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*You have now crossed the border and are in alien land. This is VIEW FROM UNDER A 60 WATT LAMP #4, for FLAP mailing #16 dated June 1982. The bizarre and frequently whipped ruler of this land beyond the border is Dave Locke, whose castle can be found at 2109 Harrison Avenue #9, Cincinnati, Ohio 45214. Those seeking directions across the moat should tap 513/661-4047. The mimeography for this issue is provided courtesy of the Jackie Causgrove Publishing Empire and Gardening Service, Ink.*  
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Just for the record, in a burst of enthusiasm the mailing comment section was wrapped up on 4/18/82. 4/18/82? Who cares, you say? Well, listen here, I care. I know you're reading this in the future, but to me 4/18/82 is today. Today is always important. It's where you always are.

As it happens, today is a Sunday. In my today, it's in Cincinnati. Blue skies, temperature in the sixties, and a sun that can burn you even though the air is cool. A quite nice day, even if I did lose to Steve at tennis this morning. Given this evidence, we can now deduce that I have been drinking beer and sitting around moaning and groaning at the aches and pains. Both of these things follow naturally after I trundle around a tennis court trying to whap hell out of a little green, fuzzy ball.

It's hard to fathom how I could have lost to Steve this morning. After all, old age and treachery will overcome youth and skill. Somehow he had adopted the philosophy that if you always return the ball, you'll never lose. Beyond that he cheated by stealing someone else's first serve. And he even stole a decent second serve from somewhere.

Does everyone know Cyril Kornbluth's "The Silly Season"? While it's hard for most anyone to believe that we could incur a Silly Season in a year such as 1982, where the joys of Mudville are few and far between, nonetheless I think I've spotted the start of it. Then again, it may only be happening to me. Would it be possible, Arthur, that the Silly Season is a conspiracy against me? Well, let me lay it out for everyone to see, and maybe we can figure something out.

As a recruiter I spend most of my day on the telephone. While on the one hand I'm not fond of the telephone, strange things do fall out of it. More often than not, lately.

I called one fair-sized business which is family owned and operated. The fellow at the other end of the line explained to me that they had so many brothers and sisters and in-laws and aunts and uncles, together with a whole new crop of nephews and nieces to find spots for, that their company motto was "nepotism begins at home."

Some people get a little hyper when they call in to inquire about employment. Sometimes they don't even give their name before they're off and running with a prepared monolog. In one fellow's case, I got neither his name nor a chance to say hello before he launched the tale of how he got fired from his last job for screwing one of his assistants. Then he paused, breathlessly, and I asked who was calling. He told me he just wanted to get in the bad stuff right up front.

Saw resumes from both the fellow who got the patent on the Rely tampon and the guy who marketed it. Also saw a resume from someone who listed his hobbies as "sharing the gospel of Jesus and square dance caller." Talked to a woman named Craig, a guy named Burt Lancaster, and Cincinnati Mayor Dave Mann's campaign manager who had pocketed his \$15,000 and needed a new job (his employer had won). Looked out on the street from the glass wall in the office, and watched two men and one woman trying to punch each other out. The fight carried from a parking lot to the sidewalk to, at one point, the middle of the northbound lanes on Vine Street. It was the worst fight I ever saw. Finally the woman and one of the men walked off down the street, the woman shaking her fist and probably saying something unkind at the fellow who walked the other way and turned in at the first bar.

The other day I turned the corner to head for the bus home, and on the sidewalk in front of me was a woman's black, curly wig. I walked around it, as did everyone over the age of about 15. A bit earlier, on a morning walk to the office, I encountered a rat as big as a rabbit. I didn't move at all on that one, but was ready to. It ran around in circles on the sidewalk about 30 feet in front of me, then headed off to part the crowds down a side street.

In checking the references of a credit coordinator, a black woman, I called a former employer down in Georgia. The woman I spoke with couldn't say enough good about her. She piled rave upon rave. The final touch came with the statement that "sometimes, when you were talking with her, it was hard to tell that she wasn't white."

Even coming home from work, it's Silly Season time. I usually commute to work by bus. Queen City Metro. Frequently I have to walk the bus in to work, as there usually isn't a seat by the time it gets here in the morning. It's the trip back at night that proves more interesting, particularly if it's a later bus in the evening. I've seen some strange sights. The bus passes through Wino Row. I saw one fellow stagger on, park his ass with a sideswiping motion, and knock the woman next to him clear off her seat. We also pass through Acid City, but frequently spend a lot of time there because of people who can't seem to locate the door to the bus. Wildest thing I've seen so far was a woman who got on with a package in each hand. Obviously coming home from a shopping expedition. Couldn't use her hands to grab onto the handholds and work her way to a seat at the rear of the bus. As the bus took off, she kept gaining momentum as she came down the aisle. She was trotting as she passed my seat. She must have been running about 25 mph by the time she hit the back of the bus, but didn't let go of the packages until impact.

Definitely it's the Silly Season, even if I'm the only one on the tour bus. Look in the paper, and you'll see it's all over the place. John Malloy, the fruitcake who writes the syndicated "Dress For Success" column, went off the deep end a few weeks back. John recommended that a young fellow go out and buy himself a good-quality false mustache, so he'd look older when he took a job interview.

The Silly Season.

It's here.

A typical religion begins by using a mythology to express a deeper metaphysical and ethical truth, and ends by worshipping the mythology at the expense of the truth.
***** Sydney J. Harris *****

LEGISLATION TO BE ENACTED TO PREVENT PEOPLE FROM BORING OTHERS

1. Television advertisers disallowed from having more than one advertising spot per evening. (This would prevent your suffering the same commercial seven times in a row, or having the same pitchman approach the sale from ten different angles.) (Daytime television watchers have no critical faculties, are difficult to bore, and probably wouldn't notice anyway.)
2. Dust-jacket blurbs and raves are to be illegal if they do not conform to Truth In Advertising or by exaggeration create heightened and undue expectations. (Raves from Harlan Ellison are banned altogether due to general lack of critical faculties and emotional control.)
3. Fanzines containing convention reports or fanzine reviews must be pre-screened by a panel of five insomniacs. Publication will be allowed if 80% can complete reading this material without nodding off.
4. "Press Releases" from political, Hollywood, and business sources will now be titled "Bullshit Alerts".
5. For the entertainment of shoppers waiting in a long checkout line, wide-screen overhead television will show action in the store's employee lounge.
6. Politicians will campaign by parading naked on national television. Each candidate can speak for two minutes. If they can play an instrument, that's fine.

Honesty is the best policy, but insanity makes a better defense.
***** Dietrich, on "Barney Miller" *****

I send my apazines to a few demented people outside the apa. Denny Lien is one of them. Denny also writes me letters with mailing comments on some of that material. Here is some of what he has to say.

It is possible but unlikely that I was drinking beer in Minneapolis at the moment you typed your colophon -- 11 a.m. 20 October 81. I have no way to be sure, but I rarely drink before noon or so, and I am rarely home on Tuesdays. It is more likely that on 11 a.m. on a Tuesday this fall I was at work keeping an office hour and hoping no one would come in. I see according to my records that I was at that time

reading DELUSION'S MASTER by Tanity Lee, that I didn't buy any books all day, that my only mail was junk mail, that I wrote two checks that day -- one for a pair of shoes, and one to the post office to mail out SPINOFF two weeks late, and that I probably did not turn on the tv, since none of the few shows I watch (M*A*S*H, ALL-STAR WRESTLING, and THE BUGS BUNNY-ROAD RUNNER HOUR) are on Tuesdays. Of course saying in your colophon that "Denny Lien is probably at this very hour buying a pair of shoes and not watching ALL-STAR WRESTLING" does not have the same zing to it.

At the moment, however, it is 2:30 pm 24 Dec 81, and I am drinking beer (Lone Star) in Minneapolis, listening to STEELEYE SPAN, "Hark the Village Wake," waiting for a meat pot pie to come out of the oven (~~it's/it/shouldn't/be/that/it/will/be/finished~~), hoping the cat does not wake up and start to bother me, and wearing a green jumpsuit from K-Mart (how often do you find yourself wanting to jump something green?) with a clashing red sweater over it to keep myself slightly warm without bankrupting us with the fuel bill. End of environment report; I am sure we all have more sympathy now for James Watt's attempt to eliminate the environment.

"They became a little dubious about the accuracy of such electronic equipment when independent tests of selected units resulted in trees being clocked at up to 20 miles per hour." I assume you mean to suggest that the radar detection system in question may have been inaccurate. It is, of course, equally possible that trees do travel at up to 20 miles per hour but have hypnotized humans into believing that they stand still [Editorial interruption: now we'll have to kill him]. (By analogy with Occam's Razor, and with Von Danniken's Meat Cleaver -- when several possible explanations apply, choose the most complicated. I hereby dub this theory as an example of Nagurski's Flying Wedge: when several possible explanations apply, choose the one that tears up the landscape the most.) Besides, it is well known that some trees do move and even migrate: haven't you ever heard of The Trail of the Lonesome Pine? Or people who make a living by trapping for firs?

I can see a 1-to-10 rating system for books averaging a 7.7 if one reads only in a genre one enjoys. I might give even a dreadful sf book at least a 5 or at worst a 4 if I am considering it as being rated, not against all the other sf available, but against all the other fiction of whatever sort available. Even GOR or the like has the advantage of diddling one's sense of wonder a little bit (among other things, possibly) which something otherwise less objectionable from, say, Norman Mailer or Harold Robbins does not. Boring as LOCUS can be, it's by definition more interesting than US NEWS AND WORLD REPORT. And so on.

"Of course Moby Dick isn't a social disease." I think you're confusing it with that noted complaint of male celibates, "Unmobb'd Dick, the Great Sperm Wail."

Given my choice of disposal of my body after death, I would prefer to be eaten by something which would enjoy me. (Sounds pretty good before death, too -)

We will now leave Denny back in December of 1981. We'll go on to something else, and when we get back to Denny he will be back in April of 1982. And I will be in May. And you will be in June. That's the way it works in the fanpubbing biz.

Certainly it constitutes bad news if the people who agree with you are buggier than batshit.
***** Phil Dick, from VALIS *****

In the wintertime in Indian Lake, New York, everyone had their own bar to go to. With only about 200 people in the whole area when tourist season was not upon us,

there were enough bars around so that seemingly every drinking group of people could claim one as their own. I was a teenager back then, and our drinkers went to Eddie Wheeler's over in Blue Mountain Lake. Blue was twelve miles away from Indian Lake, but that twelve mile stretch of highway belonged to us. We ruled it at speeds of up to one hundred miles an hour, in cars like my '57 Ford Fairlane 500 with the '58 Thunderbird engine. A blacktop ribbon through a stretch of the northwoods in the Adirondack Park. We didn't mind the drive. Besides, Eddie Wheeler was the only bar owner who would put up with all of us.

Eddie put up with us because probably we were the only ones who would put up with him. Eddie was not an easy bartender to get along with.

Wheeler's was a two-room bar. Bar and tables in one room, tables and jukebox and a small dance area in the other. And a lot of teenagers and early-twenties' crowd. In New York State you were legally entitled to drink at 18, but Eddie made it a practice never to ask for a driver's license -- the only ID you could get -- until he knew you'd just obtained it. Then he'd congratulate you and ask how the test went.

We soaked up a lot of beer in Wheeler's. Eddie did, too. While we were either trying to pick one another up, or just talking about it, Eddie was either pouring beer in a glass or pouring it down his throat. Some nights we had to lock up for him, and frequently we had to elect someone to handle the bartending.

The almost nightly event at Wheeler's was watching Eddie after he'd gotten tanked enough to do something about his escalating dislike for the music on the jukebox. Sooner or later he'd throw down the bar rag in disgust, come out from behind the bar, and stumble past the tables and any dancers on his way to the jukebox. Once he got there he'd begin kicking the hell out of it, all the while muttering "that goddamn thing." We always pulled him away before he hurt himself, but Wheeler's had the worst looking jukebox in the county.

When Eddie passed on, the church directly next door pulled a few political strings and prevented any prospective new owners from reopening the place as a bar. We didn't mind. It might not work out with someone other than Eddie, anyway. The older among us drank in smaller groups at the other bars, or moved out of town after graduation. The young ones coming up to drinking age encountered the idea of drinking in automobiles. Those younger still would come up and hit the drinking age with no remembrance of the time when the young crowd had their own place.

Probably there was no place any of us could ever go where we would see the bartender get slapped up and kick hell out of the jukebox.

Certainly I haven't heard of it happening so far.

One thing that did last, did endure through wintertime in the northwoods, was the lack of anything to do. At least, many viewed it that way. In the "Forever Wild" of the Adirondack Park there was no industry except tourism. There still isn't. There may never be. This leaves many people with time on their hands. Most of the others go to Florida for the winter.

Naturally, most people with time on their hands will drink more and screw around more. There was a lot of drinking and screwing around in Indian Lake. Probably in Florida, too, for all I knew. And all I knew was that there were a lot of bars in Indian Lake and they all made money.

In the wintertime in Indian Lake, New York, everyone had their own bar to go to.

Description of a typical party: "The talk became looser; crowded together the guests dropped confidences with increasing frankness. Gradually the men became more lecherous, the women more amorous, unburdening themselves to one another with hurt I-want-to-be-loved smiles."

Brian Garfield, DEATH WISH ***

Back to Denny Lien. He is now in early April.

Rock-bottom genre of fanwriting to me is comments on How I Run My Mimeo Good or the like. Convention reports (and their usually-even-more-boring accompaniment, Trip Reports) rate pretty low down my list too, however. Obviously I don't tend to dislike mailing comments, since I'm sitting here writing mailing comments to you on your mailing comments for an apa in which I'm not even.

I wonder how Marty replied to your comments re Catholic doctrine shifting over the years vs. God's being unpermitting of them teaching error. (But I really don't want to know...) One possibility, of course, is that the doctrine switches as reality switches. See the old story of the drunk who mutters that everybody is crazy because he's been asking people all night what time it is and he keeps getting different answers. Maybe God changes the nature of reality every once in a while when She gets bored.

I used to have some quarrel with George Fergus over my being insulted by being labelled an atheist when I insisted on agnostic. It finally penetrated to me that what he was saying was that since I tended not to be a concerned searcher after Truth, but instead someone who simply ignored religion as much as religion would permit me to do, that I was for all practical purposes indistinguishable from an atheist except in the matter of self-definition. I suppose I agree, except that it hadn't occurred to me that anyone would think that "all practical purposes" were within an order of magnitude as important on a thing like that as self-definition was.

I wish I could recall my first contact with fandom well enough to know when my twenty year anniversary was. I know that this summer will mark the 20th anniversary of my discovery of CRY, which I think of as my discovery of Real True Trufandom, but I was hanging around the edges with such things as the Burroughs Bibliophiles for a year or so before that. I did happen to have a record of my first meeting with MinnSTF, and celebrated the umptieth anniversary of that a while back by bringing a keg of beer to a meeting. There was enough other beer already there so that most of it did not get drunk. A welcome change from my first meeting, at which the only alcohol present was a six-pack I'd brought while everybody else drank coke and looked very young and fresh-cheeked.

Love the idea of a book called THE HARDY BOYS MEET EACH OTHER. Sounds like a good retrospective "origin story" (in the Marvel Comics sense) for the series. Sort of like TOM SWIFT AND HIS ELECTRIC DIAPER PIN or VIRGINS OF GOR.

On the purpose of human life in your comment to Marty H., I like this Tom Digby quote from Minneapa 51: "The purpose of life is to perpetrate itself by any means available. Ethics is the science of finding acceptable definitions for words such as 'perpetrate,' 'itself,' and 'available.'"

Next to your note on "if the purpose of human life is to prepare ourselves for the life to come, then --" I have scribbled: "callisthenics vs. ballet? Buck Zumhofs"

vs. ?". What I meant by this is a mystery to me, except that Zunhofs is a local professional wrestler who often wrestles opening matches on cards, being good enough to warm up the crowds but lacking the broad appeal of a Baron Clawmaster Von Raschke or a Shiek Ayatollah Jerry Blackwell, who get the main events. Life as a warmup.

Someone who types postcards margin to margin to save postage is quite a pica.

Othello by mail? Okay, I'll enclose my first move with this letter:

Act I. Scene 1. Venice. A Street.

Enter Roderigo and Iago.

Rod: Never tell me; I take it much unkindly
That thou, Iago, who hast had my purse
As if the strings were thine, shouldst know of this---

Okay, your move. (Other strange play by mail games include Risk, Hopscotch, Mumbly-Peg, Strip Poker, and Catch.)

Perils of not taking my job professionally seriously enough: I hadn't read the ALA editorial re Reagan's answer as to five books that most influenced him as a young adult. I wonder what they were? (And I suddenly flah on the old gag about "Tragedy struck today when Spiro Agnew's ((or fill in the blank's)) library was hit by a fire. Reportedly both books were destroyed, one of which he had not yet even finished coloring.") This does get me to wonder about five books that most influenced me as a young punk. My first thoughts are THE MAD READER; MAD STRIKES BACK; THE GREEN HILLS OF EARTH; CATCH-22; and ON THE ROAD. The first two introduced me to parody, irreverance, and wordplay; the third was the first adult sf book I ever read; the fourth was the first thing I'd ever seen reviewed favorably in THE NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW and the like which I subsequently read and found not only Interesting and Admirable, but actually Fun and Funny; while the fifth convinced me that I was wasting my life by leading it sedately and sanely, a feeling that has never gone away.

I did use my French this past Feb. to buy a book in a French-language bookstore in Vancouver. I really did. I picked up the book, stood in front of the attendant, followed her to the counter, raised my eyebrow, took out my wallet, gave her a bill, took my change, accepted the book -- and said "Merci." Not well, mind you, but I did. Since that was the only word I had uttered since entering the shop, I consider that I conducted the transaction in fluent, if accented, French. Just call me World Traveller.

Alcohol. "This was a substance produced by a tiny creature called yeast. Yeast organisms ate sugar and excreted alcohol. They killed themselves by destroying their own environment with yeast shit."

***** Kurt Vonnegut, BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS *****

From the Washington Post comes a report that 34-year-old astrophysicist J. Richard Gott "has abandoned the standard 'big bang' theory of the creation of the universe. He is not alone, as many cosmologists are turning their doubts about the 'big bang' into competing new theories." Gott's theory is that "creation begins, not with the usual empty cosmos and a big bang, but with a cosmos filled with hot, dense, and apparently eternal matter. Within this white, energetic soup, bubbles form. They begin to expand as rapidly as the speed of light. Each bubble forms separately, like carbonation in a glass of soda water, and grows until it is the size of an

entire universe. There may be an infinite number of these bubble-universes in the cosmos, Gott says, including our own. He doesn't seem very perturbed by the next bit of information he imparts as he leans back in his chair. The many universes in the cosmos are, for technical reasons involving gravity and the curvature of space, doomed never to see or speak to one another. As one observer notes, Gott's conception sounds much like the line from a science fiction story by Arthur C. Clarke: 'Many and strange are the universes that drift like bubbles in the foam upon the River of Time.' Gott's version of what should replace the big bang is the big bubble, but there are other new versions of the creation."

There we go. It's a new game, and anyone can play. I never thought too much of the Big Bang theory anyway, except as a piece of speculative science fiction jumping from the thin base of astronomical fact. Now everyone can come up with a new theory for the origin of the universe. The position of Recognized Theory is up for grabs. We can hold a contest. J. Richard Gott, or perhaps Arthur C. Clarke, is already in with the Big Bubble.

A few other entrants are:

George Ptonomi, with the Big Goose, or Primal Finger Theory. George believes that our universe was not set in motion until it was goosed. George believes that the universe is a giant asshole. He does not call it the Giant Asshole Theory because he tried that once and they wouldn't publish his paper on the subject.

F. Ferguson Swilltilter, with the Spilled Beer Theory. Tilt thinks this universe is nothing more than a beer spill in somebody else's universe. Tilt believes many points about the concept of an expanding universe, and views with alarm the increasing popularity of lite beer.

Jacqueline Elaine Causgrove, with the Eternity Theory. Jackie claims that the universe has always been here. This is not a theory of the origin of the universe. It is included here because it appears to deal with a related subject.

Send your entry today to: Recognized Theory Of The Universe Contest, 2109 Harrison Avenue #9, Cincinnati, Ohio 45214. Enclose a cashier's check for \$50 per entry, to finance a lobbying effort on behalf of the winning entry (full page ads in ASIMOV'S SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE and Bill Danner's STEFantasy).

** * * * * Well, enough of this fooling around. Let's get down to the heavy shit. Whoops, lost the heavy shit. Let's get down to the mailing comments, then. * * * * **

PHOTOPAGE Let's try it. Everyone interested in participating in this should send me a smallish (or cropable) black & white or color photograph of themselves. Mug shots would be nice, but any kind of closeup shot would likely do. If I can get these by the 20th of July I can likely include the photopage in the August mailing. Advise if you want the photo returned.

DEAN GRENELL Is it true they required your thumbprint before cashing a check at Federated Stores? Or was that an embellishment? I used to get rather testy at one supermarket in LA which had a check-cashing policy different from the one they posted at each checkout stand.

Cribet.

JACKIE CAUSGROVE Apa-shortiand. "They do save an awful lot of monotonous repetition, not to mention precious space." Well, monotonous repetition is monotonous repetition, whether it's spelled out or turned into an acronym. And I'd rather see space used for exploration. Even precious space.

I'm sure that in some alternate world we got in to see the Conan movie. I can sense that this is true. Can you? How did you enjoy it?

Snowforts and snowtunnels and snow angels. Yes. We did that when I was a kid, too. I actually have a few fond memories in which snow played a major role. Not many, mind you, but a few. Also included in the dusty files are images of snowshoeing (my favorite winter activity), sledding, ice skating, tobogganing, and taking the car out on the ice when the lake froze over. I have a love-hate relationship with snow. I like watching it come down, and fresh-fallen snow has a great measure of beauty, but except for some few winter activities I don't like being outdoors in it. It's cold, and wet, and impedes traffic...

I don't really suspect that D&D would be addictive to me, and I would like to watch a game and then maybe participate in one. Just for the hell of it, because I suspect it wouldn't interest me more than once.

"How do you handle anger when it's not politic for you to display it?" I dunno about Lon, but there are four ways I do it. Often I withhold it until the incident is past and then: 1. think it through until the whole situation is understood and there's no reason for anger, or 2. wait it out until it dissipates so I have the wherewithal to think it through. On rarer occasions I: 3. talk it out with someone, or 4. stay keyed up until I can channel it off in some other non-harmful way. Or I kick the cat.

"There always exists the question: can one trust one's own senses, but that query leads me too close to the edge of madness to consider to any depth." I like the way David Hulan spoke on this subject for the March 1982 mailing of Apanage, in PENNY-ICE AND COLD MEAT #40: "I have faith that the consistent input of my senses reflects the real world; without that faith, I couldn't function. There are occasions when they're fooled, but I have to accept that as one of the prices I pay; I'll do better being fooled occasionally than I will wasting a lot of time doubting everything." Doubting is healthy, as long as you don't let it keep you from the good things, like drinking.

Good point that there is "an even wider question -- what is education; what should it do?" My thrust was for continuity in education from school to school. I changed from a city school in mid New York to a country school upstate, and was two to three years ahead of my classmates in most subjects. My son Brian has changed schools four times in two states, finding himself academically in almost a whole different world each time. In a mobil society I consider it stupid to an extreme that grade levels do not keep reasonable pace with each other, for the benefit of the kids. There's no excuse for it to be otherwise. And there's possibly another point, that with the disintegrating quality of education it's time to do away with autonomy in the school systems and come up with a national plan which will get the quality of education back on its feet. We are prompting an increasing ignorance as the generations roll along. Those with real smarts will compensate sometimes and othertimes just get along, but there's no good reason to be happy with this state of affairs. The only question is whether national control and uniformity in the school system can turn this around. I don't think any other approach stands a chance, though, so I'm in favor of it.

This was in Dear Abby recently: *Dear Abby: This is an earth-shaking problem. The magnitude of the conflict is so enormous, the scope of those afflicted is so wide and the agony it inflicts is so devastating that an immediate column reply is our only salvation! Forget divorce, abortion, war and perspiration odor and settle this question: What is a proper salutation for a business letter when the name, gender, title and position of the correspondent is unknown? 'To Whom It May Concern' is too overused and trite. We remain in anguish awaiting your reply. --FROM WHOM IT DOES CONCERN.*

Abby's reply was: *Dear From: The same old salutations are still proper: 'Dear Sirs,' 'Gentlemen' or 'To Whom It May Concern.'* But, if in your opinion they are "overused and trite," address your letter directly to the firm, i.e., 'Dear Sears Roebuck,' or 'Dear Feinstein, Wu and O'Malley, Attorneys-at-Law.' When your letter is answered -- voila -- you have a name to use in your next letter: The person who signed the reply.

After all, how legitimate is it to use "Dear Addressee" when you aren't addressing the letter to anyone; in other words, when you have no addressee? 'Complaint Dept., ABC Co., Dear Addressee'? Reject sticker, please. Go at once and search for a suitable epicene endearing salutation. Leave no stone unturned. Here, take this reject list with you so you don't come back with a duplication: 1. Dear Whatsyourface, 2. Dear Person, 3. Dear You, 4. Dear Employee ("I am having trouble with your company's lousy product"), 5. Dear Sir or Madam or Androgenous Person, 6. Dear Shithead, or 7. Dear Reader. The other day, at the office, I got a resume with a cover letter addressing me "Dear Gentleperson." Add that to the list. Pencil in "Dear Whoever," too, although it does get points for style. "To Whomever it may concern" is traditional, but cumbersome. Still, it's maybe as close as we're going to come to a good epicene letter salutation. I like what Abby said, but hell, let's invent something. "Dear Whosus." "Dear Squisnit." "Dear Blundertongue."

You're right. I was too dogmatic. The word "usually" should be inserted. "In the big collisions, and wherever fire is concerned, seat belts will" usually "ensure that you die." Prior reading didn't show a person as a walk-away if he hadn't worn a seatbelt, but it did show that staying with the car was almost certain death. Your only significant hope was to be thrown clear. It wasn't much hope, but it was some, and you don't have any chance of being thrown clear if you're wearing a seatbelt. The engine carries part of you into the back of the car. The explosion gets you. You're stunned and burn to death. Pretty things like that. The stats and reports I read also pointed out that most car accidents were not the big collisions, and with most car accidents it was beneficial to wear seat belts. So, I see it as a gamble either way. You can see which way I'm betting. If seat belts helped or at least didn't harm in the big collisions, I'd wear a seatbelt if it took five minutes to get into it.

On the other hand, I wouldn't give up smoking even if I believed the claims against it. Which I don't. They've lied to us on the subject, and fed us bad extrapolations of data, and I'm going to be hard-nosed and not accept less than clear and decisive proof. The Official Voice has been too often untrustworthy, far beyond the mere overstating of a position, and they're going to have to have it cold (hi, I'm from Missouri, and you better be good). It's academic discussion, because for one of those unexplainable reasons I don't believe a cigarette-inflicted problem is what's going to kill me.

I'd forgotten that we saw a color Xerox at the bookstore in Torrance. Saw a unit demonstrated when it first came out, but damned if I can remember where. The mixing

of colors was the real thing of interest about it. I remember thinking the color repro would be nice for doing a cover on an issue of my genzine *AWRY*, if it weren't too damn much money. I'll just guess, but I think it ran around \$0.75 - \$0.85 a copy. Too too much. The interesting feature of the machine, once I'd ruled out being able to afford a production run, became the color-mixing feature. Taking something done in color, you can change the color scheme. Diddle with it. Recreate with it. Now, it can also be done by computer. Ain't science and technology wonderful?

Our Lexicon Webster shows both pronounciations of kiln (kill, killnn). I presume either is acceptable, though one may be preferred. Then, too, the dictionary doesn't tell whether one is preferred. We only know, from the dictionary, that if one is preferred it will be the first listed. I've always felt a preferred pronounciation could be underlined or otherwise flagged, without having to give up space to do it. But they don't ask me how to edit dictionaries. Probably a good reason for that. As for kiln, I rather like the pronounciation using the 'n' sound, if only because it makes the word unique, though I'd be happy with it because it just made sense to pronounce it that way.

"Fiends are people you don't have to impress." Really? I wonder how someone goes about impressing a fiend. Can it be done without being fiendish? But why don't you have to impress them, these fiends? Because you wouldn't want a fiend for a friend?

No, hon, unfortunately there is no appealing simplicity in correcting ditto masters. It takes as much or more time compared to a stencil, and you're gonna get purple without undo caution. Simplicity, si. Appealing, not really. But ditto is cheap on short runs, and that is appealing.

BECKY CARIWRIGHT "My fragile psyche." Your fragile what?

Us hard-wakers should put our heads together and invent something to give us a kick-start in the morning. I don't know what. Several features would be required. Primary is that something initially wake you up, without recourse to startling or annoying you. Next, you need incentive to get up, like maybe the odor of fresh-brewed coffee being wafted about. Finally, you need something to actually bring you to a point of alertness, short of doing anything drastic like having your head shoved in a bucket of ice water. There's a market of hard-wakers for an invention that could handle all of these things.

STEVE LEIGH "I do tend to trust most people until they've demonstrated that they don't deserve such trust." And some people express the opposite approach. I wonder if that isn't really the same viewpoint with but a degree of difference. Most people will use their instincts and intellect about a person before placing themselves in a position of significant trust concerning a given point. At the same time, it's rare to incur a position of significant trust, something beyond feeling comfortable that someone won't kill you, and the sky won't fall down, and the bartender won't refuse you another drink. Something beyond, for that matter, worrying about people abusing a small confidence, creating an embarrassment as a houseguest, trying to rip you off, or being after something. The tendency, as I view it, is to not sweat the small shit. In areas of significance, you look at the person and at what you're dealing with, and you make a decision if you have any choices in the matter. I think this is pretty universal. But I can see it being boiled down to either viewpoint (I do/don't trust people until they've demonstrated that they do/don't deserve such trust). Some people are a touch more cynical than others when they express a viewpoint, but in the field they seem to operate about

the same. Me? Some days the one sounds more appropriate, some days the other...

"At first sight" friendships, at least in fandom, sometimes spring from groundwork of written communications.

"The three or four days" at a con "hold all the emotional upheaval of a month at home." Is "emotional upheaval" the picture you wish to convey? If so, I guess the picture isn't clear to me.

"Morals are much like religion -- and sometimes go hand in hand --: everyone seems to have a different view of the way it should be. Isn't that a mystery?" I won't answer for Marty but, as you know, it's not a mystery once you figure out whodunnit. People choose from the options they know, and massage or knuckle the philosophy a bit to personalize it and make it their own. Or they go along with what they grew up with. Whatever, it works for them.

Like you, I'm an agnostic though leaning in the atheistic direction. Maybe there is a god and maybe there isn't. I don't know and I don't think anybody else knows, either. From the available body of knowledge on the subject, though, I seriously doubt that there is. "In my reality, gods exist mostly in people's heads, in their desires and insecurities." I think that view is most likely correct. Unfortunately, too, based on the realities at hand I can't even design a god that would both fit the circumstances and be overly impressive personally at the same time.

"I think humans are sometimes more honest in anger." I see anger as just another side to one's character. Not overly useful in most circumstances. That it occurs is normal. In myself at least, usually being able to keep it out of the immediate picture is a fact that I'm happy with. Under such circumstances, to express my anger might be viewed as honest, but to withhold it in favor of more constructive response would not, I don't feel, be viewable as dishonest. It would be honest if I told various people whom I know that I think unfriendly or antagonistic thoughts about them, too, but I usually refrain and keep the peace. I don't believe honesty or dishonesty have much to do with the picture. Concerning anger, when you have options you try to exercise them based on what seems best at the time. Trying to do the best thing gets points for honesty, too. We work with the hands dealt to us, as the great philosopher Kenny Rogers might say. Know when to hold them, know when to fold them. And never deal off the bottom of the deck...

I agree with you that "a lot of the blame has to go elsewhere" for our trouble with the school systems. It has to go everywhere. If we're going to get quality education, maybe we need uniform quality through at least the first eight grade levels, and to do that we need an overall set of standards. Instead of having grade 2 in School A resemble much of grade 4 or 5 in School B, let's get our act together and stop diddling with the millions of kids who change schools in this country. And to ensure a uniform good quality, let's keep reviewing and revising those national standards and let's do it by recommendations submitted to the will of the people at the polls. I don't see any way in the world that gives better odds for making a contribution of value to the quality of education in this country. If there is one, I'll endorse it.

"If I get preached at, I preach back. Otherwise, to each his own." Good line. You must stand a long time at the door when the Jehovah's Witnesses come around.

"I, for one, need lots of privacy and room and things I can call mine and mine alone." Me, too. "I'm selfish." Nah. I feel we all deserve as much of it as we can get.

Yeah, I don't make my points "as concisely, grammatically, or as well" in first draft, either. But I often call it good enough, or I wouldn't let it go. Close enough for farwriting.

Hold on there, Loquacio, I don't want the rep of being one of those people "who find touching uncomfortable." Old Cold Dave. It would be a bum rap. If I've implied it with my comment about the 'huggy-kissy' sessions at cons, or the fondlecons, it was unintentional. It's true Old Dave doesn't kiss the boys, crotch-grab the girls, or grope in a circle, but rumor has it that he is kind to animals and an affable cuss with people. He even hugged and kissed your wife after their first meeting. What? Yeah, it was okay. Denise is just the right height.

ERIC LINDSAY Just a minute, now. "I look up to almost everyone... except Dave Locke and Mike Glicksohn..." You even looked up to us, Little Eric. Even if you were higher than us most of the time we saw you.

Good point that envy can be a positive thing if it moves you to reach out and do something more.

"Glad to hear that DaveL has a job, although it does not sound like the DaveL I saw." Eh?

I enjoyed your jest to Bill Bowers, but you should know that Bill is definitely not a lazy person. Nope, no he isn't. He's just too slow to do much. Let's plea bargain here. Mr. District Attorney, if you drop "lazy" my client will consider pleading guilty to a lesser charge of "slow." In fact, let's go for broke (the sky's the limit: throw the canary another seed), and run with a charge of "busy." No, better not. Vice might nail him on a morals rap. Stick with "slow," and we'll get out early for a three-martini lunch.

MIKE HORVAT Sorry to hear of your dilemmas with your boy's illness, the stiff and sudden hospital bill, and being taken advantage of after helping someone. How do you like 1982 so far?

You ask if joining the S.F. Book Club is like taking READERS DIGEST to be well informed. It's likely on the same plane, yeah, but a bit higher up, and broader in scope. A good source, but it won't cover the whole field for you.

"One of the True Secrets of Happiness is to find a way to make a living by doing 'work' that you enjoy." I resent the truth of that statement. I don't think there is hope for me. Well, let's check it out. What do I enjoy? I enjoy screwing. No woman in her right mind, unless she was desperate, would at first sight employ me without asking if I had change for a nickle. Drinking. I like drinking. That's ridiculous -- how could anyone make money by drinking for a living? Who would pay me? Moving along, I like to eat watermelon, anything we could do with that? I enjoy tennis, but I'm not even what you would call your club-quality player. I'd have to wear a clown mask if they sent me into a tournament, just to keep the crowd from getting testy believing that someone was trying to be serious. Well, we could explore this for quite a while. Know anyone who needs me so far, in any of those areas? No? I'll prepare another list later.

Well, Bill Bowers says he's still looking for a primary relationship. I think he has said that the problem is in finding someone who will still respect him in the morning...

Interesting commentary about the American Private Press Association Library. It's interesting to me, anyway. As for the nature of amateur journalism in the mundane apas, why not ramble about it for a page or so and convey some of your impressions on what it's like.

Please do run the John Bangsund corro. And tell him that when he has the wherewithal and the inclination to do something with it, to get in touch.

MIKE SHOEMAKER I do not play cards at places where there is a house cut. I have played where it's common at the end of the evening to kick in some reasonable amount based on what you ate and drank, each player making their own determination.

I enjoyed the long section on favorite sf authors. We're pretty close in taste on a great number of them. We disagree on STARSHIP TROOPERS, as I thought that Heinlein novel reasonably readable but far from excellent, and on his THE DOOR INTO SUMMER, which I considered far better than "merely good." We agree on Leinster and Sturgeon. Disagree on Asimov; I found him nothing more than decently readable on all his novels except for the Foundation trilogy, which I considered excellent.

Simak's TIME QUARRY was published under that title in GALAXY, and came out in paperback as TIME AND AGAIN. We both like that one.

Russell, of course, was my favorite sf writer, though he wrote one novel I didn't much like (SINISTER BARRIER) and one that didn't overly interest me (DREADFUL SANCTUARY). His other novels, his novellas, novelets, and most all of his short stories interested me so much I reread them every five years or so. You note that you haven't yet read his DEAR DEVIL, though you've got it. I highly recommend it as one of his best.

I didn't care much for Cordwainer Smith, either. I didn't dislike Bester's THE STARS MY DESTINATION; I thought it was very very good, in fact, but like you I consider his THE DEMOLISHED MAN to be a classic.

You say that "ear trining can improve music appreciation." Does it hurt?

I guess we disagree on the school issue. I don't look at it in terms of giving power to the government. I look at it as an issue of national scope. I believe, as Eisenhower said, that the purpose of government is to represent people in matters they cannot handle as individuals, and keep hands-off otherwise. As I see it, there is not enough continuity between schools in view of the fact that we have a mobile society. That is point number one toward having a coordinated system. Beyond that, there aren't even just fifty different systems, one for each state. There are almost as many systems as there are schools. Education doesn't have enough quality control, as witness the span of quality and overall disintegration of quality. Education doesn't have enough engineering, to keep it flexible and up-to-date. Education doesn't have enough market research and analysis, to determine the needs that must be fulfilled by education. Is education meeting the needs of this country? I don't think so. And I think matters will get worse before they get better, and I don't think they'll get sufficiently better until we change our whole approach to education. If you're with me so far, then it becomes just a matter of bullshitting notions on what that new approach could be. If you're not with me so far, where did we part company?

As neither of us is ever likely to be heard by anyone in authority, even if the CIA is reading these mailings over morning coffee, we can feel free to suggest bizarre

concepts without fear of making them happen. For example, I considered the possibility that we could shorten the first eight years of grades to about four through the exclusive and extensive use of hypnosis and sleep-learning records. Keep the little bastards out from underfoot for 24 hours a day. I can see a few wrinkles in the idea, though. "It was the damndest thing. Every time he'd stop to consider how to add two numbers together, his eyes would glaze over and he'd go lay down."

I think we went through this before, but my feelings about a mandatory two-of-clubs lead in Hearts is that it puts too much emphasis on clubs when it comes to selecting a pass, and makes the opening game less flexible. It stereotypes it; locks it in to too narrow a field of play. The lead is tied to the luck of the deal, and is lost as a factor to be known and to be dealt with strategically when formulating the pass. Overall, I consider it restrictive to the game to have a two-of-clubs lead, and I see that more skill can be brought to bear when the game is played without that variant to the standard rules. Of course, to me it's not worth playing Hearts at all without the variant that the Queen of Spades needn't be dropped at the first opportunity. At least I can enjoy a game which features a two-of-clubs lead, even if I consider it restrictive of play.

Hubbard's TO THE STARS -- wasn't that an early Ace paperback with the title RETURN TO TOMORROW? My copy is billed "an ACE original," but it fits your description of TO THE STARS. Who is familiar with both titles? Wake up out there -- we're talking sci-fi! Get with it.

BILL BOWERS Hi. Done anything interesting lately?

Actually, since you ask, I'll tell you that I find life just as interesting as you probably do. And for the same reason. Because we're both simple people, and can be easily amused...

Naomi and Claudia. I see. They have appeared from out of the blue to complicate your fanac. Got it. We could flesh-out this story and make a helluva movie with it, while sticking to the facts as they are known. Historical fiction, as they call it. Who shall we get to write the screenplay?

Listen, it's okay that you no longer treat us as a "one-night stand." We'd be happy with a meaningful relationship of some kind. Even if we do like to screw around a bit. At least, I think we would. What is it you have in mind?

No, no, Bill. A sequel to SLOW FALL TO DAWN should be called FAST RISE FROM SUNSET, not FAST RISE TO EVENING. Well, you got two out of four... Actually, though, that title would make it a prequel.

Yes, my gosh, you are. You are the Master of the Ellipse. Greetings, Oh Wonderous One. The royal coffers are filled to the brim with ellipses. There will never be an ellipse shortage. Go and scatter them about the land. Share the bounty with the people. You know something? When you use ellipses I view them the same way they're used when quoting someone: as indicating that there is data which has been omitted. I mean, the liberal use of them makes perfect sense that way...

Ah, the fine art of the oneshot. Well, yes, bringing prepared material and then doing a round-robin editorial would definitely raise the quality level. The Burbee Style works well that way. However ... the traditional Jacobs Style has actually produced material of interest, provided that everyone gets their shot at the typewriter early in the evening... We'll try it again sometime. Drunken oneshots are

meant to be fun, not necessarily readable. A jam session. An excuse for a party, where we expose to the whole apa what assholes and idiots we are when we get sloshed and silly. There's beauty in this, Bill.

LON ATKINS Have you submitted that story to F&SF? I think it might click there. A good story. I enjoyed it. Lovecraft is probably spinning in his humidior.

"I thought of age as a 'quality' factor (counting both ways) until I was thirty. Then I began to understand it as a fact. Just a fact." Good comment. You could still view it as a quality factor, if it's acknowledged that with many people improvement does not seem to occur beyond a certain point.

"The gradual getting-to-know process." Ah, so. Having friendships "happen" is great. Mellowing into them through the acquaintanceship process is great, too. Most of mine happen the latter way. Usually takes about twenty years...

An apa where the members take turns not receiving mailings, so the others can talk about them? That's a good one. Of course, we do it here, too, but sort of on a Russian roulette basis. Instead of a gun, we use the Post Office.

There are probably other jewels of ideas to be tried out in new apas. Let's see if we can come up with a couple more. How about an apa of thirty people with a copy distribution of fifteen, so you get every other mailing and enjoy keeping on your toes by surfacing in the middle of conversations. Dues could be cut in half. Being OE would be a sought-after office, because it would be the only way you could understand what was going on. Or, as an added fillip, every third mailing send the fifteen copies to whoever appears in the lettercolumn of the last couple of genzines received, and then print the one or two resultant letters of comment in the next mailing in lieu of anything else. If you really want to keep things interesting, don't send copies to members at all, and see how creative they can be with mailing comments. And to throw another dimension to it, the fifteen copies could go to fifteen people who have their own apa, where they each spend much time making mailing comments about the other apa. Members of the first apa could be kept informed on co-members by once a year receiving egoboo-poll results as determined by vote of the membership in the second apa. I tell you, we could have a lot of fun with this.

Another idea would be to conduct an apa on tape cassettes. If we had the same crew as here, think of the possibilities. We could listen to Bill speak in ellipses. We could listen to you cackle when you talk about Hearts, or listen to Marty read Ananda in a properly theatrical style. We'd have to somehow ride drag on the tape to understand what Dave Langford is saying. Mike Shoemaker would likely sound breathless. Becky could throw away her gallon bottle of corflu, Jackie could actually get to *sigh*, and oneshots would be where a bunch of us all talk at once and try to keep from falling into the recorder.

JONI STOPA Sounded like a busy final two months in 1931. Of course, your trying to bring yourself to the point of virtual self-destruction probably created much of the aura.

The only trolling I'd previously ever heard of had to do with either trolling for fish or trolling for queers, the former with a lure and the latter with an open fly. Now I know what it means in a third context, using a collection plate.

I met Earl Kemp at Chicon III and again at Sally Rand's house in Glendora, California. Quiet fellow. Smiles and rods a lot. That's about what I do when I smoke

that much, too.

MARTY HELGESEN Fanzines in 1957 and worldcon in 1960? No, I didn't know you'd been around that long. Where all have you been keeping yourself? Our circles didn't cross before about ten years ago.

"This has been Langford fanzine number 78 -- is this a record?' What a revolutionary idea!" Good spinoff remark. Groovy.

My comment "I hate repeating myself. Hate it, hate it" is copyright Dean Grennell, 1968. But it got no rise out of him.

"These findings are confirmed by crash tests using dummies." Good idea. It's usually dummies who cause auto accidents in the first place.

"The link between smoking and various serious health problems has been clearly established." Too bad the experts don't all agree on the subject (I always look for things like that).

How does faith provide facts, Marty? "...people who have not received the gift of faith ... are mistaken on some important factual questions."

"...someone who says that he doesn't know whether or not God exists... should continue to consider the question actively." Loosely speaking, I agree. I did that, even. Decided nothing could be done to answer the question one way or the other, though there were a few theories that made a lot of sense (like the one that Roytac used in the last mailing). Now I'm semi-active. I read new material when I run across it. And I do things like asking you to define the appeal of your faith, or the state of preparedness that might be required to receive faith. What you tell me is things like "someone who accepts that there is some kind of Creator/God and then tries to learn more about Him is well on his way toward the gift of faith," which I don't follow. I thought we already determined that accepting the existence of a god required faith. You're saying now that this is a preliminary toward achieving faith. Very well, what -- if not faith -- might lead you to accept such a thing? Guilt? Need? Fear? Uncertainty? Are we back to faith providing facts? Where are we, Marty? Besides going to hell in a handbasket, or going to heaven in a flash of fire?

Glad you plan to attend Midwestcon. See you there.

ARTEUR HLAVATY Folded DIAGONAL RELATIONSHIP, eh? Starting up with DILLINGER HELIC, you say? Well, I'll miss DR, but the new DR looks even better. It's a good zine, and I think it's great that you'll be running it thru FLAP.

In with all those fields you're investigating, let me know if you're checking out self-hypnosis. This is one I thought might have possibilities, but so far I haven't gotten around to checking it out. And what I know on the subject is pretty sketchy.

Your move to North Carolina is similar to the one Jackie made to California, and the one I made to the midwest. One good feature about fan friends is that while you might move away from them, you're still in touch through the written word. With most other friends, when you move away you are really saying goodbye.

"...we saw a stuffed toy seal in a store. Bernadette picked it up & said, 'Isn't that cute? Let's hit it over the head & take its fur.'" I like her already.

No, I would say that you misjudge Willis. He displays his wit with a perspective and a warmth that places him in a quite different category from a Buchwald or a Goulart. Definitely Willis is a sharp wit and technically superior as a wordsmith, but his worldview is that of a sane and balanced man who sees things with a clarity that usually has only one filter on it: warmth. It's a matter of taste, but I much prefer the maturity of Willis' writings to the acid which eats through the humor of Joe Heller's. On the other hand, I like black humor, and nobody does it better for me than Joe Wambaugh, like for example with his latest book THE GLITTER DOME, and Kurt Vonnegut. You mention Sladek. I thought MECHASM showed some promise. Has he come through with it?

Chickenshit (happenings), bullshit (topics), and elephantsht (philosophy). I like that tripartite division of conversation. In the egoboo poll I couldn't resist mucking with it by adding "batshit," a category which I perceived at the time to consist of the offbeat or bizarre.

BRUCE ARTHURS How can anyone who lives in Phoenix refer to LA as "Hell on Earth"? Batshit, Bruce. Your sense of taste is all between your toes.

No, I don't think Roy would enjoy THE SHINING. The plot wouldn't hold up for him, and the good things about the novel wouldn't likely overcome that fact for him. I suspect.

I had never seen many new or used paperbacks by Westlake in the bookstores, and he's one author I look for.

EDP. Nothing mentioned about home use has ever seriously interested me. I wouldn't mind word processing to simplify rewriting and copying, but nothing else seems really useful. Amusing, perhaps. Useful, in a way. But not really useful. Possibly wiring your home against intrusion, balancing your checkbook, doing mailing lists and labels, and all like that can in themselves be considered useful, but can all be done equally effectively without EDP in the form of a home computer. I can envision the home computer being truly useful, but for me it isn't there yet. It's still in the same lineup with the electric toothbrush.

No, it was Arthur who said he wouldn't deign to piss on Joe if he were on fire and Arthur had been drinking beer. On the other hand, I wouldn't wish Joe any hard luck. Hell, if he were on fire, I'd piss on him.

PAULINE PALMER Hi, ya. You know, you lost me almost completely with your mention of "...'positive stress' such as one experiences at good cons." Could you describe this more closely, perhaps with an example?

"...the deeper truth is, I suspect, a fear that the number of possible zine titles in the universe is limited and someday I will need one and none will be left if I've squandered too many needlessly. People who can use a different title on almost every zine seem to know that potential titles are infinite (an idea I like much better but which doesn't come naturally to me)." I like that. There's always a failsafe, you know. If you do run out of titles just go back to an old one and type: "issue number 2."

DAVE WIXON I used to enjoy ice skating when they flooded the parking lot behind St. Marie's General Store. This was in a little town, Indian Lake, in upstate New York. At night the kids, and I was one of them, would