

Wild HEIRS

Las Vegas

The Fandom of Good Cheer





Vague Rants

Arnie Katz

Wild Heirs #1 caught many fans by surprise, including a couple who were surprised to find themselves on the masthead as co-editors. Fannish fame can strike anywhere at any time.

The response to the first issue was wonderful. We immediately resolved to do absolutely nothing further until we had all fully contemplated our egoboo.

That work is now complete. We're rolling up our sleeves, those of us who have sleeves on such a hot day, and setting up the second issue.

We've made Editorial Changes. One is the name of this column, which used to be "Splitting Heirs". I liked it. Everyone liked it. Unfortunately, a movie company liked it, too. They used it on an undistinguished comedy this year. So now the round robin is "Vague Rants".

One reason we like the new name is that it goes with our new group name, The Vegrants (Las Vegrants).

I put "Vegas All-Stars" in the first colophon, but it wasn't a popular decision. Some felt it would muddy the waters between this sprightly publication and the more sedate **Vegas All-Stars** oneshot series, which has reached 22 issues.

Another change is the typeface. Bill Rotsler's passionate pleas for the abandonment of our sans serif font has carried the day. So we have lots of serifs. Big, bold ones. The kind hairy-chested fans like.

For the first time in a Vegas oneshot, if not in fandom, we're writing "Vague Rants" non-linearly. Each editor will insert comments where they seem appropriate. In our optimism, we have not provided a procedure for inappropriate comments, so there won't be any. This, too, is a first for Las Vegas oneshots, if not for fandom.

Laurie "The Elf" Yates

The Vegrants. Hmm. I suppose it could be worse. Actually, by the time people finish with the "Lost Vegrants" routine, it probably will be.

Now, who has permission to rant? Everyone? Or just the people on the masthead? Can the far-flung editors rant by proxy?

The only problem with serif fonts is that they don't tend to scan well. Keep this in mind if we expect fans in 2023 to honor us with **The Incomplete Wild Heirs**. Just a thought.

Ken Forman

If the computers of 2023 can't scan this text, I want my money back. Besides, poor optical character recognition would add to the "vagueness" of our editorial.

Arnie Katz

Like most other things connected with **Wild Heirs**, who is entitled to write in "Vague Rants" is a bit... vague. All listed editor may participate by proxy, though a computer is the optimal choice.

Wild Heirs #2, fandom's walk on the wild side, is produced by The Vegrants, under the benevolent (yet ruthless) baton of Arnie Katz (330 S. Decatur, Suite 152, Las Vegas, NV 89107.)

Editors are: Arnie & Joyce Katz, Bill Kunkel, Laurie Yates, Ken Forman, JoHn Hardin, Ross Chamberlain, Woody Bernardi, Peggy Burke, Charles & Cora Burbee and William Rotsler. UK Connection: Chuch Harris. It is available for letter of comment or contribution.

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The whole country is *Jurassic Park* crazy. The hucksters expect to ring up about \$1 billion in associated merchandise sales, and box office and video cassette receipts won't be small, either.

Crichton's major plot gimmick is that scientists generate dinosaurs from DNA from fossils. Couldn't we apply the same concept to fandom? Why not clone Laney, McCain, Carr, Ellik, and others now attending the Enchanted Convention?

Sticklers for scientific accuracy and other nuisances may deride this project. "They won't grow up to be fans," they scoff. "They will have the heredity, but not the environmental influences. It is the Law of Science."

Well, I skip the science in Jerry Pournelle novels, and I say that they were all born to their calling. They were destined to be fans, and fans their clones will become, even if I have to read *The Enchanted Duplicator* to them at each feeding. By the way, I lied earlier. I don't really skip the science in Jerry Pournelle novels. I don't read Jerry Pournelle novels.

Too bad none of these reborn BNFs will be ready in time to contribute to *Wild Heirs* #2. Good thing we hedged our bets and collected a batch of articles from Bill Rotsler, Charles Burbee, Cora Burbee, and sundry Vagrant Stars.

Bill "Potshot" Kunkel

I like it, Arnie. It's called *Slan Shack Park*, and it's all about how Claude Degler -- now a billionaire using the name "Stephen Pickering" -- has been buying up the mortal remains of great, first generation fans and transporting them to Amsterdam. Just as the old fans are redeveloping their sensawonder, and are struggling to master DTP technology, a boastful "Pickering", being the sociologist he is, invites Harry Warner, Rob Hanson, Bjo Trimble and a pair of promising neos to the opening of *Slan Shack Park*, a genetic re-engineering of the early ages of Fandom.

But something is amiss. Laney has begun instigating trouble (incredibly enough, they forgot to monitor the old fans at night!), actually PUBLISHING fanzines (these clones were thought to be fannishly sterile). Al Ashley runs up to the two neos in one heart-stopping scene and hisses: "You bastards!" Even Pickering/Degler himself is smothered in hekto jelly in one scene that may not make it past the ratings board.

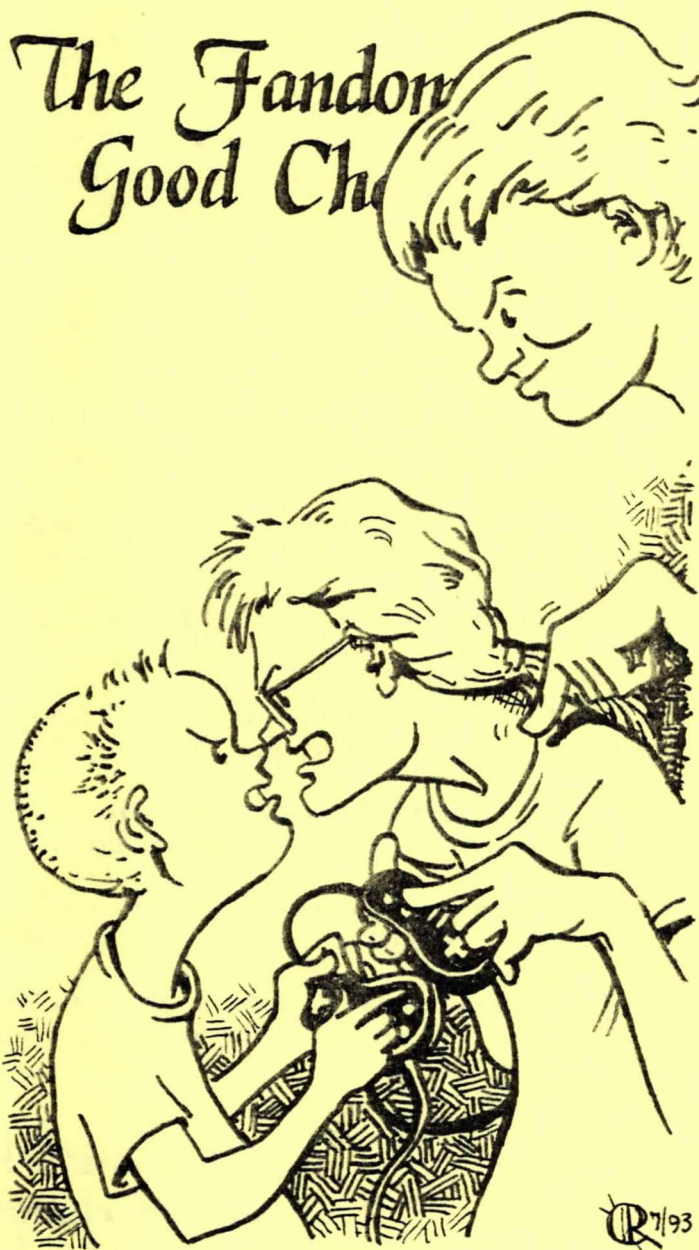
If they can get the sfx right, it could be bitchin'.

The Elf

I've watched the *JP* merchandising craze and have wondered how Vegas

fandom could utilize it. It has had one negative effect: Potshot was going to do a quarterly zine called *Raptor*, but he's now decided to abandon the project and, it is to be hoped, cannibalize some of it for our new joint FAPazine. I must admit, though, that the candy tie-in is enough to send me running and screaming. One of the "biggest" pieces is a "genuine dinosaur egg" jawbreaker with a "real DNA amber core." Does this mean that we can hatch our own dinosaur?

Of course, if we could do fan cloning, then our troubles are over. We can clone a fugghead. I can see the ads now, "Be the first fan on your block with your own FUGGHEAD!" The marketing possibilities tantalize me.



Arnie Katz

You must be a fannish masochist, Laurie, if you want to use cloning to replicate fuggheads. You can be sure that other fuggheads will clone the Deglers and the Pickerings. I'd rather clone Rotsler, to insure an unending supply of hilarious cartoons, or perhaps Burb or WAW.

Potshot

When I originally read JP what seems a lifetime ago I fell in love with the word "velicoraptor" and thought it would make a great name for a fmz -- with "Raptor" serving as the nickname. Then came the inexorable hype machine for the film and my wonderful title is hopelessly trendy and so I can't do it.

But we have a new name for our FAPA zine: **Don't Make Me Laugh.**

There, I've registered it.

P.S.: I have since noticed that Barnaby Rappaport is using the name "Raptor" as a column head in the excellent White/Steffanzine **BLAT!** He can keep this as a good will gesture.

Woody Bernardi

I saw *Jurassic Park*, and I've never seen a more horrific media presentation. Rebecca Hardin and I planned to attend the late Friday ("opening night") evening with Carol Kern. On Wednesday evening, I discovered that *JP* was actually opening Thursday. To my knowledge, this was a first. An injury had left Carol flat on her back, so Rebecca

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Art Credits

Ross Chamberlain: Cover, 3, 5, 7
Bill Kunkel: 2, 6, 8, 14, 17, 19, 24, 26, 27, 28m
Bill Rotsler: 11, 13, 16, 31, 33
Bacover Photo by **Ken Forman**

and I went alone.

Not since my nine-year-old self sat through *Jaws* for the first time have I been more effectively terrorized. I spent a good part of that showing in my sister's lap, much to the chagrin of her frustrated date.

Jurassic Park was utterly fascinating. I've always been intrigued by the giants of yester-millenia. I might dare to approach the "vegasauri", but the "meatasauri" are another story.

I'm basically a coward. I fear anything, or anyone (like the headhunters I came within a few hundred yards of in my youth while living in the Philippines), willing to eat a human being.

The opening scene should have prepared me for the coming gore, but I do tend toward thick headedness. The film was very well done, particularly the way they "created" these monsters. It was more frightening to me than *Jaws*, because potential victims can't avoid danger just by staying out of the water.

I made tentative arrangements with David Allred to attend a matinee with him this week, since he had the gall to leave town this weekend to spend the weekend at his sister's in San Jose (some family reunion thing). I decided that I was not going to be able to sit through another showing but each day that passes sees my sense of wonder overcoming my fears. As I sit here preparing to go and pick David up at the airport (his flight is due in 20 minutes) I am thinking that I may actually make it to another showing.

JoHn Hardin

Oh, Woody, quit being such a sissy. I've seen more blud 'n guts at SNAFFU business meetings.

Rather than cloning more fuggheads, I think we can apply current genetic engineering technology to the task of refining the rather poor specimens at hand.

We can spare ourselves the trouble of trying to recreate the legendary fuggheads of yesteryear, and concentrate on making newer, better, more efficient fuggheads. And as a bonus, we have the technology to do this today. We can custom make a fugghead for you; a fabulous fugghead whose every utterance is more ostentatious than the last. The future is here and it is ripe with opportunity.

Ken Forman

We can capitalize on both JoHn and Bill's ideas. Zoom in on a pimply-faced, slug-shaped hyper-neo cranking out crud-zines no one reads. He decides to seek revenge on fandom when a BNF writes a KTF review. He clones great fen of the past and uses DNA fragments from a lawyer to fill in the gaps. He

then produces a cadre of super-fen with all of the writing ability of the masters and none of the wit. We could call it **The Disenchanted Duplicator**. We'll make millions.

The Elf

I don't think so, Ken. First, I don't think we can find the appropriate neo crudzine. Second, there's the cruel and unusual punishment clause in the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution. Why punish the great fen by incorporating a lawyer into their midst?

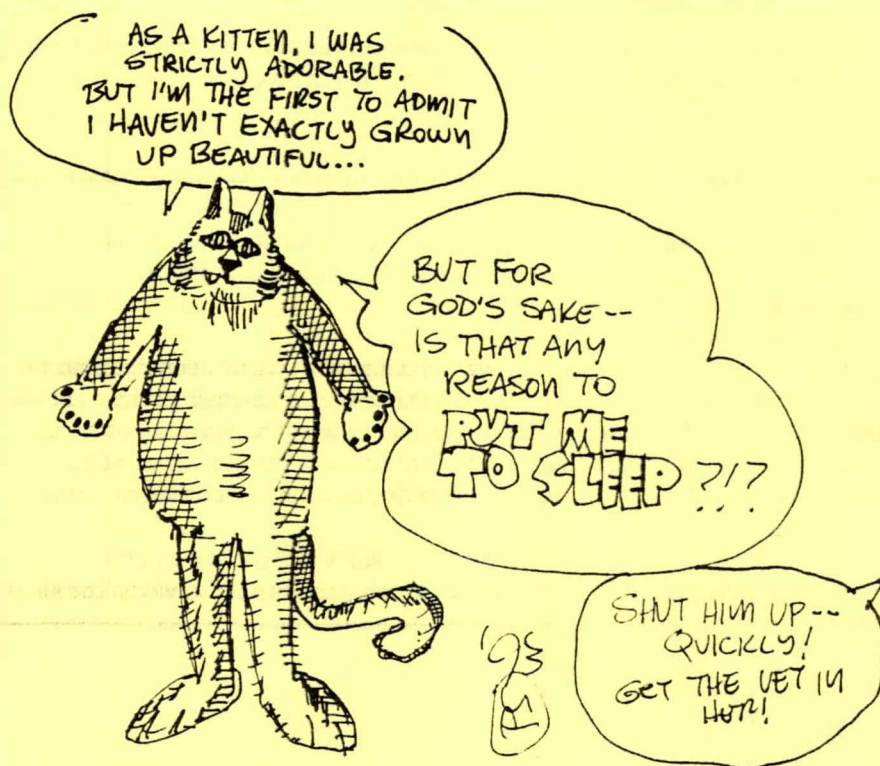
Potshot

I was working on an article about the amusing characters who peopled my old computer baseball league and I needed a metaphor. In order to make the baseball background fathomable, I attempted to come up with fans whose standing in fandom was comparable to the baseball players being discussed in the article, and I desperately needed a fugghead.

"Quick!" I snapped. "Give me a fugghead."

"I don't know," Laurie said weakly. "The guy who edits Fosfax?"





"No, no, he's all wrong. He isn't really a fugghead anyway, just Politically Incorrect (BFD) and somewhat doctrinaire. I need an honest-to-goodness, slack-jawed, drooling FUGGHEAD! You know the kind!"

Her helpless expression told me all I needed to know.

"Good Lord, Arnie's right." I sat back and contemplated, in my own awkward and fakefannish way, a recent Katz essay on the need for a new generation of fuggheads.

I certainly needed one now.

"Who was that asshole Brit we met at Corflu?" I wondered, clearly reaching. Still, I remember when I met him, thinking: well, the British need their fuggheads, too. Besides, any port in a storm.

"Colin something," she told me. "Do you want me to look up his last name?"

"No," I replied, already losing steam for the project. "It doesn't seem quite cricket to use up a British fugghead when they're in such short worldwide supply. No, I need a good old *American* fugghead! Where the hell are the Rick Brookses of the world when you need them?"

"Well, Las Vegas has its fair share of fuggheads," she argued bravely, then realized the flaw in her own theory: "But they aren't really well known to fandom at large, are they?"

"Damn."

"But maybe we can **MAKE** them into nationally known fuggheads! We could write about them."

"Let Alex Borders and Beth Brown do their own p.r.," I grumbled, watching this potentially rousing article trickle into the creative abyss. But she had a point. We have some truly spectacular humps in this town. Several believe themselves to be dragon hatchlings, for example. That's pretty good stuff when you'd walk a mile for a fugghead.

But I'm sorry. I come from the "instant gratification"

generation and ghoddammit I WANT A FUGGHEAD AND I WANT HIM/HER NOW. So I'll be watching. Should a potential candidate show so much as a hair, I'll be tracking you like a paparazzi dogs Madonna. I'm a desperate man and these are desperate times.

Send out the fugghead and the rest of you can go free.

(That's enough for now; I don't like people seeing me this way...)

Ross Chamberlain

Siskel & Ebert endorsed *Jurassic Park* with reservations—Hm? N-no-o, I'm not saying they made reservations to stay there, which would have been a very positive endorsement indeed. [The raptors would no doubt have been rapt indeed over Roger Ebert.] But no, basically, they compared it unfavorably with *Jaws*, with the complaints that with the exception of Richard Benjamin's character *JP* didn't have the good, adult characters that *Jaws* did, and, secondly, that, unlike *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, there was too little sensawunda. Okay, okay... what? [thanks, Howie Mandel] Yes, they acknowledged that first glimpse of the brontosaurus, not specifically, but by reference... I think I'll remember that as possibly the greatest *positive* shock scene in film, even beating out the first glimpse of the mother ship over Devil's Tower, and maybe matching a couple of scenes from the first time I saw *Star Wars*... There were a couple of other moments in *JP* where sensawunda was supposed to be invoked (the singing brontosauri—or were they diplodoci?—for one), but it didn't quite work...

Joy-Lynd and I went with our neighbor and her two sons, 12 and 16. The 12-year-old and the three adults loved it, the 16-year old dozed off for a while somewhere early on, and barely acknowledged enjoying it at all.

I haven't read the book. Yet. As to Jerry Pournelle, the last thing I read by him was in some computer magazine. Oh—books. Hm...I

think it was him and Larry Niven, with *Mote in God's Eye*. Do I have that right? It's been a while. I wasn't disturbed by the science, but then I tend to go off into flights of pseudoscience on my own hook so what the heck.

Vegasaurus, Woody? Yeah, I know... No doubt the reptilian ancestors of some of the less savory characters that inhabit this town...

Arnie Katz

"What's my motivation?" JoHn Hardin demanded.

Please note the interior capital in the first name. Remember it and teach it to your children. I gave this print-only nickname to him a month ago to distinguish him from all of fandom's Johnny-come-earliers. If you'll do this for me, make me look good in front of the neos. I'll promise not to write a filk version of "John Wesley Hardin". What could be fairer than that? Las Vegas Fandom and several Muses thank you for your support.

"What's my motivation for writing and publishing fanzines?" demanded JoHn a second time, making the preceding digression possible.

"Your motivation? You need motivation?" I thundered with more than usual vehemence. Joyce and I just re-watched the *Masterpiece Theatre* eight-parter about Winston Churchill's wilderness years.

"I was just asking," he temporized. His guileless eyes pleaded for clemency. I thought of my own neofannish days, and my heart softened. I even stopped jabbing toward him with my invisible cigar.

"What about the sense of accomplishment from producing something?" I roared. Perhaps the power of public television has been underestimated.

"Er, ah..."

"Then there's the sense of artistic fulfillment," I declared. "And don't you want to entertain your friends?"

JoHn looked down. (That's John Wesley Hardin, Las Vegas fan, for those who have already forgotten.) "I thought I did entertain my friends," he said, softly.

"Local fans, sure," I acknowledged. "But what about your new friends, the men and women who write and draw and publish their fanzines throughout the free world?"

"I see that."

"And there is one more thing," I said. I leaned forward to deliver the clincher. "If you write and publish fanzines, you have a never-fail introduction to a group of women whose libidos are legendary, female fanzine fans!"

He sat back, stunned.

"Yes, JoHn," I continued, carefully pronouncing that capital "H". "Producing any significant quantity of fanzine fanac is like a calling card. Shared fanzine experience is an opening line that makes all others unnecessary and obsolete."

"Tell me more," he said.

"There's no better ice-breaker," I declared. "Women in bars may snarl at you, impugn your manhood, or crack jokes about your personality quirks. A female fanzine fan may, on occasion, discourage the advances of a horny male fanziner, but the context virtually requires at least minimal civility."

"Publishing fanzines may not always get the girl, but it's almost a can't-lose proposition. Without the pressure of a possibly ball-busting rejection sensitive male fans can feel free to approach their objects of desire with enhanced confidence."

"That sounds good to me."

"And when I consider all my buddies who have met wives, girlfriends, and live-ins through fandom, I am forced to observe that most have won women smarter, prettier, sexier, and more talented than a casual observer would have thought they could attract."

"The difference, JoHn, is that these folks had fandom!"

I would have cited specific examples, but JoHn was already scribbling an article in the notebook which Joyce gave him for that purpose.

Potshot

Scene: a singles bar, late into the night. A thin, ascetic young man sits in a corner of the room in a booth while a woman,



moderately attractive for the hour, sits twirling around and around on a stool. The bartender is paging through a copy of *Fosfax*.

Girl (to Ascetic Young Man): Hey, loverboy!

AYM: Excuse me?

Girl: I'm talking to you. I hear a lot of fanzine publishers come in here and I just missed Andy Porter. Are you a publisher?

AYM: Just in APAs.

Girl: Hmmm, well, you're cute, so that counts for something. Which APAs?

AYM: Nothing special.

Girl (hopefully): FAPA?

AYM: Naw, nothing like that...

Girl: Well what? APA-45? SAPS? WHAAAAAT?

AYM: Well, I'm in APA-Saur.

Girl: APA what?

AYM: It's a dinosaur APA. They aren't lizards, you know, they are more like today's birds.

Girl: So what's your zine called?

AYM: Lizard's Lips.

Girl: Whew. So that's it? You aren't a columnist? An artist? Do you review monster pictures?

AYM: Someday, maybe. I just went to my first Creation Con last week. Umm, wanna go home with me? I have the director's cut of "Godzilla vs Mecha-Godzilla" on laserdisk.

Girl: Ask me in an hour. Maybe I'll be more desperate then.

John

Arnie, Joyce and I were in Joyce's office. My first ever for-pay writing had just been proofread and laid down in final form. Ecstatic, I beamed at Arnie and Joyce. "Thank you!" I gushed. "I

couldn't have done it without your patient help."

Joyce smiled and said, "Congratulations."

Arnie smiled at me and said, "Now you have to write a fan article."

"A fan article?" I asked in a small voice.

"Yes, now that you've prostituted your art for money, the only way to expiate yourself is to write a fan article. Isn't that right, Joyce?"

She didn't even look up from writing the check.

"Sounds good to me," she said.

"Hmmm," I looked at Arnie. "I do have to keep my reputation up, don't I? Maybe I should write some poetry or something."

"Now wait a minute, John." Arnie sounded alarmed. "There is such a thing as going overboard. Just write a fan article, maybe a little something for **Wild Heirs**."

So I took his advice and wrote this. I went ahead and wrote the poem too. It's a 5000-word epic fantasy with lots of dwarves and very special elves, and it has lots of dragons, just the way Joyce likes them. Arnie has promised that he'll include it in his next ish of **Folly**.

Ken Forman

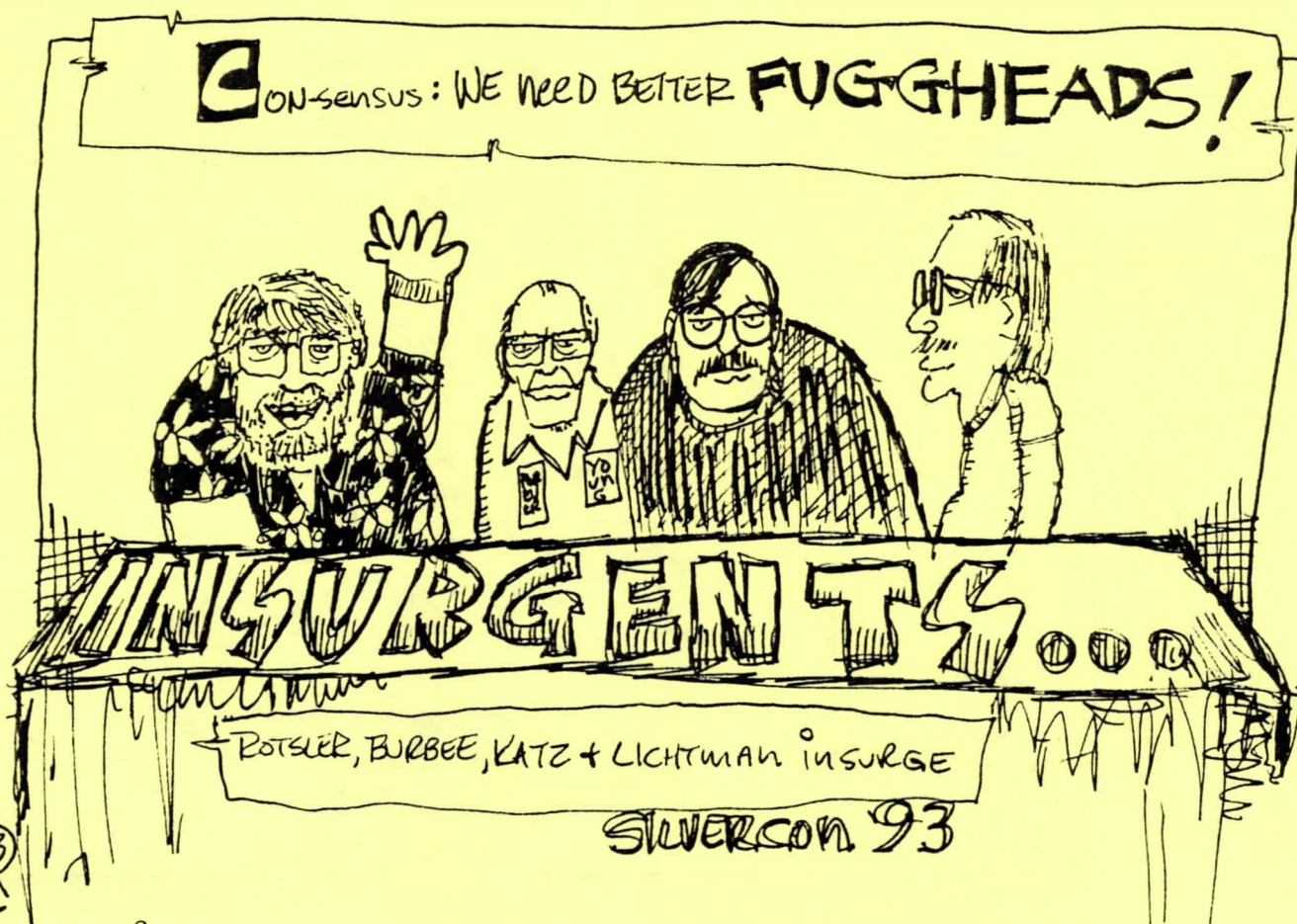
I've always been grateful I liked Science Fiction. I was working late in the bookstore I helped manage when *she* walked in.

She was a vision.

I couldn't help thinking, "*Please have a question I can help you with*" when I noticed she carried a Fantasy book.

"This book is in the wrong place."

"No, it's not."



"Can I order a book from you?"

Yes, yes, yes, I get to talk to her.

"I'd like to order..." the conversation went much like you would expect it.

That's how I met my wife, Aileen.

The Elf

'Tis true, JoHn. Without fandom, Potshot and I wouldn't be as happy as we are right now.

One of the side benefits of Arnie and Joyce making contact with SNAFFU was the introduction of the socials. It was at the first social, the NonCon in September 1991 that Bill and I met. By the end of that year, we were cohabitating.

Put your ish, JoHn. It's the romantic thing to do.

Arnie Katz

I've been married for 22 years. I think I've made Joyce happy, and that these have been good years.

Still, I'm not the perfect husband. I would catalog my failures, but this is supposed to be a short essay.

Yet Joyce has not made any serious effort to make me sleep on the street in front of the house with the curb as my pillow. I pay for my failings in more subtle ways.

Wifely revenge for sins of omission and commission takes many forms. Her most terrifying reprisal sounds so innocent, but all who know me well have witnessed its awesome power.

She calls it "Mixed Grill". I call it gastronomic hell. As sure as Ghu made little green **Hyphens**, some of you are scoffing. (You do that sometimes, you know you do.) "Pish and tosh," you say as you take a meditative puff on your fat Cuban cigar. "Nothing to fear from a little mixed grill."

First of all, I view skeptically the advice of someone who is still smoking cigars. I can understand your diffidence, arising as it does from complete ignorance of the facts. Since I have spent most of my life in that condition, I feel compelled to enlighten you on any rare occasion when that is possible. Now put out that cigar so I can continue my article. The Smoking Section is on page 43.

I have no objection to Mixed Grill as it is prepared and served at the world's leading restaurants. Properly done, Mixed Grill is a feast for the carnivore's taste buds. It is a symphony of charred animal flesh.

I love mixed grill.

This innocent menu item, cruelly twisted by the hands of a sadistic spouse, is an unlikely melange of discordant elements. (Not unlike **Wild Heirs**).

Once, it was a slice of pepperoni pizza, a sausage, and half a tuna sandwich. These three items sat on a paper plate, soaked by sausage grease and pizza oil. Doesn't the Geneva Convention say anything about this? How can it protect parachutists, men plummeting from the sky with military intent, and abandon innocent diners?

Mention of Joyce's Mixed Grill causes me to twitch and shake. For some reason, Bill Kunkel finds my discomfiture funny. His soon-to-be-famous laugh reverberates through the living room every time my "What's for dinner?" draws the reply, "Mixed Grill". It is profoundly satisfying to inspire such mirth in someone who expresses his pleasure in such striking fashion. It is probably the afterglow of this pleasure that causes me to try to maneuver Bill

into actually having to eat the culinary conglomerations that Joyce brings to the table under the dark banner of Mixed Grill.

This fanzine, on the other hand, is being done to the accompaniment of burgers and hot dogs barbequed to perfection on our mammoth gas grill by Gehrig of Grilling. And since this insures a day free of the fear and loathing that is Mixed Grill, it seems appropriate that I feel like the luckiest man on the face of the earth. (Earth.... earth....)

The Elf

I have new appreciation for the concept of Mixed Grill. Before moving in with Bill, most of my cooking responsibilities were family related, with a teenage brother who left very few leftovers.

Now, however, I'm cooking for two, when I'm used to cooking for four. While that doesn't seem like a major difference, the breakdown of portions is actually quite high. Cooking for my parents, younger brother and myself averaged about seven and one-half people. Cooking for Bill and me is an average of two and one-half. That's a shortage of five people, which means that Bill is subjected to Mixed Grill about every other lunch.

The most frightening aspect of this occurred while Bill, Arnie and Joyce were in Chicago in early June for the Consumer Electronics Show. I don't tend to eat much when Bill's home. While he's gone, I only remember mealtimes when our three cats, who are all gluttons, start screeching. I discovered that a crockpot full of spaghetti sauce will feed me, and other people who drop in during the week. The true import of this, however, occurred when, on the Monday of their return, Arnie suggested that he, Joyce, Bill, Ross Chamberlain, and I go out to lunch to discuss the show. I quickly agreed, pointing out to Arnie that Bill was facing a virtually empty refrigerator, and there was no chicken ala king in the cupboard.

Mixed Grill for lunch. Can't live without it.

Potshot

I have heard the conversation ten thousand times.

"What's for dinner, Joyce?"

"Stir fry."

"Oh."

"You don't want stir fry?"

"Oh, that's all right. Sighhhhh... I'll eat it..."

"I'll fix something else, if you like?"

"How about pizza?"

"But Arnie, we have a refrigerator full of food!"

"It's mixed grill!"

"It is not!"

"It's different food isn't it?"

"Of course it is."

"Then it's mixed grill. But that's all right. I'll... eat it."

"Arnie, do you want pizza?"

"Well, you've had a hard day, hon. If you'd rather order pizza in, you go right ahead, sweetie."

JoHn Hardin

I've had Joyce's mixed grill a coupla times. Confidentially, it's not nearly as terrifying as Arnie makes it out to be, but we're trying to keep from swelling her ego. Besides, if we encourage her she

might serve mixed grill more often and while I wouldn't mind, I think Arnie's mind would just snap, ya' know?

Ken Forman

I'll gladly defend Joyce's cooking. Her turkeys, her spaghetti, her stir fry, all delicious.

Can you imagine a feast with Don Fitch in charge of the hors d'oeuvres and wine and Joyce doing the entree? There would be acres of chocolates and cookies and crackers and crunchies and confections.

The potables would be equally varied. We would sip tasty tongue treats.

Toasted, fried, baked, fresh, and raw. The flavors mingle and inter-twine.

Entree of turkey cacciatore. My saliva glands have kicked into high gear.

Anyone want to suggest dessert?

Potshot

You know, I can't imagine what's making me think of this, but somehow the subject came up of using BBS "art icons" in the course of these one-shots.

Now first, let me give a brief explanation of what the fuck I'm talking about. BBS people, especially on chat lines, have developed a time-saving language (and when you're paying by the minute, such inventions are indeed applauded). For example, if someone gets off a good one, the room may resound with people typing "LOL". This indicates that they are Laughing Out Loud. Now maybe it wasn't that hysterical. Maybe it was just funny. Then you do this:

:D

Look at that figure above. Okay, now bank your head 45 degrees to the left (how DID I get this job, Arnie?) and it becomes -- that's right, boys & girls -- a simple "drawing" of a laughing face. And, of course, if the remark only brought a brief, wry wrinkle to your lips you could always suffice with an ordinary smile, or:

:)

I have always found the vocabulary of the BBS to be very useful in on-line chat. It's a visual shorthand that I often find myself keenly missing when writing letters, for example, to those non-conversant with BBSpeak.

But in a format like this, it can get a little eye-popping. 8)

So perhaps we might consider not doing it. Just a thought.

I've certainly explained it for the last time. :P

The Elf

Okay, fans. Let me throw down the gauntlet.

This is for those under the delusion that the most loving, intelligent, energetic, giving, flamboyant cat(s) in fandom reside under their own roof. Understandable. People always have blind spots about their young'uns. But it is important that you realize you're all wrong.

Bill and I have the privileged of being guardians of Punk. The Little Guy. The smartest, bravest, affectionate cat in fandom.

"Sure," you're smirking to yourself, "Laurie's just overcome with maternal pride. We saw her editorial in *D-bug*. We know better."

But think about it. How many of you have cats that regularly

phone friends and family (during off-peak hours, no less!)? Arnie and Joyce get rung up by Punk at least twice a week, on both lines. My mom receives equal attention. In fact, she even talks to him when he calls. True, he can only use the speed dial feature, but we view that as merely a temporary set-back. Pretty soon, he'll be calling overseas, sending faxes, making copies.

As for bravery, the other day a giant queen waterbug invaded our kitchen. When I saw it, approximately the size of the giant locusts in *Beginning of the End*, hanging on the wall, I did the obvious thing: I screamed bloody murder. Both Bill and Punk sprang to my rescue. (Our other two cats, it should be noted, ran away!) As the bug flew across the kitchen and landed on the breakfast counter, Punk was right on it. Between my two heroes, the bug was sent to Insect Heaven, and Punk tenderly and reassuringly licked my nose.

Sometimes, however, even demi-gods get out of hand. When Punk's natural energies get the better of him, he sometimes requires sedation. This comes in truly appropriate form, for just as Wonder Woman could humble enemies with the magical golden lasso, and the girdle of Hippolyte possessed tremendous mystical attributes, Punk can only be subdued with the Harness of Humility, a day-glo pink kitty harness that somehow, inexplicably, defeats his spirit, and sends him immediately to the floor for rest and contemplation.

So tell your stories, sing your songs. Your cats may be fine animals, but they are, after all, only animals. Punk, on the other hand, is a god.

And I think a god beats a smart cat, don't you?

Arnie Katz

As you read *Wild Heirs*, you may be struck by what an amusing and entertaining couple Las Vegas fandom has in Bill Kunkel and Laurie Yates. Their charming repartee may even make you faunch for two such delightful fannish friends.

Right here and now, I issue a warning: Don't become friends with them. Oh, I know it's seductive, but you must resist. I didn't, and I have Paid the Price.

This is my cautionary tale. Disregard it at your own risk.

Wrong telephone numbers have plagued us constantly since moving to Las Vegas. Our two main numbers -- we have four -- attract an inordinate number of nuisance calls. At times, it gets so bad that we have to disconnect the phone after 10 pm so we can have uninterrupted sleep.

These calls are overwhelmingly the result of human fallibility. We get misdials, calls for people who used to own the number, and foredoomed attempts to send faxes or digital data. They are annoying, not dangerous.

Then we started getting flurries of more disturbing calls. When I answered the phone, all I could hear was the loud ambient hiss of a speaker phone. I'd barely hang up when the other line would ring, and I would hear the same formless noise. When I hung up, the first phone would ring again. Usually, I got two or three calls *on each phone* before taking both off the hook.

Like many who replace science fiction with mysteries in their reading diet, I fancy myself an armchair sleuth. It didn't take Sherlock Holmes to see the ominous potential in getting identical bad calls on two different lines.

These were not random wrong numbers, I realized with dread,



but premeditated harassments. Joyce reached the same conclusion and started jumping out of her skin every time the phone rang in the evening.

"Oh, by the way, Arnie," said Laurie one afternoon, "did you get any unusual phone calls last night?"

I told her about the persistent speaker phone calls.

"Oh, that was Punk," she said as though everyone's pet makes crank calls.

"Punk? Punk your cat?" I asked, flabbergasted by her revelation.

"Yes. We caught him calling my mom the other day."

According to Laurie, Punk had made a mistake that trips up many tele-tricksters. He deviated from his time-tested *modus operandi*. When Laurie's mother spoke into the phone, Punk answered with a meow. She called him a Bad Kitty, and he hung up and has not called her again.

"Did he look up my number?" I inquired, skeptically. I admit it. It is hard to take seriously the claims of someone who calls her animals "the kids" and claims that one of them can talk.

"He uses speed dialing," she said. I was impressed. I don't even use speed dialing. "He hits one button to turn on the speaker, which means he doesn't have to lift the receiver. Then he hits a speed dial button.

"And when I hang up..."

"...Punk hits another button so he can hear the beeps again!"

They're trying to keep the phone out of Punk's reach, and the number of calls from cat to Katz has decreased significantly this month. I figure I'm safe, unless Laurie decides that her teenage kitty (in feline years) needs his own extension.

So before you get too chummy with Potshot and the Elf, you might want to consider the potential consequences. If they really

get to like you, they'll put your number on speed dial...

Peggy Burke

Arnie, whatever your opinions and experiences, I think mixed grill must be a step or three ahead of most of the frozen dinners that are lining my freezer these days. After working a 10 1/2 hour day, I have no desire to do more in the kitchen than push a few buttons on a microwave and collapse. Every once in a while, though, I can be persuaded to make spaghetti and open a jar of Prego. I reserve this for special occasions, like when company's coming. Any mixed grill, and especially Joyce's, must be superior to this.

After seeing *JURASSIC PARK* (no, this paragraph had no segue), I went back and reread the book--and discovered again why I come down firmly on the agin' it side of genetic engineering. While I would love to be able to pet a baby velociraptor (providing Mama Raptor was safely away), I don't much relish the idea of becoming dinner for that same velociraptor a few years later. Kinda takes all the fun out of it.

Ross Chamberlain

I am that most blessed of men, an omnivore of eclectic tastes, married to a person who enjoys putting together all kindsa foodstuffs into delightful combinations. She is something of an artist in this respect. Mixed grill? Sure, I'm happy... »*!«
...(excuse me)...

Arnie Katz

Having proclaimed his gastronomic inclinations, Ross rose from the Macintosh. Better read the rest of this fanzine before he eats it!

Send letters. It's lonely at night in the desert.

*People who pleasure themselves,
i.e. masturbate, are often good in bed
because they are in touch with their bodies,
or so goes the conventional wisdom.
They can also be selfish.*

It began beautifully, with a stunning Asian Southwest Airlines clerk sending me Northwest to Las Vegas. Bill Kunkel and Laurie Yates met me, drove me through a green and pleasant city -- much expanded from my earlier visit 20 years ago -- to Arnie & Joyce Katz's home.

It's a large, pleasant house filled with computers and games. Arnie is a game critic & editor of a games magazine. Art Widner was there & oodles of LV fen I didn't know. Then came Burbee.

It must be tough to be Burb, with all those expectant fans expecting. But despite a stroke which put him in a wheelchair (which he hates) and took away chunks of his memories, he was very often the Burb of old. It was great to look upon Burb again, and with him Cora (Socorro), who was the springboard of perhaps the most embarrassing moment of my life. Cannot remember anything particular, but had a nice time.

Aileen Forman, a very pretty lady who is a blackjack dealer, took me to the con hotel, the Union Plaza. This is one across the end of a street in downtown Vegas that you've seen in umpteen movies, the pan which doesn't have a lot of lights -- it has an excess of lights! My downfall came the next morning.

Despite going to bed late, I awoke early. After breakfast in the casino (they don't want you to leave for any reason!) and after reading, drawing and wandering around, I checked the con area. No one. So I started putting my pocket change in the slots: 2 pennies, 2 nickels, 2 dimes, 2 quarters. That was it.

I checked the con area. Then I wandered outside and looked down the street where they have a casino that features topless dealers. Their ad features a woman of monumental proportions. I thought briefly of going the block, just to be able to report on topless dealers at ten in the morning, but I wasn't up to it. Upon analysis, I realized I didn't want to see inferior boobs at this time of morning, Monumental boobs, yes, I was up to that, but inferior boobs, no.

Then I saw Don Fitch playing machine poker or video poker or whatever they call it. I said hi and sat down to talk. He forced nickels upon me. I bought a quarter's worth and played and talked.

I spent a buck or so and checked the con area. I

bought a cup of coffee and sat drawing. A man told me I was talented.

He bought me a second cup and showed me his card and said he had a problem. A few minutes later he went away with a drawing that he said summed up his two businesses. One cup of coffee for two drawings.

Onward.

I gambled a bit more out of sheer boredom. They really don't miss a trick. Eventually, people started showing up. But every morning it was much the same, getting up needlessly early and gambling out of boredom. By the time I went to the

Silvercon 2

By William Rotsler

airport, I was \$25 down.

I had supplied the con with what I thought was an excess of name badge designs, thinking they'd pick a few, but they used them all! I had made some special colored ones for the Poul Andersons (he was Pro GoH & I was Fan GoH), Art Widner, the Katzs, the filk singer GoHs, some of the con committee, Don Fitch Bob "Robert" Lichtman, (the previous year's Fan GoH) and of course, Cora & Charles Burloee. I had made one for The Erotic Guest of Honor, and they gave it to a Raven, who used to be a dominatrix in phone sex.

It was an easy, laid back con, with some filk singing (which I avoided like the plague), and on the last day, some guys in armor who whacked at each other.

Arnie Katz told me when he arrived in Vegas that there was an active fan group there but apparently ignorant of fandom as we know it, or at least not in touch. But they are a young, able group, and if any of you are invited there, go. You won't regret it.

I was on a History of Fandom panel with Burb, Widner, Katz, & Lichtman that was interesting.

Attended what is now a traditional Silvercon How To Gamble panel, which was enlightening. Later talked to panelist Marci McDowell, who is a Spy in the Sky supervisor, who wants to write science fiction. I told her she had a unique talent -- she knew games, gaming, people and was in a position to talk to folks who knew more. I suggested, among other things, that if she needed an erotic character, there was at least one. She said at once, "Oh, I know So-and-So who runs the girls out of [a hotel]."

I suggested she do a series of stories about future gambling, Las Vegas 2100, where the games were different, where the stakes were high -- betting your, your life, the marriage contract of your wife, your lottery shot at immortality, immigration to a new world, etc. -- that a series would imprint her on the sf mind, even do a collection in time. It was fun seeing her

"light up." (But I didn't hear her say, "Who was that masked man?")

John Hardin & Ken Forman took me on a night tour of LV, past the Treasure Island under construction, to the Luxor. Even though there are no sphinx or pyramid at Luxor, the hotel has a sphinx and a black glass pyramid, which PR says is bigger than Cheops, but I sincerely doubt it. Everywere was "the world's biggest." Across the street from Luxor was the MGM, which when completed will be the world's biggest hotel.

Saw a motel marquee sign "Highly recommended by owner." We got there a few minutes too late for the volcano eruption at the Mirage. There, gas bubbles up through the water & is ignited. But the owner didn't like the natural gas additives, so had gas especially made which Forman says smells like pina coladas.

Getting out at the hotel, a really beautiful light-skinned black girl lazily got out of a car ahead of us, and raked me with a long slow look that was *hot*, yet subtle and "ladylike." My reaction: "Oh, a professional." Maybe I'm getting too sophisticated to have fun.

They had a dinner with Art Widner as toastmaster. The night before, Woody Bernardi, con head, asked me, "Could I get a copy of your speech?" Since I had long ago asked "Do I have to make a speech?" and the answer was No, I wittily replied, "What speech?" The speech I was to make the next day. I said, as you might imagine, that I'd wing it.

Big mistake. I started by thanking people, saw Cora Burbee next to Burb and started to thank her for me, and for fandom, for taking care of Burbee all these years. Someone with a pillow soaked in overwhelming emotion whopped me in the face. I was really overcome. I couldn't speak. I squeaked. It was the most embarrassing moment of my entire life. It was so sudden and startlingly strong. I said I loved Burbee. And kinda got through the rest, whatever it was I said.

The nice thing was, not one person said, "Boy, did you make an ass of yourself!"

I donated some drawings to an auction. Also as a money-raiser, I said I'd do a carton for or against

anyone or anything. Ken Forman won one, Art Widner another.

The only problem came when I realized that Woody Berardi wasn't going to pay me the \$50 per diem he had said. (They told me he forgets things.) I wouldn't have minded, but I realized there was a \$48 parking bill waiting my return to Burbank. Thinking I was going to get cash, I had put going to the ATM low on my priority list, and I hadn't made it over there.

Then the ATM in the casino refused to accept my secret code ("pin number" they call it), but other fans had said the same. So I got the con to cash a check and all was well. Besides, some pit boss was a fan, and he gave Woody coupons for breakfasts & lunches (I did a cartoon for him) and Cora Burbee picked up one check. (She'd leave Burb, go play blackjack, come back with \$170.)

At one breakfast I found I had no change for a tip and it was a long walk back from the register, so I left a cartoon, saying this was the tip ("Never spit on a sheriff," etc).

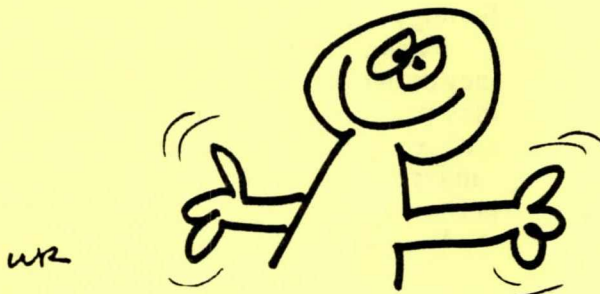
The last night there they had a Mac out with a b/w graphics program. I'd never worked with one, except a color one on an Amiga, years ago, and I really had fun, saving 38 items. Love to get a print-out of what I did.

I arrived early at the airport to find all the seats, instead of facing either directly toward or away from the windows, slanted so that you always face the glare. But gee, right across the aisle is a double row of slots. I was "read out," tired of the glare, tired of people watching, so I donated another \$3 to the Las Vegas economy.

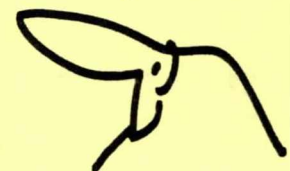
But I enjoyed myself, met some nice people, talked with Poul & Karen Anderson, too, and might well come again on my own dollar!

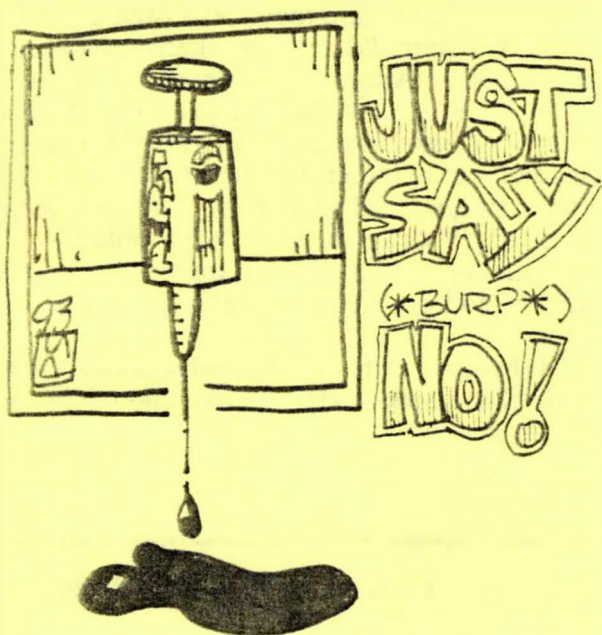
For some women, their teenage
is the caterpillar stage

SILVER CON
TWO-TO-ONE IT'S A GOOD CON!



OH, THE
ODDS HAVE
GONE UP!





Dark Ambrosia By Laurie Yates

Advice to those who might consider long-term residence in Las Vegas: if you have a weakness for gambling or alcohol, go elsewhere, young fan. The omnipresent nature of poker and slot machines is well reported, but did you also know that while you pull the handle (or, these days, push the button) on a slot, keno, or poker coin-op at any casino in town, beautiful women will bring you booze for free.

All you want, as often as you want it, as long as you keep playing.

In point of fact, Las Vegas is a town that caters to moral soft spots of all kinds. Even something as innocuous -- indeed, as deified within our own peer group -- as a predilection for Pepsi can drag you into the abyss. My own descent into the hell of soft drink purgatory stands as proof thereof.

Before moving to Vegas, a Large Soda came in a sixteen ounce glass, most of the space filled with ice. That was fine, enough to keep my desires and cravings at bay, without becoming obsessive.

Here in the city of Las Vegas, in the Kingdom of Excess, a 16 ounce soda is designated as simply a "Gulp". As I stood in front of the array of possible Pepsi cup sizes at a Vegas 7-11 for the first time, a "Gulp" didn't quite seem...enough.

I wanted my soda to last longer than a five minute "Gulp". I didn't want a carbonated "quickie". No, by Ghu, I needed a 7-11 "Big Gulp"! Thirty-two ounces of heaven-sent liquid. The ambrosia, I would later discover, of the fannish ghods.

I had found my Mecca, my worshipping place. 7-11, say halleluja!

But, wait! We had yet to arrive at the penthouse, the ne plus ultra of soda size: yea, verily, there was even a "SUPER BIG GULP"! Did my eyes deceive me? The chance of having 44 ounces of nectar to leisurely sip and fill my veins with carbonated euphoria rocked my body with spasms of anticipation. I was smug in the certainty that my habit was far superior to other people's nefarious addictions. I shrugged off the teasing about my always having a soda in front of me. I ignored the comments that I could be counted on to know not only which stores had Pepsi, but also the percentage of carbonation-to-syrup in their drink.

Soon, though, the teasing changed. Friends came up to me, offering hope and advice. They observed that knowing the distance between stores was not healthy. That my purchase of a refillable 44 ounce drink cup was just as bad as buying an extra supply of needles.

I shrugged it off. It was good for the environment, after all, and it reduced the cost of my purchase. Ecology and personal satisfaction in one swell swallow.

I was convinced that their concern was feigned: they didn't have a good time with the amber-osia, so they just wanted to ruin **my** good time. They didn't understand how I could talk, write, even fan better "under the influence." I knew these people, and they knew me.

We continued in this vein: me buying and them

condemning. Even Bill, my stalwart defender, began to question the extent of my jones. I shrugged him off, pointing out that without my daily fix, I had horrible headaches and was bitchy. Did he really want to live with that? He subsided, temporarily, and enlisted other people to talk to me. I blocked them out. I didn't have a problem. I was not an addict. I knew my limits. After all, my Castle of Cola had brought out an even larger container that I avoided. It was unweildy to carry a paper cup filled with 64 ounces of soda. It was too indulgent.

And besides, it wouldn't fit in my car's cup holder.

But then, one day, in a different store, in another part of town, I stumbled upon a sacred relic. I felt like Indiana Jones: a behemoth of a drink cup, nay, Soda in a Drum, designed to hold the all that the ghods could give, or at least 64 ounces. My Holy Grail had a handle, which was the right length and curvature to fit over my car's ashtray. It wouldn't spill, and I could have my all-day soda!

The ghods had looked upon me and found me

worthy!

I now had the ultimate fix. And with it came the realization: I, too, am a junkie. But, unlike others, I have no Soda Anonymous to provide support. I only have a slow withdrawal program that leaves me with the DTs and a manical glaze in my eyes that remains until I receive my maintenance dose.

I know that my life will never be the same. And so, trufans, if you come to Vegas, don't ask me about the Soda Ghods. Don't ask for my extra relics. Pity me, as I sniff empty Pepsi cans for the residue fumes. And look upon me as a warning.

Avoid the fizzing, bubbling addiction more insidious than heroin, crack, or even Smart Food Popcorn. Look upon me and be afraid...be very afraid.

Dear Ghu, I HAVE A PEPSI ON MY BACK!

Get Your Buns Ready for Hotdogs

That Immortal Line

By Arnie Katz

It was, I believe, the Wednesday before Silvercon 2 that Las Vegas fanhistory was made. There was no warning. One minute we were going about our time-honored fannish tasks, and then everything changed.

Collating and worried speculation were the main items on the menu when JoHn Hardin, Woody Bernardi, and Ken Forman made their pre-con visit. They'd come to lend a hand on a couple of fanzine projects, Rotsler's Rules and The Incompleat Burbee, and fret about the thousand-and-one things that could go wrong at a small regional convention.

While fans collated the Rotsler volume, JoHn Hardin kept spirits light by reading passages from The Incompleat Burbee as he went through the manuscript making corrections. (Those familiar with my standard of typing accuracy may well imagine that this was a major job.)

After a couple of hours, I thought it was time for a break. As we all gathered in the living room, JoHn turned to me, copy of Burbee's "NFFF: Ave et Vale" in his hand, and said, "So Arnie, which of those 'F's stands for 'fugghead'?"

Neofen are like monkeys. You put a bunch of them into a room with some typers, and you hope that, eventually, one of them will produce something memorable.

And here it was! After months of listening to out-of-context quotes from "top ten" movies, self-referential epigrams, and only intermittently successful attempts to pun, a Las Vegas fan had stepped forward and intoned a truly remarkable line, a pithy sentence that will be quoted, possibly with authorship credit, whenever and wherever trufans gather.

"So, Arnie, which of those 'f's stands for 'fugghead'?" Note the full majesty of the line, complete with the inclusion of my given name. You can imagine my immense pleasure of the prospect of being forever associated in the popular fannish mind with JoHn Hardin's exemplary epigram.

My extreme reaction to JoHn's utterance didn't go unobserved. As we slapped each other on the back and congratulated ourselves on our good fortune to be part of Las Vegas Fandom at this point in history, Ken Forman wanted to analyze the golden moment we had just shared.

"I noticed that when JoHn said his immortal line," said the Mainspring, "you got an amazing look on your face." I wish with my whole being that he had said "wild look on your sensitive fannish face," but his comment was as quoted. I cannot profane JoHn Hardin's brilliant quip by surrounding it with a lot of lies, half-truths, and falsehoods by omission.

"Yes, I suppose I must've," I conceded. "That was when I realized that a Las Vegas Fan, the group which Ghu Himself has placed in my care, had spoken an immortal fannish line." All right, I made up the Ghu reference to pad my part. I'm sorry.

"And then you got a thoughtful look," said the Man Who Makes It All Happen in Sin City fandom.

"Yes, it's true," I said. There was no sense equivocating. "That was when I was wondering how I could possibly steal that line, make it my own, reap every ounce of egoboo all for me myself alone."

"And then you got this wonderful smile," he concluded.

"Ah, yes," I said, "that was when I figured out how I would do it."

Paper Clips & Poker Chips

By Soccoro Franco-Burbee

enable you to LAST LONGER and enjoy your visits to the gaming halls more.

Last October we went to Las Vegas. I started right out at the Union Plaza, a big casino in downtown Las Vegas, to try out Goodman's strategy. I had studied and practiced like crazy for a couple of months, playing "pretend" games during my lunch hour at work. I played all six hands, as in a Vegas layout, and the dealer's hand, and I considered myself player #6, right next to the dealer. That is the preferred spot.

I played for paper clips. Regular clips were worth \$1, #2 clips were worth \$5, and #3 clips \$10. I played Goodman strategy throughout all my practice, never deviating. After a few weeks, I was faunching to try it for real, in a real casino, with real money.

When I got to the casino, it was so crowded that I couldn't readily find an empty stool at any of the blackjack layouts that were working. Then I noticed that Alex Sweeten Jr. was playing the #1 spot at a table. He is our Vice-President, Service Rep. UAW. We had worked together negotiating our last contract with the UAW Local 509, so I knew him pretty well. We'd come down, with 40 other people, on the same "wet" bus. Liquor, you know.

Since I couldn't find a seat right off, I stood behind Alex for awhile. Before I realized it, I was helping him with his hands, advising him ala Goodman. I guess I couldn't help myself when I saw him splitting tens. Oh my, that is a no no. "Alex, when you've got 20, you're splitting an almost sure winner. Don't split."

By the way, I will never cease to be amazed at people when they gamble. In ordinary life they may be intelligent people, adroit in business affairs, and perhaps quite financially astute. These same people, at a gambling table, will make foolish bets over and over, because they haven't taken the trouble to study the game they are playing.

I said, "Alex, if you are a \$2 bettor, you must be prepared to progress when you are on a lucky streak and back off to your basic when you lose. You must bet \$2, \$4, \$6, \$10, \$10, \$15, with \$15 as your top bet. If you lose along the way, drop back to your basic \$2 bet."



This piece was originally published for FAPA in a one-shot in May 1975.

Dave Locke says that the theme for this one-shot is "Fulfilled Desires," but I'm going to keep it clean and plunge right into the story of what happened to me on our last trip to Vegas.

My favorite casino game is Blackjack, or "21". I have read many books on gambling by Scarne, Jacoby, Radner, Hart and Goodman. All have blackjack strategies, but the one I liked best was Goodman's. He makes no claims that this system or style of play will make you a winner. He does say that his strategy will

He said, "I'm a \$10 better all the way."

"Oh, are you willing to progress to \$100 and if you catch Aces, split them and place \$100 on each of them?"

"No."

"Then I think you are a \$2 better and let's try that."

I stayed by his side for about one hour and he followed my advice. Finally he got tired of the game or perhaps of my coaching, but when he left he pressed a \$5 chip on me and said, "You're a hell of a 21 player. Thanks." And he strolled away. Later he returned, and, sad to say, played without his self-appointed coach, and lost a bundle.

Anyway, I slid onto a vacated stool and began to play, but as I said, I don't like spot #1 at the table and I kept my eyes peeled for an empty #6 spot. The fellow who was sitting in the #6 slot was losing \$100 bills with such disdain that one might think he had printed them himself. I knew he couldn't last much longer. He didn't. After he'd lost a bundle he got up and left. I eagerly slid onto that vacated stool.

The dealer was a pretty blonde girl, and sharp. She had been eying me while I was helping Alex, and even though our little team had never gotten the casino on the ropes, she was looking at me with some curiosity. At one point in the play, she said to me: "When are you going to write a book?"

"I haven't thought about it, but it sounds like a good idea."

Later she said: "When was the last time you dealt in Vegas?"

"I've never dealt in a casino," I said. I was so tickled by her questions that I was on cloud nine. A pro dealer, talking like that to me. They usually don't talk at all, unless you ask them a question about the play.

I think she was irritated at me, too. You see in the #6 spot I was the last player to act. So, many times I would have a breaking hand, like 12 or 15, and the dealer's

exposed card would be a two or three or four, so I assumed she had a ten in the hole, she also could have a breaking hand. So I would stick on my 12 and she would have to hit her 12 and many times she got a ten, which broke her, so she would have to pay me and any other players who had stood. I think she came to regard it as a personal affront; here was a player who was making her take the breaking card.

I'll spare you the details of the next six hours of play. Yes, that is how long I sat there, playing on my original \$5 gift from Alex. I had a ball. Goodman and the weeks of playing with paper clips had proved to be eminently worthwhile. I loved it.

Charlie finally came away from the crap tables and took us off to a steak and lobster dinner at the El Cortez Hotel. "Us" was Maggie, who is a good friend of ours, and me.

I grandly ordered steak and lobster--\$7.95, I think. Maggie was looking for something cheaper, being thoughtful of her host. But Charlie said: "Order from the left side of the menu. After all, this dinner is being paid for, courtesy of a crap table at the Union Plaza, second table east of the ladies' room." He pulled out a handful of \$5 chips. He'd won about \$150 up to then.

I think I will throw caution to the wind and say that the whole fan world, or at least the small segment that makes up FAPA, is going to think I am loony. I am a little crazy, too, for Charlie Burbee. He's going to hate this part when he sees it. Becoming Mrs. Burbee is numero uno on my list of unfulfilled desires. I am not like some of the wives in Eric Bernes *Games People Play*. I don't hate my husband. I concern myself with his needs and well-being. I am very proud to be his wife. This is the man I've needed and wanted since I first met him in 1951, in a small machine shop in Los Angeles.

Also working in that very same shop in 1951, was F. Towner Laney, he of the slicked-down hair and fanatic's eyes...but that is another article.



Secrets of the Universe Revealed

Plus Chickens

By Ken Forman

Since many of SNAFFU's activities take place at Casa de Maelstrom (or SNAFFU Central as my home is often called), I have the pleasure of entertaining some unusually well informed people from time to time.

At a recent club meeting, some new faces appeared from out of the night to join our group. Several weeks earlier, Donnell "no last name" and his cousin Jerome Cadd visited the club's garage sale held in my driveway. Since they expressed an interest in Science Fiction, we invited them back for the meeting.

Little did we know what a treasure trove of information we had gained.

After the meeting, a few people were milling around, talking and enjoying each other's company. Donnell, Jerome and I were in the club's library getting to know each other a little better. Someone mentioned the environment and pollution. Never one to shirk my responsibilities as SNAFFU's unofficial knowledgeable person on the subject, I solicited their opinions on nuclear fusion as a possible power source for the future.

"Nuclear fusion is *much* too dangerous to use on the surface of the earth," one of the pair stated.

"Yes," agreed his partner. "If a fusion bomb of the proper size were exploded on the ground, the entire surface of the earth would be consumed in exactly 7.2 seconds."

I was shocked.

I was concerned.

I was confused.

"What about Bikini Atoll?" I wanted to know, "Haven't they detonated very large Hydrogen bombs over the island? What happened?"

"That was detonated in the air. If it were on the ground ... poof!" The other hastily added that "a Soviet bomb was detonated on an island in the South Pacific sometime in the 50s and that island is no longer there."

I had to know. "Why wasn't the entire surface of the earth consumed?" I inquired.

"The water dampened the reaction and prevented it from leaving the area."

Boy, was I relieved.

I suggested that the three of us move into the living room where JoHn Hardin and Karl Kreder were watching a movie. I wanted somewhere to sit down, something to drink, and someone to witness.

We watched a few minutes of the movie when Donnell informed us that "All cancers are caused by viruses, and that since all viruses emit energy at specific frequencies, cancer could be cured by bombarding it with radiation at exactly 11.5 million hertz."

"In fact," he elaborated, "a relative of mine invented a machine to emit such frequencies and cured cancer. The AMA found out and had him killed."

JoHn, Karl and I were politely skeptical.

"Why would the AMA kill anyone with a cure for cancer?" one of us puzzled.

"They make too much money on cancer research."

"In fact, when the funding for cancer research started dropping off, the AMA bought the rights to AIDS so they would reap the benefits from that research," Jerome added.

When we asked for some kind of proof, Donnell offered to give us the machine to see for ourselves, but he warned that we too would be killed for using it.

A short while later, the subject of Atlantis was brought up. "You do believe that Atlantis existed?" they asked.

My response was something like "I believe that the civilization on ancient Crete had technology that Medieval Europe didn't so legends would naturally arise about it. What do you believe, Donnell?"

His response was long and carefully worded. The gist was that Atlantis existed as a continent in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, and that it sank in three stages. The final cataclysm took place 12,500 years ago when the planet Venus, which was a rogue captured by the sun, passed too close to the earth. During this near

miss, the earth was flipped over so that Antarctica was on the south pole instead of the north where it was suppose to be. This catastrophe caused the earth's energy field to change to its present state.

"I've heard of that theory," JoHn stated.

"Oh, it's no theory. It really happened," he was informed.

"You are supporting an idea that credible scientists have largely disproved," JoHn replied.

"Einstein was thought to be a crackpot when he proposed some of his more revolutionary ideas."

"Do you have proof?"

"Of course!" How could I have doubted?

"There is a complete record of Atlantis buried under the right foot of the Sphinx. If you'd like, I'll give you a shovel and you can see for yourself. Of course, the Egyptian guards would probably shoot you first."

Just think, the history of Atlantis is available to anyone with a shovel and a bullet-proof vest. I wondered what language it was written in.

"What about plate tectonics, continental drift and the spreading of the Atlantic," I wanted to know.

"Wrong, all wrong!"

I felt glad I hadn't wasted my time pursuing a degree in Geology.

"Did you know," asked Jerome, "that there is an iron pillar in northern India that dates from before the destruction of Atlantis? It doesn't rust or corrode."

"If you scrape some of it off and heat it enough to melt it," added Donnell, "it starts to rust as soon as you re-cast it. That's because it was made back before the earth's 'energy field' was changed. It's that same field that causes people to age. Aging is really oxidation of the body. People used to live a thousand years."

I was curious to know what other facts were being kept from me by scientific conspirators.

The pyramids in Egypt are actually great 'mechanisms' instead of the burial vaults of the Pharaohs. Donnell calmly stated that if he had a simple, second "essential mechanism", he could levitate using the power of the pyramids. Unfortunately the plans for that second part were lost with the rest of Atlantis.

"The secret to transmuting elements was also lost," Donnell added sadly. "It's very easy, even chickens can do it."

"I beg your pardon," I begged. "Did you say chickens can transmute elements?"

"Yes, yes, of course." Donnell seemed shocked that intelligent, informed people like the three of us wouldn't know that.

"If you remove all calcium from a chicken's diet and introduce silicon instead, the chicken will continue making egg shells with calcium. Obviously they are transmuting the silicon into calcium."

I couldn't let this one pass.

"Assuming you did remove all calcium from a chicken's diet, and assuming they still laid eggs, doesn't it make sense that their bodies would leach the

necessary calcium from their bones. I concede that they might be able to do this for a short time but after a while the whole thing would stop."

My statement conjured visions of a boneless chicken farm in both Karl and JoHn.

"Oh no," stated Jerome, "chickens will continue producing eggs indefinitely under such conditions."

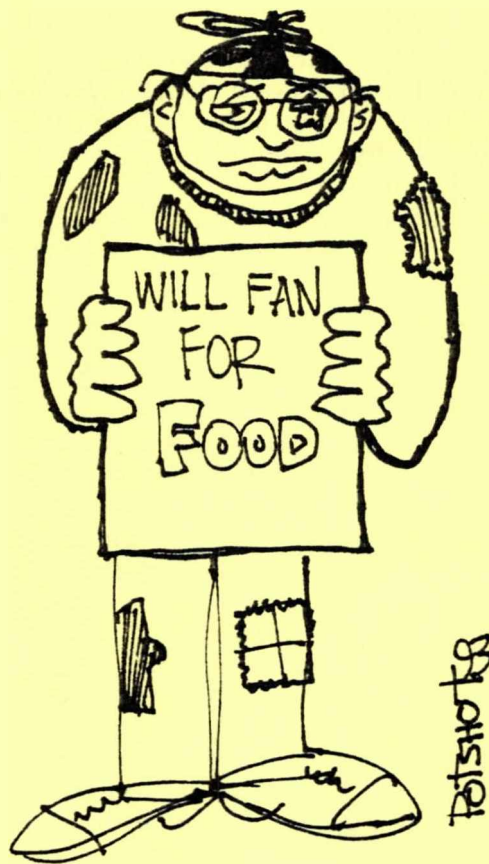
I feel grateful to both Jerome Cadd and Donnell (no last name) for correcting some of my erroneous ideas about how the world works. I feel so much better informed than I was. It is true, all knowledge is contained in fandom.

And my respect for chickens has increased tremendously.

When they left, silence filled my living room. The quiet lasted until we heard their car rumble down the street.

Karl broke the stillness when he gasped, "Oh my Ghod!"

I guess he'll never look at chickens the same way either.



The HORROR of Flight 1331

By Bill Kunkel

The thirteenth level of hell consists of people shuffling endlessly through an airport, their reservations mysteriously cancelled, their connecting flights vanished. When a plane out is finally secured, the departure time is moved back every time a traveller checks the monitor. "Everyone is a stranger, but some are stranger than others."

-Dante

Were I a superstitious man, the ominous symmetry of it all would have warned me. But it had been a long day and unlucky numbers were the last thing on my mind. I'd arrived in San Jose before 10 AM and was greeted by a tense, nervous Laurie Thornton, P.R. dynamo for Capcom America.

"I have some very upsetting news," she braced me. "And there are several things we can do about it."

I was there at Capcom to get an advance look at **Street Fighter II Turbo Edition** on the Super NES, a long-awaited and extremely hot video game title. But I was suddenly getting the feeling that perhaps I might not be seeing it after all.

"I couldn't believe it," Laurie was saying. "I had three copies of the ROM and all three are... gone."

"Gone?" I asked.

"Gone," she confirmed.

"Did they suffer?"

She then explained how two copies had been pilfered by the sales staff without her knowledge while her assistant had the third in L.A. "She'll be back from L.A. by 3:30," Laurie explained, searching my face for signs of artistic temperament. Fortunately, I'm a fairly easygoing guy, and Laurie Thornton is too nice a person to have her shoes broken at ten ayem on a morning when things had already been, as she put it, upsetting.

She offered to have me spend the night at a hotel (without any clothes or toiletries, or even a chemical support system, this was not a tempting proposition), or I could stay later and delay my flight out. This we were able to arrange, but my 5 PM departure time wound up closer to 9 PM. It was going to be a long day.

I spent most of that day in a cubicle at Capcom, admiring the game related premiums which weren't

in my collection, and reading **BLAT!** and P.J. O'Rourke's *Give War A Chance*. Eventually, I got to play the game, and was ultimately deposited at the airport, where I figured to munch a Mickey D's and read a bit.

The beautiful Scandanavian woman behind the counter confirmed my itinerary changes. "You're on Flight 1331, leaving from Gate 4," she said with a sweet smile.

1331.

Was it the interplay of the numbers? Was it coincidence? The flight boarded, in festival fashion, and I headed straight for the rear and grabbed a window seat a full three rows behind anyone else. What I do best on planes is sleep, as anyone who has travelled with me by air can attest. But I had barely dozed, when a disturbance nearby roused me.

"Damn thing!"

It was a thirtyish, attractive woman sitting one seat down from me on the aisle. She seemed stoned, or drunk, or somehow just not right, and she was fumbling helplessly with her seat belt. "Could you help me?" she asked piteously.

I looked down at my own seatbelt, determined which end was up, and quickly (and impersonally -- don't want to get her started for Christ's sake) snapped her in and tugged the belt tight.

"Thank you," she said, in a voice dripping with Blanche Duboisian angst. "You're very sweet."

Uh oh. Time to smile blandly and go to sleep, Meyer. Ten seconds. Twenty. Thirty.

"Excuse me?" she ventures.

"Yes?"

"Do you... **know** Las Vegas?"

This last was said with the sort of passion that usually precedes a cant against that Evil, Sinful Town. But she continued to stare at me.

"In what way do you mean?" I inquired.

"Philosophically? Geographically?"

"The hotels," she clarified. "The Casino Hotels. Which one would be best for me?"

I shrugged, mustering all the indifference at my command. "That really depends on what you want to do there."

"Oh, I want to die there."

Rim shot. Get ready to run, baby. This lady has just told you she's looking for a nice hotel room to off herself

in and wants personal recommendations.

"I'd go Downtown," I suggested finally. "The Golden Nugget is nice."

"You want to move away from me now," she declared. "Don't you?"

"Of course not," I said, adding a mental note: I wanted to move away from you the second you arrived.

"You're very sweet," she repeated, then realizing she had already used that line, added: "You really are. I'm Nicki."

"Hi, Nicki. I'm... Arnie."

Truth be told, I did feel sorry for her. One of those people so starved for attention and affection that they're ready to spread their guts on the table ten seconds into a conversation. Then the whole story came rushing out. She had been in a mental institution and had been released the previous day. She had gone to visit her mother. Her father had abused her, her mother had been loveless. Well, she'd evened the score with mom at least. "I stole a thousand dollars from her before I left San Jose," she reported loudly. "I decided I deserve to have a good time before I die. I deserve it." By now she was practically shouting to be heard over the din of the airplane, which had begun to taxi down the runway in earnest. Then suddenly, we were in the air and the noise level dropped, except for hers. "I'LL PROBABLY BE ARRESTED THE MINUTE I GET TO LAS VEGAS," she was confiding to the entire aircraft as we hit the clouds.

Nicki arrived on the plane seriously gassed on her last day's medication, fortified by some serious drinking in the airport lounge. So of course the smiling attendants provided her with two beers, as requested, on a flight of less than 50 minutes.

I watched with growing horror at the tiny, translucent plastic cup and the half full can of beer as they sat on the pull-down snack table before her, bouncing from the constant impact of her knees. Nicki's nerves didn't seem jangled, merely out of whack, and the leg movements had a spastic quality to them. Inevitably, the beer was going to be spilled. The only questions that remained were: how much will be left when this happens and how much of it will get on me?

Then we began to descend. Jesus H. Geronimo Christmas, it looked like she was actually gonna make it. They had even removed the beer can, leaving only the half full cup. Then the stewardess steps up behind her and says: "I'm going to have to take that now."

Nicki reacts like a puppet whose strings have been jerked violently skyward and bolts upright, smashing the tray and her plastic glass against the back of the forward seat and sending the contents dripping onto the floor.

"Well," the stew decides, "I guess I don't need it anymore."

The smell of beer permeates the air as rivulets of foam trickle into the magazine pouch and down onto the floor. A few random droplets splattered against a

pants leg, but I counted myself lucky. It could have been much worse.

Now I have decided that I am going to sleep for the remainder of this flight and nothing is going to rouse me. She continues to chatter at me and eventually gives me the hard uppercut: "I know you can hear me. I don't blame you. But I just have one, simple question I need you to answer. Just one. Please?"

"Yes, Nicki?"

"When we get to the airport in Las Vegas, what do I do?"

Against all reason I actually attempt to answer this question. Southwest always arrives at the "C" gates, and they are connected to the main terminal by a one-stop, automated train. It always evokes memories of New York subways for me, except it doesn't smell like urine, the walls are clean, and there are no legless beggars on skateboards.

"Okay," I sigh. "We'll arrive at the 'C' gates, and then we take the train--" The word was barely out of my mouth before I knew I'd made a dreadful mistake.

"Train?" she gasped in brute horror. Her voice was barely a whisper. "A... TRAIN?"

"No," I lied, "waitamminute, that's the other gates. No, we come into the main terminal."

But she would not be deterred. "WHAT TRAIN!?" she was demanding hysterically. Hysterics while a plane is landing is not generally regarded as a Good Thing, and she brought a rush of stewards to calm her down and, thank ghod, in due course escort her off the plane. Earlier she had shown me her ticket, claiming she had three pieces of luggage onboard, but there were no stubs. I had visions of her insisting I help her find what might well have been imaginary luggage.

While trained personnel struggled to chill Nicki out, I stepped past her, wished her luck and began walking from the plane.

"No, wait," I heard her say. I turned. She was staring at me with wide, sad, hollow eyes that had definitely seen at least the lighter side of Hell. She was reaching out toward me with her arm, the heels of her hands extended up, as if to receive handcuffs. I actually thought about going back for a second, before the rush of people out of the plane began to carry me along, as in a movie, and swept me out onto the hot, covered gangplank.

I headed out of the airport, alive with the sounds of slots and poker machines, via the dreaded Night Train, and soon met my own Laurie in the arrivals area. It was warm, but the heat felt good. As we drove away, Nicki's human dimension began to fade. She started to become the amusing anecdote you have just read. I have wondered several times whatever became of her, whether she got her luggage and if, indeed, she is still alive. But it is only a passing thought. I can't say it really concerns me.

Which is, after all, the real horror of flight 1331.

Orlando is a long way from home, very hot, very humid. And, of course, we took at least twice as much luggage as we needed. After we'd passed the Customs, the Immigration wallah, and the Illegal Substances man with the Big Gun, we started to look for the Dollar Rental car man.

There was a little beagle dog on the carpet who looked just as knackered as I felt. It was really cute, rolling around the carpet in a little green jacket that said something about agriculture or pest control or suchlike.

I patted it and asked the owner its name. It was Snoopy of course, like every other boy beagle in the USA. It was sniffing at the luggage and I thought it was going to cock its leg and take a leak and, to tell the truth, if it had, I'd probably have joined it.

And then the little bastard suddenly went mad, barking like fury at the cabin baggage bag which held Sue's asthma stuff and a couple of apples. The hitherto affable owner, belatedly recognising a big time malefactor, loosened his gun (his fucking gun, no shit mate, the bastard was getting all ready to shoot me stone cold dead in the morning, and me a genuine Brit Cit with a Defence Medal and a passport!!!!), and went all steely-eyed and make-my-day-punk, and told me to open up. I thought he was after the chemicals in Sue's asthma stuff, but what he wanted was these damned apples. On the plane they had warned us against taking in fruit, veggies, triffids or exotic plants, and I had signed a declaration saying that I was as clean and pure as a nun's knickers, after assuring a doubtful Sue that the two New Zealand Gala apples weren't what they had in mind.

But they were.

He was very very nasty about it indeed, and poor frightened Sue was frantically trying to commute the Death Sentence and explain that I hadn't heard the announcement on the plane, whilst I stood there giving my world famous imitation of a deaf idiot.

As you know, it's a very convincing imitation indeed, and eventually he decided that I was just small fry and not worth a shackle. Carefully lifting them by the stalks he dropped the confiscated apples into a plastic Evidence Bag, (which I suspect was probably his lunch bag too), scribbled a note on the declaration, and said we could go ahead and enter the US of A.

The little dog Snoopy turned around and sneered at us.

By this time planeloads of people were in front of us at the Dollar Rental counter, but eventually we got a Chevrolet 8-seater van/mini coach thing, (imagine! me a 45 year Ford man in a bleeding Chevy) -- very new, very clean, and automatic drive. I've never driven an

automatic and didn't want to start now, so Sue and son-in-law, Ray did the driving between them.

We drove off to the Comfort Inn, which was a dump about 10 miles away. I felt so ill with the shingles stuff and the journey and humidity that I

went to bed and let the other five get on with it. It's five weeks now since the shingles started, and I am still getting pain and problems with it. I have cream and tablets for the pain but still tend to walk around clutching my left tit and going Oh! Oh! Oh! and awaiting Death's Blessed Release. I have this damn irritating rash stretching from my armpit across my chest, and, believe me, it's absolutely no fun waking in the morning nowadays, clasping a throbbing, nipple-erect breast and finding it's your own. However, just like it says in my autobiography, on the third day I rose from the dead and went to the convention. The family had the van to visit Magic Kingdom so I took a taxi...\$14. I would have saved money by staying at The Peabody instead of using two taxis a day, but I had Samatha and Ray, and Margaret and Clair to consider, which is why I moved out to the Comfort place.

After registration (I got three ribbons on my badge, Press, Program Participant, V.I.P.), I found my way (the con hall was enormous, like Waterloo Station with escalators to the upper floor) to the 1st Fandom Enclave where I got an immediate armful of Teresa who is just the same as ever, and never never too tired or too busy to talk to me, and then big hugs and kisses from Geri and Jeff and Madeleine, and Lo! there is Himself sitting on the sofa looking just the same -- perhaps even better -- than when I left him at Yorcon II all those years ago. Still the same old sardonic smile and wary eyes, and the deep burnt-in tan that gives a picture of perfect health and vitality. It's a false picture of course; the fine mind is as sharp as it ever was, but some of the other bits are wearing out.

He has trouble filtering out a conversation from a background of chatter. Ideally one should speak slowly and clearly direct into his earpiece, but I kept forgetting and gabbling away because I hadn't seen him for so long, and got back the very same technique that I use myself -

Chuchy Makes Magic By Chuch Harris

- the knowing half smile and little shake of the head that the untutored imagine means they have scored a good point or said something particularly clever, but in actuality means I love you and I'm glad you're sitting here with me; I don't have the slightest fucking idea what you are saying, but for heaven's sake don't let that stop you.

And, I am almost sure that he is aware of this trick when I am using it too.

Not that it matters you understand. Conversation at this level becomes such bloody hard work for both parties, but there is still unalloyed pleasure in just sitting there in close proximity, grinning at each other. Perhaps it would be even better if we were women and could hold hands but try that in any convention hall and every conreport would mention these two old poofers getting their jollies whilst Towner whizzes around in his winding sheet.

Madeleine is a tower of strength to him too. She watches over him, interprets from time to time, and whisks him off upstairs for a break when she feels he has had enough. She stands in for platform work, and makes sure there is no hassle or worry for him. I am fairly sure she would have preferred him not to make the trip at all -- their flight took 14 to 16 hours -- but he is still very much his own man and makes his own decisions.

It was time for the Official Opening Session so we all trooped off to one of the halls radiating from the concourse to be welcomed by a little film, a speech by Spider Robinson, some play-acting and Introduction of Celebrities. I dunno who the bloodyhell they were, but when Walt duly stood up in the front row and waved vaguely at the nethermost, he got a suprisingly sustained clap (Sue said), and not just from me and Jas either. They really liked him, and I think he was rather pleased about it too.

Duty done we troop back to the fannish enclave to meet Arnie and Joyce. Now, you know how I tend to idolize American women -- Geri, Teresa, Avedon, Suzle, Leeh, all the way back to Bea Mahaffey -- you name 'em, I loved them, but in a very pure wistful Brit fashion of course. Well, meet the new member of the club, Joyce Worley Katz. She is blonde, attractive, quick on the uptake, truly fascinating to talk to, and a trufan to her very bootsoles. She edits her own glossy promag, *Electronic Games*, has organized and run a Worldcon, and is fascinating to talk to. She can write quite quickly too, which is a big asset when talking to me. We spent much of the time scribble scribble scribble on the notepads, and I have every intention of doing exactly the same thing if she comes over for Glasgow.

Arnie, who is not the short intense dwarf that I'd visualized, is as big as I am, bluff, happy, sharp, and vaguely reminiscent of a much younger Ackerman but much, much more fannish. They are a generous couple; no more than normally affluent but they picked up the

lunch tab for 8 of us at the Peabody. (I always feel guilty about other people paying large bills. I offered to go halves, but Joyce wouldn't hear of it and insisted that it was Arnie's treat and that's that.)

There was no difficulty in knowing who the next person was. His T-shirt said it all in letters two inches high. It said I AM SHELVEY VICK. And so it was. Accept no imitations. You felt that he should have a little corner turned down for "Something Up My Sleeve". He was a little fatter then, (he is spectrally thin now with a pepper and salt beard, and a lovely tiny wife called Suzanne who holds hands with eccentric Brits who tend to ignore road signs and step in front of passing traffic.) Sue liked her a lot and thought her sweet, motherly, kind and feminine. I thought so too.

I think Shelvey has retired more or less but he seemed comfortably off. He was staying somewhere down the road in The Ambassador Suites, a flash joint I passed on my way onwards each day, far superior to the cobwebby Comfort Inn with its air of grubbiness, door handles hanging on a single screw, and beguiling KIDS EAT FREE signs. He lives in Florida (further north I think than Orlando) and was flying home after the con rather than driving. He picked up the next dinner tab for 8 of us. Evidently CHUX EAT FREE too.

(His wife ordered the Fresh Fruit Platter for dessert -- a huge dish of fresh fruits. She barely touched it and it got passed down the table to the vulture dept. -- me, Joyce, Madeleine, who gorged the rest of it. Strawberries, star fruits, peaches, pineapple, heaps of things I'd never tasted before.)

I thought that all the portions of food in Florida were far too big and much of it is wasted. You start with the inevitable "house salad" -- coarse outside lettuce leaves with an onion ring and a very hot pickle -- which you toy with whilst the main dish is prepared. The main dish is enormous; the steaks would feed three people with normal appetites, a large jacket potato with butter or cream cheese, and a garnish (a small portion) of mixed veggies. Then comes dessert--often the size of a family Xmas pudding each. (If you can't force it down, some places wrap the desert in foil so you can take it home for breakfast!)

Most of the women watch their intake. I noticed Joyce rejecting the jacket potato with cream cheese and butter but nibbling at the fresh fruit platter, but the men all seem to eat more. Believe me, my shameful pot belly was a common thing, a NORMAL thing amongst most of the men.

(The Western Steer, a down market but very clean and decent with oil-cloth topped tables where we went for brekkie, offered 80 items every morning on the serve yourself buffet for £2. You could start with eggs, bacon, fries, hash, sausages, cheese, cereal, beans, tomatoes, etc., followed by a dozen different sort of fruit -- melon, peaches, grapes, apple, pears, pineapples, jellies, bananas, plums, etc -- and then bakery -- rolls, pastries, cakes, fruit pies, fudge,

brownies, and lots more. You could go back time and time again for refills until you couldn't force down another mouthful. Coffee/tea is another 50p. Juice is £2 a pint extra. Tipping is obligatory at 15%. The waitress was a gloriously stunning Suthun 'you all' blonde who looked like a young Goldie Hawn. If she'd been one of the 80 items on offer I'd have had her for breakfast every morning. A truly beautiful creature and never once did she call me Pops or Daddy when she put the teabag in my cup and sexily jerked the little string up and down.... Aaah.

But that's digression again. And wishful thinking for a sick and tired geriatric of damn near sixty-five.

Back to the Con to meet Spike and Mr. Spike, Moshe and Lise, Mike Glicksohn and his new fiancée (who sports an enormous diamond solitaire big enough to give her round shoulders), Richard Brandt and his pretty attractive hell-driver girlfriend who has a lead foot almost as heavy as Sean's (who has just been nicked for doing 98.4 mph on the M5), Jeanne Gomoll but no Scott, Andy Hooper but no Carrie, and lots of other people who we never saw again. I was hoping to see Sheryl. She was certainly there for a couple of days and left me a pot of fabulously tasty Boysenberry preserve in the fan enclave, but somehow we continually missed each other. We saw a lot of Vinø though. There was a poster-sized photo of Vinø on the wall and on the T-shirt that everyone was autographing. Best picture I've ever seen of him, and the only one without a necktie!

It was time for the Ted White item so we trooped off to one of the side halls for it. A bloody farce too. The mikes weren't working. The panel mumbled and the bits that were audible turned into a bloody kiss up. "Bjo, you were wonderful then," "No, no, I was just me." "No, you were really wonderful," "Well, maybe, yes, I guess you're right, I WAS wonderful." Ted talked almost interminably but hopelessly inaudibly, Bjo was

well past her sell-by date, the seats were hard, the half hour seemed all eternity, and it's about time we learnt our lesson and avoided ALL items on the programmes except the Bob Shaw show.

Afterwards I went off with Walt and Madeleine to see their suite and talk a little. Joe Siclari had really done them proud. The suite was beautiful. There were two sumptuous bathrooms each with a little TV on a stalk so that you could sit on the crapper and watch I LOVE LUCY as you defecated, a huge sitting room with couches, two bedrooms, refrigerators, interesting little bottles of unguents to put on your hair, your body, your knob; a marvellous view so that you could watch the nightly firework display (fascinating, awesome) from Disneyland, and more, much more. Incredibly luxurious, and I guess about \$300 a night. I think there might have been an allowance for meals too, but he was well worth it and attracted a lot of people to the convention who wouldn't have been there otherwise like Arnie and Joyce, Chuchy and Sue for starters.

Best of all we could talk quietly and inconsequentially without an audience. Every other time we sat together people clustered expectantly, notebooks in hand, waiting for Repartee, never knowing they were 25 years too late and we were only anxious to discuss why I can no longer do a hip-turn on my golf swing. So help me, at one room party we sat on the sofa and they were kneeling two deep on the carpet in front of us. Walter, tolerant and courteous, accepts this situation and includes everyone in the conversation, but I find it difficult, especially when most of the faces are strange ones. I realise that if it had been, say, Burbee and Laney on the sofa, I would have been on the floor marvelling, but that's beside the point. Fortunately, James is marvellous in this sort of situation and will pick up the ball and entertain and keep everyone happy. Perhaps, if I'd been on form and free of this bloody shingles I'd have been better but for much of the time I felt utterly



despondent and useless.

I'd completely misunderstood the revised programme and was never there at the right time for ANY of my scheduled appearances (there were supposed to be four or five of them.) They were typed on the reverse of my badge...but I didn't know that...and on a separate sheet I was given at registration which I popped unread in the big Bumph envelope in which I was collecting fanzines and handouts to read on the way home. I suspect Geri was disappointed and a little sore about this but she tried to be understanding and forgiving knowing quite well that even at the best of times I am never quite responsible for my actions. Her business is, evidently, going very well indeed but I think it must be one hell of a strain fitting it all in. Jeff is an enormous help and they make a good team together, but I think they will have to hire an assistant eventually to share the burden. I hate to think of what would happen if she went sick. I dropped hints about them coming over next Spring, but I can't really see it happening. Mike Glicksohn is hoping to honeymoon in England and Wales but I don't quite know when.

There was a short diversion when my conversation with Art Widner was interrupted by a belly-dancer lady. I still don't see the stefnical connection but it was all jolly interesting with those gravity defying harem pants holding tightly to the bikini line whilst one expects them to be ankle bound at the very next wiggle. However, knowing what to expect from this sort of thing -- either you push five bucks into the cleavage or you wiggle along in the conga line -- I stayed well back and let Art display his terpsichorean skills. And very fetching he looked too, wiggling away like fury in his little brown khaki shorts and his knapsack. All he needed was fingerbells and a jewel in his navel, and he could have joined the troupe.

In the middle distance I could see a ballet dancer ensemble too, but my tastes run more to belly than ballet so I didn't bother to investigate. I thought it might have been "Firebird", but that was probably just Miss Atlanta, very fetching in red and gold, plugging unsuccessfully for the next Worldcon.

And here is Dick and Nicki Lynch to give me a promised copy of their new edition of *Wealth of Fable*. It's a superb production: stacks of illos and a voluminous index for every trufan to check immediately and see how often they are mentioned -- the sort of momentous project that, quite seriously, should be recognised by a Hugo in its own right. It must have cost them one hell of a lot of money, and Harry ought to mention them with gratitude in his prayers each night... I was hoping to see more of Dick and Nikki who are "our kind of people" but never did altho I'd offered to do a reading of some Bob Shaw stuff later in the programme with them.

Their *Mimosa* won the fanzine Hugo. I was happy for them -- ghod knows they work hard enough at production -- but I am never happy with the Hugo

concept. I don't/won't vote because I feel the whole thing is riddled with pressure groups so that sooner or later the Trekkie Club zine or, worse still, the N3F organ will win the award. Frankly, *Lan's Lantern* and that sort of crap turns my stomach, but still has a big, vociferous backing whilst really worthwhile products like *Trapdoor* come nowhere. *Slant* and our lovely *Hyphen* won sod all during their lifetimes, and *Quinsy* didn't even make the Novacon eligibility list, so yes, I can be accused of sour grape syndrome. But, I still can't see how any award can be impartial whilst the voters seldom see more than one or two of the zines that are eligible. I would bet that less than half of *Mimosa's* voters ever see *Trapdoor*, and those people who plugged *Lan's Lantern* last time have probably read nothing else since they struggled through *The Cat In The Hat*..

This is NOT a criticism of *Mimosa* which would have been my second choice. It is a criticism of the whole Hugo idea itself.

And 30 year old Chas. Addams cartoons winning Hugos....Christ have mercy on us.

Teresa -- I seemed to alternate between Teresa and Joyce for most of the convention -- took me off to the TOR Books thrash in the Presidential Suite. Very posh, stacks of classy food and drinks, packed solid with very Big Names indeed, many of them wearing suits no less. TOR, evidently, always has the best and biggest parties...but what I was eager for was the 6-lb word processor that Patrick brought with him with me in mind.

We found the WP, crept upstairs (the Presidential Suite has an upstairs!!!) found a comparatively empty bedroom, plugged in and had a little convention of our own. I need at least a week to catch up with the Life and Times of T&P but there's no time at all for anything but highlights. You get a sort of movie preview and then exasperation because the movie itself isn't showing in your neighbourhood theatre, and it might be quite a while before it gets around to you, whilst you faunch to know more about the "maybe" move to Arizona. absentee editors, who does what at Tor, is the fact that she didn't fall down once in my company this time a Good Thing, and, most important of all, when is she coming back here for a visit again?

But it was long gone the time I was supposed to be back at the Comfort Inn and I knew Sue would worry. The dear girl took me downstairs, found me a taxi, gave me a quick hug and a kiss and sent me on my way if not rejoicing, at least content. And I never saw her again. Or Walter or Madeleine, or Jas, or Joyce and Arnie, or Jeff and Geri.

I was hoping to pop back for a farewell session, but we had to check out of the Comfort, make a six hour drive across Florida to the place we were staying for the second week, and any delay wouldn't be fair to the rest of the party.

Not an Article about Woody and Women By Arnie Katz



My *Fanzine Dreams* article, "Whatever Happened to Fuggheads?" has drawn quite a few comments, mostly from fellow fan humorists. (I'm taking the liberty of lumping myself into that category. I'd hate to think I meant this stuff seriously.)

One who found food for thought was Bill Kunkel. You can read his reaction elsewhere in this fanzine. In fact, I wish you would. In fact, you already have, unless you're one of those fanzine sodomites who start from the back. Or a wimp who doesn't read every salty word by the Stormy Pretzel.

Bill recounted his and Laurie's search for a modern-day fugghead worthy of being held up to ridicule in the high class fan articles they both intend to write. The way he told it to me is probably about the same as the way he explained it. That was elsewhere in this fanzine, you will recall.

But now we're here, and I am extending, possibly even enriching, the anecdote by reprising a later conversation between Bill and me.

"If you can't find a fugghead, how about the next best thing?"

"And the next best thing to a fugghead would be...?" Despite his diffident insurgent air, I knew I had his attention.

"If you can't find someone reprehensible who says and does stupid things, why not a lovable schmiel?"

"This can work?"

"Fine fan humorists have been chronicling the adventures of their quirky friends for generations."

"Now that you mention it, I suppose that's true." What other conclusion could he draw? It would've been impolite of him to contradict me in my own essay, don't you think?

"Look at Rob Hanson and Martin Smith," I said.

"Wait a minute," Bill protested. "Martin is a nice guy. I met him at Corflu 10."

"That's the whole point," I explained. "Rob obviously likes Martin a great deal, but he hardly writes a fanzine article that doesn't depend on Martin doing or saying something amazing."

"Rob *did* bring him with him all the way to America," Bill conceded.

"So he would be sure to have a foil for his humorous account of the con!" I added.

"How would it work?" He was still dubious. He wanted a Stephen Pickering, and I offered a Darryl Strange.

"You'd pal around with your foil..."

"'Butt', you mean." He laughed.

"'Foil'," I repeated with emphasis. "You'd hang out with your foil." He started to speak, but I stared him down. "Then you could report his sayings and doings."

"Do you have someone in mind?" Bill asked.

I reviewed the possibilities in local fandom. Several names suggested themselves with all the force of divine inspiration. I dismissed them. They each had strong track records to recommend them, but I knew that none had that special spark likely to appeal to Kunkel's jaded tastes. This man had feasted on some of fandom's most arrant fuggheads. He demanded, and deserved, only the best in butts. That is, foils.

Then it hit me. The perfect person was there, hiding in plain sight. "How about Woody?"

"Woody?"

"Could anyone be more lovable?"

"No," he admitted.

"And is he not totally without malice?"

"No, he has no malice."

"And do we not have him around us frequently because we enjoy his company?"

"We do that," he said.

"I give you Woody Bernardi...star of Vegas fannish fables!" I said. "Let the storytelling begin!"

"But Arnie, what could we write about lovable, friendly Woody?"

"What could we write?" His uncharacteristic lack of inspiration staggered me. "The possibilities are ubiquitous." Actually, I said "endless", not "ubiquitous". Look at it from my point of view. I seldom use esoteric words like "ubiquitous" (or "esoteric") in my pro writing, so I couldn't resist the chance. And to increase the likelihood of proper spelling, I've contrived to type "ubiquitous" three times in one paragraph. Four times.

"Like what?" he pressed.

"How about Woody and driving?" His eyes lit up. I had struck paydirt. I decided to press the advantage. "How about Woody and the telephone?"

"The telephone?" The light in his eyes dimmed several lumens. "What's so funny about Woody and telephones?"

"Well, for one thing, he isn't allowed to have one," I reminded. "And he is currently working for the phone company." Kunkel laughed again. Did my ears deceive me, or was he trying to develop a signature Laugh to go with his budding image as the Laney of the 90s? Well, that is matter for another article.

"You've got a point," he said. "That would be a good article."

"And we wouldn't hurt Woody," I vowed. "He's our friend. He's Jophan come to life. We'd just describe his adventures with the telephone."

"That would be funny, wouldn't it?" he asked. He was already drawing the cartoons in his mind. Then he gave me a suspicious look. "That's only one article. Does Woody have staying power? Will he be there, article after article, doing and saying lovably Woodyish things?"

"How about an article about Woody's repeated run-ins with Renee Claire?"

"Who is Renee Claire?" I told him a series of stories

about Woody and Renee. He practiced his laugh some more. "You're right, Arnie. That would make a good article. Got any more?"

"Well, I wouldn't write this, because I really do care about Woody, but how about 'Woody and Women'?"

"But you wouldn't write that," he said.

"No, I wouldn't," I replied. "He's such a sweet, unaffected sort of guy. No, I wouldn't write it."

"No article called 'Woody and Women'," he said.

"Well, now that I have a good title, maybe I should reconsider..."

But I didn't write that article after all. I thought about Woody's sunny disposition. I thought about his guileless gaze. I thought about how much younger, stronger, and bigger he is than me. This is one paper tiger who wants to live to fan another day.

So I wrote this one, instead.

We love ya, Woody.

Don't ever change.



An Assman Takes a Poll

By Charles E. Burbee, Jr.

"That dress you're wearing shows your bosom very nicely, but the material is too thick," I said to the young lady piano player.

She was taking her break in the piano bar, and we were talking. I'd known her for several years.

"What do you mean, too thick? I made this dress myself out of free material. It happened to be upholstery material. Free, so you can't knock the price."

"I mean it doesn't hug the curve of your ass. That fine, brave outline is lost."

"But who cares about that?"

"I do. And all the assmen of the world."

"Oh, nonsense. Men don't care about rear ends. All they care about is bosoms, and this dress shows plenty of that. I made it to play in piano bars."

She glanced down at her cleavage.

I looked too.

"I admit your cleavage is nice, I'm not knocking your knockers, I merely think you are underestimating the numerical strength of the assmen. I am sure that at least half the men in the world are assmen."

"No, they aren't," she insisted. "All men care about is boobs. Besides, I had to make the lower part loose -- this isn't stretch material -- and my job is a sit-down job, you know."

We went on like that for awhile. The lady was positive that men cared only for bosoms. Tits were In and Asses were Out. After all, she said, she'd been playing piano in bars for dozens of years and ought to know what she was talking about.

"I'm a woman and I know what men look at," she said.

"I'm a man and I know what men look at," I came back. "But I can't deny you've got a strong case."

"However," I went on, "I think all men are interested in bosoms to some extent, so naturally they are going to look at half-exposed big breasts, such as yours. But you mustn't assume that is all their interested in. Haven't you ever noticed anybody staring at your ass or trying to look up your skirt?"

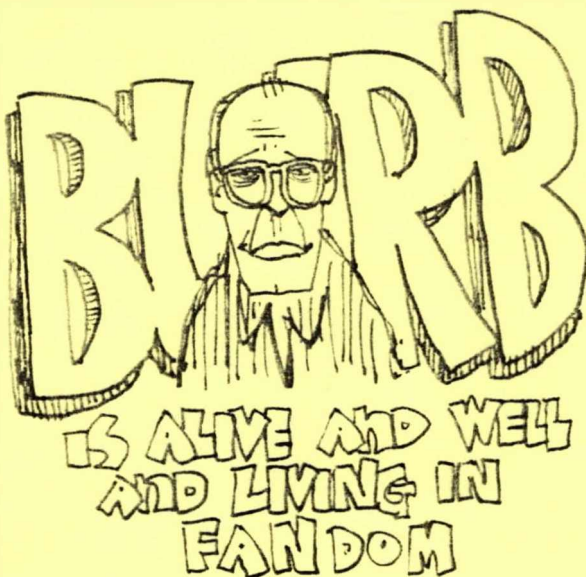
She said I was out of my mind.

"You're out of your mind" was the way she put it.

That was when the idea of a poll struck me. "I'll take a poll, by golly. That's what I'll do. I'll ask everybody I know and a lot of strangers besides, and I'll prove to you with truthful figures in black and white that half the men in the world are assmen."

She just smiled. I suppose she thought I was kidding.

I did start the poll. That same night. Soon as her break was over and she went back to the piano, I circulated around the bar, asking the men which they preferred, tits or asses.



The lady in question also went to jazz clubs, of which there are six or seven in the Los Angeles County and Orange County areas. I circulated around in most of those places, too. There I was, walking around with my two ballpoint pens and my statistics sheets, and questions like: "I'm taking a poll in the interests of sex. Do you prefer tits or asses?" Or, "For the sake of sex and the promotion and preservation of tits and asses, which is your choice?"

You can readily see that I didn't waste time commenting on the weather or complaining about high prices. I didn't need any credentials, either. The words "sex" and "tits" and "asses" were all the credentials I needed.

Some of them thought I was joking. In a way, it was all for fun, but I did really want their answers. Most of them knew the lady involved, at least by sight, because she almost always played a set or two at the clubs.

I collected more than 200 answers.

Some of the answers blew little side winds on my investigation. For example, I very early ran into a solid segment of legmen, a small but strongly convinced cross-section of waistmen, and even one enthusiastic eyebrowman.

At first I didn't record preferences other than my two main ones, so if a man said he was a legman, I would say, "Yes, but eliminating legs because this is strictly a tit-and-ass poll, do you prefer tits or asses?"

But soon I realized I was doing an injustice to the legmen of the world. After all, there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamed of in the assman's philosophy.

At least I think there are.

So I retraced my steps and included them all, titmen

and assmen and waistmen and anklemen and shouldermen and that lone eyebrowman.

Some of the answers were unusable. Entertaining and worth recording but useless for my poll. For example, when I approached one man he said, "I'm glad you asked," and pulled out three sets of Polaroid prints. Each set showed about eight poses in the same sequence. First a very nice reclining nude, looking at the camera. Then our man kissing her. Then a shot of him sucking tit. Then a crotch-licking shot. And a few wind-up shots of missionary position sex and dog-fashion sex. Three women, mind you. I wondered how this meek-looking man had enticed such nice looking maidens to pose for those pictures. "And there's Number Four," he said, pointing out a tall regal-looking lady. Her husband just went on the night shift."

I was so amazed at this man I forgot the purpose of my poll. I forgot to ask his preference. I finally logged him under "Miscellaneous."

Then there was the drummer who grinned lecherously and said, "I'll eat 'em all,"

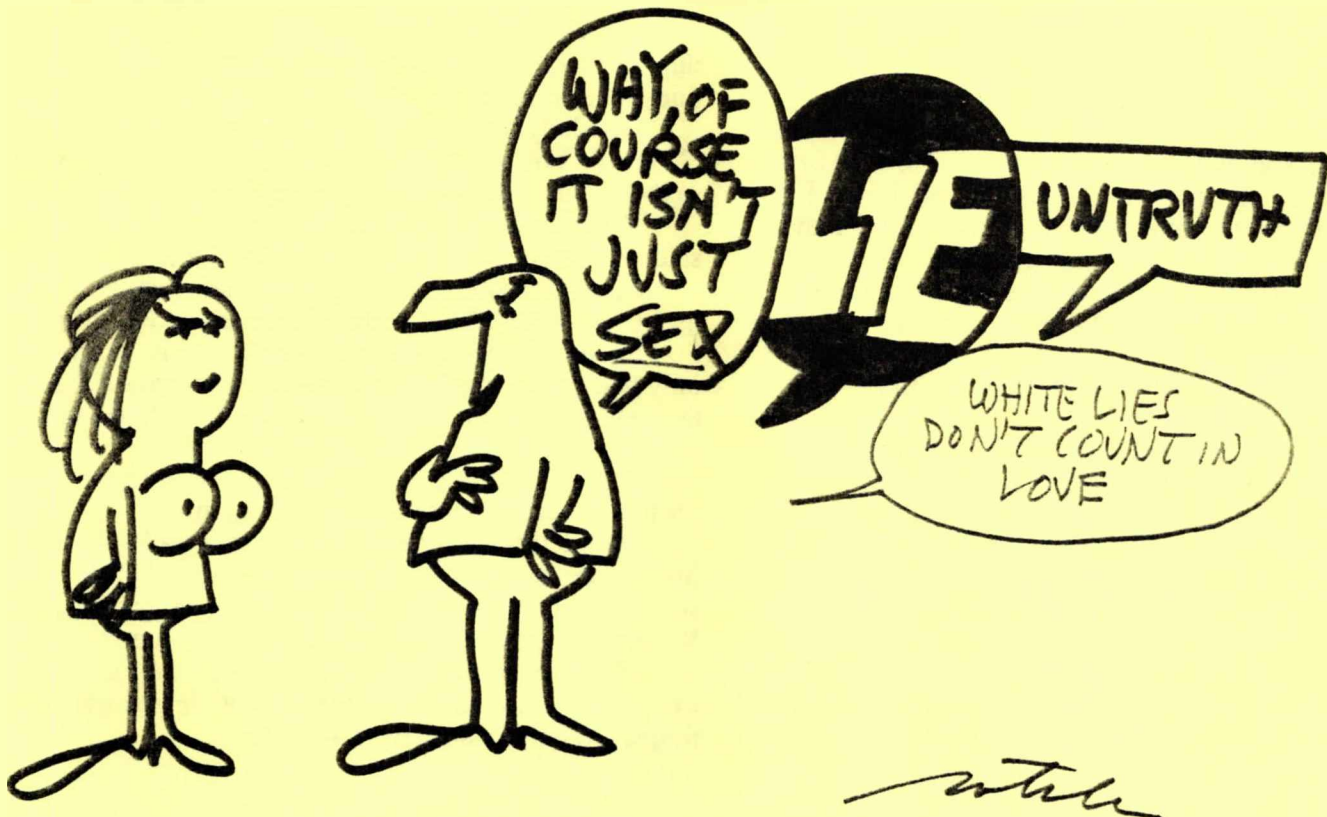
"Bill, for the sake of my records and to prove my point to Ethel, do you prefer tits or asses or legs, or what?"

He grinned, even wider and more lecherously and said, "I'll eat 'em all."

Again I rephrased the question, again I got the grin and the throaty voice, this time accompanied by a roll of the eyes, "I'll eat 'em all."

Among the unusable answers were those from the few homosexuals I contacted.

"Tits?" one of them said. "Those crazy bumps on the chest? I think they're ugly. It's disgusting the way those smelly things bulge in the chest and hips. The true



beauty of shape is in the flat chest and narrow hips of a man!"

He said it so emphatically that I saw his side of it for nearly half a second.

Another fag thought I was on the make, I suppose. Anyhow, when he found I was taking a legitimate -- if not officially sanctioned -- poll, he went into a snit.

"You bitch!" he said.

First time I'd ever been called that. I knew at once it was not a moment I'd been waiting for all these years.

That "Miscellaneous" section I mentioned awhile back -- that was, I thought, a necessity. That's where the Polaroid man went. And the fellow who collected Kleenexes that women had used to blot off excess lipstick with. Was he a lipman, or a lipstickman, or a lipstickedlipman? Or just a lover of soiled Kleenexes?

Oh, we pollsters have more problems than you might expect.

A shoe salesman gave me classification trouble, too. He claimed he got his rocks off while fondling women's feet. He also said he could get an orgasm if could catch a peek of pubic hair when he squinted up a skirt.

So how to classify him? Surely, a footman. But a pubichairman? I rather doubted that. I considered that a man couldn't be exactly equally obsessed by two things. I put him down as a footman.

Another was a legman who specialized in ankles. He insisted he was not an ankleman, but a legman who especially liked the turn of a slender ankle. I think I put him down as a legman.

All of us do specialize, sooner or later. A person might be considered a coin collector in the broad sense, yet his specialization might be the coins of post-World War I Germany.

So, then, a titman might find his greatest joy in observing a nipple, while a legman, as noted, might find a well-turned ankle the supreme eye treat.

Oh I know I was arbitrary at times, but I had to stop somewhere. Somewhere I had to draw the line. After all, if I kept going down to classes and subclasses I might find that a footman was in reality a toeman and if I pursued the subject further I might learn he was a big-toeman, or further, a big-toenailman, or even a red-painted big-toenailman. And even that might not be the ultimate.

But you can see that I had to draw the line somewhere.

Otherwise my serious and constructive and dignified poll might turn into a travesty.

Under "Miscellaneous" also went the 55 year old gentleman who shook his head and said, "I'm long past the age where I care at all."

A shock of dismay went through me here, as dispassionately as I was trying to act. I was trying to keep it all objective and here comes this fellow with his surprising statement. For one thing, I thought the idea of sex never died, though the man might be far past the

performance stage. For another thing, I was pushing 50 at the time myself. Did sexual oblivion wait for me just around the corner? Would I turn calmly away from stag movies? Would I stop peeking down young ladies' blouses and stop blessing the makers of stretch pants when shapely young ladies bent over?

"Yes, Gordon," I said, and perhaps my voice shook a little, "But back in the days when you did care, was it tits or asses?"

He shook his head again. "I just don't care any more."

I think I met a true pubichairman. Besides the shoe clerk footman and his doubtful claim of getting his rocks off while looking up a skirt, I met a true pubichairman. He showed me part of his collection. On unlined 3X2 white file cards, he had mounted, behind a plastic guard, pubic hairs from the girls he had laid. He'd mounted the hairs vertically, not constricting any natural curl, eight to a card, with neat hand-lettering under each hair, giving the girl's initials, along with the date the hair was collected.

I asked him if he graded the girls' performances in bed A, B, C, or what?

He drew himself up and looked down his nose at me.

"That's a slob question," he said.

I haven't met any other hairmen; I wonder if they're all as touchy?

In the course of the poll, several women, observing me busily circulating and asking questions and being joyfully answered by my subjects, asked me what I was doing. I'd tell them I was taking a survey to see whether men preferred bosoms or rear ends.

Some of them looked me over as though they thought I was crazy. I got used to that after awhile. They'd ask, "Are you really taking a poll like that?" "Is that all you men talk about...women?" And other questions, some even sillier.

"One lady, on stealing a glance at my sheets, said: "You said bosoms and rear ends, but on your sheets it says T's and A's...o-o-oh!" she laughed.

"When I am speaking to demure young ladies," I said with great dignity, "I do not say tits and asses."

I finally compiled my figures. I had exactly 200 usable answers. There were 80 assmen and 82 titmen. So I have way lost out there. The piano-playing young lady was partly right -- there were more titmen than assmen. I found that of the 80 assmen, 40 liked apple-shaped asses and 40 liked pear-shaped asses.

That left 38 other specialists. The legmen were by far the strongest; there were 22 of them.

I wondered the other day, though. I took this poll just before the miniskirt rose to power, and more shapely thigh than ever before in the history of the Western world are parading daily before our eyes.

Might not some of the legmen raise their sights a little? Might not some assmen drop their interest to thighs? Would bosom men hold firm?

Well, this is idle speculation? The only true way to find out how these men would vote today would be to run the poll over again, contacting each and every man I'd contacted before. But a couple of years have passed. The picture has changed. Some are dead; some have moved. Where are the snobs of yesteryear?

Besides, that is another subject; to learn perhaps if a man's tastes in women might change. After all, they tell us our allergies can change, so why not our preferences in women?

Anyhow, the purpose of my poll was to prove to my piano-playing lady friend that there are other men besides titmen in the world.

When I showed her the results she didn't seem very impressed, just surprised that I had taken the poll at all. "You really took that poll! I know you said you would, but I thought you were just kidding."

"I do not kid about serious things like tits and asses," I said. I tried to sound a little haughty.

I told her that in effect the poll had had a salutary effect on both of us. I had thought, in my provincial blindness, that assmen far outnumbered all others. And she had learned of the existence -- in her world -- of a legion of legmen and an army of assmen. Not to mention the loyal minority groups.

"I am surprised," she said as she examined my statistics. She didn't change her dress style, though. I

don't blame her; it might have meant a major change. I don't think it mattered a great deal, though. A month or so after the poll I saw her playing in a small combo. The piano was in a pit and the other musicians were ringed on chairs around the piano a couple of feet higher. The banjo man, a fellow about five feet two, had never had such a fine opportunity to look down her front. Once he actually fell off his chair.

Later he claimed he was drunk. "Too much of that damned bar whiskey is what did it."

I think his fall was caused by an overdose of tit.

So she didn't really need to change her dress style. I couldn't expect her to change overnight. Besides, she felt she had a winner in those low-cut gowns, and circumstances had proved her right. Why change a winner? Why not cause banjo men to fall off their chairs? Why not, indeed? There are too many damned banjo players in the world as it is.

I remember I'd told her I had knowledge now of more than 200 men's sexual preferences. "I have privileged information here but I will share it with you," I said. "Give me a man's name and I can tell you what he likes."

She just smiled at me.

"I know what you like, you son of a bitch."

Better, I think, to be called "you son of a bitch" by a pretty lady, than "you bitch" by a pretty man.





Charles Burbee
Our Founder