

SPACE JUNK

This thrilling, spectaculariar issue of Space Junk, the fanzine with little taste and no standards except my own, is brought to you by Rich Coad of 781 Castro Street, San Francisco (Gods gift to Time essay writers) California (Gods gift to NBC reporters) 94114. Many thanks go to Denise and Gary Mattingly, whose Selectric was used on the stencils and whose typing fingers were mercilessly abused by the ed. on more than one article contained within. Space Junk is available at the editors whim or for trades, letters of comment and contributions. Lauren Bacall circa 1945 will also suffice. My phone number is 415- 647-2449.

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AUTISTIC (UH.. ARTISTIC) CREDITS: Front cover Rob Hansen

Back Cover: Bill Bryan

Interior Illaes: Simon Agree

Logo: Sarah Prince

Reincarnate Blues: Phil Paine

Cummin next ish: Nuthin' nada unless response justifies it. If you lot respond you'll get some goodies. Oh yeah this is also available for a Krugerand or equivilant. Oh yeah, thanks, many, to Allyn Cadogan whose mimeo is being used. 1-20-79

LITERATE AFTER A FASHION

Rick Coad

The Dangers of Drinking

Have you ever had a hangover? Have you ever wokened to find a cat persistently licking at your mustache - the mustache that is the starting point for one of the worst headaches ever known to man or, for that matter, woman - with the rest of your body enshrouded in sheets that definitely should have been laundered over a fortnight ago? You know the feeling. Your mouth has the taste of several dozen used and filthy ashtrays; covering your teeth is a particularly disgusting gummy white film reminiscent of the drippings from your last dose of crap; your legs, once strong and sturdy with thighs of oak and calves of steel, are reduced to a mass of jello-like quivers and shakes; your chest aches like nothing since the last time you ran a quarter mile in under a minute; of your stomach - well, there are things best left unsaid. And, arching over all of this, is the omnipresent scent of death. No longer the far distant specter, the dimly perceived finality, no metaphor with scythe and skull - this fucker's real Jack, and the gleam in his eye reflects wan, emaciated you?

So you want to shrivel up, hide that pain above your neck, bury it deep beneath those sweaty, ensenned sheets. But the cats are too insistent. Constantly they harass and cajole you, a lick here, a nibble there, a piteous meow, one false step and up you leap, groin clutched in agony, only to trip over the insensate body of Simon Agree, a well passed-out man.

Cursing alcohol, friends, cats, love and anything remotely cheerful, you stumble down the stairs to make coffee. Once made you stumble back up the stairs, kick insensate Simon awake, hand him his coffee, and in a pitch guaranteed to drive away Grim Reaper's, scream "I'm gonna do a fanzine!"

Later, much later, you feel like a right tit having let yourself in for all this work when all you really neede were some Alka Seltzers.

* * * * *

"How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! - ugh! ugh! ugh! - ugh! ugh! ugh! - ugh!
ugh! ugh! - ugh! ugh! ugh!"

My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes.

"It is nothing," he said at last.

* * * * *

That quote is the first of a series. The first five fans to correctly identify the sources of all the quotes in this zine won't win a damn thing but may feel insufferably proud.

page number one (if counting from the beginning of writing); page number two (if counting from table of contents); page number four (if counting from the cover); you're stupid (if counting from the backcover).

A Depressing Lack Of Ability

Incredible though it may seem two years or more have passed since the last appearance of Spicy Rat Tails. Amazing innit? Over two years of fannishness and non-fannishness, cons and parties, getting laid and being celibate, working and going to school, reading books and reading fanzines, all of that and I find I have fuck all to say. Oh, I could do the usual first issue shit - poetically even, as in Well howdy all my fellow fans/ The name is Rich - fame negligent/ I like to drink my beer from cans/ My money goes to pay the rent. Hold your breath for the second stanza: I'd like to say "enjoy this 'zine"/ And send me locs and art and stuff/ That's funny and won't contravene/ My standards which are plenty tough. Hm... not worse than Robert Frost, though he makes me vomit.

Still, I can't help but wonder what happened to the old spirit, the old pixans that makes one want to fight for fandom. Am I, at the age of twenty-two, a mere stippling to be sure, an old fan and tired? Do I care? Naah. Being the lazy sod I am I'll just turn this editorial over to that hyper and enthusiastic neo I met at Octocon. He really grooves (as the kids say today) on fandom and fans and is really into it. Here now is Jimmy and his real idiot.

("That negative enough for ya Bobbie?"

"Still not as negative as Simon. I really like Simon.")

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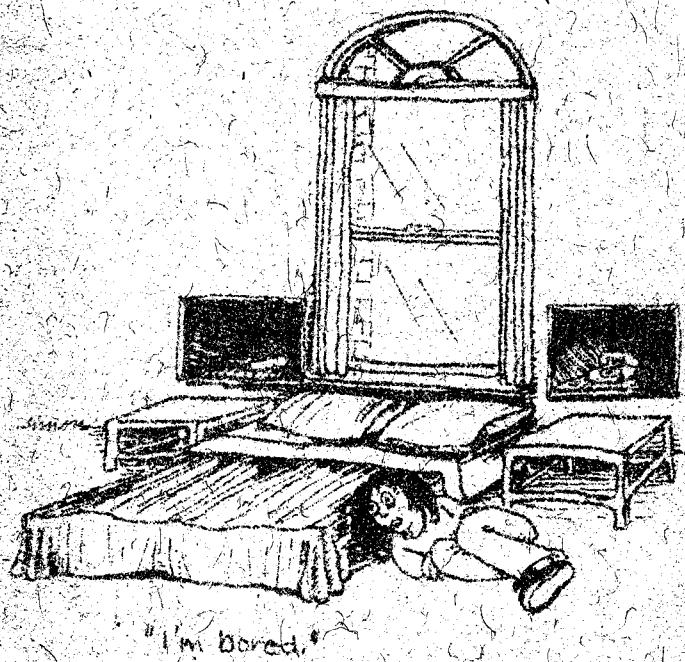
A girl's voice screamed, "Whaddya think I am, a hunk of carrot?"

* * * * *

Fandom and Me

My mother tells me I shouldn't read "that crazy Buck Rogers stuff" but I do anyway. I have for five years. For five years I have read only sci-fi. I like it. I especially like it when Johnny White, the young space ranger, blasts the evil Thargs. I would really like to be like Johnny. He gets to rocket all over the galaxy killing evil Thargs and the emperor gives him lots of money and rewards and stuff and the emperor's daughter wants to marry Johnny but he's too smart for that 'coz he knows that girls just want to have babies and tie a fellow down so he can't rocket around the galaxy blasting evil Thargs. That's what I want to be like. I even sent to Charles Atlas but my mother still makes me take out the garbage.

"Yes," said Ace grimly. "They're not very nice people, wherever or whatever they are!"



Jimmy Goes On and On

I have been to two sci-fi conventions that were here in town. Something made me mad at them. What made me mad was that I would go up to my best authors, like John Norman, and tell them how much I liked them and how I wanted to be like their heroes and then I would tell them about how I had this neat idea about how you could have the evil Thargs threatening to blow up the world and you figure out how the president's really a spy in disguise and the hero goes up and blasts them all and saves the world but they throw him in jail 'coz he killed the president and everybody else is too stupid to know that the president was really a spy in disguise but he doesn't get bitter and he convinces the people that they're wrong and he becomes a hero and they make him president and the authors would just say "excuse me" and walk away. How come sci-fi authors aren't so friendly?

But anyway at these conventions I heard about fandom and fanzines and stuff and I said "neat, I'm gonna do one." So I did. My sister says it's silly but what does she know? She's so dumb. She just hangs around with a bunch of other dumb girls who make me dress up in her clothes and put lipstick and stuff all over my face and laugh at me. I hate my sister.

This is the first fanzine I ever did. It's got a story by me in it and another one by my friend Eustace who isn't my friend anymore 'coz Sally Sapperstein kissed him and he's gotten all mushy over her but he gave me this story before. I like mine better.

I hope the people I send this to will send me more stories. I do this 'coz there aren't a whole lot of the type of stories I want to read around. Mostly everything is about love and mushy so I want real sci-fi stories.

I gotta go now.

Little Jimmy Fan 12-7-78

* * * * *

The weather in India is often sultry, and since the tale of bricks is always a fixed quantity, and the only liberty allowed is permission to work overtime and get no thanks, men occasionally break down and become as mixed as the metaphors in this sentence.

* * * * *

The Readers Task

Naturally, like all fanned caught between the desire for fame and the inability to write, I want lots of good material from you lot. Some has already been written and appears within. Much has been promised, but more is welcome. There is, however, the matter of tone. And, since I'm eclectic by nature, I find it easier to say what will not fit into Space Junk. I can live very well without fiction. Articles on feminism and sf are right out, unless, by some miracle, they have something original to say. "The Use of Prepositional Phrases in the Science Fiction Of Arthur C. Clarke" would lose points by me. I know far too many ex-speed freaks and ex-junkies for articles on drugs. Anything dealing with Los Angeles or Houston as cities of the future should be sent to the N.Y. Times but not to Space Junk. Feuds are for Geis. If you want to write about mankinds hopeful future don't do it here. No - I do want absurdist stuff, written quick and mean.

I never thought it would come to this baby!

THE HEAT DEATH OF IGUANACon

Cheryl Cline

1. It is 4:30 a.m. Because of that inexplicable but apparently irresistible urge that drives people to pile four (plus luggage) into a tiny car, travel 1200 miles from a nice foggy temperate climate through desert, or what might as well be, to a place just this side of purgatory where it is not only hundreds of degrees in the shade but where the humidity crawls down the walls and falls on you, to fight off hordes of diminutive Frankenfurters, trekkies and Ellison groupies, not to mention dealing with elevators and sandstorms that never materialize, all to have perhaps two or three good conversations with people who have gone through as much as you have to get there, I am sitting on a hotel balcony talking to Jerry Kaufman.

We have an extremely intelligent discussion about Harlan Ellison and his GoH speech. Jerry remarks on the patterns of lighted windows in the adjacent building and we attempt (unsuccessfully) to see the street over the high wall of the balcony.

Far away and in another hotel the last fanatical punk rock fans gathered in Phoenix are in my room, playing tiny tapes, discussing the philosophical position of the Dead Boys and sticking safety pins through their name badges.

Jerry and I relax into patio chairs which stick to us and regard each other through the thick Phoenix air.

"Jerry," I say, "I'm tired of punk rock."

2. In San Francisco, before Iguanacon, before Phoenix and the heat-death of the Worldcon, Rich Coad mentioned that there were actually quite a few punk rock fans. In those innocent days I knew of four: Lynn, myself, Rich, and Simon, a rosy-cheeked misanthrope from Cotati. At the Westercon that year I met Clocker Newsome, who not only liked Joanna Russ but Patti Smith. This person had driven 100 miles in the snow to see the Sex Pistols (this was Oklahoma). Huzza, thought I. Where are the rest of us? A: They were waiting at I-guanacon.

The first day I was there I saw in the atrium of the Hyatt a person looking much like someone off the cover of a Kraftwerk album (short-cropped dark hair, red shirt, black tie, black pants). This turned out to be Rick Wallace, ex-member of the Thalidomide Babies and Elvis Costello fan par excellence. At the Banquet we somehow got to talking to a woman who loved the Cramps, even had a picture of them in her wallet... I met an Australian fan who lived in Berkeley, a French fan who lived in San Francisco and a French fan who lived in France, and they all liked punk rock.

These chance meetings gave Lynn an idea. A punk rock party. Rich Coad egged him on. It wasn't his room.

Death to numerical fascists! Freedom now
for fanzine pages. Destroy all page
numbers! Right on!

3. Jerry Kaufman and I are starting to fall asleep. We stare at each other for appreciable intervals of time, waiting for thoughts to form. Thirty feet away a couple are making love in wild abandon; hands under clothing and Heavy Breathing. Jerry and I walk over to the pool where he introduces me to a naked man.

INSERT #1: Entropy

The entropy of a system is a measure of its disorder. The total entropy of the Worldcon is increasing towards a maximum, corresponding to the complete disorder of the particles in it (assuming that it may be regarded as an isolated system). See The Heat Death of Iguanacon.

4. Lynn decides that we should make a proper punk sign telling people where the party will be. "You do it," I say. Lynn spends half an hour in the atrium of the Hyatt mutilating convention flyers to produce a true punk sign made of cut-out letters. A real work of Art. Rich Coad watches over Lynn's shoulder like his bad angel. "Done!" Lynn announces and proceeds to place it lovingly on the bulletin board. We all watch. "Now," Lynn instructs us, "if you see any punky-looking people be sure to tell them about the party."

Later that evening I again find myself with Rich, wandering around in the atrium of the Hyatt. Suddenly I spy a punk, a real one: spiked blonde hair, black leather pesty complexion, hard cruel eyes. I don't think he was wearing a dog collar but he had a real Clash button. He looked real mean and unfriendly. Not someone you'd like to meet on any type of street at all.

"Hey, Rich," I said, elbowing him. "There's one. Let's ask him."

"You ask him," Rich replied.

"No, you ask him," said I.

"Hey, punk!" Rich called.

"Not like THAT," I moaned, looking fearfully at The Punk.

5. Jerry and I walk along the balcony, looking for another party. We come to a brilliantly lit, immaculately neat and completely deserted room, that has book displays propped up against the walls and book jackets scattered tastefully on the coffee tables. "I have to use the bathroom," Jerry announces and disappears around a corner. I stand in the middle of a brilliantly lit, immaculately neat and completely deserted room waiting for someone to come in and demand "What are you doing here?" so I can reply, "I'm waiting for Jerry Kaufman to come out of the bathroom."

INSERT #2: Chaos

In Roscoe's Worldcon order is least probable, chaos most probable.

"Duck be damned, it's bigger than a swan - and it's featherless!"



THIS IS
THE THIRD BORING
FAN PARTY I'VE BEEN
TO... IF SOMEONE
DOESN'T TRASH THE
FURNITURE, I'M
GOING BACK TO
CRUISING!

6. The punk rock party starts off nicely, but certainly nothing like the Mabuhay on a Saturday night. Lynn puts Ian Dury on the tape deck and I reflect that I am very tired of Ian Dury. Teri Lee, devout hater of punk rock and one of my roommates for the con, leaves. Denys Howard, devout hater of punk rock, arrives, probably to fix in his mind the difference between Lynn Kuehl and Simon Agree. (The word is out: there is no such person as Lynn Kuehl. He is a hoax perpetrated by Simon Agree, himself a hoax. Persons observing Simon Agree and Phil Paine together for any length of time have noticed suspicious similarities. But the real person to consult as to all of this is Rich Coad, to whom the whole story was told by Larry Rehse. Unfortunately, Larry has moved to New Orleans and is unavailable for comment.)

The usual party goings-on went on. Then they went on and on. The San Francisco contingent left, leaving Phil Paine asleep on my bed. The diehard punks continued at full speed while semi-diehard punks left and returned. The beer was gone and the

chili had boiled over in the bathroom. I went to sit by the pool. Sometime very early, in the morning Jerry Kaufman comes by.

INSERT #3: The Heat Death of Iguanacon

It has been held that the Worldcon constitutes a thermodynamically closed system, and if this were true it would mean that a time must finally come when the Worldcon unwinds itself, no energy being available for use. This state is referred to as "the heat death of the Worldcon."

7. Jerry and I stand irresolutely near a doorway. "Where do you want to go now?" one of us says to the other one. "I don't know, where do you want to go?" "I don't know, I'm just following you." "Should we leave?" "Do you want to leave?" "Do you?" "Let's leave." "Okay, I'm just following you." "Where should we go next?" "Huh?" "What?" "Huh?" "I said..." "Oh, I'll just follow you."

One of us moved, the other followed, and we eventually made our way back to the pool near my room, where we collapsed (into patio chairs) under the weight of the humidity that had been lurching namelessly behind us all the way back from the Adams. (We could hear it howling in frustration as we entered the Hyatt, blubbering and throwing itself at the windows, crawling up after us as we ascended in the outside elevator.)

I fell into a fit of giggles. Jerry said he'd cover up for me by making witty comments. Just then Rick Wallace came by and I learned a valuable lesson in

con party tactics. Rick asked if the party was still going, and I said yes. "No no," said Jerry after Rick had gone. "you'll never get any sleep that way." He then told me the Susan Wood Method of Getting a Party Out of Your Room. Whenever anyone asks if the party is still going, you reply, "Oh, no, they all left hours ago," thus getting rid of people by attrition. This is a secret, now, you mustn't tell anybody.

8. It is now 5:30 a.m. Jerry weakens under the weight of the humidity, which has him by the shoulders and is trying to crush him to the ground. Also, his eyes keep closing involuntarily and he has this foolish sleepy expression on his face. Recognizing these symptoms in myself also, I decide I am going to my room, party or no party. We hug goodnight, and Jerry goes to wait for an elevator. I go to my room and apply the Cheryl Cline Method of Getting a Party Out of Your Room. "Out! Out!" I cry, brandishing a pillow. I drag Phil off my bed, and he staggers out mumbling something about the Baycon party. The few straggling punks left vanish into the night.

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An Editorial Coup:

PRACTICE SPEECH # 1

by line: Bill Powers Breiding

It is not enough to see a frog leaping, in this life one must leap the frog. In order to bring change about, one must take the leap, otherwise we are paying nothing but leap service.

Bill Breiding's Quakecon Guest of Honor Speech

Ahem. Ahem! Cough. My fellow fans.

cough cough Ahem. My fellow fans, we are gathered in this great hall (shuffle shuffle). Ahem. In this great hall to pay homage to Fandom. Fandom has been here a long time. It will doubtless continue to be here. A long time.

Ahem.

In many ways, fandom is like a great ship, ploughing through the seas of history. At its helm is the BNF. In its boiler room are the hordes of little fans - and I say "little not out of any sense of disrespect, but out of true admiration - ahem, little fans, by whose labor we come to be here in this great hall. As the ship of fandom sails along, it sometimes encounters rough waters. The rough waters of criticism. Criticism and discontent.

Ahem.

Well, I say, let those who would find fault with fandom criticize it. And let those who would be little people, be little. Et, belittle. And let those who would be NFs, BNFs.

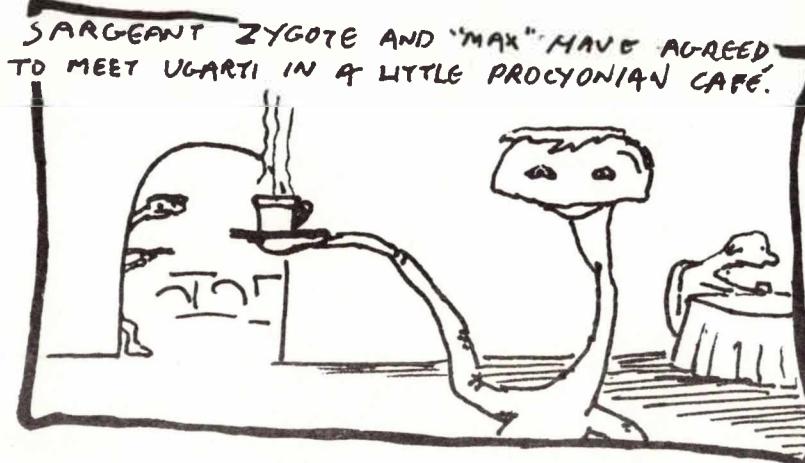
I thank you.

Recorded and transcribed by Phil Paine
at memorable Quakecon 1.

REINCARNATE BLUES



"MAX" IS
NOT IMPRESSED.
"IF THE OPAL
IS IN THERE,
WE'LL GET
IT!" HE
SAYS.
BUT SERGEANT
ZYGOTE IS
NOT SO SURG.
HE SITS ON
HIS GLASS
SHOE AND
COGITADES



UGARTI BELONGS
TO A PECULIAR SECT.
HG WARNS THEM...



...THAT THE CITY
OF HAR-B'KAELE IS
WELL DEFENDED.



"MAX" LEAVES
THE CAFE'
WITH HIS
EMBRYONIC
COMPANION
TUCKED IN HIS
POCKET.

From his forthcoming novel:

There she was. Her majestic figure was silhouetted in the morning sun. I reached out from my hiding place in the marsh grass and touched her lovely hoof. My moose love, my moose love. Then she kicked me in the head.

Gary S. Mattingly

CAN MOOSE BE RELATED TO THE NUMBER 23?

Rich just read the second draft of this and said it's okay but they won't know why you're writing it. Why don't you mention that you tout Moose to the highest degree, although, admittedly you don't bet on them? You could mention that you have a shrine in your living room dedicated to Moose gods, you publish a fanzine with Moose covers, when Moose is spoken of among your friends they think of you, of your friends barraging you with questions and comments on Moose when you silently think that since Moose are objects of reverence their name should not be used to such a great extent, that it should only be spoken of in reverence and in closets, and that you've just printed the word Moose seven times in this paragraph alone. All right, do you people understand, people that know me know that I just have this this thing for Moose. I don't really mention it that much. It just exists. It is the being, not necessarily the becoming that is important, or is it actually both? I do not know. I do know that I should get back to the beginning of the second draft.

Long tendered, ill met. I've said this many times, I like Moose. I think it all started with Bullwinkle, but it could have been earlier. Rocky was and must remain secondary to that greater shining, that greater and more illuminating Bullwinkle. I can reveal at last that, yes, he is a sufi sage. Would a Sufi sage say so, surely not. Would Jon Singer? Whether he publicized the Moose before I did or not is a moot point. Also it is not a necessary one for whoever the instigator may be, Moose is here to stay. It is even on the big screen. I rejoiced at the excellent choreography of the Moose scenes in The Holy Grail. (I've probably got this all wrong. My mind wanders so much through the swamp grass these days.)

But what of Myron Moose, brought to you through the pages of comic books? We bring it to the masses, everyone, whether they be high or just Cracked. Moose history abounds, yea verily grows in its profundity. No parameters can be set for this revolution.

And I don't care how good Singer's gourmet food articles are.

Then I consider Moose brand SMOF repellent. Is he talking about me? I know, I know these grandiose dreams will net me no reward. Brain worm combined with the time of rut can be particularly disturbing.

Did you know that there are only approximately 12,000 Moose in the 48 states next to me and 120,000 in Alaska? Most Moose in the 48 seem to gather in the Northeast tip, upper Michigan and Minnesota, and (if I'm reading this map right) the upper half of the Rocky Mountain states. Isle Royale in Michigan has many

Moose. I am saving that pilgrimage for a more propitious time.

For the most part Moose are an admirable creature. They are gentle usually, not too aggressive against other animals, vegetarians, etc. Did you know that Gandhi was a Moose in a former life? Are Moose related to 33rd degree Masons? Moose are sweet but mighty. Their antlers are tremendous, their eyes pools of love, and their gentle lowing in the night. . . . (Lowing?)

I'm trying to figure out how Rich expects me to write a whole page and more. I know that many pages have been written on wild fennel and pickles. Oh, by the way did you ever see the Burger King green pseudo-Nerf frisbee or the Burger King pickle flute? Some friends of mine even had this green liquid, not the original liquid, in a Moose Milk container. Are these two things related? Do we see a synchronistic connecting point?

My main point is, though, I like Moose. I have two acrylic paint-by-number Bullwinkle paintings, two Moose puppets, a Moose transistor radio, a Moose bubble bath bottle, a Moose Ring Toss Game, a Bullwinkle Supermarket Game, a Bullwinkle coloring book, a Bullwinkle t-shirt, Moose in pewter and plastic, Moose artwork and photographs, Moose comics, both Myron and Bullwinkle, Moose placards, and maybe one day I'll be crazy enough to join the Order of Moose.

Yes, Moose even play a major role in religion. Are Roscoe and The Moose on equal levels? Herbie would not dare bop a Moose. Well, then again, . . . Moose are very close to being Saints. The Catholic Church has not publicly sainted any Moose, however our lobbyists are working their antlers off to prove in the church's eyes that the Miracles really did occur. Miracles, you ask. Yes, Miracles have been recorded in the annals of Moose history. There, of course, is the Fountain of the Virgin Moose, where countless millions bathe in and drink the water. There was the Moose that was used to save millions in Britain where its erections were sure signs of incoming V-2s. Who could forget the classics, Magister Moosi, Finnigan's Moose, I Have No Moose and I Must Boost My Ego, et al. A classic I cannot let go unmentioned is that super song "Moose Turd Pie." And who could forget Smoky Robinson?

Fire would do this article wonders, but that's in your hands not mine. I think we can throw in a Moose picture above or below and try to satisfy the ratfan with just two pages. The muse grows weary and my lust for those hairy nether regions must be reduced in costume, if not in truth. Denise, don't run away, Denise, please, Denise, the Moose costume, please. . . .

* * * * *

As I approached the Queen's hut, one of her soldiers stood up from a squatting position beside the doorway. He said, "Cookamonga?"

I said, "I'd like to speak to the Queen for a few minutes."

"Cookamonga?"

"I must see her for a few minutes."

"COOKAMONGA?"

* * * * *

Another, different page

LYNN KUEHL: THE CHILDREN'S CORONER

HOW THIS ARTICLE CAME ABOUT

One day, Rich Coad came to Cheryl and me begging for articles for his new fanzine. Well, actually he asked Cheryl for an article and I had this idea.

"Hey Rich," I said, "how about an article about punk rock! You know, like a guide to it like the Neofan's Guide to Fandom. We could call it the Neopunk's Guide to Punk Rock. How 'bout that, huh?"

"Sure," he responded tonelessly.

So I went to Cheryl. "Hey Cheryl, wanna help me do an article about punk rock for Rich's fanzine?"

"No, not really," replied my short wife.

"Huh? Why not?"

"Because I'm tired of punk rock."

Thunk.

Hmmm. To tell the truth so am I.

Well, not really tired of punk rock, just tired of talking about it. I talk about it a lot with people to whom I have to explain that punks aren't any more gross or nasty than anybody else who appreciates rock music. I'm constantly enthusing about my favorite group of the week to friends who display horrid fascination, till I'm just about worn out on the subject. Goddamn, I like punk rock; everybody else can go fuck off!

That's why when Rich called the other day, I told him I couldn't do the punk rock article. "How about a review of the Mark Alan Stamaty books instead?"

"Hey great," enthused the worthy Ratfan. "I wasn't going to print any book reviews but I'll use these in my fanzine. They're the only reviews I'll ever print!"

Fair enough, I thought. So, if you want to find out about punk rock, you'll just have to learn about it somewhere else. If you'd like to find out about the strangest children's books of all time, read on. This is an introduction to the crazy world of MARK ALAN STAMATY!

THE CRAZY WORLD OF MARK ALAN STAMATY
by Lynn Kuehl

Mark Alan Stamaty made his first impression on me in my high school journalism class late one morning, one period to go before lunch. The mood of that period was usually a mixture of midday exhaustion and anticipation. Half the kids in class were catching up on their sleep, heads cradled in their arms bent over their desks. Others were loitering by the door, talking and looking out for an opportunity to sneak out of class.

Our teacher, Mr. Schwerin was talking with a small circle of my classmates in the front of class who were gathered around a think yellow book.

"One of the kidth brought it in thith morning," he lisped, "weirdithed book I've ever theen." Then he rushed out of class. Mr. Schwerin was always rushing around between our class and the printing class trying to get the school paper out on time.

This I had to see. I crowded with a few others around the "weirdethed book" Mr. Schwerin had ever seen.

It was a childrens' book in the flat-wide format filled with intricate black, white, and yellow illustrations. The book was called Yellow Yellow. My God, it was weird!

On the cover, a little boy in a "Visit Miami" T-shirt was balancing on an upside-down delicatessen sign . . . no, the world was upside-down. A very odd couple were observing the boy from their upside-down vantage point. The man had dozens of ties on, not to mention two hands coming out of each of his sleeves. A large frog perched on his cap. The woman with him was carrying a shopping bag full of steel pipe. On top of a can labeled "World of Peas" in a nearby upside-down garbage can, a very small horse was rearing back while the equally small cowboy on its back grinned and waved his hat.

Turning the cover upside-down, the picture looked a little bit more reasonable, except for the items noted, and that the little boy was no hanging by the soles of his sneakers from the delicatessen sign. There was no sane way to look at the front cover.

The back cover was equally crazy. Two rows of people were walking along a street in opposite directions, which sounds mundane enough but for the fact that the people walking to the right were walking on top of the heads of the people walking to the left. One lady was carrying a grocery bag with her head poking out of it while groceries stuck up out of the top of her coat. A businessman-type was intently peering at his watch, only his face was on his wrist while his watch was on his face. A three-eyed cheerleader was balancing a tiny acrobat on her nose; her hair was like a wave, with a fish leaping out of it and a surfer riding his board down from the crest. A football player was cradling a baby under his arm like a football. A woman was walking her pet turtle. Several other very strange characters were doing similarly bizarre things.

The cover was just a sampling of what was inside. The book was filled with complex little pictures, charming caricatures, and absolutely lunatic visions. On one page, a burly football player with an adoring young woman on each arm had

Sherman tanks for feet. On the same page, a man or something, with a basketball for a head (held up by a hand coming out where a neck should be) had a martini on his basketball, I mean head. He shuffled along on little cars for feet, a baseball mit on one hand, his neck-tie trailing between his legs.

"Oh wow, look at that!", "Jesus Christ, look at what they're doing.", "Shit, this is weird!" . . . we said as we huddled over that strange little book.

If the illustrations were a psychedelic story-book nightmare, the story was no big deal. Just the usual mild, rather typical childrens' book fare. Told in the first person, a little boy finds a yellow hat on a construction site. He walks around town with his treasure on his head, oblivious to the insanity all around him. He has fun with his hat, pretending and doing the usual kid things with it. Eventually, the boy meets the original owner of the hat and relinquishes it. He goes home and draws a picture of "his" yellow hat. Then he draws some yellow straw, some yellow lemons, yellow corn, yellow dandelions, yellow suns, and some yellow yellow. Having colored the whole paper yellow, he folds it into a hat and puts it on his head.

I don't know how I lost track of Yellow Yellow. I guess I didn't think to write down the name of the book. But besides saving me from total boredom that day in journalism class, I gradually became obsessed with the urge to find that strange little book.

My weird obsession later drove me to haunt the childrens' room at the library, no doubt arousing the suspicions of the childrens' librarian. I found myself chasing leads for it during junior college. My drama teacher mentioned a strange childrens' book one day in passing called Sunnyside Up. She said that it was very weird. In it, a young boy hatches a chicken and raises it, has adventures with it, and eventually turns into a chicken himself. Could this be my man, I asked myself.

I ordered a copy of Sunnyside Up from the local bookstore. Much to my disappointment, it wasn't at all what I was after. It was a pale shadow to my Yellow Yellow.

Much later, after I married Cheryl and she was working for Walden's Books, she told me about this incredible book she'd discovered in the childrens' section of the store. It had something to do with donuts, she said. Anyway, the illustrator had filled a whole page with tiny little donuts. She couldn't believe anyone would draw that many little donuts. The whole book was really very strange, she said. I really ought to see this book, she told me.

Sure, sure, I said. We're always recommending books to each other, though we often never get the chance to read them. But browsing around Walden's later on, I stumbled onto "Who Needs Donuts?" Hey, this must be the book Cheryl told me about, I thought. Yes, it was very strange. Growing excitement. It sure looked like the same sort of illustrations I'd grown to need.

Leafing to the back, I found that Mark Alan Stamaty had indeed illustrated Yellow Yellow as well as two other books.

"Cheryl," I cried, "this is it, this is it. Mark Alan Stamaty, look, look!" Alarmed and amused, Cheryl patted me on the arm and told me that it was fine, just

fine and that I shouldn't excite myself too much.

Needless to say, we immediately ordered all the rest of his books as well as buying that one on the spot.

Mark Alan Stamaty has done five books. Besides Yellow Yellow and Who Needs Donuts?, there's also Small in the Saddle, Minnie Maloney and Macaroni, and Where's My Hippopotamus? Of all of them, the best has got to be Who Needs Donuts?, an odd little story about a boy who goes off to the big city in search of donuts. He meets a Mr. Bikferd who apparently does nothing else but collect donuts. The page full of donuts is the inside of Mr. Bikferd's warehouse where he has huge piles of donuts. The rest of the story is equally strange and silly but it's the illustrations that make the book. Who Needs Donuts? is consummate Mark Alan Stamaty. The illustrations are finer, more concise, complex little lunacies. Every page is full of fascinating minutiae.

Yellow Yellow and Small in the Saddle tie for second. Yellow Yellow is not as polished as the other two books. Small in the Saddle, while not quite as complex as Who Needs Donuts? is just as lunatic, concerning a small boy's quest to clean up a western town that's being "terrorized" by Dirty Deke and his gang. Terrorized means that Deke and his boys will tickle unmercifully, with the feathers they keep in their holsters, anybody who challenges their authority. Fortunately, our small hero isn't ticklish.

It's impossible to describe the complexity of Stamaty's work. So instead of another description, I'll include an illustration. This is a representative page from the classic Who Needs Donuts?. Our small hero is looking forlornly for donuts in the big city. As it says below the picture, "He didn't find any..." and goes on to say on the next page "... until he met a man with a big wagon full of donuts."

The other two books, Minnie Maloney and Macaroni and Where's My Hippopotamus? are primarily for completists. They're not as complex as the others, having to depend primarily on the story lines, which while silly and amusing, just don't measure up to the quality of the illustrations.

I understand that Mark Alan Stamaty is now working on a new book and that it should be out any time soon. I can hardly wait.

Mark Alan Stamaty books, listed in chronological order.

1. Yellow Yellow, story by Frank Asch, McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1971. \$4.95.
2. Who Needs Donuts?, The Dial Press, 1973. \$4.58.¹
3. Small in the Saddle, Windmill Books, Inc. and E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1975. \$5.95.
4. Minnie Maloney & Macaroni, The Dial Press, 1976. \$4.95
5. Where's My Hippopotamus?, The Dial Press, 1977. \$5.95.

1: Who Needs Donuts? has also been reprinted in a less expensive paperback format by Dial as "A Pied Piper Book" for \$1.75. Buy this one and you won't be sorry.



He didn't find any

