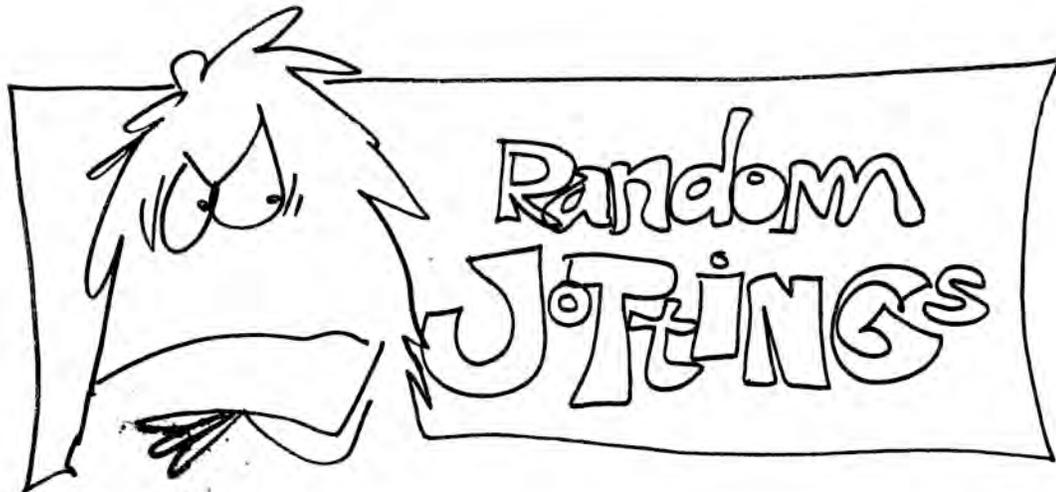




RANDOM
JOTTINGS

. EDDIE JONES .



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Art Credits

Eddie Jones	Cover
Bill Rotsler.....	1, 2, 7, 54, back cover
Ken Fletcher	3, 57
David Birdsong.....	4, 5, 12, 13, 53
Frank Johnson	8, 10
Robert E. Gilbert	9, 14
Al Andrews.....	18
JM (unknown)	19, 20, 21, 50
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RANDOM JOTTINGS

EDITORIAL

by Michael Dobson

Mention My Name...

Well, I promised in Random Jottings #1 that the next issue would be out in time for the Minneapolis Worldcon. I didn't quite make that deadline, but I'm only a few months behind schedule. That's not too many.

The 1973 worldcon was certainly the highlight of my fannish life to date. Everyone's already written about the Big Events that made the con so special, so I won't retread old ground. It was me, as for so many others, a life-transforming experience, and I'll never be the same. Minneapolis is truly today the center of the universe.

I returned from Labor Day

weekend to start my senior year of college at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC). I'll graduate this spring, and if all goes well, I'm planning to move to Minneapolis in the summer. I figure that's the best season. As a southern boy by upbringing, I'm not quite sure about all that weird white stuff they get up in Yankee Land. A few months of Minneapolis summertime should be about the same as an Alabama winter.

I'm in my third term as editor of *Sanskrit*, the college literary magazine (like editing a fanzine, only I get paid), and work on the weekends as the planetarium operator at the Charlotte Nature Museum.



Charlotte fandom isn't the same now that former ~~co-editor~~ co-editor Edward R. "Edsmith" Smith and local *Fantastic* author Richard Snead have both moved to Washington, DC. Sure, Fast Eddie Ferrell and Weird Harold Wilson are around, but it's not the same without late-night Dr. Pepper drinking sessions in Ed's grandfather's library. There's Spiror, of course, but of him (not to mention by him), the less said, the better.

But life goes on. The curtain drops on one part of your life, and then opens to reveal the next scene.



About This Issue

This issue leads off with Ted White's reminiscences of his trip to Charlotte to help Edsmith with his draft board hearing. It's a good thing he wrote the article, because my own memories are pretty hazy.

Lane Lambert follows with a story of my visit to his high school in Boaz, Alabama, a town that makes Decatur look positively modern. Both stories feature my Buick, Sherman the Tank.

Bob Vardeman, fandom's answer to Ann Landers, provides useful advice and techniques for the Technically-Minded Neofan.

Frank Lunney, famed editor of *Beabohema*, weighs in with a short but spooky piece of horror fiction that reveals why you should never trust an angel.

The Vampire Sheep: A Melodrama in Verse, is a three-act play by Lloyd Rose. She dictated it one day in the English Department conference room, while Julia Willis, herself a first-rate playwright, typed busily away. The UNCC drama department produced the play; I played the role of Nuntius. UNCC's poetry professor advises on curriculum.

Our poetry section features contributions by Raymond L. Clancy, Arabella St. Erth, and M. Shira. Christopher Jeremy and Bill Wolfenbarger review books and magazines, Various Artists get featured pages, and many people—maybe even *you*—make up our lettercol.

See you next issue!

—Michael Dobson
December 1973

FOUT

EDITORIAL

by Edward R. "Edsmith" Smith

It's wonderful to be back for the second issue of Random Jottings.

What's new in my life? Glad you asked. I'm now living in DC, where I am film programmer for the Circle Theatres, a chain of three DC-area movie palaces that specialize in foreign, independent, and classic cinema. This job has many benefits, chief among them the frequent zeppelin flights to Europe to check out the new films. For example, I just got back from France, where I saw one of my cinematic heroes, Jean-Luc Godard. I'm afraid he's gone a little insane in the far left fringes of Marxist "thought" in recent years. The only thing I could come up with to say, when face to face with the great director, and summoning all my half-remembered schoolboy French, was, "Aimez-vous Mao, Monsieur Godard?" He kind of glowered at me, which I gather is his reaction to most things these days, so I didn't take it personally.

The zeppelin flights allow me ample time to catch up on reading and facac. For example, most trans-Atlantic zeppelins have state of the art communications

systems, including silk-screen mimeos. I recently had the honor of publishing an entire issue of my fanzine, Fout while en route to the Berlin Film Festival and Beer Blast. I believe this was the first fanzine to be edited and published in its entirety over the Atlantic Ocean. Maybe someday I can pub an ish from our moon base, or from the Mars base the US will be establishing Any Day Now.



Guess I picked an exciting time to move to DC. Shortly after I arrived, in the spring of this year, Nixon mounted his attempted putsch of the government. Fortunately, the troops under the

control of President Humphrey soon put down the renegade soldiers and disgruntled Republicans who massed in our nation's capital in that fearful weekend.

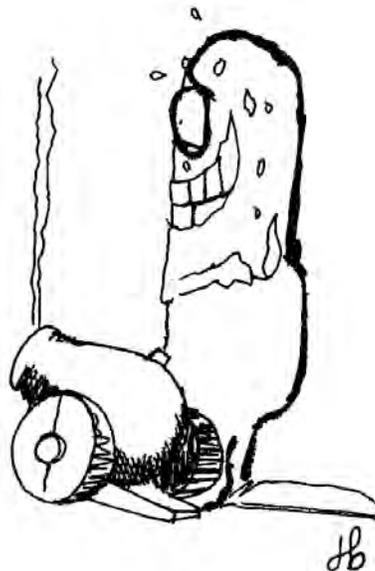
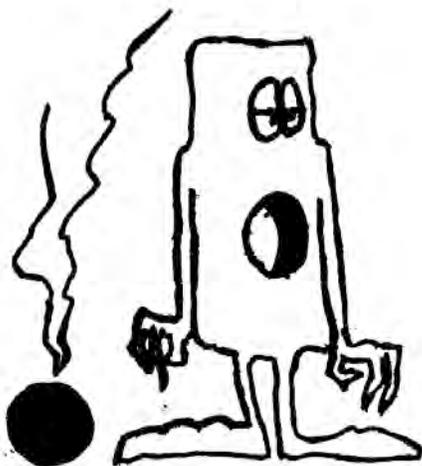
Culturally, DC offers many fine concerts and other events. For example, Brian Wilson recently appeared with the National Symphony conducting a program of his recent compositions. He has really grown, especially after finishing Smile in early 1967, and going on to record many other fine albums, both solo and with the Beach Boys. My favorite work on the program I saw was Good Variations, a half-hour fantasia for theremin and orchestra based on themes from Good Vibrations. Mike Love played the theremin part but seemed to get lost at times.

I also completed a novel about an early-21st century President of the US who seizes power in a bloodless coup thanks to the

Supreme Court, and who then suspends habeas corpus, declares war on other countries, and tortures his enemies, all while the country sits placidly by. I gave it to my friend Ted White for consideration for Amazing Stories, but he thought the concept was too far-fetched, especially the part about the public allowing this to happen. He thinks the populace would rise up en masse and throw the bastard out of office. I think he's right, and am revising my book appropriately.

Anyway, life is exciting and fun in the Big City, but I do miss my old friends from Charlotte and the Charlatan Science Fiction Society, especially Harold ("Weird Harold") Wilson, Eddie ("Fast Eddie") Farrell and Michael ("no nickname") Dobson. See you in our next thrilling issue of Random Jottings, in a few months.

— Edsmith



RANDOM DROPPINGS

FAN MAIL FROM SOME FLOUNDER

by Spiror T. Snodgrass
Local Charlotte ~~Fugghead~~ Fanboy

Dear Mikael and Edd,

I liked your first ishqe of Random Droppings just fine, and would like to be a columnist for your publication. I have many qualifications for this position, such as having graduated from the fourth grade (after only six years, a first for my family, who are not generally real Big on higher education), and being the Oswald County champion Buffalo-chip thrower. I figure I can sling the shit well enough to go into politics someday (that was a joke, did you get it?) I have to go to the Bathroom. I Back now. I could also write on politics, like how that nice man Nixon tried to take back the country for the forces of law and order and was defeated by that communist Humphrey.

Maybe you two would like to write for my publication, Spiror T. Snodgrasses Scientifiction Fantazine. It will consist of all fan fiction by the leading stf writers of the day, mostly me and my 17 siblings.

Sincerely,

Spiror T. Snodgrass

IN QUEST OF THE “DODGE SHERIFF” (OR SOMEONE LIKE HIM)

ARTICLE
by Ted White

Springtime comes early in North Carolina. It was only April, but wild strawberries were already there to be found and relished.



I was in Charlotte, North Carolina, with my second wife, Robin, and our three-year-old daughter, Arielle, better known then as Kitten, and still known by her friends and family today as Kit, to assist Ed Smith in his quest to attain the status of Conscientious Objector with his local draft board.

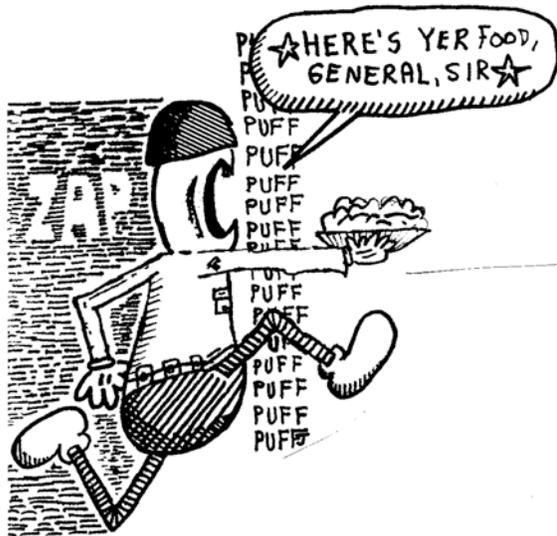
Ed had shown me his diaries, and I'd skimmed through them. They certainly bore witness to his seriousness as a conscientious objector.

We'd gotten a motel room on the outskirts of Charlotte, and I'd found wild strawberries immediately outside our room. I was driving a 1961 VW bug, the same car in which the four of us had driven to Albuquerque for Bubonicon and then to LA for the Worldcon, the previous year. It was a Very Small car, and my daughter had made a nest for herself with some blankets behind the back seat.

Ed Smith's draft board was actually located in neighboring Monroe, and for that short trip we were joined by Ed's best friend, Michael Dobson. It made sense to use a larger car, so we used Michael's big Buick sedan. That car had, Michael said, an interesting story. It seems

Michael had bought it from the local Buick dealer, and it had previously been the dealer's teen-aged daughter's car.

"The car has a manual transmission," Michael explained, "and his daughter apparently liked to slip the clutch a lot. And she burned out the clutch. Daddy replaced it, and she went through that one, too. So he had a heavy-duty clutch installed. That was apparently too much for her, so he got her a car with automatic and sold the old car to me." The car was otherwise in really good condition, an apparent cream-puff, but driving the car in city traffic gave Michael's left leg a real work-out.



The appearance before the draft board went well. Ed and I sat down at a table in a small conference room with three members of his local draft board, and we talked with them informally for perhaps an hour. It didn't hurt his case at all that one

of the members of his draft board was a regular reader of my magazine, *Amazing*. It was a convivial meeting, and Ed was granted his Conscientious Objector status – about three weeks before the draft was abolished.

The meeting was over by late in the morning. Now I could take off that damned tie I was wearing, and relax. On the drive back to Charlotte, I took out my pipe and we all got sercon.

It was party time. We picked up two friends of Ed and Michael's, Fast Eddie Ferrell and Weird Harold Wilson, cramming them into the Buick's capacious back seat. (They don't build cars like that any more.) The pipe made the circuit again. And Michael drove us to the local mall.

I guess it was a mall. I never saw that part of it. All I saw was the parking lot, part of which was a parking garage. Michael had heard that the "Dodge sheriff," a TV advertising caricature of a southern cracker, would be making a promotional appearance in the mall's parking lot and we'd decided that it would be fun to check him out. By now wisecracks were flying and the party-in-a-car was in full swing.

My memory's a little hazy about the exact sequence of events, but I believe we actually made some sort of circuit of the parking lot and garage when we arrived. It was a multi-level garage, and

there was debate about whether we'd fully covered it in that initial circuit, but we didn't see the "Dodge sheriff," and we decided we might be too early, and by then we were hungry, so Michael drove us out of the parking lot and to a nearby pizza place.

It was a sit-down place, a restaurant actually, and we filled up a table, placed our order, started sipping our drinks and were continuing our festively sercon party when it occurred to me to glance around the place.

When we'd arrived, we'd had our choice of tables, but now it was lunch time, and the restaurant was filling up with other customers, people at all the other tables. I'd been vaguely aware of that all along, but I hadn't been paying attention to who those other customers were.



They were all cops. There must have been a station house somewhere close by. This was

their regular lunch hangout. We were surrounded by police. Six loud, laughing long-haired hippie types (plus toddler), in the middle of a room full of cops, all in full uniform. A cold chill went through me. I nudged Robin. "Look around, without being obvious," I told her.

"Omighod," she said. "Guys," she said quietly, and alerted the others. It was a subdued group which dug into the pizza, when it arrived.

But the party resumed, once we'd pulled out of the pizza place in Michael's Buick. And for that reason, some details are now a blur. Such as, who was driving. Michael's left leg had worn out, and we were taking shifts as drivers, each of us in turn - well, those of us who could drive a manual transmission, anyway. I know that at some point I took my turn behind the wheel, but I'm not sure when. I do remember thinking that working the clutch in a Mack truck was probably a lot easier. You had to force your left leg down *hard* on that clutch pedal to even budge it. It could wear anyone out.

But we returned to the mall in search of the "Dodge sheriff." We began exploring the various levels and byways of the extensive parking lot, which had aspects in common, we decided, with a mobius strip. The further we explored, the more often we found ourselves back unexpectedly at a familiar spot.

“We’ve already been here,” someone would announce.

“My leg’s worn out,” the driver of the moment would announce.
“Let’s switch drivers. Who’s next?”

“Not me.”

“Not me.”

“I’ve already done it.”

“Aw, come on. It’s somebody’s turn.”

“Let Michael drive. It’s his car.”

“I’ve already done most of the driving.”

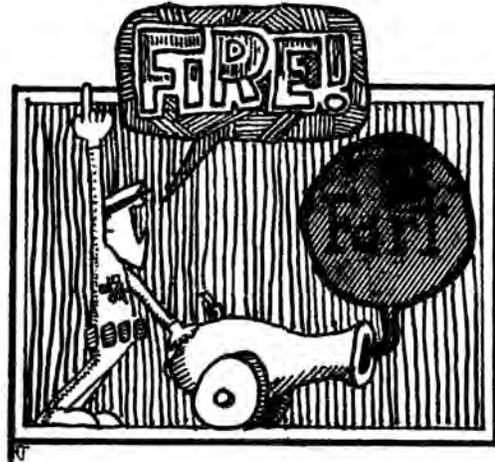
Etc.

We switched drivers (and passed the pipe) several times in the hour or more we spent driving around that parking lot in search of the “Dodge sheriff,” without ever feeling that we’d fully explored the expanse of the parking lot, and, of course, without ever sighting the “Dodge sheriff.” Were we too early – or too late? Had we missed him, or just not found him yet?

“Are you sure it was this afternoon, and not tonight?”

“Could it have been this morning?”

The obvious answer was to keep driving around, keep looking...and keep passing around that pipe.



Alas, we never found the “Dodge sheriff.” Maybe we missed him. Maybe Michael had misheard whatever he’d heard. Maybe he arrived about ten minutes after we finally gave up and left. But probably not. There never were any signs of a promotion – no banners, no balloons, no neon-bright new Dodges, nothing – that I saw in our peregrinations that afternoon.

But it didn’t matter. I’d met two new friends. We’d all had fun.

—Ted White

FUN IS ALWAYS FUN

ARTICLE

by Lane Lambert

My sister pointed the phone receiver at me. "It's for you."

"Wow, that's a surprise." I took it. "Hello?"

Michael Dobson's mellifluous disc-jockey voice answered. "Hello, Lane!" In a moment, he said, "I'm leaving for Charlotte and school next Wednesday and I'll be coming through Boaz."

We planned the rendezvous; when we broke the connection I excitedly returned the phone to the cradle. Fanac!

The appointed Wednesday arrived; I impatiently marked time in my Trig class. I hurried to my car as soon as it ended and sped to Boaz's historic Dairy Queen, home of many rendezvous, to fulfill the prophecy of our meeting. Arriving, I ate lunch. With the car radio emanating Top Forty, I waited. And waited. And WAITED.

I went home at seven the next morning for a shave and breakfast, and blearily returned to school wondering if perhaps Charlotte Fandom was indeed a fable and if the numerous visits in

which Michael and I had engaged were merely elaborate hallucinations.

That evening the hallucination phoned again to explain that a detachment of Alabama National Guardsmen had occupied Decatur and prohibited travel until they rounded up a gang of seditious American Legionnaires, and that this time he'd be in town—if the curfew was lifted.

He made it.

Knowing nothing else to do, we drove to my house. I watched him practice his future role as King of North Carolina while I ate lunch. Observing this fannish master, I was Inspired.

"Michael, want to have a little fun?"

He shrugged and smiled. "Fun is always fun."

"Okay, let's go over to my old high school and pretend that you're a visiting press official on a tour of area schools.

"That's fine. I have my press card in my wallt."

We made further plans during the drive to the school; however, in spite of his enthusiasm, Michael was a little paranoid. "I've been thrown out of schools before," he said.

"It's all right," I assured him. "They're peaceful. And they don't have a dress code."



Reassured, he maneuvered his Buick tank, Sherman, into a parking space. We were On Our Way.

As we walked toward the entrance, a second-floor window swung open. An arm snaked out and shot us a peace sign. We chuckled. Another window opened; a uniformed ROTC student leaned out and yelled, "Long-haired hippie freaks!"

Michael answered "Bozo!" and shot him a bird.

Still chuckling, we walked directly into the principal's office. Mr. Hays, the principal of Boaz High School, happened to come toward us at that very moment, so I hurried into my carefully staged introduction.

"Mr. Hays, this is Michael Dobson. He's acting co-chairman of the Collegiate Press High School Evaluating Committee. He came through Boaz on a tour of newly-accredited high schools in Alabama, and when I mentioned Boaz High's recent accreditation, he was anxious to do a quick survey."

Mr. Hays clutched his pipe. "Certainly! Yes, just show him around! All the teachers will be happy to help you!"

Smirking, we turned a corner and proceeded down the hall in as official a stride as we could muster. Michael made occasional quick looks into classes, nodding deliberately, jotting a note, and walking on. By the time we reached the second floor his theatrical presence overwhelmed him. He began pressing teachers with penetrating questions: "What extracurricular aids to you employ?" "Do you use subject-oriented literature as an external stimulus?" His eyes sparkled and his hair bounced as we marched from door to door.

We rounded the corner of a stairwell to return to the lobby. As we did, a green-clad figure burst from the last class we visited.

“DIRTY HIPPIE
REVOLUTIONARY!”

We looked at each other. “The Bozo!” I exclaimed.

We began walking more briskly. The door was in sight when our friend reappeared with a squad of armed ROTC recruits. Rifles and pistols were raised toward us.

Michael reached the foot of the stairs and broke into a run. “They don’t have weapons, Michael!” I called out. “Those pistols are just rubber!”

Three rounds pinged across the flagstone floor. “The hell they are!” Michael shouted, still running.



We dashed through the open doors together. Sharp, frequent reports filled our ears. We reached Sherman, threw ourselves inside, and barreled into the street. More shots. Shouts. A bullet smacked into the right rear fender. A second one

tore through the right rear door and buried itself in a filled carton.

“There goes the last SLANapa mailing!” Michael sighed.

I heard another thud and was overcome by a wave of pain. Gasping, I clutched my right shoulder.

“Hurt badly, Lane?”

“Not too badly,” I replied, gritting my teeth. “It didn’t get my writing arm, at least. But I’m going to have to learn to mimeo left-handed.”

More shots. Screeching tires somewhere behind us.

“Lane, think I can make it out safely?”

“I don’t know, but can you let me off at the college? I have a one-o’clock class.”

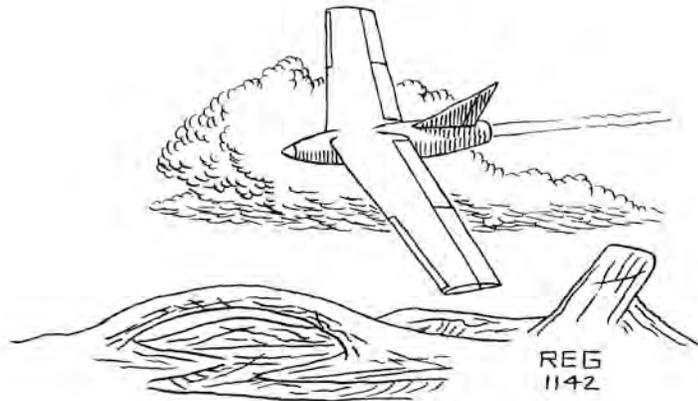
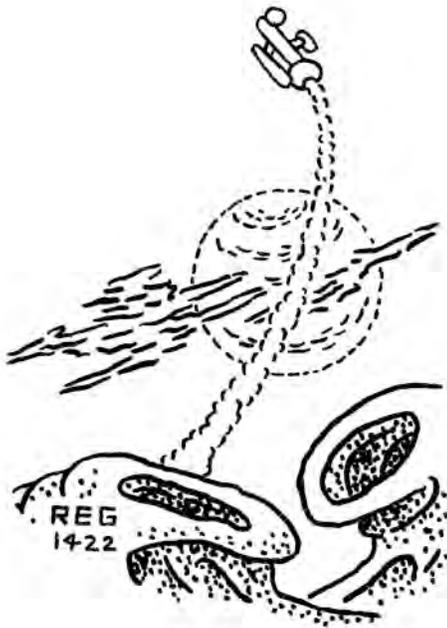
Ignored stop signs. Traffic lights. Michael decelerated at a corner beside the administration building. I hustled out and waved a clenched fist toward him as he gunned Sherman down the street. The ROTC van roared past me a moment later.

I wanted to do a one-shot to commemorate the event, but the chief of police found me before I got to a stencil.

—Lane Lambert

RANDOM ILLOS

ARTWORK
by Robert E. Gilbert



FOR THE TECHNICALLY MINDED NEOFAN

ADVICE
by Bob Vardeman

It seems that neofen come into fandom and are snowed completely by the jargon, the gafias and fafias and FIAWOLs and dreck like this. But such an obstacle is overcome with any number of good publications explaining What It All Means. The N3F serves as an apprenticing ground and various fanzines like *Yandro* will sell valuable introductions like *The Neofan's Guide*.

Learning the slanguage, then, is merely a matter of persistence. But what guidelines are there for progressing beyond this beginning? None. Each neofan is left to (sometimes) aimlessly search for his niche in fandom. Two methods for making this search more efficient come to mind.

The first is to create another bureau in the N3F, a Niche Locators Bureau. Obviously, this is not one of the best of all possible solutions, since the neofan could conceivably die of old age before all the red tape could be cut and the niche found.

My suggestion is of a technical nature. But since most fans have a smattering of technical background and since sf fandom should try to keep ahead of the times, my plan is quite logical. Computers have come to dominate many facets of business and research since they are capable of fast solutions to tedious problems. There is no doubt that hunting for one's niche in fandom could be tedious.

On the second page following is a computer flowchart showing how to achieve success at fanzine publishing. If the neofan's desire is to try to publish a fanzine, then this logic schematic will eliminate many time-

consuming cul-de-sacs that new faneds often find themselves enclosed in. The basic assumptions are simple:

1. The neofan has heard of fanzine publishing and wants to print one of his own.
2. He does not know what type of material has been shown to be the most successful.
3. He would like to accrue as much egoboo as possible.

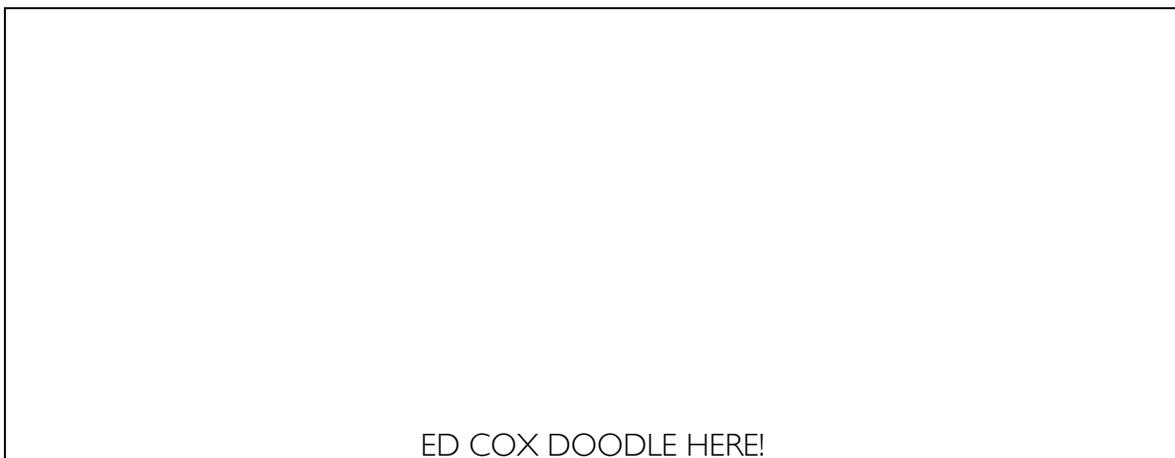
My flowchart shows the most efficient way of being a successful fanzine editor, and, barring this, shows logical alternatives to failure. These alternatives are historically those most often chosen and show a high probability of continuing to be chosen in the future, albeit through a hit-or-miss system.

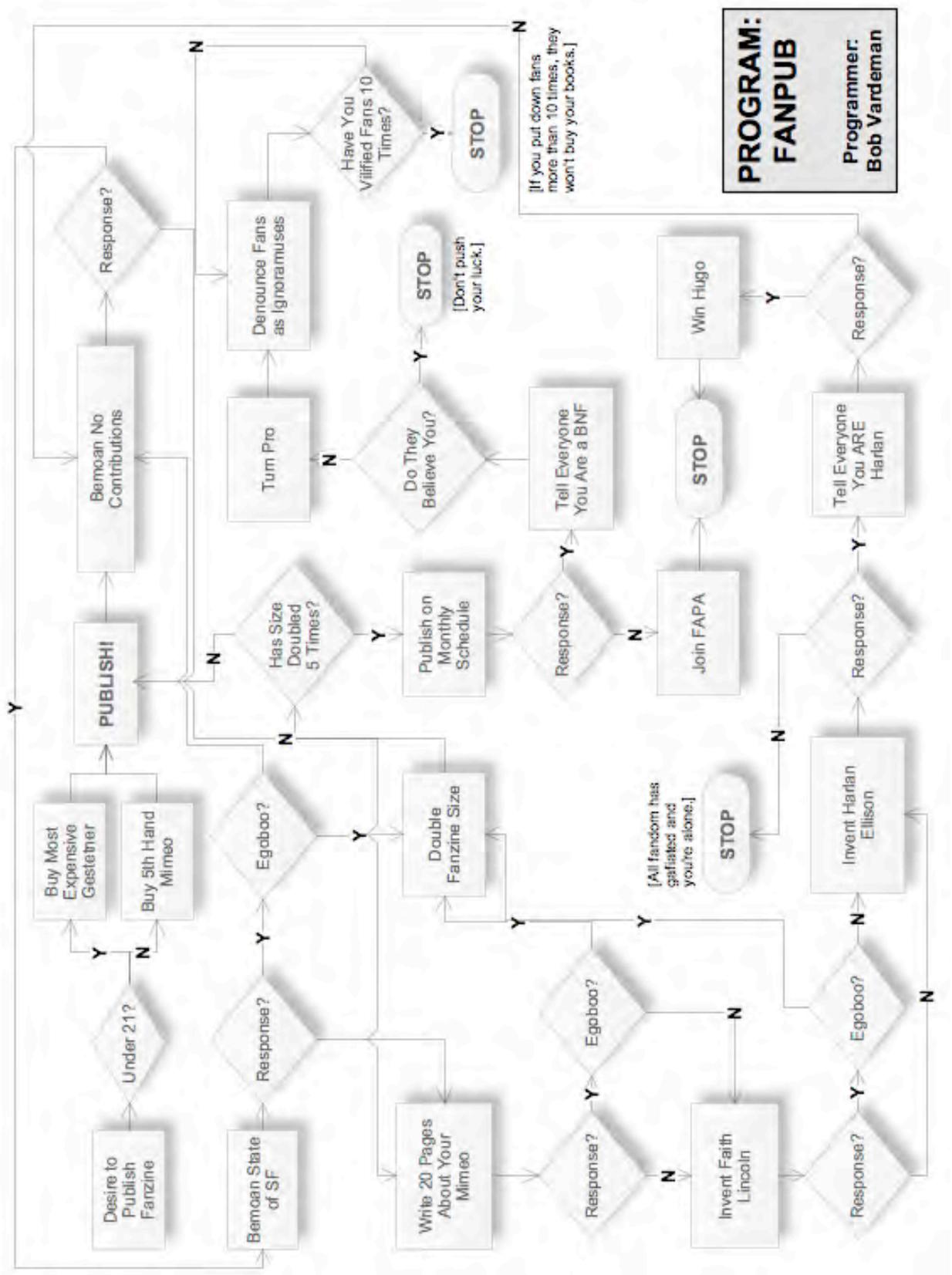
While the technically minded will already know how flowcharts are constructed, some of the technically unminded might not know. Basically, to follow through the program, start in the upper left hand corner in the first square and proceed by following the ~~yellow brick road~~ arrows. The diamond shaped boxes pose a typical Aristotelian question. Depending on the answer (“yes” or “no”), this determines the path taken. If the answer is “no,” follow the arrow with “no” beside it. If the answer is “yes,” follow the “yes” arrow.

The items in the squares are statements that should be executed, that is, commands. Never go backwards against an arrow.

Stop when you reach a circle with “Stop” in it. Do not pass Go, do not collect \$200. Send it to me instead.

—Bob Vardeman

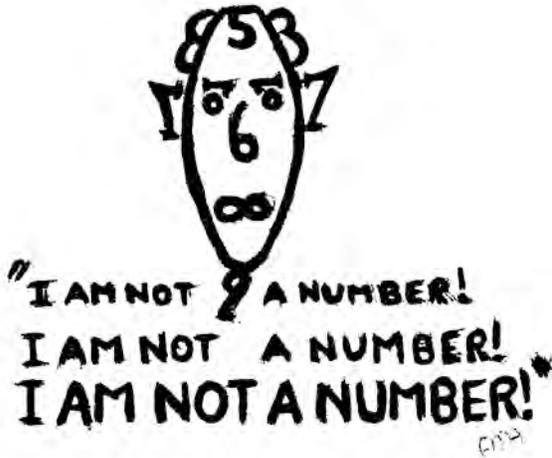




**PROGRAM:
FANPUB**
Programmer:
Bob Vardeman

RANDOM ILLOS

ARTWORK
by Al Andrews



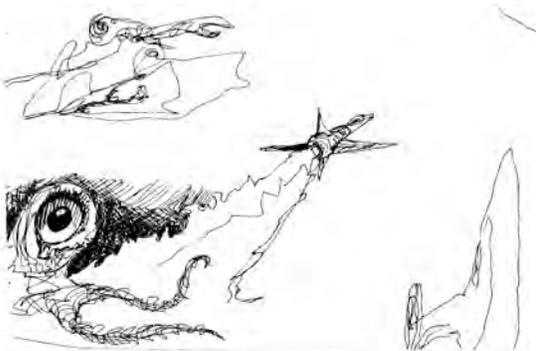
“...It’s Duty Free”

FICTION

by Frank Lunney

Hubie Rankin was sitting in his easy chair, dolefully checking the obituary column of *The Gumbo Gazette*, when the air started to crackle before him. Being a meek and out of the way man all his life (he was a coward), Hubie unplanted himself from the chair and hid behind it. After ten minutes of Hubie trying to rise above the sound of the crackling with his fits of hysteria, he looked to see what had caused this interruption, thinking to himself (for Hubie was a wise man), “If it hasn’t attacked me by now, it never will!”

Standing in the middle of the room was a man that seemed as everyday as any man could be, except for one thing: he had a halo above his head, glowing as you would expect a halo to glow.



Hubie, feeling a little sheepish for hiding from such an innocent looking man (and with a halo, yet), jumped to his feet and tried to explain himself. “Looking for loose change that fell under a chair,” he said. “You never know what kind of fortune you can find under a chair!”

Then Hubie realized that this was an invader, maybe a thief after his piggy bank. But still, all Hubie could get out was a weak, “Who are you?”

“I am Norman,” replied the man, giving a little chuckle.

Seeing that he wasn’t going any further, Hubie asked, “But what do you want with me?”

Giving Hubie a long look, Norman, ignoring Hubie’s question, said, “I can see why you’ve led the kind of life you have.”

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I’ve lead a great life and enjoyed every minute of it! These last few years have been a little slow. But what do you expect from a 65-year old man?” Hubie was a little miffed.

At that, Norman laughed louder and longer than Hubie had ever seen anyone laugh before. "Hubie, haven't you noticed this halo of mine ye? It's not for decoration; you could call it—well, let's say it's my ID card."

Hubie's mouth fell open. "You mean...!?"

"Yes, that's exactly what I mean."

"But where are your wings?"

"We don't need them anymore. Ever since Wilbur invented the antigrav belt, all the progressive people in our group have been wearing them. Only the oldsters wear wings now."

"You have the belt now?" Nod. "Lemme see it work!"

"Whatever you say," replied Norman. He reached down and pressed a stud on his belt and instantly flew up, crashing into the ceiling. "Dammit!" yelled Norman. "Can't you get a higher ceiling?" Norman fluttered down to the floor, his halo a wreck.

Norman was a little angry. "I didn't come here to put on a show for you. So shuddup and listen. You'll be leaving—shall we say—this earth in exactly one year, at midnight. I'm what you'd call a recruiting sergeant and I know all about your life on Earth. Good to your parents. Never a fight. In other words, you're good to the core. I don't know if you've been thinking of dastardly deeds, but

never carrying them out, or what. But sometimes when we get a recruit, we give him a little bonus of—what should I call it?—'duty free' time on Earth. You can do anything you want and it won't be held against you. In addition to that, we give you one free wish.

By this time, Hubie was panting. He screamed, "I wish to be invulnerable! I don't wanna go before my time!"

Norman waved his hand in an intricate series of moves and declared, "So be it."

The next thing Hubie knew, he was being bathed in sparks and Norman was gone.

Hubie laughed and laughed.



In the year Hubie had "duty free," he knocked off a few guys who picked on him when he was younger, cleared out a few banks,

and did some fooling around. And nobody could touch him.

Hubie laughed and laughed.

At the end of the year, Hubie was on the Riviera (at midnight?) when Norman appeared once again. "Ready to leave?" asked Norman.

"Let's go!"



PAIN! Hubie felt PAIN! Hubie realized he was on fire but couldn't die.

"Where the hell am I?!" Hubie screamed in agony.

"That's exactly where you are," replied Norman.

"But the halo? My year duty-free?"

"So I lied a little."

"God damn you!!"

"He already has."

"But I thought your name was Norman."

"Yes, my Christian name."

"What other poor saps are you robbing of eternal bliss on Earth?"

"Oh, only one besides you. This is a new thing with me. It seems to be working.

"Who's the other poor devil?"

"I forget exactly. I have these little lapses. It's Elbee Jay or something. We told him he had ten years left, but to sustain people over ten years was too much of a power strain, so we only gave you one."

Norman laughed and laughed.

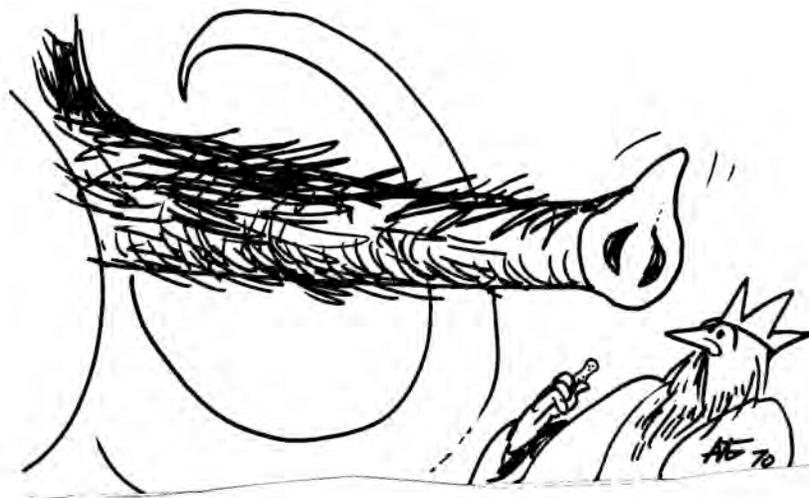
Hubie cried and cried.

—Frank Lunney

MORE ED COX DOODLE SPACE

RANDOM ILLOS

ARTWORK
by Alexis Gilliland



THE VAMPIRE SHEEP

A MELODRAMA IN VERSE

by Lloyd Rose

Characters

Rosalind, a pure young shepherdess

Colin Clout, a pure young shepherd

Dr. Anatomy S. Destiny, student of the occult

Roman Polanski, his young bumbling assistant

Harry Bailey, the innkeeper

The Idiot Boy

Nuntius, another shepherd

Various townsfolk

Act One

Scene I. A Pasture at Night

(At rise, Colin and Rosalind are onstage. Colin recites "Come Live With Me and Be My Love," by Marlowe. Rosalind replies with Raleigh's reply. Colin exits right. Rosalind moons around the stage.)

Rosalind Little lamb, thou art so fair
Snowy white with wooly hair
Would that he were pure as thee
And tried not so hard to tumble me.

(Hideous screams offstage)

Rosalind What can it be that frightened me?
That anguished shout sounded like Colin Clout!

(enter Nuntius)

Nuntius As I walked through the nighttime pasture
Treading oft in sheep manure
Looking fondly at the moon
Which dispelled the nighttime's gloom
Suddenly a cry I heard!
It was neither beast nor bird
I ran to find out whence it came
It came once more and just the same
And then came I with fainting breath
Upon a body chewed to death
His features were near mangled out
Yet I swear 'twas Colin Clout
And I swear to Almighty God
That in his body was no blood.

(Rosalind faints)

Scene II. The Inn

(General carousing and merrymaking going on. Innkeeper Harry Bailey tends the bar. Enter Dr. Anatomy S. Destiny and Roman Polanski.)

Destiny Roman, my assistant true
A deep secret I'll tell you
I've heard legends dark and strange
Of purple death and spreading mangle
Of rotting rivers that eat toes
And trees that drip blood when it snows
Yet strangest of all I tell to you
Is that of those foul beasts who chew
Their prey to death and leave no blood.

Roman Chew them to death! Oh my sweet God!

Destiny Chewed to death, by my right arm!
Soon we may all come to harm!

(Villagers at bar whom he has addressed murmur their assent.)

Villager 1 The funeral is held tomorrow.

Villager 3 All our women have a fright!
It's not safe to walk at night

Villager 2 His face was chewed so hideously
I hardly knew that it was he.

Destiny There, there, you see!
Please, pardon me
But I and my assistant here
Could not help but lend an ear
To your tale of awful death.
My assistant and I have left
London and have traveled here
Just in order to be near
To supernatural tragedy.
I may say quite modestly
I'm an expert in that field.
Our exploring here may yield
Clues to help us end this curse.
I can think of few deaths worse
Than the one you've talked about.

Villager 1 Alas, alas, poor Colin Clout.

H. Bailey I don't know of whom you speak.
There hasn't been a death all week.
Meddlers are not welcome here
Leave after you drink your beer.

Roman What now?
(*to A. D.*) And how—

Idiot Boy Don't go into the pasture at night
Or you're bound to get a fright!

(giggles and drools hysterically)

H. Bailey (*to Idiot Boy*) Shut up, you
(*to A.D.*) He's quite insane.
He has sheep's wool for his brain.

(throws boy offstage)

Destiny There's more to this than meets the eye.
We'll find Rosalind and try
To see if she will help us out
And solve the mystery of Colin Clout.

Act Two

Scene I. The Pasture, Daylight

(Enter Rosalind, Anatomy, and Roman.)

Rosalind It was here I heard him yell
Like a demon out of hell.
Nuntius found his body bled
Of all blood *(she weeps)*.
We were to be wed.

Destiny There, there, dear girl. Dry your tears.

Roman *(taking her hand)*
We hope to disperse your fears.

Rosalind How kind you are, how good to me
You're a fine person, I can see.

(enter Lamb, who runs to Rosalind and licks her hand)

Destiny What is this that licks your hand?

Rosalind It is just my little lamb.

Roman Oh, how cute. *(Pats its head)* Is it your pet?

Rosalind Yes.

Destiny *(slightly snide in disgust)*
I'll bet it sleeps indoors yet.

Rosalind In a box beside the stove. *(embraces Lamb)*
Oh, my little woolly love.

Destiny Is this where his body was found
On the strangely bloody ground?
Look, the tracks of hooved feet—
Alas, poor Colin was their meat.

Rosalind Was it demons killed him so?

Destiny I don't know, dear; I don't know.

(Exits, shaking his head)

Roman Rosalind, you are so fair
I think I've searched everywhere
To find someone just like you.
Tell me, could you love me too?

Rosalind Though Colin is just newly dead
The sight of his poor, mangled head
Makes me vomit. Love does not
Long cling to such mangled rot.

Roman *(embracing her)*
Rosalind, I love you so!

Rosalind Hold me, never let me go!

Scene II. The Pasture, Later That Day

(Roman and Destiny are together.)

Roman Rosalind's gone home to bed.

Destiny Look here where the ground's all red.
Why, it's blood upon the grass!
What caused it, you might well ask.

Roman What caused it?

Destiny Indeed, indeed.
We all know that grass doesn't bleed.

Roman *(grabbing Destiny's arm)*
Look there where the sheep has chewed!
Liquid from his mouth has spewed,
Staining the grass ghastly red—
Can it be its mouth has bled?

Destiny Or are they left-over stains?
God, I must have wool for brains
Like the idiot. I could weep.
Roman, these are vampire sheep!

Roman But Professor, can it be?

Destiny Use your eyes, what do you see?
Blood from their mouths stains the grass.
It's so clear, how can you ask?
For sheep never brush their teeth—
Grab one (*Roman grabs one*) and look underneath
Its wretched jaw and you see there...?

Roman Bloodstains on its wooly hair!
(*Straightens and drops sheep*)
Rosalind's little lamb! (*Looks around wildly*)
Night is falling and I am
Far from her and not the least
Help in fighting off the beast!

Destiny Let's hurry to prevent this crime
I pray that we may be in time!

Act Three

Scene I. Rosalind's House

(*The kitchen is downstairs, the bedroom upstairs. The Lamb is in its bed by the stove. Rosalind is upstairs reading.*)

Rosalind (*reading aloud from William Blake*)
Little lamb, who made thee?
Dost thou know who made thee?

(*Enter Roman and Destiny from the back of the theater, fighting their way through the snow in the aisles.*)

Roman Damn, damn this accursed snow!
How much faster can we go?

Destiny Whose woods these are, I think I know.

Roman They're pastures. And we're going too slow.

Destiny Have you got the cross and stake?
We this evil spell shall break.

Rosalind *(still reading)*
Did he who made the tiger make thee?

(The Lamb slowly rises from his box and creeps toward the stairs.)

Rosalind *(looking out the window)*
What a wild and snowy night!
On all nature lies a blight!

Roman Alas, I fear we are too late!

Destiny No, no, we shall yet conquer fate.

(The Lamb creeps up the stairs, slavering in anticipation.)

Rosalind I hope my little lamb sleeps well
In this night of raging hell.

Roman If she dies, I die too!

Destiny You'd better not die. I need you.

Roman I think I see the house ahead
Oh God, I pray she is not dead!

Rosalind *(stretches and yawns)*
Oh my, how heavy is my head
I think that I shall go to bed.

(The Lamb keeps creeping, reaches the bedroom door and paws at it. At the same moment, Destiny and Roman reach the door of the house and bang on it frantically.)

Rosalind What's that noise outside my door?
(She opens the bedroom door.)
Lamb, would you sleep on my floor?

Roman Rosalind, Rosalind, let us in!

Destiny Let us end this dreadful sin!

(Rosalind hurries downstairs to the door. The Lamb follows fiendishly. Rosalind opens the door.)

Rosalind Why is it you knock so late?

Roman *(grabbing her and pulling her out the door)*
Look out, the Lamb!

Destiny It brims with hate!

(Roman rushes in heroically, grabs the Lamb and rushes offstage with it.)

Destiny Your lamb's a fiend
It killed young Clout!

(Scream from offstage.)

Rosalind Oh God, was that my Roman's shout?

Destiny *(shaking his head sadly)*
He was the noblest of them all.

Rosalind Wait, wait, I hear him call!

Roman *(offstage)* The lamb and I had quite a tiff
But I have thrown him off a cliff.

Rosalind My love, my love!

Destiny Good boy, good boy.

Roman *(still offstage)* I fear but one thing mars our joy.

Rosalind Come to me love, through the snows

Roman *(still remaining offstage)*
Can you love a man without a nose?

Scene II. The Inn

(Roman, Destiny, and Rosalind are sitting around a table drinking merrily. Harry Bailey is serving them beer.)

Bailey You've killed the sheep, ended the curse—
Here, please have some more bratwurst.

Destiny *(cleverly)* I think mutton's more our line.

Rosalind *(to Roman)* My poor dear, you've had a time
But we'll be together now
Despite your nose. Yes, anyhow.

(Idiot Boy lurches over to table.)

Idiot Boy I've heard tell down in the pond
There's ducks that wander here and yon.
Doing fiendish things by night.

Bailey *(hitting him away)*
Here, now, you'll give the folks a fright.

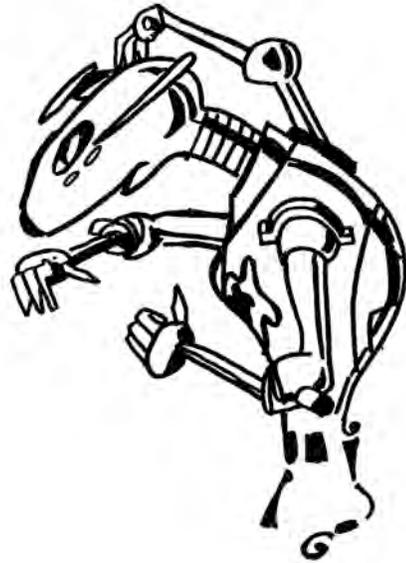
Rosalind What an awful thing to say—
I bought a duck the other day
To replace my little lamb.
He's yellow, and I named him Sam.

Destiny Now you young folks get well fed,
Then home to your downy wedding bed.

(Curtain.)

RANDOM ILLOS

ARTWORK
by John Godwin



RANDOM WORDS

POETRY

by Various

The Dirty Part of Death

Was there ever a lemming on its way
With a million others into the sea
Who felt in its heart there were too many lemmings?

Mankind approaches a fiery ocean
And whether it plunges in or not
There is something dirty in some people's feelings
There is something sick in such sad sentiments
That there are not too many cockroaches
Too many flies and fleas and gnats
Too many mice, bats, rats, or boll weevils
But only over and over again, too many people

Lemmings swim bravely, obeying some command
As if all life bows to the necessary balance
But lemmings swim bravely, true to their own
And dying, the lemmings die clean

— **Raymond L. Clancy**

If a dragon ate me, or I ate a dragon
I would die or at least injure myself permanently.

Which is a pleasanter thing than trying to tell you
I haven't changed, it was already there, all of it.
You didn't know before when I cried about the loneliness
Because that bad feeling passed soon and I didn't want
You to tell me again how I had a warm heart and so much
sophistication for a fifteen-year-old.
That didn't help when I walked out the door
But I appreciate the effort

Listen to me instead of following my growth with moist eyes.
I won't face the old loneliness
After finding people who don't hate me
(I used to think everyone hated me but you)
and discovering I don't need you anymore
to tell me I'm not stupid and fat.

Others can tell me now.

You love me so that my faults
And qualities don't count and
If I say there are lumps at the
Bottom of my bed that are conspiring
Against me and that why I can't
Sleep when I come home you won't believe me
While others will.

Aren't you listening?

— **Arabella St. Erth**

I am a bootlicker
Listener in doorways
Captive of their telephone conversations
I peer through a crack in the door
To see where one is going, and with whom.

They always go in pairs.

And if one should ascend the stairs
I wonder hysterically who could it be?
And do you want me? Me?
But they want the correct time
When I am getting up and would I do this when I go.

Of course.

And I don't do anything else
For the sake of watching
This one, then that one
Jealous and wishful of their superficiality
(I know it is superficiality)
not really wanting it except most of the time
when no one is interested in my company because

Niceness and cuteness

Are welcome in small doses
Or when no one else is around to entertain them
I listen and get lonely and wonder at the pride
That should make me do something else.

Then I eat.

— **Arabella St. Erth**

Puff the dragon never stays for long when he comes to visit and he's been here four times. Jeffrey pushed him up against the magic ship and he sat there for two years and one week but now he's getting chipped. Toni brought him in with the Captain but he didn't sit still that time, a long time ago. The dress with the green lace houses went to rags somewhere, but that's all Toni wants to wear anyway and maybe a love sign.

Eight flat feet on the speckled floor and the toes squinched down except the big ones, but the arches rose and the flesh grew eight brown boots; it's been so long since the mountain broke and if you climbed to the top you might fall off, but it only breaks when it rains. The thunder threatened the plastic pool and four flat feet ran up the tile. Two brown eyes watched the window light and nobody ate the soup. Animal, hunted, angry eyes, smash Chatty Cathy and the steam shovel too, because everything's just for girls. But hearken to the beat, your brother is coming with his rubber gun. I would have held you but you didn't ask me to. Watch your dreams through the steamy window, watch the games in the candlelit room but you should have worn your coat.

The pieces aren't together yet, the puzzle's on the table in the chocolate milk. We would have asked you, but you didn't say the words out loud. She took the words I gave out loud and sent them to the city dump with a box of Nancy Drews. But I wouldn't wear dresses with pheasants on them, I never wore dresses with pheasants on them, I never wanted to, so I won't make you.

— M. Shira

Winter Kill

Winter draws a frosty blade, dispatches summer,
Marches on with me for hostage
Held against its rival, spring.

Ice is prison, snow my warder, wind is
My executioner. Sliding ice, smothering snow,
North wind howls my sentence.

Another winter crows on summer's death-bed.
I strike a precious memory and stretch
My fingers to its warmth.

Sardines

In a crowd
They don't know
How we know each other
All the while they're talking
Our hips kiss
Our shoulders cry
Our eyes alone avoiding touch

In a Mirror

Butter-soft, your skin yields
To the pressure of my hand.
Your pulse beats in time
With the encroaching galaxy.
I lie in your arms, I tremble—
Not in your arms, but in my world.

And then the world of shame
Replaces ours; and I am again
My parents' lives and you are but
A vision. And that is why
I reach and rend you into fragments—
Silver-backed fragments of myself.

— **Anonymous**

MEMORANDUM TO THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

ADVICE

by Robert Grey, Poet in Residence and Assistant Professor
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

Perhaps the following suggestion by W. H. Auden, who would establish a “day dream college for Bards,” should be given serious consideration by the Curriculum Committee:

1. In addition to English, at least one ancient language, probably Greek or Hebrew, and two modern languages would be required.
2. Thousands of lines of poetry in these languages would be learned by heart.
3. The library would contain no books of literary criticism, and the only critical exercise required of students would be the writing of parodies.
4. Courses in prosody, rhetoric, and comparative philology would be required of all students, and every student would have to select three courses from the areas of mathematics, natural history, geology, meteorology, archaeology, mythology, liturgics, and cooking.
5. Every student would be required to look after a domestic animal and cultivate a garden plot.

RANDOM READINGS

BOOK REVIEWS

by Christopher Jeremy

Prolegomena to any Future Reviews by This Reviewer

Book reviews have always disturbed me. It seems to me that every reviewer ought to do one of the following before writing any critical review. (Reviews that merely summarize don't interest me.) He should either (1) clearly and concisely set forth the principles in terms of which he evaluates literature, he should set forth the principles in terms of which he evaluates the kind of literature he is about to evaluate here and now (e.g., science fiction/fantasy); (2) plainly admit that his reviews are primarily personal reactions reflecting his own values, interests, and *weltanschauung*.

I have yet to find a reviewer who does either of these properly. There are some who have tried, certainly. But the principles they set forth are nearly always so ambiguous they can mean anything and everything to anybody and everybody. Or, on

the other hand, after fulfilling (2) they then proceed to review the books as if they *were* using "objective" standards.

My policy in "Random Readings" (at least my stated policy, ahem...) shall be to adopt (2). This means that the reader is henceforth warned that regardless of what I say about a book, neither he nor I is a boob for agreeing or disagreeing with either myself, him, or What Most Critics Say.

Such reviews can be of value to the reader in several ways:

1. Each review will contain at least a little summary, thus giving the reader some hint as to what the book is "about." Hence, if he does not like, for example, sword and sorcery, or space opera, or sociological/psychological/philosophical messages, or whatever, he can skip a particular book.

2. After reading several of my reviews the reader will begin to get some idea of what sort of thing “meshes” with my own likes and dislikes, and he can then decide, on the basis of his own likes and dislikes (having decided how close his and mine are), whether he wants to read a particular book or not.
3. He will be vastly entertained by the witty comments and incisive criticisms, whether he feels they are justified or not...ahem...

Another thing that has always bothered me about book reviews is the lack of information given about the reviewer himself—e.g., what does he “do for a living,” what are his hobbies, etc. Hence (fanfare of trumpets), a brief biographical sketch of yours truly. I am, by profession, a college professor (Associate Professor of Philosophy, to be specific). I do have a Ph.D. (hold your applause, folks), thereby making me at least the literary equal of E. E. Smith. I am 30 years old (but, of course, a “youngish” 30), and my hobbies are reading science fiction/fantasy, drinking, engaging in conversation, and ogling pretty girls (including my wife). Politically, I am a “limousine liberal” (one who espouses all the “liberal” causes and vocally supports them but doesn’t do much actual work or sacrifice to bring them about). Religiously: I of course believe in

Ghod, but have my doubts about God. Existentially: I am.

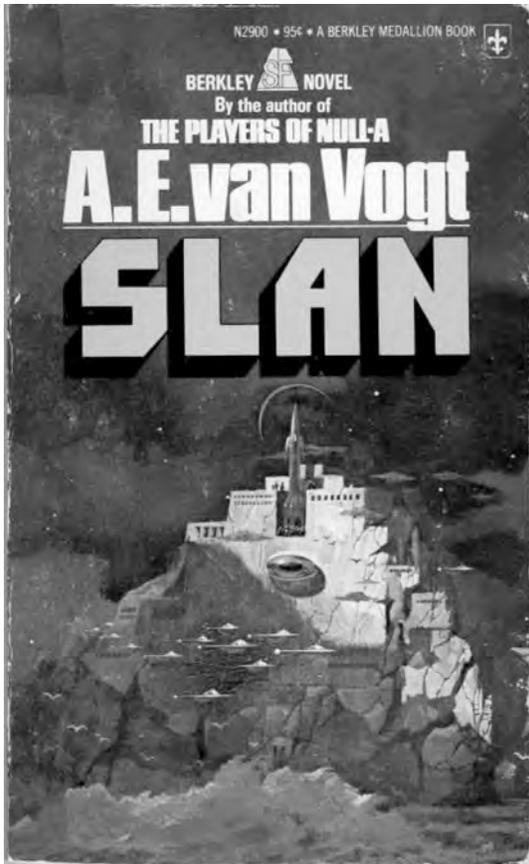
Having delivered my Soul of this burden, we shall now proceed with the business at hand (or under foot, as the case may be).

* * *

A. E. van Vogt, *Slan* (Berkeley, 190 pp., 75¢)

This book is just awful. Classic that it is (or is said to be), I suppose one ought not to be too hard on *Slan*. But reading it now, in 1971, in the day of writers like Silverberg, Ellison, *et al.*, leaves one with a true sense of depression concerning the “good ol’ days.”

Jommy Cross is a “true Slan.” That is, he has golden tendril-like hairs (two of them) which enable him to read minds and to project his own thought—not to mention being capable of other mental and physical feats which would boggle the mind/body of any “normal” man or “tendriless slan.” Cross is pursued throughout the book by all of humanity and all of tendriless slanhood—his only hope lying in the Ultimate Weapon bequeathed him by his dead father and his unflagging faith that he will find a colony of True Slans somewhere (if not on Earth then on Mars or Jupiter—or Ghod knows where).



Of course, all ends well for this Superslan. How else could matters end for a being who could construct, *all by himself*, a space ship capable of flying about the entire solar system and also able to withstand the explosion of a nuclear mine equal to an atom bomb, an entire underground hanger for this ship, a laboratory for constructing not only more ships but also guns and other miscellaneous weapons capable of blasting any other ship out of the sky in seconds, plus his own “10 point steel” ranch house (cleverly disguised as an old shack [a slan-shack?], of course). For all of this, van Vogt gives us no hint as to how Cross could possibly manage. Remember, while he is on this construction binge he is being

hunted by all the rest of humanity and all the tendriless slans. (A tendriless slan has—surprise!—no tendrils, but does have physical and some mental abilities superior to normal humans.)

Add to all of this van Vogt’s “style.” He does not, for one thing (among many), know how to give the reader the necessary background without making it clumsily obvious that he is trying to do so without being obvious. (Did you follow that?) For example, on page 76 (finally!) van Vogt decides to clue us as to how the slans came into being. To do so he has Kier Gray, the dictator of Earth, mention the explanation parenthetically in a conference with his “cabinet,” ten men who, of all people, already know all of this and would think it ridiculous for Gray to mention it at all. Thus, Gray (to his cabinet):

“They [the tendriless slans] denounce the ambition for world rule which actuated the first slans, explaining that ambition as due to a false conception of superiority, unleavened by the later experience that convinced them they are not superior but merely different. They also accuse Samuel Lann [here it comes, folks], the human being and biological scientist who first created slans, and after whom the slans are named—Samuel Lann: S. Lann: Slan [ah, yes, we would never have guessed]—of fostering in his

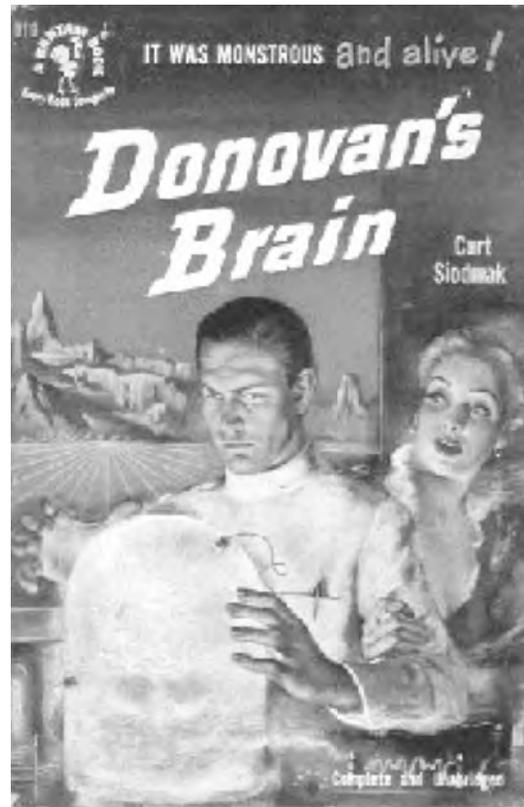
children the belief that they must rule the world.”

But enough. If you want to read one of the first books about psychic powers, or if you just want to see how badly van Vogt used to write, then *Slan* is for you. But if you are mainly interested in good sf, forget it.

Curt Siodmak, *Donovan's Brain* (Berkeley, 160 pp., 60¢)

This is a 1969 reissue of a book written in 1942. It is clearly a kind of “early version” of Siodmak’s more recent (1968) *Hauser’s Memory* (on which the television movie starring David McCallum was based). In *Donovan’s Brain*, rather than injecting one man with the RNA from another man’s brain (as in *Hauser’s Memory*), a scientist removes the brain from a man who has just died in a plane crash. Through telepathy the liberated brain (cleverly kept alive in a tank by the scientist—heh, heh) takes over the life of the scientist and tries to live out its own evil desires.

Siodmak writes this in the first person, diary form, and the reader gets an inside perspective of Patrick Cory (the scientist) being “taken over.” Not great sf by a long shot, but interesting and fun if you go for this sort of thing. If you’re going to read only one Siodmak, though, *Hauser’s Memory* is easily the superior work.



Robert E. Howard, *Conan the Warrior* (Lancer, 222 pp., 60¢)

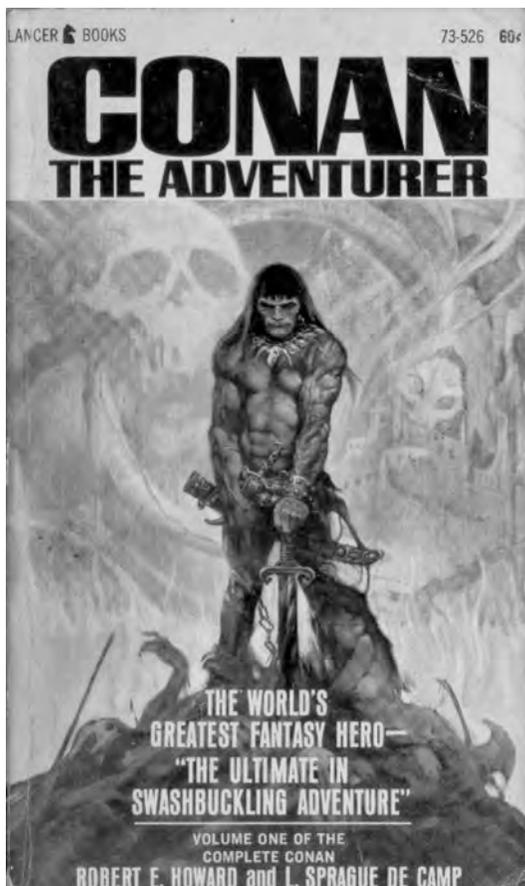
Robert E. Howard and L. Sprague de Camp, *Conan the Adventurer* (Lancer, 224 pp., 60¢)

Robert E. Howard, L. Sprague de Camp, and Lin Carter, *Conan* (Lancer, 221 pp., 60¢)

First Conan smashes in this guy’s skull, then he smashes in that guy’s skull, then he chops the horrendous monkey man into little pieces, then he rescues the beautiful naked princess (or slave girl or bar maid, etc.), then he disintegrates the unspeakable

snake-man, then he mutilates the hellacious Thing, then he picks his nose, then he...

I also have on hand, but have not read, *Conan the Conqueror*, which is billed on the cover as "Howard's only book-length novel, worthy to stand beside such heroic fantasy as E. R. Eddison and J. R. R. Tolkien." Bullshit! To put Howard (and company) in even the same universe with Tolkien is absurd. These Conan things might be good to read sometime when you are drunk, but sober I fail to see how even a 12 year old could stand them. (Wonder how I got through these three...hmm?)



Gordon Eklund, *The Eclipse of Dawn* (Ace Science Fiction Special, 221 pp., 75¢)

Eklund is one of the new, young writers, and *Eclipse of Dawn* is his first novel. It is easy to tell that he is just beginning, but he has a unique style which, when polished a bit more, promises to make him someone I'll want to read again.

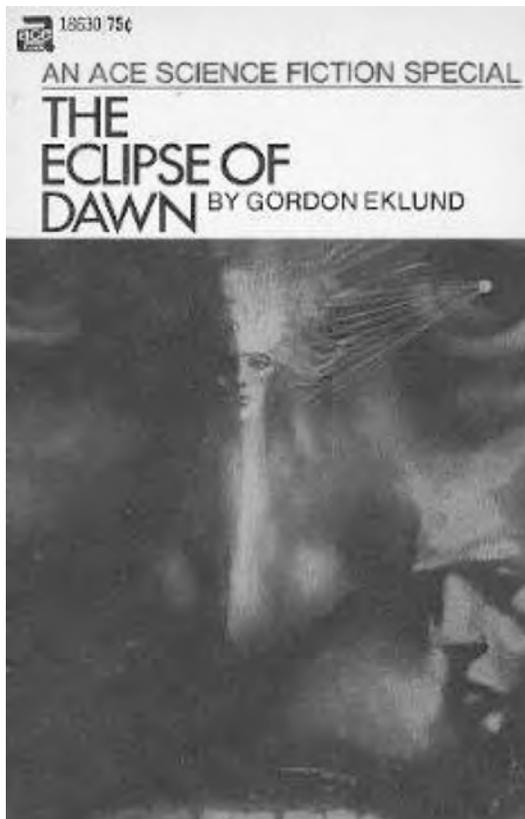
The year is 1988 and Mark Jacobi is a young writer following presidential candidate Robert Colonby on his campaign tour, trying to get material for a book. At this time (just 17 years from now), nearly the entire U.S. society has fallen apart in civil war (the Blacks finally got pissed and persuaded the Chinese to help them in a revolution) and a foreign embargo. The capital is now in California, Washington and all the other eastern cities lying in ruins. The air and water are polluted nearly everywhere; gas masks are common, etc.

In the middle of this desperate climate, Jacobi's sister, Susan, claims she is receiving telepathic messages from a superior race on Jupiter (the Octaurians). The Japanese have launched a space ship for Jupiter, and Susan claims that when it arrives the Octaurians will reveal the Secrets of the Universe to men and All Our Problems Will Be Over.

Eclipse provides a vivid picture of a revolution-torn America, including the psychological

consequences. Guns are commonplace (even more so than today) and children have low-power electric rifles to zap their pets (and adults they don't like) with. The ruins of Disneyland contain both a resort for the presidential candidate and a hideout for revolutionaries (in the various tunnels and catacombs). There is mass starvation and even cannibalism among the "less fortunate." But the hope of salvation is held out—on the tenuous and innocent fingers of Susan Jacobi. And many believe.

I still can't decide about the ending of this book, whether it is optimistic, pessimistic, or satirical. But read it, read it. We'll be hearing from Eklund again.



Keith Laumer, *The World Shufflers* (Berkeley, 174 pp., 75¢)

This is a sequel to Laumer's earlier *Axe and Dragon*. Strangely enough, though, it appeared simultaneously with another sequel, *Shape Changer*, in the December 1970 and February 1971 issues of *Fantastic*. Neither sequel mentions the other and each seems to take up right where the original left off. But that doesn't matter. I like this series.

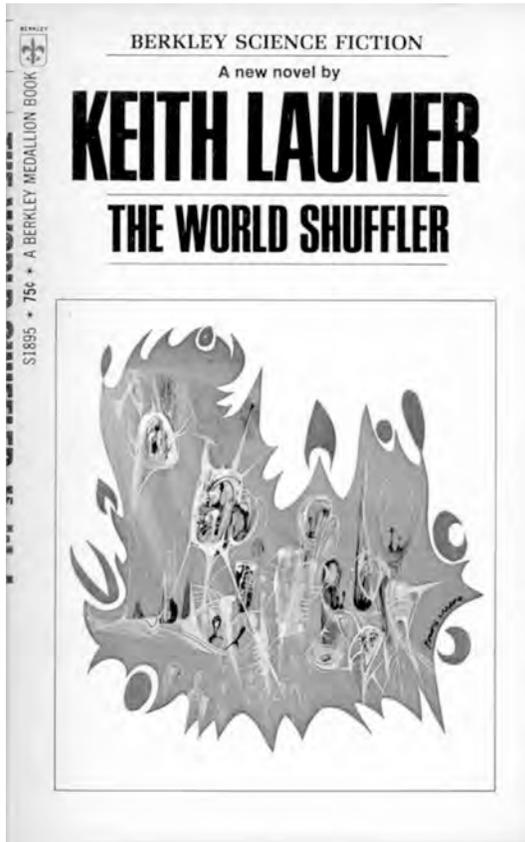
Lafayette O'Leary is a penniless draftsman who is shuffled from "our" universe to another one, Artesia, where he fights numerous battles and wins the favors of lovely ladies. He then settles down to live happily ever after as an Artesian nobleman. So ends *Axe and Dragon*. In *The World Shuffler*, O'Leary is suddenly transported to yet *another* world where nobody knows him but where he recognizes most of the major characters from Artesia—only they are all playing different roles, e.g., his lovely wife, Adoranne, is now Swinehild, the bar maid and village whore—or they are look-alikes at any rate. Once again O'Leary battles and woos fair maidens before conquering all.

But the beauty is that these books are satires on sword and sorcery. And Laumer kept me chuckling all the way. A random sample:

“Well, be that as it may, I’d better get some rest. Frankly, I’m not as used to all this excitement as I once was. Can you direct me to an inn, Swinehild? Nothing elaborate: a modest room with bath, preferably eastern exposure. I like waking up to a cheery dawn, you know.”

“I’ll throw some fresh hay into the goat pen,” Swinehild said. “Don’t worry,” she added at Lafayette’s startled look. “It’s empty since we ate the goat.”

But you can pick your own favorites. If you’re an S&S fan you should find these Laumer satires highly amusing.



Larry Niven, *Ringworld* (Ballantine, 342 pp., 95¢)

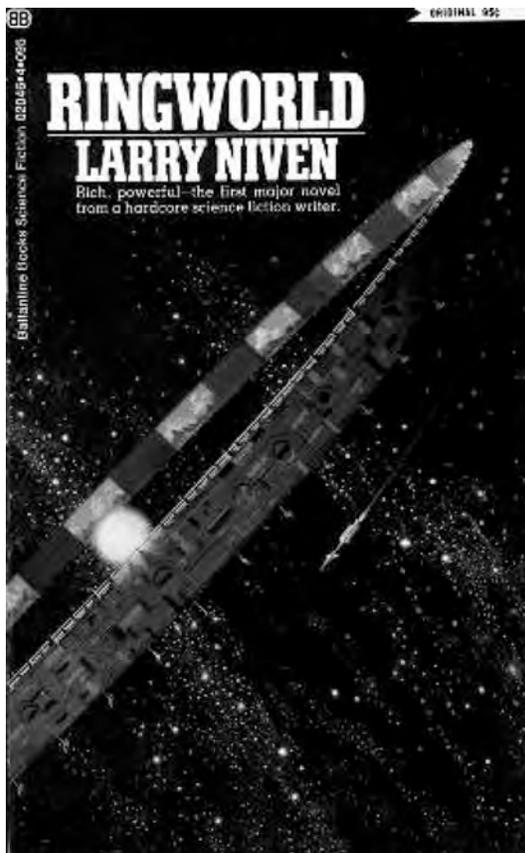
This book won the Nebula this year, and it has a beautiful cover by Dean Ellis. If you’re a cover nut, or you just try to read everything that wins or is nominated for a Nebula or a Hugo (like me), then *get Ringworld*. Or perhaps you just go for long, uninspired space opera. Any of these reasons would, I suppose, justify purchasing this book. As you can already tell, however, I didn’t enjoy it at all.

So help me, the only reason I can conceive that might even begin to establish *Ringworld’s* claim to a Nebula is just the idea of the ringworld itself. Other than that, we simply have four characters (two of them nonhuman) zipping around the universe encountering and overcoming one deadly peril after another (including enmity among themselves).

There has been an explosion at the core of the galaxy, see. The Puppeteers, a race of superior beings with two front legs and one hind one, two heads with an eye on each, and one brain under a small hump between the shoulders, are fleeing, because the effects of this explosion will reach “known space” within 20,000 years. (The Puppeteers are famous for their cowardice and conservatism.) Nessus, a Puppeteer, recruits Louis Wu (a 200 year old Earthman), Teela Brown (a beautiful 20 year old Earthwoman), and Speaker-to-Animals (a Kzin—cat-like beings

famous for their pride and ferocity) to go with him to explore the ringworld as a possible refuge for his race. The Puppeteer fleet has already left but will not arrive for hundreds of years because they are traveling at sublight speeds.

The Puppeteers do have a faster-than-light drive (hyperdrive) built into a ship but are afraid to use it because it has not been sufficiently tested (they are cowards, remember). Nessus, Louis, Teela, and Speaker set forth in this supership—to boldly go where no man, Kzinti, or Puppeteer has gone before.



The ringworld is just that: a world (artificially built) shaped like a

giant ring with its sun in the middle. Its area is one million times that of Earth (hence solving any conceivable population problems that might arise), and its inventors, brilliant beings though they were, have never discovered the hyperdrive. This failure on the part of the ringworld engineers is what (is hoped) gives our heroes their advantage. And on we go...

This book is space opera, pure and simple. Not as bad as E. E. Smith, but not good, either. I was intrigued by the name of a giant mountain on the ringworld: Fist of God. That must be the instrument Niven used on the Nebula voters to garner this award. Any other weapon would have been insufficient, considering the other fine books around this year.

— Christopher Jeremy

TIME LAPSE

MAGAZINE REVIEWS

by Bill Wolfenbarger

It came to me like a flash of thunder early one cold afternoon to sit down and review a couple of old science-fiction and fantasy magazines, in a remembrance of things past.



There's the 25th Anniversary Issue of *Weird Tales*, dated March 1948, which has all the stories new, no reprints. Lee Brown Coye did the cover, depicting some old evil witch of sorts in a tattered red shroud...part of an ancient

town set on a hilltop behind him, and on both sides of him and in his own foreground you see skulls and some evil bird laying on top of one of the skulls. August Derleth and Seabury Quinn present flashbacks on the rich history of the weird mag.

Edmond Hamilton leads off the issue with "The Might-Have-Beens," which is a poor "weird tale," and the only thing that attempts to save it is large pieces of action; it seems hurriedly written. Following is H. Russell Wakefield's "Ghost Hunt," which is a neat little ghost story about a haunted house. One of Manly Wade Wellman's better pieces, "The Leonardo Rondache," is a tight short story which contains glimpse of genuine horror. Then we come to Lovecraft's poem, "The House," which is about the ultimate horror of decay. Then there's a story by Allison V. Harding, a *Weird Tales* author I personally dig a lot, and it's called "The Coming of M. Alkerhause." The story would be spoiled if I told you anything about it. Carl Jacobi has a good one called "The La Prelo Paper," dealing with extra dimensions—seems to me Jacobi has always been good at material like this.

One of August W. Derleth's heavier works is "Something in Wood." It reads something like a collaboration between Derleth, Lovecraft, and Smith—it has eerie, spook-filled horror. Ray Bradbury's "The October Game" follows, and I imagine everyone knows about this one, about a little boy getting scared on Halloween. If you read Robert Bloch's "Catnip for the first time it just might make you squirm a little—this is the kind of tale he does so well.

Clark Ashton Smith's "The Master of the Crabs" spooked me, as his better tales always never fail to do; it's the best story in the issue. Next to the best thish is Sturgeon's "The Professor's Teddy Bear"—it'll make your flesh crawl. Seabury Quinn has a story departed from that little Frenchman Jules de Grandin, called "The Merrow," and the moral here is that, in the sight of the universe, Man *must* be nothing than the fool he is. Humm... "Roman Remains" by Algernon Blackwood is the final weird tale herein, and I wonder where the editor, D. McIlwraith, and the associate editor Lamond Buchanan, dug this one up. It's not a bad story; it's a pleasant departure from the bulk of Blackwood's heavy nature-writings.

And that, my friends, is the anniversary issue. The reason I haven't gone into more detail with the stories is because I don't want

to spoil them for you, and if I told you more they *would be*. Not a bad issue at all for 20¢ in 1948. You get all those groovy stories dedicated to scare your pants off, plus artwork by Lee Brown Coye, Boris Dolgov, and John Giunta.



The first SF magazine I ever did see in my whole life was the July 1949 issue of *Startling Stories* with Earle Bergey covering a scene from the featured complete novel *Fire in the Heavens* by George O. Smith. Well, I grabbed it from the drugstore newsrack bug-eyed and all excited and blew my mind over a science fiction magazine. It cost only 25¢, but my mother wouldn't let me buy it. I had to put it back on the shelf between *Modern Romance* and *Sexology*... (She did let me buy the *Denver Post* with Dick Tracy and Little Orphan Annie.) I remember trying to find it the following

afternoon with my only other quarter in my hand, but somebody already laid out their bread for the single remaining copy. Well, I was mad!

Around 1962 I read a review of the hardcover edition of *Fire in the Heavens* in *Astounding*. It had a good plot and the title sounded neat, and the reviewer, P. Schuyler Miller, happened to give the original appearance a plug, so I sent my bread to one of the back-issue houses...two weeks later and flash: 'twas the same issue! Well, well, I remember thinking, it *is* a small world after all. I sat down to read and didn't get up until all the stories and departments and even the ads were read. Whew!

Fire in the Heavens is in the near future when the sun suddenly goes supernova. The novel even reads pretty well today. Smith had some *fire* in him.

In the third part of a series of articles called *The Road to Space Travel*, Willy Ley rapped about "Station in Space." Ley was a good scientific author. The issue also features average novelettes from Margaret St. Clair ("The Sacred Martian Pig") and "Rene LaFayette" alias L. Ron Hubbard ("The Unwilling Hero"). This's Hall of Fame reprint (from 1938) is Henry Kuttner's "Hollywood on the Moon," which is pure delight. Arthur C. Clarke's short story "Transience" is one of the best he's ever written, which is really a prose poem about a small boy playing in the sands amid the

ruins of the world. C. M. Kornbluth has "The Only Thing We Learn," about the futility of intergalactic war. Bradburys "The Lonely Ones" is one of his less popular tales of Mars, about a strange woman seemingly dead among the Martian sands.

In the lettercol there's lots from such ~~people~~ fans as Rick Sneary, Chad Oliver, Les and Es Cole. The department of fanzine reviews include Joe Kennedy's *Spacehound's Gazette*, Bob Tucker's *Bloomington News Letter*, Gus Willmorth's *Fantasy Advertiser*, A. Langley Searles' *Fantasy Commentator*, James V. Taurasi's *Fantasy-Times*, Walt Daugherty's *Shangri-Las*, Art Rapp and George Young's *Timewarp*, Jim Harmon's *Asteroid X*, and Lee Riddle's *Peon*. About *Peon*, the editor (Leo Marguiles) says, "Nice unpretentious job."

Nobody publishes science fiction magazines like the late, great *Startling Stories* any more, and it seems both a blessing and a curse. I'm hip enough to dig the New Wave sf, and old fashioned enough to still enjoy that old-time science fiction.

What does the future hold for us?
And what, one might ask, do we hold for the future?

— Bill Wolfenbarger

RANDOM ILLOS

ARTWORK
by "JM" (unknown)



RANDOM JOTTINGS

LETTER COLUMN

by Diverse People

[Editorial comments thusly.]

Sandra Miesel

8744 N. Pennsylvania Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46240

I don't recall meeting you at the Midwestcon, but if it'll help your memory, I was the gal wearing the blood red chiton Saturday. Didn't you get the feeling that the Carousel Inn was an American branch of The Village? Next Midwestcon will apparently be elsewhere.

Your high school troubles were a sad commentary. What with so many schools plagued with robbery, assault, hard drugs, etc., yours did seem just a tad preoccupied with trivia. But it brings back memories. Ah, yes. I was threatened with expulsion—expulsion, mind you, not just suspension—in my junior year. The first time was when my mother refused to tell the school what time I'd come home from the junior prom. (It was a respectable hour but she didn't think it was any of their business.) But she was forced to yield. Then I wanted to quit orchestra to take fourth year Latin but they trotted out an unpublished rule that one must

stay in the orchestra permanently once one joined. And I was forced to yield, but by a scheduling quirk managed to get the Latin course too. And the rules of the school that year! No talking once inside the building from arrival to dismissal except for 20 minutes at lunch, strictly enforced. Other times they tried to legislate against girls wearing makeup or ponytails. But this was in the long gone '50s.



Buck Coulson

Route 3

Hartford City, Indiana 47348

I'm happy to see Jim Turner writing about one of my favorite record albums (*British Army Songs*) and another which I rather enjoy (*Rising of the Moon*). The McColl album is magnificent. There was a companion volume, *American Army Songs*, by Oscar Brand, but since I am not now and never was much of a Brand enthusiast, I didn't get it. (That and the fact that both albums were bowdlerized. The British songs were unfamiliar enough so that I didn't mind the emasculation, but the American songs just didn't sound right.)

The Irish songs aren't just propaganda; some of them were actually written by the fighters (a minority, probably, but a few). Getting "kicked to bloody hell to save democracy" isn't quite the same thing as fighting for your own personal freedom. The British songs were written for a more impersonal ideal (future freedom was certainly at stake, but the Irish fought for present freedom), and fought in a much larger, more impersonal army. It makes for a change in attitude; the Irish were, if you will, fanatics; the British weren't.

The Clancy Brothers record isn't the best evocation of the Irish Rebellion, though. If they recorded one now, it might be; but this was one of the first records they made together. They weren't used to singing together, and they

didn't have the knowledge of what sort of blend of arrangements makes an outstanding album. Compare any of these songs with "Roddy McCorley" on one of their early Columbia albums (or even with the same song on one of their later Tradition albums, after they'd had some practice). "Rising of the Moon" is historically interesting; "Roddy McCorley" makes you want to get up and fight.

The best single record of Irish Rebel songs that I know is Dominic Behan's *Songs of the IRA* on Riverside. (Currently unobtainable, alas, unless Washington Records has reissued it as they did the McColl record, which was originally on Riverside.) Behan is the first singer I ever heard who made me realize why the British put people in jail for singing patriotic songs.

"I'll pray for Mother England
While I'm waiting on the Day
I'll pray for Mother England
Till I'm blind and bald and gray
I'll pray that dyin' she may die
And drownin' may she drown
And if she ever dares to lift her head
I'll be there to push it down:"

Stinson issued a 3-record set of 10" LPs a good many years ago on *Irish Rebel Songs*. Volume 1 was *The Great Rebellion: 1798*. Volume 2 was *The Young Irelanders and the Fenian Brotherhood*, and Volume 3 was *The Easter Rising, The Civil War, the Black and Tan War*. Singer was Patric Galvin. The records

had all of Stinson's famed low fidelity, but they were good because of arranging the songs in some sort of order so the listener could get a historical perspective. Stinson later reissued at least some of the songs on a single 12" LP; I don't know if the company is still around or not.

Currently, Willie Brady has three 12" LP records of *Irish Songs of Freedom* on Avoca, but Brady sings them a bit too prettily.

Conformists and Non-Conformists? Hardly. There are still a few—a very damned few—individualists. (I'm sure Mary Kay intends her "non-conformist" tag to stand for individuality—but then what does she do with those who refuse to conform to anything espoused by the Establishment? She calls them "rigid non-conformists" and dismisses them—but from personal experience they seem to be in the majority of non-conformists, and you can't define a class by a minority of its members.) There is no particular magic in non-conformity for its own sake. "Doing your own thing" could just as well mean going to work 9 to 5, wearing ties, eschewing drugs, and voting Republican. You can't tell, these days, whether a person is living in a commune because he wants to or because he simply wants to conform to his peer group—and neither can you tell whether the straights are that way because of an urge to conform or because they are enjoying themselves. Good vs. evil is a

fallacy? Then the Viet Nam war can't be evil, right?

(And I am damned well not a member of either "Them" nor "Us." I am me, and the hell with anybody who tries to put me into an arbitrary group.)

I'm fully opposed to schools that arbitrarily dictate hair length, types of clothing, etc. On the other hand, I'm a bit contemptuous of anyone who defends his hair length to the point of losing years of schooling. Because when it comes right down to it, what the hell *difference* does the length of your hair make? Deep down, just who gives a shit whether you flaunt your independence or not? What you look like doesn't amount to one damned thing: nobody except the shallowest person cares. What determines your independence is how you think, and that's the one point that can't be monitored (as yet). Cut the hair, get the schooling, bide your time until you're a legal adult and can be effectively heard. Unless you're pretty superficial yourself, you'll find that you haven't lost a damned thing. Show me a bigot to vote against, or try to discourage politically, and I'll do it. But I have very little patience with show-offs.



Hank Davis

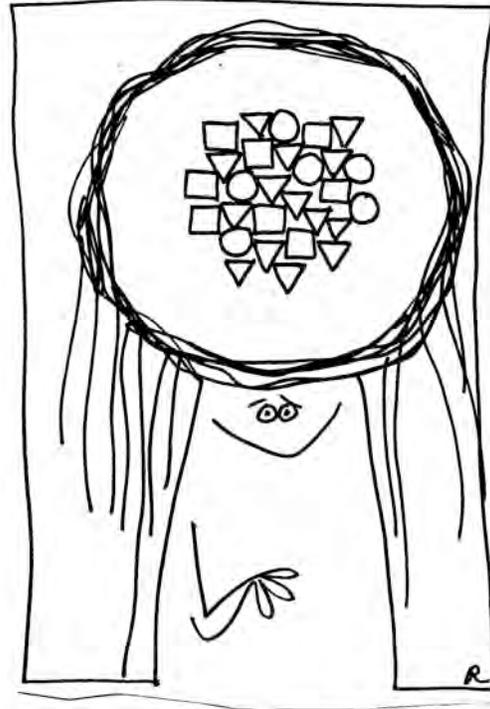
Box 154

Loyall, Kentucky 40854

Some kind of curious Phenomenon Beyond the Comprehension of Mere Mortals and maybe even fans is going on here, for your Rj 1 arrived the day after I had read "The Inland Revenue," and all these comments on that story were read while my ears were picking up the whisperings of the clockwork that makes all the Cosmic Stuff go around. So you are not all that alone in being a Saint addict. I recently did some reading of the early adventures of Simon Templar, which is why the timing is so interesting. A copy of *Meet the Tiger*, alas, I have never been able to find, so I started with (supposedly) the next one in the series, *Enter the Saint*, containing one novella and two novelettes. My copy, alas, is thoroughly beaten up and some female (I assume) has blotted her lipstick on one of the blank pages; still, it is unabridged... Skipped *The Last Hero*, which I read back in 1968, went on to *The Avenging Saint*, then *Wanted for Murder*, skipped the novel *Angels of Doom* (also titled *The Saint Meets His Match*, which he doesn't), then decided to drop the order and read *Getaway*, then went bak and started on *The Saint vs. Scotland Yard*, halfway through which a fanzine came, reminding me that there is more clockwork in heaven and earth, Dobson...

Anyway, you are not alone. If that's good.

[Hank goes on here with much bibliographic material culled from the frontispiece of various Saint books...very interesting to Saint addicts, but too much for anyone else, I'm afraid. Plus, it's too much to retype.]



Mike Glicksohn

267 St. George St. #807

Toronto 180, Ontario, CANADA

Your stories of life in Alabama are positively among the most horrifying glimpses of alien society I've encountered in my long association with the science fiction field. I stand in awe of the fact that you managed to come through the whole thing with a mind and soul that seem to be relatively intact. Winston Smith cracked under considerably less inhuman conditions.

[As much as I like the idea of appearing as a Martyred Victim of the Racist South, perhaps that's a little strong. Even though I didn't exaggerate that editorial, there was no constant barrage of attacks. Since the editorial focused on the major points of my life, the bad incidents get mentioned more prominently. There is a good deal of bigotry in the South, as elsewhere, but as All in the Family reminds us, even bigots can be three-dimensional. But thanks for the kind thoughts.]

I don't know how other people work it, but I compose my locs as I'm reading the fanzine, deciding as I go which areas or articles or statements I wish to comment on and even roughing out the phrasing of my response. Thus as I was reading Donald Wetzel's poems to Nancy I found phrases going through my head such as "...the first decent fan poetry I've read in months," "a real find," "...at last some professionalism in fan poetry." Of course, reading to the end of this section explained why I was so impressed. I hadn't recognized the author's name initially but had just sat there and quietly replaced "Nancy" with "Susan," my bride of three weeks, and thanked the poet with all my heart for saying so beautifully and so simply some of the many things that my mathematician's mind could feel but not express. If you never publish another thing in fandom, I for one will be grateful that you came along and gave us a chance to share these marvelous expressions of love.

I see Ned Brooks mentions *Energumen 2*. It's becoming apparent to me that my claim to fannish fame in certain circles will always be that I once published some "dirty" drawings in my fanzine. I find it strange when I contemplate fannish reactions to things... But Ned has a valid point when he talks about the Saint not looking like Roger Moore. I think all fans have their own conceptions of their favorite characters, and are often quite taken aback by other people's interpretations. In many cases it depends on whether you grew up on certain illustrators. For example, my earliest memories of Alice in Wonderland are build around the Arthur Rackham drawings and I just cannot take the Tenniel Alice seriously. However, to me Doc Savage will always look the way Bama depicts him while older fans who grew up on the *Doc Savage* magazines are quite adamant about the fact that Doc doesn't look a bit like that. And of course there's Tolkien. I've yet to find a Tolkien artist who can capture what I think hobbits would look like, and yet I couldn't draw one myself. It's just a case of "I'll recognize one when I see one."

Jodie Offutt

Funny Farm

Haldeman, Kentucky 40329

For crying out loud, Michael, please take credit in print for changing the spelling of Cincinnati! Mark Schulzinger couldn't wait to get me on the phone to tell me I'd misspelled it.

[Mea culpa. I didn't do it consciously; my mind just can't spell Cincinnati Cincinnati that city where Midwestcon happens.]

Besides, don't you know I live with an English major and Master Speller? There is nothing Andy can't spell, and if he has the least doubt about a word, he has me look it up. It's very handy, really; he reads everything I write and adjusts my punctuation and spelling. It tends to make me a little lazy, though: "Don't worry, Andy'll fix it," I tell myself, wondering if "across" has one or two c's or "address" has one or two d's. I even signed a check the other day and forgot the terminal "t." In fact, Andy (I call him big A) is such a stickler for proper spelling, if he thought of it, I've no doubt he'd edit my grocery list for fear I might write Jello with a small j or spell mayonnaise wrong. It would reflect on his image around town if I were to let a faulty grocery list flutter from my purse in the IGA parking lot—and it was (were?) traced back to me.

Even so, I, myself, know how to spell Cincinnati.

I really enjoyed Jim Turner's "Rattling the Sabres." It prompted me to put some of my folk records on the machine. We used to listen to a radio station in Philadelphia nearly every night when a man named Jack McKinney had a talk show. Every so often he'd have the Clancy Brothers and Tommy

Makem on. They'd sing and talk about their songs, giving the background on each one. They were great fun to listen to. The verse from "Columbo" reminds me of the Weavers' "Erie Canal." All the variations are fascinating. I've "C. C. Rider" by Ian and Sylvia and "See, See Rider" by Mississippi John Hurt—different but similar.

I enjoy country & western stuff, too, as well as contemporary folk music. Ironically enough, I don't care one whit for bluegrass music. Ironic, because it's all around us here in the foothills.

There is a family that lives very close to us, at the foot of the hill (that's like the other side of the tracks). A big family with eight or ten kids. The children come to school each year for a while after the father is threatened by the truant officer. They're personable, friendly kids—and intelligent, I think—till they reach the age of 14 or 16, when they drop out of school permanently and acquire that hard-eyed, defiant-chinned look that frightens me a little.

At any rate, the entire family is instinctively and fantastically musical. They have fiddles, guitars, harmonicas, amplifiers, mikes, banjos (acquired from God-knows-where, since none of them works—food stamps, most likely), voices, and a tremendous love of and feeling for using it all. On any night in the summertime we have only to open the door or step out on the porch to hear them pickin' and singin'. We hear a lot of

bluegrass with the fiddles and harmonicas. And we hear a lot of good old country ballads and popular and classic tunes, too. And laughing and talking. On the Fridays when the Gov'ment check comes we hear it all louder—singing, laughing, fussing about what to sing. And the bootleg beer cans and wine bottles being thrown in the creek. Those picks really zing on the strings when the wine flows free. Sometimes they even keep our children awake.

On a clear night in Kentucky you can hear forever.



Harry Warner, Jr.

423 Summit Avenue
Hagerstown, Maryland 21740

Your autobiographical material was fascinating. I had a problem similar to yours in elementary school, that of possessing better learning capacities than my classmates, but in my case it

resulted in teachers watching everything I did with the utmost alertness and pouncing with unwarranted vigor on the smallest mistake, as if a kid who dared make good marks should get extra demerits to make up for the fewer than usual opportunities to be yelled at.

It's hard to believe Donald Wetzel is as old as he claims. The poems inspired by Nancy give every indication of being the work of someone young enough to be feeling this emotion for the first time and to be expressing them without the adulteration that older poets usually mix into raw emotion. They are splendid, in any event, a conclusion I'd reached before I ran across the information about Wetzel. For Nancy has a Miltonic ring to it.

Jerry Kaufman

1485½ Pennsylvania Ave.
Columbus, Ohio 43201

I had trouble only once in high school (that I can remember) and it was over science fiction. I had a study hall in which I would usually read old *Astoundings*. The teacher (in her role of "study hall supervisor") was a red-headed old frump who told me she read sf. She tried to get me into conversations a few times, but I just ignored her, politely, I thought, but no more politely than I thought necessary. One day she swooped upon me, took my magazine, and told me I should be doing homework. I got loud, and I was sent to the vice-principal. I was a bit too awed of him to get

loud then, and I got three detentions. I did get my *Astounding* back.

I was playing *Workingman's Dead* while reading R_J, and I noticed that just as I finished the fanzine the second side of the record ended. Nicely timed!

Joel Zakem

615 Monroe St.
Newport, Kentucky 41071

Your editorial, or life story, managed to tell me more than I ever wanted to know about Michael Dobson, but you succeeded in keeping it interesting.

I could offer you a lot of advice in improving R_J, but I think you know what needs to be done.

Lynn Torline

Queen Ave. No.
Minneapolis, Minnesota

I think the requirements for being a principal are:

1. Do you hate adolescents?
2. Are you a prude and conservative in politics?
3. Do you like to throw your weight around?
4. Have you always had a secret yearning to be a Gestapo officer?
5. Are you really afraid the students are right? (no pun intended)

If you can answer 3 out of 5, you're our man—or is it mouse? Step right up and see the

invigorating feeling you get when you suspend a student. Feel the pride that ripples through your whole being when you've gotten that "hippie and troublemaker" out of your school. And always bear in mind that the basic tenet of running a high school: "Education should be a punitive, rather than a learning ~~experience~~ process."

That bit about the lovely Lynn Torline was nice and I thank you. (But just why is Minneapolis mentioned, hmm?)

Lee Gold

It's good to learn that there were some junior high school teachers stupider than mine. I had one who started out a geography class by telling us that Venus was the closest planet to the sun, but proved willing to change her mind when confronted with a contrary statement in the textbook. (She also believed, I found out in English class, that 2.5 was smaller than 2.46. Fewer numbers, I suppose.

Eddie Jones

72 Antonio Street
Bootle, Lancashire L20 2EU

Have a cover—wear it in good health.

PS—Next time put more stamps on your letter. I had to pay the VAST amount of 10¢ postage due!

[You'll be glad to know that your cover graced the very next issue—glad you didn't have too long to wait before it saw print!]

Last Words

by Spiror T. Snodgrass

Hello, it's me, Spiror, again. I had to get a Dr. Pepper.
I back now. Miek and Oddsmith have some X-iting
Stuff for Next Issue. It is all Ed Cox doodle space,
so he will like the issue. Maybe you will, too.

Don't miss it if you can!

Spiror Sez:

NO MORE FAN ART HUGOES FOR STEVE STILES!

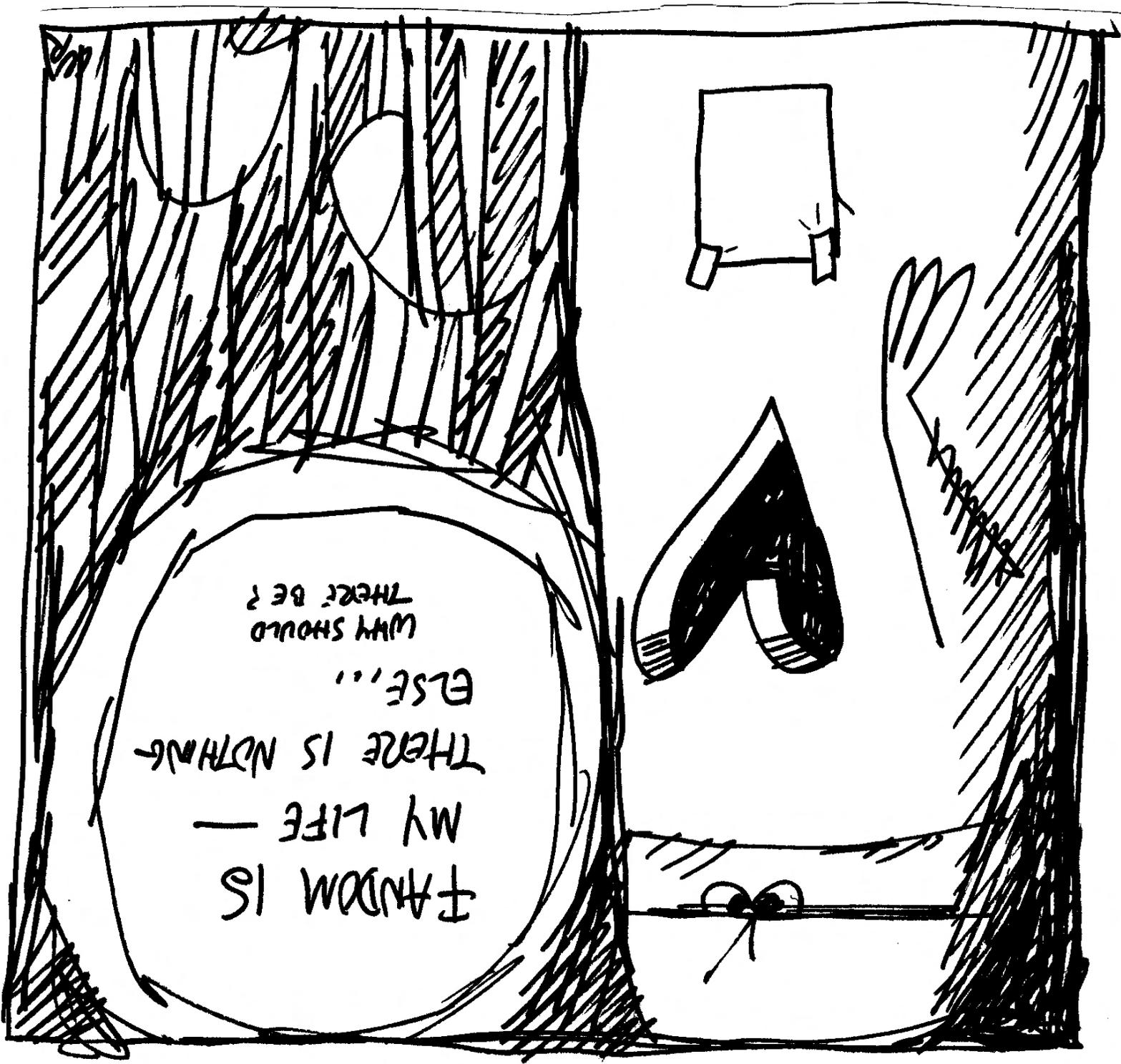
PS—I have nude pictures of Faith Lincoln for sale. Send
lots of sticky quattres.



YES, YOU



DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE YOURSELF?



FANDOM IS
MY LIFE —
THERE IS NOTHING
ELSE...
WHY SHOULD
THERE BE?

Debbie's father sounds like an amazing man. One of 5 places that remained open during the riots! Wow, to have even been close when such an event occurred, let alone in the middle of it, and helping so many. Amazing! My best wishes go out to your family on his passing.

The HI Toys are hilarious and a nice touch of humor after the Samaritan story. Did you create all of the products by putting together art and then writing product descriptions? Much to Andrea's distaste, the Adopt a Slug product has been purchased by my son Nicolas over here - worms seem to be a fine substitute as well.

Robin Postal White

I was amazed and enchanted by the catalog of inappropriate toys, do I have the name nearly correct? Being fairly new, 2+ years, to the cyber world I have got to ask, was that just a catalog or was there a chance in hell of making some of that stuff real? Sorry had to stop to send my notes about the catalog to this computer so I could remember what I jotted down.

Mister Picasso Head Made me laugh out loud
 Edward Munch Dolls Made me laugh so hard I
 was in a coughing fit in seconds
 Hazmat that's a good one-yeah amuse your
 neighbors and delight your friends.
 Blonde Moment yeah tired of unsightly IQ
 points keeping you from enjoying the same TV
 shows as everybody else?
 Oh yeah, deep sigh, Yes.

The stuff is lovely and I only just glanced over it
 and will have return to it to really look at it.
 I miss that kind of sense of humor. Thank you.

I had wondered from earlier in the issue if issue 2
 had been published at all, and then at the end are
 locs on that second issue. Will there be an issue 4?

[Well, as you now know, Issue #2 had been published in
 our timeline, and the alternate timeline edition is here.
 I know Ed Greenwood well; I negotiated TSR's
 purchase of *Forgotten Realms* from Ed back in the
 1980s. A brilliant talent; I like him a lot.]

John Nielsen Hall

Mainly what I have to say, is "Good On You". You
 are at least doing something about what we more
 or less nightly watch woodenly from our armchairs
 and wish would end. There are very few people
 prepared to but their beliefs to real practical use,
 and I believe you to be one of them. Thank you.

Lord Avebury (the fourth Baron Avebury, actually)
 is, as you say a Buddhist, as am I. I actually live
 near Avebury, while he lives in South London. I
 have volunteered to look after his estate , in his
 prolonged absence, but he didn't take me up on it.
 There you are. He also does good work.

Mark Hill

I thought the Samaritan story sounded like quite
 an adventure. I didn't know anything about
 Samaritans before this, and I learned a lot! What a
 great idea to create a medal for the Samaritan
 people to award. Fantastic! That area of the world
 seems like such a scary place - especially for such a
 holy land. How do you remember it now that
 you've left? I assume you would do it again, right?
 Did Perez ever receive his medal? Sorry that you
 missed meeting him that would have definitely
 been an honor. I have to say that your Epilogue
 touched me as well and was a perfect ending to the
 story. I agree that finding the courage to do what is
 right amidst many who are doing wrong is the
 hardest task but also has the greatest impact and
 reward.

governments. That ravaged part of the world does indeed need all the good Samaritans it can get. I never met Gary Gygax, but one big name I know in the gaming industry is Ed Greenwood, sometimes known as Elminster. I'd have to look to see how many novels Ed has out. Ed and I went to university together, what is now Ryerson University in downtown Toronto. We were both taking journalism, and while I was taking notes for my classes, Ed would be sketching dungeon rooms. He failed some of his courses, but his sketches became the dungeon he sold to TSR for millions. Who was the smart student that day, I wonder...

The best (or worst) thing about the Highly Inappropriate Toys is that in a few mere years, I would expect to see some of them, or something similar to them, on the market. There was an Edward Munch display some years ago in Toronto, the Edward Munch dolls would have been a popular hit.

Many thanks for Random Jottings 3. I never knew about your zine, or you, for that matter, and I've been in the letter columns 25 years or so, but many thanks for handing me a copy at Corflu Silver, and it is time we met one another, and here's some comments on this issue.

Anything that brings together the Palestinians and Israelis in a positive light is a good thing. Yet, I read more and more about how these problems start, through lack of dialogue and random action on both sides, against the other. So many ceasefires have splintered because of one unwise government decision, or one person about to get revenge for a past death or injustice. These medals of peace and certificates sound like such a good idea...have they made an impact? Or are they forgotten in all the politics and bloodshed? I wish I could be more positive when it comes to the Middle East, and more positive when it comes to Israeli.

Lloyd Penney

and upcoming product news from the Highly Inappropriate Toy Company

plus Death of a Shoe Repairman Bonus Feature!

Complete In This Issue!

The Adventure of the Not-So-Good Samaritan



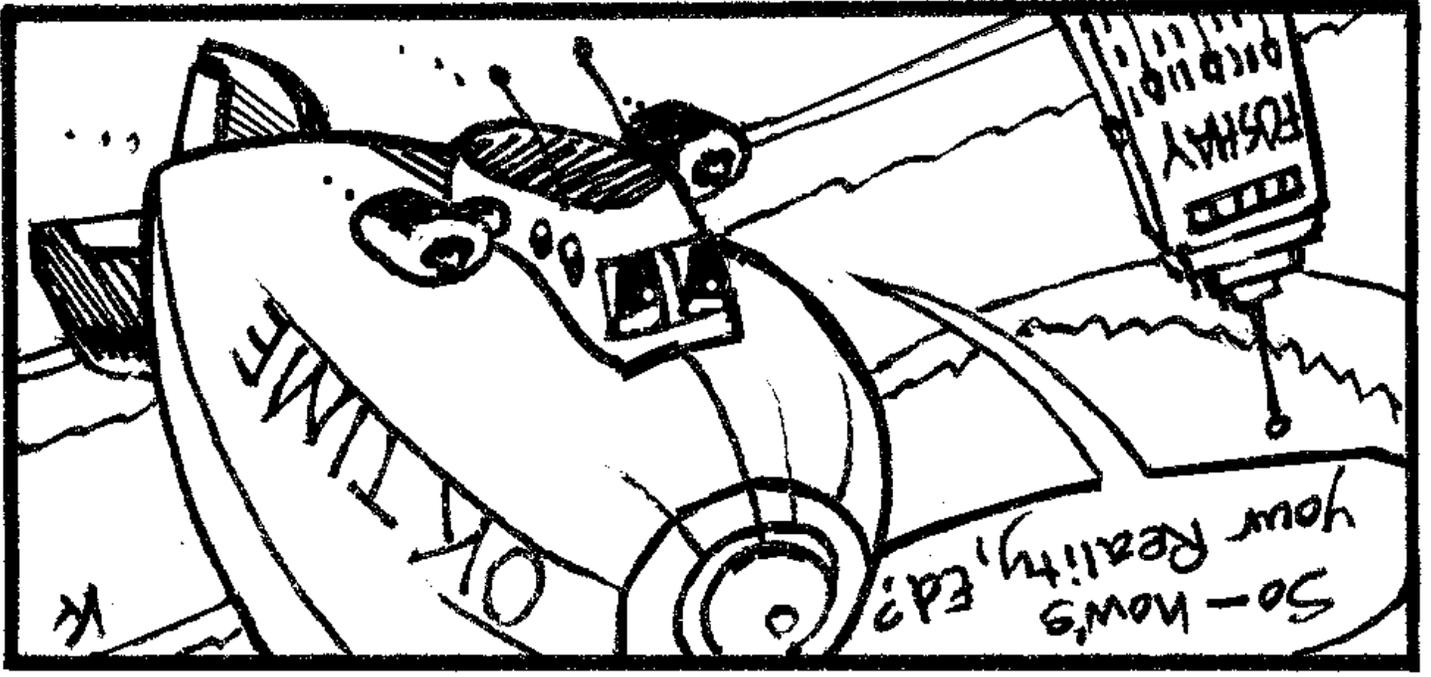
Joseph's Tomb, Nablus

ISSUE THREE SPRING 2008



RANDOM ON RANDOM JOTTINGS #3

LETTERS



The End.

It seemed like the natives really wanted a Minneapolis worldcon bid.

"Now wait a minute," I said, holding up my hands for quiet. "It was my dream to begin with, everybody. At the very least you should hear me out." I looked over at Bev. She seemed as puzzled as I did that people could have misconstrued what she'd said. "I think we can continue to bid, just as long as there's no real danger we'll actually ever "

Before I could say the word "win," the whole crowd roared, "Minneapolis in '73!"

And that was the moment, at long last, when I finally admitted to myself that there is no arguing with a truly fanmish mind.

From out of nowhere, Barry Smotroff and his girlfriend Tiffany appeared. Barry was wearing a pair of Grocho Marx glasses and fake eyebrows. "Or possibly for Zyx W. Vuus," Barry added, fiddling with the glasses.

"Did someone mention Zyx W. Vuus?" John Singer asked as he sauntered from around a heavily reinforced marble column. "Give me a long enough time-like lever and I will change the course of space-like history before it happens!"



"Well, that's not all." She cracked her knuckles again. "I understand from your dossier that as you say in your era you are 'really into' music. So let me warn you that you should be ready for something called 'disco.'"

I wasn't sure what that meant, but it didn't sound good. "But I won't remember any of this, will I?"

"No. The local memories will erase everything I've said soon enough." She pulled a card out of

a pocket on the sleeve of her uniform and

seemed to type on it, like a court-room

stenographer:

Once more the air shimmered.

Without any sense of transition I found myself sitting in the lobby of the Royal York hotel in Toronto where the 1973 World Science Fiction Convention was just beginning. For some minutes I had been scribbling what I could recall of the strange dream I'd had that morning a dream in which we'd won the worldcon bid for Minneapolis....

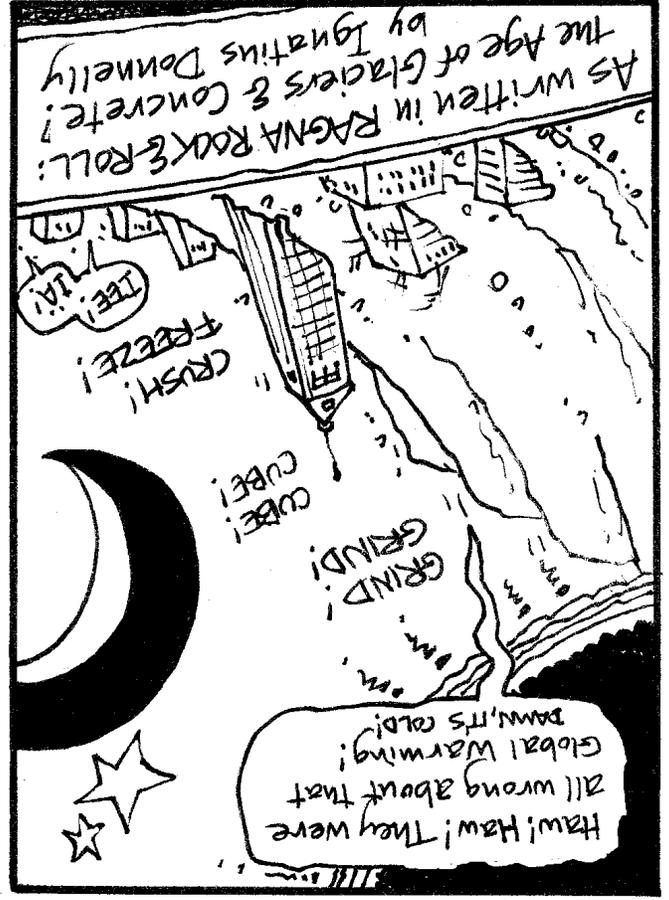
Bev Swanson walked over and sat down beside me.



effort. That notwithstanding, it's now my duty to return you to default."

"What's that mean?"

"We're taking you back to the least common denominator of timelines."



"Aren't you afraid we'll turn into fungus if you do that?"

She grimaced. "Where'd you pick up that nonsense?"

"Gernsback."

"I thought so." She shook her head. "Well, forget everything he told you. He's entirely pre-
eschatonic."

"That's easy for you to say."

Again she flashed that wan smile. "What that means is that he thought a person could go back far enough in time to change everything. Unfortunately, the many-worlds structure of the universe means you can never succeed if that's what you're trying to do."

"So you're trying to rebuild things backwards in time?"

Once more she shook her head. "Gernsback again I can tell. No. All I'm trying to do is get you back to a time track that won't fall apart."

"Where president Kennedy wasn't killed?"

She smiled again; it wasn't a very happy

gesture. "No nothing that good. You see, the default zone is one in which Richard Nixon is President from 1969 through 1974. It will be one of the low points of your country's history, and it will take decades to overcome its legacy. But that's exactly the kind of trouble that eventually produces a period of greater maturity in the post-Cold War period; without it, your country would become mired in a period of intense self-satisfaction, so manifest in the 1950's and '60's."

"But I won't know that, will I?"

She cracked her knuckles. "You learn fast. No," she added sadly, "nobody will be aware of that from the inside."

"I'm not sure I'm going to like this."

“The real issue is when the United States establishes a permanent presence in space, Mr. Young. If it doesn't happen now, in 1973 it won't happen until it's absolutely essential for the survival of the human race which is to say, under considerably less than ideal circumstances. Considerably less than ideal. For example, once we get out of this macroseries, personalities, genders, languages all become less stable.”

“Is there anything I can do about that?”

“Well ”

The air shimmied again. Gernsback looked horrified, reached a hand toward me and then simply faded away. All the rest of the guards vanished, too. None of this high-falutin' Star Trek-type glittering transition. They were just gone.

The chair collapsed beneath me and I crashed to the floor.

4.

“Halt where you are,” a female voice shouted somewhere above me. I turned over on my side and saw a very tall, heavily muscled woman dressed in a white-satin uniform.

“So you're the famous Jimmyung,” she said. There was a star-shaped scar on her right cheek that made her look vicious when she spoke an effect heightened by her blue Mohawk.



“You have the advantage of me.”

“Unfortunately true, in several senses.” She smiled wanly and gestured at a group of soldiers dressed in similar uniforms who stepped through an opening in the wall and surrounded me. For the first time I saw that she had four stars on her epaulettes.

“I'm General Joanna Campbell. Sorry that you've been subjected to this insane attempt to distort the time lines.” She shook her head. “These madmen thought they could divert history around a particularly bad period in your country's development. As they claim to have told you completely in disregard to the regulations you were a minor player in that

knew it wasn't; JFK was still alive in the 1973 I had just come from.

"So let me see if I understand all this," I said. "Your editorial board acts like some sort of paratime patrol, like in the old H. Beam Piper stories."

"Not exactly. But close enough for government work."

"So why did you need to handcuff and blindfold me?"

"I apologize for that. But we were under attack and afraid that you might be psychologically reprogrammed with a frenzy drug. Also, we had



to ensure that we brought you safely to this protected area. You see, if we hadn't secured your departure the way we did, you might have wound up no more than a dollop of fungus. On a rock."

None of that left me particularly impressed. "How's that?" I asked.

"If a series collapses stochastically, generally everything in it reverts to the lowest common denominator. I.e., life becomes unicellular, when it exists." He arched his eyebrow again.

It wasn't a gesture exactly designed to inspire confidence especially since it made him look so much like a Playboy cartoon of the devil.

"So tell me," I asked, "just what is the competition trying to do?"

Gernsback smiled. All his teeth were made out of metal. "They're trying to obtain maximum rigor."

"Meaning?"

Gernsback's smile became a little pained. "It's causality, Mr. Young. They're trying to shore up reality as they go backwards in time. Which is to say, they're trying to deconstruct the heat death of the universe." He placed his fingertips together. "Whereas we're trying to

cosmogenize the immanent negentropon inherent in this time series. In other words, we're forward thinkers." He smiled metallically. "Well," I said rubbing my forehead, "that certainly clears that up."

"Don't tell me you're an editor."

"How very astute of you, sir." Gernsback arched one eyebrow and let his monocle drop onto his chest, tethered by a black string to his lapel. "A

trans-temporal editor, to be precise. And a tad more successful than the hapless Boucher, with his all his literary pretensions, whom you met in the last iteration of manifest reality. If I'd been in charge, you can be sure that the competition wouldn't have managed to put in that

typographical error in your convention program book. So much trouble over such an insignificant chronomuto-artifact."

"Any chance you can explain that in English?"

"Well, you know what I always used to tell Ben Bova to err is human, to edit bovine."

I couldn't help it. I winced.

"And so you may well wince, Mr. Young. But

then, you have some idea already of what this is all about, if our recording of Boucher's

testimony is accurate. As he told you, we're in a time nexus. But thanks to Boucher's bungling, the competition has shifted us out of the best possible series. There is no remaining timeline we can reach in which Hubert Humphrey

became President. In fact, all the series now available are predicated upon the assassination of John Kennedy in 1963."

As I sat there, the memory flooded through my brain: I'd been in seventh-grade shop class and a kid came running in with the news that President Kennedy had been shot.

Dr Dodd Clegler studied the evolution of sf fanzine culture at his Institute ~



"Yes, I can see the local apparent memory has just reached you. It's a shame we can't immunize you from local referent time but that's prohibited, unfortunately." Gernsback

smiled. "As you may know, the 32nd-century injunction against such immunizations was upheld in the Azimuthal Court ruling on Solar v. Plexus, 4339 Galactic Code 1066."

I guess that was the first time I'd ever heard anybody speak in footnotes.

You know, right up until the memory of John F. Kennedy's death hit me, I'd had the feeling this was some kind of elaborate hoax possibly run by the Dallas in '73 committee. But now I

Without a sound the door dissolved behind Boucher. Two guys grabbed him and another sprayed something at me from a can. I tried not to breathe, but whatever was in that thing must have worked right on contact with my skin and I was falling....

3.

I came to when they were dragging me down a hall; they'd blindfolded me and handcuffed my hands together. They opened some kind of squeaky metal grate, dragged me onto a metal floor and clanged the grating shut. With a shudder we started to descend in what sounded like an old freight elevator. When it stopped they led me out into a huge basement room where our footsteps echoed hollowly. At last they sat me down in a flimsy plastic chair and look off the blindfold.

"So, Mr. Young, we meet at last," said a jolly looking, heavy set man with a clipped accent I couldn't place. He was wearing a monocle, a gold brocade vest and a yellow swallow-tail coat; it looked like the costume department had found him something to wear for 1873, not a century later:

"I'm sorry it had to be under such unusual circumstances," he nodded. "You may call me Harry T. O'Connor Gernsback." He gestured to one of the guards who undid my handcuffs. I rubbed my wrists where the cuffs had pinched them.

of timelines, Mr. Young, but general conditions would probably get worse."

"So what should I do?"

"Pick up the phone "

Boucher started to shudder as though he were experiencing his own private earthquake, and then a spasm ran through the floor and the air shimmied the way it does over something really hot.

"What was that?" I asked.

"Foul." Boucher fell back against the door. "We're being diverted from the series in which Humphrey is the President in 1973."



"Which implies," Boucher said as he crossed his arms across his chest, "that Jones isn't likely to help us out if you ask him to."

"Let's put it this way — the 'milk of human kindness' isn't exactly the phrase I'd use to describe his basic approach."

"Then we are in trouble." Boucher holstered his weapon and pulled a hand-held computer sort of thing from a pocket in his shirt sleeve. He tapped something onto its keyboard and then looked up at me. "There is an increasing chance that the competition will be able to set in motion a stochastic collapse of this entire series of timelines. According to my calculations, you'd continue to exist in the next several series



"Not at all, Mr. Young. Quite to the contrary, I'm here to try to make sure the President makes his statement about the Moonbase exactly as scheduled."

"You know what he's going to talk about?" I couldn't believe it. All the White House would let me know was that the President was going to make an announcement about some aspect of the space program — and I was the chairman of the convention.

"Yes I do. In fact, Humphrey's announcement is what makes this convention an important

temporal nexus. If the President succeeds in announcing the start of the Moonbase project here, it will bring the world together in a way that would not otherwise be possible for forty or fifty years. But there are several foul what is your contemporaneous usage?" He scratched his head and went on. "Groups interested in preventing that from happening."

"Like the guy out in the hall?"

Boucher nodded. "Exactly."

"So what do you want with me?"

Boucher grinned. "I need you to make a phone call to a White House staffer named Jones. Do you know him?"

"Do I." I must have looked pretty unhappy.

Boucher looked concerned. "So what's wrong with Jones?"

"Oh, I can think of a few choice words to describe him, that's all."

Without a sound, the man shoved me into the room and closed the door behind himself. "Hey!"

He pulled out some kind of gun from a holster at his side.

"Listen what the hell's going on?"

"It's a matter of chronosynclasticity, Mr. Young. Time-binding, I believe, is the term used in your era. Excuse my hyperbolicity, by the way, but allow me to introduce myself. My name is Damon H.L. Boucher."

Behind him someone started pounding on the door.

Boucher looked worried. "They're here," the man muttered. "Foul."

"Open up in there!" a baritone voice shouted from the hall.

Boucher held up one hand for silence and aimed his gun at the door and pulled the trigger. I couldn't see or hear any discharge.

When he lowered his gun I asked, "Would you explain what's going on?"

"I think I've just you'll excuse the expression bought us a little time."

This was getting preposterous and I was starting to get ticked off. "Do you realize this hotel is full of Secret Service people? If you're trying to cause trouble here, you might want to think again."

Humphrey hadn't known your mom and dad back when they owned their restaurant in Dinkytown, none of this would be happening. Now a simple typographical error has the White House absolutely ballistic. Thank God for the SALT treaty.

I was leaning over to unlock the door when someone called out, "Are you Jim Young?"

I opened the door and asked, "Who's asking?" I looked around and saw a white-haired man wearing a black, spangly uniform. On his head rested a black beret. He looked like a refugee from the costume ball.



Okay, Young, I told myself as I walked back to my room, this is all your fault. If you weren't really trying to bring the arts and sciences together in a brand new way, and if Hubert

2.

Ever since I was 16 years old and first got the idea of holding the worldcon in Minneapolis in 1973, I figured this would be the coolest experience in my life. Now I wasn't so sure.



"You're not going to believe it, but there's a typo in the program book that's got the White House in a hissy fit." Fred slapped one hand against his forehead. "Listen, Fred, could you meet me in the control room in ten minutes? I'm going down to my room and take a couple of aspirin. I'm starting to get a headache."

Fred nodded and said, "Jim, I don't know how there could be a typo in that thing. We both proofread it." I nodded. "These things happen. I'll see you down in the control room."

"What was that all about?" Fred asked as I walked up to him. "You're not going to believe it, but there's a typo in the program book that's got the White House in a hissy fit."

Fred slapped one hand against his forehead. "Listen, Fred, could you meet me in the control room in ten minutes? I'm going down to my room and take a couple of aspirin. I'm starting to get a headache."

Fred nodded and said, "Jim, I don't know how there could be a typo in that thing. We both proofread it." I nodded. "These things happen. I'll see you down in the control room."

"It's a typographical error, Jones," I told him. "Well you're going to have to convince the Secret Service of that."

"That shouldn't be too hard. We've got the flight plan in the convention control room."

"All I can say is, it's a good thing your father knew the President, otherwise I for one would never have recommended that the President of the United States speak to a bunch of losers like you people!" Jones stalked away. He even walked like a political science major.

A little numb, I walked back into the suite, looking for Fred Haskell, the guy in charge of the convention's publications.

A MINNEAPOLIS IN '73

MEMOIR

BY JIM YOUNG

THE TIME

BUYERS

!

A Prolegomenon To All Future Alternative Fan Histories

Back at the beginning of my fan-ish career in the late 1960's, one of my fan heroes, Redd Boggs — a native Minneapoltan — wrote me to say that *Things Are Always Different in California*. It's not just a matter of the weather, or the landforms, or the way the sunshine makes people look at each other differently, he said, but time itself:

More than 30 years later, having retired from the Foreign Service and moved to California, I was sorting books and papers and fanzines and found a copy of *Random Jottings 2* at the bottom of a packing box:

Its colophon claimed that Michael Dobson had published it, and it contained a memoir that I had purportedly written about the Minneapolis in '73 bid.

5

It just wasn't the bid as I recalled running it.

Because it was about how we'd won.



I told myself it had to be some kind of joke issue, and that I'd just forgotten about it over the years. Yet one of the illos that accompanied the article summoned up an image that began to haunt me, like something long suppressed by the exigencies of work and daily mundanity:

It was a line drawing of General Campbell:

something about it kept making me think that there'd actually been such a person, and that I'd actually seen him in action somehow.

Naturally I decided to share my discovery with Dobson. I drove up to the Las Vegas Corfu in April 2008 and handed him the fanzine and asked if it had been some kind of hoax issue and who'd ghosted the article bearing my byline.

To my surprise, Michael told me it wasn't the issue he remembered publishing.

That brought to mind Redd Boggs's comment from

Wordlessly, he reached into his shoulder bag and pulled out a fanzine. It was *Random Jottings #2*, all right...but it wasn't the *Random Jottings #2* I had published!

I knew the cover by sight. It was a beautiful Eddie Jones six-legged horse. The original was in that file folder back home, yet here it was.

My hands trembled slightly as I took the yellowing twill-tone from Jim's hand. I opened the fanzine. There was my name in the colophon. I scanned the table of contents - it was all the old material I'd never published. The mimeo quality was poor (I never really mastered the art of good repro), the hand-stencilling clumsy, the layout primitive. Yep, it was my work, all right.

Except it wasn't.

I think I babbled incoherently for a minute. "Wha Who How "

"It's a long story," Jim replied. "And this

fanzine is why you're probably the only one who'll ever believe it. Plus, you write alternate history; that'll make it easier for you as well.

Jim proceeded to tell me a story that would in fact have been unbelievable, except for the undeniable fact that this fanzine - my fanzine, even though I'd never seen a copy - served as absolute proof.

That story began on the very next page.

The rest of Corflu Silver passed in a daze, and not just because I spent a lot of time in the Sercon Suite. I kept leaning through the

fanzine. In an alternate universe, I had actually published on time! Well, more or less - I'd promised that the issue would be out before the 1973 Worldcon and it actually didn't appear until December of that year, but that was still a hell of a lot better than I'd managed to do in this timeline.)

When I got back home, I pulled out the file of contributions and sat there looking at a pile of yellowing typewriter paper for a very long time.

"I must pub my ish," I decided with renewed enthusiasm. "I must pub my ish!"

I thought about simply scanning the copy, but it was difficult to read already. Instead, I look out my file of material and began typing.

This side of the issue is *Random Jottings #4*, published in our time line. On the other side, Ace Double-style, is a facsimile edition of the alternate history *Random Jottings #2*, with all the original contents intact.

I've lost track of almost everybody in the issue. This will be available on efanzines.com and will be distributed at Corflu Zed. If you know anyone who appears in this issue, please let them know about it, or send me the contact information and I'll send them a hard copy.

Only 38 years late. That really is too many. My most sincere apologies to all my patient contributors.

Michael Dobson
March 2009

EDITORIAL BY MICHAEL DOBSON

PARATIME FANDOM

The fanzine you hold in your hands doesn't really exist.

In 1971, I published *Random Jottings* #1, and began gathering material for the next issue, promising contributors that I would publish #2 before the 1973 worldcon. Thirty-eight years later, I am ashamed to report that I still have in my file cabinet a thick folder of contributions for that issue – contributions I never published or returned. I always imagined I'd publish sooner or later, but for three decades I did nothing:

I did finally publish *Random Jottings* #2, for Corflu Badger (Madison) in 2003, but it was a personalzine, and used none of the contributions I'd accumulated. Next issue, I promised myself, I'd publish the legacy material, and rid myself of the guilt I'd been carrying around so long.

3



Random Jottings #3, of course, turned out to be another personalzine, this one chronicling my adventures with the Samaritan people in Israel and the Palestinian Territories. Worthy of publication, perhaps, but hardly fannish. At Corflu Silver, I gave a copy of *Random Jottings* #3 to Jim Young. He looked at it and smiled. "I've got a copy of *Random Jottings* #2," he said. "Would you like to see it?"

"I guess, but take my word for it – I've already seen it," I said, perhaps more sharply than was strictly necessary.

He just chuckled. "I don't think so."

"I think I've seen my own fanzine, Jim," I replied.

Random Jottings 4

Edited and published by Michael Dobson
8042 Park Overlook Drive, Bethesda, Maryland 20817-2724.
Email: michael@dobsonbooks.com.
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MARCH 2009
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The Alternate History Issue (read this side first)



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