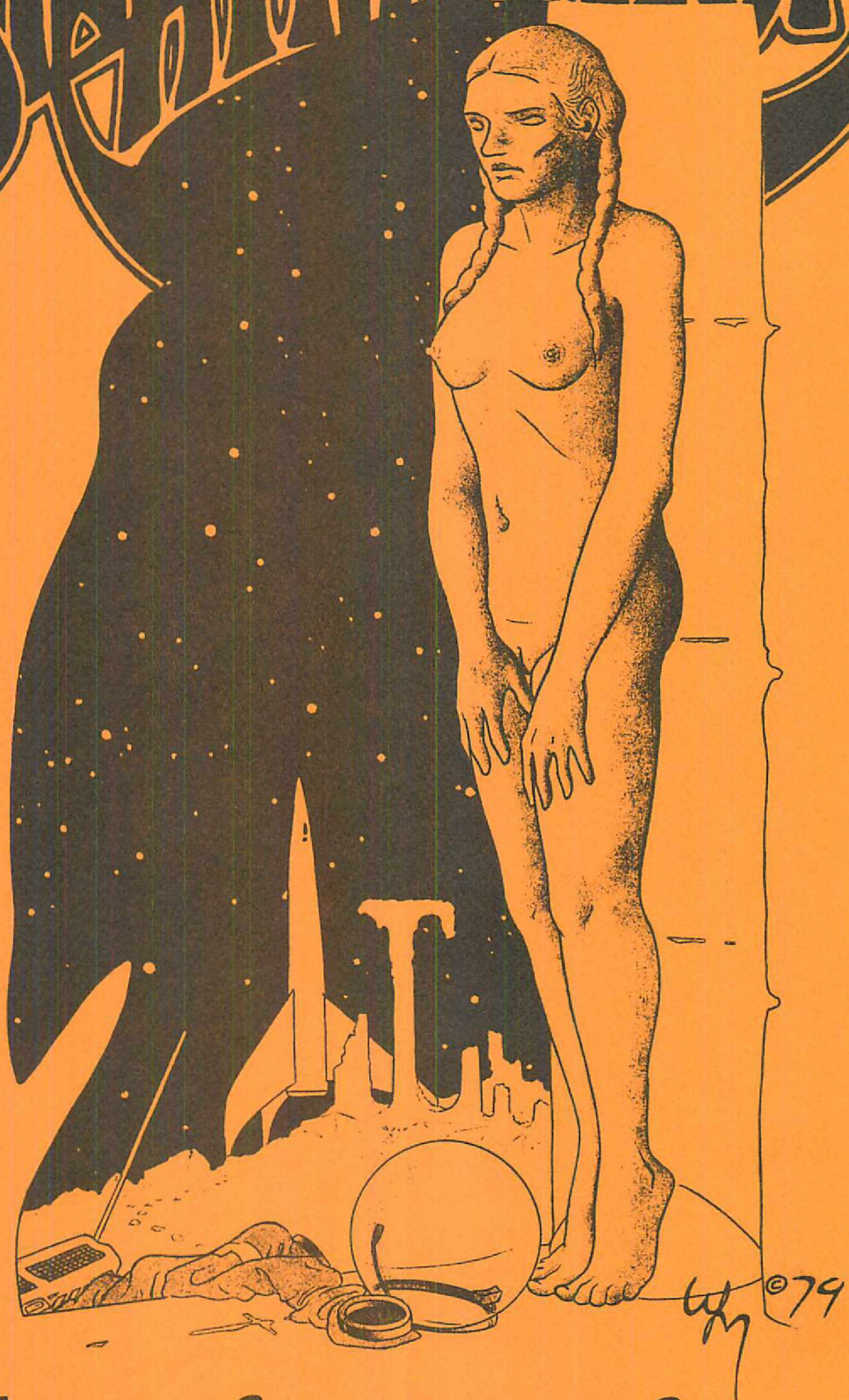


Scientifiction



10th anniversary issue

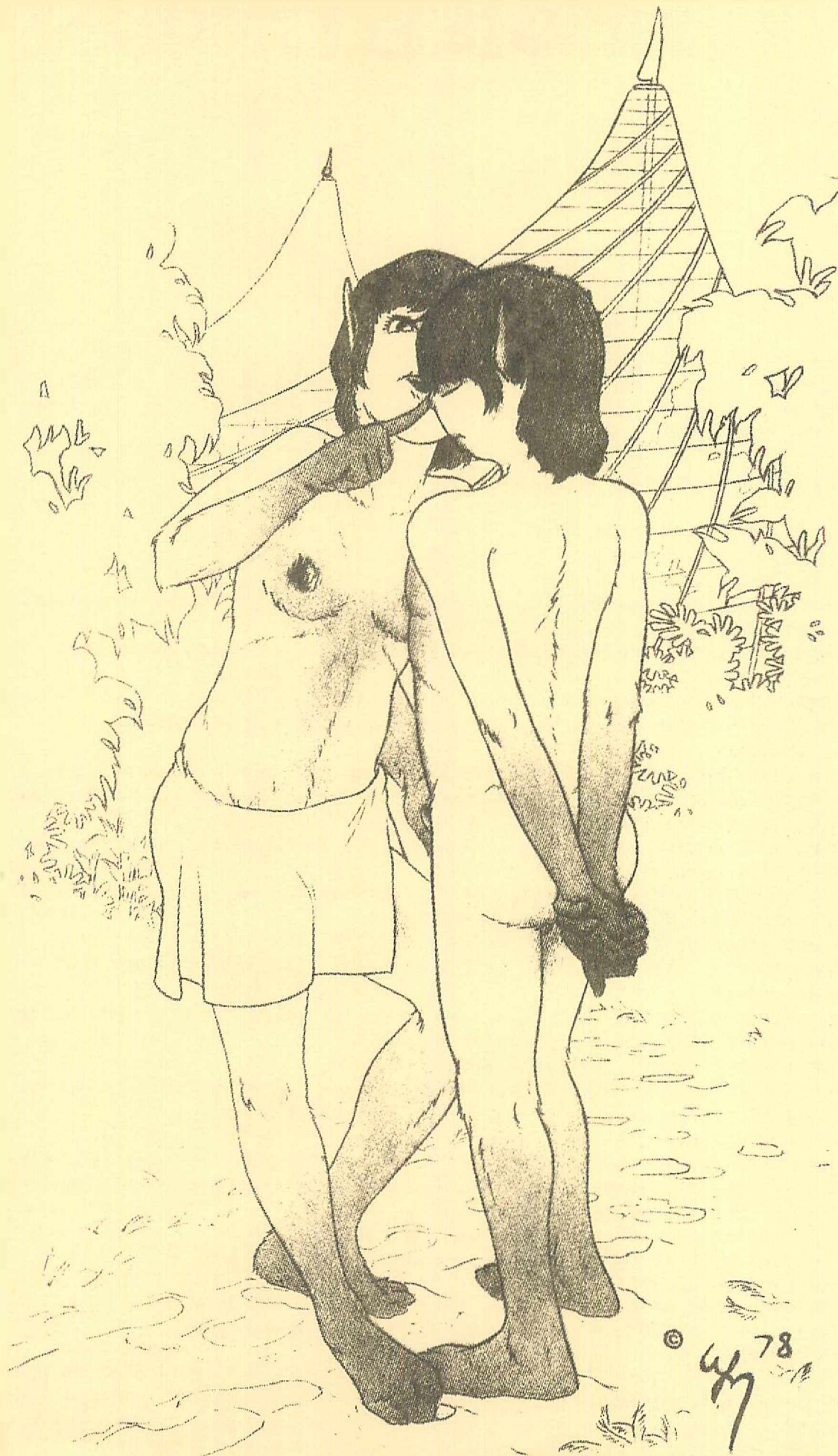
MODEL CONTRACT FOR CONBIDDERS: LEE GOLD

IN MEMORY OF THE SHERATON PALACE: to be read and signed by the manager and night manager of any hotel at which a science fiction convention is to be held -- and by all subsequent managers and night managers up until the end of the convention.

FACT SHEET ON SCIENCE FICTION FANS

We are science fiction fans.
We wear funny clothes and funny buttons.
We are noisy.
We stay up till dawn and sleep when the maids want to clean the rooms.
We are noisy.
We get hungry at strange hours and appreciate a 24 hour coffee shop.
We are noisy.
We run up a huge bar bill, but we are noisy.
We seldom get dead drunk -- and we take care of our own drunks.
We are noisy.
We seldom break things, and if we do we pay for them, but we are noisy.
We don't use prostitutes or callgirls but chase after other science fiction fans instead; we are noisy.
We like to sing a lot at night -- sometimes in the function rooms.
We do so noisily.
We drink up all the coke and stuff in the vending machines and take all the ice cubes and put them in the bathtubs.
We are noisy.
We like to go barefoot; some prefer skinnydipping in the hotel pool.
We are noisy.
Lots of us don't tip very much, and we don't like to stay at the tables we were seated at if we see a friend nearby.
We are noisy.
Don't think you can predict our behavior from watching Trekkies or attendees of Doug Wright conventions; we're not the same.
But we are noisy.
We want our convention's rooms to be blocked together so none of our parties will be near non-convention members, especially tour groups that have to get up early -- because We Are Noisy!
So please notice the clause in the contract that says that if you shut down a party only because of noise that that room or suite is free for that night....
because you shouldn't be too surprised to find out that
WE ARE NOISY

PS. We really do like your hotel and want to get on well with the hotel staff. And if we have a good time at your hotel we'll tell all our friends how great it was -- and they'll pay attention because we are noisy.



Scientifriction

1. PALIMPSESTS

Welcome to the last fanzine of the 1970s. No need to hold your watch up to your ear and shake it, nor to check the socket where your wall clock is plugged. It's not your timing that is off.

Many highly talented fanwriters responded to an invitation to be part of an issue of this genzine intended to mark my tenth anniversary as a fanzine publisher in November 1979. However, my effort expended editing FILE 770, and devotion to a wider circle of friends, forced SCIENTIFRICTION to the background. There was no time. Despite there being no real proof I would ever finish the issue, only one contributor withdrew his material (someone who, reasonably, thought he might like to see his Season report in print while it was still newsworthy).

As originally conceived, this was to be a massive issue combining new material with reprints of my favorite articles from NEW ELLIPTIC, PREHENSILE and SCIENTIFRICTION. Virtually nothing survives of that design, except a Wadholm reprint. But the thought crossed my mind that all the rest of the material is linked to no particular date, and I probably could have passed this off as a vibrant example of resurgent, creative fannishness circa 1983. In fact, it can be considered either way: as satisfaction of an overdue promise, or evidence that I've been swept up in the genzine boom of 1983.

2. PLEASE MISTER, PLEASE, DON'T PLAY B-17

Setting out to write this editorial, I decided some theme music was necessary to fill up the noiseless emptiness of my apartment. What to choose?

Several months ago Fred Harris, employed by Authors' Services Ltd. to hustle L. Ron Hubbard's BATTLEFIELD EARTH, gave me a copy of SPACE JAZZ. That record album was ostensibly scored by Elron to accompany his novel. Fred Patten compared SPACE JAZZ to the albums made from themes of the Japanese adventure cartoons Fred likes so much. That made the record sound like light fare, so I threw it on the stereo and sat down to write.

Not much later, I got up and changed albums to THE BEST OF THE DOOBIES VOL. II -- hoping to wash the taste out of my mind... Is it unethical to review something musical without completely listening to it? Probably. But it seems fair to describe why I turned it off. The first half of Side One sounds like music to kill small things by. The orchestration is good and the performances are professional (they ought to be -- several name musicians drawn from the Church of

Scientology appear on the album). But who needs routine space music with an overlay of unhappy grunts, or lyrics repetitively crying "Poor Earth, poor Earth"? The basic failing of SPACE JAZZ is -- it's dumb. Having skimmed the opening chapter of BATTLEFIELD EARTH I could at least understand what scenes Hubbard was musically illustrating. However, that merely gave me an intellectual understanding of the music, hardly an enthusiastic appreciation for it.

Recommendation: this record is prime stuff for auctioning off at fannish fundraisers to collectors who don't know any better.

3. BIGOTRY AND LITTLETRY

Recently in FILE 770 I quoted Andrew Porter's editorial from SCIENCE FICTION CHRONICLE about the campaign to popularize BATTLEFIELD EARTH among fans -- presumably meant to secure a Hugo nomination for Hubbard's immense book. Several fans chided me for lifting an item from a rival newzine: I replied to each one that in my opinion this was the first time Andy had ever written anything interesting in SFC, which constituted news in its own right. *Meow*

Porter's speculation about Scientologists potentially joining the worldcon in large numbers for the purpose of influencing the Hugo nominations was symptomatic of fandom's response in general to the book's publicity campaign. I went on record in FILE 770 with my opinion that this resentment was rooted in fannish suspicion that the gaudy hucksterism (generous supply of review copies; the billboard near and big displays in the Worldcon at Chicago) cloaked a missionary effort to convert fans to Scientology.

Robert Whitaker wrote me a letter outlining an alternate explataion for the same resentment. "What is causing concern among sf fans is not just the possibility that the Hugo Award perhaps can be 'bought' and 'campaigned for', but that it could be used to further a cause that a lot of them do not want to be associated with. If for some odd reason people like Charles Manson and David Berkowitz and John Wayne Gacy took up Scientology would the Scientologists want it to be known that this sort of person was taking up with their organization? Would they really want the association to be made between their Church and these mass murderers?"

This sort of religious bigotry -- and that is precisely what it is -- begs to be ignored, but as usual my fanwriter tendency wins out in seizing on the opportunity for making a positive statement.

Unofficial Hugo nominating information suggests that BATTLEFIELD EARTH came close to actually making the final ballot, powered by substantial voting in the last week of nominations. Science fiction fans would have good cause for outrage if a number of nonfans succeeded in manipulating the Hugo Award on behalf of Hubbard or Scientology. It's the same right they have to resent any manipulative bloc vote from within or without fandom. I need hardly run the list of people and causes within the field who generated such controversy -- Trekkie Laura Basta's fanwriter nomination in 1976 is a sufficiently useful example. Yet a creative talent can dominate the Hugo results for years without complaint provided he appeals to that peculiarly conservative/libertarian mixture which attracts so many fans. Remember a fellow named Campbell? One could not find anyone in the history of the field of sf who so energetically advocated a political point of view. Campbell's philosophy happened to coincide with the darwinism that characterized several generations of fans. I conclude that fandom is like the

world in that freedom of expression is most liberally extended to the people we agree with, and the minority viewpoint is fair game for any rhetorical trick however insulting or absurd.

In remarking that the Church of Scientology would not want to advertise any psychotic killers who might surface on its rolls, Whitaker invites us to put the same interpretation on Hubbard's attempt to climb back onto the pantheon of science fiction writers. -- Since when has it become comparable to mass murder to practice the religious freedom guaranteed in the Constitution?

As to fears that the Hugo might go to further a cause many fans want to have nothing to do with: the same complaint about Ellison's use of his 1978 World-Con GoHship went exactly nowhere. Every year some piece of literature propounding some controversial social cause is up for an award. That potential is what makes sf viable, and it would be self-defeating to separate it from the Hugos. The kicker is -- ruling out works from Hugo eligibility on the ground that they espouse controversial social, political or religious viewpoints would have disqualified the Heinlein and Clarke novels before ever touching Hubbard's tame, pulp-era throwback.



4. The Single Man's Guide to Commuting

In Los Angeles, where too much time is spent commuting to work on freeways in the morning, a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love. He ponders, for example: Is it possible to figure out which women on the morning commute are single?

--Possibly. Driving through the neighborhood, have you ever noticed two-car families and the sexual dimorphism exhibited right there in America's driveway? Mrs. has been installed in a tank-like sedan, either because it's big enough to transport the kids, or because Mr. harbors the fear his wife is about to collide with something he hopes will be flimsier than the Caddy. Mr. is skittering around town in a tiny import for reasons of economy (who can afford two Chryslers?) and because he has suspended disbelief in those photos of Volkswagens accorded against telephone poles.

So an empirical method to determine the marital status of women in traffic may be: consider American sedans as big chromium wedding rings.

That test admittedly cannot compensate for (a) single women who like big cars, (b) any Mrs. who hangs onto the tank after divorcing Mr., or (c) anyone young enough to be borrowing the family land yacht.

As to women driving trucks ---



on American fandom. Nicholas and Palmer are also always good for a handful of LoCs from US fans. Doesn't anyone ever stand aside, and think over the question why we bother to answer? Perhaps the letterwriters are only hoping to distinguish themselves from the rest of American fandom which in West's mind stands convicted of dullwitted illiteracy. Obviously, it's up to them to decide whether their time is profitably spent reacting to the comments of a West. I actually happen to hold West's fanwriting in high esteem; I once sent several letters trying to persuade him to write for this zine. However, in the matter of US fandom where his knowledge is so obviously deficient I find the effort of correcting him rather futile. The man's quite intelligent enough to inform himself about American fandom if he wanted to be educated. Therefore it's entirely wishful thinking to send a letter clarifying a topic West never wanted to comprehend in the first place.

Let us not forget that American fandom does not have to justify itself to British fandom, nor particularly to the individuals who arrogate to themselves spokesman-ship for British fandom. Most important: the energy spent in justification would be more profitably spent creating an original piece of fanwriting. For faneds the vindication of American fandom is the quality of material we generate. Anyone sensitive to criticism of that quality -- and there is plenty of room for improvement -- would best address the problem by setting an example in their own writing, rather than in the ingenuity of their excuses.

6. Fanac in the Year Zero

Many fans have reasons of their own for wanting to win a Hugo. Some think they deserve it after years of producing their crafted products by the light of a tallow wick, ala Bob Cratchit. Others regard it as their destiny, possibly in the same way Patton thought it was his destiny to drive to Berlin and "personally shoot that paper-hanging son-of-a-bitch." (This is the true origin of the quote, and not, as fans suppose, Vardeman's statement about Senda after the 1972 Bubonicon...)

Like those fans, I have reasons for wanting to win a Hugo. Simply: it's the only award in science fiction that the Post Office has not devised a way to destroy. After all, the damn things are made of cast metal.

The last issue of this fanzine won a Fanzine Activity Achievement Award (FAAn) in 1979. The FAAn Award was a statuette of a beanie-wearing bheer can perched on the Enchanted Duplicator; this clay sculpture was mounted on a walnut trophy base. Mike Glicksohn eventually mailed mine to me from Toronto, in a shoebox. I still keep the cherished pieces in my closet.

In 1982 the WorldCon committee presented me with a sculpted multi-color dragon on a wooden Hugo base as its Special Committee Award. This very delicate, very beautiful item of fannish art needed an engraved plaque, and also, seemed likely to be damaged if I tried to take it on the plane in my lap, then on a bus home. I left it with the committee. Around March it arrived from Wisconsin. The wooden base was still securedly screwed into the protective wooden frame someone had painstakingly designed to ward off in-transit damage. But since the base of the statue had never been more than Krazy-glued to the Hugo base, the statue had some unattached in the mails, and cracked in three places. Fortunately the artist had molded the dragon over a steel-mesh outline, which held everything together. What man had put asunder, epoxy reattached so perfectly you would never know. So, no wonder I want to win a Hugo -- it would be the first award I ever won that I didn't have to glue together!

RISE AND FALL OF THE NEW ELLIPTIC RICHARD WADHOLM

Disregarding Richard's anguished groans when I showed him the file copy of PREHENSILE ZERO, I am publishing his facetious essay/obituary for my first fanzine because (1) it's still funny, and (2) it's the truest statement ever written about what I do in fanzines...

I: SAYING HELLO TO THE SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET

You know the NEW ELLIPTIC is dead, don't you? I mean, word has reached you by this time that what you are reading used to be called the NEW ELLIPTIC, and not the Grand Forks North Dakota telephone directory. That's good. I just wanted to make sure before I went ahead. (Shucks an' everythin', wouldn't I be lookin' lahk a gahldarned fool writin' up an sompin' you never even knew existed? Oh yah? You say that it wouldn't make that much difference anyhow?)

People have always come to after I would show them a copy of The Rag and say: "The New Epilleptic or whatsis anyhow?" The reason they would say such a thing is because the name was too complicated -- I mean, you'd be surprised how many of my friends can't pronounce "New." Obviously, that is the reason we changed our name to (your product here). Obviously -- after being in business for two years...

Riiiiiggghhhttt...

So there are still people around that want to know how we got the name NEW ELLIPTIC in the first place. Let me just say that I was in favor of using a good businesslike name, but it was Glyer who said, "Now who do you think would read a fanzine called Science Fiction Review?!" So we came up with the NEW ELLIPTIC. How? Glyer says he read it off a lavatory wall but you know about people like him.

Right from the start this magazine has been full of people like him. I mean it's bad enough for Glyer to come bouncing in one day and tell us he was pregnant, but when the rest of the staff started circulating rumors that I was the father...I mean, somebody is not normal.

I thought it was all a joke too, until he handed me the paternity suit

II: BYGONE DAZE

THE NEW ELLIPTIC started out very humbly in November of 1969 as a poor-man's prozine instead of a real and true fanzine. To give you an idea of the quality of the first few issues, just let me say that we used rather thin paper those days and we sold the magazine in large rolls with our motto stamps on the front: "150 sheets longer!"

Deciding when we took a turn for the better is like deciding when the Golden Age of SF ended but my guess is around issue five. We got a poem written by Ray Bradbury that issue, and despite a lack of anything much to say about anything much, we got our collective rumps in gear in the layout department and went rapidly uphill from then on to the bitter end in July of '71.

As evidence of our consistently rising quality has been our consistently rising cost. Somewhere between issue 1 and issue 9 we raised the price from 5¢ to 10¢ to 20¢ to a quarter. Translated, that means about five Nixon speeches on the easing of the economy thanks to him and Spiro what's-his-name. 'Course we got our copies free so I don't really know what you subscribers got wasted for. We rip off with 'em. I mean you think we'd pay to read THE NEW ELLIPTIC? No thanks! They're too big to replace Zig-Zag papers and too stiff to replace Crown Zee.

III: WHY?

Why not?

IV: PROGRAMS! CAN'T TELL THE FREAKS WITHOUT A PROGRAM!

Come on now, level with me now. You don't care who we are, do you? The only time you ever wondered what a Wadholm really was was when you saw it marked over a door beside two others marked "men's" and "women's".

So I'll tell you anyway. There was a blessed event that happened in 1955. "Oh yah, I know about that!" says you. "That was the year the first Corvette came out!" Naw...that's not quite the blessing I had in mind. Anyhow, 15 years later I did my first Funky Junk. If you read it you know all about me 'cause I did a thumbnail sketch of myself. If not, you know all you'd care to know anyway.

The leader of us all, Das Rheingold of the paperback stands, lead singer in the rock group The Electric Turkey, and part-time bartender for the Stokeley Carmichael Lonely Hearts Club Band and Doorknob Factory, is Michael D. Glycer, student at USC. He's the editor-and-a-half, and, seriously, he's good and getting better.

Ken Halliwell is plump and fiendish. He comes on like a strung-out fascist elf. He's the only guy I know that read MEIN KAMPF for laughs. Bryan Coles, his writing partner, is about as opposite as he could be without planning. He's stringy and... uh... Well, he is too. And don't you forget it.

Mark Tinkle is a newer member. Now Tinkle is A Freak. I mean it, and with deep respect, too. Mark Tinkle is an 86% USDA choice nut, bonded in Bonn. People put down his poetry, which is too bad because he's one of the most successful satirists in print. He lives his life like a perpetual long-playing Mothers of Invention and his poetry isn't nearly as weird as talking to him face-to-face.

Miss Judith Tetove is the Ad Hoc Pastore Committee. She's not a freak, which is pretty good after three years. She knows SF and swung a mean blue pencil when Robert Moore Williams made suggestions about the procreating habits of the SFWA.



IV: THE PITCH

Hi friends! I'm Ruff Williams, for Ruff Williams' used fanzines. You know, a lot of people come down and ask me how I can charge the prices that I do. Well let me tell you; we deal in volume selling. Volume inventory, volume trading and volumes of lies.

How about this beautiful September '70 ANALOG complete with power slurring, front desk hacks and factory hot air. You know, a lot of people will want to remember and cherish the editorial which explains why the Kent State massacre was an act of loyalty and patriotism or just some National Guardsmen having some good clean fun. Don't miss it.

Over here we have our Elliptic section. Look at that, friends! Acres and acres... I tell you, friends, a scene like that really chokes me up, it really does. I haven't seen anything like it since the aftermath of hurricane Camille. Also we're selling hand-crafted leather swastikas made by Kenn Halliwell during his stay with the Woodcraft Rangers. That along with the NEW ELLIPTIC PHOTO ALBUM can be bought this weekend for only \$22.95. Can you believe that, friends? And in the photo album you see all of your favorites -- Doug Leingang gafiating into a toilet; a candid shot of Perry Chapdelaine rinsing out his mouth with lighter fluid just before he attended the Nebula convention of 1963; a nude foldout of Mark Tinkle; a picture of Richard Wadholm as he looked when he was arrested during the Watts riots; and an autographed picture of Mike Glyer as he is known by most of the FBI men in the country -- front and side views.

DAVE LANGFORD

THE C-BIRD

The first feature in the original issue of NEW ELIPTIC (and here is the last time I'll repeat the sic joke) was "The Documented History of The First Galactic Congress" by high school students Bryan Coles and Ken Halliwell. In fact the principal feature of the first several issues was fan fiction, until my subscription to SFR showed up and I started to absorb what real fan-zines were about (namely stirring up trouble; see the previous editorial). In ways, the early issues were stone age imitations of ANALOG, and the duo's story an iron-age imitation of Christopher Anvil's rollicking sf satires:

INTRODUCTION: And it came to pass that there was a serious situation in the Galaxy at this time. And this serious situation was The Galactic Congress.

I - THE DELEGATES: A big hulk of a man came crashing through the thick wooden doors and fell flat on his bearded face.

He rose to his knees in a drunken stupor, staring glassy-eyed straight ahead into the saloon.

A wiry, muscular man appeared at the shattered door carrying a large, half-empty mug of beer. An unlit cigar stuck out of his stubbled face. Spewing tobacco juice as he went, the man stepped through the door and hovered menacingly over the downtrodden figure.

"Why you dirty Martican scum. You black asteroid-plagued son of a Venusian swamp-snake (In the time following he made some additional comments about the other's relationships with extraterrestrial, non-humanoid flora and fauna.)

"What do you mean, you won't volunteer? We need delegates who can go to that convention and hold their cocktails with the best of them. You are a delegate, final and forever."

While delivering a sharp, painful kick to the kneeling man's face, the bartender motioned to two crudely dressed frontiersmen. They easily hefted the now unconscious man to their shoulders and carted him away to the waiting starship.

Several successive episodes develop the satire, ending as an alien plot to take over the constitutional convention is ended when the waiter spills a cocktail on one and the alien dissolves. The waiter is elected President.

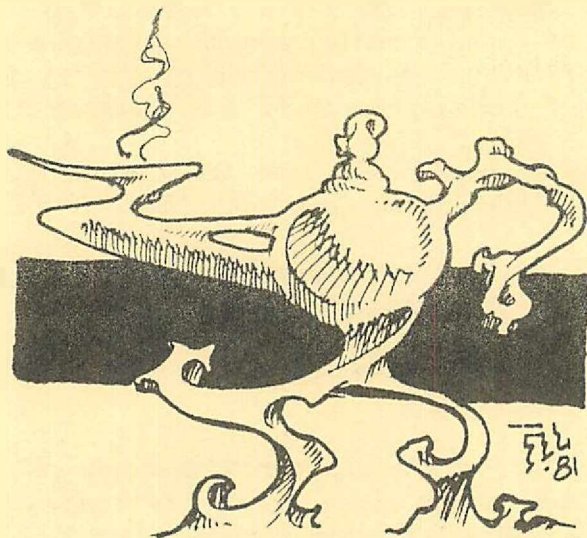
In the embryonic stage of writing, it is an achievement to learn how to manipulate such cliches.

For those who fail to grow beyond that stage, though, Dave Langford suggests an appropriate literary doom ---

"It's time we did something about the cliched state of sf," said Atheling, meditatively picking his nose with a scalpel. "Aliens, spaceships, time travel, Isaac Asimov... it's all been done to death."

"So keep writing the reviews," said Amis. "We big names have no time for ghetto cleansing."

"Bleeding poseur. Get back to yer mainstream rubbish," said Knight. He waved a dismissive finger at Atheling, who stood with his back to the window. "There's nothing you can do about sf cliches. When we invented them we created a Frankenstein's monster which --- my god, I'm doing it now."



But Atheling was moving towards the vault door in the secret laboratory. "not so, Knight! I have the answer at last. It came to me last night when I was staring into the fire and a Newcastle Brown bottle fell on my head." He flung open the vault door, and out flew what appeared to be a small spaceship. In size and design, it vaguely resembled a Newcastle Brown bottle.

"Behold the C-bird -- the Censorbird, the Clichebird, the guardian of our literary purity! Now watch this..." Atheling moved over to a small, safe, and with a pair of tongs removed a copy of ISAAC ASIMOV'S SF ADVENTURE MAGAZINE. As the others averted their eyes, he flung the deadly object in the air; at once the C-bird zoomed towards it and unleashed a bolt of energy which instantly carbonized each page, so that only the Doctor's fearful, indestructible smile remained.

"So perish all cliches!" said Atheling with a smile. From the leaden safe he now took an incredibly banal SF illustration showing a monster emerging from a swamp; the C-bird blasted it to shreds, and enthusiastically did the same to four other pictures as bad or worse.

Atheling continued, "Purifying our literature is the issue at hand. Despite impassioned objections from Jerry Pournelle, Edmund Cooper, Alan Dean Foster, Spider Robinson and others too award-laden to mention, I have developed the C-bird to seek and destroy cliches wherever they may lurk. Using a cunningly designed microcomputerized snivvy valve with inbuilt parasyntactic episteme and eschatological ramifications, it ---"

ZAP! A singed Atheling picked himself painfully from the floor. "That's odd."

"You were lecturing, said Knight. "That's a cliché, that is."

Amis said, "I suppose you included a learning faculty which enables the C-bird to continually extend its range of clichés to be eradicated?"

"Well, yes," said Atheling. "However did you guess?"

At this point, foiled in His attempt to have Atheling explain the C-bird's inner workings, the Author decided that He would subtly integrate the lecture into the text ---

Twenty years ago, the ships of the Federation

**ZAP!* The Author, now scorched and hairless, decided that it was too much trouble to include this vital explanation. Meanwhile, back at the plot...*

Glumly, the three critics watched the C-bird as it continued in its search-and-destroy mission amid Atheling's SF collection. Not even his prized STAR TREK anthologies escaped.

"I still don't think it was a good idea for you to set up automatic factories producing and releasing 500 C-birds every minute," said Amis nervously.

"If a thing's worth doing, it's worth building a machine to do it," snapped the C-bird's creator. Outside, the smoke of innumerable blazing bookshops filled the sky. Charred fragments of four-color jackets drifted on the breeze; jackets showing not merely many-windowed spaceships but swordsmen in fur jockstraps and nightgowned girls fleeing solitary lights in tower windows.

A voice came from the door: "Daddy, what's going on?" Atheling turned; it was his daughter, resplendent in her fashionable copper brassiere. "A funny little spaceship just fused the television..." she said. At that point the C-bird noticed her and discharged its bolt.

"Aaaaagh!" she commented, falling to the floor.

"My God, of course!" said Knight. "As a mad scientist's daughter, the poor girl is a walking cliché!" Atheling scratched his head. "Then as a mad scientist, I ---" The energy bolt struck him down.

"You fool!" Knight shrieked at the unconscious form. "You have created a Franken---" Another crackle of power, and Knight fell.

Amis said, "Bloody hell. Come to think of it, even things like screwing must be clichéd after all these years (we mainstream writers know about such things) -- ditto genitals -- " he clutched nervously at his own, fearful of some alteration. "The human race could be finished off by a gimmick already done to death in Sheckley's story, 'Watchbird'..."

Hearing his words and realizing that it too was tainted by cliché, the C-bird instantly destroyed itself. All over the world, others were coming to the same inescapable conclusion, though happily too late to save the SFWA. Meanwhile the stunned bodies on the floor began to stir.

"There are things with which man should not meddle," said Amis cautiously. No bolt of energy came; but the enraged Atheling, with a cry of "Don't say that!" plunged his scalpel into Amis' heart. "The old ways are the best," he snarled.

WHEELS OF SF

ADVENTURES OUT OF TIME BY

STU SHIFFMAN

Patrick Hayden lifted the Chrono-Shield and let his new memories seep in. They were good -- his little business in 1976 had restored the Worldcon to Phoenix. The damned boojums (the LA-MINNSTF-COLUMBUS-NYC axis) had fiddled with fanhistory to eliminate Iguacon -- but he'd shown the damned kumquats! The new Arisian bloc led by Nesfa had loaned him their time displacement device, not out of liking for Iguacon but rather to hit at the boojums. He wanted to safeguard his own memories -- the boojums seemed to be working chaotically for ends that were not apparent to even the elite of the Arisian bloc.



Margaray Monaghan, on a Thursday in June of 1977, was sitting in the audience of the Loew's Astor Plaza Theater in Manhattan. She was watching STAR WARS for what was perhaps the twentieth time. She wasn't what Hayden, if he had even known her, would have thought of as a "fan". She had read Heinlein and Asimov juveniles as a young girl and STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND in college.

She'd been a follower of STAR TREK in syndication. At 11:30 PM the ripples from a boojum alteration in 1961 reached her time.

She was still Margaray Monaghan and in the Astor Plaza Theater. However, she was with a group of fans watching George Lucas' adaptation of Doc Smith's Lensman Series. She was editor of a genzine named CHANNEL and had been to Aussiecon. Margaray didn't know that her life had been altered.

However, when Moshe Feder shut down his chronoshield he discovered that he was now an instructor of English at Queens college. His room was nearly empty -- in comparison to the mare's nest of sf, fanzines and Coca-Cola collectibles that reality had erased.

In Los Angeles on November 9, 1979, a secret meeting room in the Lasfs clubhouse was being filled by leaders of the boojums. Bruce Pelz and Mike Glycer distributed mimeo'd copies of the agenda to representatives from New York, Columbus, Chicago, Seattle and Minneapolis. It was well reproed on Goldenrod twiltone, and had carefully been kept from the eyes of the general Lasfs membership. Stuf Shiffman of the Flushing in 1980 committee component of the New York delegation flipped through it.

"Bruce, I think that this is a bit much...why don't we just eliminate the existence of MIT and so get rid of the Arisian historical base?"

"Ridiculous," cried Gary Farber, "That would alter contemporary sf too much -- John W. Campbell went to MIT..."

"I think that we're getting carried away," began Denny Lien from Minneapolis. "I thought that a little judicious re-editing was needed -- just enough for Mipple-Stipple in '73 and a few other worthy causes -- I didn't expect a sort of change-war throughout fanhistory. Our own realities are wearing away -- I have to use a chrono-shield all the time now."

"The war isn't really being pursued by our contemporary selves -- but more by our temporal selves in the 1980s, Denny." Pelz paused to wipe away some sweat from his forehead. "It worries me, the future boojum leaders didn't even know who I was -- am! Sure, we save Ron Ellick from his car accident -- but somehow this caused Bob Shaw to be blown up in Belfast five years ago...I wish we could pull out."

Ross Pavlac, fidgety behind a "Columbus" placard, began to fiddle with a pad and pencil. "Things seem so different, my persona seems to be altering from that of someone interested in fan politics to that of a fanartist..."

"The reverse is happening to me, Ross," replied Shiffman. "...Plus I appear to have a decent job selling insurance -- so improbable!"

"We have to stop," said Ben Yalow.

"We have to stop," said Ross Pavlac. "We have to stop," Don Bailey declared.

"But we can't stop, it's too late," said a person they had never seen before. But soon the doubled memories would come.

Jon Singer awoke on the morning of June 2, 1978 in Boulder, Colorado. He sat up and tried to put to rest a feeling of displacement. Being in Colorado seemed too outrageous for a native of the Big Apple. He was right, it was outrageous. In another five minutes the ripples from 1973 put him in Minneapolis where he belonged.

In a film revival house in Seattle, on October 31, 1979, a movie changed/shifted in the middle from Danny Kaye in COURT JESTER to an MGM adaptation of THE INCOMPLETE ENCHANTER with Kaye, Bing Crosby and Basil Rathbone and special effect animation by the Fleischer Studio. The only people in the audience who noticed the change were Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins. It scared them very much. When they returned home they tried to explain it to their housemate Bob Doyle. He asked why they were in town from New York City ...He'd met them at LACnn II in 1978.

In 1928, an anonymous pulp collector tried to alter the finances of Hugo Gernsback's AMAZING STORIES. Somehow this affected the timestream so that the Street and Smith Company didn't pick up ASTOUNDING STORIES with the other Clayton magazines. Hundreds of sf writers in 1980 found themselves teaching English and introductory physics in community colleges and high schools. Admiral Robert Heinlein retired from the Joint Chiefs of Staff (the Pentagon never understood why). Joan Vinge was confused, Gardner Dozois perplexed and Harlan Ellison in Poughkeepsie. Fandom was nonexistent, the only magazines of sf being the Fortean journals with their stories of alien intelligences, poltergeists and rains of frogs.

Meanwhile, Sam Moskowitz was elected President of the Teamster Local in Newark. It was ridiculous, a subculture becoming part of unreality -- and we subsumed into the nation of strangers, of plastic and television game shows.

I didn't like this game, so I grasped the moment and left -- taking my time going home.

++ Stu Shiffman

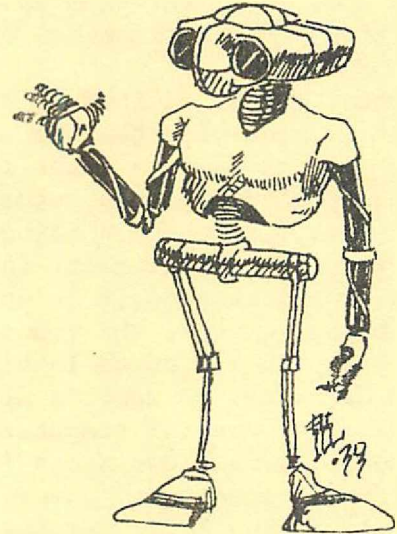
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DARKER THAN YOU THINK by Jack Williamson
Dell 1940/79 \$1.95 Reviewed by STAN BURNS

Reprint of Unknown novel, out of print for years, containing the original Edd Cartler illustrations. When I first read this novel at around the age of thirteen, it scared the hell out of me and I find it holds up exceedingly well. Will Barbee finds he is drawn by supernatural forces beyond his control into an elemental struggle as old as mankind. To his horror he finds himself drawn at night by a beautiful woman/she wolf into changing shapes, and one by one murdering his oldest friends, who are struggling to alert the world to its danger. This is a classic occult horror novel, and probably the most effective novel Williamson has ever written. Rating: Good.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE TALISMAN by Clifford D. Simak
1978/79 \$2.25

Very minor Simak novel, in the 'tradition' of Tolkien. In an alternate universe, Endland in the 1970s is much as it was in the middle ages, except that here magic works. The Harriers, a flock of ancient evil creatures from the stars who have kept man from progressing, are once again ravaging the land like a plague of locusts, destroying all in their path. Duncan of Standish and his companion/servant Conrad set off on a quest across the Desolation with a manuscript that might give humankind a chance to repel the Harriers if they can get it to the one learned scholar who can read its ancient language. This 'epic adventure' in the end is long and mostly boring, containing none of the Simak magic. Rating: poor.



Robots

JON GUSTAFSON

Baley approached and said in a monotone, "I am Plainclothesman Elijah Baley, Police Department, City of New York, Rating C-5." He showed his credentials. "I have been instructed to meet R. Daneel Olivaw at Spaceman Approachway." He looked at his watch. "I am a little early. May I request the announcement of my presence?"

The Spacer, who had listened politely, said, "It will not be necessary. I have been waiting for you."

Baley's hand went up automatically, then dropped. So did his long chin. He didn't quite manage to say anything. The words froze.

The Spacer said, "I shall introduce myself. I am R. Daneel Olivaw."

"Yes? Am I making a mistake? I thought the first initial --"

"Quite so. I am a robot."

Isaac Asimov, *THE CAVES OF STEEL* (1954)

With those words, science fiction readers were introduced to what was to be one of the literature's oddest and most enduring friendships: a friendship between Elijah Baley, human, and R. Daneel Olivaw, robot. They appeared in Isaac Asimov's classic novel, *THE CAVES OF STEEL*, first serialized in *GALAXY* in October 1953; and reappeared in its sequel, *THE NAKED SUN*, serialized in *ASTOUNDING* starting in October 1956. Though robots had been appearing in science fiction for many years, and Asimov had been writing robot stories since 1941, his two robot novels represent a highwater mark in the conception and use of these mechanical marvels that, to this day, has not been equalled.

Almost every science fiction reader has read at least one story or novel with a robot in it, but few readers have really thought much about robots: what they are, where they came from. For that matter, just exactly what is a robot, and

how does it differ from an android or a cyborg, two other "stars" of science fiction? Definitions are obviously needed.

A robot may be defined as an artifact (as used in science fiction stories) that is made of metal, is mobile and can think for itself in most circumstances. (In most stories, a robot is made by man although many stories contain robots made by alien species, usually for diabolical purposes.) A robot may or may not look like a human being, although those that look the most like men seem to be the most intelligent; in science fiction, the less human a robot looks, the less sophisticated it is and is more likely to be a laborer. In the case of R. Daneel Olivaw, the robot looks exactly like a human; so much so, in fact, that he can pass for human in virtually all situations, even to the point of eating and drinking. A robot's mind is mechanical, electronic, or positronic; a device similar to a small computer but with the ability, in the more sophisticated models, to make decisions (within certain parameters). It is usually a self-contained unit, powered by some form of nuclear power plant, and is very mobile, using legs, wheels, caterpillar treads or even antigravity devices to move about as well as, or better than a man. In most stories a robot's physical strength is assumed to be greater than a man's but its thought processes are slightly inferior; this is man's ace-in-the-hole, allowing him to get the upper hand should conflict occur. Robots (with very few exceptions) cannot have human emotions, cannot cry, do not laugh or smile, and thus are able to fit quite well into a city environment such as Asimov's THE CAVES OF STEEL. Robots are at their best when they are taking direct orders; this is also where many problems with robots originate, as robots tend to be literal-minded and if the order is not exactly stated, things can go very wrong.

An android, on the other hand, may be defined as a robot made of flesh. While mentally similar to a robot (that is, they are programmed to accept orders as robots) their bodies are chemically or biologically based and are grown rather than built. Their brains, like their bodies, are organic and very similar to human brains. In science fiction, androids are generally grown in a vat and either come into the world as fully grown adults, or as babies who then grow to maturity in a fraction of the time it takes a human child to mature. They are, in essence, artificial human beings (generally used as slaves or servants in the majority of android stories). Like robots, they are sexless and cannot have children, although they are sometimes equipped with human sexual organs. Being organic, androids are usually less literal in their following of orders; in most stories it is their desire for freedom that causes the problems. In most cases, androids do have humanlike emotions and feelings.

The cyborg (short for cybernetic organism) may be defined as the combination of man and machine. The cyborg is the most recent arrival in the realm of science fiction and has been made famous by Martin Caidin's novel CYBORG (1972). Although the proportions of man to machine may vary, the machine part usually makes up the larger percentage of the whole. In Caidin's novel, the protagonist is outfitted with artificial legs, one artificial arm and one eye; he becomes a superman, given more than human strength by his new limbs (these limbs are nuclear powered, much as the robot often is). In the "Professor Jameson" series by Neil R. Jones, popular just before World War II, Jameson and the Zoromes are converted into the ultimate cyborgs; of their original bodies only the brains are not replaced with metal organs. Cyborgs are not necessarily humanoid; in the case of Anne McCaffrey's series about Helva, "the singing ship," Helva's brain is transplanted into a spaceship.

In short, we can say that a robot is an all-metal, mobile, thinking machine; an android is an artificial, organically-based humanoid; and a cyborg is a

combination of man and machine. The robot, however, is by far the most important of the three and will be the main thrust of this section.

Robots, like virtually everything else, have their origins far in the past. The robot in science fiction has a history that stretches as far back as the legend of Daedalus. Daedalus, it is said, once built an artificial man for Minos, the King of Crete. The Roman poet Virgil, also according to legend, described a statue that spoke, moved and followed his orders. Another type of artificial man, the homunculus, can be found in the ancient Finnish epic Kalevala. However, by far the most important precursor of the robot is the artificial man of Jewish legend, the golem.

The golem (the name means "embryo" in Hebrew) of legend was born, if that is the right word, in Prague in the 16th century. It became part of Jewish legend because of the incredibly poor living conditions of the Jews at that time. The Golem was viewed by its believers as a protector of the Jewish people, and the stories surrounding the golem were based on its role as a protector. It was a creature molded of clay, which was brought to life by writing on a piece of paper a combination of letters forming a shem, one of the many names of God. This paper was then inserted into the forehead or the mouth of the golem, bringing it to life. Upon removal of the paper, the golem reverted to its natural state and ceased existing.

The first golem was thought to have been created in the middle of the 16th century by Elijah of Chelm, but the artificial man is most closely connected with the rabbi Judah Loew (or Löw) Ben Bezalel of Prague. Rabbi Loew was also one of the most often quoted authorities of the secrets of the Cabala, a mystical book by eastern European Jews; it is undoubtedly this type of widespread mysticism that led to the idea of animating lifeless matter. Rabbi Loew's golem was created to protect the Jews from their oppressors, but turned against its creator. The golem was stopped, after considerable hardships, when the good rabbi managed to take away the paper inscribed with the shem.

The idea of a golem turning against its creator is not unique in history; in most stories of the golem, this same thing happens, but the rabbi manages to "kill" the monster in the proverbial nick of time. The golem does not always turn against its creator; sometimes disasters happen when the golem is "programmed" incorrectly. This happened with the golem of David Jaffe, the rabbi of Dorhizen, Russia, about 1800. His was apparently the last golem to be created, and was made to replace the gentile whose job it was to light the ovens of the Jews on their Sabbath. Because the orders given to the golem were slightly inexact, the town ended up being burnt to the ground; this is one of the main ideas in the robot stories of the 1940s and 1950s in American science fiction. Also, like the robots of virtually all stories, the golem in legend is sexless.

While the golem gave science fiction writers the base from which to construct their own lifeless creations, it was up to a young woman writer to give them the theme that they were to use for so many years. The woman was Mary Shelley, and the novel of course was her immortal FRANKENSTEIN. To repeat the story would be redundant, but the theme of the story is important. It is that of the created turning against its creator; it is this theme that is found innumerable times in science fiction stories dealing with robots. The mechanical man, built for the good of mankind (generally) has some kind of flaw, either built in or added on, which makes it turn against its master and the world it

was built to serve. It is with this theme in mind ~~that we now turn to the~~
~~acknowledged creator of modern robots, Karel Capek.~~

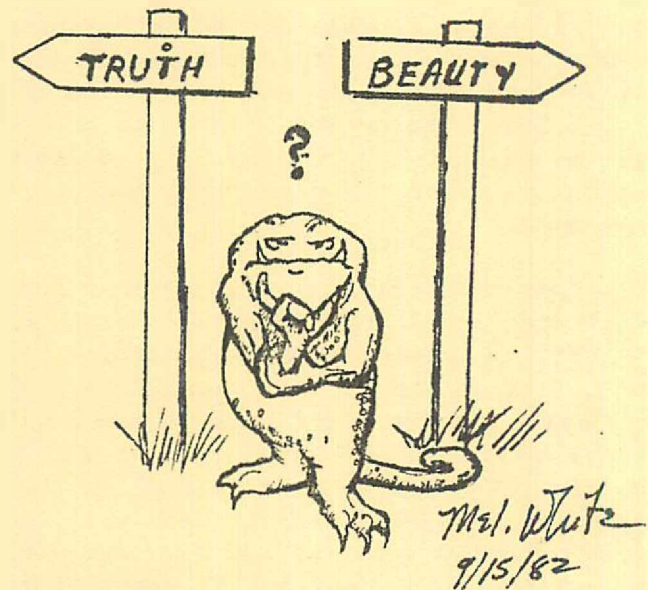
Karel Capek was born in northern Bohemia, an area that was then a part of Austria-Hungary, on January 9, 1890, in the town of Male Svatonvici. Like so many others of his time and ours, he spent many years becoming an overnight success. In 1920 he wrote the play ROSSUM'S UNIVERSAL ROBOTS, which was first performed in 1921 in the capital city of the new country, Czechoslovakia. It was an immediate hit and was shortly playing in theaters around the world.

The story of R.U.R., as it is widely known, is a modern treatment of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein theme in which Rossum invents a method for creating artificial human beings. He called these artificial beings "robots", although today we would classify them as androids. Rossum builds and sells millions of the robots and all goes well until, one day, the formula for the robots is changed. Instead of being obedient, emotionless servants they are now instilled with a fervent desire for their freedom which, of course, man is reluctant to give. The robots revolt and wipe out all humanity except one worker of Rossum's whom they keep in order to change the formula so the robots can procreate. He is unable to do this and they kill him. Everything would end at this point except that it is discovered two robots (a male and a female) have accidentally, but fortuitously, been given the correct sexual organs and are able to start things all over again (a modern Adam and Eve). The play, on the surface, is a biting satire on some of the obvious follies of capitalism; underlying this is Capek's fears about the dehumanization of man by the age of automation. Capek, like some others of his time (though they were few and far between), was deeply suspicious of man's ability to overcome the march of progress and to maintain his sense of perspective in the face of overwhelming change. He feared that man would come to serve the machine, not the reverse.

His theme is the logical evolution of the Frankenstein theme, except that where Victor's pathetic monster was a solitary creature, a model that could not be duplicated, Capek's robots are the result of a Henry Ford-like assembly-line, marching off the conveyor belts by the millions.

Karel Capek was a humanist, and a great one. He dramatized the conflict between man and machine by creating a man-like machine, the very embodiment of the fear of depersonalization. His play started an avalanche of stories and novels that hasn't ceased. He lived to see the human robots of Hitler's Germany but died before he felt their effects. A great man, a humorous man, a liberal man, Karel Capek died on Christmas Day, 1938.

At about the same time that Capek was having his world-wide success with R.U.R. and his other plays, an American, Hugo Gernsback, was taking steps that would



change the face of science fiction forever. In the spring of 1926, he started America's first science fiction magazine, AMAZING STORIES. Robots appeared in these pages almost from the very beginning, though not necessarily the type that Capek envisioned. Where Capek's robots were chemically based and fleshlike, the robots of the early Gernsbackian era were made of cold, hard metal, with brains of wire, tubes and relays.

Another difference of the robots of this era is in their fictional treatment. The scope of the early pulp stories was somewhat limited, and, in many cases, the robot was treated as a clever gadget, new and untested. The theme was one of detached scientific curiosity, rather than one of fear of the robot "taking over." One such story was David H. Keller's "The Psychophonic Nurse", which appeared in the November 1928 issue of AMAZING STORIES. A family of the future gets a robot nurse, complete human in appearance (it looked rather like Aunt Jemima, complete with bandana wrapped around its head), whose job it is to take care of their baby. The wife thinks this is great, but the husband, an old-fashioned sentimentalist, begins taking care of their baby on the sly. One day the robot, the husband and the baby are caught out in a blizzard and the father, through a superhuman effort, saves his baby's life. The moral of the story seems to be that the human being is much more flexible and able to cope with any given situation than the robot is; the robot is summarily junked.

The mood of scientific curiosity did not last long. By the latter part of the 1920s the robot had changed from an interesting gadget to an antagonist. Writers began to exploit the fear-of-the-unknown quality in their stories with increasing frequency, until the robot as hero (or at the very least, a neutral figure) became a rarity.

A fairly typical example of this type of tale is "The Call of the Mech-men," written by Laurence Manning. It appeared in the November 1933 issue of WONDER STORIES; the robots in this story have the nasty habit of capturing animals, a definition which seems to include man, and carrying them off to their city near the north magnetic pole. The heroes are captured and carried off to be exhibits in the Mech-men's zoo. In typical pulp-style, the humans succeed in escaping and ending the menace of the robots. This type of rather incredible ending seeped through the pages of many of the pulp stories, and was an almost stock ending until the late 1950s, when the last of the pulp-mentality magazines died. The Mech-men were excellently illustrated by the noted science fiction artist, Frank R. Paul, who illustrated many robots in the early decades of the pulp magazines. They were bipedal (with a small trailing wheel for stability), had eight 'eyes' spaced around a cubical body, and one long metal tentacle, which the illustration shows curled tightly around the two heroes.

Another story in this vein is J. E. Kelleam's "Rust" which appeared in ASTOUNDING SCIENCE FICTION, October 1939, and is one of the many to use the theme of the "yellow menace." In it the robots have been created to defeat the hordes of inimical Asians that caucasian America had come to fear in the past half century. Due to the usual hitch in the programming, after the robots had killed all of the yellow hordes they finished the job by killing the rest of the human race. By the end of the story there are only a half dozen or so of these metal monsters remaining, the rest having succumbed to their only enemy, rust. In an illustration by Orban, we see one of the few survivors trying vainly to copy a statue of a small child. Since the moral of the story is that a machine built to kill cannot create, the machine is failing miserably. Since there are no humans left to repair the remaining robots, they are left to perish in a slow, squeaky death.

While most of the robot stories of the 30s and 40s were concerned with the evil that robots could be capable of, there were several authors who were looking at this mechanical marvel through different eyes. Rather than seeing the robot as a menace, these men and women saw the possibility of trust (and even affection) between men and robots.

In 1926 Thea Von Harbou, wife of noted film-maker Fritz Lang, wrote METROPOLIS. In this novel the son of a wealthy industrialist is strongly attracted to a robot created in the shape of a woman, so much so that he ends up helping destroy the industrial empire his father created.

In 1938, Lester Del Rey wrote one of the most intimate, touching stories of robot-human relationships, "Helen O'Loy". Helen O'Loy was a female robot built by two inventors, made in the image of a young, beautiful woman. They gave her many human emotions, including some they did not intend, the feelings associated with that classic human "problem", love. When activated she rapidly falls in love with one of the inventors and, after an initial rebuke, finally marries him. As the years fly by the inventors artificially age Helen cosmetically to avoid suspicion among their neighbors and friends. When her husband dies, Helen destroys herself to "be with him". The story was written with an insight into human emotions that was quite rare in the days of pulp magazines, and holds its own even today,



In the 30s and 40s the stories of "Adam Link, Robot" were very popular; written by Eando (Edwin and Otto) Binder, the stories featured a robot with beneficent motives. Here was a robot who had been programmed properly! Adam Link had virtually all of the best human virtues with none of the weaknesses. His main purpose was to serve mankind in any way possible, an altruism only a machine can possess. Adam Link even went to war for his country in "Adam Link Fights a War" featured in the December 1940 issue of AMAZING STORIES.

Of course, even robots may have feelings, if only in science fiction. In the story "The Lost Machine" by John B. Harris, which appeared in the April, 1932 issue of AMAZING STORIES, the robot Zat finds himself marooned on Earth and commits suicide rather than face the bigoted feelings of Earthmen towards robots. However, this story is an exception and few robot stories show the machine with any kind of human emotions; the majority of books and stories about robots show them with logical, precise, reasonable, but very unemotional minds.

The basic antagonism between humans and robots which appeared in stories throughout the 30s and 40s began to change permanently in September 1940 with the publication (in Frederik Pohl's SUPER SCIENCE STORIES) of a story titled "Strange Play-fellow" (later to be retitled "Robbie"). It was written by the man who, in just a few years, would so influence the world of the robot as to make it virtually his domain. His name was Isaac Asimov and it is now impossible for the science fiction reader to think of the word "robot" without also thinking of Asimov.

Asimov occupies a place in science fiction that makes him difficult to write about, primarily because it is too easy to give him more attention than even he deserves. In the 40s and 50s he remodeled robots in his own image; he gave them a code of life, he took away the fearsomeness from them, he made them rational, emotionless, programmable machines that they are today. At the same time, paradoxically, he instilled them with more real personality than they had ever had before.

Asimov's Three Laws of Robotics are known world-wide, but important enough to reprint here. They are:

1. *A robot may not injure a human being, or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.*
2. *A robot must obey the orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.*
3. *A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws.*

Although these "laws" are not infallible, and indeed even Asimov claims that they are not, they have been an excellent guide to the actions of robots for the writers since their inception. They have been the soul, so to speak, of robots to this day. These laws have had the added effect of taking the horror out of the robot; that is, no longer is a robot capable of being inherently evil or malicious. The robot must be programmed in that manner, either deliberately by the villain, or accidentally by some clumsy technician. Robots are now metal good guys; not only can they no longer be persuaded to harm or enslave mankind, but they now exist to help mankind better itself. From metal Hitlers to metal Boy Scouts in an incredibly short time, and all because of one man, Isaac Asimov.

The robot has occupied a great deal of Asimov's writing, and many of his short stories of robots have been collected into two volumes, I ROBOT (1950) and THE REST OF THE ROBOTS (1964). Asimov can also be credited with introducing one of the first female leads in science fiction in the person of Dr. Susan Calvin, Robopsychologist. In most of his short stories, mankind is helpless against the berserk robot until Dr. Calvin comes to the rescue with her superior understanding of the programming processes. Asimov's robots, when it came to credibility in the years following World War II, left the robots of all most all other science fiction writers behind, and all the rest virtually faded from view when he wrote THE CAVES OF STEEL in 1954.

THE CAVES OF STEEL is not only a classic robot story, but it is also one of the most successful attempts in the history of both genres at melding the science fiction story with the detective story. The plot includes the joining of two detectives, Elijah Bailey and R. Daneel Olivaw, and their successful attempt to find the murderer of a Spacer in New York City of the distant future. Bailey, unused to robots who look and sound exactly like "normal human beings", spends a large amount of time getting used to the fact that he has a robot for a partner, one who is just as smart as he is, and, what's worse, one that must be regarded as his equal. In the end, however, Bailey has gained a grudging respect for R. Daneel and a friendship ensues, one that is unique in the field of science fiction. They even get together, with Asimov's help, for a second novel, THE NAKED SUN (1957) which takes place on the Spacer's world of Solaria. Again, Bailey and Olivaw brilliantly solve the murder, overcoming many physical and psychological problems in the process.



Isaac Asimov, in this series of short stories and two novels, has given science fiction robots credibility, even personality. Robots, until his writings, had spent most of their time trying and occasionally succeeding in attempts to take over the world and enslave or destroy mankind. Since Asimov, robots have taken their rightful place among the other staple elements of science fiction (eg space-ships, aliens, espers) as workers, partners, even heroes. With the Three Laws of Robotics as a basis for logical development, robots have become viable characters; they are now able to interact on all levels with their human counterparts as thinking, albeit emotionless, beings. Asimov took the clanking metal monsters and reprogrammed them, so to speak, into useful members of society.

But Isaac Asimov wasn't the only writer of robot stories to use the metal men in a logical, reasonable manner. In 1952, Clifford D. Simak's fascinating novel CITY was published to rave reviews in the science fiction community. It was destined to win the International Fantasy Award, and would undoubtedly have won a Hugo had they been available then. In this novel, mankind has left the Earth for bigger and better things, leaving it to be inherited by man's best friends, the dogs. The dogs are to be watched over and taught by a group of robots, as typified by Jenkins. This is an excellent example of robots at their best; watchful, protective, even loving in a way. The robots no longer contain only the best attributes of man for they have, for all practical purposes, become men.

All was not yet goodness and light for the robot. During the decade following the end of World War Two, a boom in science fiction occurred and a large number of new science fiction magazines sprang up. Unfortunately not all of them were able to attract the high-quality writers who had made names for themselves in previous decades. Thus, these new magazines had to attract either new writers, who being untried often made horrendous fools of themselves, or the old fading stars far past their prime who were no longer capable of really creative writing. Hacks abounded, and some of the most unbelievable, incredibly trite writing ever to hit the stands marched across the pages of magazines like SUPER-SCIENCE FICTION, IMAGINATIVE TALES, MARVEL SCIENCE STORIES and IMAGINATION SCIENCE FICTION, to name

a few. Most of these magazines lasted a few years at best, then succumbed later in the 50s, to a collective sigh of relief from the main body of science fiction readers. The quality of the stories in general, and robot stories in particular, was very low; the writers seemed to have almost no sense of what the reader wanted and relied heavily on sensationalism, sex and sadism (the three S's of the magazines.)

Many of the robot themes that had been abandoned in the late 30s were now revived with a vengeance. Robots once again became killers, dictators, sadists and generally rather unlikeable characters. Asimov's Laws, so carefully thought out, were casually tossed by the wayside and robots became unbelievable. The average plot involved (A) The robot takes over the world through superior armament/strength; (B) The heroine is captured by the robots for use as a slave/guinea pig; (C) The hero sets out to rescue his girl-friend; (D) The hero manages to find his girl and destroy the robots through some hidden or overlooked flaw in their makeup. The pair then live happily ever after and turn the ravaged world into a paradise. Almost the only variation of this plot was when the hero and heroine were killed and the robots lived happily ever after.

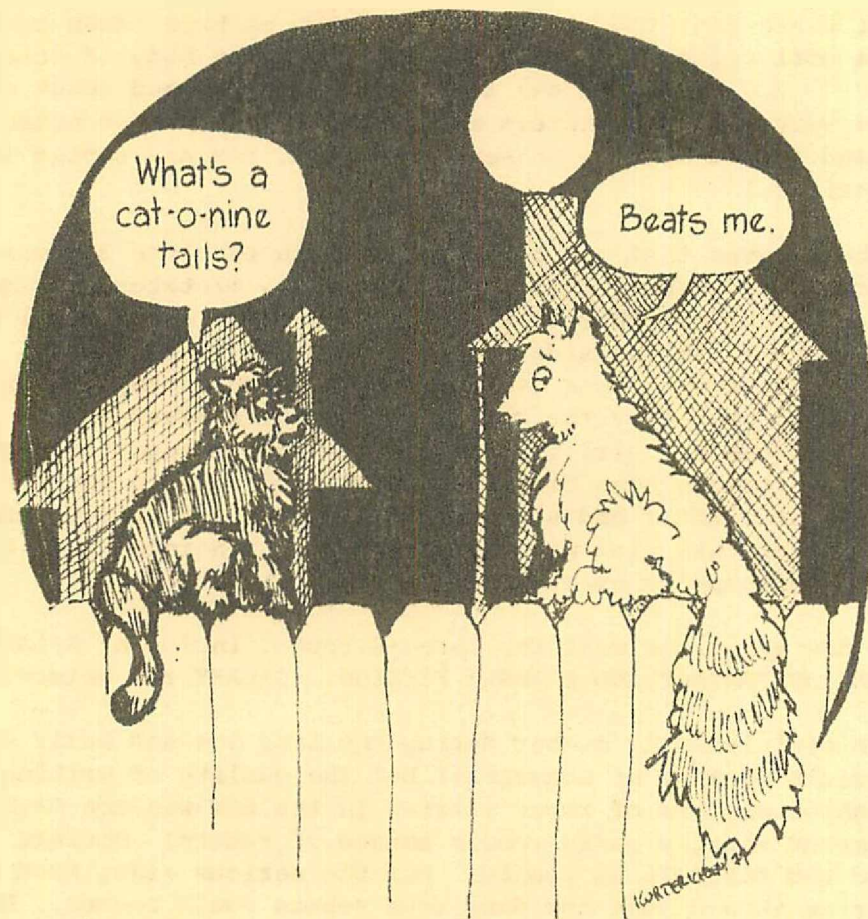
Not all of the new magazines went the three-S route, including GALAXY, SATELLITE and THE MAGAZINE OF FANTASY AND SCIENCE FICTION. GALAXY ran Asimov's CAVES OF STEEL.

Tales of robots diminished in number during the late 50s and early 60s (a direct result of the death of many sf magazines) but the quality of writing improved. One of the brighter writers of robot stories in the 60s was Ron Goulart, whose wacky stories about equally wacky robots amused sf readers. Goulart's robots are as neurotic and fallible as people. For the serious side, Fred Saberhagen's "Berserker" series showed just how dangerous robots could become. Built by an alien race, his robots are intelligent interstellar combat vehicles with but one purpose: to destroy life wherever it is found.

But what of the future? Science fiction, among all the literary genres, is the most concerned with this question, and it must stop now and then to ask about its own future, and in this case, the future of robots in science fiction. Two recent tales may well point the direction for future robots.

"Home is the Hangman," a novella by Roger Zelazny, appeared in the November 1975 issue of science fiction's leading magazine, ANALOG. "Home is the Hangman" concerns itself with a robot who, during programming, is involved in a murder while operated by its team of designers. The robot, having a fantastically complex artificial brain, is affected by the team's guilt feelings and its own guilt. It breaks down mentally during an exploration of the solar system. Unlike the breakdowns of Asimov's robots, this is not purely physical or related to the Hangman's programming; it is psychological and directly related to the trauma associated with the crime. Although traumatized by the original incident of murder, Hangman learns to live with its guilt, something only humans are thought able to do. The question arises: where is the dividing line between human and robot? Perhaps future stories will be able to explore this tantalizing question in more detail and from different points of view.

A second potential influence on the future is SOUL OF THE ROBOT (1974) by Barrington J. Bayley. Jasperodus, created by a master robot-maker of the far future, wanders the Earth in search of the meaning of "soul" and trying to discover if he, a robot, has one. Is it possible for a robot, given enough complexity in its brain, to have a soul? What type of consciousness would such a machine have? The robot themes are far from being completely exploited; indeed, there seems to be much more that can be written about robots. With each advance in science, with each new discovery in psychology, with each new step taken in electronics or engineering, new avenues open for the sf writer in the field of robotics.



words

ARTHUR HLAVATY

We're not going to let words bother us, are we? I mean after all, we are slans, and null-A people, and all that other good stuff Van Vogt wrote about. I know that I'm not going to let a word bother me because I know that the word is not the thing, that a single word can mean many things, and I shouldn't let my feelings about words influence my view of the world. But sometimes I wonder.

I've been thinking about the word romantic. That seems to mean a lot of things. I thought about it so much that I looked it up in Webster's, and I found a couple of columns of things that it means.

I was surprised to find that first of all, it's a literary word. The first thing it means is "having the qualities of a romance." Thanks. Turning the page, I discover that the first meaning for romance is "a tale in verse, written in medieval times, based chiefly on legend, chivalric lore and adventure, or the supernatural." In other words, it means stuff like BEOWULF. Now if you've taken a course in English literature, you know what BEOWULF is. It's what you have to read first. Since everybody knows that the right way to study literature is historically; you have to start at the beginning and read BEOWULF, whether

you want to or not. -- And maybe that's the beginning of why I don't like the word romantic. But that's only from the historical point of view. In my personal history, before I could take a college English course, I had to study High School English, and there I learned about the romantic poets.

I used to know all that stuff. I do remember there were three of them -- Byron, Sheets & Belly, or some such. And one of them had a club foot, and one of them schtupped his sister...like I say, I used to know all that stuff.

I do remember what the poems were like, though. They were full of Feelings. They were, as I recall, a Protest Against The Excesses of The Age of Reason. So they had Feelings -- from positive ("more happy love! more, happy, happy love!") to negative ("I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!"). In fact, you could say that they wallowed in feelings, and while I can dig a good wallow as much as the next person, wallowing is a lot more fun to do than to watch, and that's another reason I don't like the word romantic.

While the Romantic poets talked about feelings, Ayn Rand says that the essence of Romanticism is Reason. So we have the view of some critics, most of whom seem to have found their way to science fiction, that true Romanticism is found in the tale of the Hero, a man who is strong, brave, incorruptible, and all the other good things in the Boy Scout oath.

Mind you, I don't say the opposite of what the romantic critics say. I do not maintain that great fiction must be grimly and depressingly realistic. I admit that it's possible to write bad fiction that is true to such a grim version of reality. In fact, it's easy. But the clean-in-word-and-deed hero of E.E. Smith is at least as bad, and once again I find that the word romantic means something I don't like.

Today, romantic fiction means books for women -- love stories in which the hero is strong and brave and virile (a word which may or may not have anything to do with his abilities in bed), and the heroine wins him by being sweet, demure and -- most of all -- stupid. There are two kinds of romantic novels. There are the pure ones, like Barbara Cartland's, in which one of the characteristics which attracts the hero is the heroine's purity. Then there are the lewd ones with titles like LOVE'S FLAMING PASSION, in which the hero shows his virility by taking the heroine forcibly. Thus the reader of romantic fiction has her choice of books which glorify virginity and books which glorify rape. These last two literary meanings connect with what seems to me to be the primary meaning -- romantic as a sex word.

Or in one sense an antisex word, because often the word indicates the idea that relations between men and women involve dancing and dating and social intrigue, but not sex. The other meaning includes sex, but sees it as something people are Swept Into, carried away by a tide of passion in which any sort of thought -- about birth control or whether the other person is telling the truth -- is Not Playing the Game. But either way, it comes from a view of men and women as opposites -- the men totally Masculine and the women totally Feminine -- so much so we can hardly expect them to understand each other. In fact it's a wonder they can eat the same food and breathe the same air.

But that is a lie -- one that keeps men and women apart, deprives us of the talents of those who have the "wrong" abilities for their sex, and reduces sexual love to the mammal elements of reproduction and dominance.

That's why I don't like the word romantic. To me, it stands for bad literature and worse sex. So I'm prejudiced. If I hear that a book is romantic, my first impulse will be to refrain from reading it. If I am persuaded to read it anyway, and I like it, I will conclude that it wasn't "really" romantic.

Nuclear weapons may be the greatest menace humanity faces today. The nuclear family may not be totally evil, but the insistence that everyone must live that way has caused great misery. What was that you said about nuclear power?

POETRY BY RICHARD HARTER

Come Children,
Come gather around your grandpa's knee.
Only be careful and don't bite too hard.
Now children, your old gramps will tell you a story.
Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess -
Careful there, Julius, leave that cat alone;
There, there, now don't cry - we'll get another kitty.
Yes, I know it's all bloody - mommy will clean it up in the morning.
Come here, Julius, sit in your grandpa's lap.
Damn it, take your spurs off.
Now listen, you little monsters.
Now where was I?
Oh yes, once upon a time...
Hortense, stop playing with the cat!
Yes, I know he's dead, but you're getting the floor messy.
Now this beautiful princess had no brothers or sisters...
What do you mean, did they have birth control in those days -
Where did you hear about that?
Oh.
No, no, the Queen died when the princess was very young.
No, it wasn't an axe murder - I don't care what the neighbor did,
Anyway the King remarried.
Hortense, for God's Sake, go wash your hands!
The Queen was a beautiful wicked woman.
Yes, she was very wicked.
Because when men see a pretty face they kind of stupid, sometimes,
Of, for Christ's sake, he met her at a burlesque show.
You don't really - well I'm not going to explain it now.
Anyway, this stepmother was very mean to the princess.
No, a stepmother isn't like Uncle Henry or Aunt Mabel;
The King was married to the stepmother.
So, anyway,
No, you can't have any candy;
Your old Gramps will bring you some next time,
No, that isn't coconut, that's a caterpillar.
No, they aren't good to eat.
I told you they weren't good to eat.
Anyway, the wicked stepmother decided to get rid of the Princess,
So she sent the Princess into the magic forest to pick some flowers.
Oh, the kind you're eating, I guess.
Put those damn flowers back in the vase.
Yes, Mommy will pick some more - for my funeral, no doubt.
So the princess went into the magic forest, but unbeknownst to her...
Yes, I heard the noise.
Yes, I know it's an accident.
Yes, I can hear the screaming.
Yes, you can go out and see - go out and play in the traffic.
Hell. I wonder if the mail is in.



.....

Some folks say the biggest enemy that women in the Feminist movement have is Other Women. Yeah, you hear it all the time -- the statistic that men show stronger support for the ERA than women do? And that most of the anti-feminists you've talked to are women. And look who led the Stop-ERA group. And all that.

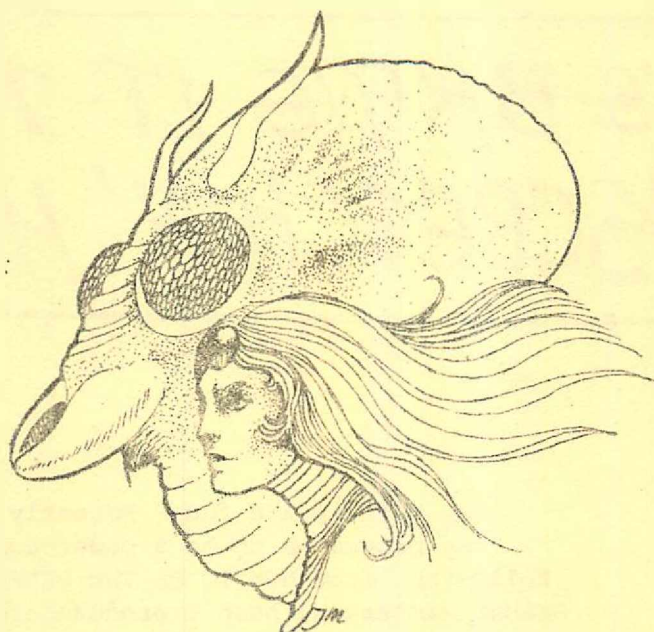
Well...maybe it's true, but so what? I've come to the conclusion that there's a lot of bad feelings about one's own sex no matter which sex happens to be one's own. Maybe no one has it against women like other women do, but have you ever really listened to what men say about other men? Why honey, it's downright embarrassing. I can still remember the first anti-male statement I ever heard -- it was from my father, who let me know that men simply cannot be trusted. Of course, he was imparting to me the traditional sort of information which fathers impart to daughters who appear to be on the verge of Going Out With Boys, and nothing he said was very flattering to his own sex. He conveyed basically that males are Only Interested in One Thing (shallow little things, ain't they?) and that they were very opportunistic and exploitative about getting it. He also wanted to make sure I understood that, once having achieved the One Thing in which they were interested, they (1) would no longer respect you and (2) always managed to translate the event into unflattering terms to share with other males.

What brought all of this back to me most recently had to do with that nonsense about men having trouble getting it up around "aggressive women." You know about Aggressive women, don't you? They're the ones who like it and let you know that they like it. These castrating individuals, we have been informed, have caused an epidemic of impotence that is sweeping the nation in such a way as to reduce the population by half as of next Friday. It's a pitiful sight, my friends, to see these wild and mangy nymphomaniacs who can't seem to behave themselves, aggressing right up to normally virile men and wilting their family jewels down to the proportions of a stud gnat.

The implications of this view, of course, are a staggering indictment of the male sex. Men are basically not able to enjoy sex with women who are able to enjoy sex. In order to facilitate their making it at all, we have to pretend we don't enjoy sex so that men can enjoy pretending that they are getting over on us, making us do something we hate every minute of. Men, in other words, are basically rapists.

Of course, men aren't the only people who hate men, as any Phyllis Schlafly can tell you. It seems that genuine anti-feminism -- I mean the real article, first-class misogyny -- is almost always accompanied by a deep-felt contempt for males which, while disguised as admiration and respect, really reveals a basic mistrust and misandry which is unequalled even by radical dyke separatists. George Gilder states flatly that if Women's Liberation means that women will no longer be devoting ourselves to using our "softening" influence on males, then men shall be left free to run amok with their unsuppressed beastliness and destroy everything. Phyllis Shiftly and friends insist that their own husbands will simply refuse to stay with or support their families once the law no

AVEDON CAROL --



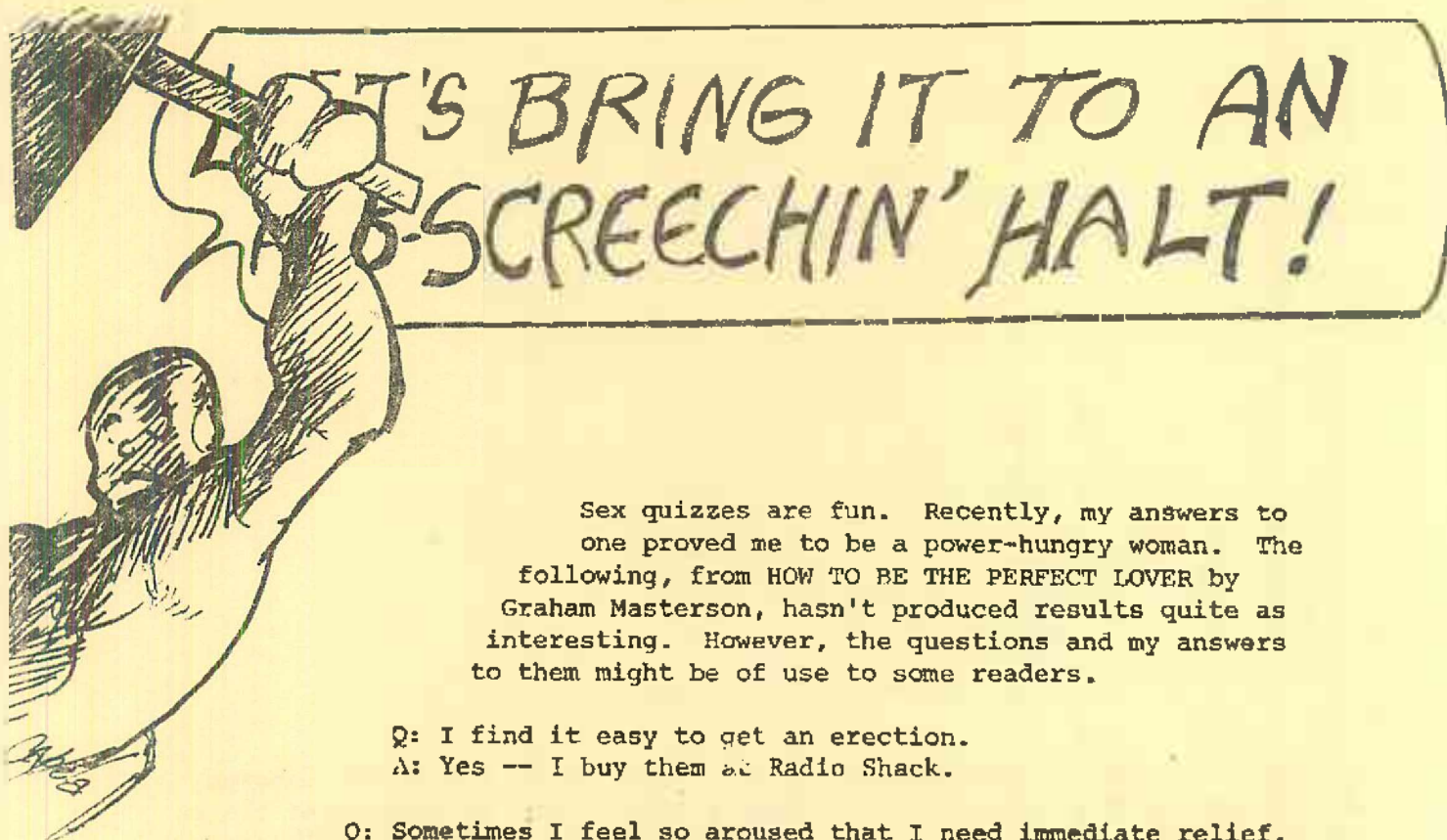
longer forces them to support their wives. Imagine the hoards of husbands, once typical middle-class fathers, proud of their sons, protective of their homes, suddenly bolting and running at the drop of a "Congress shall pass no laws..."

Well, I'm not going to argue with these women about the character of their own husbands, nor with Gilder and friends about their own behavior -- surely they would know more about these things than I do. One would, however, tend to get the impression that men must be horrible, violent, dishonest, nasty little creatures who really oughtn't to be allowed out -- which might make one wonder why these women want to be married to them in the first place.

Certainly, there has been a great deal said and written which would tend to bear out this low opinion of men -- much of it written by other men. More than one (male) lawyer has declared in court that a rape victim ought to have known that when she allowed herself to be alone in the company of a man she was "asking for" rape -- she would not have been raped, therefore, if she had only acted on the assumption that all men are rapists). And every manner of Great Thinker has averred that it is the Nature of Man to make war and run about Causing Damage to his fellow human. If you ask a man, it seems Men are terrible people. They even have women friends who will agree with them. And who should know better?

Actually, I don't go along with all of this. Oh, I know that men certainly can be terrible when they're trying to live down to their image. The more manly they try to be, the more obnoxious they can get. Fortunately, not all of them are so good at it.

MEN IN THEIR OWN WRITE



Sex quizzes are fun. Recently, my answers to one proved me to be a power-hungry woman. The following, from HOW TO BE THE PERFECT LOVER by Graham Masterson, hasn't produced results quite as interesting. However, the questions and my answers to them might be of use to some readers.

Q: I find it easy to get an erection.

A: Yes -- I buy them at Radio Shack.

Q: Sometimes I feel so aroused that I need immediate relief.

A: Excuse me for a few minutes.

Q: I can only make love once a day.

A: Well, when it last twenty hours...

Q: I do not produce very much semen (average is about a teaspoonful.)

A: Pass on this one -- I can't find the measuring spoons.

Q: There are times during lovemaking when my erection subsides.

A: Not since I began wearing steel condoms.

Q: I am irritated when my love partner caresses my anus.

A: If only she wouldn't insist on using steel wool!

Q: There are many times when I find it difficult to reach a climax.

A: Well, sometimes it takes awhile. But I'm usually able to reach one after a few days.

Q: After making love, I feel physically exhausted.

A: That depends. For example, intercourse while hanging from a diving board is exhausting. Though it's a lot easier since we found out that you're supposed to hang by your hands.

DAN GOODMAN'S

Q: I can achieve a new erection less than half an hour after having reached a climax.
A: Where's the stopwatch? 29 minutes, 50 seconds -- yes.

Q: Sometimes, even when my partner stimulates me, I cannot get an erection.
A: See answers to 1 and 5.

Q: If I do not have sex for a week, I have wet dreams....
A: I never dream.

Q: I usually want to go to sleep after making love.
A: Of course not. I haven't slept since The First Time. And if you think it's easy for a six-year-old to go without sleep for the rest of his life....

Q: My partner can bring me to a climax by fellatio (caressing the penis with the mouth.)
A: Only if she bites.

Q: Sometimes I feel very little sensation in my penis during sex.
A: Only if she doesn't bite.

Q: I ejaculate very quickly after putting my penis into my love partner.
A: Doesn't this depend on WHERE the penis is inserted, among other factors?

Q: Sometimes I can only reach a climax in certain sexual positions.
A: Unfortunately true -- there are only 1913 positions which turn me on.

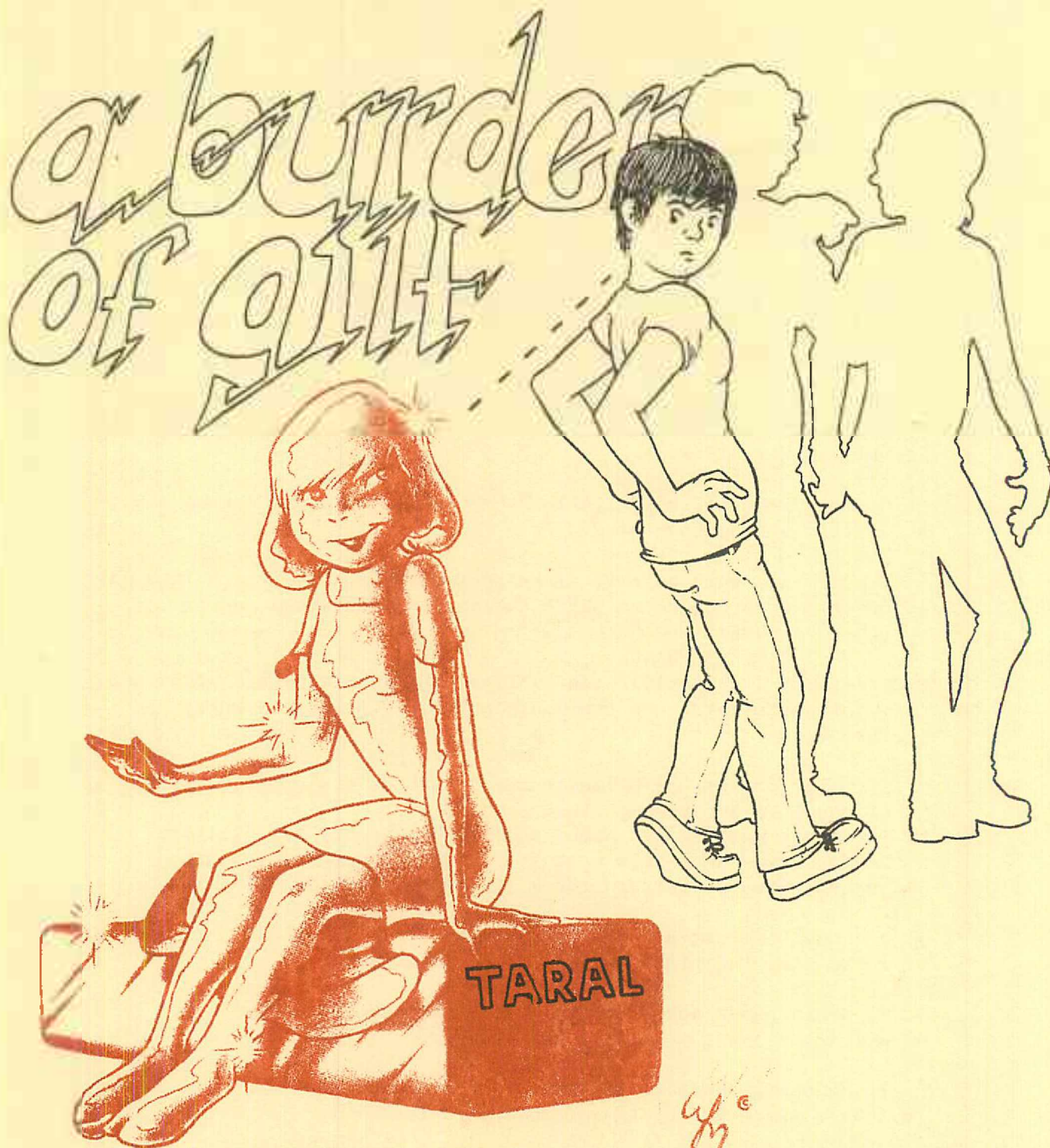
Q: I really prefer the climax I reach through masturbation to the climax I have during coitus.
A: I've only masturbated once, and it wasn't very satisfactory. People have since told me that you aren't supposed to use barbed wire, so perhaps there are better ways of doing it.

Q: I cannot perform after a few drinks.
A: I can play the piano as well drunk or sober.

Q: My penis never seems to get quite hard enough.
A: Not since I began wearing steel condoms.

Q: I can easily control the moment of ejaculation.
Yes, ever since the urologist implanted the dial.

SEXUAL HEELING



Art has its own truth. The following is little better than Art. Be warned.

A typical outing of the Derelicts, it was. Victoria Wayne, Bob Webber and I were pounding the streets frightfully late one night, preoccupied with other-worldly concerns -- four-quark models, historographic sources, numinal cosmology, and FAAn awards, pretty much as usual. Down one street and up the next. Turn the corner.

"Watch out Bob, you almost stepped in it."

"Oh, thanks Victoria."

"You'll step on my fingers!"

"God," said WebBob, "have you found another dime?"

"No, a quarter this time." It went smartly into my pocket. "That's 55¢ tonight."

"Taral, why don't you write an article about finding money?"

"Why?" I asked. What was unusual about finding money on the streets? I'd found a few five-spots in my life, but what of it? My younger sisters had found twenties, I pointed out.

WebBob was muttering, "It runs in the family." Glancing furtively at the sidewalk, he seemed to find something, then averted his eyes angrily.

"They're adopted. I inherited nothing from them."

"Crass monetary overkill," VV countered. "What about the \$1 you found at the chrome diner? That took panache."

This particular chrome diner lies in a valley between tsunami-like Alleghany ridges along highway 15 the route from Toronto to the Big City cons. We had been travelling this way at least twice a year for several years. Esoteric once, the landscape had diminished in our minds to mere landmarks. There was the river valley where the Allegheny plateau ended and rose up to be the Appalachian Front on either side. There was the breath-taking overlook above Williamsport. There was the sinuous downhill slalom along the Susquehanna near Harrisburg. And there was the chrome diner where we often stopped to eat. On one trip I was not overly anxious to stop -- I had no money -- but was overridden. In hunger, the others fell over themselves to get out of the car. No less hungry, but with less reason to hurry, I found the dollar lying on the ground in plain sight. I ate after all.

"Well, it was provident, I'll admit. But for style it can't beat the 100 year old 5¢ bar token my sisters found." Victoria wasn't intimidated by that at all, though.

"What about the \$3 at the National Air and Space Museum?"

"I didn't even find that first, technically."

At Disclave that year a number of fans resolved to see something of the nation's capital while they were there anyway, having gotten used to leaving the con the year before when they saw the nearby premiere of STAR WARS. The prime target was the National Air and Space Museum, a bus trip and a short walk away. For reasons now forgotten, Patrick Hayden and I were separated from the main party and approached the museum from the other entrance. The museum is built a little like a shoe-box massive enough to house Saturn V stages. To make it still more impressive, the architect had raised the building on stone steps. Patrick, in his normal aggressive fashion, was making way up these steps when he kicked aside some wadded-up paper. The shape and color of it suggested more to me than trash, so I snatched it up. In fact, the wad turned out to be three American dollar bills that someone had not crammed quite far enough into their

trouser pocket. I don't remember which was more satisfying at the time, the three bucks or the howl of disbelief from the fan who'd contemptuously kicked the money out of his way. I cherish the memory more now that the cash is spent, of course.

At this rate I would soon have to write the article. "I can't make anything out of only two incidents. I'd need at least three, or five, or best of all..."

Fortunately I was saved by WebBob at last finding what he had been trying not. He was scraping his shoe on the curb. "Don't anyone suggest I write about finding dog shit if they don't want to pick their teeth up off the sidewalk."

* * *

That was a long time ago. Two months at least. Last month Bob Wilson and I drove north of Lake Superior on a camping trip. During the long sub-arctic nights atmosphere demanded we tell horrifying tales of the Loup Garou, wandingos, lonely cabins and axe-murders, Bob Webber, and other things too strange to tell or that Man Was Not Meant to Know. Mornings we would complain about the chill, the hard bumpy ground and the unholy racket of the natural environment. (Wind, breakers, downpour, grinding ice-floes, and the nearby Trans-Canada Highway...) But most of the time we talked people and goings-on.

Near Wawa Ontario is a tourist site imaginatively called "High Falls." It was high, but was also wider than it was high. Nevertheless it was a beautiful fountain of whitewater and slick black cliffs. Upstream the river flowed peacefully to the edge of the world. Ghosts of rising spray were the only sign that water thundered into the chasm below. Several feet from the lip of the falls I came across an American penny. This put me in mind of my reputation for finding money, and I mentioned the article I wasn't going to write to Bob.

"You do, you know."

"Just a couple of freak accidents. Anybody watching the sidewalk can pick up the odd quarter and dime."

"Like that penny?"

"Like this penny. Hey, watch! I've always wanted to do this!" What I'd always wanted to do was toss a penny in a waterfall, one place where the sacrificial victim would never be recovered for charitable use.

The penny flew proud and where it disappeared the rushing water snatched the ripples away immediately. It was gone from human ken forever. From above the falls the trail wound down onto a rocky prominence that jutted in front of the cataract, half damming the boiling water behind it. It was possible to climb down off the trail to the brink of a watery death, so we did of course. No one with adventure in his soul could resist the slippery ledge and maelstrom mere feet away. PoonBob cautiously posed on a rock protruding into the raging water while I photographed him silhouetted against the white falls and black ramparts. Once finished hauling him back to safety I noticed an impossible coppery glint on the ground. It was...

an American penny! Wet. In fact, scattered over the ledge I found a whole

pocketful-of pennies, all of them American and all of them wet.

"Maybe you should write that article. Somebody's awful anxious for you to."

"A coincidence. A monstrous one, but it'll never happen again. No reason at all to write an article and blow it up into a fannish myth." I was beginning to wonder, though.

Later that day we were driving down an old logging road in Lake Superior Provincial Park, heading toward Gargantua Bay. The road was one lane, dirt, and often badly eroded. One stretch was narrowed to a few feet by a deep trench for a distance of several hundred feet. Another stretch was buried in sand. Another deeply rutted and boulder strewn. At several points signs warned to proceed at their own risk. According to the map the road wasn't passable all the way to the bay. We drove it all anyway. (That adventurous soul, again, or a disinclination to walk the last mile or two.) The impending failure of the suspension of Victoria's car was worth it. Gargantua Bay was a sweep of stony beach, headlands lichened over with Autumn, enamel blue water, and sapphire sky. Where the car track ended a creek joined the bay with picturesque pine skeletons angling crazily over it. On our side of the creek canoe-ists had built a cairn of rocks piled one on top of the other to mark the landing. Over more of these fist-sized to head-sized wave-rounded rocks we made our ankle-twisting way a hundred yards or so to where the beach reverted to sand. Between waves and the line of flotsam was virgin beach, untrammelled for days, perhaps for weeks. Gargantua Bay was ours and hadn't been anyone else's in all that time.

What would be a more unlikely place to find a quarter? But I did.

There was no evading it now. "You're obliged to write that article. Fate or Destiny has levied it as the price of your knack."

The next day were were a hundred miles north, on the Coldwell Peninsula. The peninsula is renowned for many reasons, not the least of which was inspiring many paintings by Canada's Group of Seven. We were more interested in the abandoned concentration camp, however, where German officers had been kept during the war. The camp was completely overgrown, thirty-four years later, and all that was left was rotting wood, tarpaper, twisted ruins of rusty iron where machinery had been removed, and barbed wire tangled through the creepers. Picking up a rust-eaten can I challenged the powers that be.

"If you want your due, you're going to have to prove we have a bargain. Deliver the goods."

"What's that?" asked PoonBob.

Fate and I were negotiating.

"Supposing I find an old German pfennig here I'll believe I have an unusual talent."

Bob, speaking for fate, replied, "Then you'll write the article?"

"Then I'll write the article."

The coinage minted by the Third Reich is classically designed, with the Nazi eagle and swastika stamped in steel and brass. The steel ones from the war tend to corrode, or at least turn a leaden gray, but the brass 5 and 10 pfennig pieces from the 30s are as bright as the day they were struck. I have 11 altogether, totalling 73 pfennig. The question is, did I find them in the Neys Park concentration camp, or didn't I. That's for Fate and I to know, and you to find out. But I wrote the article.

when the music died

NORM HOLLYN

It was 1975 when we realized that the Sixties had gone -- all five of us who hadn't already realized it after Chicago in '68, Charlie Manson and Altamont in '69, and Richard Nixon in '68, '69, '70 etc. etc. etc. The exact moment that we realized it is as fixed in my head as if a sculptor had chipped it in. Five of us, driving in my old Chevy, down a wide Long Island Expressway, higher than all of the Dallas Cowboys cranked up before a Super Bowl, and we couldn't find a tape that fit.

Automobile sound hadn't yet reached the frenzied peak of misguided professionalism that it has today and so instead of a three-band equalizer and a Dolby stereo cassette deck, we had a Craig barely-functional 8-track tape machine which I had kept constantly supplied, during those years, with tapes made at the college radio station (their equipment, their records, my tape -- let's be fair here.) The sound would hardly have been adequate for Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik" but we were hardly listening to that then. The sound was plenty adequate for Crosby, Stills and Nash, the Beatles, Cat Stevens, The Doors, Cream and the myriad other grounds whose tapes rested on my floor boards and under the back seat. But not one of them, not even the quintessential car driving tape -- Santana's Abraxas -- fit the mood.

Ralph had been selecting the tapes for our rides for as long as the group had been in existence. He was the perfect auto DJ, slamming tape after tape into the jaws of the Craig, shouting out rapid words of encouragement between each one.

"GOD, here's agreatone!! You're just gonnalovethis!! It is absolutely fuckinperfect!!"

And "Black Magic Woman" would come out of the two tinny speakers which were propped up in shoe boxes in the back of the car. Years later I tried to duplicate the sheer energy, the total magic, of riding down the Long Island Expressway, floating on top of the car high on grass, "Black Magic Woman" blasting away, and the gas pedal pressed maniacally down to the floorboards. It is an experience which I had many times in college, but which seems lost to me now, perhaps justly so.

Which brings me back, though somewhat circuitously, to that fall afternoon in 1975 -- the theoretical crest of the wave, the barbed wire fenced boundary of the territory of the Sixties -- when no one, not even Ralph, could find a tape that made sense anymore.

We were returning from...who knows where. Month after dulling month of trips to and from this movie theater, that shopping mall, one restaurant, or another bar, blur certain details of that final ride, though the sculpture itself remains intact. Ralph was, as usual, the highest of all; he'd been smoking since

early morning. In fact, he'd been smoking since an early morning in 1965, stopping briefly--only when passing a policeman. But, high as he was, he was sweating pools of sweat onto the car floor.

"Ah ha. Here's one for you guys," he was screaming. "This is fuckinbeautiful." SLAM! A bar or two of "Volunteers" came out of the speakers.

"Up against the wall motherfuckers, tear down the walls..."

"Shit Ralph, give us a break," Arnie complained. "Jefferson Airplane!"

Ralph swore and stopped Gracie Slick in mid-squeal. We spent the next few miles crawling around under the dashboard, searching for another tape. But it was a thankless task. Like the edge of a dream not quite remembered upon waking, the proper mood music seemed to escape from us as quickly as we reached out for it.

"GREAT! GREAT! Hereitis. No fuckinaround now!"

SLAM!

Fuckin' Neil Young goin' to Ohio! "Dammit Ralph! Why don't you put on America if you're gonna try and bore us?" Arnie was pissed. He'd had a bad day, spending two hours searching for a pair of jeans that didn't cost \$25.

Jesus Cripes Suzetta! It comes back to me now. Where we were returning from that day. How fitting! The Smithaven Shopping Mall -- three huge corridors of Americana: Sears, Radio Shack, Woolworths, a Pathmark, the works. And acres of parking. It was Saturday, with walking a sheer physical impossibility amidst the crowds and the Greater (hah!) Suffolk County Art Exhibit, and twenty minute waits for every pinball machine in the place.

The Smithaven Mall is the Northern Long Island Mecca for the religion of the sale. Men and women who spend two hours commuting from their homes to work every morning, and another two hours returning in the evening, think nothing at all of waiting on one hour lines for Sears Panty-Hose sales. By the time I graduated and got out of the Smithtown/Brookhaven area I had learned that facial expression very well. Eyes loosely set in their sockets, jaw slack, eyebrows trailing down at the edges. The words "burned out" took on a visual reality there, though these Long Island Republicans had found a legal sort of drug to burn out on -- boredom.

But we seem to have strayed dangerously far from exit 50 on Interstate 495 and Neil Young here. That scene of Suffolk County bliss was what we were fleeing from (with quite a bit more finality than we realized) as we watched Ralph vainly try to find an eight-track tape with some degree of appropriateness to our situation.

We drove for a few more exits in a silence broken only by sounds of Ralph moving shoeboxes about on the floor. After another few minutes he too sat back in an uncharacteristic quiet.

No one could say out loud what everyone knew -- forget the music, forget the rides, forget that experience. The Sixties were gone, and the whole sense of

middle class Kerouacness which we, and all of our college generation, had allowed ourselves to believe in, was gone. For years there had seemed to be no limit

to the number of rides which one could take, powered on grass and music, in tune with the surroundings. Nothing could touch us, for those rides were adaptable. When McGovern captured the Democratic nomination we felt the occasion with wine and Ike and Tina Turner in the middle of the summer night and the Grand Central Parkway. And it was perfect and fitting. When four students were shot dead at Kent State University, we went driving through the Port Jefferson

side roads, playing some dirge-like Cat Stevens tune. And that too was perfect and fitting.

Seemingly, there was no saturation point. We could go on, absorbing wine, marijuana, music, the news and the gas fumes forever. For any occasion or for no occasion, we were ready to Do It. And hell be damned if we didn't always know what "It" was. There was always the Mothers or Firesign Theater for that. And if all else failed there was always the sheer rush of energy of a long open six lane highway at midnight, and enough Santana to last us the 100 miles from Queens to Stony Brook and back again. Whacked out to a pedal-pushing frenzy, there is nothing to beat a solid Latin rhythm section for keeping in time with turning wheels and scenery that whizzes by too fast to focus on.

The closest I ever came again to matching this perfect collusion of elements came on my first day in Los Angeles, when I stuck my hand out of my car window as I sailed down the Santa Monica Freeway at 70 mph, and banged away on the car hood to the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations". But that was years later and it was, quite obviously, a different world by then.

The attitude of being in tune with the world around you -- location, people and happenings -- rather than being in tune with yourself seems to me to be a peculiarly Sixties notion. A world in which "Good Day Sunshine" and a half-tank of regular Esso provided happiness is not a world in which Werner Erhard would find crowds of disciples waiting for his teachings. The right ingredients always seems to be there; there was no search involved. Until that day.

And that is, I suppose, as good a definition of the point where the Sixties ended, as any. That decade ended for Ralph, for Arnie, for myself, and for a lot of other people, when we all had to hunt for the right music to drive to. And there was no one taking any bets as to whether we'd ever find the right eight-track, either.

After a half-hour of silent driving Ralph turned on the radio. Joe Franklin's nostalgia show was on and Joe was interviewing some aged movie star who had just written an already-forgotten autobiography. Over Joe's whining voice we began to talk again, making plans for Sunday. We'd see a movie, or maybe go to a Yankee game if we could get up in time. No one had much enthusiasm. But it was a beginning. And we were, finally, realists enough to know we had to go on.

::STAN BURNS REVIEWS:: ANOTHER FINE MYTH by Robert Asprin. Dell 1979 \$1.95
Skeve was a Sorcerer's apprentice, after being caught in the act of thievery by the Sorcerer Garkin and being pressed into his service. That service lasts until Garkin is assassinated during a spell, which frees the demon Aahz -- with only Skeve available for him to vent his wrath upon. Maybe. For Aahz isn't quite your ordinary run-of-the-mill demon, and this comic novel isn't quite to be taken seriously. I haven't read such an utterly delightful first novel since THE WARLOCK IN SPITE OF HIMSELF. Asprin achieves just the right mix of humor and adventure to keep the story flowing smoothly. Rating: Very Good. Or, as the demon Aahz says, eyes gazing heavenward, "Everybody's a critic!"

THE DOPPLEGANGER GAMBIT by Lee Killough
Del Rey 1979 \$1.95

Good police procedural set in an energy-poor future. In many ways similar to (though not as good as) THE DEMOLISHED MAN. A perfect murder has been committed -- a starship broker has o.d.'d on a drug, and everything points to suicide. But lion Janna Brill and her new partner Mama Maxwell suspect the broker's partner of murder, although in an age where computers keep track of everyone's comings and goings he has the perfect alibi. The background creation is impressive, and the two main characters seem almost to have stepped out of a nonsexist Police Story. Like THE NAKED SKY, Killough sets up an alien society and then plays fair with the reader in letting the cops figure out who did it. Rating: Good.

THE RESURRECTIONIST by Gary K. Wolf
Doubleday 1979 \$7.95

In the future, a network of matter transmitters has been set up to transport people around the world. This network, called the Bridge, works by wire. Why wire? Why not direct transmission? Otherwise there would be no plotline. A famous Russian ballerina is 'lost' in the wires -- in other words, she doesn't come out -- and the monopolistic Bridge Authority calls in its top troubleshooter. Saul Lukas is an ex-cop, and ex-husband of the pirhana-like chief of the Bridge network, must get the ballerina out. Only it appears she has been deliberately murdered -- and his wifey-poo is involved. This boring, sloppy, poorly-thought-out novel is so full of cliches it would be laughed off the shelf of any self-respecting mystery bookstore. The lead character is even more of a cliché than Broderick Crawford on Highway Patrol, and the novel is about as exciting as a bowl full of moldy jello. Rating: Yuck City.

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