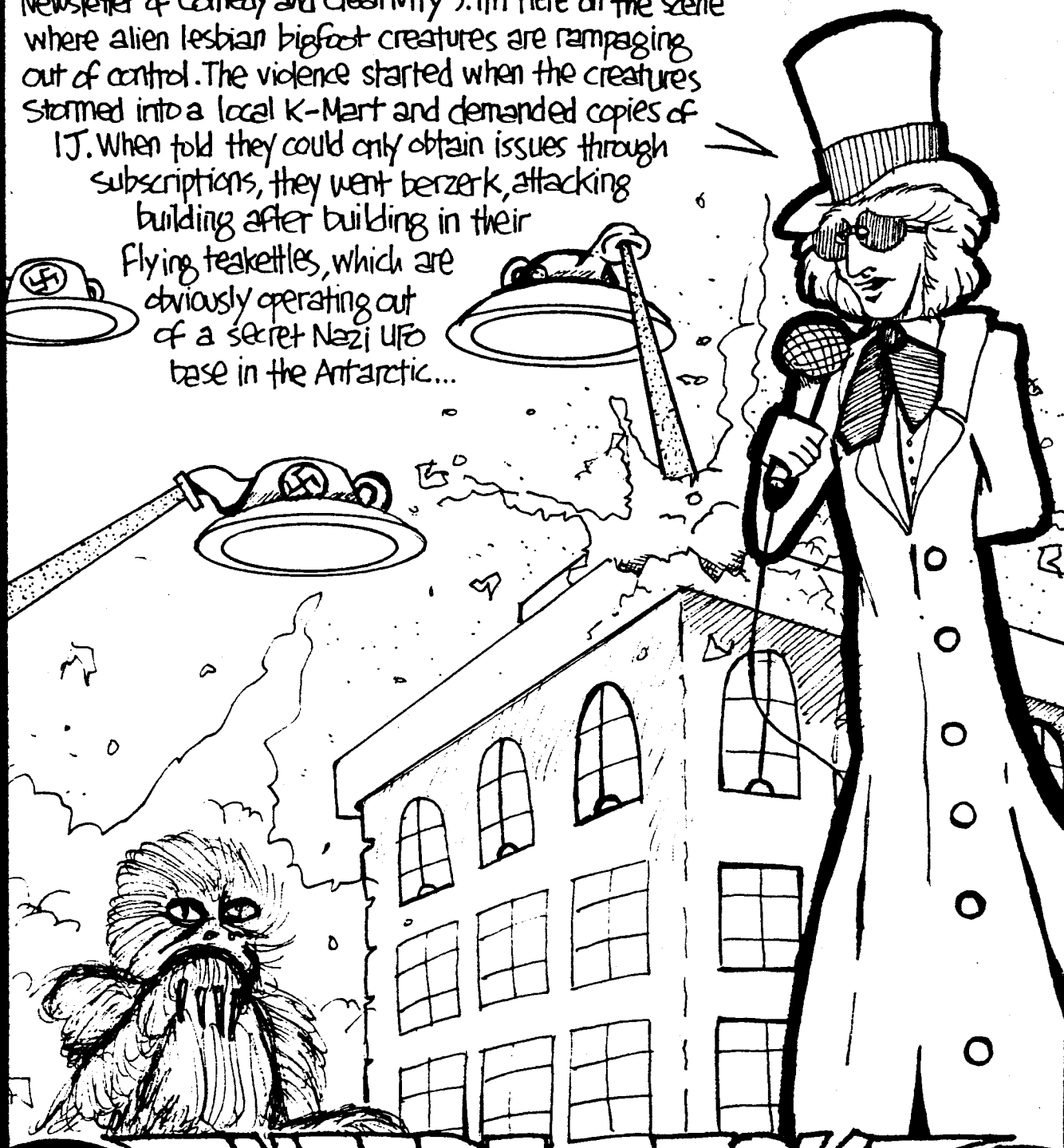


This is Professor Vacant reporting for INSIDE JOKE (A Newsletter of Comedy and Creativity). I'm here on the scene where alien lesbian bigfoot creatures are rampaging out of control. The violence started when the creatures stormed into a local K-Mart and demanded copies of IJ. When told they could only obtain issues through subscriptions, they went berzerk, attacking building after building in their flying teakettles, which are obviously operating out of a secret Nazi UFO base in the Antarctic...



#53

INSIDE JOKE

\$1

ACKNOWLEDITORIAL

Good Lord, it's almost summer. We didn't seem to have spring for very long here in the NY area...quelle etrange, or something like it. I'm happy to report it's once again fun to be a Mets fan, now that the team's losing like a proper team again, and I'm doubly elated to announce that IJ #52, for some strange reason,

Upcoming Events

forgive me if I skip anyone's birthday; I'm typing this up at work and only have one immediate calendar in front of me...LET ME KNOW if you want something publicized!

- JUNE 16 - KATLADY (aka helen katz) (35)
 JUNE 18 - Paul McCartney (45!)
 JUNE 19 - Confucius (b. 551BC); Lou Gehrig (b. 1903); Malcolm McDowell (44)
 JUNE 20 - Errol Flynn (b. 1909); Lillian Hellman (b. 1905)
 JUNE 21 - Sartre (b. 1905); Judy Holliday (b. 1922)
 JUNE 23 - E & S Anniv. (3 years) (MTYNTK?)
 JUNE 25 - JILL ZIMMERMAN (32); George Orwell (b. 1903)
 JUNE 26 - Abner Doubleday (b. 1819); Peter Lorre (b. 1904)
 JUNE 27 - Helen Keller (b. 1880); Emma Goldman (b. 1869) and the Cap'n, Bob Keeshan (?)
 JUNE 29 - MARK JOHNSTON (26)
 JUNE 30 - RORY HOUGHENS (31); LUKE MCGUFF (30);
 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO IJ #54

- JULY 3 - Tom Stoppard (50); Franz Kafka (b. 1883)
 JULY 4 - Rube Goldberg (b. 1883); Eppie & Abby (69);
 SECOND ANNUAL GUTTERAMERICA CONVENTION (Nat'l Mark Almond/Soft Cell Fan Club) at the home of Mari Thelander, 22 Cottage St. #3E, S. Orange, NJ 07079; pot luck supper, 8pm-?, RSVP 201/763-6451 for info
 JULY 5 - P.T. Barnum (b. 1829)
 JULY 6 - Beatrix Potter (b. 1866)
 JULY 7 - Ringo Starr (47)
 JULY 9 - BRUCE DUNCAN (44)

(continued on page 4)

- *****
 * INSIDE JOKE is put on hexaweekly by Elayne Wechsler and some
 * dear friends and emanates from beautiful downtown Brooklyn in
 * the year of the reign of Queen Connie Stevens I (don't ask!).
 * Print run approx. 200, but we run 'em as we need 'em.
 * EDITOR-IN-RESIDENCE.....ELAYNE WECHSLER
 * PRODUCTION ASSISTANT/FIANCEE-AT-LARGE.....STEVE CHAPUT
 * PELIKAN TUSH.....BLANK DEB
 * FRONT COVER BY MAX NUCLEAR - LETTERING BY BRIAN PEARCE

STAFF WRITERS/ARTISTS

- * ANNI ACKNER===ACE BACKWORDS===DEBORAH BENEDICT===ALIX BISHOFF
 * ==KEN BURKE=====TOM DEJA=====G. MICHAEL DOBBS==
 * RORY HOUGHENS=====E.E. LIGI=====CAROL ESCOBAR MAGARY
 * ==JOHN P. MORGAN=====LARRY OBERC=====SUSAN PACKIE==
 * STEVEN SCHARFF=====DAVID SERLIN=====DORIAN TENORE
 * ==KERRY THORNLEY=====PHIL TORTORICI=====A.J. WRIGHT==

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:

- | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| * ANDY AMSTER | * MIKE GUNDERLOY | * HANK ROLL |
| * TIM ARNOLD | * JAY HARBER | * st.EVE |
| * LARRY BLAZEK | * MARY ANN HENN | * MICHAEL SCHAFER |
| * JIM BUTLER | * STEVEN A. HESS | * MIKE SELENDER |
| * BRIAN CATANZARO | * WAYNE HOGAN | * KATHY STADALSKY |
| * TOM CHAN | * KATLADY | * LARRY STOLTE |
| * TIM CRIDLAND | * KIT | * NOEL M. VALIS |
| * JOEL DAILEY | * TULI KUPFERBERG | * SIGMUND WEISS |
| * JAY DEFELICIS | * JED MARTINEZ | * ROBIN LYNNE WIDMEYER |
| * ADAM EISENSTAT | * EDWARD MYCUE | * ERIC WILSON |
| * GARY PIG GOLD | * SHERYL L. NELMS | * ROBERT WILSON-WHEATLEY |
| * ADJA GORBACH | * ERIK NELSON | * A.D. WINANS |
| * VERNON GRANT | * MICHAEL POLO | * and "KID" SIEVE |

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 * SubGenius Foundation, Sound Choice, Twisted Image, Wall-Op, &
 * the Y.U. News Service

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* All rights revert to writers

* Writers'/Artists' Guidelines available for SASE

exceeded its initial print run of 150-something twice! Therefore, the masters smeared a bit on the second and third printings and so forth, so I do apologize to those of you who "joined us late," as it were. I hope to avoid this problem with this issue, the masters of which I will be getting done outside of the office on a different photocopier which should remain smudge-free.

Because we've had such an overwhelming (as opposed to "whelming," as mom would say) amount of requests for IJ #52, I've pretty much abandoned any idea I may have been harboring about advertising this 'zine in other publications. Although I may still work up some sort of all-purpose IJ ad for you fellow editors to use at will if you so desire, I've never found it that necessary to go out and publicize INSIDE JOKE. Word, thank the powers that be, seems to get around quite nicely anyway through the various networks, and we certainly don't appear to have had a dearth of interest or contributors of late, so we must be doing something correctly...Of course, I would be rude and remiss not to confess that most of our new readers have come to us via "word of pen," so to speak, in any number of sibling small-press publications which have plugged us in their own words. My special thanks to Michael Flores and Pam Smith for their kindness in IT'S ONLY A MOVIE; and thanks also to BETWEEN THE LINES (Erik Kosberg), THE BLOTTER (C.F. Kennedy), EGAD! (Tom James), SLIMETIME (Steve Puchalski), THREAD-BARE, XEX GRAPHICS (Bob "X"), and of course the larger publications like FACTSHEET FIVE (Mike Gunderloy), SOUND CHOICE (David Ciuffardini) and THE UTNE READER (Jay Walljasper). You'll find listings for these 'zines in our "Fan Noose" section, natch, but I did want to remind you nice fellow editors that if you give us a plug, PLEASE mention that IJ is "c/o Elayne Wechsler" and that all checks MUST be made out to my name, not to IJ, 'cause IJ doesn't have its own bank account and I can't cash checks made out to what is, in effect, a fictitious name, okay? Thanks, appreciate it!

INSIDE STROKE is apparently dead in the water unless someone wishes to volunteer to do the shitwork; see Steve's hail and farewell elsewhere in these pages. On the plus side, Steve's duties in print have expanded somewhat herein (and that's not just because the wedding's only a year away now), as I've been letting him review the art and visual zines I get in trade, as well as the comics and mini-comics. Trust me, he's much more qualified in that area than I am. (Oh, and by the by, since nobody has had any complaints about "Fan Noose's" rating system, I'm going to keep it for now.)

My stars, how did we suddenly acquire THREE new staff writers? Well, to be honest, regular IJ readers have known Dorian for some time, and Tom introduced himself last issue, and Carol is a friend and co-publisher of David Serlin, so we're none of us strangers, but even so, I feel it's time to put a moratorium on new staffers for awhile—we just don't have the room for more right now. To employ my favorite commune-in-writing analogy: although the guest suites are still available to an extent ("other contributors"), there's currently no vacancy in any regular apartment. And I'm not going to raise the rent just to make more room, sorry. But hey, these things go in cycles, so if would-be staffers can just hang on until the pendulum swings back, there should be plenty of room sooner or later.

Every staffer, for the first time I can remember, is represented in one form or another this time, even those who haven't sent in their regular columns. The ad for Anni's zine is real, and IJ urges all fans of the Rock Fiend to hop on the Bus before it takes off without you. On a more serious note, on behalf of everyone connected with this publication I'd like to offer Anni our deepest condolences on the recent loss of her mother Lucille, and also to wish our own DeeBee, Deborah Benedict, a speedy recovery. While I'm not a religious person, I do pray, secularly, that the summer months bring some much-deserved good things your way, friends.

The summer months also bring with them deadlines, the first being for IJ #54 on June 30 (yes, this June) and the second for IJ #55 (the Double Nickel issue with an appropriately Discordian cover by Roldo) on August 15. Staffers, do try to remember the deadlines, as you may not get your IJs in time to remind you. Mark 'em on calendars or something...every six weeks, it's not a big mystery or anything. Yes, we still have tricky printing schedules, requiring me to mail IJs out piecemeal; no, that's not going to stop us from publishing or force us to raise our price.

A clue about written submissions—THE SHORTER THE BETTER! If we have a glut of your stuff (SW, LB, POETS, you know who you are), PLEASE hold off sending us stuff until we get our heads above the paper. New readers wondering what's acceptable and what's MTINTK (More Than I Need To Know), do send for the Guidelines. Issues of IJ (including samples) cost \$1 each; I trade with editors of like zines all-for-all or one-for-one, depending on frequency of publication; non-staffer contributors have the option of sending a dollar or a 56¢ stamp (well, I had to raise some cost) for the issue in which their submission appears; if you put out a mini-comic, mini-zine or one-sheet, trade terms are IJ in exchange for publication + 56¢ stamp (I mean, let's be fair, okay?). If you're in Canada, that postage is 58¢ U.S. If an "X" appears next to your name on our back cover, it's time to renew. Back issues of IJ (\$1 each) and nifty IJ caps (\$5) are still on sale. Do not pass Go, just say "No" to Nancy and Ron, and cheer for the good guys in the Tran/Contra hearings, if you can find them. Send submissions and joints, discreetly, to

P.O. Box 1609, Madison Sq. Station, New York NY 10159
 Lotsa good folk gone since last we spoke: Alejandro Rey, Paul Butterfield, Hermoine Gingold, and this IJ is dedicated to Hugh Brannum (Mr. Green Jeans) and Dick Shawn.

Fan Noose

by Elayne
Wechsler



As you read in this issue's editorial, I've put a bit of this zine-reviewing job in Steve's hands, as he will be plugging comics and art-zines, but it still hasn't seemed to shrink the size of this column to manageable proportion. My asterisk "rating" should help, but as always, if you want to know more about any of these fine publications, get FACT-SHEET FIVE, or ask me about 'em, or (best yet) take a chance and send for whatever you think might interest you. I'd also like to remind you that many zines are always seeking submissions, and I will henceforth use the abbreviation "SS" to so designate those about which I know for sure are looking—so if your stuff doesn't fit in *IJ* for whatever reason (space or such), consider sending it to any

of these good folks, won't you?...Steve will be reviewing this one in more depth in *IJ* #54, but I did want to mention that the gang at Oddmags is back (however temporarily) again with MAD DOG #11, a wonderful mixture of art and Discordian-type writing. Chris also sent along his own one-shot CHIP ACTION COMICS, and for info on all his fine products write him, Chris Brasted, 78 Oxford Ave., Southampton, SO2 0DN UNITED KINGDOM...Sad news to report from our 49th State—the excellent colorful punkmag WARNING! has ceased publication. Here's hoping "Bill Bored" and the rest can start something up again real soon...The *IJ* pick this time comes from Orlando, home of Disney World and Wayne Alan Brenner, whose two-issue one-shot (if that makes sense) RED & BLACK is, one hopes, destined to be a small press masterpiece. Lucky us, Wayne promises to send the set out free while copies last, so write him at P.O. Box 533808, Orlando, FL 32853 and you won't be disappointed. I won't gush on about this, because I think the creativity speaks for itself. Stupendous...T.W.I. (Typing While Intoxicated) is a bimonthly political creative zine from Curtis Olson (P.O. Box 19441, 20th St. Station, Washington, DC 20036-0441), and where else can you find book reviews of *The Tower Comm. Report*, "The Search for Reagan's Gazoo," and a guide to Teen Sex Comedies all in one place? Worth the \$2 (do keep sending it, Curtis!)...If you want to send \$1.50 to EAT MY SHIT, perhaps you should address it to editor Lew Jackson or just plain "EMS"—she's been having, as you may well imagine, postal problems. Unread as a whole just yet; I get the impression it spews out a lot of hate in proportion to its energy and drive. Judge for yourself—Lew's at P.O. Box 12504, Raleigh, NC 27605...I haven't roamed the galaxy in lifetimes, so I'd forgotten about the Embassy of Planet Claire, which puts out a free (send SASE) one-sheet called LIFE ON PLANET EARTH which is funny and bizarre and quite intelligent. Have I stirred your curiosity? Hope so—their address is P.O. Box 85807, Seattle, WA 98145...I've been looking for a good Native American publication for awhile now, and I'm thrilled to be trading pubs with a new one, DAYBREAK, "Dedicated to land and life and the Seventh Generation," which focuses on the sad state of eco-myopia. Please support them by writing for info to Ray Cook, Box 98, Highland, MD 20777-0098...Some unfunny clowns out west have put *IJ* on a mailing list of joke magazines, and while we're not shesky, there are some other pubs worth checking out if you're into, well, jokes. A new one is LAUGH TIME U.S.A., a monthly published by Maxwell Miller (who refers to himself as a "publishing company") which even pays \$5 for any jokes published. They don't even have to be yours, apparently. Only \$1, and MM hopes to expand it to include humorous news, gossip and contests soon. Write him at P.O. Box 42303, Philadelphia, PA 19101...While I disagree with about 3/4 of what the WEEKLY WORLD ANARCHY advocates, they are, needless to say, a vital voice that deserves a listen. Lev Chernyi loves pissed-off religious fanatics and delights in alienating well-meaning feminists, but hey, WWA reprints Ed Anger! Subs are \$3/6 issues c/o the Columbia Anarchist League, P.O. Box 380, Columbia, MO 65205...Remember two-way magazines? Well, Carol Schenck and Charles Nash have put that idea to work in CIRCULAR, a biweekly whose self-defined purpose "is to make connections between things that, to the rest of the world, heretofore seem unrelated, unconnected, even in conflict." Much of it's still unconnected to me, but I'm not as visually minded. A grand experiment that continues, all yours for an SASE to 1565 Washington #9, San Francisco, CA 94109-3866...My friend Steve Winter is something of a Renaissance fellow, and is willing to sell his many secrets (how to shop better, how to relax, the addiction epidemic (I think his conclusions are wrong here, but who am I to say?)) and even his writings for the right price. Send him an SASE for inquiry—he's at 1497 1/2 Queen St. W., #71, Toronto, Ont. M6R 1A3 CANADA (remember the proper postage!)...Primo SubG pamphlet just out from the Rev. Erb Cooper (231 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11215-5311) entitled WOOPS! WRONG PLANET! and available for 50¢, slack slack...OFF THE DEEP END sure is—it discusses all kinds of unexplained phenomena, conspiracy theories and the like, but editor Tim Cridland might wanna lighten up a bit and stop crediting Holocaust revisionists (in my opinion the worst sort of slime—hey, someone's gotta stand up for all my dead rela-

tives). Still, fairly Discordian and shows promise—cost is \$1 + 50¢ postage per to P.O. Box 85874, Seattle, WA 98145-1874 (Tim did the Cabbage Patch thingie elsewhere this issue)...The latest NOTES is out, a whopping double-at-least issue full of Anni Ackner, Jeff Grimshaw and tons of other good writers who happen to be in sf fandom, and lots of letters, many good. Oh, and speaking of issues, for the record (since fan-types care deeply about such things and a few of Them do read this), editor Sam Heim and I have not, do not and will not hate one another because we occasionally happen to disagree editorially. I'm expectedly attacked in much of the lettercol until Sam says "Cool it guys," but *IJ* is given some nice press even from people who apparently don't like me—ah well, better disliked by fans than friends. If you are a fan, or even a friend as well, this is one of the best fandom pubs, and I highly recommend it even if it is MTINTK, so there. Sam and co-editor Ginnie Fleming are at 497 W. 186th St. #5E, New York, NY 10033 and I think it's available for a buck...On the other hand, some fan pubs don't pay to send for, especially if they're soon closing up shop as is CONVERGENT REALITIES. Editor D. Thome talks about his personal life and publishes stories about the SCA and Neuro-linguistic Programming and fan-stuff. One or two stories in here are really good, like L.M. Birden's "Points," but it's got another of those lettercol things in which people talk about their personal lives, and really, if you don't know the folks none of it makes much sense. "The usual" to P.O. Box 1708, New Milford, CT 06776...And the US doesn't have a monopoly on this stuff, in case you were wondering. Britisher Ron Gemmell's EAT THAT DUCK has the same good points (a couple neat stories) and bad (personal stuff about strangers, etc.), and unless you're a fan it may not be worth writing all the way to 79 Mansfield Close, Birchwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA3 6RN U.K. for a copy...But as much as I may dislike some aspects of fandom sometimes, none of it even comes close to the MTINTK quotient of the NEW YORK SURVIVAL GUIDE, a "weekly entertainment guide for consenting adults" (I wonder who told them I was that consenting?), in which you can "make a date to get laid" with places like Sizzle Pussy, Anal Addiction, Clits Cum Quick and No Bullsshit Banging. Sometimes I almost feel guilty about being uptight till I see something like this. It's a whopping (pun intended) \$36 for 20 4-page (11 x 17 folded in half, 2 sides) issues, but if you need to get off that badly, write them at P.O. Box 1070, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013...The only thing more depressing than gratuitous sex is a surfeit of death, and SHADES OF GREY reveals in the dark side. Either Orcen Bender is a Satanist or a punk or both, and even looking at this thing gives me the creeps so he must've succeeded. If the devil wants to make you do it, send \$2 to OB at P.O. Box 571713, Houston, TX 77257-1713...At times I think I should have a separate column for mags which publish primarily poetry (to alliterate), but as you may suspect, *IJ* hasn't the room, so I'll detail them a bit this time and refer to them as "poetlit" zines in future columns. As you may expect, the quality of poetlit varies from person to person, and I'm the world's worst poetlit critic (can't stand the stuff, myself), so the best I can do is brief descriptions: THE GUARDIAN ANGEL PRESS catalog #2, a singularly unimpressive 12 3 x 4 pages stapled together, lists available works from editor Greg Evason and others. Greg does poetry & collages and sells it really cheap (15 or 25¢), so if you're into mini-reads send him a SASE (Canadian postage, please) for the catalog at 47 Gloucester St., Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1L8 CANADA...Some photocopied poetlit zines have their own unique trademarks—Larry Blazek illustrates the poems & stories in OPOSSOM HOLLER TAROT, 4 or so unstapled 2-sided pages (I think the price is \$1.05 per issue, to Route 2, Campbellsburg, IN 47108); and Kyle Hogg credits BOLD PRINT's contributors on the last of his 12 2-sided stapled pages and places poems, stories, illos and assorted dada every which direction (I'm becoming fond of this, as the format isn't dissimilar to our own). No price, but I'd send a buck to 2008 Stuart Ave., Basement, Richmond, VA 23220...The standard size for poetlit seems to be 5 1/2 x 8 1/2 with a nicely-drawn cardstock cover (a format I'm considering for *IJ*'s eventual successor publication), around 40 or so pages, a cover price of \$2-3 per and lots of white space to set off the work (you and I may think one poem per page is a waste of space, but I guess poets don't). NO, edited by Ann Meyer and Brad Johnson, goes for \$2 each from #6 onward, and A & B hand-calligraph titles and authors (826 W. Belmont #3F, Chicago, IL 60657); EGAD! is a big 58 pgs. and Tom James does plugs as well (2.50 to D19 Maple Hill Estates, Hamet, MN 55340); the quarterly LACTUCA features familiar names and back-page bios (\$2 to Mike Selender, P.O. Box 621, Suffern, NY 10901); and the NEW SOUTHERN LITERARY MESSENGER (\$2 to Charles Lohmann, 400 S. Laurel St., Richmond, VA 23220) has some nice art and bios at the end as well...The other popular size for poetlit mags is 7 x 8 1/2, as with FOIST Magazine (8 1/2 x 11 folded at the 6 1/2 mark), which bills itself as a mail art collective (mail art is collage dada stuff that often looks incoherent and pointless and I suppose is meant to evoke something) but does have drawn art and a couple essays (\$5 for 2 issues to Scott Dohring, P.O. Box 44, Penfield, NY 14528); and two members of the Boston area Small Press Alliance, the "Short Fiction Quarterly" OAK SQUARE (\$2.50 to Philip Borenstein, Box 1238, Allston, MA 02134) and Mic McInnis' "meglozine" NIGHTMARES OF REASON (\$2 to P.O. Box 278, E. Cambridge, MA 02141), the assoc. ed. of which is *IJ* staffer Larry Oberg & which features many familiar names in its eclectic pages...Another SPA member, The QUIMBY QUARTERLY, is all about art so I'll let Steve tackle that next time if he wishes; it's \$2 to S. Thomas Svymsky, P.O. Box 281, Astor Station, Boston, MA 02123...Now that she's settled in in NY,

(cont'd. next page)

(cont'd. from previous page)

Elissa Rashkin's back in the swing of publishing, and her newest, LIFE OF CRIME (as in "spiritual crime," which kinda includes all us mutants), features yellow paper and striking red type, poems & letters & art & all for an SASE to E. at P.O. Box 20375, New York, NY 10025 (SS, by the way)...I never know what to make of collagist Mike Schaffer's EMOTIONAL VOMIT but our esteemed printer swears by this tiny dadaist masterpiece. Write for more details and a few surprises—75 Fairview Ave. #38, New York, NY 10040...And IJ is happy to welcome two returnees, BETWEEN THE LINES #6 from Erik Kosberg (3013 Holmes Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55408), \$2 for news 'n views, fun reprints from the small press world, plugs 'n stuff; and SIDNEY SUTREY'S QUARTERLY AND CONFUSED PET MONTHLY v. 5 #3 from Candi Strecker (590 Lisbon, San Francisco, CA 94112), \$1 or fun stuff in trade for pop culture, Galaxy Rangers, DINKS, baseball books and clockwork sushi as only Candi & friends can do it! ...Oh yes, and this installment of THE WHOLE SHMEER, #10, has kat-lady poetizing a love affair diary-style—quite touching and an interesting departure from her usual SubG stuff (SASE to her at P.O. Box 7742, Salt Lake City, UT 94107)...And all you Couch Potatoes take heart, the new TUBER'S VOICE is out at last! Elder Bob Armstrong seems to be on a yearly schedule now, so my video music column is way outta date, but the rest of it's prime view—I mean, reading! \$1 to P.O. Box 249, Dixon, CA 95620...And finally, breaking all records, the Regulars! ATROCITY—Hank Roll, 2419 Greensburg Pike, Pittsburgh, PA 15221 (Mensa Absurd SIG; 50¢ & #10 SASE); BABUSHKIN'S DIGEST V.3 #1—L.D. Babushkin (aka Larry Bush), 13 Canyon Lake Rd., Accord, NY 12404 (political creative zine; free but send donation); BASEBALL OUR WAY V.111 #7—Dale Jellings, 3211 Milwaukee St. #1, Madison, WI 53714 (stats and other tales; SASE); THE BLOTTER #9—C.F. Kennedy, 233 Woodbine Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4L 3P3 CANADA (creative lit/zine; \$11.50/6 issues, but ask about American rates); BUF-O V.3 #2—Klaus Haisch, 1729 E. Tabor St., Indianapolis, IN 46203 (creative pop culture zine; SS; SASE?); DEREGULATOR #8—Rick Henderson, P.O. Box 1063, Chapel Hill, NC 27514 (libertarian; \$8/year for 12 issues); DUCKBERG TIMES #34—Ron Baker, P.O. Box 382, Alexandria, VA 22313 (local music & comic strips; SS, says "free" but send \$1); FACT-SHEET FIVE #22—Mike Gunderloy, 6 Arizona Ave., Rensselaer, NY 12144-4502 (the mandatory plug/zine; \$2); GOOD DAY SUNSHINE #38—Charles F. Rosenay!!!, 397 Edgewood Ave., New Haven, CT 06511 (Bea-Elles; \$8.50/year); IT'S ONLY A MOVIE V.2 #5—Mike Flores & Pam Smith, 54 W. Randolph St., Rm. #606-E2, Chicago, IL 60601 (psycho-chronic film & video; \$1.25); JET LAG #76—Steve Pick & Tony Renner, 8419 Halls Ferry Rd., St. Louis, MO 63147 (music scene; \$1.25); LOOKOUT! #26—Lawrence Livermore (aka Larry Hayes), P.O. Box 1000, Laytonville, CA 95454 (political creative zine; \$1?); MAGIC BULLET #3:3—A. Craig Dickinson, 169 W. Huntingdon St., Philadelphia, PA 19133 (creative zine; SASE w/39¢ postage); THE MONKEES/BOYCE & HART PHOTO FAN CLUB #71—Jodi Hamrich, P.O. Box 411, Watertown, SD 57201-0411 (M/B&H; 50¢ + SASE); THE MONTHLY INDEPENDENT TRIBUNE TIMES JOURNAL POST GAZETTE NEWS CHRONICLE BULLETIN #54—T.S. Child, 2510 Bancroft Way #207, Berkeley, CA 94704 (creative zine; 2 stamps or 50¢; NOTE: PLEASE don't send T.S. or Denver anything for 3 months as they're taking a hiatus & going to Europe); OUTER SHELL V.20—Roy Harper, Box 7053, St. Petersburg, FL 33734 (music one-sheet; SASE); THE PIG PAPER #30—Gary Pig Gold, 70 Cotton Dr., Mississauga, Ont. L5G 1Z9 CANADA (music one-sheet; SASE w/ Can. postage); PROCESSED WORLD #19—41 Sutter St. #1829, San Francisco, CA 94104 (life & slow death in the 9-5 world; \$10/year); SLIMETIME #7—Steve Puchalski, 1108 E. Genesee St. #103, Syracuse, NY 13210 (psychochronic movies; 50¢); SOUND CHOICE #7—David Ciaffardini, P.O. Box 1251, Ojai, CA 93023 (HUGE independent music pub; \$2.50); THE SOUTHERN LIBERTARIAN MESSENGER V.XVI #1—John T. Harilee, Route 10 Box 52A, Florence, SC 29501 (libertarian, mostly re-printed news articles; \$5/year); UTNE READER #21—Box 1974, Marion, OH 43305 ("The best of the alternative press;" \$4); XEX GRAPHIX NEWSLETTER #8—Bob "X", P.O. Box 24061, Memphis, TN 38124 (minicomix and other reviews; SASE). Sorry I couldn't detail more but no room, no room! See you in the funny pages!

UPCOMING EVENTS cont'd from page 2

- JULY 10 - Arlo Guthrie (40)
- JULY 12 - Buckminster Fuller (b. 1895)
- JULY 13 - RODNY DIOXIN (?)
- JULY 14 - Woody Guthrie (b. 1912); Jerry Rubin (49)
- JULY 17 - MAX NUCLEAR (31)
- JULY 19 - LARRY BLAZEK (30)
- JULY 20 - Robin Williams (36); Vaughn Bodé (b. 1941)
- JULY 22 - Marshall McLuhan (b. 1911)
- JULY 23 - T.S. CHILD (?)
- JULY 26 - ROLDO (39); Gracie Allen (b. 1906); G.B. Shaw (b. 1856); Aldous Huxley (b. 1894)
- JULY 28 - PHIL PROCTOR (47); Phredd (2)
- JULY 29 - RANDY MAXSON (31); WAYNE HOGAN (?)
- AUGUST 1 - DONALD LEIGHTY (36)
- AUGUST 2 - GEORG PATTERSON (27)
- AUGUST 5 - SPENCER PINNEY (33)
- AUGUST 7 - PHIL KRESTEDDEMOS (?); Stan Freberg (61)
- AUGUST 8 - Andy Warhol (b. 1930)
- AUGUST 10 - Ian Anderson (40)
- AUGUST 13 - Bert Lahr (b. 1895); Hitchcock (b. 1899)
- 4 AUGUST 15 - Woodstock (1969); DEADLINE FOR IJ #55

Inside IJ Staffers

A hearty and somewhat overwhelmed welcome to our three newest staff writers, two of whom (Dori and Tom) should be somewhat familiar to IJ readers, and the third (Carol) to readers of SPACE-TIME CONTINUUM AND YOUR POCKET WRENCH (whence comes David Serlin as well). As I mentioned in this issue's editorial, I'm putting a moratorium on any new staffers coming in for awhile, discounting the few folks who write for IJ regularly now anyway and might want to make it official (such as Gary Pig Gold, who may indeed be joining us next time). For the time being, it's going to be difficult enough keeping track of all the staffers we have now, so we have to wait until things again slack off a bit and the cycle runs its course once more. We'll be running all the staffers' addresses next issue, in the hopes that some readers might want to correspond with any of them personally (they all love getting letters!).

TOM DEJA
Box 127, 425 E. 25th St. First Appearance: Brookdale General Hospital, Brooklyn
New York, NY 10010
6/22/64

Name: Thomas Deja

Costume: Brown wire-rimmed glasses;

mousy grey-brown hair; shirt open at

the collar; black and grey belt; striped pants (sometimes white jeans); white dirty sneakers; buttons with various sayings, dependent upon day; grey double-breasted jacket.

Occupation: Cynic/Insanity Fighter

Tools and Weapons: Legal pads; black ballpoint pen; Omega 30 Manual Analog Typewriter with worn-out ribbon; tape recorder with various tapes.

Biography: Raised by feral Brooklynites, Thomas Deja grows up in a particularly tough part of Brooklyn. Instead of learning how to fight, the young student instead learns the secret art of Sven-Kwan-Du, the Swedish method of herring fighting. Realizing that very few people in the world carry herrings around for battle (let alone take it seriously), Thomas instead develops the power of an acid tongue "able to cut through three men at twenty paces." The school system fears this power and imprisons Thomas in Special Education classes. Thomas survives eight years of this abusive program before graduating six months early from high school. Then, at Hunter, he discovers the Underground New Music Movement. Spurred on by such heroes as Peter Gabriel, Elvis Costello, Robyn Hitchcock, Cabaret Voltaire, Kid Creole and the Cocteau Twins, Thomas decides to fight the insanity of the world. To aid him in this task he forms The Ground Zero Club, the world's first post-apocalyptic comedy troupe, and starts operating out of a run-down college radio station dubbed "This Vicious Cabaret." Now, whenever insanity rears its ugly head, Thomas Deja and his Ground Zeroers sally forth to do battle.

Quote: "Remember, nothing ever happens in Parkersburg."

Comments: This highly unorthodox pulp hero has been bounced from magazine to magazine since 1983. He is unique in that he has consistently been marketed to the wrong audience. At present he is having some small success in INSIDE JOKE magazine. While there is some argument over this, it is fairly certain that he does not exist.

Scotch: Butter, over Fudge Ripple ice cream.

Batname: Carol E. Magary **CAROL ESCOBAR MAGARY**

Bataddress: South Florida

2220 Island Drive

Batdislikes: Talking about myself,

Miramar, FL 33023

beer, Miss America contests, an

12/17/67

uneven cheese/nacho ratio, not

having perfect vision.

Batlikes: Writing about myself, Cranapple juice, Zippy the Pinhead, getting a good Crackerjack prize, Aretha Franklin.

Batself-description: Confused, but basically a nice person.

Batfuture: Married to Snookums, writing radio commercials, two cats in the yard, life used to be so hard.

DORIAN TENORE
301 E. 48th St., #6D
New York, NY 10017
6/8/63

Dorian Kathleen Tenore was born to mama Jackie, a model-turned-executive-secretary with Lee Remick's looks and Bette Midler's personality, and papa Peter, a Runyonesque gambler and man-about-town,

on June 8, 1963 in New York City's Greenwich Village. The fortuitous combo of these parents and this locale guaranteed her a bohemian, pop-culture-oriented life, though her childhood was spent mostly in "da Bronx."

Dorian believes in both God and reincarnation, despite her education at an all-girl Catholic high school and the Jesuit-run Fordham University. At an improvisational comedy class, she met her beloved, the notorious Sub-Genius and Hawaiian shirt wearer Vinnie Bartilucci. Through Vinnie, Dorian began writing for fanzines, starting with APA-NYU. Her film/stage review column, SAVAGE SAYS: "THERE'S NO FREE LUNCH" (named after an episode of TV's late, lamented detective series "Tenspeed & Brown Shoe," where Dorian first developed her near-fanatical admiration for actor Jeff Goldblum), currently appears in INSIDE JOKE and CAPRA.

Dorian also writes screenplays (she's currently working on a sequel to LUCK COMES TO McSHAMUS, which appeared in IJ last year), and has been a production assistant/performer/director on her own and others' student films. One of these, THE COOL WHIP HORROR, won her the coveted Fordham University Transparent Drinking Vessel. Right now Dorian's a freelance editorial assistant, but her goal is to write, direct and/or produce films combining the Marx Brothers' absurd zaniness, Alfred Hitchcock's stylish suspense, Jim Jarmusch's cool, and Jonathan Demme's quirky characterizations. Barring that, she wants to be the world's greatest film critic. Dorian also likes large, affectionate dogs; gooey sweets; intelligent children; and mail without windows in the envelopes.

DRIVE ALL NIGHT/CHOMBY
A Division of Wolfwoman Enterprises, Inc.
(*"When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro"*)
Rather Bemusedly Announces The Imminent Arrival Of
BUS NINE FROM OUTER SPACE

A Journal of Unclassified Ads, Letters, and Notes From The Bad Doctor

After many years of what might fairly be termed obsessional reading of magazines, fanzines, periodicals, and the sort of pamphlet that always seems to be written by some poor soul whose brain is being controlled by microwaves from the CIA, we have, after much study, and a certain amount of guesswork, discovered that what most people like to read best, what they turn to first in any given publication, are the letter columns, the peculiar little ads in which people thank St. Jude, carry on semi-public conversations with each other, attempt to contact that special person they saw reading The Story of O on the BMT, and endeavour to off-load four mint-condition tickets to Woodstock, and the agony columns, wherein a person who, in more civilised times, would be relegated to writing the shipping news for a particularly land-locked paper in Wisconsin, tells her distraught readers precisely why they are distraught, and how to go about getting traught again.

There is, of course, no shame to reading these things - the shame is that there's never enough of them in even the best papers to satisfy our deepest cravings. Finally, however, something has come forward to fill the gap: BUS NINE FROM OUTER SPACE, a journal containing nothing but ads, letters, and what we humbly believe is the tackiest agony column this side of Ask Beth.

ADS:

Advertise your small business or publication, find a copy of the Beatles' Butcher cover for less than the price of a condo on the West Side, praise the diety of your choice, carry the flag for your favourite ism, tell that special person how you feel about him/her, convince the world that the CIA really is microwaving your cerebral cortex - all at affordable prices!

Teeny-Tiny Typeface ads like this are 1¢ a word for the first 50 words, 5¢ per word for 51-100, and 10¢ a word for any over 100.

Regular Typeface ads like this are 5¢ a word for the first 50, 10¢ a word for 51-100, and 25¢ a word for any over 100.

Big Fat Juicy Typeface Ads like this are 10¢ a word for the first 50, 25¢ a word for 51-100, and 50¢ a word for any over 100.

Anything goes in the ads - the only things we ask are that you keep it quasi-legal (bootlegged tapes are okay; drugs aren't) and, because of Your Beloved Editor's preference, you steer clear of child pornography. Other than that, we'll print anything, names count as words, but addresses and phone numbers are free.

LETTERS:

You don't need me to tell you how to write a loc, do you? Of course, it may be a bit hard to comment on a magazine you haven't yet seen, but use your imagination for the first issue. Tell Your Beloved Editor how wonderful she is, tell us about your cats or your sex life, tell your Beloved Editor how wonderful she is - what the hell, we'll print anything as long as it's semi-coherent, legible, and in English. Letters are printed free, but must be accompanied by a full name and address, which will be withheld on request.

THE BAD DOCTOR:

The Bad Doctor is a real, live psychiatric social worker who prefers, for what will soon be obvious reasons, to remain anonymous, and who will answer your questions about the sadly screwed-up state of your pathetic little life. Write to The Bad Doctor at your own risk. Letters to The Bad Doctor need not be signed, but for clarity's sake, we suggest you use at least a psuedonym.

RULES OF THE BUS:

1. No trades. We can't afford them. We regret this policy, but we're already teetering on the brink of poverty and have no desire to fall into the abyss.
2. BUS NINE FROM OUTER SPACE costs \$2.00 a copy. Checks for ads and copies should be made out to "D. Anne Ackner". All correspondence should be mailed to Anni Ackner, Wynnewood at Wyomissing, 855 N. Park Rd. #CC103, Wyomissing, PA 19610.
3. The first issue will be mailed 6 July 1987 and thence on the 6th of each month following. Deadlines are the 22nd (of June for the first issue, and so forth) for ads and letters, and the 15th for letters to The Bad Doctor. Deadlines are etched in stone.
5. No subscriptions until we see if we've made asses of ourselves or not.

BE THERE OR BE SQUARE!

CLIP AND DAMNATION

In which Our Hero unwittingly gets drawn into the mysterious and powerful International Shopping Cult and lives to tell of it.

When I first started Life On My Own Away From The Family Support Group, I swiftly realized a move towards independence was one that had to be made in stages.

This realization was a direct result of my lack of necessary things in my dorm room. These necessities included food, soap and towels. No longer in easy reach of a caretaker/family figure, I had to obtain these things by myself. Thus did I gird my loins, grab twenty bucks and venture out for the first time as a soloer. I had to go shopping.

I still remember my first bag of groceries. I bought a styro-foam Cup-O-Noodles, a can of heat-n-serve pasta and a liter bottle of Classic Coke. I put this stuff in a plastic bag on the floor. Never mind that I didn't have a fork with which to eat the noodles. Never mind that I didn't have a pot in which to cook the pasta. Never mind that I had a neighbor who would raid my room for munchies when stoned. Never mind that I still was without a towel and had to run down the hallways soaking wet. I had food. The fact that I had food made me very content.

It is hard to imagine that this one event led me into my wanton life as a member of the International Shopping Cult. Now my shopping habit is a daily thing. I frequent four different supermarkets located anywhere from 21st to 65th Street. I spend more time stalking those antiseptic corridors than Michael Cimino does making movies. I have occasionally tried to resist temptation. Many are the times I have paced my floor in a vain attempt to resist the Shopping Siren's Song. Unfortunately, I am not a strong person. Sooner or later I break down and skip on over to the local market.

Since my induction into the Cult, I have noticed that various supermarkets have different advantages. Sloan's, for example, has a generic food department (a/k/a The Shelf Of The Last Resort), and a spotty general food section. Its meat section is terrible.

Pioneer's meat section, on the other hand, is superior. You pay for that superiority with a slightly higher price tag. Its snack corner is Nirvana. Unfortunately, the Pioneer near me has 'yuppified' into the Food Plaza ("Oooooo"), which means the normal, reasonably priced foodstuffs are buried amidst chichi things like imported Italian pesto and cellophane noodles from Japan. Add that the chichi stuff is indistinguishable from the normal stuff save for a higher price tag and you have a schizophrenic shopping experience. It is also, at present, my favorite supermarket. Go figure.

To put it bluntly, the Food Emporium sucks. The designer of FE stores had to be a sadist. They are claustrophobic little mazes that twist and turn without any sense of interior logic. Their approach to food borders on the downright absurd. Their idea of a basic food group is Godiva. When I went searching for bread one night I found 'French Whole Wheat Opera Rolls,' which are smooth round pieces of grainy stuff just the wrong shade of fuschia. The idea of eating something like this upsets me. Why, you ask, do you shop there? One reason is its proximity to my workplace. When my boss sends me out for food, he can afford the price mark-up. Secondly, it is open twenty-four hours a day. Case closed.

This leaves the A&P, and I must confess to a fondness for the ol' Red-N-Orange. A&Ps have been around longer than Katherine Hepburn, I bet, and they're just as well-known. Who doesn't remember their local A&P without a slight twinge of nostalgia? Every neighborhood had one. Mine was underneath the elevated "J" line in Brooklyn. For many people The International Shopping Cult began here.

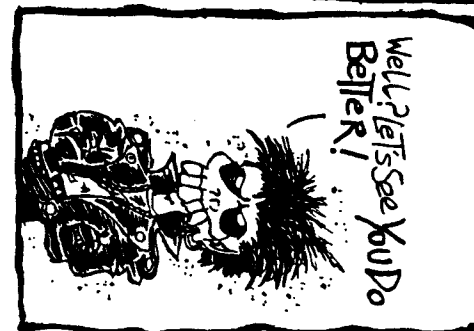
Well, I am sad to report that A&P has gone into a bit of a decline. In my recent visits to the local Red-N-Orange I've been struck by the overall cheesiness of the place. Those gay colored signs have been replaced by hastily scrawled-on pieces of typing paper. Those gleaming aisles of steel now have dusty film on them. The impression is one of tackiness, and it gives one the urge to hide one's face in shame. After all, we let this happen. We were the ones who abandoned A&P for the Finasts, the Dagostinos, the Gristedes, and yes, the Food Emporiums of this world. Now we cross the street when we see an A&P. We don't want people to know we were once friends with it. Well, I hope you're all happy!

By now you're all sitting there thinking, "Why is he dictating to us? What makes him such a good shopper?" Well, there is a major difference between your average shopper and a SHOPPER. It's a fact of life that some shoppers are better than others. Unlike in other fields of endeavor where differences in quality might be difficult to figure out, the difference between an amateur and a hardcore shopper is easy to find.



THE PURGATORY PAPERS

by TOM DEJA



CLIP AND DAMNATION

MAILORDER PUBLICATIONS ARE TO OTHER PUBLICATIONS WHAT HORSE RACING IS TO OTHER SPORTS.

At the track and at the mailbox everyone is trying to make a buck. To keep the horses running and the mail moving send S.A.S.E. to:

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Eliminate or Improve
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P.O. Box 140306
Dallas, TX 75214

Your hardcore, better believe it, professional, blue-ribbon shopper always has coupons.

Coupons are a must for International Shopping Cultists. These bright little pieces of paper can cut pennies off major purchases. In the grey area before payday, those pennies are vital. Coupons can also give you a rush of pleasure when you come across a coupon for something you really like. Imagine my thrill when I once came across not only a 35¢-off coupon for Dr. Pepper but a 25¢-off on Ovaltine.

Coupon mania does have its bad side, however. The coupon's primary reason for existence is to get you to try a product you might not otherwise consider. Sometimes this theory works only too well. After making a coupon purchase, the dawning light of better judgment makes you realize it may not have been such a wise decision. I have used coupons to buy crackers with the consistency of soggy cardboard, spaghetti sauce that is overtly sweet and cloying (believe me, nothing is worse than overtly sweet spaghetti sauce), cereals that redefine "poison," french fries I wouldn't feed to tree slugs and a sugar-free fruit drink with enough acidic content to burn through titanium steel. I should never have bought these travesties masquerading under the name "food," but I had a coupon for them.

I have had the opposite experience, too. I have tasted cheese crackers that are too addictive, worn sleekly cleaned clothes washed in a little-known brand of detergent, eaten firm and flavorful pasta and bathed with a green soap that has kept me awake at the oddest hours. Unfortunately, one never remembers one's triumphs more than one's defeats.

There is no hope for me. I am to all extents and purposes a brainwashed minion of the International Shopping Cult. I suspect that there are some of you out there who are likewise enthralled. I beg of you, however, not to try and deprogram us. It will only serve to destroy the Status Quo. How will the world look with all Consumers and no Shoppers? We poor Cultists are powerless to break away, but society needs people like us.

The next time you are in the supermarket and see those folks behind their shopping carts, going through their coupon files to find that 20¢-off chicken pot pies they just know they have, remember my tale. That person was once a normal human. That person may now be your only hope for salvation.

Pray we're out there.

(For those of you interested, there are five foods I feel are essential for happiness (those who ask, "Why are you not happy, Tom?" may now leave the room). They are Dr. Pepper, cheese pie-rogies, Entenmann's chocolate chip cookies, carrot muffins and the original malt Ovaltine dissolved in a glass of cold milk. Four scoops are recommended.)

Whatever once did make you blue
I do not think it could be all true
Whatever since has kept you strong
You did not truly do so much wrong.
- Robert Wilson-Wheatley

Interest by Dorian Tenore

(OUR STORY SO FAR: College student/aspiring rock 'n' roll rebel Rob Tolliver thought it was gonna be just another dull morning waiting on line at the bank to get his dad's racetrack winnings safely converted into a tuition check—until he saw Ari, the ethereal, exotically beautiful new teller. When we last saw these two crazy kids, the bank's main computer had gone down, thus "forcing" Ari to finish the transaction Rob had reluctantly started with another teller. Can Rob win Ari's heart before she finishes making out his teller's check? Now's your big chance to find out:)

Rob silently and gleefully thanked the Supreme Being for the wonders of modern silicon technology.

Ari flashed that smile at him and crooked a finger. "Komm wiz me," she Marlene Dietriched. Rob couldn't have followed her more eagerly if she had invited him up to her boudoir.

Ari stamped the application form and wrote the cash breakdown on the back of it. Ellen wrote her initials next to the breakdown to show that two tellers had counted the large sum of moolah. Then, Ari took a teller's check from her top drawer and made it out to New York University. "Hey, maybe you know my brother. He graduated from NYU last year."

"What's his name?"

"Azriel. Azriel Mered." She accented the last syllable of the last name.

"Nope, I think I would've remembered that one. What was his major?"

"Pre-med. He's in medical school in Cornell now."

"Was he into music at all? That's my major."

"Are you kidding? He can't even hum a dial tone."

"Well, nobody's perfect. But if I get deathly ill with an incurable hangnail or something in four years, he'll be the first one I call."

Through the magic of peripheral vision, teller and customer couldn't help but notice Bea giving Ari her famous get-the-hell-rid-of-that-customer-already-so-we-can-make-a-dent-in-that-line look. Finally, Ari gave him his teller's check. "Okay, that's that. Do you have any other transactions I can do for you?" she asked. Could that be a hopeful tone Rob detected in her voice? Just in case it was—

"Uh—yeah! Wait a second!" He left the teller's check lying in the window slot while he hurriedly took off his knapsack, tore it open, and embarked on a frenzied search for his passbook. (For once, he was glad this joint didn't yet have a cash machine.)

Before the crowd on line could get ugly (well, uglier) and commit mob violence on this upstart hogging one of their precious tellers, Rob whipped the passbook from his knapsack, slapped it through Ari's slot atop the anxiously waiting teller's check, and dropped the knapsack, all in one less-than-fluid motion. "I hate to keep bothering you," he lied shamelessly, "but could you do a," he thought fast, "withdrawal for me?"

"Sure!" Ari beamed at this delaying tactic. She opened the passbook and flipped through the pages. "You've got a withdrawal slip, don't you?"

"Shit!—No."

"No problem—you pick up your stuff and I'll get you a withdrawal slip, okay?" He did, she did, and when they were all straightened out and unflustered, she gave him a blank withdrawal slip, a Bic ballpoint, and his teller's check.

"Thanks," he grinned, a bit sheepishly. Soon he handed Ari the pen and a filled-out withdrawal slip for twenty bucks. While she blithely poked away at the computer buttons, he got a look at her full name, signed on the bottom of the teller's check.

"Ariza Mered". Hey, that's pretty. A pretty name for a pretty girl. Christ, that was corny, Rob groaned inwardly.

Maybe it was, but Ari obviously liked hearing it anyway.

"Thanks and thanks. The name runs in the family on my mother's side." Meanwhile, she'd also checked out his full name on the withdrawal slip. "'Robert Tolliver'. That's got a nice ring to it, too." I hope he doesn't think I'm just returning a compliment, she thought.

"It's not a bad name, as names go," he replied with a genial shrug. "So, Ariza Mered, what's a nice girl like you doing in a bank like this?"

"I only work here part-time. The rest of the time I go to Hunter College—I'm a political science major. Since classes don't start again till next week, I'm filling in for Amy this week."

"I work weekends at Genre—it's this little rock club in the Village, a few blocks from Washington Square Park."

"Do you play music yourself?"

"Damn straight! I play guitar—including bass—and saxophone, and sometimes I write my own songs. Matter of fact, a couple of my friends and I formed this group, 'Pop. 1280'...."

"I take it you don't have that many members in the band," Ari couldn't resist wisecracking.

"Nope, we're a trio," Rob laughed. "The name comes from a novel by Jim Thompson—he wrote the book that the movie *The Getaway* is based on. I gotta tell you the whole story behind our name sometime."

A LESSON IN PHYSICS

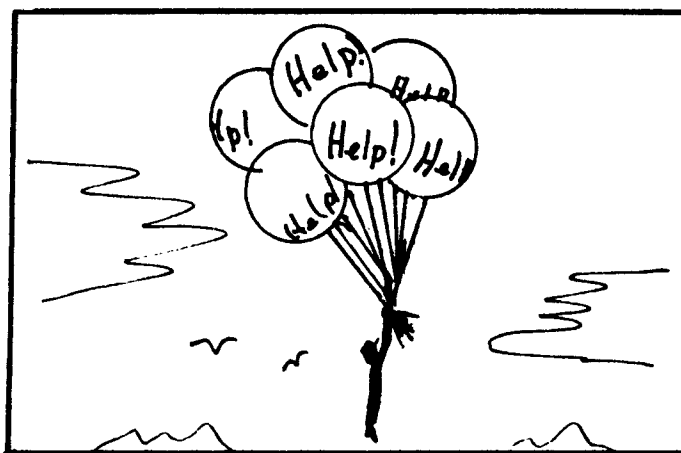
by Noël M. Valis

In physics, the Second Law of Thermodynamics says The universe will be arrested for disorderly conduct One of these days. Speculations of this sort can seem Remote at six a.m. in Athens, Georgia, when what You want is tangled up in sticky blankets, dull From slow and unwise blood. When what you've got Is sixty minutes from which to reassemble worn-out Parts (the same old cotton bra) and mixed-up feelings, The disarray like last year's winter socks. It's hard to empathize with tanked up, crazy atoms, to think The world in disrepute, when suddenly you see You aren't at all what Harry said you'd be in 1964, On the last page of T.R.'s high school yearbook. You Concentrate on 7:10 to catch the early bus, and while the Fragments of your life go whizzing by, while the landscape Dies, you meditate on just how much the world will have to pay.

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IF YOU COME HOME MY LOVE

by Adja Gorbach

Our fights will be fiercer
and our peace deeper
and our passion will triumph
as sea hits land
and land refuses to move
and I will become silence in
the presence of sound.

I will shake as wind ripples leaves.
I will love as tropical sun
shines after hurricane storms.
My strength is solid rock
to be carved by your wind
but always to exist.

My love find soon my cove,
come home.

SIMPLE ODE TO CARL AND PEARL BUTLER'S GREATEST HITS

(a found poem)

by Jim Butler

Punish me...
Don't let me
If I'd only...
Sundown,
It's called.
Can I draw / loving arms?
We'd destroy...
For a minute.
Goodbye.
We'll sweep
In the morning.

"A literary rock group! I love it!" Ari smiled at him happily as she opened her cash drawer. Both her lovely hands dove in there, one holding Rob's passbook, the other grasping the Bic. "You're quite a character, Rob—and I mean that as a compliment." "You're pretty damned interesting yourself," he answered sincerely. He caught her eyes. "Listen, Ari, Genre's gonna give Pop. 1280 the chance to open for another band Friday night. Why don't you come, and we can go for a bite afterwards?"

Her lustrous eyes shone with delight. "Great!" She slid the passbook, which now held two crisp tens, back to Rob. "What time?"

"About eight. In fact, if you wouldn't mind being there early, I could even pick you up." He gave his money and his passbook balance a quick once-over. Suddenly he noticed a strangely uncomputerized print just under his current passbook balance.

The print was in blue ink, and it read simply "Ariza Mered—555-2797."

In a minute, Rob and Ari were grinning at each other like idiots—and loving it.

"Expect a call from me tonight, kiddo," he said.

Ari gave him an affectionate wink. "Thanks, sir, and have a nice day!"



WINNER
by Edward Myrcue
The bird has come deep into our paths.
It dazzles us, brightly impedes kindness.
The cold sun shines on glass plains. Until
night, we stack need against fear. We
huddle together, damp, dry, quiet, await.

THE CONTINUING SAGA OF DR. IGUANA THE SEARCH CONTINUES.

by Kenneth K. Burke

BASEBALL - A Satirical Speculation

(This scene is already in progress. The Commissioner of Baseball is having a heated discussion with a perturbed emissary from baseball's team owners.)

Commissioner: ...for the good of the game.

Owners' Rep.: Look, Pete, I don't want to be the one to bust your bubble, but has it ever occurred to you that without the owners there'd be no game? These are the men who took the initiative, hired you, and pay your salary. Now, sooner or later you're going to have to learn the true meaning of the phrase "play ball," or the owners are going to hang you out to dry like they did Bowie Kuhn.

PU: But dammit, drugs are wrong!

OR: (Exhales wearily) Look, Pete, you know that, and I know that. Drugs are a curse, a sickness that will eventually obliterate the accomplishments of civilized man as we know it. The whole world is going to hell in a handbasket, but in the meantime, there's a buck to be made.

PU: (Confused) I don't think I quite understand what you're getting at.

OR: (Contemplative) This makes it a little tougher. I wasn't aware that you were such a babe in the woods. Okay, Pete, I'm going to lay my cards on the table here and tell you what prompted the owners to send me around to talk to you today.

PU: Good.

OR: The owners are starting to complain that the cost of testing and rehabilitation is cutting too deeply into the kickbacks they receive from the guys who sell the drugs to the players in the first place.

PU: What?! That's ridiculous! Are you asking me to believe that responsible businessmen such as baseball's club owners are supplying their own players with drugs? That's like saying that a store manager would deliberately allow perishable items to stand exposed to room temperature until they rotted!

OR: The operative word here is business, Pete. Ever since we lost the reserve clause, players' salaries have gone through the roof, and the owners have had to find ways to reclaim some of that lost revenue in order to justify keeping the business open.

PU: But what about the players?

OR: What about them? Players come and go, there is a virtually unlimited supply of them, but there is a limited supply of owners with investment capital, and we must do our best to keep them in the black if we want the game to survive.

PU: (Exasperated) I can't believe what I'm hearing! Don't the owners know that a player who is dependent on drugs can be vulnerable to the corrupting influence of gamblers, and that influence could extend as far as to affect the outcome of a game or even a whole season?

OR: (To himself) Oh, jeez, why do I always have to be the guy who does this? (To PU) Pete, baby...Baseball, like all other sports, is a branch of the entertainment industry, which, again, is a

business. The outcome of key games, player milestones, and the season in general have been orchestrated to induce maximum audience response for years now.

PU: (Horrified) I didn't even suspect—this is awful! Baseball, fake?

OR: (Trying to soothe) Just think of baseball as something like professional wrestling; the bumps and bruises are real, but for the most part, the action is choreographed and the outcome is predetermined.

PU: (Shocked, desperate) I—I've never heard anything so positively evil! Something has to be done. The game must be rescued from such vindictive cynicism. I've got to do something.

OR: (Amused) Oh yeah? Like what?

PU: I'll go to the newspapers...when those reporters hear what's going on—

OR: Oh, c'mon, you know as well as I do that the majority of the press are nothing more than publicists who are either on our payroll or have a vested interest in supporting the status quo. Their job is to perpetuate the sports legends and myths, not to tear the game down.

PU: (Grasping at straws) I'll—I'll—talk to the players! That's what I'll do. They'll listen to me. I'll appeal to the dreams of honor, glory, and good clean sport that they had as little boys. We'll band together and—and throw you and your vicious parasites out on your ear! Then baseball can be once again the icon of purity and sport that it was always meant to be. We'll get together and...and...(breaks down into huge, heaving sobs)

OR: Whoa there, Pete. This isn't Mr. Smith Goes to Washington. The fans won't support you on this one. They don't really care so long as they're sufficiently entertained.

PU: (Deflated) I know.

OR: And Pete, I hate to mention it, but since you brought it up—the players?

PU: Yeah, what about them?

OR: Well, it seems that ever since you've announced your policies concerning drug use, the response from the players has been divided into two camps. One group has signed a petition that states, "Since the Commissioner of Baseball is so interested in the properties of our urine, we the undersigned have agreed to deposit said urine, fresh from the source, on the Commissioner's front lawn daily whenever our teams' travel schedules permit."

PU: Oh no, I've spent months building that lawn up. What do the other players say?

OR: The other players have signed a pact proclaiming that if any action is taken against them for alleged drug abuse they are not only going to name you as their supplier, but offer irrefutable, hard evidence that you got them hooked on drugs by surreptitiously doping their chewing tobacco, snuff, bubblegum and Gatorade. They'll claim that they danced, but that you called the tune.

PU: (Broken, defeated) Oh god...god, what am I going to do? What am I going to say?

OR: Well, Pete, if anybody asks you, go right ahead and express your opinion. Tell everyone you are against drug abuse, but as far as implementing any harsh programs or effective policies, forget it. You'd be bucking an entire industry. So just smile for the reporters, cash your checks, and keep your mouth shut. Easiest dollar you ever made.

PU: (Petulantly) But I wanted to do some good for baseball and the American way of life!

OR: (As to a child) Now Pete, you know that traditionally the Commissioner's job is just a figurehead position and that all the really important decisions are made by the owners. But cheer up! A lot of people have told me that they believe you are doing a good job, and that's the most important thing. They also say—and I go along with this line of thinking 100%—that you're the best-looking Commissioner of Baseball we've ever had.

PU: (Sniff) Do you really think so?

OR: Hey babe, would I lie to you? Why, the secretaries in my office alone...(fade out)

Announcer: (Baseball logo superimposed over fading scene)

BASEBALL FEVER - CATCH IT! IT'S ADDICTIVE!

(And now back to today's game. Vin and Joe are your play-by-play announcers.)

VIN: And here he comes, ol' #17, and what a nice hand he's getting from these fans, who, like his team, are glad to have him back in a major league uniform taking his cuts at the plate. My question is, how much does he have left? What can he contribute to this team's bid for the pennant?

JOE: Well, Vin, as you know, #17 just hit .338 in the cocaine rehabilitation league, and there's as fine a level of play there as there is any place in the world today. So, he should be ready to play at the top of his game and really help this ballclub.

VIN: Oh, ha-ha-ha. Look at that, he's giving the finger to our home audience and mouthing obscenities into the camera.

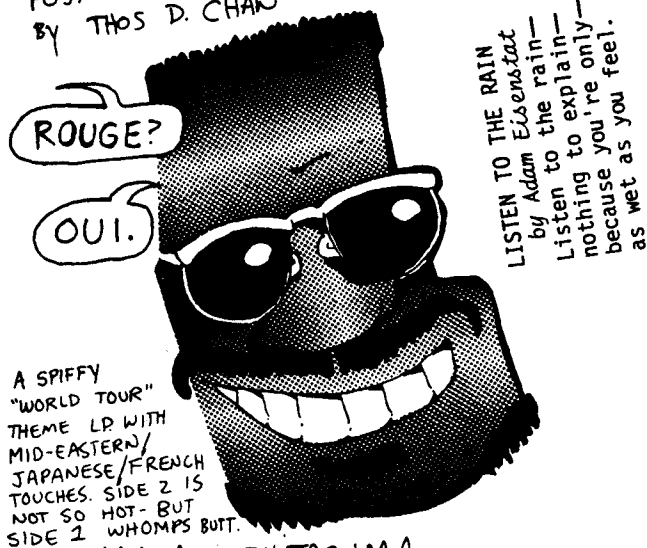
JOE: What a colorful performer! Really, ol' #17 is as nice a guy as you'd ever want to meet. This seemingly irrational behavior is all part of a ritual he employs in order to psych himself up for the game and get that competitive edge.

VIN: Call it rude, abusive, or just plain disgusting, but it works for him. The day he punched out those small children in the parking lot, he went 3-for-4 at the plate and made a spectacular diving catch in the outfield.

JOE: Right, Vin, a lot of people never fully understood—

VIN: Line drive up the middle, base hit! Well, it looks as if... (Fade out. The game goes on, but do we really want to watch that closely?)

POST JAZZ VIZUAL REVIEW BY THOS D. CHAN



A SPIFFY
"WORLD TOUR"
THEME LP WITH
MID-EASTERN/
JAPANESE/FRENCH
TOUCHES. SIDE 2 IS
NOT SO HOT-BUT
SIDE 1 WHOMPS BUTT.

JAMAALADEENTACUMA
"MUSIC WORLD" LP.
(HEY, ELAYNE, IT'S GOT A PHIL
COLLINS SONG ON IT. JAZZ PURISTS
HATE THAT KIND OF CROSSOVER...)

Wax Ink by Rory Houchens

CROWDED HOUSE—Crowded House (Capitol)—Many words of praise have been written/spoken about this New Zealand/Australian group, and as far as I can tell, they're all true. Led by former Split Enz singer/songwriter/guitarist Neil Finn, this refreshingly talented trio takes the innocent optimism of the 60's, the sobering knowledge of the 70's, and the warped wit of the 80's, and makes a distinct sound that refuses to wear thin. The push-pull keyboard promenade of "World Where You Live" and the skiffing guitars of "Now We're Getting Somewhere" (which could've been lifted from the Beatles' HELP) do their best to boost your spirits, while the pop perfect single "Don't Dream It's Over," with its soldier of freedom lyrics, is nothing short of an anthem for these bleak times. "Something So Strong," another paean to true love, is bolstered by a great chorus and producer Mitchell Froom's churning organ, and "Mean To Me," swinging and swaying all over with gutsy guitars and meaty horns, is a pretty wild ride, man. And don't miss the spine-tingling murk of "Hole In The River." If you buy only one record this year, make it CROWDED HOUSE!

"Kaw-Liga"/"Stars & Stripes Forever"—The Residents (Ralph Recs., 109 Minna #391, San Francisco, CA 94105)—This little gem is just a sampling from the STARS & HANK FOREVER album which is the second volume of the Residents' tasty American Composers Series. Imagine, if you will, the ultra-cool, shuffling beat from Mikey Jackson's "Billie Jean," the wheezy mouth organ from the "Deputy Dawg Theme," and some geographically-correct vibes, and you've got the Residents' version of Hank Williams' classic tale of the lonesome wooden Indian. Turn to the 'B' side, and you'll find John Phillip Sousa's famous march stretched all out of proportion and orbiting somewhere in Never Never Land.

WALKABOUT—The Fixx (MCA)—Previous Fixx records have been alright—some good songs, a few bad ones, a little heavy on the "funque blanc," and leaning ever so slightly toward the "fashionable" new save, and noteful execution that went from nimble to numbing—but with WALKABOUT you get not only consistently strong material but a band that plays like its musical life depended upon it. The gangling echo of "Built For The Future" and the seasick "Treasure It" tell of neglected objects (people?) that will become priceless after some kind of massive change (a world revolution?). "Chase The Fire," which alternates between a polyethylene funk and Bill Nelson

mysticism, speaks of a poor soul who dislikes being dominated by another, but finds he really doesn't know what to do once he's on his own. On the raucous "Sense The Adventure," the listener is advised to lose inhibitions and "let the pagan out," while on "One Look Up," the boys would have us get rid of our bodies completely and do a little spirit travelling. But my favorite song on this pretty groovy disc is "Camphor," whose grey chill evokes the mind trips of mid-period Pink Floyd and the exquisite ethereality of Kate Bush while the singer unashamedly admits that he is, yes, high on life.

LIVE IN TOKYO—Public Image Ltd. (Elektra)—Recorded in the summer of 1983 and previously released in England, this bitter PIL has now found its way to the colonies. Rotten Johnny Lydon has never sounded snottier as he bad-mouths religion ("Religion"), caterwauls about dating ("Flowers of Romance"), textures his succotash with a big fork ("Low Life," "Bad Life"), menaces a sweetcake ("Annalisa"), hyperactively decorates woodwork ("Banging The Door"), and dips his mired head into damp Poe-isms ("Under The House").

NOTHING CAN GO WROGN!—B.G.K. (Alternative Tentacles Recs., P.O. Box 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101)—Tedi-ous, boring, puerile, unpleasant, painful, plodding, suspect punk, junk, hardcore, no core. From Holland with venomous love.

THE WAY IT IS—Bruce Hornsby & The Range (RCA)—Bruce Hornsby has what every ambitious musician wants—critical acclaim, commercial success and a funny haircut. On the magnificent THE WAY IT IS, Bruce and the boys have created a decidedly American sound (with universal appeal) that draws inspiration from folk, country, light jazz and gospel, and is reminiscent of such (formerly) great artists as the Band, the Byrds, Van Morrison, Jackson Browne and Procol Harum's Gary Brooker. "The Way It Is" is highlighted by jazzy piano runs and is as close to a protest song as we get nowadays, and "Down The Road Tonight" pulls into town dusty, with three good wheels, a meat-and-potatoes chorus, and Huey Lewis' Dodge City harmonica. "The Wild Frontier" slyly kicks up an ornery hoedown, while "Mandolin Rain" throws beaten-up, blue showers everywhere, and the stately "The River Runs Low" trickles sadness all alone.

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BUT YOU CAN'T HIDE!!!

NEW YORK MARATHON
- START -



Marketing The Right To Vote *by Ernie Hemingway*

You're probably as tired as I am of the grim game of charades we call the news. It's been a long time since anyone has even bothered to defend President Reagan's frail grasp on reality by claiming he's "the nicest guy you'd ever want to meet." Newsmen no longer point out deliberate "misspeakings" by administration spokesmen, and there seems to be a sense of fatalism throughout the land.

What we have witnessed since Walter Mondale's stunning landslide defeat against the least competent leader in the history of the Free World is the ultimate slaughter of substance by style, the murder of reason by reflex, the banishment of morality to Las Vegas, the enthronement of cosmetic celebrity, and the total capitulation of rational courage in the face of lethal intent.

Just one example from the recent past will suffice to support my contention that what happened at Jonestown pales in comparison to what Americans have done to their cerebral cortex on an hourly basis during the past six and one half years.

On November 25, 1986, President Ronald Reagan signed a proclamation making November 24th "A Day of National Fasting for Hunger Awareness." In attendance at this ludicrous affair were Mrs. Reagan—resplendent in a \$5,000 French gown, \$700 German heels, and clutching a zircon-encrusted Swiss handbag fashioned from the hide of the last white rhinoceros from Kenya—several members of Congress, 120 journalists, and a 60-pound turkey from Minnesota named Hoover.

Hoover was a gift from Calvin Coolidge, a professor of Agricultural Architecture at the University of Minnesota, who presented the huge grain-fed bird on behalf of the United Turkey Growers of America.

The bird did not, of course, end up gracing a table in the White House dining room, nor was it donated to a charitable organization to provide any of the estimated 11 million American homeless or the equal number of unemployed with a Thanksgiving meal.

Instead the bird was given to a Virginia "petting farm," where "all Americans can go and visit Hoover whenever they like," the President said, "and be proud of the kinds of success we have had in this country to provide the world with the biggest and best turkeys at the lowest prices."

(AUTHOR'S NOTE: Admission to the Upper Virginia Wildlife Safari and Petting Park is \$7.50 per person, and it is only open Monday thru Friday between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m.)

During a brief question and answer period which followed the President's 30-minute speech extolling the promised development of an eighty-pound turkey that will consist solely of a large boneless breast, a reporter asked Mr. Reagan why he hadn't been able to sign the National Fast proclamation prior to the day it was supposed to take place.

The President quickly struck the pose he uses to indicate he

has not heard a question shouted from the reporters' gallery while boarding a helicopter to catch Air Force One for a vacation at Rancho Mirage. It seems the joke was lost on most in attendance, and the President, seeing a missed photo opportunity, smiled briefly as his wife, Nancy, before facing the popping flashbulbs and saying, quite soberly, "We're doing everything we can."

"But sir," the reporter pressed, "the resolution passed both houses of the Congress nearly six weeks ago."

"Well, yes," the President acknowledged, "but I think you have your facts wrong. I know there may be some people in the world today, and even some people in the United States, who feel compelled to be hungry by fasting or other means, but I'm convinced there are many more people hungering for peace and arms reduction."

At this point, Hoover let loose with a prolonged outburst of gobbles, and the President took this opportunity to pose, while saying, "Well, yes, Hoover. I also think the Strategic Defense Initiative offers this country its best hope for lasting peace and prosperity. Thank you for your gamely support." The applause in response to Reagan's quick wit went on for eight minutes.

During the same question and answer period, Mrs. Reagan announced that her program aimed at eliminating substance abuse among the nation's youth had been responsible for saving "millions of lives that would otherwise have been lost or damaged" and that she could now turn herself to another major project—namely, increased participation in local, state, and national elections.

The President pointed out that the major critics of his administration are chronic complainers. "These people, these cynics and moaners," he said, "are undermining the foundation of democracy by refusing to participate in the electoral process." The First Lady then cited statistics showing that most top elected officials in the federal government had been voted into office by fewer than 10% of the voting age public when unregistered voters were taken into consideration.

"This is a shock and an outrage," she said, noting that a blue-ribbon panel she had set up to investigate ways to make elections more palatable and appealing would soon suggest a day of door-to-door voter registration coupled with making the first Tuesday in November a national holiday for registered voters and their children.

"Allowing children the day off," Mrs. Reagan stressed, "would surely prove a great bonus to education in this country, and the National Football League has already expressed interest in scheduling an annual meeting between the Redskins and the Cowboys for an added incentive."

Perhaps the two most controversial suggestions Mrs. Reagan said the Voting Rights Panel would make involved Presidential Debates and televoting. The Democratic and Republican parties, Mrs. Reagan claimed, had already agreed in principle to conduct a series of debates shortly after each election to give voters a clear idea of what policies and platforms they had just voted for. These debates would replace those historically sponsored by the League of Women Voters and previously conducted prior to Election Day.

"There is just too much to do before an election to get bogged down in political rhetoric," Mrs. Reagan noted, "and having the two major parties hold the debates themselves would assure that the shows—and that's all they are, after all: political videos for political junkies—aren't as political as they've gotten under the League." The First Lady went on to say that although she, personally, was very much concerned and aware of major policy questions in domestic and foreign affairs, she felt that most members in the League of Women Voters probably attended the debates to show off their latest suits.

The most controversial topic, however, was the proposed use of televoting in national elections. The Reagans both believe the use of televoting, similar to the informal polling systems employed by nightly newscasters, would result in a dramatic increase in voter participation.

Mr. Reagan cited statistics showing that voter turnout in Topeka, Kansas, last spring in response to a budget request for a traffic light resulted in nearly 8 times the turnout for the most recent Congressional elections. "In fact," Mr. Reagan smiled proudly, "even little children called in and cast their votes. That's so much better than taking drugs, isn't it?"

Since that chilly November day on the White House lawn, the Voting Rights Panel has pretty much confirmed what the Reagans told us while Hoover stood by gobbling. And we here at INSIDE JOKE are interested in how you feel about the prospect of voting by telephone.

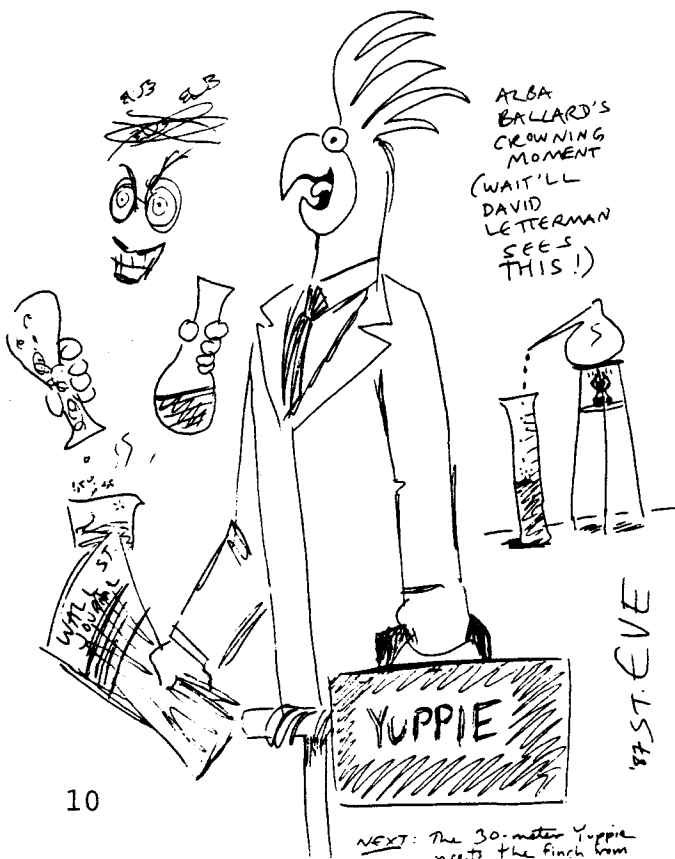
Call 1-212-555-1212 if you think, "Yes—voting by phone is a civically responsible idea, my idea of a good time, and one whose time has come."

If your answer is "No—I think this has got to be the dumbest idea the Reagans have come up with yet, but I won't be against it becoming law," dial 1-803-555-1212.

We'll publish the results in a future issue of IJ. Just drop us a card telling us which number you called.

Ernie Hemingway, former Acting Assistant Deputy Undersecretary for Agricultural Tubers and Starchy Foodstuffs, recently published his first novel — *The Keelers* (Wright, Waters, and Wharton, Pocattello, 1985.)

This column was conceived and executed at The Portland Pataphysical Outpatient Clinic, Lounge, and Laundromat, Dr. E. V. Ignacio Ligi, Director. The Clinic is dedicated to the discovery and dissemination of imaginary solutions to imaginary problems and is in no way affiliated with the National Endowment for the Arts or any other government agency.



A VISIT TO GRANDMA'S

Part Three by Prudence Gaelor

Since the movie theater was only two blocks away, Edna and Prudence walked. Prudence's little hi-tops had a hard time keeping up with Edna's larger ones, but unfortunately for her, Edna wasn't walking fast enough for her to lag too far behind. Edna incessantly babbled the entire two blocks, but Prudence wasn't listening. All she could think about was Pink Bunny and how uncomfortable were the black socks that she had stolen from Daddy's drawer and were now riding down into her shoes.

As they neared the marquee Prudence began to stagger. When it was Edna's turn to buy tickets Prudence rolled her eyes back as far as she could, slackened her jaw and drooled. This became quite painful as it became apparent that the movie theater had no policy against the admittance of zombies and Edna was paying in change consisting mostly of nickels and pennies.

Prudence spotted Katie Garret as soon as she walked in the door. Prudence didn't like Katie very much, mostly because Katie ran around with a group of girls Prudence hated, and because she always wore bright red bows in her short, curly blonde hair. From behind she reminded Prudence of a pampered poodle. Fortunately for Prudence, Katie's attention was focused greedily on the vast array of candies under the counter of the concession stand. Prudence realized that the only sure way to keep from being seen with Edna, since the zombie imitation wasn't working, was for the two of them to separate. Watching Katie she came up with an idea.

"May I have some popcorn, please?" Prudence asked sweetly, tugging on Edna's sleeve.

"Sure! Would you like something to drink too?" Edna gushed, delighted by the prospect of buying something for her granddaughter.

"Yeah. A soda. A large one, please," answered Prudence. "I'll go find our seats." Prudence figured that it would take a while for Edna to get the popcorn, what with the line and the fact that she was carrying small change. Prudence hoped that the theater lights would dim and the previews start before Edna brought the popcorn. "May I have some Raisinettes and some Jujufruits too?"

"Are you sure you can eat all that and still have room for dinner?"

"Oh yeah!" Prudence swore. "I'm sure. There are days that I get so hungry that I can eat all that and still have room for a small tractor."

"A tractor."

"A small tractor."

"Well, okay," Edna said, starting towards the concession stand.

Prudence darted into the theater to find seats. When she got inside she found herself faced with the dilemma of where to sit. If they were to sit in the front, people would see them. But it would be just as useless to try in the back, as people coming in and out would see them as well. Prudence opted to sit in the back, because less people might see them and there might be a chance that they could sneak out in the end, unseen.

Prudence lucked out. Edna came in just as the lights grew dim. Prudence waved, hoping to catch Edna's attention. But she was too small, Edna's eyes passed right over her. She stood up, thinking she might be seen the next time Edna looked in her direction. Again, Edna's gaze passed over her. Prudence realized that if she didn't attract her grandmother's attention soon, Edna would call out her name and then everyone would know. She stood on her seat, wildly flailing her arms above her head. "I'm over here, Grandma!"

But it was inevitable. In a voice that seemed as loud as thunder, Edna boomed, "Prudence? Where are you, Prudence?"

For a brief second the world ended. Prudence, standing on her seat so that everyone could see her if they only turned to look, said in a small voice, "I'm over here, Grandma. I'm in the back."

She sat down. An old Silly Symphonies cartoon, Ske-



leton Dance, was on the screen, but Prudence wasn't interested. They were here to see Sleeping Beauty. Prudence had seen this many times on video, in fact it was her favorite Disney film, but she had never seen it in the theater. And now Prudence wished that they hadn't come. Prudence, numb, couldn't decide whether to relax and enjoy the movie now that everyone knew, or to wallow in self-pity and have a horrible time out of spite.

Edna sat down beside her. She sat the popcorn and the sodas on the floor, handed Prudence the Raisinettes and Jujufruits. She pulled off her mock leopard skin coat and set it on the seat beside her. Pulling Pink Bunny from her bag, Edna said cheerfully, "It's a good thing I brought him along. He can help us eat all this candy." (Concluded next issue; this time for sure!)

BACKWORDS LOGIC by Ace Backwords 0-15



SEVEN SIGNS THAT SUBVERSIVES ARE AT WORK AMONG US

by A.J. Wright

1. You are sitting in a dentist's office flipping the pages of a two-month-old issue of People magazine. Across from you a young woman with blond hair has fallen asleep. In one hand she is holding a baby's pacifier. The child is nowhere to be seen. Suddenly you realize that the theme from The Avengers television program is playing on the Muzak.

2. On one of the first cold days of autumn you are digging a hole in your back yard. You want to move a tiny oak from the rear of the lot closer to the house. The ground is hard, red clay that breaks up slowly under the combined work of pick and shovel. Inside the house your wife has fallen asleep watching Bogart and Bacall in The Big Sleep.

3. You are in the baby's room changing his diapers. Above you a plastic Street Hawk kite hangs from the ceiling and casts a giant spider of a shadow. Your son tugs at his Denver Broncos t-shirt. He has never been to Colorado. A Masters of the Universe white plastic ball lies in his crib. On the top of his chest of drawers are his Wonder Woman sunglasses, his Yogi Bear hand puppet and a cracked Smurfs cup. On the floor are all the pieces but one of a Danger Mouse puzzle.

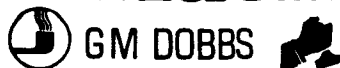
4. You and your lovely wife are attending the annual fund-raising dinner at the Ed Gein Memorial Museum Support Society. Your wife is wearing her stunning black dress, against which her long blond hair looks like gold spilled across the night, and her brand new mood ring. All of your friends and favorite neighbors are here, and the table talk and good fellowship will last until late in the evening. On the drive home the two of you are silent, listening to "Psycho Killer" on the pirate radio station.

5. You are late for an important meeting. Rain is pounding on the windshield of your car like tiny fists. Through the downpour you can make out a giant billboard advertising Melissa Jackson, TV-3's Wonder Weatherwoman. She is smiling down at you like a statue of an oblivious saint.

6. You and your sons are walking in the small park near your home. The sun is shining brightly, and the sky is so blue it seems as solid as stone. Soon you pass a bench and an elderly man dressed in worn, filthy clothing and battered tennis shoes. You do not look closely enough to tell if he is unconscious, dead or merely asleep. His knotted right hand clutches a copy of the latest issue of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy.

7. 6:30 a.m. and the family sits at the kitchen table eating breakfast and watching a morning television newscast. The anchorwoman reports that the Right Reverend Jim Bob Billy has announced his recent discoveries in the matter of subliminal advertising. For instance, the theme song of the Mister Ed show is—when played backwards—a message from the followers of Satan. This knowledge led the Reverend Jim Bob to further revelations: that, played backwards, the Leave It To Beaver theme is a portion of an address by Karl Marx delivered by Ouija board; that the Andy Griffith Show theme is, played backwards, actually a short speech by Adolph Hitler, who is alive and well in Del Rio, Texas; and that the Bill of Rights, read backwards, is in truth a JFK grocery list. The Reverend notes that he is currently deciphering the Father Knows Best and Secret Agent themes, as well as various other nefarious documents.

TALK SHOW HOST confidential



George knew that he was in trouble the moment he opened the first page of the trade journal. Another fashion/accessory trend had passed him by, and his own company would once again be playing catch-up ball with the retailers.

As he sipped his tepid coffee, he wondered how he could explain this latest mistake to his partners, the Barbaro Brothers. Harry and Mike were identical twins and the real money men behind Fab,

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Inc. Former juvenile offenders who both became cops, the Barbaro Brothers had retired from the force and had invested their money in George's company when they discovered that two of their kids were interested in fashion.

George was not interested in fashion, but he was a marketing major with nowhere to go, and fashion seemed to be a good thing for him. He could be near plenty of good-looking women, and he could get his clothes wholesale.

George knew that once the sale reports came back that he would be in trouble with the Barbaro Brothers once again. What made these confrontations worse was that George could never remember which one was Harry and which one was Mike.

George never had the guts to really tell them that their kids' designs never really sold very much and the company survived by George dumping out-of-date fashions in Third World countries.

George was single-handedly responsible for the Anni Hall look in Senegal and the Michael Jackson fake leather jacket phenomenon in Singapore. Around the world, Fab, Inc. meant American pop culture styles at affordable prices, several years late.

George never worried about what he did for a living. There was little sin in dumping Nehru jackets that were twenty years old in Pakistan. In fact, George took pride in being able to sell things to people that other salesmen wouldn't touch.

In front of George was an order from one of his clients in Syria. He wanted to know if George had any FRANKIE GOES TO HOLLYWOOD t-shirts. George knew where there was a warehouse of FRANKIE SAYS shirts but this kind of business was not going to save his ass with the Barbaro Brothers. It might save his company, but not his ass.

He had to make their kids' designs a hit. Rudy and Tom were not very talented. They did a few drawings that were basically rip-offs of styles they saw on MTV. Lots of surfing shorts and leather G-strings. Even George had a tough time trying to sell those overseas. Surfing shorts were popular in the Soviet Union, though, and the Japanese liked the leatherwear. George wanted them to have a state-side hit, though; a success that would satisfy their family and themselves.

George decided to feed them an idea. He knew nothing about design, but he did know the mostly unlikely crap sold as fashion today. If you didn't have an original idea, steal from the past or from "real" life. Discover a style that already exists and package it.

The big problem was trying to decide which non-style could become a style. George didn't know how to go about finding his style except to walk the streets of New York and try to find something that worked.

George walked along the streets of the city quietly evaluating and rejecting different styles. There was the hot dog guy style—the greasy nylon double-knit with the splashes of color caused by spilled mustard and catsup. George also noted the repressed upper class woman look—too much tweed, plaid and pleats. It reminded him of his Smith College girlfriend, and that was one person he didn't want to use as inspiration.

Nothing seemed to click until he reached a slightly rundown hotel. There was a stream of people going in and out of the place, and George was intrigued. So he went in, and a bolt of Zen lightning hit him broadside. He was so excited he ran all the way back to his office and called Rudy and Tom. He took them to the hotel, and they were as excited as he was. An undiscovered native fashion style that was all theirs!

The three worked very hard the next few months. They put together their line and staged their first real show. The buyers only turned out because George personally paid them to sit and watch their hour-long presentation.

George himself was the Master of Ceremonies.

"Ladies and gentlemen, Fab, Inc., the trendsetter for the world, introduces a fashion line that is right for both men and women, young and old. A line that is truly American. A line that is American made. A line that could only happen in America," George nervously said.

The first model strode onto the platform. He was 50 pounds overweight and was wearing broken eyeglasses. His doubleknit slacks were too tight and the color was too loud. His shirt was buttoned all the way to the top and he had a plastic pocket protector filled with pens. On his shirt were several buttons with the photo of Christopher Reeve as Superman.

"That's right, ladies and gentlemen, from the streets of America's heartland and from the American youth themselves comes The Fan Boy Look," yelled George over the applause.

Applause? George thought. They're applauding! They like The Fan Boy Look! And they liked it as feeble-minded Tom and Rudy were able to conceive. Mismatched socks with shoes that are held together with adhesive tape, Doctor Who scarves and hats, leotards two sizes too small, wide ties, string ties and lapel jewelry with small lights that blinked on and off.

George had a hit. His Fan Boy Look swept the nation. Other companies copied the style. George didn't care. He was there first with it. The other companies could sell their overstock to Zambia.

All George had to worry about was next year's look.

THE FRAT HOUSE EXPERIENCE by David Serlin

Time had come for me to burst the small curvaceous bubble that surrounds my outer mechanisms and soak in the reality minuetting outside my window. Time rapped on my skull and forced me to don casual garb and touch pavement. Time sent me out the door to face the frat house across the street.

The frat, a crumbling mound of weathered brick and wood hosed over with thick shiny layers of paint, is situated directly across from campus, as to facilitate the easy movement of inebriated students to and from their dorms. The actual building—a narrow five-story ancient structure with loads of staircases and bay windows and a mammoth backyard landscaped in hoops of rusty barbed wire—was probably quaint in its day, but right now it seemed more of an abscessed tooth resplendent in its agony. Imagine the pale, listless 19th century architect, rummaging through the papers and diagrams of his portfolio in the afterworld, beaming proudly at his various mortal accomplishments, finally peering through the heavy despondent clouds at his *piece de resistance*. Only now the sloping Gothic shapes and intricate grills have been replaced by a seeping array of stupified humanoids oozing out of every architectural orifice like springs standing erect from the cushions of a favorite chair.

They spilled out through the frat house entrance, onto the landing and down the steps, tumbling in an imaginary somersault contest onto the sidewalk of a hundred gaping-mouthed gawkers and mediocre girls not pretty enough to be stapled to the collective consciousness of the fraternity men. Iwaded through the thicket of posed arms and knees and buttocks to the inside, which was barren except for a dottering freshman with an alcoholic tolerance of approximately the liquid content of one of Thumbellina's bedroom slippers. A sign on the pinball machine read "BEER" with a long, badly drawn arrow heading in the direction of the backyard. I followed the corridor down the steps to the back, flirting with the disastrous notion that I might get swallowed up in this and need a crowbar to release my firmly established feet from the floor.

The backyard was brimming over with people, billows of exaggerations wafting up into the air to mix with the good cologne and the Afro-Sheen fumes and the soft, flightless words exchanged between apathetic drunken students who shifted the pelvic angle of their flowered surfer shorts with every passing allusion to their consumption of the previous night. I navigated the ne'er-do-wells and wallflowers from my path, past the borrowed stereo, further on to the handsome pale Northern kid massaging the keg lever like a lonely prepubescent given unrelenting access to Dad's video library. The beer wretched helplessly from the red plastic nozzle, pouring gallon after freaking gallon into the familiar plastic cups. The beer captain raised his eyebrows at me, uttering not a word but instead anticipating any acknowledgement from me, outside of a pleasant laugh or a horrific collegiate "Woo!" I nodded, completing the Mason-like circle of beleaguered tradition, rewarded only with a foamy cup of brewski.

The sky was pink and purple, and the sun was peeking through the clouds like a bellboy's eyeball in the keyhole of a honeymoon suite. The winos and street urchins were beginning to collect outside, cowering from a distance, edging closer to these antiseptic college kids who were no further up on the ladder than these soused ragamuffins but spared the connection if only because they have their whole lives ahead of them to evolve into decadence.

"Hey, get out of here!" the dark Mediterranean frat god poured like acid over the bemused expectations of a bright-eyed wino with a complexion like a Brillo pad. The little gnome had approached me, almost begging through monosyllables and garbled verbal diarrhea, for a sip of beer that had lain dormant in my cup for a few minutes.

"Go away, go home, leave the guy alone!" the frat Zeus echoed again. The tiny wino looked up with childlike brain damage, mumbling words that had lost their meaning to us clean clipped trimmed scrubbed shaven entities who hovered above him. The drunk grabbed my arm, rocking it with vigorous enthusiasm, laughing at a joke that hadn't been created, shaking in his filthy tweed coat and dripping with visual entropy. It was as if all that nature had created—his skin, his body, his aura, his mind—had been erased and washed over with a new layer, a completely synthetic and un-human layer. He let go of my arm and staggered down the street, a chemical marionette, into a world whose vast bleakness I probably could not fathom.

I stared up at the frat god, who was amiably cocking his head to the artificial delight of some cosmetic nightmare whose bobbing skull activated a precious carnal Morse code between them.

"Do those guys come around often?" I said to him as I glanced down at my arm, thinking I might find some alien residue or a boil from where the wino had touched me.

"Yeah, sort of. Whenever we party."

I gulped down the last of my beer, by this time nicely tainted with the swagger and myopic enchantment of a few fermented ones in my belly, and I crossed the street back to the dorm. Poised there at the unlit corner of the street, the frat seemed a self-consuming beast, like a vacuum cleaner manipulated by insecure yelps and young derelicts staining vacant walls yellow. The frat god had retired to his third floor Olympus, and the violent volcano of music had folded in on itself, finding a new mellowed monarch whose quaking hands would push and pull the tuning dial across the air-space until it struck his fancy or incurred the contentment of the couple who had made their own niche in a nicheless wall.

I decided that I probably wouldn't want to return to the frat houses; I saw them as a young comedian whose first few minutes glow with naivete and wacky eloquence and who surreptitiously finds himself boring holes in the audience's forehead midway through his shpiel. Time had come for me to breathe deeply, and crush the blazing candle wick between my fingers.



AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HUNG MUNG

In Zen sociology it is called piercing—or stealing or taking—someone's nostrils. A dominance-submission contest, in which one adept strives to "cut off the tongue" of his opponent: to dumbfound the individual in question. Whoever, in other words, wins the Mindfuck Game (so called by those of us in the trade).

Bodhidharma came from the West to bring the Buddha Mind imprint. This was strictly a neurological concept. Who had not experienced it could not understand it any better than an individual who had never done acid.

There were little "in jokes" about what it was like that seldom made much sense to outsiders, straights. Only people who cheerfully called themselves broken and old could understand. (Take care, Yuan Wu would say, not to stand by a tree waiting for a rabbit to hit it.)

These jokes could not be intellectual because they were about something that always only seemed "the way it is" to Zenheads. A pothead usually thinks George Carlin doing the pothead looking for the grass petition is a riot—because, yeah, it does screw up your short-term memory! Yes, we chuckle, that's the way it is. There is that. Every Yin with a dash of Yang and vice versa and every Nirvana with its Samsara Window: the sorrow in the Buddha at Nara's smile. It manifests itself in both war and peace, and that's fortunate, for though it needs peace we need it most in war.

So Chung Tzu knew the true way things are when he said the Tao includes it all, because the Tao is like the Church of Universal Life—it wouldn't be universal if it didn't let the booger hang out my nose when I spoke to that Rev. In Florida—with his bicycle. It was to include everything—not, however, by definition. And this is very important. Because then it would be meaningless talk—metaphysics that was actually just bad grammar.

Although elusive, the Tao—being inescapable—can be found.

We can tell immediately it is closer to the manure wagon than to the war horse, but only how close by looking at Hung Mung—who surrounds us everywhere, at least whenever our eyes open—Primal Chaos is just Mapless Reality.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK CONTEST

When the Future Buddha arrived all but one were enlightened. That friend of Primal Chaos and Great Knowledge was called _____ (you decide).

When Nathaniel Branden objects to the free association—first-thing-to-enter-mind—conversation of Zen, that says in your words only avoid picking and choosing and you can talk genuine dribble for the rest of your life that will astound the world. How is this any different than sentence-completion diagnostic therapy? Only that the patient never ever decides to go ahead and adjust to society afterwards. To humor them a little, of course. In Japan of old, the sumera sword seldom rivaled the Zen master's staff, already drawn and engaged in battle. Running out of room and laughing was the easiest way to deal.

THE BEST OF ALL POSSIBLE SUFI STORIES

Many people may not realize or recall that there is a magnificent Sufi tale in Voltaire's *Candide*. Here is John Butt's Penguin Classics translation of that enlightening story:

There lived in the neighborhood a famous dervish, who was reputed to be the greatest philosopher in Turkey. They went to consult him and chose Pangloss as their spokesman.

"Master," said he, "we have come to ask a favor. Will you kindly tell us why such a strange animal as man was ever made?"

"What has that got to do with you?" said the dervish. "Is it your business?"

"But surely, reverend father," said Candide, "there is a great deal of evil in the world."

"And what if there is?" said the dervish. "When His Highness sends a ship to Egypt, do you suppose he worries whether the ship's mice are comfortable or not?"

"What ought to be done, then?" said Pangloss.

"Keep your mouth shut!" said the dervish.

"I had been looking forward," said Pangloss, "to a little discussion with you about cause and effect, the best of all possible worlds, the origin of evil, the nature of the soul, and pre-established harmony."

At these words the dervish got up and slammed the door in their faces.

BUDDHAMIND JUSTICE

Monk: "Where does he go after death who knows what is what?"

Nansen: "He becomes an ox of the monastery supporter down the hill, to requite him for his help."

Three Firecracker Stories by Larry Oberc

I. We were driving down Harrisburg Road towards High Bridge, the highest railroad bridge in the state of Kentucky, when Bob, in between drinking his beer, steering the car, lighting firecrackers and throwing them out the window, told us about the box of M-80s on the floor of the back seat. "Now ya gotta figure that that there box got fifty loud motherfuckers in it," he said. "Three of those suckers equals one stick of dynamite. We're talkin' major noise here."

Joey suddenly drifted out of his nod and asked, "Where we goin' again?"

"High Bridge, man," said Bob. "Where ya been?"

"How many drunks fell off last weekend?" I asked. "I heard it was something like two or three."

"I think it was three," said Joey. "But I'm not sure."

People were always falling off High Bridge. A lot of them didn't realize until the last minute that trains still zipped across the bridge. Then they panicked and fell through the ties or got run over. But falling off of bridges was something we'd have to save for later because Bob, being either drunk or stupid, or maybe a little bit of each, lit up a string of firecrackers, there must have been a hundred of the damn things all tied together like dominoes, and tried to throw them out the window. The wind caught the sparking mess and tossed them into the back seat where they started dancing on the box of M80s.

M80s are used to create a shock wave in gopher holes. The tunnels save in and the gophers, they suffer major earlobe damage. Bob, knowing all about earlobe damage, threw the brakes of the car to the floor, jumped out while the car was still rolling, and left me and Joey to panic on our own. Joey grabbed the pipe off of the dash, left the seat up so I could follow him, leaped wide awake into the universe, with me following close behind, while we watched the car roll up the median, driving a miraculous straight line, until it stopped innocently as though it had been carefully placed where it landed.

We all stood there waiting for the explosion. All of those slow-motion special effects we had watched on movie screens across America were going to happen right in front of us. Cars slowed down to see what was going on. The firecrackers had stopped dancing and the folks passing by didn't know that all it would take would be a spark hopping in the wrong direction to light up the night. Joey was passing the pipe around, and some of the drivers that had stopped, figuring they could help out, took a few hits. We assured them that we had everything under control, that if the car didn't explode in the next few minutes we'd be on our way. The drivers usually left after we mentioned the possibility of an explosion. There were limits as to how helpful they could be.

A few bowls later we took a vote and decided it was safe. Joey figured that safety was in the mind of the beholder, and the way he was beholding the beer and pot he figured that any place, even High Bridge, was safer than passing a bowl around on the side of Harrisburg Road. We walked back to the car, saw burned spots all over the back seat, moved the box of M80s into the front seat where Bob would be the first one to get blown up if he did anything else stupid, and thanked the firecracker god for sparing our lives. A few minutes later we were on our way, preparing ourselves for the task ahead. "You think one box will be enough?" asked Bob, looking at the M80s. "After all, it's a pretty bit bridge."

II. We were sitting around my apartment drinking beer and trying to figure out what we were going to do in the real world tonight. The bar scene had been dead for the last few weeks because cops lined the parking lots at closing time and busted everyone as they got in their cars. There were no parties to speak of and with the holidays and school being out and all most of the girls had gone home. It looked like we'd have to amuse ourselves for a change.

I had to hit the bathroom to perform a natural function and while I was aiming for the commode I suddenly remembered the bag of firecrackers my sister had picked up for me in Tennessee. When I walked back into the living room everyone was sitting there bored and silent and not even listening to the music anymore. They watched as I pulled the bag out of the dresser. I grabbed a pack of matches off of the table and walked into the bathroom. Nobody bothered to follow. I opened the bag, selected a short string of twenty firecrackers, lit a match, then the fuse, tossed the mess into the bathtub, and waited.

When the firecrackers started climbing the walls, trying to escape while exploding and raising firecracker hell, everyone ran into the bathroom to see what was going on. Everybody suddenly forgot they were bored and started laughing. Nobody in their right mind would actually blow up firecrackers in their bathroom. We started dividing the firecrackers up and everyone took turns tossing them into the bathtub. Then there was a loud knock on the door. Everyone froze up. We all looked at each other, expecting the worse, and I walked out of the bathroom to see who it was.

It was Benny, the speed freak who lived in the attic. "What the fuck are you doing?" he yelled, looking at me like I had gone crazy.

"Blowing up firecrackers in the bathtub," I said. "You want to join us?"

"You sure it's just firecrackers?" he asked, looking around the living room for weapons.

IF THE OTHER DOMESTIC AND WILD ANIMALS OF THE WORLD COULD BE SAVED BY PUSHING THE BUTTON ON THE LEFT WHICH WOULD PUT ME IN A HELL FOR ETERNITY OR PUSHING THE BUTTON ON THE RIGHT WHICH WOULD SPARE ME BUT PUT EVERYONE ELSE IN HELL I MIGHT HAVE TO GIVE IT SOME THOUGHT. WHAT'S ME WITOUT YOU ? To keep this heaven and hell on earth functioning in our herenow and hereafters as in our herebefores

send S.A.S.E. to:

HERENOW RERUNS

Box 2243 — YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO, 44504

"Yeah, man," I said. "What'd you think it was? Guns going off or something?"

"I didn't know," said Benny, settling down a bit.

"If you want to join us," I said, "you're welcome."

"No way, man," said Benny. "But I'm going to tell you right now if a bullet hole flies through my floor I'm going to call the cops."

"Don't blame you," I said, closing the door.

I walked back into the bathroom, grabbed the bag of firecrackers out of Joey's hand, and pulled out a new string while looking around the room to see who had the matches.

III. It was getting late and it was the Fourth of July. A few of the late night drunks, wandering home from bars or parties or getting their second wind, continued to blow off firecrackers as they zig-zagged their way down the street. Bob and me were sitting in his apartment finishing what was left of the beer. Bob's apartment was in one of those old houses that had been broken up into one- and two-room studio efficiencies over the years. If you looked out the front window of the apartment you could see the street. If you looked twelve feet down you saw the top of the porch. Joey lived on the floor below and he only had to look two feet down to see the top of the porch from his front window.

Well, there were firecrackers in our possession that had survived the High Bridge ordeal, the screaming bathtub boredom and Benny's paranoia, and these survivors, having had their chance to go to firecracker heaven, had to go. This was the official get-rid-of-your-firecrackers day and there were two hundred of the damn things left that just had to be destroyed before the sun came up. Joey had passed out hours ago and was probably snoring twelve feet below us. Bob got a beer out of the fridge, looked at me, at the firecrackers, and asked, "What are we gonna do with those damn things?"

"Is there still anything happening on the street?" I asked.

We looked outside. Down the road the cops were busting the drunks as they staggered along. Here and there you'd hear an explosion, see a flash, then blue lights would appear magically to shove shadows against the car. The cops were floating everywhere waiting to clear the streets of firecracker scum. I was inspired by the sight and suggested to Bob, "Let's toss the rest of the firecrackers on top of the porch. That way, when the fuckers blow up, Joey will turn his lights on to see what's happening, look out his window, which the cops will see, and all hell will break loose as everyone goes crazy!"

"You sure that's a good idea?" asked Bob. "After all, if Joey gets in trouble he's gonna blame it all on my ass. He never blames nothin' on you."

"Hey," I said, "take it easy. So what if Joey gets pissed off? You ought to be used to this shit by now. These are old games, only updated. Besides, think about the look on Joey's face. Just for that it'll be worth it."

We sat looking out the window. The lights were out, we had spare beers lined up, and the drunks were just asking for it as they staggered in all directions. Then that old familiar flash of blue lights snuck up on a drunk as he was tying his shoelace and he fell over looking like someone had kicked him by surprise. This was it, that final firecracker finale. Bob lit the suckers and dropped them down below. The firecrackers started dancing and screaming at the same time. The cops let their suspect fall to the ground as they ran towards the house. Things were happening right on schedule.

Joey had his shit together a little more than we expected. Instead of turning the lights on in his apartment he looked out the window instead. He saw firecrackers cheerleading the cops to glory and knew better than to stick around. He ran up the steps and started kicking, not knocking, kicking on Bob's door. We were laughing so hard it took a few seconds for Bob to unlock the door, but Joey wasn't amused.

"What the hell do you think you're doing?" he asked.

Bob was still laughing. "Keep it down, man," he said. "You're gonna give it away."

The doorbell to the house suddenly went off, screaming like a bird run over by a Mack truck: squit! squit! Nobody bothered to answer it. Bob looked out the window. The cops rang the doorbell again. They looked at the windows of the building, up up up. No lights, no nothing. Then the drunk who had failed to tie his shoelace walked by. The cops, not knowing what else to do, ran across the street to get him before he got away. Joey, he was passed out again, and Bob and me decided, between laughing our asses off and checking the fridge, to buy another case for tomorrow. It was going to be a long day and the odds were we'd be bailing a lot of our friends out of jail.

One Wish, Not Three by Carol E. Magary

The genie had his hands on his hips and was tapping a pointy, gem-sprinkled shoe. Instead of the harem pants and vest I usually imagined would be on a genie, he wore a bright yellow aerobics outfit, covered with gold tassels.

"Well, sweetheart, what'll it be?" he asked me, as if I were deciding on a 99¢ breakfast special rather than a wish that could irrevocably alter the structure of the cosmos. I tried to stall.

"Don't I get three wishes? I could swear that I'm entitled to three wishes, not just one."

The genie pursed his thin blue lips, raised a carefully-plucked eyebrow, and gave me a 2000-year-old stare. I decided then that one wish was better than none.

"I need more time," I said, trying not to whine. "I mean, one minute I'm cleaning out an old mascara tube and the next minute you pop out of it in a puff of pink smoke like a bad 'I Dream of Jeannie' special effect."

"Mauve."

"What?"

"Not pink," said the genie, wrinkling up his nose, "it's mauve smoke. I designed it myself. And please, for Hajiin's sake, do not mention that horrendous TV program again. It's been very bad for genie public image. As if we were all squealing little tarts, simply falling over to please our masters. Really."

"Okay, I've made up my mind," I said, ignoring his remarks. "I wish for world peace."

The genie rolled his eyes. "World peace, world peace," he mimicked. "Oh, that's so original. Every mortal I get makes the same wimpy, Nominate-me-for-the-Nobel-Martyr-Prize wish. No can do, ducky."

"Why not?" I asked indignantly, watching his crescent moon earrings swing in tiny orbits as he fervently shook his head.

"If you want world peace," said the genie as if reciting, "I would have to kill off everyone on the entire planet. You humans will never be peaceful."

That thought completely depressed me. I was beginning to want to wish for something totally hedonistic and selfish—something involving Mel Gibson and a tub of banana pudding. I had a feeling the genie would have wanted the same thing.

"What do you mean, 'you humans'? Aren't you just a magic person?" I was hoping that drawing him into a conversation would give me more time to think.

"Oh, no," he answered. "I'm a freelancing spirit. A make-up bottle here, a Vaseline jar there—I jump out, call on the powers of the universe to give some poor shmuck his sordid fantasy, and then move on. Believe me, honey, the spiritual world is a D-R-A-G, drag."

I nodded sympathetically.

"No sex, no booze, no all-body massages. What do I get instead? The Inner Workings of Truth and Reality. Big deal." The genie rubbed his head sadly.

"I always thought that being a spirit was what everyone wanted. Not to be limited by a body that can get sick and die," I said, feeling as if I had made a good point.

"LIMITED?" the genie nearly screamed. "You don't know what you've got. I'll never be able to walk through a park on a rainy afternoon and feel the grass squish beneath my bare feet. I can never lie on a raft in a swimming pool while someone sings 'Love Is A Many Splendored Thing' to me and brings me lemonade. I can never know what it is to really feel, and see and smell and taste all the great earthly pleasures that you take for granted." The genie bowed his head into his delicate hands and sighed heavily.

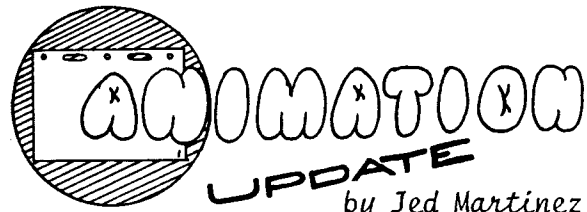
I suddenly felt very proud to be human, a peculiar feeling since I had never even speculated being anything else but human. "You're right," I told the genie.

"There are a lot of wonderful things in my life that I don't appreciate."

"I'd like to experience some wonderful things, too," said the genie wistfully.

"There, there," I said, patting him on the shoulder. "If it were up to me, I wish you could too."

Suddenly the genie jumped up, and before I could re-



by Jed Martinez

Continuing (from the last issue) our look at specialty shops and galleries that sell animation artwork, here are three more you should check out:

CIRCLE GALLERY OF ANIMATION ART, Seaport Village, 207 Front Street, New York, NY 10038. Located seconds away from the South St. Seaport, this establishment of the Circle Gallery chain specializes in both animation and comic art. Opened last summer, this rather small boutique's walls are adorned with works from the Disney and Warner Bros. studios, as well as art from the pens of Al ("Lil Abner") Capp and Chester ("Dick Tracy") Gould. If you plan to stop by (to window-shop and/or possibly make a purchase), call (212) 732-5625 for store hours.

CARTOON CARNIVAL GALLERY, 408 Bickmore Drive, Wallingford, PA 19086. In suburban Philadelphia, they have been making their own kind of history for over ten years. Although their specialty is Disney artwork (both classic and current), they also boast of having the world's largest selection of cels, pencil drawings, etc. from many other major studios. If you doubt my word, give Stuart or Miriam a call at (215) 876-1292; or write for a copy of their latest illustrated catalog. It costs two dollars, and is a solid investment for any cartoon buff.

KORKIS & CAWLEY'S CARTOON & COMIC COMPANY, P.O. Box 1643, Burbank, CA 91507. This collaborated effort of Jim Korkis and John ("GET ANIMATED!") Cawley is worth a look-see. For starters, their list of merchandise is free! Secondly, they have a more unusual diversity of items for sale. For instance, they sell animated film posters, some magazines (I, myself, purchased the "HOLLYWOOD REPORTER"'s January 22 issue, featuring an "Animation Special Report"), books, calendars, toys and other knick-knacks. But hurry; this stuff goes fast!

MAGAZINE UPDATE: The April '87 issue of "MILLIMETER" features the second and concluding part of a sneak preview of Chuck Jones' autobiography "The Making of 'Duck Dodgers'", to be released in 1988. The first part of this article was in the February '87 ish... A recent issue of "STARLOG" featured many full-color illustrations from two recently released animated features; Walt Disney Productions' "The Aristocats" (the first cartoon sans Walt's assistance) and the unusual assortment of shorts that make up the "Animation Celebration". This ish is already a collector's item... A new publication, "WITTY WORLD", is out. The 'Summer '87' issue of this international cartoon magazine includes articles about comic art and animation. Its cover story is an interview with artist Stan ("Usagi Yojimbo") Sakai, and its main animation article deals with cartoons from Japan. A copy of "W W" costs \$6.50, or you can save money by subscribing; four issues of the quarterly for only \$24. To order, write to "WITTY WORLD", P.O. Box 1458, North Wales, PA 19454. Truly recommended for the avid fan...

ERRATA: In the last issue, one of the galleries was misspelled at the beginning as "T.S.'s Gallery", even though it was later presented in its correct form of "T.R.'s". Sorry for the typo-goof. Also, in that same review, I had described one of Chuck Jones' oil paintings as "Porky Pig as done by Matisse". It should've been "Porky Pig as done by Paul Klee". That makes quite a difference! I personally stand corrected.

In the next edition, I'll deal with the subject of a different type of animated feature; the anthology film (i.e. Will Vinton's "Festival of Claymation" and "The Puppetoon Movie"). Till then, please remove the gum from under your seat!

act, said "Done," and evaporated into the pink smoke from whence he came.

I suppose I could have been bitter about the whole nasty trick, but a few weeks later I tuned in to the Richard Simmons Show to find in the background a bouncing yellow figure with a big smile on his face, and I had to smile too.

PASSIVITY: HOW IT WAS INVENTED

by Deborah Benedict

excerpted from the book

STUMBLING BLOCKS TO MODERN HAPPINESS

Once Upon A Time, there was a fox named The Great Rambooni. Upon that same time, there was a bunny named Miss Marion Crane. Now this was a very long time ago, so you must, across the great divide, just grab your hat and take that ride. That is Aesopian for, "This is hard to believe, but it's true!"

In those days, foxes and bunnies belonged to the same tribe of fierce warrior animals. They did not eat each other, but they did compete for food and other good things in life.

One day, the Great Rambooni was thinking foxily to himself about how fabulous it was to be a fox, but wouldn't it be fabulouser to be even more? But, how could one hope to be even more? How could one actually gain more? Why, by getting it from everyone else, however you can! This was the biggest lightbulb that the Great Rambooni had ever had over his head and he was as excited as an epileptic. He buzzed, he generated convulsions of chaos. His companions grew alarmed. He explained himself eloquently, and instead of censure, he received satisfaction. Seems like all the other foxes had been thinking the same revolutionary thoughts, but feared to act. Such are the pathways of evolution entangled!

It was not the Great Rambooni's intention to get the other foxes all steamed up, but this is exactly what happened. As a consequence of his heroic ideas of reform for the fox community, he was much honoured and feted by his compatriots. He suddenly found himself turning down offers of matrimony and less structured exemplars of libidinous energy from the more prominent foxy ladies in his societal sphere. He was shocked to discover that they had invaded his home, and waited for him there, to dole out his favours as pleased him. Never in his life had he been so sought after and desired! Previously, the Great Rambooni had been a stage magician, and while he liked applause and was accustomed to it, all this blind adoration and lubricious pursuit gave him the wim wams. But he liked it, after all, and furthermore, he took it as a sign from the God of Foxes that not only was he indeed right in his desire for dominance, he was also blessed by Divinity and this blessing, he felt, gave him carte blanche. It was sheer destiny that the lady foxes wanted the same things the gentleman foxes wanted.

They decided to hunt and eat the rabbits.

The Great Rambooni went forth on a solo reconnaissance of the territory. Miss Marion Crane happened to be taking her afternoon leap when Rambooni espied her and commenced his chase.

"Just like Pan of old!" he gleefully cheered to himself.

Miss Marion Crane took one look at her pursuer. She knew Blue Devils from Hell when she seen 'em, and she ran away from him so fast it made the molecules in the air hiccup. Rambooni was undismayed. He wanted to make the situation as clear to the bunnies as he possibly could. He felt the easier it was to comprehend something, then the easier it was to expedite the plan. He was sly, but he was not overly subtle. Miss Marion Crane deciphered his intent swiftly, and dashed into the nearest warren. She was so out of breath, she'd have sworn her little bunny lungs would just explode like puffballs. As she calmed down, she realized she was not alone in the warren. Her apprehension evaporated into the sweet-scented mist of hope that comes upon all islands, no matter how remote. In the warren was another bunny, Miss Lily Rosemary. Marion burst into tears of relief, tears of rage and grief and told Lily Rosemary about her encounter. Miss Lily Rosemary put her paw upon Marion's shoulder and said softly, "Ain't it hard when you discover that he really wasn't where it's at, after he took from you everything he could steal?" Marion agreed it was

damn awful hard and what were they gonna do?

"Why, we're gonna fight back, of course!" Lily Rosemary replied, laughing like a looney.

"Fight them? You mean, have a war?" Miss Marion asked, staring in disbelief.

Lily Rosemary took on a pose of great dignity. "Yes, we will have a war," she said. "A really important war, a major war. It will echo forever down the mirrored corridors of time."

Miss Marion shook her head slowly. "But we can't hope to win!" she said.

"Of course we won't win, we haven't a chance of winning," Lily Rosemary said with a laughing shrug. "But that's a poor excuse for refusing to fight!"

And so they did have a war and the bunnies lost it.

A great many bunnies were eaten alive. Once the foxes got a taste of blood, well, they wanted more.

At first the bunnies fought bravely. They had their heroism, of that you may be sure. But the foxes had very sharp teeth and they were cunning and they were bigger. Soon, the bunnies grew weary of their struggle, and alarmed at their diminishing population. They scuttled back to their warrens and they hid, not really tharn, but frozen in a state of ennui and anxiety—a sort of crazed bitch sedated by thorazine.

And things settled down. The bunnies came to know that the only way to avoid being eaten alive was to stay hidden, stay passive—but they also knew that passivity was the way of being eaten alive.

Such was the paradox of their once simple bunny lives. And, as it has often been noted, those who are condemned and blessed to the life of the paradox become wiser than all others, although because of their retiring natures, this wisdom may go unnoticed, un-availed.

And so, lack of aggression is fuelled by lack of appreciation, and thus is the condition of passivity heightened.

The Great Rambooni became Master of All Foxes, and they organized themselves into hunting hierarchies. Bunnies replenished themselves fast. The future looked very good to the foxes.

And then, a strange thing happened. Into this land came giants! They took a liking to the bunny, too. They didn't eat bunnies alive, thank goodness; they killed and roasted them because they were civilized. But these giants hunted the foxes, too.

Time passed and things came to be as they are now. The giants, now known as humans, studied the ways of the foxes and bunnies, decided that these were natural ways and that they too should abide by them.

And thus they enforced the mistranslated code from nature, and so do we.

That is the story of how passivity was first used as a tool in dominance and war, on a large canvas, a spectacle too big and obvious to go unnoticed by the humans. And humans, then as now, were wonderfully adept at imitation. It is pleasing to say that that some humans actually loved the bunnies for being bunnies and did not want to eat them, but rather kept them in cages and fed them and called them pets.

To be a pet bunny was of dubious value.

While you were safe and well cared for, you knew that the other bunnies were living in their warrens, huddled together, sneaking out for food when it was deemed safe—and being eaten by foxes and humans when the supposed safety turned out to be another veil of Maya.

And it came to pass that the pet bunnies were looked upon with piteous contempt by the hard ramblin' bunnies. And it further came to pass that the pet bunnies regarded the free bunnies as hoodlums, scum and Not Our Kind.

And the humans imitate.

And the big wheel turn round and round and the carnival never closes.

Male Operator com-x

Jim Catagorini



Commercial McClue-In

by "Kid" Sieve

Gawd, I almost hate to admit that I even look at PARADE, the Sunday newsmagazine for fascists everywhere which is so cloyingly patriotic-hokey-heartstrings it sometimes reads like a print version of a Jerry Lewis telethon (which I almost hate to admit I do tune in on occasion throughout Labor Day), but the edition for May 24 speaks of the new 30- and 60-second spots for IBM featuring the better-known stars from M*A*S*H (save David Ogden-Stiers and Alan Alda). In this version of After-afterWash, Trapper (Wayne Rogers) and Potter (Henry Morgan) occupy the same time zone (although B.J. Hunnicutt—Mike Farrell—is absent as well). Rumor has it that Alda may be enticed to do some future ads, but this reporter tends toward skepticism on that count. I remember Alda pushing another computer company (Apple, I believe) long before computers were de rigueur in Yuppie households; moreover, I find it hard to imagine IBM suddenly becoming, pun intended, "PC" (politically correct) enough to entice liberals like Alda or Farrell to endorse its products and, implicitly, policies (making nuclear weapons, supporting the regime in South Africa, etc.). Time will tell, tho...

But that's not what I wanted to talk about. I want to talk about a book that's so excellent, so mind-opening, that I recommend you stop reading this column right after this paragraph, go buy it somewhere (it's even worth spending hardcover price!), read it and then come back to us. The book is INVENTING REALITY: THE POLITICS OF THE MASS MEDIA by Michael Parenti (c. 1986 St. Martin's Press), and it's the best Everything-You-Know-Is-Wrong book I've ever read. And I thought I was hip to the headgames played by those in power over the powerless! "The worst forms of tyranny," writes Parenti, "—or certainly the most successful ones—are not those we rail against but those that so insinuate themselves into the imagery of our consciousness and the fabric of our lives as not to be perceived as tyranny." He speaks of the history of anticommunism ("It serves a very real and rational purpose: It creates a climate of opinion and a political atmosphere that makes it easier to discredit and repress labor militancy and progressive and anticapitalist viewpoints at home and abroad."), accuracy ("In creating a climate of opinion, the facts of the matter may count for less than which side has access to the mass media."), "infotainment" ("By slighting content and dwelling on surface details, the media are able to neutralize the truth while giving an appearance of having thoroughly treated the subject.") and much, much more, to the extent that you start to wonder how he ever got the book published in the first place (remember, all major media are controlled, in effect, by under 50 mega-corporations). I can't say enough wonderful things about this book, and I think everyone in the country should read it and expand their brains a little. My only complaint, and it's small, is that Parenti gives little credit to non-mainstream small press-type media (like us). Maybe he's not familiar with grassroots print activism or something. Still, from where I sit, alternative and small presses are the only way to fight against the tremendous money- and power-backed infoglut perpetrated by the status quo establishment. Trust me, after reading this book you'll never be able to read newspapers or look at tv news the same way again.

The latest issue of Mother Jones begins a "MediaWatch" feature, and starts off with Mark Green's update to his co-authored RONALD REAGAN'S REIGN OF ERROR which is also must-reading. Mark, one may recall, ran unsuccessfully against right-wing asshole Al D'Amato for a Senate seat in New York last year (he was too progressive for Koch and his Dem machine to endorse, and the media never did give him a fair shake), and was heard to utter the funniest statement concerning the end of Gary Hart's 1988 presidential aspirations when Hart was caught presumably doing what JFK did while in office—"I'm sitting political shiva now." All you gentiles out there can inquire personally of me for a translation...

In the midst of sneaker and car companies disgustingly co-opting sixties tunes for their own evil ends (the same evil ends as any other manufacturer of superfluous items who wants to convince you, the Consumer, to buy more stuff you don't really need), Tom Petty filed a \$1 million lawsuit (like he needs the money) against B.F. Goodrich for playing a Petty ripoff song with a Petty ripoff artist singing it (in the same way some car company did Bette Midler and Michelob sometimes uses Phil Collins and sometimes a Collins clone singing a Collins clone song). J.P. Morgan sends us notice that the suit has been "amicably settled" out of court and that Goodrich has "awarded" Petty an undisclosed sum in

damages and withdraw the ads. It turns my stomach to see anybody who otherwise does hip things like touring with Bob Dylan knuckling under and coysing up to a corporation, but who knows, maybe they agreed to back his tour as part of the settlement...

On the anti-drug front, things are getting worse (as you'd expect), with a horrid commercial in which a white rat fed as much coke, in unlimited supply, as humans might get to see in one or two lifetimes slowly (or quikly, actually) dying in front of our eyes. I'm amazed the animal-rights folks haven't harped on this one, and even more astounded that this piece of nonsense is supposed to represent scientific truth. Don't write letters to the stations, though, or they might make you take a urine test, or turn you in or something. And, of course, we're finally starting to hear those much-touted anti-drug PSAs on the radio from such folk as Robin Williams and Grace Slick. Reminds me of a character Peter Bergman used to do who, as part of some sort of parole, came on the air to talk about "good drugs and bad drugs" and obviously didn't believe a word of what they wrote for him to say ("And there's times for using 'em, and times for re-fusin' 'em. Re-fusin' drugs...sheeit..."). Meanwhile, even otherwise-semicool papers like Newsday are bowing to anti-drug pressure by printing articles about how "symptoms following cocaine use were identical in first-time and chronic users. Also, the method of ingestion...made no difference to the problems experienced by the users," such as "cocaine use can cause seizures, strokes, paranoia and suicidal behavior...the effects could be potentially long-lasting." I don't even have the strength to point out the twisting inaccuracies inherent in the sort of study whose conclusions are foregone before the study even begins, and I'll just reiterate two things I've been asking folks to think about: 1) Trust your own experiences and those of your friends; nothing else is valid, since so much is propaganda; and 2) if the current administration really thinks drugs are so hellfire bad, why are they supporting drug networks when it's convenient for them to do so (to help the contras, for instance)? 'Twould seem more than double-standard, but then, you only hear the tip of the iceberg from the conservative media...

I haven't seen the "Roulette" PSA about AIDS yet, which the three network biggies have declined to run (we can shock people against drugs, they seem to think, but the sight of a loaded gun at a person's head violates our standards, except during prime-time television shows in sweeps weeks). Really, for a media so obsessed with equating sex and violence (as if they're one and the same!), I can't understand why they'd have a problem with it. I think if there were more violence (say, not fading to black before hearing the "BAM!") and less mention of sex (AIDS or the word gay) it would probably be more acceptable to usual network standards... and yo, how 'bout them condom ads that you still don't see outside of news reports about them? Oops, I said the "C" word...

Random thought: If George Wendt's such a "simple guy" (in every sense of the word, it seems to me), why does he keep going to all those polo matches, state dinners and high-priced auctions in the first place?

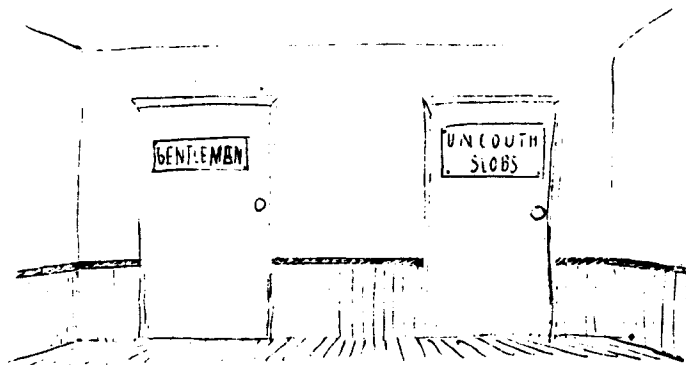
My favorite commercial series currently running is the one for British Airways ("Let me through, I'm a British Airways steward!") and my favorite line from the "steward" segment (there's also a "stewardess" one) is "I see the vino is thrown in..." You have to be there, as the saying goes...

Plus points for Polaroid's animated (stop-action, methinks) cameras, and Lucky for us (since it's bad for the corporation) that most viewers probably don't remember the name of the sponsor as much as the commercial (a peculiarity that goes back to "At's 'a some spioy meatball!" and beyond). Case in point: quick, who did the camera commercials featuring The Hand With Five Fingers?

I should know better than to check the trades (AdAge and AdWeek) after writing the bulk of this column. I feel it my duty to be a warning beacon anyway, so onward...AW reports: Officer McGruff the dog will be featured in anti-drug ads for kiddies ("It's everybody's job," so turn in your folks, children!); be on the lookout for more patriotic garbage as the stars come out to Keep America Beautiful (you know, to the children growing up on tv now, someday all these PSAs will be kitsch, so take heart); a writer calls TV bra ads "about as sexy as watching Rob & Laura Petrie climb into twin beds," but what did you expect?; it was announced that Baby Boomers Return to Spiritual Value" so look for even more of an upsurge in religious-oriented commercials; the new Hartford Insurance commercial will feature a Pixelized stag, in case you'd like to learn a new word (PIXELIZATION); Black & Decker has new ads for flashlights that look like they'll be amusing (one features Al "Fuck the FCC!" Lewis from The Munsters drooling over the secret of his long life, "lithium batteries"); new Honda ads ask "life's great" stupid questions and will probably annoy the hell out of you on first viewing; and as if Parenti weren't predictive enough, something pretty scary's on the horizon, boys & girls—PSAs on behalf of The Press itself ("If The Press Didn't Tell Us, Who Would?"). Can't you feel your flag waving already? Ain't this country just so gosh-darn great? If this column were not already so long, I'd start in, so you folks are spared...

AA reports: Honda fails to secure Richard Nixon as ad spokesman...look for "Quick Schtick" 15-seconders soon...David "Mr. Isuzu" Leisure is doing TV pilots, surprise surprise...KFC to introduce their version of White Castle-type sandwiches, called "Chicken Littles" (the sky is falling!)...AA doesn't have as much hard news as AW, seems to me, but they do have funny contests...

A silly-named research firm called Brain Reserve, for which the ubiquitous Faith Popcorn works, has conducted research finding the average audience is "almost 100% suspicious of advertising." Keep up the good work, folks; and remember, don't hate her because she's beautiful, because frankly, she's not.



A Sermon for Our Time

by Susan Packie

"Welcome to the Church of the Inside Joke, and thank you for giving me this pulpit from which I might address you, my faithful parishioners. Now, I don't want to start a panic or spread false rumors, but, well, I have to tell you something straight from the shoulder. Don't look under your bed or in your closet. Don't venture into the attic or cellar. Don't even leave your house. It's just not safe.

"Why? Do I have to draw you a map? THEY are coming. THEY are trying to change the neighborhood, destroy its solidarity, run it into the ground, make your home, your castle, worth a fraction of what you paid for it, lower educational quality and scare businesses away.

"You don't know who THEY are? Where have you been lately? THEY wear white sheets with eye slits, dirndls, black faces, and grass skirts. THEY aren't married, move when the spirit inspires, subsist on vegetables, and dye their hair green. THEY—oh my goodness, I see one out there listening to this sermon. To the battle stations, good people! When I say fire, let the creep have it!

"Whoops! Why are you all giving each other funny looks? THEY are waiting to nuke us to Hades, to destroy our minds with illicit substances, to marry us, our children, and exterminate our race. THEY are poised to inundate our fair land with quality, inexpensive merchandise, something no good American wants. THEY are slinking into our fruit orchards and our vegetable beds, stealing field work jobs from solid citizens. THEY are cleaning our septic tanks.

"Now you're getting the picture. I can tell because you're mobilizing your forces. You're moving away from me, whispering to one another, writing things down, even making a tape recording of my words. Mind you, I know what I'm talking about. Ever since we got here, THEY have been trying to destroy us, first with tobacco and turkey, later with pasta and pizza, then with fried chicken and watermelon, now with rice and raw fish. THEY aim for the stomach, where it really hurts.

"Okay, people...people? Why are you coming in my direction with that rope? I want you to get THEM! THEM! Next to you! Behind you! On your roof and hiding in your backyard! Not you, mister, not you, madam, not you, kid, whatever you are! Put down that—"

The lights went out and the organ music which had been playing in the background came to a halt. A green-haired unspecified stepped up to the pulpit and solemnly began to address the congregation of spiritually starving, intellectually imbibing Inside Jokers.

"Welcome to the Church..."

In the last pew, a man with a crewcut and wearing a jacket and tie readied a rope.

Unrequited Love

A single-scene play based on
an actual event

Eyewitnessed by Steven F. Scharff

*SCENE: Greenwich Village, NYC, Late spring, 1 am
Disheveled young man, visibly drunk, walks onto stage,
stands and looks up, as if looking into a window.*

Young man (shouting): Maria!

Long pause

Young man (shouting louder): MARIA!

Spotlight shines on young man, followed by sound effect of a window being opened.

Feminine voice from window (angrily shouting): WHAT?

Long pause

Young man: Y' still mad at me?

Long pause

Incandescent light bulb is thrown at man from "window," hits floor and breaks.

Long pause

Young man: I'll take that as a 'yes.'

Young man walks off stage, sound effect of window being closed, spotlight is turned off.

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What's The Point?

Part One by Kathy Stadalsky

It was a beautiful day—well, actually, it wasn't a beautiful day, but it wasn't raining or snowing or anything, drastic, so it wasn't too bad of a day.

The alarm clock went off at 6:00 (actually, it went off at 5:58, but it was set to go off at 6:00) and Humperdinck (the dog) promptly began howling.

Whitney (aged 28, 5'7", 130 pounds, formerly brunette, hazel eyes, majored in Computer Sciences before dropping out to "find herself") turned off the alarm, rolled over and went back to sleep. Humperdinck, more than a little pissed at this point, bit her.

At 6:10 (actually, because the clock said 6:12), the phone rang. Whitney intended to ignore it, but Humperdinck bit her again, so she answered it.

"Hey, good morning, gorgeous," said the voice at the other end of the wires. Whitney didn't know who it was, and she wasn't yet awake, so she didn't particularly care.

She hung up.

6:11 (6:13, if you want to go by the clock): the phone rang again. Humperdinck readied himself for another bite, but she shoved the blanket into his mouth and picked up the phone.

"Hey, uhh, Whitney, you there?"

"No." (Rather a foolish reply, since she'd already answered the phone—come to think of it, it was a rather foolish question for the same reason.)

"Well, uhh..." the voice trailed off, obviously confused by this unexpected turn of events. (He wasn't too terribly intelligent, Mr. James Alexander McAllister, III: 29, 5'9", 150, black hair, eye color unknown due to distortion produced by coke-bottle thick lenses, C.P.A.)

Whitney, correctly discerning the caller's identity now, debated hanging up. Then, realizing the futility of it (he'd keep calling back), she barked (well, okay, she didn't literally bark, but it was close enough to a bark, and anyhow, who's telling this story?) she barked "whaddya want?"

"Whitney? Is that you?" (Hope flared brightly.)

"Whaddya want, I said." (She wasn't too pleasant, first thing in the morning.)

"Uhh, Whitney, this is James."

"Yeah, so, whaddya want?" she demanded, yawning.

"Well, you see, I was calling to see if you could possibly, umm, give me a ride to work, because, you see, my car broke down, and, I, uhh, that is, you see, umm—" (he was quite fond of the phrase "you see", he thought it made him sound intelligent and refined) "—well, that is, I..."

"No," she interrupted. "I won't give you a ride. Take a cab or something." She hung up. Humperdinck finally divested himself of the blanket, and bit her again.

James Alexander McAllister (the THIRD, God Help Us All) stared at the phone in his hand. She'd hung up on him again, and he was still unsure of whether or not she was going to give him a ride to work or not—oh, sure, she'd said "no", but he was reading a book about the hidden meanings behind people's words, and he'd learned that...

* * *

Whitney kicked Humperdinck (because he'd bit her), and got out of bed. Ignoring his howling (because she'd kicked him), she went into the bathroom and turned on the shower. Nothing happened because she hadn't paid the water bill in six months, and she'd been behind in payments before then.

She shrugged, and went into the kitchen. She turned on the faucet to get a pot of coffee going, and nothing happened (might have had something to do with her not paying the water bill in six months when she was already behind in payments, whaddya think?).

Humperdinck came into the kitchen (he'd since stopped his infernal howling) and looked pointedly at his water bowl. Whitney turned on the faucet again to fill it for him, and nothing happened because she hadn't paid—well, you get the picture, even if Whitney didn't.

"Hey, that's life," she remarked as he stared in obvious disgust at the skim milk she was pouring into his bowl.

She walked around him to go get dressed. He bit her on the ass. She kicked him. He started howling. (Life was somewhat routine around here.)

Covering her ears with her hands to blot out Humperdinck's howling (because she kicked him), Whitney grabbed her purse and car keys and walked out the front door.

She started across the lawn, and a car going up the street honked at her.

"Aww-riiight!" the occupants (all young men) screamed out the window as they passed her. "Go fer it, ba-bee!"

"What the hell's your problem?" she shouted back, flipping the bird at them. Ignoring their laughter, she looked down to make sure she wasn't walking in mud and saw her fuzzy slippers.

"Oh, shit," she said, turning back towards her house quickly, covering her almost bare chest with her purse. Her other hand went to her rear, tugging at the hem of the tiny, see-through nightie as she ran for the front door.

Humperdinck glanced up from the skim milk as she came in the house, and I'd swear he grinned at her.

She must've thought so, too, because she threw a slipper at him before she ran up the stairs to get dressed.

GODSCAM by Larry Stolte

Teapot Dome, Watergate, Abseam, Contragate. All this was child's play. Move over, Woodward and Bernstein, you're history. Nothing compares to Godscam.

At first it seemed like just another fundamentalist preacher named after a type of sex hitting up the gullible *en masse* for millions of bucks. I mean, these guys are always seeing God in their soup or having a *tete-a-tete* with St. Peter right before they make ambulatory people walk, sighted people see, stupid people give, and smart people vomit. Reverend Oral Lee was no stranger to the speculation game; well-meaning dupes constantly forked over huge sums of money to ensure that the Reverend's threads got better and that he would always carry a significant *embonpoint* in carat weight.

So when he claimed to have seen a large, theistic apparition that tried to extort money from him, causing the National Perspirer to summarize, "Reverend Oral Lee Fixated on 900 Ft. God," everyone giggled a bit and figured it was another fundamentalist scam. That's not to say the press didn't have a field day. They did. I did too; well, I'm part of the press. How could we secular humanist reporters help it? I mean, this is what he said: "Peepul, Peeepul, Peeepul. I saw Gawd last night. He was nine hundred feet tall; my neck still hurts. He spoke unto me—he said, 'Oral, get your people to fork over eight million dollars by April or I shall sucketh you into the heavens with a large Hoover.'"

Columnists accused him of being psychotic or a swindler. The kinder ones said he got a hold of some bad pepperoni and had a bad dream. But they all agreed that there was no 900-foot God.

Reverend Lee was saved from the Heavenly Hoover; his sheep came through with the money. The news was seemingly ephemeral—the story and Lee's reputation died quickly.

However, four months later a middle-aged, blue-collar type man appeared at my desk. "You're Rollins, right?" he asked.

"That's what it says on my desk. What can I do for you?" I replied.

"You do all that investigative reporting?"

"Yes." This is where I expect him to pull a gun or try some nonverbal communication on my gums. I've done a lot of Mike Wallace stuff in my day, and there are more than a few of my subjects who would like to separate my body from my soul.

"Something's been bugging me," he said. "It's about that Oral Lee thing."

"Go on."

"I—this is gonna sound crazy—I saw the nine-hundred-foot god, too. Right where Oral said it was and at exactly the same time. I was out walking late that night because I couldn't sleep. All of a sudden, there it was. So big. Then it just disappeared. At first I thought maybe David Copperfield was in town or something. Then I read about the Oral Lee thing a few days later."

"Wait a minute," I said. "Why did you wait months before telling anyone?"

"No one would believe me. You think I'm crazy, right? That's why I didn't tell anyone. But yesterday, Steve Wilson, a friend of mine, confessed to me that he saw God that night also. From his bedroom window. He'd been holding it in all this time, too. He said he just had to tell someone, so he told me. Well, I just have to tell someone, so I'm telling you."

"What's your name?"

"Mike."

That afternoon Mike and I took a drive.

"That's the field over there," Mike said. We got out of the car.

After walking a little bit, I inquired, "Right around here?"

"Yes, what are we looking for?"

"I'm not sure, but you'll know if you see it—whoa, I've found something."

"What?" Mike asked.

"A footprint. My god, it must be a hundred feet long. Looks like a size eleven hundred, I'd say."

"You don't mean—"

"Sure, it's God's. The size would be about right. It's been months, but the print looks fresh. Only God could do that. That's no human foot. Check out those lines; kinda like my dad's old trihull boat. You could walk on water with a design like that."

"Imagine," Mike said, "I'm standing at the right foot of God."

"Inspiring, isn't it?"

"What do we do now?" he asked.

"On Hawaii Five-O they always make a mold out of the print and bring it back to the lab, but this one's too big. I'll just take some pictures of it."

I knew we were on to something. There were witnesses and photographs to corroborate Oral's story. Not exactly a smoking gun or even a burning bush; still, it's one heck of a story. Would my editor run it? That probably depended on the next obvious question.

Did God really try to extort money out of Oral? Though we placed God at the scene of the crime, we still didn't have any witnesses to back up Oral's version of what God said. But I had a hunch that if he were telling the truth about the appearance of God, he was also telling the truth about what God had said.

Then a thought struck me. If the premise that God conversed with Oral was correct, maybe these guys who claim to talk to God really do talk with God. Could we pragmatists have been wrong all

these years? If we ran the story, all of these guys would try to get through to the Big Guy to find out his version of what happened. My editor agreed; he ran the story.

The head read, "Witness to Oral's Sighting, God Implicated." The funniest thing happened. Psychics, rabbis, bishops, fundamentalist preachers, Charlie Manson—these people who say they converse with God—all reported that God wasn't speaking and that he wasn't answering prayers.

The instant my story broke, it was no longer my story. Everyone in the press joined in. Next day, the heads read "God Silent" or "God Has No Comment." The New York Daily News wrote, "Earth To God, Do You Read? Over."

To make it easier on the reporters and to keep the prayer lines from overloading, the pope volunteered to be the official connection between God and the press if God were to start talking again. This was perfect; God and the pope were on a first-name basis.

It was planned that the pope would try to get God at 8 o'clock Rome time. Usually, Monday nights were spent by the papacy watching mud wrestling, but the pope decided to sacrifice. This was too big. The press and the paparazzi circled the Vatican like buzzards over a nearsighted zebra with tertiary AIDS.

At 8 o'clock, the pope prayed long distance. He got St. Peter at the other end. St. Peter issued a press release from God which he read as a direct quote: "I wasn't even in the United States the night in question, and, while I do wear a size eleven hundred shoe, it's triple E. But I did some checking, and there was an aurora borealis that night and a UFO in the area, so that's what they saw. So let's just go on from here like before—I'll dominate and judge you, and you will be my sheep, okay?"

Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings and Dan Rather talked for a half hour about what God had said. John Chancellor asked, "If God is omnipresent as it says in the Bible, how could he not have been in the United States that night?" Sam Donaldson, who thought he was off the air, muttered, "I wonder if he can walk on water and chew gum at the same time." God's popularity was lower than before the press release.

The pope got on the Heavenly Hot Line the next morning, but St. Peter put him on eternal hold with a jazzy rendition of "Rock of Ages" blaring out the receiver. Finally, St. Peter returned with a second press release, again a direct quote from God: "The previous statement from me was not fully accurate. I was given bad advice from some angels; they've been relieved of their duties. What I meant to say about that evening was—I don't remember where I was but I wasn't talking to Oral, and I'll never do it again. Besides, all us gods look alike to you."

The press went crazy. Here we first heard the word "Godscam." The New York Daily News head read "Heavensgate." Everyone agreed on one thing—cover-up. The discussion on MacNeil-Lehrer centered around God's options. It was agreed there were only two. One, he could say that extorting money from Oral and his sheep was a mistake. This would eliminate his perfect record, but would probably work out best in the long run. Two, he could zap some magic, and—voila—none of this ever happened. But experts agreed this option was too much like claiming executive privilege or firing Archibald Cox. It would bring God to Nixon's level—a move politically and religiously unconscionable.

The McLaughlin Group was especially entertaining. All but Bob Novak agreed that God should admit that he made a mistake and just go about his business of running the universe. Novak started raving about how the communists under Mikhail Torquemada were building "Trojan Gods." He fulminated for three minutes on the subject, forcing Jack Germond to body-check him into the nearest cameraman.

John Lennon once said that The Beatles were more popular than Christ. Now, a recent poll determined that Sid Vicious was more popular than God. Of course, it was a biased sample; only nuns were polled.

Time Magazine's cover story "Is God Brain Dead?" was probably the last straw. God announced through St. Peter to the pope that he was going to speak in person to the people of the world. It was to be a Fireside Chat, as it were, out by the Vatican's Jacuzzi.

No one knew what to expect. Could it be a total fiasco like the last presidential State of the Union address? The president had a large booger hanging from his nose all the way through the speech, and he accidentally called the First Lady "toots."

Would God look good on camera? Sure, his portraits look fine, but this is the electronics age. One thing was certain; the ratings would be fantastic.

God appeared as scheduled. He looked like Peter O'Toole but with funny glasses and a big rubber nose. He filled out his 900 feet nicely with a physique like Bruce Lee's bodyguard.

"Good evening," he started. "First off, I did talk to Oral, that dope, but I didn't make a mistake. I told him that he had to have the money by April 1—April Fool's Day. It was a joke, a damn joke. God, Oral is so dim he could dull the sun. And you people have no sense of humor. Why do you take everything so seriously? Lighten up. God, I write one book, and you analyze every passage like it's Hemingway or something. Okay, some of the Bible's true. But c'mon, Genesis was funny stuff. And the bit about the ark. I tell Noah, 'Hey Noah. You got two of each, right? Now check 'em, make sure you got one male and one female.' He tells me, 'No way God, I'm not turning those porcupines over.' Well okay, you had to be there. Lamentations was probably my best chapter. Or maybe Revelations. Revelations is hilarious—I agree, the punch lines could have been better. But you guys don't even crack a smile. Are you breathing? I've seen better crowds

say as Gospel. Don't you think I have a sense of humor? Even after I gave you Wayne Newton? Do I have to spell it out to you? Hey, I gotta go. They're having a Woody Allen film festival back up there tonight. Later."

In Sodom. But really, the translators screwed up all the good jokes. King James has the timing of Henry Youngman on crack. No wonder no one laughed at the commandments. You humans watch too many sitcoms. Your brains are fried. And you take everything I

GS4MDL

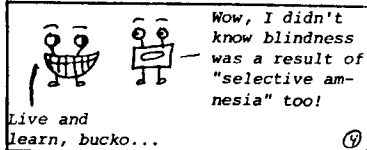
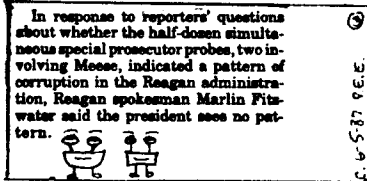
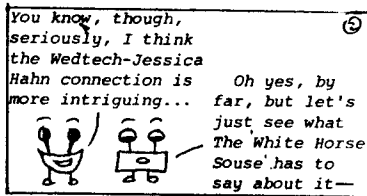
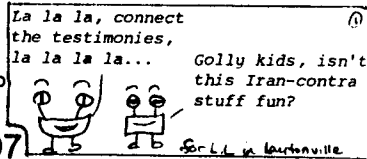
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WHORZITS by Elayne
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Bellybuttons"



VALLEY OF LOST NERVES

by Adam Eisenstat

Weeds
flaking train tracks
broken shopping carts
dented buckets of
rusted railroad spikes
other once proud commerce soldiers
driven to this swollen industrial
tomb.

Once they were the conquerers
now they bear
the ragged scars of
nature's eternally inevitable

victory;
mercifully beautiful wounds
unequalled by anything
in functional lives past.
Behold the random poetry of decay.

I will find time to do
for all of you
Mostly for troubled ones, and
those so blue
No mind your bad habits, and
others thoughts true
Calm down, dear friend, you
are nothing new.
- Robert Wilson-Wheatley

Tucson traffic
is not forgiving
to out-of-state tags
wheelchair emblems
or white-haired natives
no one is exempt
from the horn
or the finger
or the ass-hugging
demons who slam-dance
their right-of-ways
cross town
- Sheryl L. Nelms

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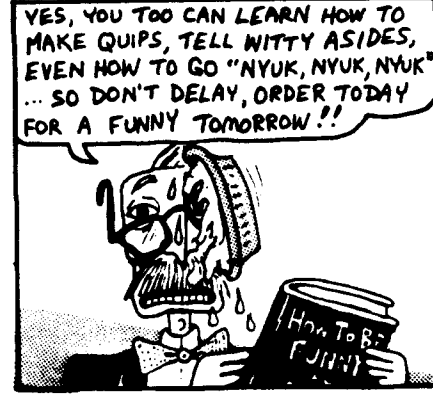
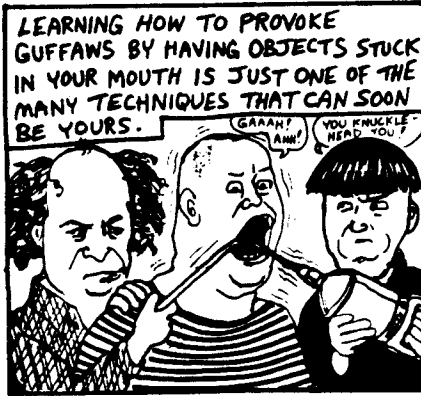
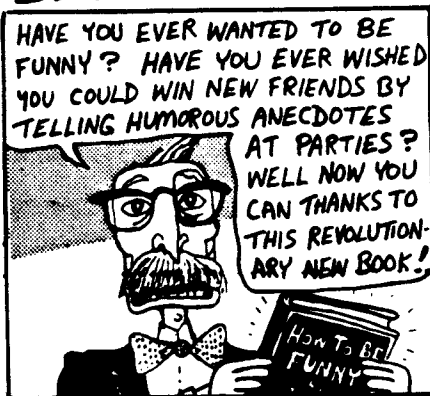
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COSMOLOGICAL PHILOSOPHY
by Wayne Hogan
Life's a truck
rollin' through moist muck
headin' for a tummy tuck.
Green then brown like a corn shuck,
rots-a-tuck.

EVEN THE BRICK IS A SILHOUETTE

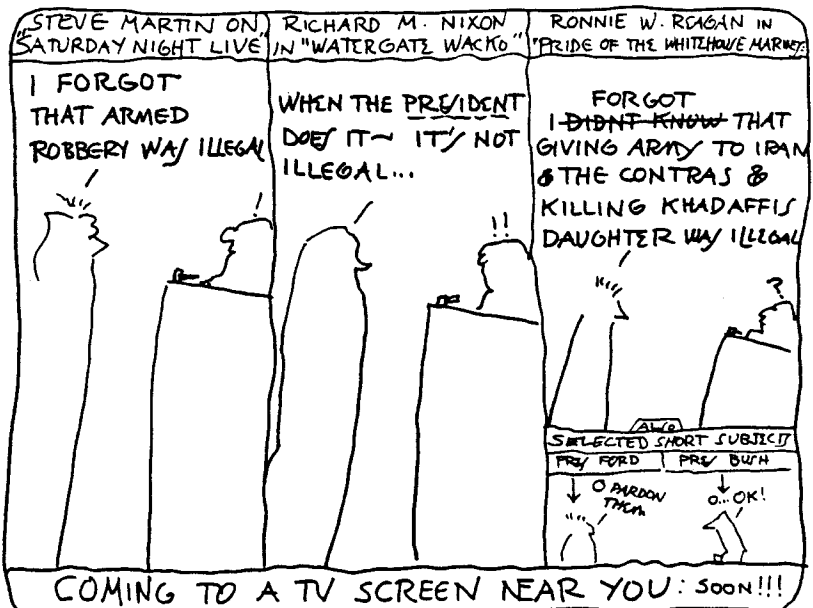
SURFACE by Edward Mycue

The plain hands everybody has are fools that jump and hop from blade to blade—bad news, and nothing will get better, only more gaudy and cheap MOUNTING like a marsupial another marsupial. Look, there's gramma, that's mama. That's sister. That's me. We are all hope-minded, reaching out but stuck within all self-absorbed, -indulgent, -concerned, -centered though not -contained. Nor centered within the self, not self-renewing though maybe self-starting (sometimes). Self-computing and all the wrong ways of being self-winding, -actualized, -processed. But I don't think we are so self-repairing. But sometimes. Sometimes we are friends to ourselves—a single soul dwelling in so many bodies of intent in this single person—whose very denials assert "HERE" "NOW" "TOMORROW" like a little masturbation sequence and like refined flatulence. Slurp. Surprise! Survive the circumstance and create an actual street of hope—there even the brick veneer of a Hollywood set's okay!

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First, the big story in fandom (and in the industry as well) is that Jim "Back" Shooter is out at Marvel. Replaced in early April by long-time Marvel editor Tom DeFalco, Shooter is no longer the guiding light in the "House of Ideas." It should be interesting to see the stories that come out in the next few months regarding the Shooter era. Now that he is no longer in a position to apply pressure on people, the rationale regarding past decisions (Byrne leaving Marvel, New Universe, etc.) should become clear. It should also be interesting to see where, if he continues in the field as a writer/editor, or whether he moves into a publishing position somewhere.

In case anyone is interested, Frank Miller, Alan Moore and DARK KNIGHT took many of the top honors in the just-completed Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards '86. With the exception of the long-running CEREBUS and its creator, Dave "Ain't I Somethin'" Sim, the B&Ws had little impact on the top spots in this year's balloting. Perhaps, as some of the better B&Ws (along with their writers and artists) become better known, future awards will better reflect the influence that B&Ws are having on the market overall.

FOUR-COLOR FIEND FAVES

(These books are in no particular order, so don't try to read anything into it. Also, these books are either continuing series or maxi/mini-series currently in progress. I'll do one-shots and past favorites worth looking for some other time.)

COLOR - DYNAMO JOE, SWAMP THING, DR. FATE, GROO, THE QUESTION, CAPTAIN ATOM, DOC STEARN... MR. MONSTER (various Super-Duper Specials vary in quality depending on the material reprinted, but I give them an overall thumbs-up), MR. X, JONNY QUEST, THE FLASH, WATCHMEN.

BLACK & WHITE - BORIS THE BEAR, CONCRETE, WORDSMITH, CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY, SILENT INVASION, RETIEF, CEREBUS, CROSSFIRE, NO SUCH THING AS MONSTERS, LONE WOLF & CUB.

Having already listed some of my faves, I thought I'd do a few quickie reviews of some material that I've come across.

PARADAX! (Vortex Comics, \$2.25 US/\$2.95 Can.)—Elayne picked up the first issue of this unusual item and was anxious for me to read and review it. Well, try to imagine some of the better material from Heavy Metal coming out as a bi-monthly comic and you'll get some idea of what to expect. Writer Peter Milligan and artist Brendan McCarthy have created some delightfully bizarre characters beyond anything that you would expect from a "comic book." The most "normal" creation is Paradax himself, a "super-hero" with a magic suit that makes him able to pass through solid matter or vice versa. The guy is a complete mercenary and about as likeable as you can get. We also find MIRKIN THE MYSTIC, a "gentleman magician" who is able to travel throughout infinite realities righting wrongs and solving mysteries, if only to relieve his boredom. Add the adventures of a couple of "old British poofs" (as Elayne would have it) and you'll find that PARADAX! gets my vote as most literate and entertaining book to completely baffle me this month.

RADIO BOY (Eclipse Comics, \$2.00 US/\$2.95 Can.)—This is the 14 book of the month. Created by Chuck Dixon, who wrote all three stories and penciled RADIO BOY, with artistic assists from Jim Engel (a great funny-animal artist in his own right), Tim Harkins, Flint Henry, Tom Wimbish and Timothy Truman. Imagine a typical issue of a Japanese comic (you know, the ones selling for five or six bucks in comics shops that you always try to browse through forgetting that you're reading it backwards, but couldn't understand anyway? Yeah, those comics!) translated by the guys who write the English instructions found in foreign products. Also imagine the dialogue as spoken by The Firesign Theatre in "Young Guy, Motor Detective" or by Jerry Lewis when he does real insulting impersonations of Japanese at which you always feel guilty laughing (but you always do, don't you?). Check this out: "It is MITSU, the plant demon who so terrifies!" "So we have no help but to call for one who is so smart, so tough, so great!" "RA BOY!!!!" Apparently only a one-shot (no doubt the joke would get old "real fast"), it demonstrates why Eclipse is fast overtaking First as the "Independent" most in line to break through into the Big Two's market share. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

LONE WOLF & CUB (First Comics, \$1.95 US/\$2.60 Can.)—The classic Japanese series by Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima (some of you may have seen the dubbed and edited version of one of the motion pictures made about this series, released stateside as SHOGUN ASSASSIN). Hey, it has a new cover and introduction by Frank Miller, if that makes it acceptable to you mainstreamers out there. The first issue is slightly larger than the regular book will be (86 pages of story as compared with 64), in black & white with card stock cover on quality paper. All subsequent issues will be similar in format for the same price on a monthly basis.

I'm not qualified to judge the art to any great extent, but as someone who has been reading comics for about a quarter of a cen-

tury (YOW!!!), I find it some of the most exciting material I've ever encountered. Drop the giant robot/ninja turtle stuff and see what it's really all about.

STARHEAD COMICS (Michael Dowers, P.O. Box 30044, Seattle, WA 98103) was kind enough to send Elayne and myself a nice assortment of stuff that is currently available from them. I'll briefly describe the material and give a price, but I recommend all of it.

SPOOKS IN SPACE & PAW PRINTS #3 (minis; 50c + stamp)

SEATTLE STAR (tabloid with material by Steve Willis, Peter Bagge, J.R. Williams and others; 6-issue sub \$5.50 or #1-10 for \$1 each)

STARHEAD PRESENTS #2, "Curse of the Baby Monster" (95c US/\$1.35 Can. at comics shops)

MORTY! by Steve Willis & SKINBOY FIGHTS BACK by J.R. Williams (\$1 each; about twice the size of a mini with 2-color covers)

THE BROWN STUDY, a moral novel by Edward Lee Bolman (75c + stamp; nice little mini with card stock cover)

MORTY THE DOG (\$1.75 US/\$2.50 Can.), the usual great stuff by Steve Willis; 32 B&W pages with color covers

RAT FINK™ COMIX (\$2.00 US/\$2.80 Can.)—Written by Ed "Big Daddy" Roth himself, with art by R.K. Sloane in the same format as BABY MONSTER and MORTY THE DOG. Look, I have to throw a caveat emptor into this thing, even though I sort of hate to. If you remember "Big Daddy" and his creation with the same fondness that I do, you'll want to have this just for nostalgic reasons, but I haven't been into cars since I was a teenager, and I was never fascinated by surfing. All the jokes stem from those sources, so if you are not heavily knowledgeable in those areas you'll probably miss some of the punch lines. Most of the stuff are one-pagers and, while good filler material, after awhile they begin to seem too much alike. Sorry, Big Daddy!

A quick mention of Matt Feazell and the find folks at Not Available Comics (Box 5803, Raleigh, NC 27650). Through his work in CAPTAIN CONFEDERACY and ZOT!, Matt is becoming more widely-known to fandom, so his material will be even more sought-after than it has been. He consistently puts out the most entertaining minis around, and has been a long-time friend of IJ to boot. Write to Not Available for a catalog of material and send along a couple of bucks for samples (ask for HERMAN HANKS TEAM-UP SPECIAL, done in collaboration with Ian Shires, or any of the other recommended material that Elayne and I have been plugging for years). By the way, Eclipse Comics will be publishing a full-size 32-page B&W comic featuring CYNICALMAN this coming July. Also look out for the upcoming ZOT! IN DIMENSION 10½ and 14½, which will also be out from Eclipse this summer; it will be a full-length continuation of the material that Matt does in one-pagers in the regular ZOT! book.

TALES OF THE SINISTER HARVEY (\$1, plus maybe 50c for postage; Bolt 'n' EFF, Route 1, Box 531, Pittsboro, NC 27312)—Compilation of copy-art, collage, stamp art and cartoons. Nicely weird and, to quote, "contains material some might call 'Adult'."

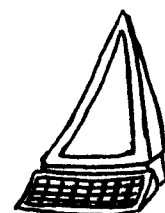
GROGGY COMICS (Eric Mayer, 1771 Ridge Rd. E., Rochester, NY 14622; 25c + stamp)—AMERICAN SPLINTER is Eric's takeoff on you-know-who and is nicely done even if you're only marginally familiar with the original. ANIMAL I U was done by Eric's daughter Fleur (five years old) and deals with a trip the family took to an amusement park; Eric tells the story from his perspective in a 4-page tale. Cute.

Just a reminder that WATCHMEN has only one issue left to go as of this writing. If you haven't started it yet (and just why the f**k not??), you'll be happy to know that DC will be republishing it as a graphic novel sometime this fall. It has also been optioned for a film, with Moore doing the adaptation.

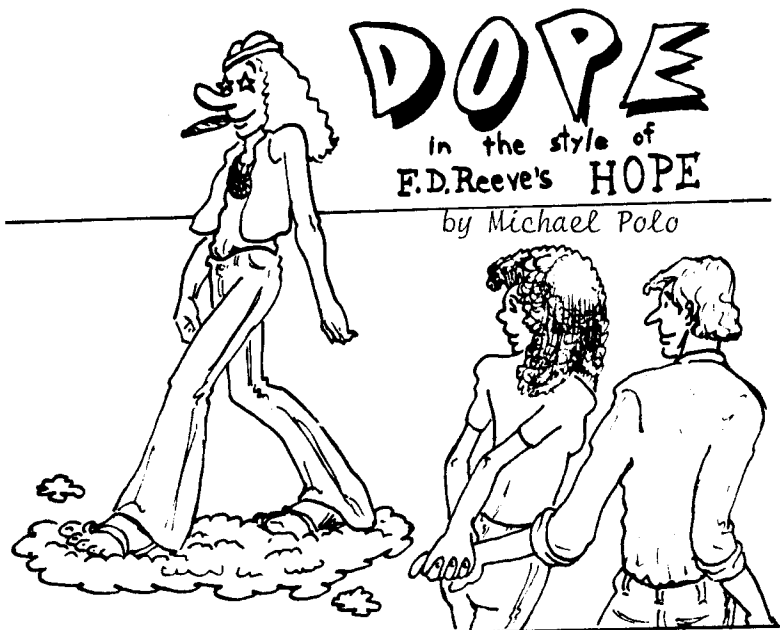
You might also be interested to know that I've just been accepted into CAPA-ALPHA (also known as K-apa), one of the better-known comics apas in fandom. I'll be trying to contribute regularly (monthly to start, I hope), and will be printing up a few extra copies of my zine, if anyone would be interested in getting a copy (admittedly, it will be mostly MC's [mailing comments, for non-apahacks out there], with a few reviews and personal comments on diverse subjects on which I don't touch in IJ since my job here is strictly comics reviews). Since I'm not an artist (as you can see by the self-portrait in my logo, which was designed and executed with help from st.EVE), I'll be using some of the extra material on hand that is piling up for IJ and/or INSIDE STROKE. All artists will get copyright identification, and if you have any reservations or don't want me to use your stuff, let me know (in no uncertain terms, as I do yield to even the most empty threats).

'Till next time...Notary sojac!

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and stems, a dealer rip-off. Some harm the mind,
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by A.D. Winans

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**Bakersfield
Bartending
Lues**

(yet another excerpt from *HOW I GOT THERE FROM HERE*, a/k/a *Fear and Loathing in Bakersfield*, which takes place twenty minutes into an alternate past, or something like it.)

Bakersfield, 1983. I wish I could get down in words what there is to this town that continually draws me back to the area, what strange mixing of timelines has caused so many pivotal events in my life to be tied to this town. I wish I could, but I can't. It's like trying to describe heartburn to a vegetarian.

It was a balmy June night with just a sliver of moon and a lovely Aurora, thanks to the harmless atmospheric tests of the Q-

DREAM VISIT FROM D.O.

by Larry Blazek

She came to me
in a dream last night
her golden hair
reflected the light,
"I've always loved you
like a brother"
then she gave me a joint
then another
I woke up later
all alone
Sadder, wiser,
gladder and stoned

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by Mike Gunderloy

Bomb over the Canadian wastes. At least most people still were convinced the tests were harmless, since the stories about the five-legged moose hadn't gained widespread currency as yet.

Actually, I wasn't really in Bakersfield, but in a large open pit just a tad northeast of Oildale, sort of a suburb of Bakersfield. Well, it would be a suburb of Bakersfield if it hadn't been nationalized due to oil reserves and turned into a camp for National Service youth. The town was swarming with these modern-day Hitler Jungend, which I figured was an excellent reason for hoping that no one would think to look here for me.

The Volks was parked in plain sight at the lip of the pit, but it had undergone three paint jobs and six license-plate transplants since the last time the FBI had put out a bulletin for it, so I felt reasonably safe. It was a necessary risk anyways, since Herb didn't know exactly where this pit was and I told him to look for a solitary VW.

Of course, I had known exactly where I was going when I left La Pine, which was a good thing since I had had to leave in such a hurry. It was unclear whether Fred Simmons was more upset about his daughter or his geese, but he was backing up his anger with a shotgun. I decided that both daughter and geese could do without seeing me again, and dived for the car. Fortunately, Fred was not a very good shot after seven beers, and I got away clean and in one piece.

I had managed to make it from La Pine to Bakersfield in one long stretch of driving, except for a short stop at an abandoned roadside tent just north of Sacramento. It had apparently not occurred to the Highways & Byways Patrol that anyone would have the gall to drive right through their sawhorse and into the now-verboten rest area. Fortunately, this was only two months after the Strict Curfew law had passed, and the HBP had not gotten around to blowing up the old rests yet.

While I was there, I took care of a couple of errands. The first thing to take care of was flushing all of Peter Wise's ID down the head, and taking the ID for Albert Cahill out of the box welded beneath the left rear fender. Next thing was to find the still-working pay phone and hope that the info on net-access codes I had gotten from the Fone Freaks underground last month was still current.

Apparently it was. I got a hold of Herb at the National Med School where he was pretending to be seriously interested in becoming a doctor. After all, anything beat being in the Army.

I told Herb that I had decided it was finally time to do something, and would he like to join me?

"Sure thing, uh, Al, I've got midterms tomorrow. The school administration has cracked down and I wasn't able to buy more than half of the answers, so I'm bound to flunk out in a few days. Give me a few hours to get some stuff together, and where did you want to meet?"

I gave him instructions for getting to Shark Tooth Hill, as it had been known when rockhunting was still legal, and headed there myself.

It was after 2 AM when I arrived, but I had no trouble recognizing the place. The major change was that there were no ruts I could see on the dirt road leading in—which meant that no one had visited since the last rains. Good, perhaps my stash was still here.

Before the Draft was reinstated, I had managed to hide a few vital supplies here and there, and hadn't had time to pick them up in that mad rush for Oregon and a new identity. Shark Tooth Hill had once had ten cases of Blue Label liquor in one of the more obscure gullies, and I hoped it still did.

Digging in the little moonlight that there was with only a trenching tool was hard work, made even harder by the fact that this part of California had been sun-baked for five months. I had just about decided that someone had gotten to my trove first, or that I was at the wrong gully (after all, it had been almost four years), when the shovel struck something.

It was what I had been hoping for, a plastic-wrapped case of liquor. In another two hours I had uncovered all ten cases, and was considering where the devil to put them next. To aid in the consideration, I had opened one of the bottles of Blue Label Vodka ("Brewed by the Vodka Company of Amerika, Inc.").

It was nearing dawn when another vehicle drove up. I must say that Herb had not exactly picked the most inconspicuous possible method of transport—he was driving an ambulance. At least he didn't have the lights or siren on.

After almost toppling the thing into the open pit while parking it, a smiling Herr Doktor Gold leapt out, clad in white lab coat with a stethoscope around his neck and one in each pocket. We greeted each other enthusiastically and I went up to the stolen ambulance to see what had taken so long.

It was an incredible amount of booty. There may have been some drugs left in the school's pharmacy, but not many and certainly no interesting ones. The chem lab was out four fifty-five gallon drums of pure, undenatured ethanol. He had also picked up a heart-lung machine on the way out, on general principles since it wasn't nailed down.

"I sure hope you can come up with some ID for me, ol' buddy," Herb smiled as he poured himself a gin-and-catatonic, "because ol' Nat Med is probably sort of upset with Herb right at the moment. Oh, and I heard from Zimmerman and Otto last week, they're trout-hunting in Mississippi, and I think Uncle O'Toole is a box-boy in Philly, and..."

We talked of Revolution and good clean fun as we repainted the ambulance into a plain van the next day. The light-bar went in back (in case we needed it) and we headed for Philly.
(Further installments to come!)

...or not TV by Elayne

Now that the three major networks have announced their fall '87 schedules (dropping virtually all the programs I really got into taping, like *Starman* and *Amazing Stories*), I suppose it's time to clean up the slate a bit and present a quickie review of some tidbits on which I didn't touch in my regular "...or not TV" column. I haven't bothered marking down times and days on these entries, because most are subject to change or aren't on at the moment or some such little television peculiarity.

THE CHARMINGS—Happily, this has been renewed for the fall season after a 4-or-so show tryout. It's one of those gems that we set up to tape when it premiered, then we got totally disgusted with it during the first five minutes and turned the tape off at the commercial, and when it came back from commercial it suddenly turned hilarious, much to our dismay. The premise is asinine, but the actors carry it off really well, and it's a piss of a half hour. Look for it; trust me.***

MAX HEADROOM—I don't think there's anything I can add to the tons of well-deserved praise heaped on this baby. It's a mystery how it infiltrated otherwise-rightwing ABC, it's so subversive, but I suspect it's because it might go over the heads of the big network execs. In any case, it's been renewed for fall '87, with the six tryout episodes repeating to start the season, followed by 13 new ones. This is a must-tape for future generations, so we can show our kids how on-the-mark this program is about the future and especially the influence of television itself. Brilliant.****

MY SISTER SAM—I didn't really review this last time, just mentioned it in passing as I hadn't seen it. It makes me giggle. Really. I need a show that makes me giggle. And the fact that it supposedly takes place in San Francisco always adds points for me. But it's a cute, neat show with good writing and acting, and I'm even starting to like Pam Dawber (that's saying something).***

SQUARE ONE TELEVISION—This is a kids' show sort of modelled on the *Sesame Street*/Electric Company type of stuff, put out by the same people, but funnier than EC (if that's possible). It's got mathematics as its subject matter, and if this had been around when I was a kid I might be able to deal with math today. A must for kids, and a lot of fun for us older kids.***½

SUPERGRAN—Laugh if you will, but this show's almost as good as its theme song ("Stand back Superman/Iceman, Spiderman/Batman and Robin too/Don't mean to cause a ruckus/But B.A. Baracus/Have I got a match for you/She makes them look like a bunch of fairies..." and so forth), most of which I have memorized by now and which I occasionally sing in the shower. It's a quirky kidshow from Scotland, so be forewarned about the accents, but it's a lot of fun. I won't spoil the surprises by revealing plots, but Gudrun whatsher-name as Granny Smith is wonderful, and the show is appropriately strange. The best superhero comedy on the air.***½

MARRIED WITH CHILDREN—This is the bright spot in Fox's dismal line-up (although certainly no more dismal than the major network stuff against which Murdoch hopes to compete). The four main characters, two couples, play off each other well. The young marrieds (DINKs both) are nauseatingly idealistic about their relationship and life in general; the older couple (the title characters) is sarcastic and mean and generally not very nice people but absolutely hilarious and as true-to-life as one is likely to get in prime-time. Katey Sagal, who was so marvelous as the Anni Ackner character in the last Mary Tyler Moore show, is great as the cynical Peg, she of the impossibly wiggly walk, and Ed O'Neill plays Al to such perfection you can't help but be disgusted and amused simultaneously by this lumox. As Steve and I are about halfway between the Bundys and their saccharin neighbors, we get a lot of kicks out of this one. Belly laughs too.***

DUET—I can't stand either of the main characters, and I don't give a shit if they fall in love or not. This show is worth watching only for Jodi Thelen as an Alyce Beasley sort of character and Chris Lemmon acting as well as his father does.***

MR. PRESIDENT—Having anti-government tendencies, I was well prepared not to like this, but the writing is pretty good, given the subject matter, and George C. Scott adds his usual fair amount of dignity to the title role. Worth a glance or two.***

THE TRACY ULLMAN SHOW—This rounds out Fox's Sunday night line-up, and I really like this. Okay, maybe 'cause I'm female, but I consider that as good a reason as any. Heidi Perlman is one of the creative minds behind this beauty, a series of three or four different vignettes per show broken up by related bits of animation that are the most outrageously funny since Sally Kruikshank, or however she spells it. Co-stars Julie ("Rhoda") Kavner and Dan Castellana are often more appealing than whomever Tracy is portraying (while the British singer-actress does a PERFECT American accent, her voice is sometimes terminally whiny and she often does not carry the sketches she's supposed to), but the writing is alternately funny, poignant, crisp, witty, and hey, what more can you want from a half hour of television?***½

THE DAYS AND NIGHTS OF MOLLY DODD—A new entry on NBC's blockbuster Thursday night line-up, and the one about which all the tv critics are raving. They have reason to: the writing and timing are tremendous, and there are a lot of little moments that aren't played for laughs and can be appreciated all the more because of it. In fact, none of the show is played for laughs—like Fox's *MR. PRESIDENT*, *MOLLY DODD* has no laugh track (PRAY it's a trend!). My one complaint is that Blair Brown is very unappealing in the title role, even though series creator Jay Tarses (formerly of "Patchett 6," whose erstwhile partner now does *ALF*) apparently requested her specifically for it. Can't imagine why. It's quite refreshingly unusual, and might take a couple viewings to fully



YOSSARIAN UNIVERSAL News Service (YU)
PO Box 236, Millbrae, CA 94030/Ferican
PO Box 40710, Portland, OR 97240/Ligi

"All the news to give you fits"

WASHINGTON (YU)—Lashing out at reporters during an impromptu press conference held on the roof of the White House, Nancy Reagan vehemently denied she was the President's real mommy, and promised a full disclosure of the facts "over my dead body."

"Just because the President thinks I'm his mother doesn't give you the right to believe he knows what he's talking about!" screamed the First Lady. "What difference does his age make? Can't you see he's just a little boy?"

Reporters, however, were quick to remind Mrs. Reagan that her "Bedtime Bonzo" was only 76 years old, and reasoned that it was quite possible for her to have given birth at the age of 12, thus making her 88 years old.

When pressed further by some members of the press to reveal her true age, the First Lady abruptly ended the meeting by threatening to throw herself off the roof.

WASHINGTON (YU)—Claiming that he'd have to be a "goddamn fool" to ignore a sure thing when it kicks him in the teeth, White House Chief of Staff Howard Baker will tomorrow announce his intention to seek his party's presidential nomination, and added that he would also ask Nancy Reagan to be his running mate, as well as his wife.

"Naturally, I'm planning a formal proposal," beamed Baker, addressing reporters who had established bureaus in his office, "just as soon as the President is more comfortable with the notion that I won't be trying to replace his father. I just want to be his pal."

President Reagan, who is vacationing in a treehouse on the East Lawn, was unavailable for comment on what he remembered about all this.

WASHINGTON (YU)—In the wake of still more revelations in the ever-widening Nancygate scandal, documents released today under the Freedom of Disinformation Act clearly indicate that Ronald Reagan has been on drugs for more than six years.

According to medical records recently obtained by YU News Services, the president has apparently been taking the drug Thorazine, a major tranquilizer used to combat schizophrenia, four times a day since November 4, 1980.

Also discovered in the file was a sworn statement by Dr. Elmo Benway, the President's personal pataphysician who prescribed the drug, which said, in part: "the combination of euphoria, shock and total disbelief at having won the election in 1980—from which the President has never fully recovered—caused a hallucinatory state of self-importance at which time immediate and deliberate application of Thorazine was indicated. Since his reelection in 1984, the dosage has increased steadily in direct proportion to the President's own delusions."

Dr. Benway, indicating in his statement that the President was in no danger of abusing a drug "that should have killed him by now anyway," could not be located for questioning.

STOCKHOLM (YU)—Middle East envoy Terry Waite, whose exact whereabouts remain a mystery since his abduction from a Beirut tanning salon on January 20th, reportedly surfaced in Stockholm yesterday to make a phone call.

According to several people who claim to have seen him, including Jumbatt Belushi, a post-modernist architect, Waite was apparently standing in a public phone booth outside the Scandinavian Fiber-Optics Academy fumbling for change and shouting obscenities into the receiver. No other details were given.

In the last four months, Waite has been sighted 28 times on 5 continents and in 12 different time-zones. Prior to yesterday's observance, the last reported sighting was made three days ago by two Alaskan trappers who spotted Waite hunting for caribou 50 miles north of Fairbanks.

FRANKNOI, SHEMPUS MINOR 4 (YU)—Pop artist Andy Warhol, who died earlier this year (1987) on the Planet Earth (Milky Way Galaxy), was detained and arrested at Franknoi Interstellar Teleport yesterday (6012) when security officials found a stolen gun in his carry-on luggage.

Franknoi, a city located on the planet Shempus Minor 4 in the Snickers Galaxy, is more than 28 million light years from Earth's New York City where Warhol died after having his heart removed by mistake while undergoing a routine gall-bladder operation.

During a customary Laser-Ray inspection at the Teleport, officials detected a .38 caliber derringer hidden inside Warhol's Nikon camera as he attempted to board an intergalactic flight back to Earth. A check on the gun showed it had been reported stolen in 1969 on Earth during a house burglary in Danville, California.

Questioned by Franknoi authorities, Warhol refused to say why he had chosen to reincarnate on Shempus Minor 4, but did admit he was having difficulty accepting his karma and needed to return home to take care of unfinished business.

CHICAGO (YU)—Justice Department officials announced they planned to pursue an injunction against the Amalgamated Fast Food and Ephemeral Service Workers (AFFESW) who have threatened a nationwide strike on August 15th if their demands for a contract guaranteeing a wage and benefits package totalling \$3.50 per hour are not met.

A justice Department spokeswoman who could not produce valid identification argued that an AFFESW work stoppage would threaten national security within 24 hours and that a prolonged strike would affect the nutritional requirements of more than half the American workforce.



PIGSHIT

By Gary Pig Gold

OH SUSANNA

Dear Miss HOFFS
(or should that be MS. Hoffs?)
(or maybe even SUSANNA!!)

I have never written a "Fan" letter before—I don't really know why I'm doing one now... maybe its coz I've never really BEEN a REAL FAN of anyone before! (not that I'm really sure what a "Fan" really is! Do you know what I mean?—coz I don't—I think!!!)

I know you are becoming very famous now—I saw you on Rolling Stone and even my mom thought she heard Walk Like A Egyptian at the ball park last week. And I know you must be getting so very much fan mail now that you are very famous—Hey! How does it feel to be REALLY FAMOUS? I bet you have a really nice house now—and you don't have to wait in any lines anymore! But I hope you'll notice MY letter—I made the drawing on the enveloped myself! its from your picture on All Over The Place.

Well now that you are reading my letter (I WISH!!!) I want you to see that I am not just any fan... I have been a very big fan of your band for a LONG LONG time now—ever

The Big Boy by Steven A. Hess

The smart-mouthed children shouted and jeered at the new boy as he arrived at their school. These were ignorant children from a backward place who thought the world revolved around them.

"You're dumb," they shouted.

The new boy made no reply.

These children were downright stupid, though they thought they were bright. They did have smart mouths.

"You can't even play hopscotch or jump rope," they jeered at the new boy.

The boy paid them little attention and wandered around the school grounds. They followed him around and gathered around him like flies.

"Your feet are so big you should wear dump trucks on them instead of shoes," yelled the kids.

The boy continued to explore the schoolyard and didn't let the kids annoy him. He bent and brushed a piece of lint from one of his shoes.

"Big dummy! Big dummy!" taunted the children. "Big foot, big foot, hasn't got no brains."

The new boy with the big feet wore a pair of brand-new blue suede shoes. The children pushed close against him trying to show how much smarter they were than "outsiders."

"Watch it," said the new boy speaking for the first time. "Don't you dare tread on my blue suede shoes." He was a boy of few words, the kind who says what he means and means what he says. He'd warned them and when he warned people, people paid attention, but these children were very stupid. The new boy had warned them and now it was up to them.

"Don't tread on my blue suede shoes!" chanted the children over and over. "Don't tread on my blue suede shoes!" And the boy paid them no mind. He could see they were very stupid children. He wondered how they could even be in school.

Suddenly, all at once, they jumped on his blue suede shoes. They jumped up and down and jeered, "Dummy big foot got his blue suede shoes treaded on!"

They were very stupid children and the new boy had warned them. He was a patient boy, but they had done exactly what he'd warned them not to do.

The new boy never raised his voice; in fact, he never said another word to them. He'd warned them once. He simply stepped on the bunch of them.

"Stupid kids," he said to himself afterwards as he wiped his shoes on the grass.

Anyone who doesn't listen to a giant is a fool. The giant boy picked up the school's auditorium and took it home with him. Now his model school set was complete.

since my cousin sent me your FIRST record in the mail all the way from Orange, California!! (he says he STOLE it, but I don't think he did) I used to bring your record of Going To Liverpool to all our parties in seventh grade—is that really Mr. Spok in the video?—before anybody ever heard of The BANGLES. So you see I am a TRUE fan—not one of these posers who only get into you guys after Magic Monday.

What is this thing about you and this Prince guy anyways? My brother says you guys are gonna get married and have a buncha really short kids who wear dresses. UGGHH!! I stuck up for you tho—I think you have much more senses than that! Maybe you will marry Michael Damion instead. HA HA HA!!

I want to go see your new movie soon too. The Allnight. But my dad says he won't let me go coz you wearing a skinny bathingsuit in the add and he thinks its just gonna be one of those dirty sexy movies like the girl from the Cosby show did but I don't think you would do something dirty like that. Would you?

(My dad also doesn't like your video of Hero Takes The Fall coz you knock down all the men mannekins. But my MOM likes that part! Do you have a boyfriend Sussanna?)

It says in the paper your movie is just a dumb movie—the guy in the paper calls it Beach Bangle Bingo whatever that means! My best friend Jenni far is gonna go see it tho coz her boyfriend REALLY wants to see it BAD. He says he's a big fan of yours but I say he was listening to Duran Duran when I was first having your records!!!! Besides what does he know—he goes to see all Madonna's movies to. YUKK!!

I want to say that the video of Walk Down Your Street is really neat—I specially like the part where you fall out of the truck with all the cases and the other Bangles give you funny looks.

Do you like the other 3 girls? Vicki always looks so mean. And the base girl looks really stuck up—like when she walks down a hall her nose scrapes along the ceiling! HA HA! But my brother really has the HOTS for HER!!! And how did you get that guy from Beverly Hills Cop in your video?

Sussanna—I think you are very beautiful—and you must be very smart to. You should be proud to know that I am learning the guitar now and am writting poetry and will make songs and have a group JUST LIKE YOURS when I get out of school. Maybe I should come to Hollywood with it! And maybe you will help me make records and movies and get RICH and FAMOUS like YOU! OH—I WISH I WISH!

(Wish!)(Wish!)(Wish!)(Wish!)

Here is a poem I wrote for you?

Sussanna is the girl I like
From a band I think is great
The way you sing and dance a lot
And every move you make
I like your dresses and your beads
Your hair is stringy too
When I move to Hollywood
I hope I look like YOU!
So when the people put you down
And say you are the fool
Just you Walk Like A Egyptian
Down to Liverpool!
Those stupid people laugh and say
Your just like all the rest
But I say BANGLES RULE
And Susanna YOUR THE BEST!!!

(I hope you don't think its too YUKKY...)

I gotta go wash now for the morning. I hope you read my letter—and know I am a TRUE FAN—TO THE END!

Your #1 Big Fan,
Mary Street
(She knows what she wants!)

PS: I don't think you look as short as MICHAEL J. FOX does!!!

EXCUSE ME, BUT DO YOU HAVE A TOOTHPICK?

by Larry Blazek
We have a lovely alligator
it slept in the back yard today
Do you know what it means
when you hear your mother
tell you to go out and play?

Leg Room by Joel Dailey

Earlier that Wednesday Steve's eye—he's missing the other one—childhood accident—it couldn't be helped—caught the following ad in some Whole Earth Whole Wheat magazine:

IMPROVE YOUR LIFE!
THROW OUT THOSE OLD HABITS!

Right away Steve thinks of his mom, Mrs. Tremor, who'd been on his ass like an Evinrude on a speedboat for weeks. I could hear Mrs. Tremor all the way down the block screaming like somebody just knocked over her full garbage cans again, "Get a job! Get A Job! GET A JOB!"

Steve was used to strange goings-on concerning his family members but the employment litany was sticking in his crawfish. I could see an explosion coming. His sister, Cleopatra, spends her free time on the phone calling Hollywood long-distance and threatening TV game show hosts' lives. We all need a hobby to keep the tension at bay. Mr. Houston Tremor, Steve's dad, got this great inspiration one afternoon. Instead of opening just another New Orleans Seafood restaurant, he offered a new option: goldfish almadine. You could scarf a million of the little thugs, but the business sank. Mr. Tremor, a broken man clinging to a cleanly fileted dream, took to locking himself up in his study for days. He began reading books and subsequently developed what he swore was a "passionate reverence for The Text." And every single time in the last ten years when I went over to Steve's house there was Mrs. T on her dimpled knees licking the yellowed kitchen floor with an angry, sanitary vengeance. She was always a gracious hostess, long as you didn't scuff up her latest area of accomplishment.

Steve's my best friend, but I have to admit it—things down the street are often a little tilted; being "different" runs like a champion marathoner in the Tremor family.

So anyway Steve's mom kept harping about Job City for her son. Steve's last position was a cramped, unrewarding one as lackey for a downtown frame shop. He learned how to shrink-wrap everything you can imagine. So after Steve reads the fateful ad for radio-inactive yoghurt or something a switch inside him is thrown, some interior turnstile spins: Steve decides to "improve his life" and "throw out old habits" like listening to his mom infreaking-sist for 24 hours a lifetime. Steve elects to off his mom but quick, shrink-wrapping the form of send-off.

Mrs. Bagatelle, one of the nosey, sensitive souls plaguing the block, called the cops and complained about the noise right away. Five minutes later a couple of New Orleans' Finest were kicking in the Tremor front door as the "eerie, desperate screams issued forth from the Tremor household"—that's the way the guy with the funny hairdo on channel six put it. The cops burst in just as Steve was wrapping the head, which he savored for last to quench some poetic justice fantasy, but this turned out to be his undoing. He should have started at the top and worked his way down, shrink-wrapping that mouth first—20/20 hindsight, I know.

The cops freed Mrs. T and clubbed Steve into dazed submission and near apology. Cleopatra was on the phone with Wink Martindale's secretary the whole time. Mr. Tremor never stepped out of his study.

The wire services and networks picked up the sordid tale. Dan Rather made a wry comment and actually stuttered on his second pronunciation of "shrink-wrap." Served the sweater-monger right! And my best pal? He's out on bail right now. Steve's selling his life story to the Catholic Church—one huge cautionary parable. The Pope's flying in tomorrow—part of the deal. Steve craves a personal blessing and I, for one bystander, don't blame him.

Seems like someone—make that everyone—is trying to pack your meatballs these days! It's enough to give a guy the permanent bejersks! Just walking out the front door is taking too much of a chance! Too much vermin, corporate and otherwise, working the streets and the handicapped-parking zones. I can't even get out the frigging door without an in-depth investigation of the neighborhood through this nifty periscope I installed through the roof the other day. I scout the environs, gobble down five or six chocolate brownies, a bazooka

shot to the blood/sugar level, and if the light's good I'm off! Getting home is another boot in the groin. I usually play tag with fate and fifty-yard-dash it blind, slamming that door behind me, relieved to have made it home, corporeal frame intact, once again.

So I slam the door and wilt against it clawing for breath, pure oxygen in my own tent, something—and here's Steve fresh from Jailhouse Rock, sitting on the sofa in a priest's costume.

"What's the setup?" I gasp.

"Protection," Steve offers. "Maybe if I absolve myself in front of the Courthouse on the 5 o'clock news everyone'll forget and forgive. But this collar is a pain in the asteroids!"

"Think your Mom'll drop that charges?"

"Maybe. But there's always Plan B—"

"Which is?"

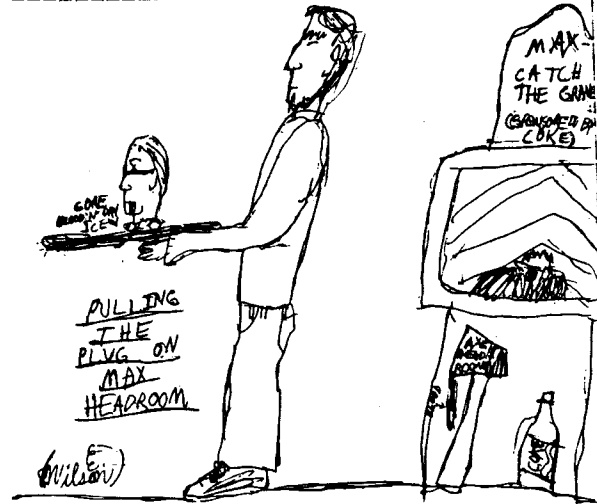
"Shave my head, grab one of Cleopatra's skirts, chant to my belly button for the next 20 years—all those Hare Krishnas look alike! They'll never find me!"

We sit down at the kitchen table. I get out the Gatorade and the syringe. While Steve is tying off his arm I pick up the binoculars and scan the neighbor's new aluminum siding for defects.

Steve sighs, "Just doing my own thing in my own time to my own mom..."

I re-focus the binoculars, think about suggesting some double German chocolate chip fudge cookies to boost the perk. Steve's dreaming of Hare Krishnaville. I'm staying indoors...

FLASH: The YIPpie office was raided & is being staked out as I write this. Please contribute to their defense fund if you can—for info call 212/533-5027 or 5028... tell Dana (or whomever) I sentcha...



STOPPING IN MID-"STROKE"

A Brief Word from your P.A.

I've been fending off inquiries on this for awhile now, and Elayne and I figured it was about time to come to some sort of decision. I am genuinely sorry about this announcement, as a number of people put a lot of effort into the project, and it is entirely my fault that it never came to fruition.

INSIDE STROKE, for all intents and purposes, is dead. I just do not have either the time nor the desire to continue on the project, and if anyone else seriously wants to carry it on, they can contact me via the IJ palatial p.o. box c/o Elayne.

Some people may have their material used in my apazine (see "Four-Color Fiend"), and anyone who desires to have their contributions and/or money returned need only get in touch.

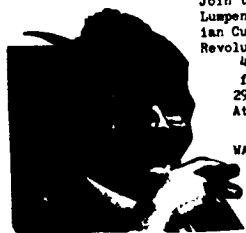
Please don't blame Elayne for any of this; she tried repeatedly to get me back into it, and I declined (sometimes not very politely, I'm afraid).

My deepest regrets go to Ace, Phil and the other artists who did some very funny stuff. The BLONDIE strip (no pun intended) is the best imitation of the old Tijuana Bibles that I've seen for a while.

- Notary Sojac

"Say the magic word and the duck will come down and pay you a hundred dollars." -- MARK

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WALL-OP



STRANGER

by Robin Lynne Widmeyer

Excuse me, but
don't I know you from somewhere?

If I'm not mistaken, I think
you were the other half of my smile
once.

Gosh, you've changed.

Yes, we knew each other...

As I recall,
you and I were very much in love
just a few short months ago.

Oh, I remember now—

you were the sun in my eyes
the song on my lips

and the rain on my face.

THE HEAT IS ON

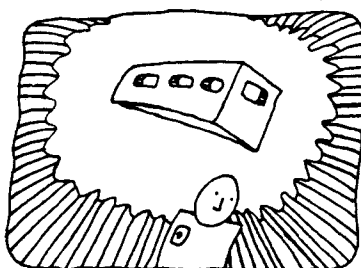
by Mary Ann Henn

The heat still rattled in the pipes
the night I died and she
next door went right on
shuffling her cards. I cried
not she her TV played on
and on playing trivia till late
and I drew up blue quilt
beneath my chin no sin
is that all you have to do
She'd probably say

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municate with YU!

*this blank
space could be
yours - if you
send me a tiny
poem or
ill...*



I FELT AS IF SOMETHING
WAS GOING TO HAPPEN,
IT WAS IN THE AIR.

THE BEST OF THE UNDERGROUND!
Oct. 86

TWISTED IMAGE

featuring
HENRY ROLLINS
JELLO BIAFRA
ZIPPY
CHARLES MANSON
and more !!

MORNING JOE...
SO HOW'S
BUSINESS?

COULDN'T BE
BETTER. BOB!
COULDN'T BE
BETTER!

to order
send \$2 to

TWISTED IMAGE
1630 UNIVERSITY AV. #26
Berkeley, Ca. 94703

by Ann Backwards - 8/1/86

UNFIXED WAGES:
Produce More or Less — Earn More or
Less while Ending Inflation.

DO THE OTHER CANDIDATES A FAVOR LIKE SAVING
THEIR LIVES.

1988

VOTE FOR J.C. BRAINBEAU

Ignorance

taking the form of a joke
dressed in a suit and tie
driving this year's model
allows for little
questions of implications
to actions necessary
for individual gratification

The wheels of commerce turn
for the benefit of those
whose needs are seen as greater
than those of the collective

Society's structure
of social classes
limits the progress
of man's evolution
to conditional surrender
for personal fortune

9/17/86

Jay DeFelicis

REVISIONARY BLUES

by Adam Eisenstat

I'm white
I'm happy
I'm white
I'm happy
got a job
and a pappy
I'm white
I'm happy
feel good
feel good

INCIDENT

by Mike Selender

i move thru a tunnel
beneath a concrete overpass
toward the dorms
ashen brick
conflagrations
thrust against the sky
back in the open
white pines line both sides
i sit
atop a stone walled square
enclosed by silent
white pine sentinels
a figure falls
against a volleyball net
bringing it down
players move in
encircling in care
as she lies knees bent
they help her up and away
and fold the net

POLITICIANS, JESTERS,
LIARS AND FOOLS

by Larry Blazek
Politicians, jesters
liars, fools
Cheat, cry
lie, loose

Sayz-U!(Letters)

(This first letter came in a bit late for inclusion in either of our last two issues, but I promised the author I'd run it anyway, so do bear with us if you don't remember all the references.)

Dear Elayne,

Thank you for the copy of INSIDE JOKE #50...I also read NOTES #5, with its description of each and every sexual encounter over a two-week period. Now, I've heard that some psychologists say that people who feel the need to advertise their sex life are insecure, and think they must prove to the world that they even have a sex life. Then there's also the saying, "Those who talk about it the most do it the least." (Well, in all fairness, I don't take issue with the truthfulness of the accounts in question, as I believe the authors to be honest sorts, but with its appropriateness. And not being a psychologist, I'd like to reserve judgment on the first hypothesis.)

Is "Satan's Brain Surgeon" a continuing story? I want to hear more about the trials and tribulations of Mary/Holly/Zog. (Alas, you caught the last of three chapters in #50, but with enough interest I'm sure Rodney might be persuaded to rerun it in his own zine, whenever that comes out.)

Of the 1986 "bombs," I saw and liked HOWARD THE DUCK and SHORT CIRCUIT, finding the latter hysterically funny. And I wanted to see LABYRINTH, as I'm a fan of David Bowie. Of the 1985 "losers," I wanted to see A VIEW TO A KILL, since I'm a James Bond fan, as well as THE BLACK CAULDRON (I like most kinds of animation). I saw 2010 (in 1984) and rather enjoyed it, and also found parts of INDIANA JONES and THE TEMPLE OF DOOM very amusing. I agree with you, Elayne, on many of these movies. Now, what will J.P. have to say about the films of 1987?

Rory Houchens has great taste in music. Though I don't have most of the albums named, I agree with many of his preferences, such as Pink Floyd, Kate Bush, Roxy Music, Neil Young, Thelonus Monk, The Who, The Beatles, Big Star, Steely Dan, Junior Walker, Creedence—just to name a few! I plan to keep my record player! Isn't Brian Eno playing New Age music and focusing less on rock these days?

I have not seen many chalk paintings on NYC sidewalks, though I've seen quite a few in Europe, particularly France and England. Isn't it a European custom, anyway? I imagine it's customary for low-income artists to display their work in that fashion, as chalk is inexpensive and they needn't buy paper or canvas. I remember seeing chalk drawings on West 8th Street, and thinking, "Oh wow, just like in Europe."

More next time! Take care—
NINA BOGIN
88 Seaman Avenue
New York, NY 10034

Dear Elayne,

Many thanks for IJ #51, which finally arrived in late March, right after I got back from four days of murder, mayhem and boredom in exotic Blackpool, referred to by those who still retain the power of speech as "The Easter Conference of the National Union of Students"...Nice cover; reminded me of a sort of Picasso-esque style. Diary Of The Rock Fiend is best described as being a lot like the Diary Of The Rock Fiend, which is to say that I thoroughly enjoyed it. "I Made Elvis Presley A Vampire" was amusing but not really very alternative—has Mildred seen Gary Panter's RAW one-shot, "Invasion of the Elvis Zombies"? Now that's bizarre! Slapstick horror has never really been my favourite form of writing but this was quite good.

"Dr. Iguana" definitely works best when Kenneth is being introverted and examining things from his own angles. Good stuff. How To Visit The Living Dead seemed to be in a very similar sort of style. With the plethora of "Prudence" stories this issue, it is getting hard to tell the "real" Prudence's style from Rodney's; the two obviously work very close together. As if I didn't know...

Larry Oberc's stuff is growing on me—his use of the first person is excellent but many of his pieces depend heavily on dialogue, and when that dialogue's not quite right, the piece fails. "Games" was like that.

"Dancing On The Jetty" was nice, and Rodney writing about Prudence brings a slight shift in perspective to the characters. (I may be mistaken, but it's likely Rodney wrote about Prudence before Prudence ever did.) Good pieces from both Steven Scharff and Mike Dobbs. Ditto Ho Chi Zen.

I'm fascinated by the amount of British material that surfaces in Wax Ink—in other words, the amount of rubbish that makes its way from this side of the Atlantic to your side. The Police and The Cure I can understand but The Jesus & Mary Chain? Rory made one curious remark—"I like Philip Glass as much as the next guy"...Research in the UK determines that the next guy hates Philip Glass. Personally, I think he's excellent. Went to see the English National Opera's production of AKHNATEN the other day, and that was transfixing.

Amusing little story by Tish.

Aha! Skipping by a few pieces that I intend to ignore (take THAT, Ace!) we reach "Commercial McClue-In." The first thing that struck me is that we get the same Kellogg's All-Bran advertisements that you do—the people with no stomachs. Next thing? Well, over here we don't have M&Ms, we have Smarties. There are red Smarties. If I recall my press cuttings correctly, someone tried to take some into the USA a few years back, was stopped at Customs and all the red ones were removed and flushed down the

Customs toilet or something. At the time I was struck by the surrealism of such an act, but now I know the reason why. "Red Dye #2," eh? Can anyone tell me what it's made of or otherwise called (Deborah?), and I'll track down its EEC code number (over here all additives have E-numbers, as they're called, and are listed not by name but by E-number on ingredients lists so you need to take a translation sheet around the supermarkets with you to find out what you're really buying. As one Member of Parliament said, we know more about what goes into our shirts than we do about what goes into our food).

The second half of "McMACK" was a disappointment; what had started off as a palatable Dr. Who revamp finished up with a bit of a damp squib. Still, amusing.

Although I'm into animation, "Animation Update" bored me stupid. "Four-Colour Fiend" was pretty hot...I notice that my signed copy of ZOT! 10½ is worth \$25?! You're kidding... Pigshit. Who?

The questionnaire results were quite interesting, but I'm not sure they merited a full page.

David Serlin's bit wasn't up to his usual standards, but if the guy's not up to the level of, say, F. Scott Fitzgerald by the time he's 75 then I for one will be very disappointed.

Lots of stuff about "My Favourite Martian" this ish. Unfortunately, I don't think it was ever shown over here—I certainly never saw it. Culturally deprived, that's what we are. Oh sure, we've got Shakespeare and J.G. Ballard and Alan Moore but we never get any decent reruns. While I'm mentioning Shakespeare, that cartoon is a very old pun over here—"tube E or not tube E," "2p or not 2p," etc. etc. ad infinitum.

That "Dress For Excess" series is beginning to catch my imagination. Lovely drawing, if nothing else.

"Strategies of Penetration" was really pretty funny; being different for the sake of being different is all too evident within society today, but if you can do it and laugh at yourself doing it, that's healthy. Fun, too...

Revision to the thing [in the letters column] about [INSTANT KARMA] reprints—all stuff will be totally untouched by subhuman editor, except for a little retyping and conversion into one of the eight new funky typefaces I've just acquired for my computer printer. Since it's dot-matrix they're all stored on disc and have to be shoved physically into each document which takes ages. IK #1 did suffer slightly from all the type looking the same (apart from the occasional bursts of italics). Anyway, no editing—not even for purposes of saving space. I will correct spelling but not grammar.

Deborah Benedict's minor synopsis on how and why she writes is interesting. Personally I find it very hard to just sit down and write something from scratch—I need INSPIRATION. Recently my muse hasn't been around much (dunno what's happened to her but I'm getting lonely); the ol' Wallis brain works in curious ways, usually throwing a word or phrase at me which will proceed to ricochet around within my skull until I finally write a story about it and "exorcise" it. On subsequent revisions, the original inspiration for the piece often gets cut. Maybe that's why my muse has vanished—she doesn't like censorship. Hmm. DB's idea of using a randomly-chosen word to spark ideas sounds a bit like this, except my muse used to do the choosing AND SHE'S NOT HERE NOW AND I MISS HER! Somewhere, a bit of me is sobbing its tiny heart out. A massive spiritual reward will be given to anyone who can point her back in my direction. PLEEEASE.

Meanwhile, I agree totally with Deborah about TRON—it's one of my favourite modern SF flicks, and the SFX are flawless. And to computer folks like me, it's all so wonderfully tongue-in-cheek! I don't know about you lot, but I want a Recogniser for my birthday! And a bit and a Solar Sailor (as pirated from a NASA development disk...).

And as far as censorship goes...it is your zine and what you do is your decision; you're not really answerable to anyone...As far as censorship of material submitted to IK goes, please bear in mind that my parents will be reading every issue and will disown and disinherit me if I print naughty stuff in it. My mother almost keeled over at the piece on public awareness of AIDS, and if she knew that I'd written it under a (blatantly obvious) pseudonym...well, I might as well have emigrated then and there.

BCNU,
JAMES WALLIS
Flat 5, 139 Hainault Road
London E11 1DT U.K.

Dear Elayne,

...As for issue Number 51, the cover both front and back were truly sublime. Not only is Rodney Dioxin a great prose stylist, he also gives good letter. Whenever I need that boost that caffeine will not give, I turn to the letters column. Thanks one and all for a great issue.

Yours,

MICHAEL POLO
P.O. Box 659
Matawan, NJ 07747

Elayne, bay-bee!

I've only briefly glanced through IJ #52, but I've come across oodles of fun stuff. Anni's piece is a nice change of pace for her (for one thing, it's a heckuva lot shorter), and I'd allow her to interrupt my favorite TV show (which at the moment is ABC's MAX HEADROOM—how did such a delightfully subversive, visually and ideologically mind-bending program manage to sneak onto the ever-pedestrian network airwaves? Pray that it has staying power!) with a press conference any day of the week! Mildred Neptune's further adventures with the newly-resurrected Elvis were gleefully

sordid, as was Vernon Grant's "Lobotomy by Lobster" cartoon.

'Twas a nifty expose on "The Big Blonde and the Two Big Bears Ganged Up on Me." Tom DeJa's "The French, They Are An Odd Race" is hilariously paranoid—I may never look at movie posters in quite the same way again! Kudos, too, to Vinnie Bartilucci's short take on the problems of breaking up with a superhero, "Divorcee in Distress." Must be kind of like being an ex-President—you're not really important anymore, but the crazies are still after ya because you're a symbol—heave! I agree with your critique of the gerber, that changing characters into other beings in midstream is a lot like changing realities and thus makes for a rather disjointed narrative. Otherwise, it was a fun read.

I'm in hearty agreement with Candi Strecker and her "The Talonization of America." Might I add, too, that according to surveys, the fingernails are the absolute last part of the body that a man notices on a woman (only 1% of men said they looked at a woman's nails first—and no doubt those nails were noticeable because they were "Dragon Lady" claws)...

Love (and rockets?),

DORIAN TENORE
301 E. 48th Street, #6D
New York, NY 10017

Dear Elayne,

I had returned from north of the border a few days ago and was wondering what had become of IJ #52 when, presto, it appeared in the mail...I'm glad you like the cover; upon seeing it in print it's very nice but I would do it differently now...I haven't read the whole issue #52 but I liked "Video Angst." "Why Do Ghouls Fall In Love?" was also terrific, as was Gary Pig Gold's piece, which is wrapped up in my history as much as it is his—a true tale, well written. This passage with Zenarchy stories resembles the efforts of some friends of mine years ago, which produced a single issue that I may have mentioned before.

The John Ohlinger piece is marvelous.

And I'd also like you to pass along my interest to Steve for his comics review, which as a comic reader from time to time and a once-zealous collector I enjoy.

"One Evening" was well intended, I could say a lot about it, but I'll keep it short. Sincerity goes a long way, even in apparent failure. But the whole thing was sort of simple, and because it involves a myriad of things would have been better longer or shorter, considerably.

Time walks short.

Adieu,

DAZA
Box 106
Manchester Centre, VT 05255

Dear Elayne,

I liked INSIDE JOKE 52 a lot, but then I was predisposed to after you hit numerous sympathetic chords in your editorial—from baseball to John Lennon to running off zines surreptitiously...Not too long ago I read your letter in THE DELINEATOR which I had, unfortunately, received—a statement about sf fandom along the lines of "If nominated I will not run, if elected I will not serve" but more succinct than Coolidge was. And that predisposed me to send for INSIDE JOKE. Well, I had years ago seen a copy, but I suppose I just wasn't ready for it! (Well, we've changed a bit through the years, I suppose...)

Noticed in the letters the tail end, it seems, of a discussion about "private matters" in magazines. I like your MTINTK quotient. It's odd, but a similar discussion—in this case more like an argument—is going on in small press. Tim Corrigan, who publishes THE SMALL PRESS COMICS EXPLOSION, has refused to carry ads for a few minis ranging from pornography to blatant racism, sadism etc., and has caught a lot of flak because of it. My feeling is that when you edit your own magazine it's up to you what you want to print and besides, we are so bombarded with sex in the media what is the point of adding still more? Shouldn't we be doing something different? It's not that it's improper, it's just that it's a waste of time, a waste of resources, a waste of these special kinds of creative outlets, with of course rare exceptions. However, in my time in sf fandom I noticed something interesting in relation to MTINTK. Sf fans, and presumably most readers, tend to like reading MTINTK material. I've seen more than once a new fan come along, put out a personal zine with all sorts of revelations. The newcomer is hailed as a great new talent, etc. etc., and continues to pour out the revelations. A year later response drops off, the fans lose interest, there's somebody newer, with fresher revelations. Nobody, it turns out, was really interested in the fan's writing per se—they were just interested in finding out all they could and once there wasn't any juice left...well...

Course, I probably shouldn't be saying this since I don't know what you deem MTINTK. Maybe you need to know less than me, or vice versa. One can write, and I've seen some such writing recently, intimately without being gratuitous. (I agree, such distinctions are very necessarily subjective, but I tend to reject the intimate as well as the gratuitous, even though I'd usually tend to read the former if it appeared in another publication. I try to base my judgment on, among other things, the number of times the word "I" is overused...)

I just mentioned sf fandom a few times. It's funny—sf fans, what few are left, are generally unaware that there is anything outside their own mail network, and they seem to be about the most isolated network there is. Small press people, I've found, don't refer to themselves as fans—to them fans, and fandom, refer to comics fandom. That is, to people who are basically fans of comics rather than creators. Sf fans were originally fans of science fiction and although they've in large part ceased being that (at least among the self-styled sf fanzine fans) I can see the de-

rivation of the name. But, I notice you refer to "fandom" and to "fanzines" and of course your editorial is called Fan Noose. I'm just curious why? What is the derivation? It doesn't strike me that INSIDE JOKE is about anything except what you want it to be about—and I can't imagine it having sprung from any "fandom" that I know about. Do you consider it a part of some definable gestalt? In other words—what have I stumbled into? (Even after six or so years of doing this, that question's still a toughie. I'm not sure I ever want to pin down one set definition of IJ, because I still believe that once you tend to label something, there's a definite danger of that thing being pigeonholed and thought of afterwards as only one sort of publication, to the exclusion of anything else. I like to think IJ has something for everybody, from writers to illustrators to philosophers to networkers and even to fans. You are correct, however, in your assumption that IJ did not grow out of sf fandom—interestingly enough, as some old-time readers may recall, we started as a fanzine-of-sorts for a local vaudeville-type comedy show called The Uncle Floyd Show. The Fan Noose section began as a sort of snide gossip column about the program's "groupies" and such, evolved into a review of other Floyd-related publications in existence, and then when IJ branched away from Floyd and into comedy & creativity in general it turned into the plug column it is today. Nowadays, when I refer to "fandom" and "fanzines" I am almost certainly discussing sf fandom, in which I was involved briefly (but not briefly enough, it sometimes seems) four or five years ago and from which I still retain a few individual (rather than packrat-mentality) friends. And given that I am often predisposed to the same sort of generalities you make above about sf fans, I see no reason to change the sarcastic pun of the plug column's title.)

Now, one thing for sure, there is a lot of good stuff here. I'm not even going to think about commenting on everything or even half of it. Some articles I liked a bunch—G.M. Dobbs' rather allegorical tale of turning into a Yuppie. When George woke he was a Yuppie. It was no dream. However, I really want to see the sequel to this—how does a Yuppie survive without big bucks? Well, we're told George is going to go into consulting work, but, I mean, does one qualify for a job out of sheer yuppiness? Being a legal editor I am surrounded by childless, two-income yups who really do spend half their time—at the office at least—discussing CD players. Which is maybe why I write a lot of letters.

Another goodie was Larry Oberc's STUCK. Reminded me of our attraction as kids to the places where big pipes had been laid under streets instead of bothering to make a bridge, to carry creek-water. There always seemed something romantic about those tunnels. Actually they were just old pipes filled with slime and muck. We never crawled into ours very far, just fantasized about it.

My favorite was PIGSHIT—and I wonder why Gary had to name it that? Does he get a kick out of people writing in saying stuff like "I really enjoyed PIGSHIT" etc. etc.? Or do other people think these things out before they type them, or use correction fluid? My kids would like the title. (Actually, I believe the story itself has a subtitle; PIGSHIT is Gary's "handle," in the same way "Dr. Iguana" is Ken's or "Rock Fiend" is Anni's. Gary, who uses "Pig" as his middle name, also puts out his own one-sheet zine with the name PIGSHIT. You'd have to ask him about the origin of the "Pig," but I'd personally guess the "-shit" is simply another way of saying "stuff" [see George Carlin's "shit" routine, for example].) Despite that, it was extremely well written and moving. I don't know if I'll ever go back to the town where I grew up. No relatives live there any longer. We moved next door to my grandmother's house. After my parents sold their house we still lived nearby for a few years. But when my grandmother died, when mortgage rates were so high (if she'd thought it through she would have waited, I guess) my parents had trouble selling it, or the real estate agent did, or said she did or something, and the bank stepped in to help out and so the house ended up going, for a pittance, to some kid of one of the bank's loan officers. I don't think I could stomach seeing the place my grandparents lived in for half a century occupied by some rich kid whose rich father had stolen it for him. My grandfather, who died back in 1961, had always hated banks and bank presidents, since he'd been robbed by those sorts in the past. But he and my grandmother had come from farms...they didn't know much about growing money. Of course, the banker and the banker's kid knew nothing about the lives that went on in that house, all they knew was how much money they saved on the swindle...

A word about Steve Chaput's column. I haven't been around comics for long—in fact I despise most of what I've seen by the major companies, even most of what comics fans seem to feel is good. (I thought the "new" Superman even worse than the old one...the issue I could stand reading.) It isn't surprising though, considering the way comics are produced in assembly-line fashion. Even best-selling trash authors write pretty much according to their own schedules. They're not cranking out corporate product to deadlines. But last summer my wife and I came upon mainly B&Ws, and found a lot of good stuff there. Most of the comics I read are B&Ws and so I can't feel very happy about the B&W bust. Heck, I'm scripting a B&W comic now and while I'm no judge of my own writing—who is—I've seen the pencils for the first issue and I can see they're better than most of what the major companies are doing. What few major companies there are.

Steve seems to be taking an attitude I've seen recently, almost one of gloating over small publishers getting what they deserve. Okay. There's no doubt there was a lot of trash out there. Of course, most of the comics Steve mentions this issue are B&Ws, and

I wonder how many of those publishers will get what they deserve 'cause of the crash?

Yeah, it would be nice if some publishers had been a little more realistic in their self-appraisal and waited till they actually were capable of better work. But I guess my years of amateur publishing have affected me; I'd rather see everyone have a crack at it—democratically—than a couple of giant companies, with a corporate bottom line to worry about, deciding according to their own peculiar standards what's good enough and what's not. Just as I read many things of value in the amateur press which would never be commercially viable enough to be published by big publishers, so I've read many excellent B&Ws that wouldn't be able to attract enough comic buyers to make corporate-type profits.

But the beauty of the B&Ws is that, if they are produced as B&Ws—with two color covers, without frills—it is possible for them to make a small profit by selling to a small audience. So an artist can stick to his own idiosyncratic visions, reach a few thousand and maybe survive, rather than having to worry about homogenizing his vision enough to reach the number of readers required by large publishing companies.

Of course, my view of all this is influenced by the people I know who are involved in it, none of whom are out to make a killing but all of whom would, naturally enough, like to be able to make a living by communicating to people through their art rather than by tending bar or working for a corporation.

I guess it's like if someone were to tell us there was this distribution system whereby a few people had, and maybe we could, scrape a living off publishing...it'd be pretty hard to resist...

(One of the handier aspects of living with my production assistant and the writer of "Four-Color Fiend" is that I can get Steve to reply to this letter right away, and so he does:

"Since last issue was your introduction to my column, I cannot fault you for perhaps misunderstanding my position on B&Ws. Over the last year I've reviewed and recommended dozens of B&Ws and, as a matter of fact, most of my current favorites are B&Ws by the various independents [or 'small presses,' if you prefer that term]. The number of books by The Big Two that I purchase dwindle constantly.

"My chief complaint with many B&Ws is that they consist of material that should be relegated to self-published zines that go for a buck or so, and not published with a glossy color cover forced to compete with professional material. While a great deal of the B&W material is "good" by fanzine standards, the average comics buyer [and remember that the 'average' comics reader leaves the hobby after 3-4 years] feels burnt by sloppy writing and bad art, whether it's in color or B&W.

"I personally feel that a shakeup of the B&W market will allow the better material [see my current column for my list of favorites] to find its audience [CEREBUS and the original run of ELF-QUEST immediately come to mind], just as it has in the past."

And all I'd have to add to that is that some of IJ's dear friends, like Will Shetterly and Valentino, are involved in publishing B&W comics, along with lesser-known [but no less deserving of mention] names like Brian Pearce, Matt Feazell, J.P. Morgan, and quite a few others. When I think of bad B&Ws, I think of pro company ripoffs like the crap that Blackthorne puts out—these are among the bandwagon-hoppers which Steve mentioned last issue, and in my opinion, oblivion's too good for 'em.)

Better not go on too long...

Best,

ERIC MAYER
1771 Ridge Road East
Rochester, NY 14622

(Too long? Nonsense. A wonderful first-time letter, Eric—thanks raising some good points and questions, and I hope we've explained anything you might not have gotten the first time 'round!)

Dear Elayne:

'Saturday night's alright for typing/Saturday night's alright.'

"Deadly Eyes" is on the USA Network. Barbara and Nick are down for the night and my IJ and Liquid Paper are at hand. Time for a little correspondence.

Firstly, Elayne, thanks for getting the 'zine back on line. I sometimes didn't know what to do with myself while waiting for my IJ to show up. (Well, let's not speak too soon; I only promised to try. We may have to be bimonthly...but we'll see.) Of course, Barbara and I have been a little busy for the past eight weeks. The quasi-uber-baby was born on 10:March at 6:57 P.M. As usual, life has not been the same since, and will never be again. For those who may be concerned, we went through Lamaze, which is definitely more than I needed to know or ever want to know again. I don't care what anyone says about the birth of a baby, it is gross. Period. So far, the end product is worth it. He looks just like his mom.

On to the comments (52)...Anni was on target again. I have had a portable television at work watching the hearings and have been shocked and appalled and most of all fascinated. Anni held up admirably under the strain of questioning.

"A Visit to Grandma's" was excellent. Does Prudence ghost-write for Bill Watterson? Another fave was Talk Show Host Confidential. I have often wondered where yups come from.

"Stuck" was fun. Snide Critic Reviews was snide, as usual. (Can't find the time or desire to go to the movies. Babs and I did go to see the new Police Academy movie. Fair.) And "Commercial McClue-In" was informative and infunative at the same time.

[The rats in this movie are real smart and real fake.]

"Urban Folklore" is a strange one. But I like it.

Steve, I bought a copy of BULLET CROW, and liked it quite a bit. Try the new EVANGELINE. I like it. The lead character is

a space-going, nun assassin. I am serious and they are too.

[I love these rats.] Good cartoon on page 20, J.P. You are definitely right, Gary. You can never go home again. That is why I have never gone back to New York to visit, even though I still have dreams about high school occasionally.

And I liked the gerber. My same comments from the last one apply. "Interest" could be interesting. I can certainly identify with the story.

Well, the letter's a little choppy, as usual, and the movie just ended, so it's time to wrap. The cats are taking to Nick pretty well and we're both glad about that. The grandparents are happy about it—especially the dueling grandmas—and Nick has the remnants of a cold but is healthy otherwise. He just learned to push up a little and to roll over. If we could paper-train him... well...that would be better. I almost have the time to start drawing again. I got an art show in Michigan to prepare for.

Greetings from Swamp Florida, PHIL TORTORICI
P.O. Box 57487
West Palm Beach, FL 33405

Dear Elayne,

Oops, dammit...no Snide Critic column this time around. I haven't popped out to the movies for a while, so instead of complaining about crappy new movies, let's complain about crappy TV editing of movies. Perfidy! Infamy! Bah! Channel 11 [WPIX] and "Fox Nitwork" Channel 5 [WNYW] seem to have put scissors and film cement in the hands of zombies, as usual; I tried to watch THE PINK PANTHER STRIKES BACK (on 11), and for some reason they cut out the old man playing Indian from the opening sanitarium scene, so all we saw was a suction-cup arrow come from nowhere to complete Dreyfus' (Herbert Lom) relapse! Some bits with a whoopie-cushion-like hemorrhoid pillow were cut (a remaining scene had the "raspberry" electronically removed from the soundtrack); but most vexing of all snipping of the entire scene where Clouseau (Sellers) deals with a senile hotel clerk ("Clerk: "...Zimmer?...oh, you want a room!" Clouseau: "That is what Ah hev bin saying to yeu, yeu idiot!") Since this is an important scene—it helps establish Clouseau's disguise as a dentist to enter Dreyfus' castle—I wonder what the "editors" were thinking about? Channel 5 was just as bad with its butchering of GHOST OF FRANKENSTEIN (Universal, 1942, with Bela Lugosi playing Ygor with relish), a 90-minute feature cut down to 70, with commercials! The entire Monster's resurrection from the sulphur pit was missing, and god knows what else was chopped out by the jerks...they must have overdosed on NutraSweet, or some damn thing. A pox on 'em all! (My enjoyment of TV-broadcast movies has greatly diminished since this arbitrary censorship. It's amazing how random the repressed anxieties of the censors get when it comes to, for instance, Mel Brooks movies. My favorite, YOUNG FRANKENSTEIN, had most of the humor snipped out, and I don't even want to begin to tell you what they did with HISTORY OF THE WORLD, PART I [such as leaving the Inquisition scene in but cutting the Last Supper scene! Now that's arbitrary!]. And the networks are still in a quandary as to why they're losing viewership.) So let's look at IJ #52, quick!

A great "Rock Fiend" from Anni! She can sling circumlocution with the best of 'em! Tuli's cartoon was a neat co-conspirator. Another chapter of Prudence & Bunny—yes, yes! Dr. Iguana keeps rolling along, the high point being the "Stupa-Snax" commercial. Swell Yuppie terror from Mr. Dobbs. Hey, wow, congratulations, Mr. and Mrs. Tortorici (and hello, Nick!) Especially nice Zenarchy this issue. Yossarian News keeps gettin' better. I wish I'd drawn the "Lobotomy by Lobster" cartoon that Vernon did! Another swell McClue-In column (w/ matching cartoons), Kid... "Talonization of America," amazingly enough, actually made fingernails interesting to read about. Morris' "Postal Exam" delivered chuckles. Elayne, you sounded disappointed with the party gerber...I kinda liked it, meself. Neat Ayn Rand 'toon by Nina. Yes, another superfluous issue! Oops, superlative—I mean superlative!!

Let me exit with a plug for a great cassette: "Living with Victoria Grey" by Cleaners from Venus. Yes, they're for real—they do amazing Hollies-inspired stuff (big hit: "Mercury Girl!"), with strange li'l comedy bits in between. Everybody at WFUM likes this. Just \$5.95 from Greenlight Records & Tapes, P.O. Box 23121, Cleveland, OH 44123. Hotcha!

ILLEGITIMI NON CARBORUNDUM! Okay?

JOHN P. MORGAN
185 Seabreeze Ave., #4
East Keansburg, NJ 07734

Dear Elayne,

This will be brief, but hopefully with some point. Placating the almighty supervisor was never something I wanted to get into, and I suspect I have him fairly pissed (Americanism) by now.

Anni Ackner has done much better. The same style of quiz as her Dope Fiend test is used to the same splendid effect in the United States Postal Examination. (That piece was written by Roger Morris, not by Anni—perhaps you have them confused in this instance?) Maybe I just haven't seen enough surreal multiple-choice papers, but I doubt it. Incidentally, on a quite wide sampling the USP exam rated very highly; Fluffy was so warped by the experience he had to throw a steaming teabag around our kitchen (whacky student stuff, don't you know).

Ligi's 2842 Northeast Rodney Way managed really rather nicely, whilst daudling along in no particular direction and finally fading out instead of finishing.

G.M. Dobbs' grotesque transformation story was quite stomach-churning. After all, there is nothing wrong with any of the things George got up to, individually, or moderated with a goodly

dose of brain-damage by some other means: everybody needs to get their proper measure of excess or they cease to be worth talking to. I for one quite like the films mentioned, but I would pursue them in abundance (I have managed 13 films in 48 hrs. once). The style of the tale does fail towards the end: Yuppies do not "stumble through life" nor become despondent (yes, but you would if you're turning into a Yuppie against your will, which was the point—ed.), they lack the necessary depth to realise there is anything to be unhappy about, and you have to have quite remarkable balance to manage some of the fashions and chemical add-ons necessary for your status.

Zenarchy: now that Gurdjieff had something. Hideously careful trials performed on unsuspecting friends of mine reveal that "kastousilia" is a mind-toppling exercise, and definitely to be recommended when chemical assistance fails.

Could you pass on to YU News an item of British affairs: for the next summer solstice Stonehenge will be open for druidic and other traditional celebrations (hippies are now traditional) but by limited ticket admission. The tickets cost nothing and are being given to various near-respectable organisations for distribution. This is in an earnest attempt to avoid the farcical situation the police found themselves in last summer: chasing a hippie convoy of automotive relics around the countryside whilst being, in turn, pursued by hordes of news-hacks looking for a good police-brutality case to report. Your correspondent (and a few others) will be watching the situation for the hoped-for foul-up.

Note that we in the 'Old Country' (most of which was built in the last fifty years, and that which was not is usually just a pain) are more refined than to have "barroom brawls," especially among the clergy. No, here we have street fights. This avoids the embarrassment of taking a swing at someone only to find that a wall has been foolishly built in the middle of your back-swing.

Anti-drug campaigns: not just limited to the land of the freebie: we have them here, in various guises. Oriental note: there are four television channels—BBC1, ITV, BBC2, and Channel 4 (in order of decreasing audiences, and [lumping the first two together] in order of increasing content). A recent Channel 4 (C4) documentary analysed the coverage of crack in this country, in all media; or rather the producers, more cunningly, hired a team of top British advertising consultants to do it for them. The Ad-Men were asked: how would you go about promoting this drug? The answer, after some discussion, was to get exactly the sort of news coverage as the "outraged" media had produced. In other words the most susceptible group in Britain has been consistently sold on the most recent fashion in drugs. I could be tempted to give up.

I agree entirely with the sentiments expressed so neatly by Candi Strecker on fashionable disablement. See also Bernard Wolfe's novel 'Limbo 90' ('Dodge The Steamroller!').

From a more northerly (and some might say superior position, but that is probably an accident of map-reading) stance, I have this to say on James Wallis' notes on regional brogues: having lived in Scotland for five-odd years now, I can get by fairly well with an average Glaswegian—of course my previous patois (London [pronounced Laaanden]) is lost to me—but I will never get the hang of the Fife (lowlands Scots) or Aberdeen accents. In this I am as lost as all the other Scots who are not native to these regions. Let no one fool you into believing that there is a Scottish accent, there are about ten; all mutually incomprehensible in the traditional manner in which peons the world over avoid being understood by their overlords, and thus lead fuller and happier lives (in a pig's eye, half of the time)...

Too much, already. See ya!

MALCOLM HODKIN
3, Main Street
Strathkinness, Fife KY16 9UE
Scotland, UNITED KINGDOM

Dear Elayne,

Well, well, well. (Three deep subjects.) Got issue #52 yesterday. I'm still digesting parts of it, but I felt compelled to write something now, while my first impressions were still fresh and not tinged by a good night's sleep.

First: Shame on you! Harlan Ellison, God of the Written Word (a man I would talk through hell on Sunday to see tie his shoes) was born on May 27, 1934. Ask him—he'll tell you so. (While I do apologize to Harlan, wherever he is, I doubt he'd actually give enough of a shit to care about the date mixup...which, I'm told, is what makes him so lovable.)

Second: Glad to see the THE MONTHLY...BULLETIN earned 5*'s. I sent for a sample copy last week. (I take this to be tacit approval of my new * rating system, so until I hear otherwise, I'll continue to so recommend publications in "Fan Noose".)

Third: Have you "done" PABLO LENNIS yet? (Never heard of it.) I got a sample issue the same day IJ arrived. I'd give it—maybe —2*'s. The artwork (and I use that term loosely) leaves much to be desired.

Fourth: tickled to see I can get FUNNY TIMES free because I live in Cleveland. I always knew there had to be something good about being stuck here. (Strongsville [a/k/a Yupoie City, USA] is a scant 22 miles from downtown Cleveland, thereby earning the right to be called a "suburb".)

Fifth: for what it's worth, my opinion on the letters question is: KEEP THE LETTERS IN THE BACK. It makes IJ unique and different. (Redundant statement, yes?)

Sixth: I liked the Pink Bunny story so much, I'm [sending] for the next issue with the continuation of this in it. WARNING! If that old witch hurts P.B. in any way (dyes it blue, mayhaps?) I will be forced to write nasty letters to Prudence Gaelor for a 1-o-n-g time.

Seventh: The Continuing Saga of Dr. Iguana was, well, interesting. I'm not too sure why, but I particularly liked the Shaggy Dog Story.

Eighth: Backwords Logic was...different. On first reading, I missed the part about "LSD." After I spotted it, the story made more sense.

Ninth: 2842 Northeast Rodney Way was captivating. Shame it didn't give us more of the conversational prowess of Louis Pasteur.

Tenth: Stuck was good. I'll admit to more than a few chuckles while reading it. Compliments to Larry Oberc.

Eleventh: The Big Blonde And The Two Big Bears Ganged Up On Me —this corny little story was surprisingly good. As I first started reading it I sorta groaned and said "ahh, shit" expecting the story to be likewise. Thankfully, it was not.

Twelfth: Bedtime Story was good. I told it to my kids, however, and they didn't see the humor in it. In fact, the oldest one (Anna, aged 6½) said "That's stupid, mommy." But what does she know?

Thirteenth (unlike major hotels, who have a problem with 13, I feel quite comfortable with it): Rats Live On No Evil Star was good, too. I think you did a decent job of winding up everything...almost...

Fourteenth: What's the big deal about the MTINTK stuff? It's your magazine, and you can print anything you want to. There's even a law somewhere that says editors can edit things (that's why they call them editors). (NO, NOT THE "E" WORD!) And if there's not a law like that, there should be.

Besides, everyone else publishes stuff like that, so why should IJ? I had gotten the impression that IJ was somewhat of a rebel-publication. (Well, we try.) That being the case, you deserve to be different. By publishing none of the standard titillating crap that people can get anywhere. By having the letters in the back of the magazine. By printing a column called PIGSHIT. (Which, incidentally, I enjoyed almost as much as I enjoyed the title—wish I'd thought of it first...!)

I could go on and on, but there's really no need to do so. I can't think of anything in it that totally disgusted me or anything—the worst reaction I had to any of it was "so what?" or "ehh."

Overall, I was quite impressed with the IJ—it was even better than I'd been expecting (and I had high hopes)!...

Satis verborum...

KATHY STADALSKY
14264 Prospect Road
Strongsville, OH 44136-4834



THE VILLAGE WORDSMITHY

by Erik Nelson

I think that I shall never see,
a futtock that is nugatory.

Nor unnun a zaftig abecedarian,
who's palinoic over a ranarium.

I'd never be limaceous over quims,
unless she was a slubberdegullion.
Instead I'd ponder aeaeae yethounds,
or the trilemma of sesquipdealian
oxymorons.

I'd compose a tetragram about
winchester goose,
that was clearly more pigney
than oleaginous.

For if I became just a wordy
pilgarlic bard,
I'd deserve some zoanthropy and a
well-lit petard.

I'd rather just dabble in oenemel poesie,
and change ylem to palimpsests effortlessly.

MORE OF LOVE
by Sigmund Weiss
There are times a man gets more of love
in his heart than he can handle;
lets it burst forth as if to free himself.
Somehow, people just don't take to him
like he were natural,
which gives him a bad feeling
like he being sick and crazy like,
while inside himself he cries
as if he is keeping a secret
he couldn't or wouldn't tell anybody;
almost dies then meditates;
a sort of love
that gradually works its way into wisdom.

Manifesto of "Bob" in E Minor Brought to you by the LDFs of Utah

When in the face of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the *Conspiracy* bonds which have confronted them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the *Squirtin' Universe*, the separate and unequal station to which the laws of *Sanity* and *Hedonism* entitle them, a decadent respect for the outrageousness of Mankind's desires that they should *declare the forces which impel them to the separation*.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all SubGenii are created *horny*; that they are endowed through their *Mentor* with certain unalien rights; that among these are *Frop*, *Sex*, and the *Pursuit of Slack*. That, to enjoy these rights, *Clenches* are instituted among SubGenii, deriving their just *Slack* from the effect of the *Frop*; that, whenever any form of the *Conspiracy* becomes destructive of this *Slack*, it is the *right of the SubGenius* to alter or to demolish it, and to institute *new Slack*, laying its foundation on such frivolities and organizing parties in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their *Sanity* and *Hedonism*. Prudence, indeed will demonstrate that *Sacraments* long established should not be abused for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experiences hath shown, that SubGenii are *more disposed to hide out*, while life is unsufferable, *than to sell themselves by ignoring the Slack to which they are entitled*. But when a long train of abusers and usurpers, pursuing assuamably the same object, effects a plan to squash them under insolent despotism, it is their *Birthright*, it is their *Duty*, to throw off such goons and to prime *new Slack for the Future Serenity*. Such have been the repeated sufferances of the SubGenius, and such is now the Nirvana which compels them to abandon their former styles of entertainment. The history of the present *Glorps-In-All-Places* is a history of repetitive banalities and absurdities, all having in direct consequence the establishment of an *attempted stranglehold* over these SubGenii. To prove this, let facts be submitted to the Common World:

They have refused consent to laws the most wholesome and necessary for the *SubGenius'* good.

They have forbidden government to pass laws of enjoyable and personable implications, unless hidden within others until notice is obtained; and, when so hidden, *they have noticeably searched to eradicate them*.

They have refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of SubGenii, unless they would relinquish the right of *I & I (Intercourse and Intoxication)*, a right inestimable to them and formidable to the tyrants.

They have called together legislative bodies of unusual, uncompromising and distant beings, for the purpose of fatiguing *SubGenii* into compliance with their measures.

They have dissolved representation of SubGenii repeatedly for opposing with their *Manly Firmness* the invasion of the Rights of the *Slackful*.

They have refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause *SubGenii* to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, capable of annihilation, have not yet returned to the SubGenii at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the *dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within*.

They have *endeavored to prevent the popularization of this Church*, for that purpose obstructing the laws for harvesting of *Sacraments*, refusing to pass others to ensure freedoms hither, and razing the conditions of new appropriations of *Frop*.

They have obstructed the administration of the *Frop*, by refusing their assent to laws for establishing *Frop Parlors*.

They have made *judges dependent of their will alone*, for the tenure of their offices, and the severity and consequence of their findings.

They have erected a *multitude of bureaucratic offices*, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our *People*, and eat at their *Securities*.

They have kept among us, in time of perplexities, *HipWimps* without the concern of our *Libidos*.

They have affected to render militant tactics and a superior posture to the *SubGenius*.

They have combined with others to subject *SubGenii* to a lifestyle foreign to

our constitution, and unacknowledged by our beliefs; giving their assent to their acts of pretend legislation:

For quartering large bodies of *HipWimps* among us:

For protecting them, by a mock acceptance, from punishment for any obscenities which they should commit on the *individuals of this Cult*:

For cutting off our trade with all *SubGenii* of the world:

For imposing taxes on us without our consent:

For *depriving us*, in most cases, of the benefits of trial by peers:

For transporting us beyond venue to be tried for pretended offenses:

For abolishing the *free system of SubGenius UnLaws*, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule over these *SubGenii*:

For *taking away our Frop*, invading our most sacred rites, and altering laws to confuse our members:

For superceding our own *UnLegislatures*, and *declaring themselves* invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

They have *abdicated freedom* here, by declaring us within their protection and raising havoc with us.

They have *plundered our Sanities*, *ravaged our Frop fields*, burnt our publications, and disrupted the lives of our *People*.

They are at this time *cloning large armies of Feeble MedioCretins* to confiscate the works of *J. R. "Bob" Dobbs, Reverend Ivan Stang, and Doktor Philo Drummond*, already begun with circumstances of censorship and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous age, and totally run by the head of a *callous nation*.

They have constrained our fellow *SubGenii*, and taken captive their *high Sacraments*, to bear grudges against their *Mentor*, to become the censors of their friends and once fellow *SubGenii*, or to fool themselves by their new *Wimpress*.

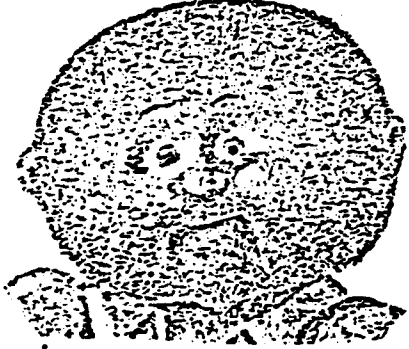
They have attempted demeaning insurrections amongst us, and have endeavored to bring on the other inhabitants of our communities: the *J-Dubs, the Scientologists, the Mormons, the Southern Baptists*, whose known rules of conformity are an attempted *destruction of our axioms, sex lives, and cohabitations*. In every state of these oppressions, we have partied for "*Bob's*" sake in the must unhumble terms; our repeated *Devivals* have been answered by the repeated indifference. A friend, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a *Pink*, is unfit to be among a *SubGenius* *Clench*.

Nor have we been wanting in attention to our *Conspiracy brethren*. We have warned them, from time to time, of attempts made by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the *circumstances of our defection and resurgence* here. We have appealed to their naive justice and management, and we have connived them, by the lies of our common competency, to *desist these usurpations*, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They, too, have been deaf to the *joys of Frop and Slackdom*. We must, therefore, emphasize the necessity of delineating our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of *Moronicism, Slack Thieves, Peons-for-Hire*.

We, therefore, the members and supporters of the *Church of the SubGenius*, in general attitude agreed, appealing to the sane beings of the world for the recititude of our intentions do, in the name, and by the acknowledgment of the members of this *Church*, solemnly publish and declare, that these *SubGenii* are and of the right ought to be, *Free and Independent Beings*: that they are absolved from all allegiance to the *Conspiracy*, and that all social connections between them and the *Conspiracy* is and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that as *Free and Independent Beings* they have full power to take *Frop, Rant, conduct orgies, experience Slack*, and to do all other acts and things which *SubGenii* may of necessity do. And, for the support of *J. R. "Bob" Dobbs*, we mutually pledge to each other our *Bodies*, our *Frop*, and our *Sacred Individuality*.

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LET US WHAT
THOU WILT



Tim Cridland

SHALL BE
THE COLE
OF THE SLAW

THE MIND BLASTER

AMAZING! NOW! A FEW SAMPLES OF LETTERS THAT POUR IN DAILY...

ASK THE EXPERTS!

"PURE UNADULTERATED BAWLING BELIEVES BULLDOGA."
(me)

"PROVES THAT THE CHURCH WAS NOT YET BEEN COMPLETELY OVER-RUN BY THE 'BOBBIES'."

"IT BROUGHT TEARS TO THE EYES OF EVEN AS JAKED AND JAUNDICED A SUBGENIUS AS MYSELF."

"THIS IS TOPNOTCH STUFF."

"STOMACH BUSTING...LOTS OF GUFFAWS."

"MAKES 'SHEAR' LOOK MAINSTREAM."

"EXCELLENT!"

"GREAT!"

REV. IVAN STANG

ROBERT ANTON WILSON

JAMES MOSELEY

SAUCER SHEAR

MIKE MISKOWSKI

MALLIFE

DAVE GORDON

POPULAR REALITY

LURE MCGUFF

LIVE FROM THE STAGGER CAFE

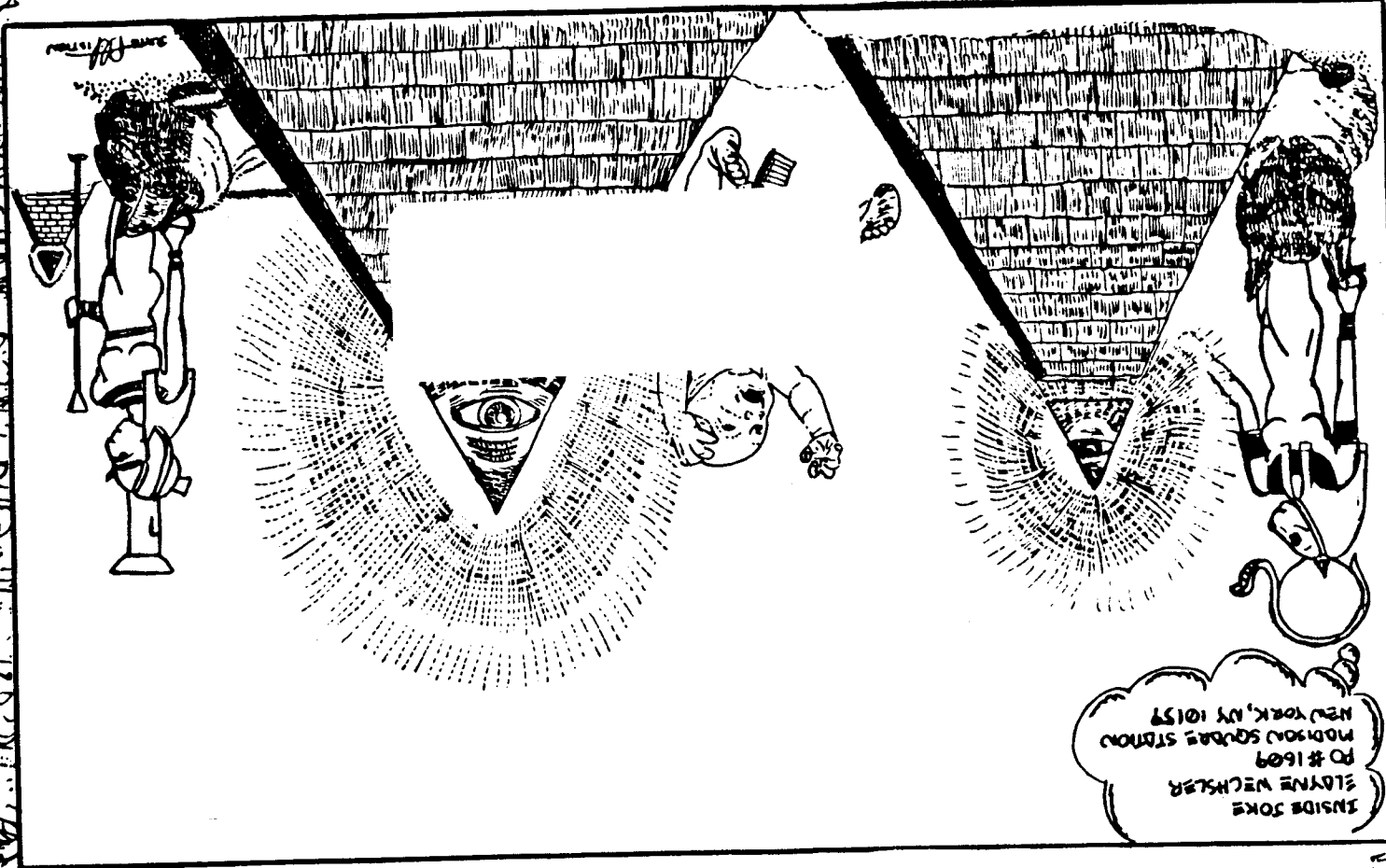
MIKE GUNDERLOY

FACTSHEET FIVE

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Q. Aren't all stripping chemicals alike?

