

Yes, by gosh, we're back again for another inertia-packed issue of *Slow Djinn*, this time for the 84th mailing of Fannish Ritle Amateur Press, October 1993. A drink is at hand [iced Celestial Seasonings' Morning Thunder tea, heavy on the caffeine for morning zombies], the world is so uncharacteristically quiet that a pin dropped on the other side of town would probably make me get up and look out the window, and the smoking lamp is lit. Guess I'm all set. This is Diabologic Pub #2.

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It was a sad day when the aliens landed and we all learned that Bobcat Goldwaithe had been their advance scout.

No, wait a minute, wrong story line.

So, how's everyone been? Survive the summer, did you? Anyone here get either washed away or baked on the hoof? Are we sure the Apocalypse is not at hand? Why does Thanksgiving always fall on a holiday?

This month, right here in River City [or Queen City, or Porkopolous, or any of the other cute names by which this place is known], there will be Octocon and there will be a special visit from Brits Paul and Cas Skelton. No special fund this time; they're coming over on their own £, will attend Octocon, and will bum around with us local fannish colonists [i.e.: fans who use colons in their writing and/or fans who write from the colon]. I know I look forward to it all.

Mailing Comments on mailing #83

Arthur Hlavaty *Let's Give A Hand To Love & Derogatory Reference*

Marge Schott's trouble began locally; Jesse Hymietown Jackson came in as a 'national' icon to support the local effort to oust her. That much is factual, so on that basis it does make sense that "the baseball powers-that-be" were "using the racism as an excuse" to dump her. And, after succeeding, look how marvelously well the Reds have done... Maybe what's missing isn't so much Marge as it is the visiting teams no longer having to run dogshit.

Speaking of Jesse do you find it as ludicrous as I do that an anti-Semitic prick like Jackson, who got maybe 15 minutes of press for his "Hymietown" remark, should continue to be running loose around the country going on and on and on and on about racism? Let alone that he should show up to drivel on about what supposedly occurred in a phone call by Marge Schott in 1988? I think the main reason he showed up here was to receive his check for the appearance, but obviously without checking too closely as to where the money came from.

You know, even after Gary's explanation I still couldn't visualize the Zen Breast business. Jackie, after reading your original description, showed me how it would obviously work. What my mind was locked-in on [...] was a visualization that the signs were originally one above another rather than side-to-side. That someone would split "frozen" into a left-hand sign reading "fro" and a separate right-hand sign reading "zen" didn't occur to me as a creative possibility.

Speaking of frozen, you note that the guy with his ladder on the frozen cow pie "should have sued the cow". No, the cow should have sued the farmer for *defacement de feces*, a little-known legal term which, loosely translated, means "stay out of my shit".

"But typewriters can still do a few things better than computers, such as postcards and envelopes." Depends on your program and your printer. I don't type envelopes anymore. Even including setup times, which you have to if you're going to make a real-time comparison, Jackie's computer is slightly faster even on a single envelope [one assumes the computer and printer are already turned on; otherwise you wouldn't have just printed a letter you need an envelope for], and definitely more accurate because you're proofing the address only when you first put it into computer file and not every time you - perhaps creatively - type it onto an envelope. I get even further ahead because of my particular "system" for regular correspondence. I have file folders for each correspondent. Into them go "enclosures" for the next time I write. Since I already have the folders, I developed a tendency to run more than just one envelope at a time so long as I've got the printer on an envelope setup anyway, and toss the extras in the folders. This makes the computer even more efficient for doing envelopes.

My son sent me a letter on which the Post Office fastened one of those little colored stickers. I think they bundle their letters according to some scheme and code them with a sticker on the top letter. Unfortunately the sticker covered city, state, and zip, and it took a month for the letter to get here. I've seen some letters come in here with more than one sticker, so I told Brian to put my name and address on the envelope half a dozen or so times just in case they miss a couple.

The mentos seem to mount up as we get older, Arthur. I'm sure by now you've browsed back through this issue of DR and discovered that you have Robert Sheckley writing something called "Mind Trap". The Theory of Searches was in *Mindswap*. Hey, I understand...

Bob Tucker *i couldn't square tuit*

Now that you mention it, most outgoing telephone messages do indeed have unnecessary wordage. Ours has been: "984-1447. No one is available right now. If you'll leave your name and number, we'll get back to you." The phone number is something I'll talk about a little later. That no one is available is unnecessary to state. That we'll get back to whoever leaves a message isn't necessarily true, but at one point the message said that we'd "probably" get back and Jackie thought that a little too wiseass so the word was dropped. Well, hell, thanks for your thoughts on this, Bob. Let's clean this message up, and "maximize" it as they say in the business planning rooms.

"984-1447. If you wish a callback, please leave your name and number and a message." Let's analyze this. A number instead of a name is overall of no difference to someone who wants to call here, more informational to the wrong number dialer, and not at all informational to someone we don't want

calling. Next, we're not saying we'll call back. We're saying if the caller wants us to call back then leave a message. Two points of difference there: we might not call back, and the caller might just want to chat at the moment and won't feel obliged to leave a message. "Please": a nod to courtesy; serves no other purpose. Name: some people automatically think you'll recognize their voice, so they don't tell you who they are; some of them are right... Number: someone who wants you to call them should have the courtesy to not send you to your address book or to the phone book; strangers will have this courtesy, but your friends often won't. "Message" instead of "brief message". Many feel uncomfortable at the sudden request to be brief. Hell, let them ramble on if they want. We've got a half-hour message tape and even the most verbose and unorganized "message" probably hasn't run longer than two minutes. Notice no mention of "the beep". Telling someone to wait for the beep these days is like telling someone not to blow their nose until the handkerchief is in place.

Our phone number ends with a 7 and the number of the local shrink's office ends with a 1. So far I have resisted pulling a shtick like you do when you get a call for the local restaurant, but I don't know as I can hold off much longer. Low will power, you know. "I'm sorry, the doctor is giving electro-shock therapy right now. I can have him call you as soon as he's done zapping Mr. Brown." "The doctor won't be able to see you for a few months, Mrs. Smith, due to heavy bookings. He told me if you called to suggest you try immersing yourself in a tub of warm jello." "The doctor is on vacation for a month, Mr. Green. There's no phone in his mountain cabin, but he did say that in an emergency he would see you. Do you have a pencil so you can take down the name of the mountain?"

HORT *If It Wasn't For Long John Silver...*

Issue number 43, I believe...

Hell, they didn't have any art classes in my high school. They added one the year after I graduated. Probably just as well. If they'd had one, I'd have elected to take it. I'm an inveterate doodler of abstract ... designs ... and if I'd actually taken an art course I might have thought I could actually draw and sent off even more stuff to fanzines than I did. Would have been even more embarrassing than present reality allows.

In Albuquerque they teach the kids "how to put on condoms and collect welfare"? I didn't know it was necessary to wear a condom to apply for welfare. Damn, they're really cracking down on requirements and qualifications, aren't they? "All right, Mr. Smith, let's see your condom. No sir, that won't serve. A condom won't do any good if you keep it in your pocket, now, will it? Put it on, Mr. Smith. Attaboy. Hmm, you might have to go to the end of that short line over there. Margaret! Did you borrow my ruler?"

Do I correctly suspect that you think there's something wrong with the grammar in *Have You Never Been Mellow?* "Ever" doesn't quite serve the purpose sometimes. "Have you never had ice cream?" and "Have you ever had ice cream?" have different, er, flavors depending on whether you know, don't know, or suspect that the person you're addressing has never had ice cream. Think about it. And "never" fits best for the text in the song.

You don't pay taxes on your cigs? Get them at a military base or an Indian reservation?

Yeah, same here. I can sit over morning coffee and cigarettes and mentally review all the various things that need doing. That done, however, it becomes apparent that just thinking about work serves to tire me out, so I make another pot of coffee.

Good line about Bob Dylan. Some of his stuff was all right if others did it. Which is about the way I felt toward the Beatles, who did a lot of numbers that made good instrumentals if others played the music. I remember one time telling Jerry Kaufman that it was too bad Bruce Springsteen couldn't sing, and he asked what made me think that. I told him

I knew this because I could sing better than that, and I couldn't sing, either.

The Taos hum theory that it's "caused by traffic". Wait now, let's investigate this with idiotic care. First there was traffic, and there was no hum. Now there is still traffic, but there is a hum. If the hum is caused by traffic, either the traffic or the road has changed. Are all the vehicles driving faster and/or are there more of them? Has the road changed? Did they repave it with harmonicas?

Sure, maybe it's time that Chelsea Clinton got her first fanzine. Go ahead and send her one, Roy, and let's see what happens.

"Religious communism?" indeed. Disturbing stuff. Especially when you consider that if Clinton had really wanted to do something moral he wouldn't have adulterated his stance on gays in the military even though it would have been shot down. We went through all this same military bullshit with blacks and with women, and now here we go again letting their ignorance retard enlightenment one more time. I notice that last year's Soldier Of The Year came out of the closet right after receiving the award. Good for him. Too bad he had only a spineless campaign promise to back him up.

Yeah, it's usually called Greek Chili and, in this country, it spread from Chicago. Made a big hit here in Cinsanity, where it's called Cincinnati Chili and never Greek Chili. Spaghetti and chili, and usually grated cheese and onions and beans or some combination. I didn't like it the first couple of times back when I came out here. To me chili was Texas chili, and that was the end of it. One day I was rushed for lunch, ordered it because it's a quick dish to prepare, and got to thinking of it as spaghetti and meat sauce with a chili kick to it. Of a sudden, it clicked with me. Now I eat it fairly often. My favorite place is Gold Star, because it gives you a bottle of Red Hot to further spice it up. The other big chain, Skyline, gives you either Tabasco or their own sauce, neither of which I particularly care for.

Dean Grennell *Harper's Bizarre*

Well, if you had wanted to see Tucker bad enough in mid-1985 you could have come over to visit us, just like you did that evening in 1975. Of course, the "us" has changed and the visit would be some 1700 miles farther afield for you but, well, time changes things. '75 was a good time. Bob and everyone else going to Aussiecon made a long LA stopover, had a pre-Aussiecon flight party, then went to Australia for the worldcon, then came back to LA for the tail-end of NASFIC. Somewhere in there he came out one evening to the house in Duarte and partied with a shitload of Petard members [that may be the wrong collective, but...]. If I remember correctly, that was the time there was one of those mysterious simultaneous lulls in all the ongoing conversations except for the confidential one which Tina Hensel Jones was having as she disclosed that "I haven't been laid in a month!"

I remember your stories about the visiting fans and the gin bottle, and the call that came in the middle of the night, but it was amusing to encounter them again. Remember mine about the fan I'd never heard of who was dropped at my Duarte door by someone who barely slowed down to push him out of the car? I opened the door to find him with a suitcase by each leg. The guy wanted transportation to LASFS meetings and chauffeur service to various upcoming local fan and skiffy events, plus apparently a bed & breakfast arrangement. Said he was a Canadian fan, but I can't remember the name and don't believe I've heard it before or since. Said he knew me, which I doubted. I told him I didn't speak the language.

Actually, being a lot less nice back then [also about 1975] than I am now [hard to believe, but not impossible; though granted it's a stretch to conceive of it], what I told him was simply "No." I did, however, follow that up with an offer to let him use the phone for local calls in an effort to drum up other arrangements, which it took him a while and several abrupt

disconnects to do. I remember talking with Mike Glicksohn about this, but from my physical description he couldn't imagine who the guy might be.

Eric Lindsay *Missed Mailings for FLAP*

"Can't understand this 'snow is our friend' attitude"? May be coming to the USA in early December? Well, around here there's seldom any snow in December, but it's still cold. Most anywhere north of here and you run into that s*n*o*w stuff, you know. Got any particular plans for the proposed visit?

Liked your comment to Gary on his idea of having a parrot deliver his eulogy [wouldn't be as boring as most ministers]. His idea that the parrot deliver Porky Pig's standard farewell was great, but I've been considering other notions. "We are gathered to pay our last respects ... SQUAAAAWK! ... Mr. Jones was a faithful man, changing the paper and the water every day ... SQUAAAAWK! ... Fresh sandpaper perches the first of every month ... SQUAAAAWK! ... It's true he once took care of his mother's cat for a weekend, but it really wasn't his fault ... SQUAAAAWK!"

When I sew a button back onto a shirt you can be assured that it will remain there until the end of time. I don't so much sew them on as tack them on. A few loops, tie it off, a few more, tie it off again, and repeat, and repeat, and repeat. Break a thread on a normally sewn button and sooner or later it all unravels. Break one on mine, just pull it out and keep going. I mean, you could then lasso a large calf and bring it to a dead halt by fastening the other end of the rope to the button.

Saw on tv that there's a new product getting more widespread. When your car is stolen, it automatically notifies the police, and then ten minutes later it gradually slows down to a crawl and stops while continuing to send a location signal. Sure beats those stupid Yuppie car alarms which serve mainly to piss off anyone within earshot of the incessant noise. I think most people cheer if a thief breaks in anyway and then drives it out of earshot.

Jodie Offutt *Whistle Post #50*

Your 10th anniversary *Whistle Post*. Congratulations on your stamina. Doesn't seem like ten years, somehow. I keep thinking of you as one of the newer members...

Ah, yes, Porter Wagoner. I have an ancient album he did with Skeeter Davis that I'm especially fond of. Porter always liked doing duets, but with Skeeter it clicked more than with any of the others. I know if I were going to Nashville, which is highly unlikely, I doubt I could get from one side to the other without stopping in at the Grand Ole Opry. I'm not a fan of any particular type of music, but I like enough country that I'd make it a point to stop in.

Well, there's a couple of things about your group choosing a Buffett number to record. You don't have to worry about knowing the words or the way they're supposed to be sung. Especially *Margaritaville*.

You never reread books, except this time with *Rising Sun*? Do you keep books? If so, why?

Yup, John Huston directed *The Bible*. Maltin gave it a terrible review, but I've never seen it. Jackie is another who likes those old bible movies, and if one is playing I immediately get occupied with something elsewhere.

Lynn Hickman *FLIP-FLAP #28*

Well, you're a super salesman, Lynn. As a bunch of us were sitting around at Midwestcon doing nothing more strenuous than moving our lips and our elbows, some were wondering who that fine-looking woman was at the other end of the pool area. Leave it to you to go fetch her for introductions all around. I was the one who wound up doing all the talking with her. Larry Tucker wanted to, but his

tongue had swelled up and he couldn't get any of the words out. After she left he looked like he was in a daze. I waved my hand in front of his face and he turned fire-engine red.

Your memory is fairly good. Yes, I did send you a letter or two back in the early 60s when I was a teenager living in Indian Lake, New York. The corro was about a Bill Scott cover for a genzine I was doing called *Phoenix*. The cover eventually saw print in 1972 on my genzine for that decade, *Awry*. I don't have anything pre-'68, but figured I'd have whatever corro was created in the early 70s. Nothing in the file. Back then I probably had a separate file for matters dealing strictly with the zine. But, yes, we did write each other some 30 years ago. As for the cover, it turned out that I was possibly the only one in the universe who liked it.

"I enjoy the changing seasons." Sorry, but I have always believed that if you notice the weather, there's something wrong with it.

Was never all that much of a beer drinker. Disliked most American beers except for Anchor Steam's Lager and Porter, but now with the mini and micro breweries and the brew pubs there are a lot of good domestic beers. Besides Anchor, the only beers I really liked for the taste were Dos Equis and an occasional Guinness, though I found just about any Mexican beer to be quite decent [don't know why; sure couldn't have been the water].

Yes, pigs make good pets. You can make an excellent pet out of a descented skunk. They act like a cross between a dog and a cat, they're clean, don't eat much, are affectionate, and the mere sight of them can cause a would-be burglar to soil his shorts.

David Hulan *Fenris #69*

An Oz Story Apa. Just couldn't stay away from being an OE, right? You do Apanage for all those years and after retiring from that you get a case of the fidgets.

Couldn't get into McCrumb's *Bimbos Of The Death Sun*, but that didn't have anything to do with the type of fans she was depicting. Glicksohn raved about it to me, which is the reason I tried it way back when, but I found it uninteresting to my taste and couldn't get beyond my usual 50 page trial. I later forgave him when he turned Al and me on to Carl Hiaasen with a gift copy of the paperback *Skin Tight*. Still later he gave me a hardcover of that novel.

I've got the last two in Shaw's *Wooden Spaceships* trilogy, but am not sure about the first. Might be around here somewhere. The series does sound interesting, which is obviously why I bought them in the first place. Will mentally move them higher in the to be read stacks...

Carolyn Doyle *Personal Slant #19*

A 1-1/2 hour float in the water wearing a life jacket and bobbing around as an underground river carries you through a cave. One of the best parts of your Mexican trip, you say. "...had a blast". I think you're a couple of sissies for using the life jackets.

Danny MacCallum *The Clan O'tas 60 fools*

Don't let them lie to you, Dan. Yes, it's true that it rains in NYok state, but not always enough to make all those strange green things grow. Sometimes somebody actually does have to go out and water what they can of it. Often this is done by an organization called the Forestry Service, which even uses airplanes for the chore, though buckets are used quite frequently.

Dick Lynch *Turning European*

What, two trips to Europe and suddenly you don't even take ice in your cola anymore? Why, that's unAmerican. I find it hard to drink almost anything cold unless it's first poured over 3/4ths of a glass of ice. Never was fond of

soda from cans or bottles; couldn't pound icecubes down those little holes.

As physicist Dave Langford once pointed out, despite the presence of black holes in skiffy for the last umpteen years they're just theory. Sometimes the newest evidence helps support the theory, and sometimes it hurts it. We are a long, long way from proving or disproving the theory, but that's scant reason to look at it as anything other than theory. Patience, Dick, patience...

The Tommyknockers was padded a bit more than most King novels, except maybe *Misery* which was a novelette with a pituitary problem, but it was still a good novel. Now that he's a Big Name, though, it doesn't appear there can ever be "a strong-willed editor who'll sit on him." He's gone the other way. Where an editor had cut *The Stand*, he reinstated the cut material after his name got big enough.

Nicki Lynch *Crazy 8's #2*

Crazy 8s. One of my two favorite card games, just below Hearts. Don't believe I've played the game since leaving Califfunny, though.

"This is intended for the th mailing of FLAP." The what mailing? You got your own numbering system here?

Mimosa got its third Hugo nomination? Congratulations. You've won one, right? Need another so you'll have bookends.

I'm missing something here. "We bid for, and won, next year's Corflu, but not without controversy. Several local [D.C.] fans, feeling our bid was a surprise to them, put out a zine at Corflu critical of us and their fantasy of the kind of Corflu we would do. They were surprised to discover we don't put up with that sort of shit and were prepared to pull our bid. Things were patched up after some discussion and the bid went ahead." Three things escape me. 1. What does it matter that your bid was a surprise to them? 2. Why would your bidding cause them to put out a zine against it? 3. How on Earth would pulling your bid have been called not putting up with that shit instead of just the opposite?

Haven't seen the movie, but just finished reading *Jurassic Park*. It was extremely difficult to put down because it's a gripping skiffy novel in the technothriller category. If the movie's "plot and characters were wooden and contrived", then they didn't do justice to Crichton's novel.

Lon Atkins *fan ordinaire #62*

It's bad that fiction can skew the reality of a person's existence, as opposed to attempting an honest interpretation.

I enjoy reading your book reviews. I'd enjoy them even more if I could use them as book reviews, but anyone whose reading speed is just slightly faster than the Second Coming of Christ needs to find time more than recommendations.

Richard Brandt *Deadwood Dick #5*

"What is the sound of one Zen Breast clapping?" Alice Morigi, who reads *Slow Djinn* from Syracuse, wrote: "Zen Breasts: The sound of one tassal twirling." Actually, the bit about Zen Breasts is that they meditate rather than lactate.

Thieves stole the knobs off your car's radio and abandoned one in the parking lot. Probably too much air drag. That, or the distance involved was an indication of the thief's intelligence based on how far he got before realizing the value of his booty.

Marty Helgesen *Split Infinitive Soup [83 FZ]*

"Some slogans are true, and the slogan, 'Not to decide is to decide,' is one of them." Sometimes yes, sometimes no... Depends on whether you have to go in one direction or another based on the issue. You might take an aphectic [attitude of suspending judgment] stance on an issue with or

without being confronted by a decision point. For example: The agnostic, in not adopting a religious lifestyle, can be said to have made a lifestyle decision without having made a philosophical one. The person who doesn't think there's a great case for or against the possibility of other intelligent life in the universe doesn't face a lifestyle decision and therefore holds no by-default position.

Well, if it was Quayle who first said "Everyone's entitled to their own opinions, but they're not entitled to their own facts", then hats off to him.

Jean Weber *Living In The Land Of Oz*

"A pox on 'fashion'!" Couldn't more wholeheartedly agree. Silly bunch of horseshit. But I like peeking in on the news once a year when they're doing a brief story about the new fashion lines, just so I can roll around on the floor and laugh until my gut hurts.

At least you have a good excuse for your ills ["...climbing ladders and painting ceilings has probably been the main cause of the back pain"]. A short while ago Bill Bowers broke a rib while doing nothing more strenuous than standing in front of the bathroom mirror ["what did you say to it?" I asked him]. Then Skel, the English leg of the WO4W I'm in, told us about being laid up for two weeks when he threw his back out while brushing his teeth. A very short while back I incurred one of those lovely lower back clenches - you know, the kind where it doesn't take you more than 10 seconds to get out of a chair but it takes your body about 30 to become fully upright - and I got this way while standing in the kitchen chopping up green onions for two salads I was building. Life is just a tire swing.

Congrats on the big five-zero. I make it there next time.

Roger Sims *Bheer Is Best #7*

Fer Chrissakes, Roger, make up your mind: do you live on a street or a square? Are you sure it's not a circle or a lane or an avenue or a road or a path? You should receive some kind of award for Address Change Of Least Import or something like that. Not that I ever mail you anything anyway. I just call you up and you come over. Might take you a month to get here, but whathell.

Stranger In A Strange Land seems rather tame in hindsight. I remember I didn't particularly care for it at the time, and probably still wouldn't, but your reaction seems strong: "...will not allow a copy of it to be in my house". Okay, I give up, *why* won't you? I don't want a copy in my home, either, but that's because it's rather crowded here and without it we could add another book. In fact, if we got rid of everything Heinlein wrote later in his career we might not have to go outside to break wind.

I remember a Westercon in Goleta, California about 2-1/2 decades back which was on a campus and each two dorm rooms shared a connecting bath. I didn't like that kind of an arrangement, either, as I recall, though surely I consider that it beats commuting 86 miles round-trip.

A novel wherein, over the course of three centuries, an Elizabethan nobleman turns into a modern woman who is age 36? Really came a long way, didn't she? Ah, nothing like a good mystery.

Enough, enough. Time to put this puppy to bed. Look forward to seeing some of you at Octocon, and then it's onwards to the December mailing.