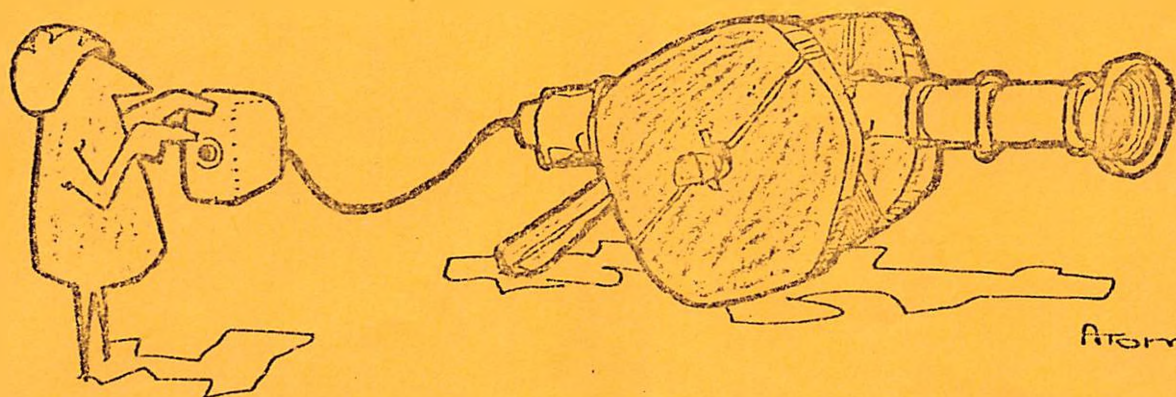


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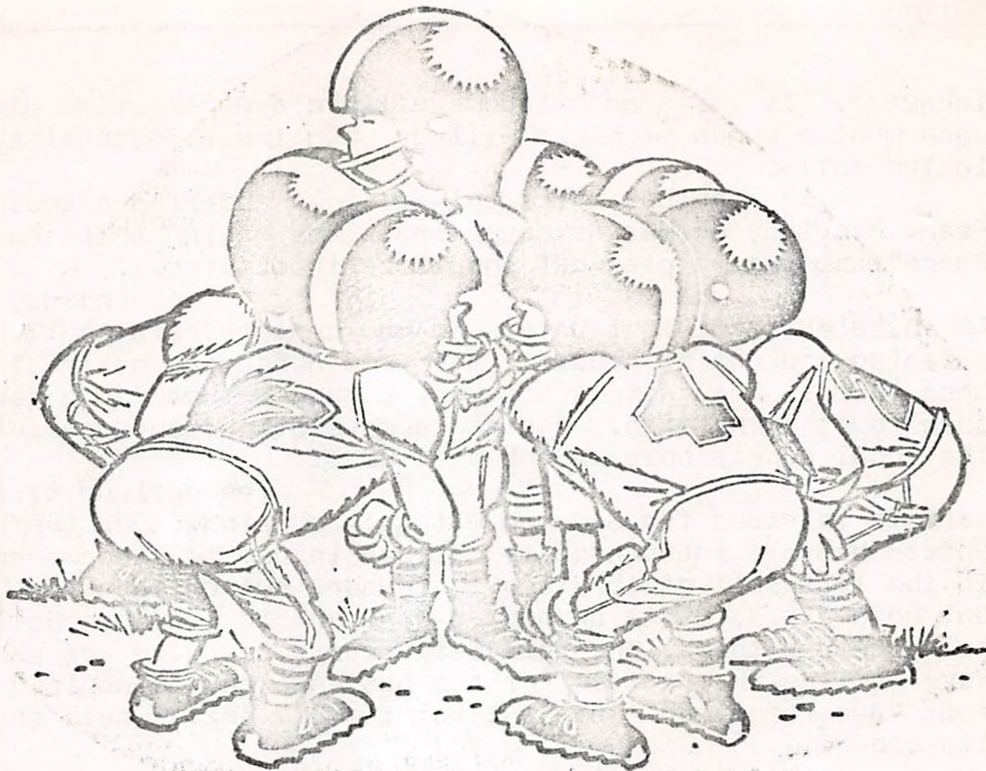
MELIKAPHKHAZ #74

A SFPazine by
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Huntington Beach,
CA 92646.

January 1980.

A
Zungzwang
Publication.

Roll, TIDE!!



Yes, I'm going to write about football. As football games can be captured on video tape and traded, I figure it must be a topic of universal interest in SFPA.

The 1979 collegiate football season was wrapped up on New Year's Day of 1980 with an orgy of bowl games. Alabama's Crimson Tide rolled to a 24-9 victory over the Arkansas Razorbacks, who two years ago threw off underdog status to clobber a mighty Oklahoma team. The contention for the mythical national title fizzled away as USC and Ohio State battled to a near tie. Charles White made a one point difference in favor of the Trojans.

When the confetti settled only Alabama remained, among the Great Powers, unbeaten and untied. In both the AP and the UPI polls was agreement. The Crimson Tide were the champions of the land. The Bear was humble in receiving laurels, yet he called his team a great one. Almost forgotten was the controversy of last year's poll split between Alabama and USC.

Almost forgotten, but not quite. In the penultimate ballot of the season, which followed the regular season but preceded the bowl games, Alabama dropped to second, behind Ohio State, in the AP poll. There were some curious aspects to this poll. Teams are ranked on total points, the voters ranking the top twenty teams. A first place vote is good for 20, a second place 19, and so forth.

Alabama had been riding high. In the poll of question they still were -- in first place votes. The Tide had more votes for first than any other team. (By a margin of almost two to one.) But the AP poll was decided on total points and Alabama was second, USC third.

The Los Angeles Times ran a funny little article the next day about how people from Alabama were calling up the AP and using abusive

language. It was a chucklesome article demonstrating with lightfingered ease what a bunch of hicks will do when their football team takes a fall in the polls.

The day after this article appeared a squib was run quoting Frank Broyles, former Arkansas coach, as saying that the AP vote was "a farce" and that a play-off should be instituted.

The day after that the AP revealed that eight voters in the controversial poll had ranked undefeated and untied Alabama, the AP's defending national champion, lower than third. Some simple arithmetic showed that for a few, it must have been lower than fifth. A strange revelation, but one left uncommented by the local papers here on the West Coast.

The curious timing of the poll left it to stand for a month without revision. Odd that these eight voters had all independently decided to demote Alabama so dramatically in the last poll of the regular season, but decide they had. The poll put Ohio State, USC's announced opponent in the Rose Bowl, into #1. USC being number three, the television was awash with ads proclaiming the Rose Bowl as the "battle for the national championship." One might almost have forgotten 'Bama but for the UPI poll, where the Tide retained its crown.

Now Alabama's opponent was 10-1 Arkansas, ranked #7 in the AP and #6 in the UPI. A curious correlation, in that the UPI had #1 playing #6 whereas the AP had #2 playing #7. Even stranger were the Sugar Bowl ads on TV, which proclaimed the match as "ALABAMA #1(UPI) vs. ARKANSAS #7." Less clever advertising that the competing network which billed the Ohio State-USC encounter as "#1 meets #3."

--Pardon me if I'm beginning to sound paranoid, but after last year when #2 Alabama defeated #1 Penn State only to see #3 USC vault to first place in the UPI poll I was ready for anything this year. Add that to the constant barrage of denigrating articles aimed at Alabama and fired by Southern California sportswriters: you get a beleaguered transplanted Rebel. I was really irritated by a column in the Ellay Times which "analysed" the games played against LSU by USC and Alabama. When USC won 17-12 by scoring two desperation TD's in the fourth quarter it was "the mark of a champion." USC had the terrible disadvantage of playing in Tiger Stadium, Baton Rouge, at night before a host of screaming hostile fans. Alabama, winning 3-0 in a driving rainstorm, "could muster no more than a single field goal." And they didn't have a disadvantage by playing in Tiger Stadium before hostile fans because Alabama is also a Southern team. (What???)--

When New Year's Day arrived the Bear was unflappable. The Tide was mighty both on offense and defense. Arkansas under that wiley devil Lou Holtz fought tooth and nail, but was no match. The Tide had built a 17-3 halftime lead, which Arkansas trimmed as the Bear played lots of folks in the third quarter. It was 17-9 when Arkansas downed a punt on the 'Bama two yard line with 14 minutes left in the last quarter.

Paul "Bear" Bryant waved in his first string offense. It was a significant wave, cresting the Tide. The drive went all the way to the Arkansas end zone, overcoming a five yard penalty to total 103 yards of consecutive offense. Power running supported by the best-executing offensive line in the country, was balanced with spot passing. The Bear was saying: I like to play lots of folks, but don't forget what the first string can do.

This drive took the excitement out of the game, but there was a dimension left. When 'Bama got the ball again the scrub offense was sent in. "A dreadful mistake!" moaned the network coverage. "The Bear should remember the polls. It's a contest to see who whips their opponent the soundest, Alabama or USC. He has to go for more points."

But Bear played his usual game: let lots of players get exposure and glory, don't run up a big score by virtue of the first team. He was satisfied with the score: 24-9. It was to become the final score.

WIRE SERVICE POLLS				UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL			
ASSOCIATED PRESS				Final			
Team	W-L-T	Pts.		Team	W-L-T	Pts.	
1. Alabama (46)	12-0-0	1,317		1. Alabama (23)	12-0-0	559	
2. USC (21)	11-0-1	1,289		2. USC (9)	11-0-1	539	
3. Oklahoma	11-1-0	1,163		3. Oklahoma (1)	11-1-0	463	
4. Ohio State	11-1-0	1,160		4. Ohio State	11-1-0	451	
5. Houston	11-1-0	1,064		5. Houston	11-1-0	424	
6. Florida State	11-1-0	873		6. Pittsburgh	11-1-0	316	
7. Pittsburgh	11-1-0	872		7. Nebraska	10-2-0	300	
8. Arkansas	10-2-0	857		8. Florida State	11-1-0	238	
9. Nebraska	10-2-0	852		9. Arkansas	10-2-0	276	
10. Purdue	10-2-0	739		10. Purdue	10-2-0	227	
11. x-Washington	10-2-0	690		11. x-Washington	10-2-0	215	
12. Texas	9-3-0	464		12. Brigham Young	11-1-0	112	
13. Brigham Young	11-1-0	474		13. Texas	9-3-0	94	
14. Baylor	8-4-0	358		14. North Carolina	8-3-1	75	
15. North Carolina	8-3-1	311		15. Baylor	8-4-0	60	
16. Auburn	8-3-0	263		16. Indiana	10-2-0	35	
17. Temple	10-2-0	213		17. Temple	8-4-0	15	
18. Michigan	8-4-0	207		18. Penn State	8-4-0	14	
19. Indiana	8-4-0	206		19. Michigan	8-4-0	11	
20. Penn State	8-4-0	168		20. Missouri	7-5-0	8	

x-Record includes forfeit by Arizona State.

The pollsters seemed happy too. In the wake of USC's narrow 17-16 victory over Ohio State, both wire service polls awarded the Top Place to Bear Bryant's Alabama Crimson Tide.

Lou Holtz said it after the Sugar Bowl: "The thing that makes Alabama what they are is that they can run, pass, defend and kick. I voted for them virtually all year and I'm going to do it again. The only thing I can't understand is why our team wanted to play them. Personally, I wanted New Hampshire."

So the polls closed with a resounding affirmation for Truth, Justice, and the Alabama Way. Because this is a Southern apa I don't feel shy about mentioning that there are three major recognized National Championship awards: the AP poll, the UPI poll, and the MacArthur Bowl (the award of the National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame). In the span of the last two years Alabama has captured 5 of the 6 trophies. In this light, polls are A Good Thing.

However, The Alonzo P. Atkins position on polls is that they are a poor substitute for a play-off. Polls are rather subject to manipulation, as the sad saga of the penultimate AP poll this year might demonstrate if one could believe that partisan politics enter into such sporting events as college football. Fortunately I don't believe it was anything but sheer coincidence.

Polls are supposed to contain a large enough body of honest voters to prevent this sort of manipulation. In fact, the recent trend towards breaking down the vote by region shows an awareness on the part of the media and public that many factors influence a poll vote.

So what stands in the way of a play-off arrangement? (It's done in the lower divisions of the NCAA.) The answer is the bowl games. That's even admitted by Will Grimsley, AP Correspondent, in a syndicated article which discourages the budding movement for play-offs. If a playoff were held, writes Grimsley, "...it would be antiseptic. There is no way such a playoff could capture the color and carnival holiday spirit that has been built up by the tradition of the bowls."

Let's thump Grimsley quickly by evoking the dull insipid "antiseptic" atmosphere of the routine "ho-hum" media blight: the NFL Superbowl. As the coverage and intensity of college rivalries equal (if not exceed) those of the pro teams, I feel justified in assuming that a

national championship playoff would have a terrific pageantry and charisma attached thereto. I dismiss arguments of dullness as ridiculous.

The second argument voiced is that the bowls already bring the top teams together in a fashion adequate to answer questions of supremacy. To fight this argument I need only bring the media in to the attack. The references the Ellay media has made to Bear's "cream-puff" bowl opponents are manifold. Opponents like Penn State, #1 in both polls last year. (The local HB paper even managed to misquote the recent Sugar Bowl score as 21-9 -- as opposed to the actual 24-9 -- and call Arkansas a "secondary team" of the Southwest Conference -- instead of co-champion, missing the Cotton Bowl host position by virtue of a 13-10 loss to Houston, the winner of the Cotton Bowl.)

But bowl opponent manipulation is a certainty. For example, it's known that the Bear had a "deal" with Joe Paterno to allow the #1 and #2 teams to play, be it the Sugar Bowl or elsewhere, in 1979. And Florida State squeaked into the 1980 Orange Bowl by virtue of Florida political pressure. (Or so Rumor Hath It.)

The granddaddy of bowl manipulation concerns the good ole Rose Bowl. The Rose Bowl was originally established to showcase the best of the Pacific Conference against the Best of the Rest. This policy built it a tremendous reputation and spawned many fine games. However, the west coast didn't fare all that well against unrestricted competition. In the 1945 season Alabama went 10-0, scoring 430 points. They were invited to the Rose Bowl....

Under coach Frank Thomas the Crimson Tide had recorded an awesome year. Their selection to play the Pacific champion USC Trojans marked them well as the Best of The Rest. On New Year's Day of 1946 Alabama defeated USC by the score of 34-14. It was a rout. The Tide led by a solid 27-0 in the third period before USC was even able to make a first down, Thomas having removed the first string defense. It was a testament to the Alabama defense that USC's first half yardage netted out to minus 24.

This type of humiliation was not to be tolerated. In a clever move the Rose Bowl excluded most competition by signing an exclusive contract with the Big Ten Conference. And thus the first closed circuit, you-scratch-my-back-and-I'll-scratch-yours national championship arrangement was concluded. It persists to this day.

Today all four major bowls are attached to the championship team of one (or more) powerhouse conferences. Thus, the PAC-10 and Big Ten play in the Rose Bowl. The SEC plays in the Sugar Bowl. The Big Eight plays in the Orange Bowl. The Southwestern Conference hosts the Cotton Bowl. How the hell can any kind of really significant encounter occur save by chance??

The true impediment to a national championship playoff is financial. The bowls assure an enormous flow of revenue into the coffers of participating schools. There is doubt that a playoff would highlight as many schools. There is trepidation that release of an assured conference appearance in a festival could be offset by a risky shot at a "collegiate Superbowl." No wonder Division 1-A claims a playoff isn't feasible despite the existing playoffs in lower divisions. Hell, it ain't good business!

Several styles of playoff arrangements, however, could preserve the bowls and still focus attention on a later collegiate playoff. I present a couple of those ideas for perspective

purposes. One idea, proposed last year by some coaches, is to reschedule the bowls to accomodate an elimination tourney. The major bowls could rotate hosting the big playoff, etc. Seeded into the competition would be the conference champions of the Pac-10, WAC, Big 8, Big 10, Southwestern, SEC, ACC, etc. plus a set of major independents with top records and perhaps "wild card" teams from the established conferences. Pick 16 qualifiers and play it off! The bowls balked at this one.

A second try was to have the winners of the four major bowls (the New Year's Day complement) play an elimination series. That would add three games in January. The bowls and the colleges creebed at this 'un.

So the polls will not be overturned soon. The national championship will remain mythical and subjectivity will continue to reign. Only some years they get it right: Alabama is Number One!

"There are no research techniques to answer such questions as 'what causes the breakdown of a society'"... --P.F. Drucker

SOME QUICK NOTES ON THE BOX SCORES: Having read Guy's comments about his own labors in producing "Harlan's Side" I've decided it's only fair to give him full credit. This is reflected in his total this time. I was also able to move backward a mlg as well as forward one. The scores now cover eight mailings. No changes in the standings of the top four, but Mark Verheiden fell out of fifth and was replaced by Andre Bridget, while Ned Brooks soared into the elite ten. Bob Jennings and Mike Weber were casualties. (Gotta do more than 16 pages, Mike, to keep up with the fast-trackers.)

The average Pages per Mailing, by the way, is 9.09. (This doesn't reflect the total pages in an average SFPA mlg, but does give the average PPM for the 28 members in the current Box Scores.) Only 11 of the 28 are above the average mark. Not a normal distribution, big team. To sample the extremes, the top five average 23.04 PPM. The bottom five average 3.28 PPM. If an "ideal" roster of 30 is assumed, the baseline pagecount for a mailing done at the "top five" rate would be 691.2 (the .2 being accounted for by a 4/5 page of "embarrassing blank space" in Bob Jennings's zine). A similar "bottom five" mailing would contain 98.4 pages. Interesting.....

"Children do not know, of course, why they find school boring rather than exciting..." --P.F. Drucker

AND NOW LET US PRAY....: When my mother, charming and proper Alabama lady that she is, visited us Californians at the Christmas season it was a joyous occasion. The kids were delighted to have grandma here and she in turn seemed to revel in the simpering little turkies. The Christmas feast was all in order, headed toward a proper California agnostic Christmas, when my mother expressed a desire to attend Christmas Eve Communion Service.

My family is traditional Episcopalian. I myself served long hours as an altar boy, reaching the

revered status of Head Acolyte my senior year in high school. I understood her request and so we departed early that evening for a nearby church which promised services from the traditional prayer book. It was threatening rain and by the time we reached the church a light sprinkle was falling.

The church was an old one for Orange County. Its clapboard siding gave it a real "country chapel" feeling. Inside, there was little space, what had obviously been the rectory was opened to provide more seating. At the door we had been recognized and greeted as newcomers by the friendly usher. A very comfortable feeling developed.

Just prior to the service they rang the steeple bell, such a nice touch. I was ready for the nostalgia of the service. In my years as acolyte I'd practically memorized the Communion service. (I specialized in the 8 am service, as it was a 30 minute number and acolytes who'd volunteer to be there so early on a Sunday were few. I usually stuck around for the 60 minute 11 o'clock service too.)

This service was advertised (in the local paper) as a carol singing event, so I mentally added 15 minutes to the baseline 30 minutes of the Holy Communion which I knew so well.

Now it is fair to mention that the Communion service is written with a goodly number of optional prayers and readings. The service may thus be tailored to the inclinations of the minister. This pastor knew what he wanted: duration. He read both the "either" and the "or" in steady fashion.

I am a staunch believer in religious freedom. Let any human believe as is best perceived. Yet there is another dimension to religious freedom: it is freedom from harsh and cruel punishment. After twenty consecutive minutes on my knees for prayer I began to consider the classic tools of revolution. Theses nailed to the church door. Molotov cocktails....

Then came the carols. How many English language Christmas carols have been written? Want to guess?

Following this inspired session of song, the principal feature of which was its absolute refusal to slight any little known carol by exclusion, we worked our way toward the sermon.

It is the sermon, undoubtedly, which solidifies a good religious service. A good sermon is like unto a work of art. It is carefully constructed to fuse the virtues of brevity, clarity and relevance into a white-hot ingot of thought-stirring oratory. It is delivered with restrained fervor, peaking very occasionally into enthusiasm or the gravest of reproach. Above all, it moves at a pace to hold the listener's rapt interest.

Our minister believed in breaking with tradition. One fact of interest did escape, however. Our minister was English by origin and when a lad was frequently struck across the head by the choral master. I deduced (1) that our minister was frequently off key, and (2) that his choral master must have been a fan of American baseball and therefore favored use of a Louisville Slugger. Frequent use.

After a mere hour and 48 minutes the service concluded. My mother and I started for the door but were temporarily blocked by churchgoers speaking at the door with the pastor. When we escaped the rain was sparse. The trip homeward went quickly and soon we were standing before the roaring fire, saying our hellos and

Christmas greetings to the family and our special guests, Dave and Marcia. The fire and the greetings were warm. It was good to be back in the land of spontaneity and balance. I surveyed the mountain of gifts beneath the twinkling Christmas tree and wondered if, perhaps, the merchants hadn't learned better how to approach Christmas ritual.

Then I excused myself and walked back to my retreat -- the farden. A rare prayer was issued. "God," I said, "I recognize your Glory of Achievement in this world. May I reflect, however dimly, the intent of your Purpose in the actions of my life. And please understand why I don't go to church no more...."

"We will demand of the men of knowledge a high code of morality. This demand will come as a rude surprise to the learned." --P.F. Drucker

THE BRIEFCASE GAME: Yet another vignette in the series of Atkins Management Tips. One aspect of the corporate game is Status Symbol Manipulation. Image is one of the more important factors in this simple pasttime, and image counts most in meetings. When the Marketeers meet the Engineers there is a silent battle for turf. Where one sits at the conference table is critical. What one wears is paramount. And the briefcase from which one plucks documents of Truth and Wisdom is itself a testament to the value of those papers.

I've chosen a substantial work wardrobe. Five suits for Occasions, plus the leisure combinations I have. When I walk into an important meeting with Marketing it is clad in proper armor that I go. As for position, I survive.

I recall one meeting in particular. My arrival was delayed unavoidably and by the time I entered the conference room all the close positions around the Top Honcho had been taken. If I followed convention and took a fringing position in the cluster my inputs would originate from a position of obeisance.

I went all the way to the end of the long table and sat opposite the Big Name. From my friendly old briefcase I drew stacks of paper. The documents were carefully spaced in a semi-circle about me. I made places for an ashtray and my cigarettes. It consumed perhaps three minutes, but I grabbed so much working space that a huge bubble of occupancy was built around me.

I had totally ignored comments made as I set up my paraphernalia. Then, "I suggest we start the meeting," I said, stern-faced. Thereafter was balance of opinion. The Engineering viewpoint was listened to and thought upon.

But however cleverly I might play the conference table game, and however sharply I might dress in grey pin-stripe vested suits, the old battered imitation leather briefcase I carried could not be concealed. The accordion-style top-loader always was placed on the floor, but it introduced a note of incongruity nevertheless.

I liked the old fellow. It was quite serviceable, having been with me since college days. Tough as iron and capable of holding tons of stuff. On my trips to Albuquerque it carries not only my working papers but also my electric shaver, hair dryer, etc. I ignored the occasional jibes of the Marketeers as they put their genuine leather briefcases on the table as if to accentuate my floor bound case.

But at Christmas the currents reversed. Kathy gifted me with a Genuine Leather briefcase with Gold-Plated Fittings. True, it lacked embossed gold initials, but anybody with "AA" as an initial-handle has to be careful... Overall, the deep chocolate-brown leather was luxuriant enough to impress the most jaded of marketeers.

The first meeting I carried it to was held at one o'clock in Chatsworth. As this fair city is 75 miles north of my home base, and as I had a rather full morning, I arrived a scant five minutes before convocation time, still unfed.

I'd gotten coffee first. (This is a business MUST.) The VP of Sales, his chief aides, the Corporate Planning Officer and six junior functionaries watched me enter and set that gorgeous leather manifestation carefully upon the table.

I read the trepidation in their eyes. Here was the dashing knight of Engineering. The man who, armed with an imitation leather ancient top-loader, had driven sanity into the planning operations by virtue of his flamboyant style and relentless logic. What horrible stroke would he now unleash, armed as he was with the Classiest Briefcase in the room? Apprehension smothered all sound; a terrible silence was born.

An élan, graced with trembling need, possessed my fingers as I lifted the First Item from the briefcase. The second item followed quickly. A spontaneous gasp arose. This was nothing they had conceived or anticipated. I knew the question in every eye.

"Tuna salad," I announced, munching away at my sandwich. "Anybody care for a dill pickle?"

"Scorning power only makes it more oppressive." --P.F. Drucker

MAKIN' MUSIC FOR MONEY: Who is the most evocative balladeer in pop music?

Debate rages, but a strong case can be made for that unlikely, scratchy-voiced sell-out to disco rythmn -- that publicity-scarred veteran of hard-rock and FACES -- Rod Stewart.

Stewart may be best known for the Britt Eklund escapades and his current disco dance numbers, but a strong current in his published work consists of high-emotion ballads delivered in understated but collectively overpowering fashion.

Try "Mandolin Wind," "The First Cut," "It's Not the Spotlight," "Still Love You," "You're In My Heart (The Final Acclaim)," or "I Was Only Joking."

How can this skinny freak with obvious PR aspects and outrageous public predilections toward the wandering eye have any musical talent? The official line would have him dead via OD by now, or perhaps drummed unceremoniously from the public eye by a morally outraged public. (Remember Julius LaRosa...)

But Rod, clever commercial devil, preaches a brand of New Love that overcomes odds and social boundaries. Catch these lyrics from "I Still Love You:" I was told by a good friend, that you were untouchable, out of my reach. But the first time ever I saw you, I spilt my cherry wine all over your dress. You said: Don't you worry. It's not my best one. --First encounter: hardly the best.... But I would not change a thing if I could do it over again."

Pretty trite, yes? YES.

But now take it in the Stewart style, with pauses at the emotional interstices, young confidence interweaving the words and bravado taking up with "whoops" of apparent victory on the later verses. It tells a story between the lines: beautiful girl, with-it guy from ordinary stock, charismatic love, and later announcement of "no contract." BUT, enduring attachment in a non-obligatory style.

To do Rod justice, he has his share of "straight love" ballads. And whichever way he may bend the lyrics, he comes through with an emotional impact that grows, rather than diminishes, on each relistening.

You Neil Diamond fans, consider the unsavory edge of reality. It creeps into Rod Stewart's songs with such dismaying frequency. Yet the man manages to lasso romance and bring it struggling into his reach. How can there be stronger communication?

(Now let us say that fantasy has its place, and this writer is a frequent listener to The Fantasticks, Neil Diamond, The Lettermen, Linda Ronstadt and Jerry Brown.)

Let's say: Rod Stewart is the best sustaining romantic balladeer practicing today. Granted, he can't match Carole King with "I Feel the Earth Move" or John Sebastian with "She's a Lady" or Rita Coolidge with "Higher and Higher," but he exceeds on general volume output anybody else practicing these days.

Comments? Arguments? Or is this apa populated with pale-blooded vestiges whose greatest thrill is the Lawrence Welk Band breaking into the unforgettable strains of "How Much Is That Doggie in The Window"??

"I like the way you love me strong and slow. Takin' you with me, honey baby, when I go." --Bobbie Zimmerman

EDITORIAL STATE, MENT: The editor of this rotten rag feels inclined to categorically deny the beliefs and principles espoused by the writer thereof. Thus, an editorial immunity is preserved and any inflammatory statements may properly be blamed on a bad day at work or the inferior vintage of this evening's wine. Complaints on the content of this zine should be addressed to Editor of Customer Creebs, PO Box 1, North Pole, Arctic Circle. \$1000 should be included to cover postage and handling charges. Cash or money order only. Thank you.

"I said that in Cleveland, not Milwaukee," --former Presidential candy

POSTAL HEARTS: Announcing an exciting new SFPApasttime!! Postal Hearts!! This fast-paced game will raise your blood pressure and occupy your waking thoughts with thrilling strategy. Here's how it works: I'm the Gamesmaster; I'll deal a hand and mail each player his holding. Then the play begins.

(1) Pass. The pass is left, right, across and hold. Rules are Standard Southern, of course. Each player will be sent the name

and address of the other players and their position at the table. The cards passed are sent to both the Gamesmaster and the receiving player.

(2) Play. A "routing sheet" is sent by the Gamesmaster to the player on the lead each round. He fills in his play and sends it on to the next participant. The final route is to the Gamesmaster, who records the play and sends a copy of the completed routing sheet plus the new sheet to the player on the lead.

At this rate it might take a couple of years to finish a game, but if there enough Hearts nuts out there who want to try, I'll Gamesmaster. Dave Locke wants to play; that leaves three others to be found. I'll run more than one table if necessary. Any interest?

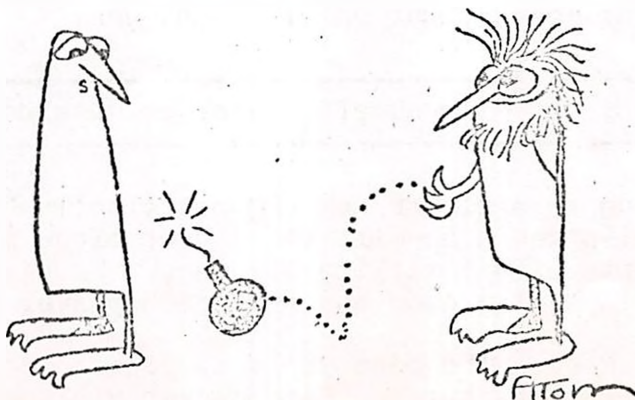
"You're absolutely crazy, Atkins! But count me in." --Dave Locke

ODDS AND ENDS: If you're wondering what happened to my Senatorial font, it stayed at home when I came into work this Sunday. Tons of action items are due Monday morning, the change of Pertec's fiscal year to January-December (as opposed to April-March) has us all scrambling frantically to meet impossible deadlines.

Not being one to work without short breaks, I brought the last page of MEL in to be completed between mundane chores. This section, thus, becomes little more than short filler items strung together. Sorry about that, but the OE frowns on lots of blank space on a page...

We missed getting our Christmas gifts in the mail before the holiday. In fact, we even missed buying them. (The out-of-town presents, that is.) Now the packages are almost all wrapped, some are already in the mail, and there's a rather relaxed and hassle-free feeling about the operation. I may make this a tradition.

I've found a variant on Eggs Benedict that I might like better than the original. Simply substitute a stack of asparagus spears for the poached eggs. On mildly toasted English muffins place thin sliced imported ham, then the asparagus. Cover with lots of Hollandaise.



intellectual...

*M*A*I*L*I*N*G*

*C*D*M*M*E*N*T*S*

THE SOUTHERNER 92 (AHOE) * Nice solid mailing, Alan. Sorry to see Linda and Lane drop, but I can understand the ebb and flow of interests and commitments. Perhaps we'll see them both on the waitlist before long. SFPA seems to reclaim a fair percentage of members who stayed in a year or so before they dropped.

Congratulations to Guy on his election to the OE post, and congratulations to you, Alan, for regaining the Presidency. Hope this boosts your waning interest in the apa and motivates you to retain that hallowed spot.

THE NEW PORT NEWS (Brooks) * Nice comment to Janice Gelb. There's a little demon (cousin to Maxwell's) running about the back of my head too, telling me that I should be doing something really important. He never says what it is, however, and as a consequence I try things like fanzines, French cooking, and building computer systems. I've decided that the demon is a neurotic little snot, hiding his fear of things like entropy and mortality with irrational frenetic proddings of his normally-sedate host.

The typical Carter program seems to be thoroughly hedged and compromised. Your observation on his "amnesty" applies well to his other works. When I voted for Carter it was with the hope that some clear and honest direction was to be had. Now I find that the man may be a super smiley campaigner but he's not strong enough to hold the office he won. And Kennedy would be a worse disaster.

The difference, to my observation, between the Stupid Rules of the private sector and the government is the amount of resource poured into tracking, documenting and enforcing the Stupid Rules. Pertec devotes only a tiny resource to Rules (and most of the enforcement goes to enforcement of plant security measures). In my experience, the government spends vast sums. A second difference is that Pertec will change its Stupid Rules in the face of a strong practical argument. (I have won a couple of these battles myself). The government never budes. (Local management may, to their credit, ignore the Stupidity, but they do so at risk of Higher Power.)

PHARMAGRAPHY AND TYPOCOLOGY (B. Bridget) * I don't follow this. My sympathies on Andre's miscarriage.



SOMEONE ELSE'S GARAGE (A. Bridget) * One of the things I observe in Albuquerque is a slower life-pace. Not so much at the plant, which is mainly driven by transplanted Californians, but in the town itself. The attitude of the populace is relaxed. Deadlines aren't terribly important unless they involve human survival. The vast presence of the Sandia mountains interjects an awareness of nature. The people of Albuquerque take periodic retreats into nature.

In many ways I imagine you are feeling like the Albuquerqueans. The demands of organizational life can be defeating to the human spirit. I don't believe we were really built for the frantic speed dictated by profit and power. The ability to organize and drive has given the race much, but some of the side effects are less than desirable. In Albuquerque, where "Navajo time" is recognized as a legitimate frame of reference, the Influence is so much lessened. People race hot air balloons... Where the wind blows, so they go. At the wind's pace.

I hope you and Bill find Etowah a healing influence. I hope the pressures recede and give you space for that reconciliation with life's genuine realities. Believe me, I understand the pressures you two are under and I wish you the best of futures.

I'VE BEEN READING (Hulan) * Lots of books; enjoyable commentary. However, I don't really have much to say because I've not read but a few of the books you review. Where I have, we tend to be in agreement. Little reason to elaborate on agreement.

I continue to be puzzled by your mildly negative feelings toward Raymond Chandler. His books are rich in California culture, suspense and human insight. He's a fine prose stylist also, and his dry, almost subterranean, humor could go unnoticed on a superficial reading. Owell. Tastes differ.

MEL 73 (me) * Gee, it was fun to get back to lengthy MC's, Box Scores and faan fiction serials. Not to mention insulting Hank, Reinhardt-baiting being such a grand SFPA tradition. With the Christmas vacation, I may even get another big Mel done before my usual relapse.

QUETZALCOATL (Hyde) * I really like your "Cat-Bear" cover by Jerry Collins. It's a combination of softness; a sensual Disney drawing. I notice the copyright notice and wonder if Collins plans to use the character in a strip. (Or perhaps he is already.)

Interesting viewpoint re: fandom. Most fans go through this stage of disillusionment, as the propaganda of the microcosm becomes transparent. Yes, it's true that the denizens of fandom haven't escaped the good ole bell-shaped curve of the normal distribution. There's a range of intelligence, personalities, neuroses and tolerance-levels.

Once this is recognized, however, it's easy to move toward the part of the curve that suits one best. Fandom is a place where fan-types can meet lots of people with similar interests. Even similar neuroses. The methods of discriminating selection which one learns in "real life" apply equally well to fandom. That's a two-edged sword; working at alienation will produce alienation. Working toward understanding will yield acceptance.

Keep the Collins cartoons coming!

DWED'S DWELLING 39 & 40 (Reed) * Had me worried there for a moment, Gene, but I knew you hadn't departed from the roster and so looked ahead to find the answer. Glad you decided to stay with us in SFPA.

What type of computer programming are you most interested in? There's lots of varieties: business applications, scientific number crunching, assembly language system development, etc. From your comment about your plans for a Masters in Business Administration, I suppose you're aiming toward business applications, perhaps financial. If so, squeeze in several accounting courses and the combination of skills will make you valuable on the market. Too many business programmers know little or nothing about accounting theory.

DC SUPER-STARS (Reed) * Is APA-I an index apa?

TRUE CONFECTIONS 2 (Lynch) * The several years I spent in SAPS were enjoyable. There was a well-established pantheon of old-timers in the apa then, many from the Seattle area, and John Berry was perpetual President. SAPS was then perhaps the second most prestigious apa, behind FAPA, but probably the best for activity and overall good material. (SFPA was on its way up to the Golden Ages.)

If you could send me an overrun copy of The Spectator I'd appreciate it. To be honest, I've not the energy to sustain another apa, but I'd like to see who's in SAPS and enjoy a moment of nostalgia.

I caught the tail end of a Fantasy Island last week, just wandering into the TV room at the wrong time. If the sequences I observed are typical of the show, I guess it has to be one of the dumber shows on the air. None of us who miss it on a regular basis are missing much.

Enjoyed Charlie William's pictorial con report. Nice work indeed. Please pass on my best wishes and tell Charlie that he'd be a valued member of SFPA.

THRU THE WORMHOLE 3 (A. Bridget) * What Nancy O-T writes about is sex-role stereotyping. It isn't limited to women doing traditional "male" jobs. The same reactions and prejudices are applied to a man performing a "female" job. I still hear comments from fellow passengers on an airline when the steward (as opposed to the stewardess) serves meals, etc. The comments are usually along the line of "I don't like her legs" or "I'll bet he's queer," but they are denigrating. The reason is sex-role expectation.

I see many signs that this prejudice is lessening in many areas, but women are still, on the average, paid less than males with similar work experience holding similar positions. Stereotyping "justifies" it in the mind of the employer. I would like to see a study to determine if the reverse financial bias exists: do males filling typical female jobs receive less pay, on the average, than their female counterparts?

Pornographic star trek material? I should reprint some choice stuff from the VD (Victorian Digest), the pornographic journal of Ellay fandom in the late sixties. The Blackguards, now defunct, was the sponsoring organization. The key question is: how does our new OE feel about porno running through SFPA?

SPIRITUS MUNDI 54 (Lillian) * Issues take so long to drop out of print in SFPA because of the Last Word Syndrome.

Many members appear to have a superstitious belief that the Last Word signifies something Immense -- like Truth or Triumph or Revenge. Therefore, we get a replay of everybody's own special position for as long as anyone is willing to comment and prolong it.

There's also a lot of harboring of grudges. Issues dead and forgotten by the other apa members will suddenly appear with the thin justification of a memory jog. Read thru almost any issue of Spiritus and you'll see what I mean. (And you can probably find the same thing in Mel if you look.) We really don't need to be doing this, but we apparently can't resist taking a free shot.

Well, that's an ambitious "contract" you have with SFPA. My contract is four pages of original material in any two consecutive mailings plus a payment of dues on an annual basis. Whatever comes above that is extra. The pressures of my life dictate a roller coaster performance, but over the years I've given SFPA a lot more than the basic contract. It's that extra that pleases me most.

So the Box Scores are back. Pleased? I imagine we'll still have our disagreements about "credit" for pagecount, as I don't allow anything a member paid postage on to count in the Box Scores, but we should be able to level the major disputes.

America has a outward and visible belief to "human rights" as is vested in our Constitution and propaganda. This belief permeates much of our society, true. It may even be the basis for many laws. The laws themselves, as their enforcement, are strictly based on the exercise of temporal power. To believe otherwise is naive. Laws are made by a power group; they are interpreted by a power group; they are enforced by a power group. And it is power which contests them.

Look at the condition of the black race in the American South. The laws of this nation existed, yet failed until pure force was applied to encourage their observance. Whenever ideals such as "human rights" are to prevail they must rely on force to deal with the malignant violator. You must not confuse the actual operant mechanism with the theoretical political justification.

I recall the California discos of seven and eight years ago, when the height of fashion was a dance pit where dancing to pop records was encouraged and the ring of tables surrounding the pit was full of energetic dancers, awaiting room on the floor. Dancing was strenuous, not routine, and no one that of "disco" as a type of music but rather as the name for a kind of club. Popularization, as always, killed the spark.

Hank won the Hearts tournament at Halfacon?? Aside from the patent impossibility of such an occurrence, I croggle that the old man had enough stamina to complete such a marathon. The Hankish victory (if such is indeed true) can be explained: Atkins wasn't there.

THE SECOND SECOND LIEUTENANT (Lillian) * Noted. A good example of the "here I am at the typewriter" one-shot. There's some substance to the natter, though no comment hooks for me unless I manufacture one. Right now I'm driving for the end of the page and moving on to the next zine.

THE ABSENT MINDED WAITER 3 (Crlbrg) * I've got BLOOD ON THE TRACKS spinning now. Of all the "later" albums it comes closest to the shredding-machine power of BLONDE ON BLONDE, but incorporates the lessons Dylan learned in NASHVILLE SKYLINE (though integrated now) and the lucidity of NEW MORNING. In my top four Dylan Albums. Favorite easy listenin' cut: "Buckets of Rain."

My current ambition is to get a reel-to-reel setup and do my own dj'ing. Some rare nights I get to that mellow plateau of stoned and play favorite album cuts in the proper sequence, darting from album to album, artist to artist. This is creation of art. The thought of having various tapes (and creating new ones on those rare nights) is highly attractive. ...Now to find the bread.

And I still have not purchased SLOW TRAIN COMING. Maybe I never will. A flawed collection holds more excitement than a complete run.

The practice of power, one might say, is a trip I'm on at the moment. Power need be no more of an extreme than any other pursuit. "Making the world safe" is an extreme. "Getting whatever you want" is another. In my microcosmic power framework I study what is the beast and what are its habits.

Whatever the origin of power, be it from possession of resource or possession of temporal might, the fine points of the study come from delegation of power. That is, the power structure is what bears observation. When in your MC to Don you mention: "Keep the amount of power involved down to where there won't be any temptation to fight over it." you touch the key issue.

In a two-person operation this may be achievable. On the other hand, it may not. A marriage is a two-person power operation and it can run awry so damn quick when one partner loses sight of the Balance.

In my mid-range position (there are as many steps of power above me as there are below me) I must present two faces: the earnest steward and the benevolent tyrant. (Certainly other faces are possible, but I have chosen these and depart only as required to achieve a key goal.)

Because power is bestowed downward onto my shoulders, I must carry the burden which has been currently assigned. In practice I am given a resource pool, the size of which is decided above me. My negotiating efforts have an incremental effect only. With these resources I must achieve certain established goals: mostly general in nature, some highly specific.

It is my intent to achieve the goals set for me and to utilize marginal resources to improve my condition -- in the direction of long-term probability of success. This means that whatever resources are extra go to build the strength of the organization. Thus, the earnest steward face.

Those to who I myself bestow power see the face of the benevolent tyrant (and this is the face I most often see above me). The benevolent tyrant is outlined best in a manual by Machiavelli. Some of his characteristics are giving a free hand to subordinate Princes but maintaining a strong intelligence system, extending generous rewards for accomplishment (of the benevolent tyrant's goals), never neglecting the general welfare, and being able to cut through the most excruciating of paradoxes with a clear decision based on the best assimilated info of the moment.

Now, while I may play the benevolent tyrant within the circle of my power, it is not for the sheer exercise of that power. The group must have direction. It must function efficiently within corporate guidelines to achieve tangible goals. The role of the benevolent tyrant is to administer his resources to achieve those goals.

In the course of this, power is used to set operating policy, resolve technical and personal disputes, motivate the team, knock out external roadblocks, track schedules, redispense resources as problems develop, etc. Power is required to achieve these goals. The visible power is bestowed from above, but the genuine government must be by assent.

The goals I seek to achieve with my group are both creative and demanding. The direction must be coherently focused; the efforts of the group cannot be counter, one to the other. Were it otherwise, the energies of the group would be dissipated in resistance and political competition. That is why I am constrained in my government. The group must accept my decisions are sound; they must believe in the technical integrity of the methods I endorse; they must know my discipline is just.

When government is partial, when it seeks to dictate morals or ethics or beliefs, when it takes disproportionately from the populace, then there is resistance. That act of opposition weakens the very power which created the imbalance. In time, that malignant or foolish power will fall.

In reality, yes, the exercise of power is too often flawed. It seeks to inculcate, smother, suppress or extort. Yet this is not the theory of power. It is not its true exercise. As Gandalf knew, power is a trust only.

--Nuff--

Reading your opening page, Stven, I marvelled at the fleshed-out clarity your stoned-prose can achieve. Now if there were only an outline to it... Lots of enjoyable items and choice mots in this zine. Your most praiseworthy achievement, however, was in perceiving the true thread of "Quixote Lake" -- a difficult construction to put into SFPA. Thanks for your comments.

So why a mere eight pages from such a sage? Don't let your humble waitlister status deter you, youngfan, from contributing a healthy 30 pages or so per mailing. All us oldtimers do it as regular course....

UTGARD 36 (Hulan) * That "overdose" syndrome, where work writing clobbers fanac, isn't a stranger to me either. A couple of weeks ago I had to write a manual for one of our products, having volunteered myself because of a manpower shortage/schedule bind. Time crept up on me and suddenly I had only a weekend to do the thing. I crunched it out, though it was really more editing than original writing. But for several days afterward I avoided the typewriter entirely. This syndrome may be why I do no "hobby computing" at all. I leave it at work.

And speaking of work, I should set the record straight on future Pertec offerings in the small computer system line. My apologies for any misunderstanding I may have created in chatter, but the fact is that Pertec isn't planning to compete with Apple, etc., for the "home computer" market. The new system I was speaking of will cost me about \$2000 to build; it'll sell for x4 to x5, depending on purchase quantity. (And although Pertec has a 20% employee discount now -- against list price -- I don't know what Triumph-Adler's policy will be...)

The "better" in the new Pertec system is reliability and sophistication, not selling price. Pertec aims for business, and the sheer horsepower of our new machine is it's strong point. We use quality components, design ample margins into the logic, select sturdy mechanical assemblies, etc. The system is built for convenient expansion to significant mass storage capacity (up to 160 megabytes in the first offering). A powerful telecommunications option will be available (async, 2780, 3780, 3470, 3270, HASP, SDLC). The software will also be very powerful, supported with a wide range of languages, utilities, recovery capability, data base management, etc. The point I was making to Marcia was that if she intends to use your machine also she'd miss the powerful tools and system features she's grown used to. The little home computers are rapidly improving, but they lack the strength and versatility for serious efforts. On the other hand, they're delightful for what they're intended. Choose what suits best, but don't plan to race the steeplechase with a Shetland pony. And if it's relaxation you're after, why bother with an Arabian.

Agreed that prohibition is not an answer; indeed it introduces a criminal approach to drugs and thus compounds the problem. There's no way to stop a determined user. (A man should have to right to go to hell in the bucket of his choosing, so long as he doesn't drag down his fellows in the process.) However, I question unrestricted availability of any consciousness-altering substance. My problem here is children; they should have some protection until they're exposed to the concepts and (bare bones) practice of society. (By the way, I consider religion in the same category as drugs -- unsafe for adolescent useage.) Education should precede indulgence.

What is the proper control system? Perhaps it depends upon the drug. (By the way, I was surprised that you didn't mention the LSD, mescaline, etc. list of drugs on your "dangerous" mentions. Also, the big H.) Britain had a system some years ago, and may still, where a heroin addict could qualify for controlled quantities of the drug by registering as an addict. Prices were set well under those of illicit channels. Methodone was available cheaper yet. The idea was visibility. Economically attractive and entailing a minimal amount of government hassle, the addict was encouraged to function with society. Opponents of this idea, as I recall, based their arguments on manifest moral codes and private communication with God.

In a society based on a professed belief in alcohol (in "moderate" amounts), it's incredible that as mild a drug as grass is forced underground. Had marijuana been so indelibly associated with the "antisocial" "hippie" "revolutionary" counterculture of the late sixties I'm sure it would have gently found its way to legality today. Unfortunately, the American Moral Machine has taken a position. A generation will be needed to reverse it.

Going on to your fascinating ideas on the federal government, I find them similar to ideas expressed in a sf story of unrecalled title or author. I read it in the fifties (when I was preschool) in, I think, Fantastic Universe. People gave confidence votes as you describe, electronically, and those votes in a computer. The catch was that an indication of lack of confidence didn't trigger a job dismissal. It triggered an explosive charge in a collar-of-office which each "Czar" accepted along with the position.

Now this is fanciful and impractical for many reasons. But the idea is a good one -- the idea of power moderated by those being served in a specific area.

Put the genuine public services in this category. Put the military and research organizations on a tighter budget. Give the President an eight-year term, keep the Congress as is, and make them subject to recall on a -- say -- 66% dissatisfaction level as recorded via the public opinion monitor system you describe.

My original thrust wasn't so radical. As you describe in your MC to Gary Mattingly, the federal government (and similar orgs) encourage inefficiency by rewarding it. What I want to see is a policy installed which reverses this trend. I know it can be done. The Treasury Department of Michigan has a data processing operation which is efficient. I've been there and seen it, examined their set up and installed equipment. It was done with the strong initiative of a good professional management team, the boss having retired from private industry. I wish my tax dollars were in similar good hands.

The trivia quiz was dropped for lack of activity, but your answers scored highest of the few responses that dribbled in (all but Guy's after the deadline). I think a quiz of sorts with running scores would be a neat idea, but trivia wasn't the right idea. I may try again along another direction.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH (Hutchinson) * "Assholic"?? Your deft skill in coining terms, Alan, makes any confrontation between you and Mr. Bridget overbalanced in your favor. Why bother with the lad? Comments garnered from many members' zines over the last couple of mailings show you're not alone in your irritation. Agreed, if Bill Bridget doesn't want to join us he can leave; it's a voluntary organization.

Any "open membership" group must occasionally deal with an individual whose insecurities, pain and bitterness make him destructively assinine. ("Assinine" is a word approved by Webster's Unabridged.) Such persons can heal and so they're worth some patience. But that's Rare, healing. Hang cool, Alan. Juvenile raving can't change the fine job you did as OE.

Fandom is sometimes defined as a place where newcomers are accepted without question. It would be better to say that fandom is willing to deal with most newcomers in their own terms. The diversity of interests that coexist in SFPA is broad. Every newcomer receives friendly overtures. If they are accepted everything goes well.

The destructive personalities which have entered over the years don't usually last long. They don't mesh with the apa gestalt. In battling with the loose structure and straightforward rules, in attempting to rise by tearing down others, they alienate the welcoming members.

Fandom has places for such destructive personalities. The Cult (as it was some years ago) thrived on petty haggling, bitter insults and general assininity. TAPS served as a forum for cocky adolescent egos. Other such groups existed. Perhaps Southern fandom, having grown larger, needs a Cult of its own. But it ain't SFPA.....

THE FICHE FAN (Celko & Baird) * Microfiche is neat. Going to fiche for a collection is a good idea, which has been utilized by libraries and institutions for some time. All our engineering documentation is on fiche at Pertec and copies are simply ordered as needed. As I have access to the system, I suppose I could put my collection on fiche.... someday.

IN THE POST OFFICE... (Hutchinson) * SUPER cover! Your ~~fertile~~ fertile mind keeps coming up with humorous and intriguing cover ideas. If you ever turn to minacking, Alan, forget the prose and send these fabulous covers thru.

The crummy cartoon strips in the papers are there because they're what the bulk of the population reads. (Remember Sturgeon's Law -- there's a reason for it.) It's the same with novels. Look at the utter drek on the stands and look how much of it sells. Quality material limits itself to a small audience. (Though this rule is broken from time to time when something good gets to also be popular. And the older I get the less I understand how that happens.)

The death penalty has two arguments in its favor: (1) attaching such a severe penalty has great deterrent value, and (2) a murderer has lost respect for human life and will kill again, so snuff him first. The first argument was tested some centuries ago in England when the death penalty was attached to sheep stealing. However, faced with a choice between a possible hanging and a certain starvation, people kept on stealing sheep. (Death was also the unwritten penalty for cattle rustling in the American West of yestercenury, and while accurate stats on its deterrent value are not available, the number of Hollywood movies based on this theme can be evaluated if anyone is interested.) The second argument, if consistently applied, would decimate the ranks of our police forces and military corps. Therefore, it has been dropped and we send potential repeat offenders to mental hospitals where they are trained in pottery and basketweaving before being released.

Best idea I've yet heard concerning executions is to keep them but structure the event to yield the greatest public good. Criminals would be publically executed in groups. Each execution would of course be individually handled, but several would be arranged for a single program. The executions would take place in large stadiums (like the Rose Bowl) and tickets would be sold at various price levels. Novel methods of death would be introduced to hold public interest. There's no doubt that sheer millions of fans would appear and throng to the stadiums. Television rights would of course be sold (primary to concerns like Forrest Lawn and the beer that advertises you only go round once). The proceeds would go to reduce the national debt.

I too am a supporter of wildlife. Ah, wildlife.... Love it!! I'll cope with the hangovers as best I can.

I didn't mean that censors had produced animation to change an ending. I meant that if alternate versions were available the one most acceptable would be used by preference. Also, cutting can remove "offensive" scenes. I'm sure you've witnessed the butchery that can occur when a film of "mature content" is edited for television.

Howard the Duck not only smokes grass, he deals. This kind of information can't be allowed to leak to his public, but Howard runs the biggest dope ring in the Orange County area. (With the exception of the Board of Supervisors, of course, but their kind of dope is elected, not smoked.) Maui Wowie, Panama Red, Orange Orange, fine Columbian blend, Mendocino Magic -- all the best. "Howard the Duck," you see, is the nickname for Howard Zapata, probably the biggest independent dope dealer in Southern California. I've never met the Duck.

Your experience with Sparkman was unfortunate. Too bad that creeps like that exist. (He probably reads inferior comic strips too.) I didn't know there was a rule against delivering mail in the street. A number of times I've gotten our Saturday mail directly from the mailman without him putting it in the box. He's a nice old gentleman, doesn't run fast at all. I caught him within fifty feet, delivered a sharp rabbit punch and collected my mail. The second time he tried that dog spray trick, but I held my breath and went in low for the tackle like Bear teaches. Then I kicked the old bastard's knee caps out for the trick. My report to the USPOD about "Rude and uncooperative employees must have worked also, for I hear he's been transferred to St. Petersburg.

THE SPHERE 63 (Markstein) * You deserve commendation for your common-sense approach to the forthcoming GHLIIIOE regime. Truly, we all have the chore of getting variety into the MC's, boosting page count while doing that. A house divided, etc. So let's see some improving Box Score stats from Don Markstein.

Feudal barons and Chinese war lords. That's how a tyrant gets control of a huge mass quickly. He carves the pie into nice pieces and turns it over to a ruthless but just (hopefully) group of barons. They subdivide in turn. The ruler keeps power sufficiently fragmented to control it via force, politics and reward. Then he sets to the business of delineating standards -- legal, taxation, etc. -- within his empire. Temujin was a master of this form of "instant government." Of course he started with the barons and hordes of mounted warriors...

This bornial approach is pretty much the way big corporations operate. The emperor keeps a strong intelligence apparatus, mostly financial reporting & controls. The barons go off and run their divisions. It is as successful as the quality of the emperor and barons. The I CHING, s'matter fact, is a text book for the baron.

A "conservative" is a person who opposes change of traditional methods and is characterized by a "low risk" approach to enterprise. A "Conservative" is one who flocks under that political banner, the dogma of which changes constantly. My impression of the current Conservative posture follows. Opposed to much government control; opposed to the graduated income tax; favoring the promiscuous use of military force; indignant at the size of the Civil Service; favoring local control of moral statutes; convinced that the judicial system is infested with Commies; distrustful of social science; prone to adopting simplistic models of the social/political scene; even more prone to simplistic economic models.

Some of these traits are reflected in my own beliefs, so I'm part Conservative. I'm not, however, fond of the term "Conservative." It's outmoded. Ronald Reagan exemplifies the Arch-Conservative position. He's outmoded.

On the issue of legislation, the Conservative opposes laws because he wants freedom to rip off people as he pleases. The Liberal opposes lack of law because he lives in the loop holes, ripping off the designated game. Naturally, property owners tend to be Conservative and lawyers tend to be Liberal.

I'll be in Phoenix on business the third week of January. Will try to get in touch. Maybe we could do a one-shot. Or maybe not....

WALDO KICKED... (Davis, Tesser & Wells) * I walked past Anything Goes last time I was in New Orleans, and looked over the billboards outside advertising its charms. Somehow I passed the opportunity, being more intent on traditional New Orleans atmosphere and cuisine. Anything Goes reminded me too much of several restaurants to be found in the Ellay area, all enjoyable but not New Orleans.

Gee, I hadn't realized that you weren't getting your share of MC's, Hank. (I thought it was only me not getting a fair share.) Having skimmed the mailing already I know you have a GIGO later on. Will comment.

Agreed with you, George, that it's not the apa page count but the amount of enjoyment contained therein that makes the difference. And if it weren't for the damn minackers there'd be more enjoyment!!

THE BARRINGTON BULL (Lillian) * Ah, nostalgia! It's fun to look back over the years and spot the memorable times, both good and bad. Thanks for your vote on Red As Flame. I did send Jerry a copy, soon after publication. These days my stock is down to a file copy. Jerry will have to wait for a reprint.

The 77% SOLUTION (Juge) * The "do your own thing" movement, as much as it's turned into modern barbarism, had sound beginnings in psychological theory. The original idea, I believe, was to combat the guilt trips plaguing us. Don't worry that momma said you had to eat everything on your plate... Break the guilt motivator that says your shirts must come from the wash "whiter than white"... And the much deeper trips that are laid on us in childhood. In that vein, it's fine, but given what the commercializers do it's become a litany of irresponsibility. It's just another example of a good idea being put to poor work. I hate it too.

"Punk" and "Disco" are too very different musical movements. As any ardent bumper-sticker reader knows, Disco Sucks and Punk Is Puke.

Granted, we form a image of a person based on the inputs we receive; and granted, that image is not the person. This difference between image and actuality is ignored in interactions, even if known to exist, because the image presents the closest approximation to the actuality currently available. If the actuality isn't known the best approximation will have to do.

The danger lies in "freezing" an image and thereafter ignoring further inputs which would yield yet a closer approximation. We all fall into this trap, though to varying degrees, once a comfortable image has been formed. The image can become a label -- like "nigger", "Bircher" or "Trekkie" -- and thus interfere with the assimilation of new information.

SMOF stands for Secret Master Of Fandom. Bruce Pelz' license plate reads: "SMOF 2."

Suffering also gives one some perspective. As the line from "The Fantasticks" goes, "Without a hurt, the heart is hollow." Our perceptive capabilities, intellectual as well as sensual, are to a large extent calibrated by experience. Just as contrasting Red Mountain Burgundy to Chateau Laffitte-Rothschild provides insight into the range of wines, so experiencing pain and pleasure, sorrow and gladness, etc. instills empathetic senses. Another, deeper, level is the question of choices which you mention.

OUT OF THE BLUE... (Lynch) * Putt Putt tourneys are fun. Even better was the year the LASFS formed a fannish bowling league. Other denizens of the bowling alley didn't quite know what to make of us -- an aggregation of people appearing to come from every subculture in the area. The standings were run weekly in Apa L. After one season there wasn't enough general interest so five of us formed a team in the name of the Blackguards (raunchy Ellay fan group) and continued to drive the regular bowlers crazy.

PIVA THE PARANOID (Lillian) * See, you made it to OE. No insidious write-in campaigns. No poison pen letters. (At least I received none; the closest thing being an incoherent long-distance call from somebody named "Ned" begging me to not let "him" make Ned an Emergency Officer. Never did figure out what it meant.)

Covers are an important part of SFPA. An integral part of the SFPA image is good art and visual humor. Clean attractive layouts interior to a zine and spot illos or cartoons are nice as well. Fortunately, SFPA has good artists to draw upon, plus promising newcomers (like Alan Hutchingsome, who shows real promise of someday drawing something funny...).

SONATINA 3 (Rogers) * Most fan writing is done first draft. It takes time and effort to rewrite, demands not tolerated by most deadline-pressed fan hacks. (Reports that fans are lazy are most certainly not founded.) Writing first-draft is a skill in its own right. I feel it develops one's ability to wordsmith, forcing one to try for the best words and proper construction the first time around. The better the original the more effectively it can be revised if desired.

The N3F today sounds remarkably like the N3F of fifteen years ago. Turnover was high then, outside of the small power factions, and I suppose it still is. Strife between the factions over what grandiose project to begin next accounted for most of the writings/conversations. Uwell. Some things never change.

STARJAZZER (Johnson) * The impact of Buddy Holly's music was what made his reputation. He really opened things up for "white" rock'n'roll. His songs, simple as they are, still infect me with enthusiasm, get the feet and body moving. Of course his untimely death had to have a lot to do with the Holly legend. As you say, his tenure was too short to achieve the mass usually required to produce a legend (like Elvis). But death alone wasn't enough to make his work keep on keepin' on.

Have you read Eddison's THE WORM OUROBOROS? It's a beautifully (if rather wordy) written fantasy of great derring-do, high romance and complex intrigue.

Yes, Deb, you've hit the truth: us old fogies are burned out, unable to summon up the energy to big SFPazines. Each morning when the nurse wheels me into the fan den I type a few feeble sentences, straining my typing fingers. This mailing comment has taken nearly sixteen weeks to reach its third paragraph. Only the thought that there are older, slower, more decrepit fans than I still contributing keeps my ember of minac still glowing. My thanks to Dave Hulan, Hank Reinhardt, Meade Frierson, Ned Brooks, Bob Jennings, Cliff Biggers, George Wells, Alan Hutchinson, Guy Lillian, Ron Juge, Don Markstein, Mike Weber, Hank Davis, Joe Moudry, Mark Verheiden, Gene Reed, Andy Whitehead and Steven Carlberg.

An interesting comment to Clint. The strength and flexibility of your written personality comes thru well. (Are you the same in person?) You touch nicely on some difficult issues. The core of strength we build inside as we formulate and affirm standards is important. It is the tree grown from that elusive seed: self-esteem. Winners have it. They can be crushed down and battered, yet they rise up again with fresh determination. One statement of this philosophy has especially appealed to me. It's from a song by a Canadian, Robbie Robertson, about the American Civil War. The song is cast in the words of Virgil Caine, a Virginia man who survived the war. His brother didn't, and the verse dealing with that episode ends: "I swear by the blood beneath my feet, /You can't raise a Caine back up when he's in defeat."

My Rebel blood is showing.

"Character, style and grace" are the criteria you scan for in men. In your relegation of physical looks to a lower position there's an implication -- and forgive me if I've wronged you, Deb, but I've heard this accusation from numerous women -- that men value good looks/bodies first. It's a stereotype that is applied with too wide a brush. Good looks are certainly an attention-getter, and I do appreciate a beautiful woman, but the factors that count most are similar to the ones you give for men. Women appeal to me who have character, style, intelligence, compassion and grace.

A relationship which is more than just sexual infatuation must have durability, mutual support and that special magic that comes from liking the inner person on the other side of the partnership. It's hard to find, and charismatic people are often flawed by selfishness and jealousy. A lot of the genuine beauties I've known were manipulative and self-centered to a remarkable degree, as if beauty were itself a right to More. Give me the warm and caring heart instead.

KUITLOXOPETL (Frierson) * My last cat inventory still discovered only three felines: Charky, the great black truffle; Blossum, the attractive nuisance; and Bilbo, the fatuous fop. All three are acknowledged as boo-boos, being respectively The Big Boo, The Little Boo, and The Bil-Boo. If they pooled their intelligence they might out-smart a radish. If they pooled their energies the resultant wattage might power a tiny LED for a nanosecond. If they combined their appetites the spontaneous monster would devour all of Birmingham and have Bakersfield for desert.

Bilbo is most lately distinguished by a new Household Post, which was bestowed upon him by a Christmas gift of Dave and Marcia Hulan. They gifted us with a wall hanging which announces, "This house is protected by an ATTACK CAT." The beast depicted, sleeping among the daisies, resembles Bilbo and so he was awarded the position. His guard duties thus far have included sleeping on the kitchen counter, the living room chairs (in sequence), the TV top, the front step (a step in the right direction) and Dawns's bed at eventime. We have low hopes of his success in this trusty post, but we are certain that should danger approach we would be warned by the loud pop of air rushing in to fill the vacuum where his form had most recently been sleeping.

Could I interest you, sir, in joining the Great SFPA Mailing Comment Revival which is beginning to take shape? Requirements are simple: merely read and comment upon the zines in SFPA. Your wit, charm, instructional eloquence and other writing talents would be appreciated.... As you should recall from Days Past.

GIGO 9 (Davis) * Hotel room rates do seem to be skyrocketing at absurd measures. In my travels to that Golden Gateway to the Great Southwest, Albuquerque, I've been sleeping all over town. (Disclaimer!) There seems to be little correlation between room price and sumptuousness of accommodations. One hotel, being closest to the plant, has been established as the Median. It offers median rooms, a median restaurant, an expensive bar (though, admittedly, with some of the sharpest waitresses in town) and a variety of median attractions: unheated outdoor pool, sauna, weight room, pinball room. It does have an Expensive restaurant, distinguished by the scantiness of waitress costume and the \$30 price of a New York steak.

If I'll willing to drive ten extra miles I can stay at the Best, which has spacious rooms with comfortable king-size beds (two per room, as if that makes a difference). Included are a heated indoor pool in a garden area, waterfalls, superb service, an excellent! and reasonably-priced restaurant, a piano bar and a rock-music bar, and a bigger pinball room. The difference in room price is a mere \$4 per night.

The Worst, which I've never had the pleasure of sampling, is down on Central. An engineer who neglected to get his reservations taken care of in advance wound up there the same week that the Fraternal Brotherhood of Police Officers was in town for its annual convention. He was asked at the desk if he wanted the nightly or hourly rate. All through the darkness he was kept wakeful by slamming doors and squeaking bedsprings. It had no restaurant, pool or pinball room. The bar, I'm told, considered Old Fedcal a name brand. The room rate? A mere \$2 per night over the Median.

Re: activity extensions for SFPA. The appealing aspect is that a member can escape page requirements in an "extenuating" circumstance. This certainly makes it easier when the tough times arrive. We've all had our tough times and would have (most likely) used such an escape clause.

The negative side is direct and practical: dispensations are abused, as history rather dispassionately records. Look at the FAPA practice of allowing members in default to petition to save their membership. This began as an escape valve for those tough times. It went on to become almost an automatic endorsement. The most frequent people taking recourse in the petition rule were minackers. FAPA became bloated with non-productive members protected their roster position and mailing copy. It stultified the apa.

SFPA has a lowwww page count requirement. In any two consecutive mailings only four pages of original material are required. That's four pages per four months: twelve pages a year. Hardly an intolerable burden if one has enough interest in SFPA to contribute. The page count requirement is so low in consideration of the fact that we do go through those hard days when no time is available. SFPA's rules are not complicated. They are rigid at the minimum points in order to assure some interest in the apa. There's no satisfactory substitute for participation.

I like your Feedback Scores idea. Perhaps the easiest way to do it would be to award one point per idea discussed, or maybe a simple Coffin-Score type arrangement in which you drop if you don't MC (say, a minimum of one page). Even better would be a restriction requiring a minimum of 19 comments covering at least 15 members with a page count totalling to 22 in any 5 consecutive mailings. (Ghosh! What an idea!!) You could require at least two different colors of paper, to promote variety. Just like the Arnie Katz Scores...

Four pages of original material in Shadow should count as membership credentials. Traditionally, four creditable pages in the mailing of invitation have been enough to admit an invitee (if dues were also paid prior to the deadline of that mailing). I must have missed the ruling on this issue, but I'd agree with you unless that Shadow were distributed outside of SFPA prior to deadline date.

UNNECESSARY INTIMATE REDUNDANCIES (Phillips) * Once you've left it, Home is a memory. It belongs to the ongrowing person, yes, but the memory of Home is static, as many events as it might contain. In the absence Home changes and the ongrowing person changes. Usually, the person more than Home.

When I first went back home to Alabama that mismatch between memory, me and home was painfully clear. As the number of return trips increased and my world perspective broadened, that disturbing difference between memory and present came to mean less. Home again became a dynamic place. Visiting it was like returning to a city I had known well but hadn't inhabited for some time. I know the landmarks, the roads and where to find what I need, but the specifics of the moment and the new developments are to be fresh discoveries. You can't go Home again but you can enjoy going home.

By the way, although Thomas Wolfe did write YOU CAN'T GO HOME again, he was influenced by Hardy. The first segment of that novel is called "The Native's Return." Echoes of RETURN OF THE NATIVE, eh?

TALISMAN 22 (Biggers) * IF I COULD ONLY REMEMBER MY NAME is also an album I like a lot, but it's uneven. A "jam session" style of album, it's like a one-shot. Good bits and ho-hum bits combined, the excitement and confusion showing clearly, for a fresh non-sound-stage feeling. And don't forget Joni Mitchell's contribs.

With an ad lib attempt at four other praiseworthy but ignored rock albums, I'll suggest AMERICAN BEAUTY by the Grateful Dead, which garnered some nice comments but never hit the big times; it's a fabulously even album with numbers like "Truckin'" and "Sugar Magnolia" gracing it.

HIGHWAY by Free was a strong album by a British group that never gathered much American momentum. AIN'T THAT A BITCH by Johnny "Guitar" Watson (which may not be r'n'r). HIS BAND AND THE STREET CHOIR by Van Morrison is a rich presentation strangely overlooked (perhaps because of MOONDANCE, ASTRAL WEEKS and TUPELO HONEY). RIDING THE RODS by the Rod Embury Band is a dynamite cross of rock and jazz which never got much critical attention.

I'll support your position to strike the extra dues requirement for shared memberspots. The only advantage is two sets of votes, but that is offset by dual activity requirements. Dues should go against expenses.

THE WAKE OF THE RED WITCH is the correct title. John Wayne was an American Institution; that's what was lost.

Your landlord problems with broken problems remind me of problems I had once. The lesson is to get it in writing, signed. At least you have the money in your possession and can force them into small claims court where you have a chance (if Georgia has small claims courts -- I don't know).

Many cookbooks (and the food stamp gourmet may be in this category) just pass recipes on through without regard for the quality of the basic ingredients. That is, they neglect tenderizing and marinating procedures, etc., in discussion of the recipe which was probably cribbed from Julia Child in the first place. You'll find this type of discussion in the better cook books.... Child, Beard, etc. A super all-occasion reference is HELEN CORBITT COOKS FOR COMPANY. Dynamite culinary ideas and tomes in tons of sage practical advice plus cra-zee tips and specialty recipes.

SITTING IN LIMBO 4 (Mattingly) * The problem with shifting to a non-petroleum economy is two-fold. First there's the lead time required to bring one or more other technologies to the point of economic feasibility which rivals petroleum. This isn't an easy problem. Stoking up an energy technology takes several strokes of sheer genius plus the solution of practical problems (which frequent take the longest time). The lesson here is to not put all your eggs in one basket, even if Fiscal Year profit standings tell you to do it. We've been far too smug a culture since our victory in WWII to do any real contingency planning.

The second problem is to find substitute materials for the petroleum by-products that appear in an overwhelming number of goods. This is also a difficult challenge, for it may involve changing entire product conceptions, capital equipment inventories, etc., in addition to the technological invention. If America doesn't learn one hell of a big lesson from this snafu I'll be disappointed. Second sourcing of components is a must in the electronics manufacturing business, but second sourcing of concepts is so rare as to be non-existent.

The Apa Elite were the traditional group of SFPA as characterized by the Insurgent Faction some years ago. The Apa Elite supported fulsome mailing comments and were accused of commenting primarily to their bretheren therein. The political connotations underlying this issue were terribly serious and terribly ridiculous. For a while it was thought that the Apa Elite were guilty of commenting primarily to those who contributed most and best. This myth was exploded by the discovery that there were no Apa Elite. I trust you feel clarified.

FETF GAZETTE (A. Bridget) * Had the Shah killed the primary leader of the opposition there would have been another appear. There is always another....

BEWARE OF TROOLS (Lynch) * Funny, but it stops in mid-sentence. Was this xeroxed from a mimeed zine?

KAR120C (weber) * Two or three moonshots per Hearts game is pretty good; minus sixty-five points. Going for a run, however, usually involves some risk. Even if one shys away from the Reinhardt Method (which involves just taking points indiscriminately in hopes of collecting 26) there are likely to be a couple of Flaming Disasters. Are you sure it's only inattention driving up your score?

I would seem that an all-sf bookstore would benefit greatly from support of local fandom, but there are so many more readers than fans that the principal financial support would be non-fannish. Why does Moody not want the Atlanta fan

community in his relax-and-browse sf bookstore? Bad image? Some years ago a "neighborhood" bookstore in Birmingham installed a couple of chess tables, offered coffee, and invited the local chess club members to drop in and play any afternoon. Most chess players also being readers, it was quite good for business.

Lots of West Coasters tried supporting themselves via hand crafts -- everything from pottery to furniture. The competition with machine-made goods was too sharply economic, however. The ones who succeeded managed to get to the money through little shops and galleries. In the world of chic and collectibles, a particular signature could pick up and reputation and command nice prices. But that seemed to be the only way to make a decent living with hand crafts.

Yes, I recall your good words about Dick Francis. Sorry not to have given you proper credit, but I only mentioned the original recommender. I've slowed down on Francis, but I'll get FLYING FINNISH on the strength of your anecdote.

Good zine, especially the trenchant commentary on moaning' and bitchin' and whinin' appearing from certain members. I had trouble finding hooks without resorting to echo, so I'll sign off with best wishes.

THIN ICE 39 (Verheiden) * You have had more than your share of encounters with crazies lately. Maybe it's the neighborhood... Here in sedate Orange County we have a sex murder only every week or so. It's a tame area. Lots of red-light-runners and speeders, however.

Work can be depressing, but it ain't gonna go away. I spent a few years moving from dull job to dull job, until I finally hit the work I enjoy. It wasn't a matter of struggling against the system so much as broken field running to get around and through the obstacles. There were times when I thought it was the same everywhere (and I still get those feelings on occasion). But in truth, there's always a way to get to where you want to go -- if you're willing to work at it and think on it.

FINGERTIP REALITY 16 (Moudry) * With a fractional publication numbering system how can you tell how many zines you've done? Or maybe you, like I, don't care any more. I just put "a Zugzwang Pub" on my zines for old times sake. Once I kept track of how many titles and how many pages I'd published -- and had fond hopes of someday catching Bruce Pelz.

Enjoyed your zine but can find no more hooks. Maybe I'm getting burned out for MC's... Will take your advice and reread THE EMPTY COPPER SEA before tackling THE GREEN RIPPER. (I'm waiting, as always, for the paperback appearance.)

BOY, I WISH I OWNED.. (Hyde) * Glad to hear things are going well for you. Sounds like you've found a fine girl -- serrendipity is such a fun thing.

EYECARE NEWS (Caruthers) * I suppose this flyer for Dr. David O'Brien is your work. Or is it included for the nice words about the good doctor's new assistant? ## Do a real zine next time, P.L. They're much easier to MC.....

1979 SFPA EGOBOO POLL RESULTS (Hutchinson) * Great cover, but I have no idea which members you're referring to, Alan. ### I was delighted to climb back up the standings after last year's near-fall from the Top Ten. Thanks to the folks who gave me points! I notice that I the third best zine and the worst zine of the year, quite an achievement when I think about it. This year I promise to work hard on my MC's.

GOVERNMENT DRONE (Bush) * What is the extra census information -- the count of flush toilets and the like -- used for? I can't see much practicality in a lot of the statistics. Perhaps flush toilet density can be the basis for distribution of government aid dollars, but how about stats like the number of TV sets per household?

Does your father own the coal companies? I thought that coal was doing rather well since the oil shortage forced America back to alternate energy sources. Perhaps the difference is between mining and distribution.

Nice little parody. Seems to go well with the tune. Do mailing comments next time.



"Commenting to Bill Bridget again, Alan?"

EXECUTIVE BRIEFING:

The bombardment of advertisements for seminars, short courses, reports and texts designed to train the "executive" in better coping with his corporate environment is staggering. One's name quickly becomes fair game for a mailing list or two via journal subscription, association membership or convention attendance. Then the incestuous copulation of mailing lists begins and soon a veritable deluge of junk mail is gracing one's in-basket.

One afternoon as I was sorting my mail I spied a report claiming to answer the "difficult personality issues" which must be dealt with by an "executive." It was a teaser, and as I chuckled at the questions who should walk into my office but John Barkwell, a friend and associate from bygone days who now heads up the buggywhip division for Krapmonger Industries.

"Look at this shit, John," I said. He did, snorted, and gave me the Barkwell answer to each crucial question.

How can I resist passing on those questions and the Barkwell answers? What follows is actual text...

It does recognize that today's successful executive -- no matter how he feels about social changes -- must from a standpoint of marketing, employee communication and motivation, hiring practices, and the like, at least be cognizant of today's new social climate.

Here, for example, is a rundown of questions that are answered:

- 1- TELL-TALE SIGNS OF A DOPE ADDICT -- CAN YOU FIND OUT BEFORE HIRING?
- 2- IS THERE A WAY TO HELP THE EMPLOYEE WITH A DRINKING PROBLEM?
- 3- DOES SOCIALIZING WITH SUBORDINATES IMPROVE MORALE -- OR HURT?
- 4- WHEN DO YOU HAVE A TALK -- WHEN DO YOU RAP?
- 5- HOW DO YOU HANDLE A VERBAL CONFRONTATION WITH A SUBORDINATE?
- 6- IS THERE AN "EASY" WAY TO FIRE AN EMPLOYEE?
- 7- CAN YOU SET THINGS UP SO THAT YOU ALWAYS HAVE RESPECT FROM EMPLOYEES?
- 8- WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN SOMEONE INSULTS YOU IN VIEW OF OTHERS?
- 9- IS THE EXECUTIVE WITH AN "OPEN-DOOR" POLICY BETTER OFF?
- 10- AT WHAT POINT DO YOU PUT YOUR FOOT DOWN?

- 1 - "I've never hired a dope addict," said Barkwell. "After the formal interview I relax and draw out the personality of the applicant. Any drug addict, after I've rolled up my sleeve and tied off, will accept an invitation to join in."
- 2 - "Any employee with a drinking problem deserves some sensitive help and support," explained an empathetic John Barkwell. "I had a drinking problem myself once, so I understand. What I try to provide is advice. A drinking problem is nearly always environmental. Since I joined Krapmonger drinking has ceased to be a problem for me -- it's now the thing I do best."
- 3 - Barkwell thought for a few seconds about the issue of socializing with subordinates. "A party is one environment," he stated, "and a small group is another. I go to the company parties to show my support, believing as I do that employee morale is an important dimension of the job and that management encouragement is not to be underestimated." He paused to scratch his crotch. "Socializing in small groups, however, is by necessity more discrete. I limit such activities to groups of two. Blondes, brunettes and redheads receive preference."

- 4 - "When I talk to a subordinate," revealed Barkwell, "I express my honest opinion about job duties and performance thereto. When I rap, it's about the same topics, but I utilize a riding crop or a sturdy branch. I rap vigorously over head and shoulders."
- 5 - John was somewhat terse about his enlightened management technique for handling a verbal confrontation with a subordinate. "I fire the son-of-a-bitch on the spot!" he disclosed. John further commented that, in his experience, such confrontations were few and far between.
- 6 - John rather candidly admitted that he had yet to find an easy way to fire an employee. However, he did relate a few of the more gratifying methods he'd utilized in his career.
- 7 - Barkwell was puzzled by this question. "I have respect," he said, "from everybody still working for me."

- 8 - An open insult, John claimed, was no reason for a manager to get uptight. "Right there, in front of the world, I insult the mutha back," crowed Barkwell. "It levels things pretty quick." This has been Barkwell's policy since his service days, when he topped a Navy Chief in an abusive language contest.
- 9 - Barkwell was enthusiastic in his endorsement of the management "open door" policy. "The air conditioning at Krapmonger is so piss poor," he confided, "that I suffocate if I don't keep my office door open." The one exception, John admitted, involved small-group socialization. "I lock the goddamn door," he said, "before I get into heavy socializing."
- 10 - Barkwell puts his foot down before he raises the other one when perambulating. Other connotations seemed to escape him.

THE MENACE

PART TWO.....

SYNOPSIS OF PART ONE: The Old SFPAN's Hearts game was interrupted by a message from the The OE of SFPA Today (today being the year 2015). PAGE the Butler announces that apa fen have taken over the apa and its pagecount consists almost entirely of con flyers. Consternation rules as this message is digested, but LOCKE shuts off the Dos Equis keg and MOUDRY captures the attention of the group. REINHARDT is appointed War Chief on ATKINS' recommendation (and secret plan).

The OLD SFPANS invade FlatulaCon, a regional con held in Lower Platypuss Flats, Arkansas. Lester Jaundice is chair, but active SFPA members Steve Simple, Jack Frenetic and Goldy Goodass are involved in the con.

REINHARDT sends the whole rowdy gang to drink up all the bheer in the con suite. Led by HULAN, WELLS, JENNINGS and BILLYPETTIT the crew is successful. Meanwhile, WEBER inspects the kitchen and REINHARDT is quick to impress the cook with the need to cooperate in preparing "Count de Weber's" favorite recipes, which REINHARDT invents to suit his scheme.

GUIDRY extorts an Ignite from Frenetic. LILLIAN outbrags Simple, thus subverting another convention plan. CARUTHERS outdraws Goodass via sheer appeal and REINHARDT moves in for the kill by reading Planet Stories to the dismayed damsel.

The con appears shattered, but Lester Jaundice has other ideas. He confronts REINHARDT with the fact that 100 cases of beer are due on Saturday and Harland Hellion, fastlip from the West Coast, will gun down the OLD SFPANS. HANK's thought of slipping a shiv into Hellion's ribs runs ashore when Jaundice announces that Amos Anthropoid, the jiant SCA champion, will be Hellion's bodyguard.

.....
...Mornings break crisply in the Ozark mountains. Hank Reinhardt saw the golden-red sun intrude upon the night's fading secrets. All the hours of the dark he had paced the halls of The Platypuss Arms, seeking in his solitude an inspiration. With the dawn he had no ideas.

As Hank passed from the swimming pool area into the garden on his way to the entrance he spotted Linda Karrh and Sperhawk walking amongst the blooms. "Y'all stayed up all night too," he said.

"No," laughed Linda. "We arose early to watch the sun rise. It's so lovely in these mountains."

"Didn't you attack the room parties?" asked Hank, taken aback that loyal troops might be coasting.

"Of course," responded Sperhawk. "We didn't sleep long."

"We were awakened in the last hours of darkness," said Linda. "The tramp of heavy feet reverberated in the hallways and deep coarse voices sang evil songs in strange tongues. A host of the black power passed our door with the rattle of iron and behind them a foul wind blew."

"There are orcs in the corridors," frowned Sperhawk. "We have come to watch the sun as its cleansing rays break over the earth."

A chill breeze blew thru Hank's mind. This development had escaped him. (It must have occurred in the hour he spent raiding the hotel bar -- they would never miss the quart of Jack Black he'd put away to aid his concentration.) Apparently Jaundice had fell resources upon which to draw; armies of more terrible aspect than Harland Hellion. He must discover the nature of the threat and take appropriate action.

Linda and Sperhawk watched the sun rise for a while. When they turned again to speak with Hank they found the Wolflord had vanished without a sound to disturb his going.

Morning came to the hotel coffee shop much later, as bleary fans drifted in for sustenance and java. The Old SFPAns took over a portion of the coffee shop and compared notes from the evening before. They were jolly, not yet being aware of the countermeasures Jaundice was massing. When Hank joined them they cheered him. Hank waved a weary hand in acknowledgment, then ordered his usual omelette: six fresh farm eggs, a pound of Cheddar cheese, five shredded chili peppers, a minced onion and a rasher of bacon. "Why is it?" asked Ron Juge, "that Hank's eating habits restore my faith in miracles of healing?"

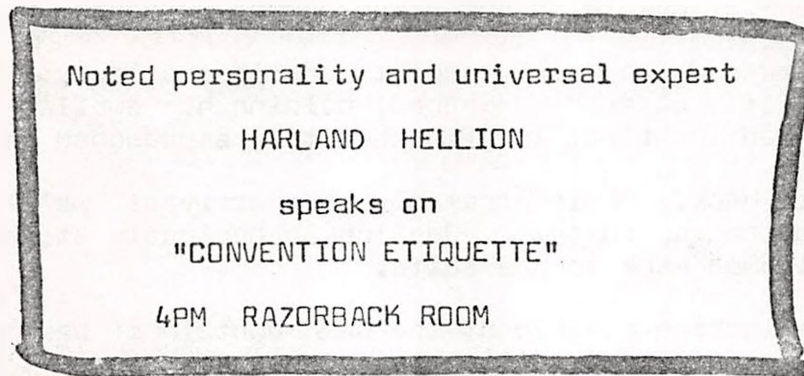
Hank glanced sharply at his comrades. "Healing is what we all need." And he outlined the challenges which faced them. There were mixed reactions, of course, many of the bheer drinkers feeling that they'd only begun to hit their stride and fifty cases hadn't been enough -- one hundred sounding more like it. Others felt that only idiots would bother with Hellion's ravings and thus they were immune.

"You don't understand!" thundered their warchief. "Jaundice intends to turn this confrontation into a circus. It'll be the most talked-about con in years. By the time you stalwart lads drink the 100 cases down every neo in the place will have had time to get loaded. And the Hellion side show will provide enough quotable material for a thousand con reports and three dozen feuds. Jaundice has the upper hand."

That sobered them. Hank took pity and revealed some of his planning. "I've made a few phone calls," he grinned. "We'll have some exceptional help arriving during the weekend. We'll also do some great partying ourselves. Remember, you bheer-drinkers! Jaundice is a businessman and there's nothing he hates worse than to see his investments pissed away!"

With rousing cheers the Old SFPAns hurried out of the coffee shop to do battle. The first of the beer had just arrived and was being iced for cooling. Dave Hulan ripped a can untimely from the bathtub. "Emulate the English! Drink it warm!" A chorus of "Skoal!" joined him as the Old SFPAns went after the brew, undaunted by mere tepid temperatures.

Hank went to lobby to scout out the enemy. Lester Jaundice was in the act of putting a big mauve poster up. He saw Hank and sneered. The poster, done in big block letters with green Magic Marker, read:



"What time this afternoon is he arriving?" asked Hank casually.

"Ain't telling you," replied Jaundice with a narrow grin.

"Just thought my friend might be on the same plane." Hank returned a broader grin, then walked away leaving Jaundice to stew.

A heightening excitement was felt as the morning passed. Throughout lunchtime the talk centered around Hellion's appearance. What was "convention etiquette" and why was Hellion suddenly arriving to speak on this strange topic? Inside information had it that the raunchy invaders were to get a verbal upbraiding they'd never forget. The fact that beer was disappearing at an alarming rate made such punitive action a sweet possibility. Neofan catcalls greeted Old SFPAns.

Shortly before two o'clock an odd caravan left for the airport. Lester Jaundice and two members of the con security team escorted Goldy Goodass to a black limousine. As the limo pulled into traffic it was followed by a taxi containing Hank Reinhardt. Behind the taxi was a VW with four more members of the convention security squad. Bringing up the rear was a county prowl car, as the Sheriff was determined to maintain order.

The airport servicing Lower Platypuss Flats was not a large one. Shuttle flights were provided by Wild Boar Airlines and their larger planes carried twelve passengers. There was no waiting, however, for the first passenger off had to force his way through the small door. As the huge muscular body twisted through the inadequate opening Hank knew it had to be the mighty Amos Anthropoid. Arms like oak trunks, Anthropoid pulled himself through quickly and leaped to the ground. He eyed the crowd for threats but saw none, so he signalled for Hellion to disembark.

Hellion chose to use the ladder, stepping nimbly. He was a tall thin man dressed all in black. As Jaundice rushed forward to greet him Hellion got in the first word: "Your rustic backwardness is too depressing. Get me to the hotel, Jaundice, where I pray they have Perrier and lime."

Hellion brightened somewhat on his introduction to Goldy, however, and seemed content to enter the limousine with her bountiful presence at his

side. Goldy had worn a demure little sunsuit designed to demonstrate that at least 97% of her surface area had a marvelous tan. As the black limousine, the Volkswagen, and the prowler car left the parking lot, Hank was greeting a mild-mannered Californian with beard and glasses. They hurried back to the Platypuss Arms but never caught up to the motorcade.

At the hotel a distressed Joe Moudry caught Hank in the lobby. "They've brought in another fifty cases," he moaned, holding his swollen gut. "Just as we almost had the first lot finished they sandbagged us!"

"Not to worry," said Hank. "Reinforcements have arrived! We'll have a strategy session in the con suite." Joe looked dubiously at the "reinforcements" but followed Hank to the suite.

The entire crew was looking bleakly at the new mountain of beer when the airport contingent arrived. "Attention!" shouted Hank. "I'd like you all to meet a former SFPAn who loves beer: Ed Cox!!"

A cheer went up, for in the time that Hank had taken to introduce him EdCo had spotted the brew and already finished two cans. "Burrpp!" said the reinforcements, opening his third can.

"The shock troops will stay here with EdCo and attack the beer," instructed Hank. "Wells, Brown, Hulan, Pettit, Atkins, weber, Whitehead, Jennings, Frierson." The Wolford grinned, one might say, wolfishly. "The rest of us will get downstairs and get our special guests registered quickly. In time for the Hellion speech."

In the big lobby a group of big dudes in cowboy boots, spurs and Stetsons was milling about. "Gentlemen!" announced Hank. "These people will help you register for the convention and hurry to the Razorback Room for Coach Hellion's talk." Old SFPAns began guiding the cowboys. With a comment to Linda and Sperhawk Hank cleared up the mystery. "These fellows are the Texas Longhorns Touchdown Club. They arrived very late last night after a late flight and are raring to find some good fun." Hank winked. "We get some lucky breaks too."

The Texans were ushered into the Razorback Room, con badges prominently displayed, just in time to hear Hellion's opening comments. "Rudeness and gluttony," began the critic, "are not to be tolerated at a civilized convention. I have a few comments concerning animals displaying these disgusting characteristics."

"Is it true," screamed Hank from the rear of the room, "that you're the fink who turned over the Texas playbook to Oklahoma before last years game?"

"Football!?" reacted Hellion. "Football is a game played by Neanderthal cretins and supported by the neurotic retarded products of a long lineage of incestuous idiots. Of course I had nothing to do with this playscript."

"49 to 6 says you're a liar" shouted Hank in his best imitation Texas accent. The Longhorn Touchdown Club was, to a man, on its feet.

"Asshole!" screeched Hellion. "To smear my name by associating it with

football, that's infamous!, but to further denigrate me by implying that it was Texas football is intolerable. The dimwitted, clodhopping, red-necked inhabitants-" And he got no further.

"You lookin' for trouble, mister?" interrupted a Longhorn athletic supporter, approaching the podium with fists balled. Amos Anthropoid never let him pass. With a casual backward swing of his arm Anthropoid sent the Texan flying.

Suddenly 44 enraged Texas football enthusiasts, fresh from a good morning's sleep, were swarming over Anthropoid, other con-goers, and making righteously for a retreating Harland Hellion. Even the redoubtable Amos was no match for a herd of stampeding Texas brawlers. He went down in a mass of kicking, screaming, eye-gouging, fist-punching red necks. Hellion and Jaundice escaped via the kitchen, where preparations for Sunday's incredible banquet were already underway.

order

When the Sheriff's men arrived to restore neither Jaundice nor Hellion nor an Old SFPAn could be found. Nobody was left in the Razorback Room but Amos Anthropoid and the Texans. They had finished their little dispute and were singing rowdy songs as they drank beer which Hank had thoughtfully sent down from the con suite.

"There ain't no brawl now," said the Sheriff to the hotel manager.

"Who'll pay for the damage?" shrieked the manager in despair.

"Shucks, son," spoke up one of the Texans, pulling out a roll of thousand dollar bills. "I reckon I will, seeing as how this Amos boy ain't never played college ball and is coming to Texas next year." He threw a few dozen bills at the astonished manager. The placated manager and the Sheriff withdrew to a chorus of "Hook 'em, Horns!!"

Naturally, it was the Texans who were the number one dinner conversation topic. The Old SFPAns, when it was discovered that they had "brought the beer down to calm the football jerks," were even quasi-heros. Efforts by Jaundice to reverse this feeling proved fruitless with the majority. The Texans had been given beer and were subsequently out on the town (such as it was) looking for fun. That was indisputable.

And so Saturday night began. Jaundice's strategy, after last night's invasion of room parties by Old SFPAns, was to hold a few carefully guarded bashes for the influential fans. This maneuver may have been fine for the chosen few, but it backfired with the masses. The Wolflord seized the moment. Having barricaded the Jaundice faction behind siege walls, he played genial host to the populace.

The beer squad was given a rest (all of them but EdCo needing it) and the con suite was thrown open to all. Typewriters were brought out and curious neofans introduced to the concept of one-shots. (Some of the more recent fen had never seen a typer before and at first thought them to be a weird new form of VCR.) Soon the entire suite was alive with this new idea and con-goers were competing for a turn at the typer. Nobody noticed that most of the pros and BNFs were missing. And nobody cared.

Hank and a few Old SFPAns closed the con suite an hour before dawn. "I count 96 pages of one-shot," announced Shelby Bush. "There're 14 more pages over here," added Rich Morrissey. It was quite a haul, and they intended to frank it through SFPA.

Heading to his room, Hank passed the Longhorn Touchdown Club returning from their evening of fun. "Have a good time in town?" he asked.

"Shoot, ain't nothing here, boy," replied an unsteady Texan. "We went over to Hog Junction where there's some action."

Hank resisted the impulse to ask what kind of action. He trudged on toward bed, knowing that Sunday would be the final showdown. Clever tactics had subverted Hellion's speech, handled the beer crisis and finally turned general opinion in favor of the Old SFPAns. But tomorrow at the banquet how could Jaundice be stopped from working his poison? How could the hold of con fen over today's SFPA be broken? And would Marjorie jilt Fred to elope with Wickersham's dashing young nephew? He shook his head in weariness. The last hope of Old SFPA lay with the midnight oil boys, Moudry, Markstein and Hulan, who were painstakingly researching the fanzine archives for a brilliant idea.

Uneasy sleep covered our hero. He dreamed he was being chased by a Deadline, a great green hairy monster with flashing claws and markings like PO cancellation stamps. The monster's eyes smoldered and slobber ran down its jaws. Hank tried to run fast but his progress was hindered by a huge lead typer chained about his neck. He had to carry the typer and flee at the same time. "If only I could chew gum too," he thought. "Then I'd be President."

The Deadline had almost caught him, its fetid breath upon him, when suddenly he fell into an unseen pit. He hit bottom, fighting the bedspread he was wrapped in, when it was morning. Light crept in about the curtains. Sunday had arrived not a moment too soon.

Hank glanced at his alarm clock: it was 9:56. He'd set the alarm for eleven, but no point in returning to the lair of the fierce Deadline. With the keen edge of his Bowie knife Hank shaved, resisting the urge to close his eyes at the sight of his sagging face in the mirror. Things would be better after the second cup of coffee.....

The banquet officially began at one o'clock. Jaundice, knowing this was his last opportunity, had installed several rows of "free" chairs at the rear of the room to attract the more penurious con-goers with promises of the explosive program to follow. Never had he been so right.

By quarter of one the back seats were filled and some minor disputes about table seating were occurring. The security people sorted them out rather well, and some the opening moment had arrived. Jaundice strode to the microphone at the elevated head table. "My friends," he began. "Welcome to the Awards Banquet of FlatulaCon. I hope you've enjoyed yourselves despite the unwanted ruffians who intruded."

When a cry went up, "To hell with Texas!!" Jaundice was quick to correct the popular misconception. "NO! The unpleasantness brought by the Texans was short -- and I'm sure they're not representative of their state -- but

the mischief and troubles caused by those old goats who call themselves members of SFPA is just terrible! Those people have no sense of decency. Which our special guest, Dr. Harland Hellion, will talk about later."

Hellion stood up and bowed. A ripple of applause ran through the hall while Amos Anthropoid squatted before the head table and eyed the crowd for potential trouble. Anthropoid was skipping the banquet, having been fed six pounds of prime beef at noon. He waited now, hoping that a good fight would be his dessert.

"And now our Master of Ceremonies, who is a bona fide SFPA member, I give you... Steve Simple!" Jaundice handed the microphone to Simple, who almost dropped it.

"Ur frens and mind," began Simple, "its a plezure too be here. I wont to asshore you that those pipple my gud fend Lestar talked about are knot SFPA members like me. The diffrense is knot jest membership -- its stile and intelligents and class."

At this point the Old SFPAn in the audience arose and applauded Steve. It was the only thing he'd yet said that they agreed with.

Simple looked pleased at the ovation. "An now hour Fan Gest of Honor, a man well nowne in SFPA I mite add, will sey some funny werds to us all. Jack knows sew many sellebriteaze that he haz lotts of funny stories. He knows me two. That shows what rilly big names he rubs elboze with. Ha. Ha. Warm up yur applauz -- give Jack Frenetic the clap!"

Frenetic acknowledged this blinding display of wit with an all-tooth grin. He bounced up to grab the microphone. "Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen! A funny thing happened to me on the way to the banquet. A skinny neofan came up and said he hadn't had a bite for the whole convention..."

Hank glanced away from Frenetic, not anxious to be treated to yet more of this dazzling humor. He spotted Joe Moudry and company at the door to the hall. Joe waved him over. Hulan and Markstein were holding two big stacks of what looked like fanzines.

As Hank walked over, the hotel service began to set out the first course. Groans of discontent flew up soon after the first bowl of liver soup was put before the first banquetteer. Hank grinned, toothy as Jack Frenetic, and continued to his conference with the midnight oil boys.

The second course, a nice liver pate, was served. The chef poked his head from the kitchen door, hoping to catch a smile off approval on the face of the Count de Weber. But alas he merely caught a barrage of frowns from the fans. He darted back. "Quick!" he shouted to his staff, "serve the piece dew resistance!!"

This proved to be broiled liver steak with pickled carrots and raw cauliflower on the side. The saving grace was the bread: hard rolls, and were they hard! The rolls were like heavy round stones. Perfect missiles, as the crowd quickly discovered. A barrage of them pelted the head table, where Lester Jaundice sat amazed. He had been expecting prime rib and knew nothing of Hank's ploy with the "count de Weber."

Jaundice launched himself for the kitchen like a missile of retribution. The resultant yelling could be heard even over the roar of the crowd. If Lester had hoped to magically change the menu back to prime rib, however, he was to be dissatisfied.

When the con chairman returned he made straight for the microphone, dodging a few hard rolls as he went. "My friends!" he bellowed over the booing, "this terrible food is a plot by him!" And Lester's long bony finger pointed directly at Hank. (Who put on his best Innocent Expression.)

"These people who call themselves 'Old SFPAns' have been doing everything they can to sabotage your convention. This last piece of terrorism is intolerable! I refuse to take any blame for this disaster, and the hotel is being very unreasonable, claiming that it was a convention member, him!" --and again Jaundice pointed a bony finger at Hank -- "who requested the change in menu."

"I did extract a concession, however. Those of you who want to order from the regular menu may do so. At the normal charge, of course. Waiters will be circulating soon and the meals will be served here in the banquet hall."

The booing and foot-stomping reached a crescendo, as the unhappy conventioners decided that they'd been had. It was unthinkable that the concom couldn't control the banquet menu. The common opinion, as echoed in the room, was that this menu had been chosen to save money. Calls for a refund were rising.

Jaundice counterattacked. "Be quiet and listen!!" he screamed. "I plan legal action against these criminals, starting Monday. For now, I ask Dr. Harland Hellion, noted authority on everything, to give us a talk. Harland will make it very clear, I believe, who is at fault in this mess. Be quiet and listen to him. Real food can be ordered during his speech."

The crowd calmed somewhat, knowing of Hellion's electric way with words. If he were going to take the offensive it would be real entertainment, and while they were hungry they were far from starvation.

Hellion stood his lanky frame up and bowed, then started for the mike. On the sidelines, Hank girded his loins for action. He knew that Hellion's tongue was famed for emotional invective. If anyone could turn the sentiments of the crowd, it would be Hellion.

"Wait a moment, Harland," said Hank as he approached the head table. "I've got something you should see before you begin speaking." In the Wolford's hand was a xerox copy of what looked to be a fanzine.

Jaundice leaned forward and spoke two words to the giant, Amos Anthropoid. "Kill him," he said.

Suddenly Hank was faced with towering menace. Anthropoid hulked forward, his great muscles flexing, his mouth cast in a cruel grin of anticipation. They met in the open space before the head table and eyed each other. The crowd was silent: this was even better than a Hellion diatribe.

"Get out of my way, Amos," said Hank. "This is too important to let you stop me."

The SCA King was amused. He stood almost a foot taller than Hank and must have outweighed him by a

hundred pounds of beef. Amos was undefeated, practically unchallenged in battle intensity, since he found the SCA and entered the lists of combat. To hear this old man threatening him was a joke.

Amos grabbed for Hank, but the Old SFPAn was more nimble than he looked. The xerox went flying into the air, but Deb Hammer Johnson risked her life to catch it in the air, there in the combat zone, by leaping from her seat and rushing sooo fast.

"Get back, Deb!" snapped Hank. He was growing angry, as anyone who's played Hearts with Hank could recognize.

Amos shook his head in frustration, then hunched his shoulders and charged. Hank sidestepped, tripping the behemoth onto his grinning face. Hank danced into a ready position, flexing his old'n'tired muscles, and awaited Anthropoid's next move.

It was warfare. The giant was furious when he regained his footing. With a sawtooth roar of anger he attacked.

Hank danced, dodged and struck back. A deadly series of blows and chops rained down upon the giant. They were shrugged off as if the kiss of gnat wings. Hank, on the other hand, was untouched but slowing. Sooner or later, everyone saw, they would collide. And then Hank would be crushed to death.

It must have seemed to the ordinary con-goers that Hank had elected to choose the moment of his own death when he stopped and challenged Anthropoid. "We don't seem to be making any progress, ape halitosis. I don't have the time to waste on you."

Amos poised for the attack; his nostrils flared. The Old SFPAns saw signs of unmeasurable anger and purpose upon Hank. When the two fighters locked in final embrace there were two camps of thought in the banquet hall. Lester Jaundice was doing his best Nero imitation, knowing which way his thumb would point. The conventioners were on the edge of their chairs, fearing Hank's death. The Old SFPAns were tense, but they had hope for they'd never seen Hank this mad before.

Limbs flailing, the fighters rolled across the hardwood floor. Suddenly there was a second of stillness. Hank had pinned Anthropoid firmly. With a twist of his body, Hank confirmed his grip and then lifted the helpless giant above his head. Hank stood, a colossus, holding the struggling man with apparent ease.

"Is this the first floor?" roared Hank.

"Yes!!" came a chorus.

"Good. I didn't want to hurt this lummoX much more than he deserves." And with that, Hank carried the furious giant to the wall with windows and threw him through. (The windows, not the wall.)

"Now we can talk, Harland," said Hank, briskly rubbing his hands together. "My apologies for the delay."

Jaundice stood up abruptly, shaking off his utter disbelief. "Security force! Escort that man from the room!"

The security force shuffled uneasily, showing little inclination to confront the victor. Hank recognized that most were SCA members. "Knights of the SCA," he began. "I am Ulric Wolford. In fair combat I have defeated your king. Now I am your lord." In a low ominous voice he continued: "Perhaps

the historians among you recall that Ulric Wolflord has been King before."

There was a slow stirring in the SCA ranks, then calls of "Hail, our King!" and a pledging of arms. Jaundice was turning a gorgeous shade of pea-green. Hellion was watching the panorama with amazement. The conventioners were absolutely delighted with the old champion, and Old SFPA was in its glory.

"I'll call the sheriff!" screeched Jaundice.

"Knights of the SCA," instructed Hank, "Form a detail to escort this man to the con suite. Keep him there until I order otherwise."

Lester argued and cursed; he pleaded and begged. All for naught. The inspired SCA warriors led him out, to occupy a con suite dungeon for time unknown. At the head table there were uneasy expressions on the faces of Steve Simple, Jack Frenetic and Goldy Goodass. Harland Hellion looked bemused; this was more entertainment than he'd expected.

Hank recovered the xeroxed document from Deb and advanced to Harland's place. He handed the fanzine to the special guest. "This is an interesting perspective of convention fun, Harland. I suggest you read it before you speak."

Hellion took the fanzine and began to read. Then a flash of nostalgic recognition played across his face. It was the worldcon report issue of GONADS, Art O'Reary's Hugo winning fanzine. The October 1983 issue to be exact, and it featured a humorous commentary on the absurd antics of a neofan teenager named Harland Hellion. According to the report, Hellion had nearly set the convention on its ear. But O'Reary's commentary was generously understanding. It recognized and advocated the hell-raising aspects of conventioning. It almost made Harland's bratty behaviour seem OK.

"You can't blackmail me," said Harland Hellion. "I'm here to speak on convention etiquette and speak I intend to do. Damn your threats."

"It's not a threat," sighed Hank. "It's a perspective. Take a look -- this zine is being distributed now." And sure enough, Old SFPAs were handing out copies to all present. "I thought you might want to consider... everything. Before you started your speech, that is."

Hellion stood up slowly. "What's your angle?" he asked.

Hank considered the risks. "SFPA is dying," he confided. "Too much convention and too little apazine. What's happened to fan writing? The alumni are concerned."

Hellion looked thoughtful. "I can understand."

"Some of us are seriously concerned," said Hank.

Hellion looked even more thoughtful. "I can really understand," he said. Then he walked briskly to the microphone and launched his speech. "Today," he announced, throwing those electric eyes about the room, "I'm going to tell you kiddies a few truths about the way to enjoy a convention. And then I'm going to talk about another way to have fun in fandom. A way called 'fanzines' -- and I'll bet half of you bozos don't even know the term!"

Thirty minutes later there wasn't a dry eye in the house.

Hank took over the microphone. There was a brief moment when Steve Simple thought that he'd be continuing to MC, but Hank wanted it different and there was no argument.

"I hope you like fanzines. The Old SFPAns are handing out reprints of some of the best items to run through SFPA. Read 'em -- those of you who can -- and think about getting on the SFPA waitlist. Better hurry though. A few of us old duffers are already there."

The con fans had been intrigued by Hellion's fascinating words on the joy of fan publishing. They'd been startled and amazed by the deeds of the enduring oldfen. Now they were treated to an insight into the magic that powered both phenomena. Little wonder that a scramble for the SFPazines ensued.

"Read 'em quick!" continued Reinhardt, "or carry 'em with you. On the other side of town is a real old fashioned barbeque joint called The Spare Rib. I've got a feeling that there are tables set up, barbeque on the spit slowly turning, and beverages of all sorts available. Anybody who wants to come over as a guest of Old SFPA is welcome. We're going! Going to feast, drink toasts to the four corners of the earth -- and invent a few more corners -- and just plain enjoy.

"And by the way. Those buses out front are to transport our guests. Y'all come!!!"

Most of the crowd came. Harland Hellion decided to join the party, feeling as mellow and nostalgic as he was, and Hank had invited the Texans along to let the con fen see them in a better light. Texans love a barbeque.

On that blue-sky beautiful afternoon a miracle occurred in the life of about a dozen fanatic con-goers: they discovered the world of fan pubbing. Of the perhaps fifty who expressed interest, a few would continue the journey to apazine expert. In the open air informal atmosphere of the barbeque an exchange of vital information took place between the neophytes and the Old SFPAns. Ned Brooks discoursed on the beauty of hectography. Mark Verheiden explained the use of the xerox. Joe Moudry championed the hand-type printing press. Dave Hulan held that Ditto IS Cheaper. And Ron Juge was delighted to explain that if one started with MicroElite and reduced it ten times, a twenty page zine could be put on one sheet of paper. (While other Old SFPAns blamed their failing eyesight on this practice.)

SFPA was to become viable again, as new blood and Old SFPAns thronged to the waitlist. The OE of SFPA Today took courage and enforced the original activity requirements, dumping hordes of con-flyer submitters from the roster. A genuine gestalt flowered again, together with readable page count, and Hearts rose as the fannish game of the South. (Although Ned Brooks still could never decide what was led.)

Conventions went on too, and the quality seemed even better, for the Old SFPAns started to attend once again. Although they only rarely interfered in the politics they were instrumental in a renaissance of fannish fun. The clique which took itself So Seriously was active, yes, but it rarely infected the convivial attendees.

In time all was healthy and growing again in Southern fandom. The Old SFPAns saddled their horses and rode in a caravan to Grey Havens. As they came to the gates Cir-dan the Shipwright came forth to greet them.....

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THE *BOX* *SCORES*

for mailings 85-92

Name	Hits	AB	Average	P(90)	P(91)	P(92)	Total	Pg per Mlg	
ATKINS	8	8	1.000	4	41	35	137	17.1	(4)
BIGGERS	4	8	.500	6	0	7	26	3.3	
A. BRIDGET	8	8	1.000	10	6	46	85½	10.7	(5)
B. BRIDGET	8	8	1.000	13	4	3	54½	6.8	
BROOKS	8	8	1.000	6	4	4	82	10.3	(6/7)
BUSH	5	6	.833	16	0	4	28	4.7	
CARUTHERS	6	8	.750	0	7	2	33	4.1	
DAVIS	7	8	.875	0	4	12	45.5	5.7	
FRIERSON	8	8	1.000	4	4	2	29	3.6	
HULAN	8	8	1.000	4	65	36	148	18.5	(3)
HUTCHINSON	8	8	1.000	16	15	29	211	26.4	(2)
HYDE	1	1	1.000	—	—	6	6	6.0	
JENNINGS	4	8	.500	0	25	0	51	6.4	
JUGE	8	8	1.000	2	2	4	31	3.9	
LILLIAN	8	8	1.000	29	52	40	340	42.5	(1)
LYNCH	8	8	1.000	7	15	17	81	10.1	(8)
MARKEFEIN	8	8	1.000	8	6	6	77	9.6	(10)
MATTINGLY	4	5	.800	0	6	6	23	4.6	
MORRISSEY	4	8	.500	0	12	0	44	5.5	
MOUDRY	8	8	1.000	10	5	4	41	5.1	
PHILLIPS	1	1	1.000	—	—	4	.4	4.0	
REED	5	8	.625	4	0	7	27	3.4	
REINHARDT	1	2	.500	—	5	0	5	2.5	
SPEERNAUK	7	8	.875	6	4	0	52	6.5	
VERHEIDEN	8	8	1.000	9	17	5	82	10.3	(6/7)
WEBER	8	8	1.000	9	8	16	75	9.4	
WELLS	7	8	.875	2	2	10	28.5	3.6	
WHITEHEAD	5	8	.625	4	25	0	79	9.9	(9)