongue keeps many at bay. Even bullies, I learned. I noted that often the people with this ability would keep off to themselves, forming a little elite. I didn't mind being in that crowd--it was comfortable and ego-massaging.

Such people often lacked some of the other social talents, so they leaned on their crutches



all the more. So did I. It became a reflex tactic, learned best in junior high--a way of defining status and superiority. This primitive primate-style elite-formation takes place with rather subtle verbal and body-language forms. (I still see it in the exalted of academe, too. I attended the annual University of California conference on sf this year, at the Riverside campus, and noted the best critics in the nation using the same maneuvers and slight shifts of tone to set themselves off. There is a whole armory of techniques, including the leisurely, drawled putdown and the condescending nod of the head. Most users are probably no longer conscious of using them by now.)

As a surgeon friend of mine says, it's easier to cut than to sew. That can run away with you in your teenage years, lead you into a perpetual wry stance. You lean toward style more than substance, and in the worst stances see people as allies more than friends.

In fandom, it leads to slashing reviews and lettercols in which things are said more for their effect than for their meaning. I plead guilty to having done all these things.

\*\*\*\*\*

And yet, and yet.... I made few enemies in fandom--or at least, few that are still around. Odd.

When I made notes about this piece, I wrote down a few words about each topic, without knowing the connection. I think I see it now.

I doubt that anyone but a fan would catch the humor in Charlie Brown's sly last word.

What kind of grownup, professorial type will ponder the depths of Japanese monster flicks?

Who would bother to relate Star Wars to El Salvador?

I spent most of the 1970s working intermittently on a novel. It was sf and I kept thinking through those years, that a writer I'd never met might be surprised--if he ever read it--to find that it made connections to real-world concerns we both shared. I looked forward to the year when the book was finished and I could send him a copy. I didn't imitate or adapt any techniques this other writer used, understand--but I knew there was a connection.

The book was called Timescape and it was published in hardback on July 1, 1980. On that same day C.P. Snow died in London. His copy arrived a week later.

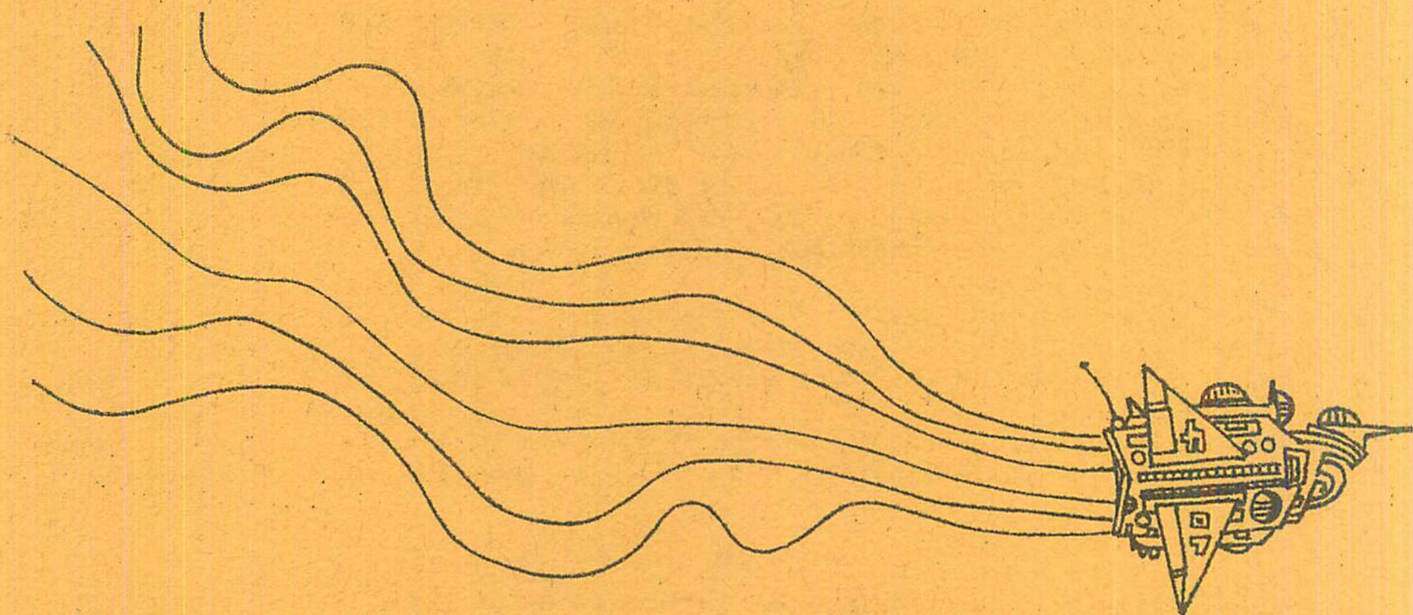
I felt about it the way I do about many fans. Ships in the night. Names like Vernon McCain and F. Towner Laney, presences you felt through the words.

Both McCain and Laney were quick with the stiletto wit. Neither suffered fools gladly. I see now that I had gotten a partial equation into my head, back in high school. I had seen Boyd Raeburn as a written analog of the cynically adept elitists in my social crowd. There's an element of the truth there.

Mostly, though, it's false. Fandom is a place where you can find your own natural circle and be as biting as you like--but it is independent of careerism. That takes the true sting out of it, for me. It returns a certain lift to the sentences, an echo of Addison and Steele.

Fandom can teach you social lessons of varying worth, as I have slowly learned to my discomfort. But it retains a certain quality I have found nowhere else. Here, you can be nonlinear and playful and silly, and see some fraction of the world again as a game, undiminished by life's unremitting earnest designs.

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Richard Ellington      What really stirred me to write was to stick in my two cents worth as  
144 Irwin Court      addendum to TEV's "Uffish Thots" on prehistoric days in FY fandom  
Oakland, CA 94503      (Neanderthal or Cro-Magnon depending on which side of the bed you're  
                                 sitting on). I did enjoy it but I kept spotting slight errors and  
oversights which I thot I should point out. This is not meant to fault Ted: parts of the  
earlier days he wasn't in New York and I have to point out frankly that my memory is  
probably no better than his and maybe I'm remembering wrong. Anyway...

Of course, you realize New York had long had a reputation in fandom as a hotbed of radical  
politics, though by the time we surfaced in the mid-50s, Futurism was just a memory and,  
since it was McCarthy Time in the U.S., most of the former Futurians did not at all appre-  
ciate being reminded of what they considered their "salad days" of flirtation with radical  
ideas, and in fact found us a bit of an embarrassment as we kept reminding them. There  
were exceptions of course, notably Fred Pohl and Cyril Kornbluth who would argue Marxism  
vs. Anarchism with us in good spirit and without much care about whether the FBI was  
looking over their shoulders.

A number of fans were indeed active members of the Libertarian League, at that time the  
only anarchist organization on the N.A. continent (it finally broke up around '52 or so).  
We also made up a social grouping that met quite regularly in the grimy basement of a  
small apartment building in the village that Dave Mason was super of. Out of this came the  
Coup Group which published several issues of a fanzine under that title--mimeod with lino-  
block covers by the late Dave Foley. As befitted the McCarthy era, almost everybody used  
pennames. I will refrain from embarrassing anybody by mentioning who Fearless Liberal  
was. It also later spawned the Fanarchists, which was really mostly a joke, though we  
carried it off well, replete with red armbands with a winged bullet on them (mimeod cloth,  
believe it or not), emblem of the Assassin's Guild in an sf story popular about that time.  
We sort of controlled the F.Y. Science Fiction Circle too, though it was more a question of  
us being willing to do the work necessary rather than any kind of a power cabal. To out-  
siders there was a very definite division socially between the wild bohemian young people  
of the Circle and the "straights" as personified by ESFA, the Eastern Science Fiction  
Association, which met in Newark. If you were in the middle of it, however, it wasn't  
quite as easy to see. There was much crossing of "lines" and very little animosity, most  
of it directed against the amazing Calvin Thomas Beck and his mother who were--well,  
pretty strange. I'd been active in ESFA myself--even secretary of that august group for a



# CROSS CURRENTS

while--and considered the basically quieter, older people who were the core of its membership my friends and still do. We would all troupe over annually for ESFA's large open meeting because, like most fans, we did have serious interests and appreciated certain aspects of sercondom, though admittedly never to the exclusion of the important things in life, like bheer.

The upper west side of NY was, in '56, pretty much the epicentre of fannish living for quite a while. We had Riverside Dive, a slant shack inhabited by Bill Donaho, Chuck Freudenthal, Art Saha, Dan Curran, myself and, later, Pat, my wife. A few blocks down was Toad Hall with Lin Carter, Joe McKenna and Joe Schaumberger, and a few blocks up was Idiot's Castle--not really a slant shack but an older building where large apartments had been broken up into smaller units. At one point Bob Silverberg, Harlan Ellison and Ron & Cindy Smith lived there and possibly a couple of more fen. After the breakup of the Dive (we were finally evicted after one particularly horrendous party which culminated on a Sunday morning with Donaho opening all the windows and playing the 12<sup>th</sup> Overture on his massive hi-fi at full volume), things remained fragmented until the Punnery appeared. We (Pat and I) lived a few blocks away on East 11th St. and the Libertarian League/IWW hall was also nearby.

The Libertarian League dinners were regular monthly affairs and were simply our way of raising the hall rent each month. We'd taken over their preparation from the old timers and always served a paella, varying it occasionally with spaghetti. They were very warm, friendly affairs, and I miss them. And yes, early on we had identified fandom, particularly fanzine fandom, as a functioning anarchy in a microcosm, particularly as opposed to club fandom, which seemed to have almost built into it the seeds of its own peculiar form of Parkinsonism.

The drug scene was pretty funny, really. I'd got into doing a little hash years before when I was in the army in the Philippines and later, when I started socializing with some West Indians in New York, it was an easy transition to Ganja. Purely a social diversion on my part, and we did indeed keep quiet about it. I used to repack regular cigarettes half-and-half with tobacco and grass and smoke them at Dive parties and nobody in that supposedly hip milieu ever asked me for a toke.

Donaho and Dan Curran were the main delvers into peyote. It was quite legal to import

the flat of plants from Texas at the time and use the stuff--they just hadn't got around to criminalizing it. The problem was that nobody knew quite how to prepare the stuff and for months the Munnery was a regular sty as they boiled, broiled, fried, and eventually baked the buttons. And of course most of the users got deathly sick from eating the stuff and there was a good bit of bad tripping. Great results were touted but most of them were pretty temporary. As Donaho later put it, "Peyote makes you see a lot of the things that are wrong with you--but that doesn't mean you're necessarily going to do anything about any of them." Dan Curran, at one point, took an immense dose, and disappeared mentally for a very long time. When he came back down he was very phlegmatic about it--except that he had discovered he had a soul and could point to where it was located--that was in him. He did not know or care if you or anyone else had a soul. But that's Dan Curran. I know most people assumed I was in on this too but I have to tell you that neither Pat nor I ever took any peyote--still haven't, as a matter of fact. Just never got around to it.

((Idiot's Castle was replaced by some sort of religious day school. Suzle and I lived across the street from it in the mid-'70s. jak))

Gary Deindorfer  
447 Bellevue Ave., #9-B  
Trenton, NJ 08611

What can I say about Dan Steffan's cover to #7 that has not already been said? I don't know, because I don't know what has already been said about it. It is full of detail and has a meaty feel to it as though you could dig your fork into the critturs and have them for dinner. I am left to wonder about the meaning of "X-17" on the plane and the 17 on the robot's torso. Probably some secret meaning Steffan is trying to convey to the rest of us.

Ted White's account of the Munnery days fills me in on an area of fanlore I have always wanted to know more about. His solid, rather workmanlike prose is well suited to this sort of substantial subject. Reminds me to say that about 5 years ago Dave van Ronk was being interviewed "live" on the Sunday night folkmusic show on radio from Philadelphia. Since he was once involved to some extent with the Munnery I made a call to the station and said, "Tell Dave hello from the Munnery gang." Gene Shay, the host, passed the phone message from the girl I talked to, later asked Dave, "Somebody called and said hello from the Munnery gang. Does that mean anything to you?" "Yes," said Dave a little wistfully.

Ted on the communal dinner he had in 1957 reminds me to say that what I like about communal dinners is how everyone digs their hands in the kettles of food and rubs the nutritional material all over their bodies. A real feeling of sharing comes about as a result. Sometimes experiences of Oneness even occur.

Let me wipe these boiled carrots off my stomach and continue with this missive....

Paula Lieberman  
P.O. Box 942  
Billerica, MA 01821

George Flynn (in your lettercol) may have "wasted all those years as a mundane" but he's certainly been making up for it with a vengeance. People have considered passing him from Worldcon to Worldcon every year, to do such things as count site selection ballots, edit fanzines, act as secretary...but his latest achievement is a very dubious one--he would seem to be fandom's best mouse eradicator. You've probably read the description of George eradicating mice by stomping on them. Poor George, all those years spent in chemistry only to wind up returning to mechanical methods...

The antifreeze in ice cream keeps the ice cream creamy rather than full of ice crystals. A cave of natural ice crystals is a thing of beauty, but ice cream full of ice crystals lacks a certain consumer appeal.



John D. Owen  
4, Highfield Close  
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U.K.

Star Turn was obviously Ted White's long reminiscences of early fan activity in New York. This is White at his relaxed best, with interesting comment and ideas flowing into and out of his general storyline. It's definitely worth a number of reads that one. It amazes me to see the other side of White, after hearing all about the more rumbunctious side via British zines, and the one issue of Pong I've seen. Ted the Knife is a different kettle of fish entirely, and one I'm not sure I get along with at all.

Jerry's bit on the Britzines conreports was quite interesting. It's always been a bugbear of mine that the conreports that have appeared in zines in the last five years (when I've been involved, albeit peripherally in fandom) have been pretty boring. The reason is now clear--they are still striving to do the same things that were done in those mid-seventies fanzines, and getting further out from the starting point all the time.

That looking-backwardness pervades a lot of British fandom at the moment, to the exclusion of forward movement (where to? the stars, where else?). As a faned who is busily trying to bring out new faces, rather than relying on the "Old Guard" (silly title, but it seems to have stuck) for inspiration, I deplore this attitude, since it stifles any sense of innovation. There's a lot of good writing going on in British fanzines, but far too often it's done to trivial ends.

((John edits The Crystal Ship, a mixture of book reviews, humor, and off-beat journalism. It gives the impression of existing in an English fandom quite other than the one we know (to say nothing of the Welsh). Jak))

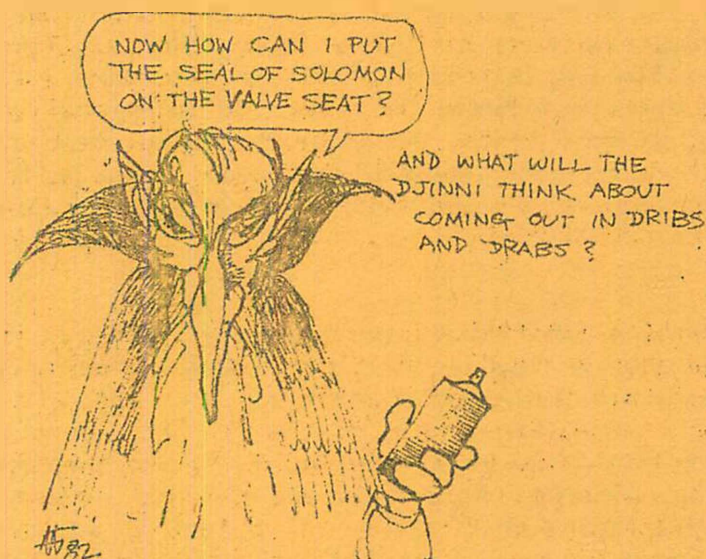
Jan Brown  
Cataclysm  
1212 Washtenaw Court  
Ann Arbor, MI 48104

You're right--at least around here, fan GoHs tend to be convention people. The concom figures that they want someone the attendees will at least have heard of, and all too many fanzine fans aren't known very well outside the pages of fanzines. It's sad--someone nominated Moshe Feder for Fan GoH at Confusion, and the general reaction at the meeting was, "Who?" He didn't get elected, either. Now, the fan who did get chosen has contributed a lot to Midwestern fandom and deserves recognition--but something has gone wrong when con people and fanzine people have never heard of each other. Maybe we should think about doing Midwestside Story instead of Mimeo Man.

Where have all the neos gone, indeed? It's not just the influx of mediafen; it's not D&D; it's not costumes or weapons or apas or filksinging. It's not confandom's fault entirely; it's not entirely fanzine fandom's fault. It's everybody's fault.

There's a lot of either-or in fandom; eclecticfen soon find out they don't really fit anywhere. Fanzines are increasingly inward-turning, too given to self-examination and self-defense. (Are fanzine fans elitist snobs? Why call us that just because we like being with our own kind? Everybody has preferences.) Con-running all too often becomes a one-way power trip. Costumes? Wear a costume at a con these days and you're branded as a mediot. Filks? Let it be known that you filk, and you'll really get sneered at. Even in filk-fandom, there are divisions over East Coast vs. Midwest vs. Minneapolis--I'm the only person I know that's equally at ease in a Midwestern-type filksing and a Minneapolis music party.

With so many distinctions, it's hard not to feel one ought to take sides. I hate sounding like Mary Sue Sunshine, but if we don't start cross-fertilizing a little, fandom--our fandom--is going to die of inbreeding, and the mediots will take over.



Ted White  
1014 N. Tuckahoe St.  
Falls Church, VA 22046

I think you gave Luke McGuff a good answer, but could have said more. Like, who cares if no neos are producing fanzines right now? Actually, that's not true...most of the fanzine producers in Australia strike me as pretty close to the neo stage, and new fans are still turning up in Britain...but suppose it was: what difference does it make? New fans inevitably turn up, often when least expected, and it's not like fandom is dwindling, anyway. We have the advantage of more than fifty years of accumulated fannish talent now--a rich mix that covers many generations and talents--and we ought to be encourag-

ing it and not slinging shit at it because it belongs to some previous-and-ought-to-be-buried era. I mean, when I became a fan there was little of this generational nonsense: once you got past the exploratory stages you knew that "fandom" was all the fans then active, irrespective of when they became fans or how long they'd been fans. The ranking talents, the BNFs, didn't belong to any single era: the Big Names in 1951 were Tucker, Burbee, Laney, Art Rapp, Redd Boggs, Lee Hoffman, Willis...etc. Soon Dean Grennell would join their ranks--within less than a year of entering fandom. You know, it suddenly occurs to me that I was a fan before Grennell was...something I'd never considered before, mostly because I recognized immediately that he was better at fanac than I was then.

Well, anyway, my point is I hope obvious: the real pleasure to be gotten from fanzines and fanzine fandom is considerably enhanced by the participation of older, more mature talents. I mean, I'd rather read a Warhoon or a Tappen than a Rune.

((Hypothetical question: if someone told you there were no new musicians and no new music, would you tell them just to enjoy the ones we've got already, or would you wonder why it might be true? Your example from the '50s includes several people who were relatively new fans and already DNFs. Why was it different then? And you don't mention fans who were neos, and of no particular merit then, but became BNFs: you, Silverberg, etc. Where are their equivalents today? (I do think they're there. I hope so.) I want all the older, more experienced fans to participate, but I want the neos, too, for these reasons: 1) They are the experienced fans in training. 2) They enrich the mix, with new viewpoints and experiences; and keep fandom from being the same people running the same riffs all the time (or do you want nothing but the same Chuck Berry, Ella Fitzgerald and Mozart stuff all the time, to extend the music metaphor). 3) They prove, by their presence, this fanac we do is as interesting as we think it is. We could be publishing these fanzines from blind habit (and probably are), but it's new to neos. If they like it, well, it must be okay, after all. (That is an exaggeration. The biggest thrill of this issue was the letter from Dick Ellington. If an old fan and tired like that thinks Mainstream is okay...) The subject is probably too complex and tricky for a lettercol response, and I should write an editorial about it sometime. Everyone, including me, is, and has to be, over generalizing.



Dave Locke  
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Jerry, I couldn't believe my eyes at first. They bugned out when I read you endorsing the creation of more convention reports. Take vitamins, Jerry. Build up your strength. Issue a disclaimer; tell everyone you were momentarily overcome by fever. I can visualize the entry in some future-history book: "In the early 1980s, Jerry Kaufman singlehandedly instigated a rising tide of convention reports written by all sorts of people just as much of fanzine fandom was thinking that the convention report was all but stamped out. Jerry was stripped of his Trufan status and was subsequently lynched by a group of disgruntled faneds.

Who is this "Jerry Haufman" who writes an editorial that sounds just like you, Jerry? Whoever he is, we must expose him at once and show that you didn't actually come out and bemoan "the lack of con reports." We'll arrest him for impersonating you, and charge him on moperly with intent to gawk. Perhaps we could then banish him to the N3F, and laugh this thing off. We must move quickly. ((Re: "Haufman", well, now, actually what happened is that it really was a "K", but the lettering guide moved slightly and the way it would print was not apparent until we were actually printing that stencil. I did wonder at the time if anyone would think I had misspelled Jerry's name. I mean, aside from changing the title of someone's article in Spaning once by accident, I have a pretty good track record as the lettering guide person of our crack editorial staff...svt))

Avedon Carol  
4409 Woodfield Road  
Kensington, MD 20895

I think you're quite right, Jerry, about the number of American cons having an adverse influence on the number of conreps (or at least good ones). I know they (cons) do tend to blend together for me after a while, which is certainly one of the things that discourages me from writing reports about them.

I remember when I wrote "Life Is Too Complex (Part 1)," which was about my 1976 trip to MidAmeriCon--via Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey Circus (then moving up the West Coast). I tried to get a good conrep out of it, but it ended up being about the circus because it had to be. Little that was printable happened--at least, little that hadn't happened at every other con I'd ever been to. So, the circus, because it was something people are often interested in and not many people do have the opportunity to spend two weeks with them studying the show and hanging out in Clown Alley.

Then there was my MichuoCon report, which was fictitious and which was easy to write because I could use the pun on the name of the town which was once reputed to produce the best dope in the world to create a theme--around which I wrote what was really a conrep of the 1977 Disclave. Which would have been pretty dull had I just written it straight.

So Noreascon was easy. It was different from most of the cons I'd been going to lately, in that I was mostly meeting new people who I'd known only in print before (something that hasn't happened to me in a long time), and they were from somewhat of a different situation than the one I was used to, and Langford and Edwards can tell good stories, and ...well, of course a lot of strange things happened at Noreascon, too. And by concentrating on a smaller group of people, I managed to shrink the size of the con to something that could fit into an organized picture, something manageable.

HERE'S YOUR PROBLEM.  
WIZENBEAT... IMPOSSIBLE  
ASSUMPTION #5 IS A RESTATEMENT  
OF THE SECOND LAW OF THERMODYNAMICS!



Art Widner  
231 Courtney Lane  
Orinda, CA 94563

I was almost as disappointed with "Choral Interlude" as Mr. Berry was with his debut. I kept expecting some sly sendup of fannish follies, but no it just meandered along like one of those very dull British rivers, and finally gurgled down a storm drain without ever becoming anything more than it appeared to be. Maybe I've just heard too much about the Great John Berry, and this wasn't one of his better efforts. Or maybe I missed something.

I agree with Ethel Lindsay that poking fun at the handicapped is bad form, and that it tends to be done more frequently when the handicap is mental rather than physical. And I agree with Jerry that mendable lapses by normal people, or especially smart people, are fair game. But there is another kind of what seems deliberate, willful stupidity (characterized in fandom as "fuggheadedness") which needs to be examined.

First, is the condition "mendable"? Whatever that means. I have always assumed that it was, along with most fen, and therefore prone to attack the offender without the compunction I would have for one who was simply weak in the upper story. Ted White's account of the retarded Raleigh Evans Multon in Beardmutterings is a good case in point.

Second, if the condition is "mendable" why do we see so many fuggheads who make no attempt whatever to mend their ways; and in fact, seem to resist any attempt whatever to "help" them? Of course, caustic criticism, which is what they usually get, stretches the definition of "help" quite a long way.

So I would suggest that baiting fuggheads, altho it can be a lot of fun, is essentially useless, and possibly cruel, if the fugghead is basically unable to pull himself up by his own fuggstraps, even with the assistance of a launch booster consisting of a good kick in the arse.

"Jaywalking," according to my Webster's New World dictionary, comes from jay, "a foolish or talkative person" in turn from the European Jay, garrulus glandarius. My only wonder is why Lee Hoffman wondered instead of looking it up.

((Mainstream, the fanzine where Fourth Fandom attacks Sixth Fandom! jak))

Anders Bellis  
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113 46 Stockholm, Sweden

The Irish John Berry has always been a top-favorite fanwriter of mine. I can scarcely think of anyone with his ability to amuse and entertain--mind you, I even find him more entertaining than Willis Himself. Willis might have been a better stylist (note that I say "might"), but I have found that the kind of robust fannish humor presented by John Berry in his Berry Factual Articles and Goon-stories, not to mention The Fables of IF, made me laugh more. On many occasions indeed have I been seen with an issue of Retribution (or for that matter any fanzine from the latter part of the fifties or early sixties; I have a feeling that there is no such thing as a fanzine from that era without a Berry-article in it) laughing out loud. I therefore read his article in Mainstream with great pleasure. Even though it is perhaps a little more seriously meant than most of his stuff, it is interesting and well-written.

((I think Art would like some of the older Berry pieces, and hope he finds some someday. Maybe you send him some copies of your favorites, Anders? However, I think you go a little overboard in your praises. It's nice to see such enthusiasm, though. jak))

Ted White's column strikes me as slightly fragmentary; he recalls a lot of incidents from his early fannish life, but there seems to be no overriding purpose in him writing about them. It doesn't seem like he has a point to make, but that he merely likes to write down occasional fond memories that happen to come to him. This doesn't mean that his column



isn't entertaining and well-written; everything he writes is, or nearly everything. But it would certainly have been even better if he had reached some conclusion, or if he had told the full story of one particular thing. As it is now, you get a lot of small fragments, in themselves entertaining and amusing, that don't really have very much to do with each other. Or at least are not presented in that manner.

Jean Weber

C/O CSIRO, P.O. Box 1800  
Canberra City, ACT 2601  
Australia.

M. Beth Komar's article on low-cost long-distance telephone services caused great envy. Do you know it costs something like \$180 just to have a phone connected in Australia, and (particularly if you've never been a subscriber before, or you live in a place that hasn't had phone wires connected), it can typically

take several months at least to get the connection. Then one can start complaining about charges! And since phone bills are quarterly, it's a real shock when it arrives. (Used to be worse; only a year or two ago, phone bills came every six months.) 'Tis good to see private enterprise at work...

F.H. Busby

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Seattle, WA 98119

Ted White has the Great Peyote Flap about right. It was to some extent a spinoff-feud from the 1958 anarchistic overthrow of WSFS, Inc. The corporation was a typical New Yawk Power Grab (concentrate all power in NYC and then fight over it there; similar types

did the same thing to Mensa a few years later). Yeh; when Dr. Christine Moskowitz hit peyote as being addictive, first I laughed a lot. Then, from personal experience with the stuff (in March, 1955, to be exact) I wrote to say that peyote was about as addictive as poison ivy. The Inchmery folks didn't print my remark, so I did. (Back around 1952-53 some Seattle and VancBC dianetics-offshoot groups got into substances such as peyote, LSD-25, etc. Seemed risky and extraneous to me, but in '55 Elinor and I did do peyote. It was worth doing, once. As was acid in 1970.) Actually peyote was illegal in California as early as '55. A friend got busted for picking up a package at the P.O., and a couple of us sent him bail money.

Thank you, Tim Hammell, for the backover.

Terry Carr

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Oakland, CA 94611

Ted White's stuff is enjoyable, as always. It's true that the late-50s period of NYC fandom has been inadequately chronicled in fanzines, though Ted seems to forget Bill Donaho's "Adventures in Fandom" series in Innuendo, which were awfully popular in them

there days. Maybe somebody should reprint them. ...But Ted is the first to write about the Munnery et al as fanhistory, and he does a good job; no errors that I can detect. The only thing I'd even think of arguing with would be his dismissal of the Dukes of Dixieland as "an ofay ripoff, a commercial popularization of New Orleans jazz." What Ted knows about New Orleans jazz, or any other form of traditional jazz, isn't very much, since it never interested him. I do understand and largely agree with his preference for "the real stuff" --i.e., New Orleans black jazz--over later white adaptations of it, but this is largely a purist-historical attitude, similar to saying that SF Times was a better newszine than Locus because it came first and was "pure," uncluttered with reports of later media sf and the like. Actually, the Dukes of Dixieland was a very accomplished jazz group that produced a long string of records which, speaking purely musically, beat the hell out of most of the records by black bands from New Orleans in the '50s and '60s (and today) that tried to re-create the early style as heard on records of the '20s. Musically, the Dukes were much more sophisticated than, say, Piron's New Orleans Orchestra; and Frank Assunto played more imaginative horn than Bunk Johnson. The early jazz is something I love to this day, but there's no denying that it was usually crude and its practitioners not very well schooled. The Dukes of Dixieland themselves are now part of jazz history, and in retrospect



it seems true that very few bands since have managed to swing and surprise as much as they did.

Dave Langford  
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U.K.

Jon Sinner's column alone is enough to make me deeply regret not having accepted his invitation to visit in 1980: though with the hindsight provided by his blue food fantasies, it's possible that I might have taken my own sandwiches. As for cheapo phone calls and mysterious boxes which fool the system, I remember all too much of this happening in Oxford in the early 70s. The very weird Duncan Campbell

(later famous for being prosecuted both by the Post Office for 'illegal use of electricity' and under the Official Secrets Act) was at large in Brasenose College, puzzling fellow-students such as myself by the epidemic of stripped insulation on college phone leads. To the bared wires he would duly attach bleepers and other scientificfictional equipment, and by simulating the coded tones for coin insertion would get free calls on these pay-phones —one of his triumphs being a lengthy and cost-free conversation with a Los Angeles brothel. It was also his downfall, since although it's fearfully prestigious in Britain's phone-freaking circles to speak with LA brothels, it is considered less politic to let slip your name and address. And one day the heavy hand of the law fell upon Duncan, coincidentally as he was leaving some college carrying a briefcase stuffed with bleepers, computer prints of ex-directory numbers and other implements of world domination: shades of the prison-house began to close around the growing boy, and the Brasenose authorities were left to say intelligent things such as, "You mean our phones aren't supposed to have these home-made sockets and terminal blocks for connecting sundry extra apparatus? Well, well, think of that."

There was also the time of Duncan's earlier slip-up when boldly asking the telephone operator to connect some peculiarly illicit call. OPERATOR: "Please deposit one shilling and sixpence in the slot." DUNCAN: (huddles furtively in phone booth and presses button on Black Box, six times.) BLACK BOX: Bleep bleep bleep bleep etc. OPERATOR: "What?" DUNCAN: "What can be the matter, did you not hear the bleeps indicating infallibly that I have dutifully deposited six threepenny bits even as you desired?" (Or words to that effect.) OPERATOR: "Yes." (long pause) "...I'm not going to connect this call." (Exit DUNCAN, pursued by a bear and the realization that this particular phone booth had been converted: it no longer had a slot for threepenny bits...)

William Gibson  
3180 W. 3rd Ave.

But did he eat the blue glowing squid?

Vancouver, BC V6K 1M3  
Canada

Reminds me of the terrible tiny blue ring octopus of the South Seas. Nerve venom of appalling potency. Victim picks up cute blue octopus, feels burning sensation, discovers two tiny bluish

bruises on palm, dies pronto. See With Wm. Burroughs by Victor Bockris.

Good reason to avoid blue seafood. (The blue ring said to glow like neon when the victim picks it up. Hmmm.)

((Always nice to hear from you, Bill. jak))



Jim Meadows III      Only in fanzines has the convention report been elevated into an art form.  
P.O. Box 1227      By art form, I don't mean that all of them are that good, but that peo-  
Pekin, IL 61554      ple like Jerry write about the form as if it were art. One has to treat  
it that way, I suppose. It's not like an article in a trade magazine,  
where an uncredited writer gives you all the lowdown of the latest midwest pizza-weighers  
conference, all about the new models, and convention rules, and shop talk, and nothing about  
the wild parties and the hookers and how they had to bribe the management to keep this big-  
wig from going up for pederasty. Fanzines have brought a strange life to a static form  
that future generations will hate us for. We've developed the talent of writing pages and  
pages about a convention, with the convention itself not really counting for much. I recent-  
ly got a copy of a clubzine, Pvenus Pflytrap, where a conrep went through its paces with-  
out even mentioning the name, location or date of the convention. It wasn't missed.

rich brown      Seems to me, while most of Mainstream is entertaining and well-  
1632 19th St. N.W., Apt #2      written, Gary Farber's piece, more than any other, cries out  
Washington, D.C. 20009      for response. The problem here is my response--if you've read  
even a small part of what I've been writing for the past 10  
years or so--should not be that hard to figure out; I'm one of those responsible for the  
fact that the topic is considered dull, boring and old-hat.

While Gary's proposed "solution" doesn't address all the problems which beset the fan Hu-  
gos, I do hope people support it. I can't offer that support myself--beyond saying here I  
think it should be given a try--because I've given up paying exorbitant membership fees to  
"join" the world convention. If I attend Chicon--I still hope I can--I won't be going to  
official functions. If and when the people putting on the worldcons decide to repel the  
barbarian invasion, this might change. Right now it's an obligation I do not feel to help  
pay for everyone's good time--including a lot of people whose exposure to sf comes from the  
media rather than the written word. While I play D&D myself, I don't do so at conventions  
and see no good reason to pay a share of the expense involved to provide D&D players con-  
vention space; nor do I feel a need to share the cost for the 11,387th showing of "Amok  
Time," or any of a dozen other media-oriented expenses.

"But the Worldcon is, theoretically, supposed to be a world convention for all fans..." I  
can hear people saying. And I can almost hear them asking, "By what right do literary sf  
fans propose to dictate the exclusion of programming for 'fringe' fans?"

I guess it depends on who's doing the theorizing. There's nothing in the World Science Fic-  
tion Society rules to bear out the idea that worldcons are supposed to be for "all" sf fans.  
On the other hand--and I urge anyone tempted to disagree  
with me to check this out in any worldcon program book  
which contains those rules--the very first rule defines  
the WSFS as a "literary society" whose purpose it is to  
(1) put on the world sf convention and (2) distribute  
the Science Fiction Achievement Awards (Hugos). (I  
haven't checked this in a few years myself and sus-  
pect I've turned the two around. But it hardly mat-  
ters, for this discussion, which order they're in.)  
It certainly seems reasonable to hold that this  
"literary society" has the right to exclude non-  
literary items from their programs--such items  
belong on those programs only as a matter of courtes-  
y anyway. The fact that this courtesy has been ex-  
tended to these non-literary items in the past does  
not mean it must be automatically extended to them  
in the future--or at least there is nothing to that



effect in the rules.

((To be precise, rich, it's the second rule: Article 1, Section 2 says, "WSFS is an unincorporated literary society whose functions are: A. To choose the recipients of the annual Science Fiction Achievement Awards (the Hugos), B. To choose the locations and Committees for the annual World Science Fiction Conventions, C. To attend those Conventions, and D. To perform such other activities as may be necessary or incidental to the above purposes." (We just got our Chicon IV program book in today 's mail.) jak))

Larry Carmody  
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Brooklyn, NY 11218

Jerry, in your editorial you bemoan the fact that there are not that many theme con reports appearing in North American zines while there seems to be a wealth of them over in Great Britain. I disagree with that, but to an extent you are right. The problem over here? Most of the good con reports are appearing in limited circulation apas. While at DeepSouthCon I got a gander at some back mailings of SFPA (Southern Fandom Press Alliance), and within those pages were over a half-dozen reports, some quite good. Apas never were as big across the water and thus reports end up in fanzines and are more visible.

As to the semiprozines (meaning SF Chronicle and Locus), Jeff Schalles has told me that he's been edited ruthlessly in Locus. In SFC I've been conforming to Andy's dictates as to con reports (mention plenty of pros, etc.), but I've also slipped in fannish goings-on as much as possible.

Anne Laurie Logan  
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E. Lansing, MI 48823

(On issue #6) ...Also appreciated MacAvoy's piece on harps. My favorite harp is in the musical instruments wing in the Metropolitan Museum of New York. They have (or had, when I last visited three years ago) on display a couple of harps of a type invented in Central

Africa: the soundchest is an antelope skull, and the two uprights are the horns of the beast, with a stick fastened between them at the top and the strings strung between this stick and the top of the skull. This obviously works best with skulls from species with relatively straight horns--I think one of the examples in the museum came from a kudu, and the other used oryx horns. The one with the oryx horns, however, used a human skull, cleverly re-articulated, as the soundchest. It looked tremendously weird and fantastic, and I have always intended to use it in a story someday. I cannot report on the sound quality of this instrument, but I wouldn't expect a great deal from it--I think it had only six strings, of plant fiber and animal sinew. But I would love to have a harp like that. I even have a couple of candidates for the soundchest all picked out.

Leigh Edmonds  
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Civic Square, ACT 2608  
Australia

Have you ever thought that there might be only a finite amount of fanac in the universe at any one time and that fanzines like Mainstream, Varhoon and one or two others might be using up my share? Actually, that's not a bad idea; at least it's something that I can blame my slipping deadlines one.

John Berry's "Choral Interlude" was a terrible thing to read, bringing back, as it did, terrible memories of having suffered at the hands of musicians. Of all the tortures in the universe I can think of none quite so exquisite as having a piece of your music misperformed, live and in front of a lot of people. The least terrible time was when, at a music workshop for string quartets the person in charge stood up, waved my score about and said, "Who wrote this?" It turned out that nobody could read it, since I hadn't used ordinary notation but a system called equitone--one that I find very useful because it doesn't have sharps and flats and hence, it has no implied key. Well, there I am in a room which has more than a couple of Australia's foremost composers and more than a few well-known performers



of contemporary music--and none of them had ever heard of or knew how to read equitone. Blush...

The other time...no, I don't think that I can bear to think about it.

Lester Boutillier  
2726 Castiglione St.  
New Orleans, LA 70119

A particular note was Ted's statement of the influence of On The Road on fannish writing. I've often thought that the typical Ted White fannish nostalgia piece owed a lot to that book. Kerouac starts right off explaining how it was when Dean Moriarty first came to New York and thus first met the narrator, in much the same way as the typical Ted White fannish nostalgia piece starts off with a reference to the coming to New York for the first time of Terry Carr. There are differences between the typical Ted White fannish nostalgia piece and the Kerouac book, of course. In the former, everybody is coming to New York and staying there. In the latter, everybody's trying to leave New York--for anywhere. And the Ted White typical nostalgia fannish piece, reflecting the spirit of that city's fandom of that era, is upbeat and joyous. On The Road is, in the end, despairing (in the sense that Kierkegaard meant it when he said that the specific character of despair is that it's unaware of being despair).

Creath Thorne  
7537 Walnut  
Kansas City, MO 64114

Ted White says, on page 15, that On The Road influenced fans, for it was really "a lengthy trip report, minus the convention." That's such a perfect example of a writer with his fannish blinkers on, of the type of chauvinism that growing up in fandom can produce. Ted, however, has thrown all of literature in a new light for me. What is The Sun Also Rises but an account of post-convention triste? What is The Iliad but an account of pre-convention bidding maneuverings? In short, all of those boring old classics can now be revived and read as charming Ur-faan fiction. A tip o' the hat to Ted.

Murray Moore  
General Delivery  
Midland, Ont. L4R 4K5  
Canada

Freff's mention of the changing by people of their name from the conventional to the unusual not being confined to fandom caused me to find a clipping from the Toronto Globe and Mail, datelined Liverpool.

"Tarquin Fintimlinbinwhinbimlin Bus Stop F'Tang-F'Tang-Ole-Biscuit-Barrel is causing headaches for polling officials at Crosby in Liverpool in a vital by-election.

"The 22-year-old student was John Desmond Lewis until he legally changed his name for 50 pence (about \$1.10) to run in the election as a joke candidate representing the pranksters of Cambridge University Raving Looney Society."

No mention in the third paragraph of the AP wirestory to Monty Python's Flying Circus, which is the source of the name for me.

George Flynn  
27 Sowamsett Ave.  
Warren, RI 02885

I see what you mean about '70s British zines, Jerry, having acquired a copy of Stop Breaking Down recently (I outbid Moshe Feder for it at the Lunacon TAFF auction). And I note from the Fanthology '81 that the British are still doing great con reports. I just went through the file of fanzine reports on Noreascon and found very little worth noting--mostly just bare listings of events, or of the people the writer talked to. (Of course, this is only based on the zines that people sent us: Avedon didn't send her conreport, for example, and for all I know there are other decent ones I haven't seen. You know, there's a real problem here: fanzine fans are always complaining about concons being ignorant of fanzines, but half the time they don't send their zines to the concons even when they're talking about

them.) You're right about the number of cons discouraging conreport writing, of course; I typically get to eight or ten cons a year, and most of the time don't even get around to writing apazine reports on them any more. (Apazine reports are a special species, concentrating on what's of interest to the particular audience.) I dunno...

Frank Balazs  
19 Broadway Terrace, #2D  
New York, NY 10040

So Harry Warner Jr. is a vampire! I'm surprised you two didn't pick up on this. He clearly states: "I can't see the frames while wearing the glasses..." Neither can I see my glasses frames when wearing them--properly, anyway. But if I look at myself in a mirror, I can see the frames just fine. Harry doesn't even consider this possibility because he is accustomed to not showing a reflection. Therefore, he is a vampire.

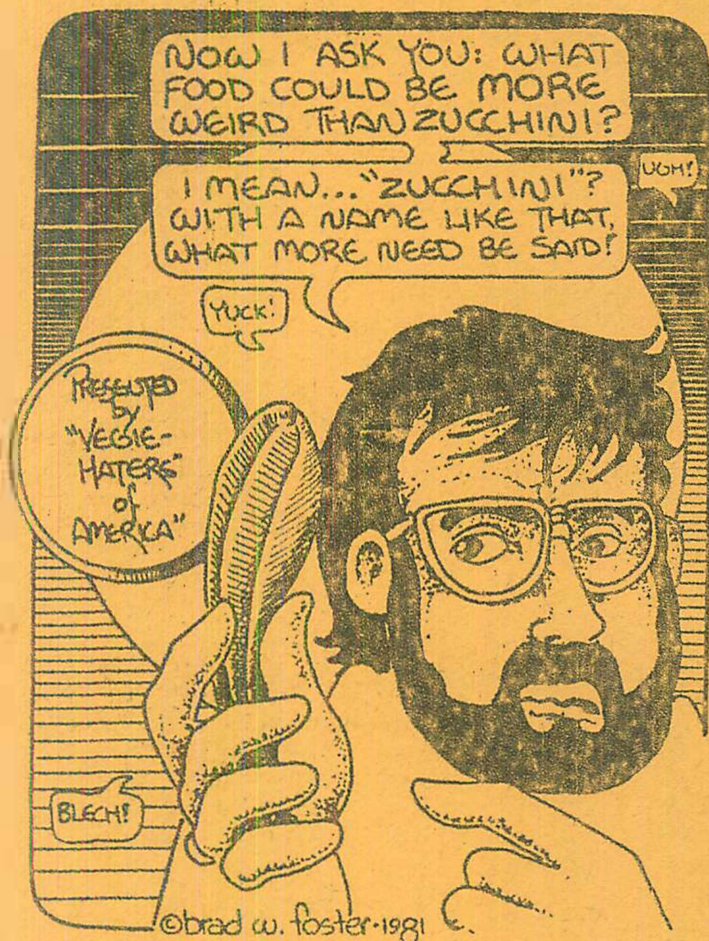
Harry Warner Jr.  
435 Summit Avenue  
Hagerstown, MD 21740

The new Mainstream provides vital additional information about the dramatization of The Enchanted Duplicator, about which I'd read some other interesting facts elsewhere. But I still don't know the most important fact of all from the standpoint of a person like me who is obsessed with preservation: was the production preserved on tape, either audio or video or hopefully both? If it was, is there any hope of scattering enough dubbings of the tape around fandom to minimize the danger of the production's becoming lost to fannish posterity? I keep thinking about all the vanished or inaccessible audio tapes and home movies which recorded events at cons long ago.

((It's a sad story. The play was video-taped using two cameras, one trained on the narrators, the other following the action. At first we thought one of the cameras had not worked at all; then we were told that both had. We went to a Northwest Science Fiction Society meeting to view the two tapes, and found that we had one tape showing the narrators reading and reacting to the performance, and one tape showing a minor pro reading his stories. Minor Pro has not deigned to return the Duplicator, so we have no idea if it's any good. The tape of the narrators, unfortunately, is dim, static, and aurally unclear. jak))

I share your unhappiness over the scarcity of conreports in current fanzines. One possible reason for their decline in length and quantity which you don't discuss is the ever-increasing use of large quantities of alcohol and other drugs at cons nowadays: fewer potential writers of conreports seem clear-headed enough to take notes during a con than was the case a decade or two ago.

The front cover is gorgeous. I suppose it conceals a score of subtleties and in-group references which I fail to perceive, but it's still superb. After all, we don't think any the less of the paintings of the old masters because in most cases we don't





know the identity of the individuals who served as their models.

Brad W. Foster  
4109 Pleasant Run  
Irving, TX 75062

The little quotes lifted from The Mimeo Man throughout Farber's article were hilarious! Has the entire script been printed anywhere? And if not, how about doing so in an upcoming issue? The stanzas in the center of page 9 were particularly funny--I can almost hear a Greek chorus chanting the last lines in hushed, forceful tones, their eyes bugging in lustful anticipation, hands clutching in front of them...

((All of the quotes are from one song, "The Hugos." It would be nice if we had the room to re-print the whole play, but alas... Yes, it was published by Moshe Feder in 1975...I'm sure he long ago ran out. Maybe he should re-issue it...(Moshe? svt))

Great imagery in "Trickle." A lover of cats, I can see every motion described perfectly, down to the fluttering of soundless mouth. Great.

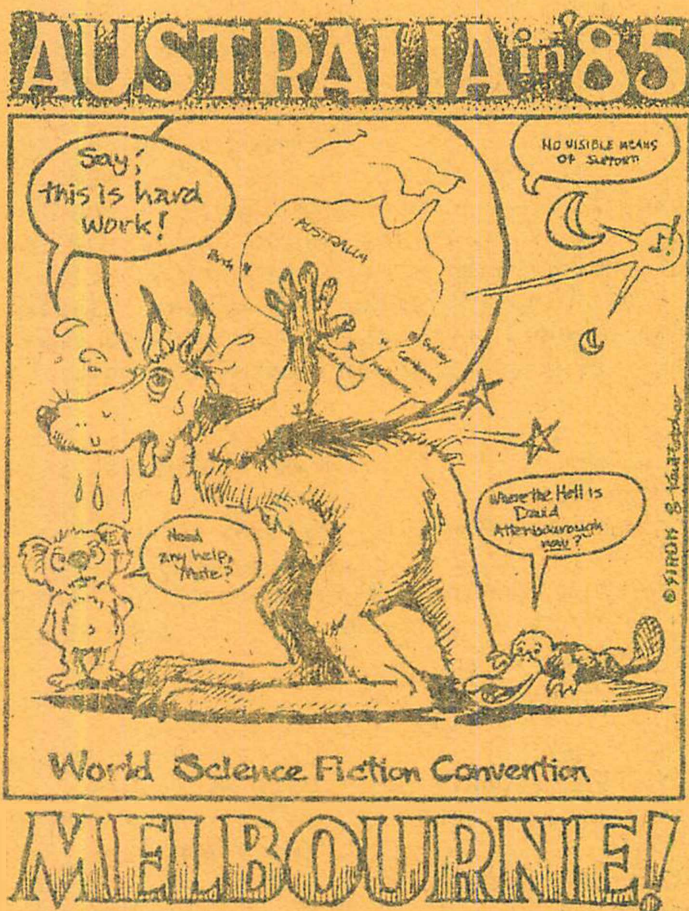
Eggpalnts are only good for target practice.

Bill Patterson  
537 Jones St., #9943  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Singer makes such a big deal out of blue food--feh! To the color-blind (among whom \*koff, koff\*, etc.) the issue is moot. Aubergine, blueberry, lingonberry, grape--all is blue. Those stern distinctions between poiple, lavender and true blue (Cerulean? Prussian? Royal?) are too feeble: there is but one florious band of color from Roy G. onward (upward). Three bands, to be sure, but the same color: BIV. You have such irrelevant names...

Dick Ellington. Anarchist. Surprising--or perhaps not--how many wish to enforce a dress code on the beknighted bomb-thrower (I once considered buying a bowling ball for the exclusive purpose of mounting on mantels...). Black capes, boradcloth or poplin, too expensively come by. The point is well made--and fairly beaten into print, I suppose, if you don't count those myriad AZApazines that pulped the thought in 1975 and 1976. Laughter is central social idea--amusement, joie-de-vivre, busting out cupoverflow(ing)eth. Remove the impressed strictures and see the individual...

Harmony was around for ages--part songs go 'way back, and they're a pretty sophisticated development. A very recent (and very dubious) decoding of an ancient Greek piece treats



the neumes as if they were figured bass and comes up with an interesting four-part harmonization. But descriptions of ancient-world musical and theatric performances makes it quite clear that what we think of as harmony--i.e., vertical harmony, was in common use as early as sixth century B.C. But the ethos of the time was principally concerned with horizontal harmony. The development to which Jerry refers is a late acceptance of thirds. The intervals of fourth, fifth, and octave were always accepted. The reason thirds came to be accepted is that natural temperament (based on proportions of string lengths) is not suitable for striking thirds, while equal temperament (a seventeenth century invention) is. A lot of the peculiar strictures against which Debussy was rebelling date from the Renaissance church codification of harmony around Palestrina's part-writing. Purely arbitrary. Main reason, though, vertical harmony was not important to the ancient world is that they thought in terms of linear, or horizontal harmony.

Hog Decarnin  
512B Cole St.  
San Francisco, CA 94117

When you're sad and blue, read a fanzine, I think--it always changes my mood to read a Mainstream, at least, I've noticed that before. What better reason could there be for fanzines to exist? Ken MacLin's pictures of you both are great, maybe because I've

seen Jerry a couple of times more often, but Jerry's had a certain something that made me say, "Hey! It's really Jerry!" Perhaps the characteristic bending over a typewriter or so it appears...

Sandra Miesel  
8744 N. Pennsylvania St.  
Indianapolis, IN 46240

Sorry to rain on Jon Singer's blue food parade, but.... Squid meat isn't blue, squid blood is blue. And how do I know? because I once did some experiments with the substance back in those long lost days when I was studying biochemistry. Squid

blood is almost pure cyanoglobin, a copper-containing protein that takes the place of hemoglobin in higher animals. The structure remains etched in my mind because remembering it was the margin by which I passed Macromolecules: it's pentagonally spaced clusters of five cylinder-like subunits, each with a molecular weight of about a million. The cylinders can be separated and split lengthwise into halves, each of which contains one copper atom. And yes, it is a lovely shade of blue.

But for really blue food, there's a special sort of trout found in Austria that turns an intense, almost cobalt blue upon cooking. It's pictured in color in The Cooking of Austria's Empire. Chive blossoms are but one example of edible blue flowers. Heliotrope blossoms extracted in white wine were used as blue food coloring in the Middle Ages.

The anthocyanins that give red/purple fruits and vegetables their color will change to pink in acid and green in base. (Grape jelly can actually turn green on hot biscuits that contain too much baking soda.) That's why one adds vinegar to red cabbage to "brighten" its color during cooking.

Now in answer to Bob Lee's challenge to the readability of handwritten manuscripts: as a matter of fact I have tried to read MSS all the way through. I do it frequently, much to the delight of the art dealer I expertise for. Some bookhands, especially Carolingian miniscule and gotica rotunda, are quite clear and beautiful. The former is the parent of the italic hand the Renaissance humanists wrote and beginning calligraphy students still learn. The problems in deciphering medieval MSS are more due to the size of the letters (micrographic Bibles are written in letters 1/10" high--with corrections between the lines), the quality of the parchment, the accuracy of the scribes (they made lots of errors), and most of all, the abbreviations (so various there are entire dictionaries of them). The development of lower case letters and a clear script in the Carolingian era was a landmark in the history of Western writing second only to the invention of printing.



There are some surviving examples of ancient illuminated MSS. One speaks in hushed tones of the Quedlinburg Fragments or the Cotton Genesis. But since the letters run together across each line, all in capitals, they are harder to read than Medieval MSS. Late classical cursive hands are matchless abominations of illegibility. We have some bits of cursive Coptic on papyrus that one must take on faith as written communication.

To one who knows Arabic, handwritten texts in the most common hand, naskhi, should be as clear as printed ones since the letter forms are the same. But the more decorative Arabic scripts are strictly for embellishment. (Shikasta, used in Persia, is not only squiggly, it runs diagonally across the page.) I imagine some of the more exotic Chinese and Japanese hands are also difficult to read.

Debbie Notkin                      While Terry Garey's cat lusts after hawks, mine catches humming-  
1903 Virginia St., #3       birds--a habit which makes me want to kill the cat, or at least  
Berkeley, CA 94709       imprison him indoors. I would have thought hummingbirds would be  
   impossible to catch, but apparently they stick their beaks into  
flowers and go into an avian equivalent of deep hypnotic trance (wouldn't you, if you were  
getting a direct and constant supply of honey?) and the cat just sneaks up on them from  
behind. I wish he wouldn't do that, but I just mumble to myself about the perils of  
raising a predator.

I particularly enjoyed Ted White's "Offish Thots" on music, though fanfeuds and drugs are always interesting topics.... Actually, it isn't even music, it's destroying records that captured my imagination. (We sometimes have to strip the front covers off paperbacks in the bookstore to return them. This is usually my job--I'm the non-collector in the business--and I long since started referring to it as "tearing the wings off flies." Dave Nee leaves the room during this sacreligious process.) Ted's story about the Dukes of Dixieland record, however, made me think of the Indian restaurant in San Francisco whose menu states, "Eat with your fingers. Indians believe that eating with a fork is like making love through an interpreter." With a warning like that on the menu, I felt morally obligated not to use utensils. The first time I ate there, I could literally feel my mother (who was physically 3,000 miles away) standing behind me, repeating, "Use your fork." This had a double function: it made me feel a little bit guilty, but it also made the meal into a delightfully rebellious occurrence, not unlike the record-scratching orgy Ted describes.

Steve Miller                      Suzle's description of The Enchanted Duplicator at Norwescon re-  
56 Lowergate Ct.               minds me of the two times I saw Suzle in a "dramatic" situation.  
Owings Mills, MD 21117       One was the very first official performance of The Mimeo Man,  
   where she was nervous up to the time things started and then did  
great. And then there was the more or less dramatic Live Fanzine at Balticon. Suzle was  
nervous until things got going and then...she was great. If I were doing a play, I think  
I'd draft Suzle...

The Mimeo Man reminds me of something else: at that Pghlange I ended up with a Mimeo Man hat and three cameras (none mine) to take pictures of the play for various cast members. Did any of those photos ever turn out for anyone? ((Steve, did you by any chance have Genie DiModica's camera? That's where I got my set (they are, uhm, rather, blurry...), and I never did know who took them as Genie herself was in the play. I have always wondered about other possible sets of photos from either of the above "performances" you mention. svt))

Marty Cantor  
5263 Riverton Ave., #1  
H. Hollywood, CA 91601

I am somewhat croggled at the number of collators that you have helping you put out your zine; it must make for an interesting party. I assume that you are not using collating racks (such racks speed collating to such an extent that collating assistance is usually not needed). In my case I borrow several racks from the LASFS and I collate and staple a complete run of Holier Than Thou in a little over three hours (last issue was 250 copies at 68 pages). Granted, this does eliminate the opportunity for a collating party, but it does get out the zine with dispatch--and I can concentrate on partying when I party.

((Collating racks are helpful, but I can't understand them saving anything except space when collating, rather than time. Unless, of course, you use them by slotting each sheet into the rack instead of taking them out just as you would take up a sheet from the table, or whatever. You would then spend lots of time checking both sides of each page of the zine before you could begin collating it. You do check both sides, don't you Marty? svt I like the idea of a collating party as a way for more people to be part of Seattle fan-zine production. This has encouraged others to do their own fanzines or to contribute to other people's fanzines. It all adds up. Maybe if you had collating parties (and other encouragements) you and Mike Glyer wouldn't be the only Publishing Giants in LA. jak))

The last thing in this loc will be some commentary about Jerry's article/editorial. I would be most happy to pub in Holier Than Thou the kind of con report and trip report about which he is writing. There are many people in fandom who could write the kind of report that he would like to see; I would certainly be willing to pub a literate report--the kind of thing that Dave Langford wrote (about his trip to Noreascon). I have only been offered one article of this kind--it is many months overdue and I do not know if it will ever get written. What I do not want is the sort of con report that I have seen in too many small fanzines and APAzines, reports written with little wit and little interest --mostly just mindless lists of people met, panels attended, and food eaten. Get me the well-written con report and I will find a place for it in HTT.

Brian Earl Brown  
20101 W. Chicago, #201  
Detroit, MI 48228

Detroit has had its share of fannish communal dwellings: Harper Hotel, Brush-off, Gladstone, and its share of "thrilling adventures," most of which I wasn't party to. It seems typical of fandom today that no one bothered to write up these escapades the way Ted does for the Nunnery now or the way the Void boys (apparently) used to write up Towner Hall. Either today its just too ordinary for fans to live together or people just don't feel like writing. These two reasons, fannish life is too ordinary and the decline in an interest in writing about each other, are at the heart of the decline in trufannishness in America. No one has a real sense of other fans anymore. It isn't just a case of myth-making--an activity whose decline was decried a couple of years back--but of fans' being together, being fannish, thinking fannish. Everyone is an isolate, an anchorite, existing without connection, aping what they presume to be fannishness.

((I think I know what your point is, but I can't agree. I don't think Seattle fans can be described as anchorites, or Minneapolis ones. Both groups are, or should be, known for the parties they throw, and the general hang-about and influencing one another they do. Whether this causes, sustains, or prevents fannishness has yet to be determined. jak))

Ray Nelson  
333 Ramona Ave.  
El Cerrito, CA 94530

Reading Mainstream made me lonely because I have strayed so far from the fannish mainstream. I am surrounded by people who will sue me if I write about them humorously, husbands who will divorce their wives for things I and most fans don't think twice about--in short, I am adrift in the mundane sea, my sail flapping listlessly. What happened to that



gently adventurous island Ted White writes about, that world of anarchy, drugs and music? Tell me, which way do I go to find that mainstream again? I want to start rowing.

((And on that elegiac note, we roll (or row) into the We Also Heard Froms: HARRY J.N. ANDRUSCHAK, DOUGLAS BARBOUR, GREGORY BENFORD, LINDA BLANCHARD (who may yet join the ranks of the Seattle Fanpublishing Empire), GERALD DOYKO, ALINA CHU, RICH COAD (who will merely be visiting the SFE), CHRIS COUCH, TOM DIGBY ("Perhaps Buck hit on the reason we have to wait so long for elevators at cons: they're out buying and selling soybeans."), STEVE DUFF, DIANE FOX, BRUCE GILLESPIE, MIKE GLICKSOHN, SETH GOLDBERG (who wants everyone to know that Menlo Park is real near Palo Alto), LAURA HAMEY & HAL DAVIS, JACK HERMAN, ARTHUR HLAVATY, LEE HOFFMAN (with a hilarious letter that was, fortunately or unfortunately, made obsolete by eventual actions of Dan Steffan...did you all get your SF Five Yearly?), MIKE HORVAT, LUCY HUNTZINGER (even though she moved to the Bay Area, she's still a part of the SFE; watch for her art in Izzard and Mainstream), JAY KINNEY, RICHARD LABONTE, LINDA LOUNSBURY, PATRICK MCGUIRE (whose letter arrived one week ago), LUKE MCGUFF, DONNA MCMAHON, ERIC MAYER, SANDRA NIESEL (again), LINDA ANN MOSS, MIKE O'BRIEN (with a letter we hope will grow up into an article someday), DARROLL PARDOE, ERICA PARKER, SARAH PRINCE, MIKE ROGERS, ED ROM, DAN STEFFAN, DAVID STEVER, DAVE SZUREK (twice), BOB TOOMEY & MARGIE DRAKE, BRUCE TOWNLEY, ELSIE WOOD, and BEN YALOW.

((And that leaves us with only the editorials to write, and the other hard things to do: headings, mimeo, basking in the egoboo. We're very friendly about receiving compliments: amiable baskers, we are. (Suzle makes funny face at Jerry, pretends to kick him.) jak))

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"Trickle" (continued from page 12):

Well, kid, I thought sadly to the unborn child, your Auntie tried, she really did, and she may go on to better things, one day, but I think that you will just have to hope that one of your talented grandmothers makes you a baby blanket to keep you warm, down there in Austin, Texas.

I wonder, I thought, eyes narrowed, how you would like a bird house made of popsicle sticks?

Terry Garey (copyright 1982)

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After thought (or forethought) from the Suzle:

Since "Trickle" turned out to really be "Torrent" this time, I am going to opt for a one-page "Suzlecol" (see next page). Therefore, you may look forward (?) not only to my description of working for a travel agency in a setting out of a forties detective novel, but also to revelations of my life as a klutz, in the form of tales of my ability to fall over in otherwise normal daily situations. The idea for this wasn't brought on, as you might have expected, by the quote we use from Miss Manners, which you should go right back and read if you haven't already. It originated, instead, when I was writing to Fred Haskell (of the many rings), describing how I ended up hanging in the basement stairwell by my jade ring, due to a series of, uhm, unfortunate, er, circumstances. We shall see.

And speaking of klutziness, we blithely typed, proofread, and mimeod Jon Singer's column without noticing that the reference to blue foods was left over from last issue's Technocrat, and that there is no reference to blue food in the first part of this one. Comes of our habit of of mixing and matching sections. svt

# SUZANNE

## STUFF BY SUZANNE TOMPKINS.

What can you say about a 34 year old woman who can't write her editorial...?

\* \* \*

Having been duly informed that I may turn out either a one-page or a three-page column (Jerry knew better than to mention words like five-page or seven-page within my range of hearing), I have been pondering several appropriate subjects for discussion, and have not so much drawn a blank, as found too many interesting tidbits which seem random and totally unmanageable in a cohesive written form (besides, Jerry's used a great format for this very thing and I wouldn't want to appear to be copying his, uhm, style...)

For example, I should talk about our second Holiday Party (David Emerson mentions the first in his column back there), but think it will suffice to say that we were elbow deep in cabbage rolls and cassoulet for weeks afterward, and speaking of elbow deep, should the Board of Health have wandered into our kitchen anytime after 6 pm that day, we'd probably have been closed down on the spot. Let's see: we hear that everyone enjoyed themselves; we discovered exactly how many dinner guests is too many (68), at exactly what stage of exhaustion we would allow otherwise salvagable leftovers to be thrown out, how long it would take for me to discover that Dave Bray (our sommelier) was lining up the wine bottles on the front porch as they were emptied and to what extent I would be mortified (not as much as I would have been if I'd actually been conscious), and that we will never do it again. (One simply cannot top perfection...Koff...Ahem.)

Oh, by the way, does anyone have any ideas about what to do with 4 quarts of frozen leftover vichyssoise?

\* \* \*

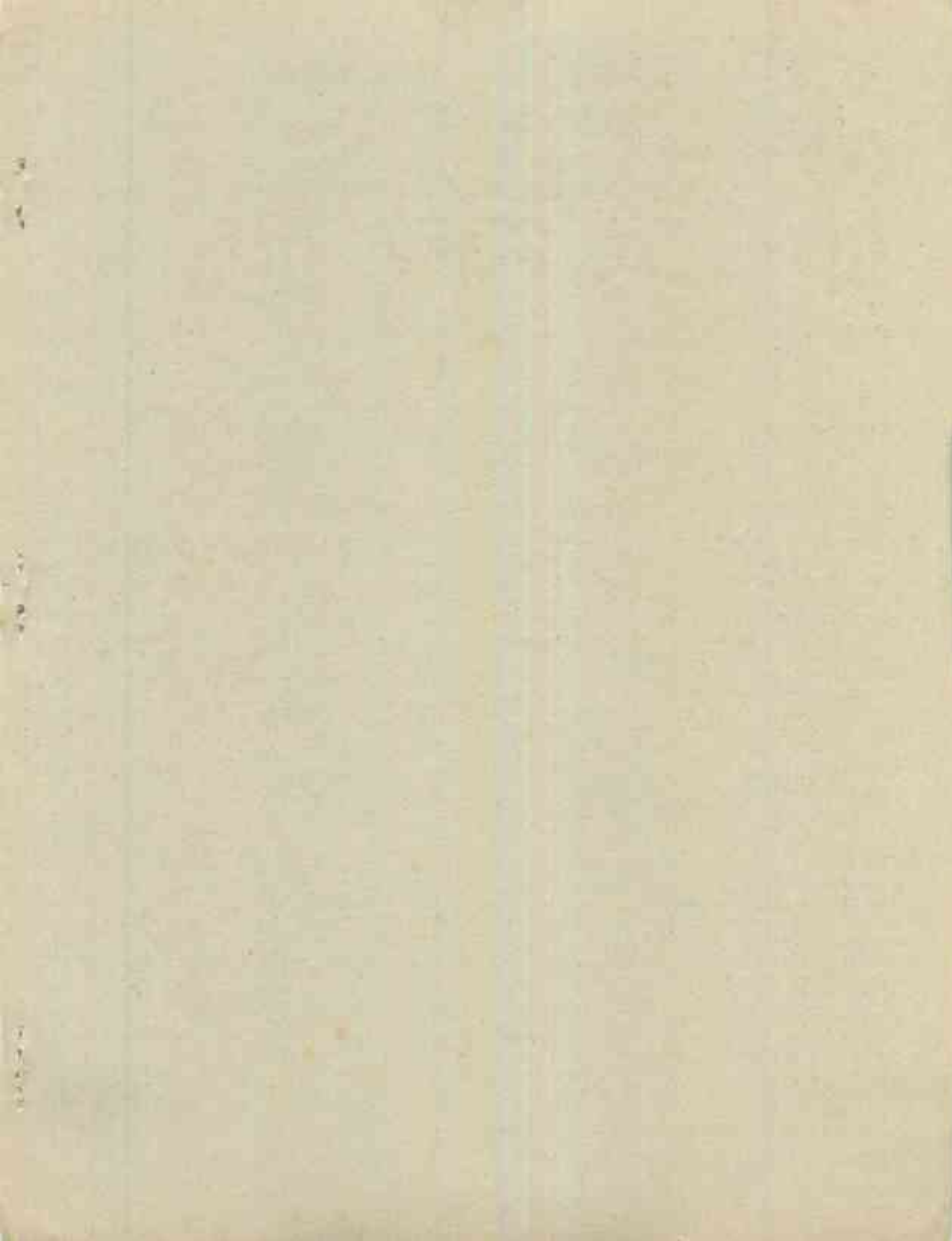
My original idea for this editorial, conceived at least 8 months ago, was my job. To some extent I have been waiting for the end, the conclusion, to this strange tale, so that I would have a complete plot to lay out before you. Alas, it drags on and on, and even at this writing, in March, although I haven't been paid for the last half of February and payday was 8 days ago, I still don't know FOR SURE, if there is an end to this bizarre story. Tune in next editorial (which, if our gleaming best intentions work out, should be in only a few months) when I will give you all the exciting details.

In the meantime, should any of you need hotel/motel reservations, world-wide, I have a toll-free number--800/426-4710--and we will make reservations for you just about anywhere (even for a convention, but not at the convention-contracted hotel, of course). By the time you read this, it may be disconnected....but, if anyone answers, ask for me. I'll be glad to help you.

And what in god's name can we do with 4 quarts of frozen vichyssoise?? (No vivid writing, please.)

###







Dr. Margaret Mead

• Zoomorphologist  
(190 - 1978)

Great American  
Zoomorphologists  
second in a series



Dr. Mead's earliest (and quite well-known) work was **Coming Of Age in Summora.**



like curator emeritus of  
ethnology at the American  
Museum of Natural History

Her work captures the Summoraons at a time their  
culture was untouched by Western Ideas

World War II forced her to switch  
her studies to cultures outside  
the South Pacific.

Later concerns were the cultural vs.  
racial basis of characteristics, civil rights  
and feminism (to name but a few).

