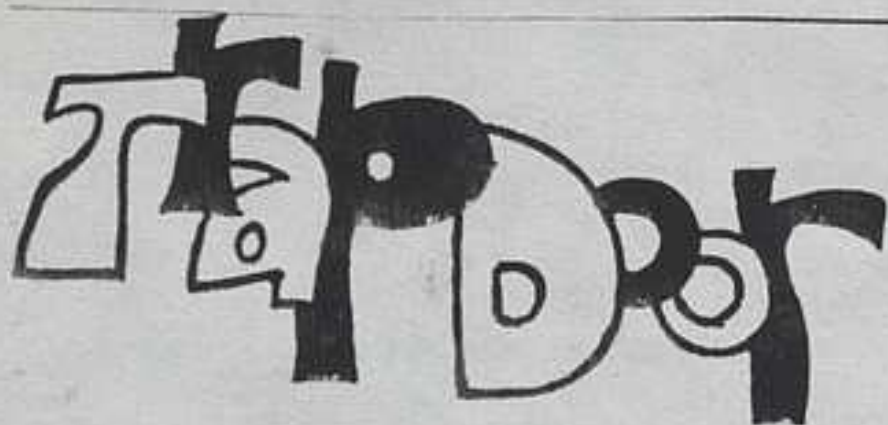


Trapdoor



No. 8

Shanne Gonnoll '88



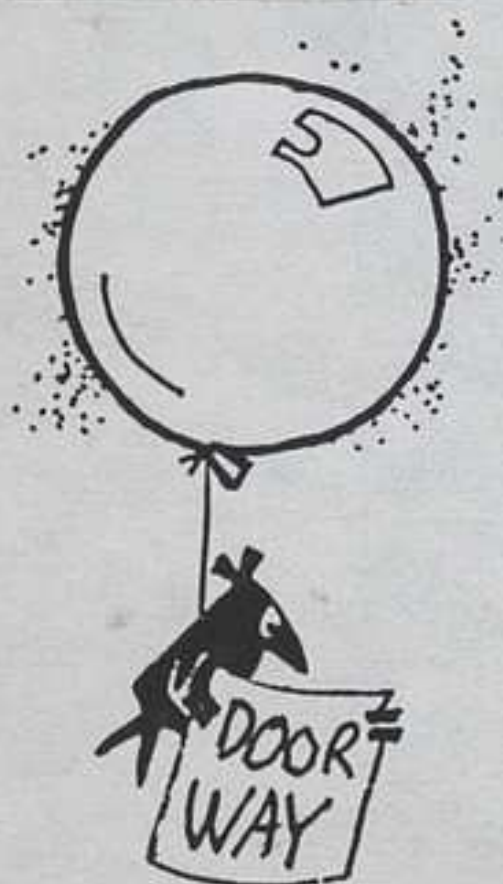
Issue No. 8, December 1988. Edited and published by Robert Lichtman, P.O. Box 30, Glen Ellen CA 95442. Please send all trade fanzines and letters of comment to this address. Founding member: fwa. Local associates in fandom: Jeanne Bowman, Don Herron, Donna Nassar and Paul Williams. This fanzine available for \$3.00 per issue (no subs) or by editorial whim in response to The Usual. A red circle around this "X" means I may be reconsidering your presence on my mailing list.

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THIS IS TRAP DOOR's giant ensmallled Fifth Annish. The stfnal wonders of laser printers and "downloadable soft fonts"--consumer products that would have been undreamed of in, say, Murray Leinster's time--are realities today even in the pages of this humble fanzine. Using direct image type saves a whole step in the process and looks better too (no reductions, thus clearer). It packs more wordage in, too. For instance, the letter column this issue takes up 14 pages; in reduced elite it would have taken nearly 22. Jeff Schalles' article would have run 6½ pages previously. The heights of the two type sizes used are the same as that of the reduced Courier pica and Prestige elite previously used, but the proportional spacing saves a lot of space. There are well over 30,000 words in this issue.

Besides all this technical gorgamoosh, this is the first time a genzine I've done has reached an eighth issue *as a genzine* (PSI-PHI went nine issues, but the last two were for FAPA; FRAP went only six). It's also my personal Thirtieth Annish--the first PSI-PHI appeared in December 1958 and was mailed to an unsuspecting assortment of some 85 fans. I was just sixteen and fit most of the descriptions you've read of generic fan origins except for one: I was *never* fat and didn't wear glasses until I was 41. (Indeed, I was embarrassingly thin.) There's never been a time when I couldn't find my feet, thank you, D.

THE FOLLOWING is for the small but persistent voice which cries out, "Write more about The Farm." When my article about one day in my life on The Farm, "Alabama Run," which appears in rewritten form in Dick and Nicki Lynch's MIMOSA #5, was originally published in a small apa, the aspect of it that drew the most comment was an offhand remark concerning the use of honey on The Farm. I wrote, "Honey...was discontinued due to something 'spiritual teacher' Stephen Gaskin said about exploitation of bees; when bees became an endangered species a few years later, he recanted." In response to these comments, I wrote the following, originally titled, "A word for all those who are eager to know more about exploitation of bees and other obscure Farm lore," but more accurately a history of sweeteners used on The Farm.

In the beginning there was sorghum and honey. Honey because it was the old beatnik/hippie traditional sweetener and was readily available, sorghum because The Farm was in the South and it was a Southern Thing. (Or "thang," the pronunciation I rapidly adopted.) The best deals on sorghum around Lewis County were from the Amish, who were among the few in the area to actually still

grow and produce sorghum as a cash crop. Every fall, along the highways and country lanes, little sorghum stands would open up and stay open until their stock was exhausted.

Shortly after we arrived in Tennessee and learned about 'lasses, Stephen decreed that honey was out. The reason was that it was exploitation of bees. You see, those bees don't go to all the work of producing honey for us. It's supposed to be for them, don't you know, and here we were coming along and "ripping off" their stuff. Certainly this was going to wreak some sort of karmic havoc on us all down the line if we didn't straighten up and cut loose.

Our friendly Amish neighbors were willing to make us good deals for some of their sorghum seconds. So in the fall of 1971 we made our first sorghum buy and we were all suddenly introduced to the joys of sorghum. I recall thinking of it as an amusing Southern thang, not to be taken seriously. But the group mind flipped out. It liked it (because Stephen said he liked it). It even went so far as to plant many acres of sorghum molasses starting the following spring.

Following the instructions contained in a U.S. govern-

ment pamphlet from 1938, we built a gravity feed sorghum mill on a hillside on The Farm. Now, making good sorghum molasses (hereinafter known as "lasses") involves two major variables: the quality of the cane and the skill of the cook. The extracted sorghum juice (see below) is put in large cooking pots and slowly brewed until it's at just the right point, determined by tasting. There is a danger in undercooking in that the syrup will not be as sweet and will taste "green," and there is also a danger in overcooking in that the syrup might become too strong tasting or, even worse, it might scorch just slightly and have a burnt aftertaste. Totally unacceptable to a sorghum buff.

When fall of 1972 came, most of the manpower in the community was diverted to cane harvest. For days we got up early and went out with our knives to the fields, cutting and stripping cane all day. Our biggest flatbed trucks would drive by, pick up the stacks of stripped cane, and haul them off to the crusher, next to the mill. It was like what I always imagined sugar cane harvest in Cuba would be like. The crusher extracts the juice creating a lot of residue which can be plowed back into the fields to aerate and enrich them. The mildly sweet syrup flows in pipes to a holding tank, from where it is introduced into the large cooking vats. After much stirring and tasting, our newly trained sorghum cooking crew would produce Old Beatnik Pure Lewis County Sorghum: the best of it for sale, the spoils (and some of the Good Stuff) for us. The theory behind building the sorghum mill was that we could save money by producing good quality sorghum ourselves. Actually, we rarely achieved truly good quality--the Amish had us beat by a country mile in my opinion--and when we did, it had to mostly be sold to Service The Debt. Also, it took enormous amounts of manpower to pull this off, and after the first year or two it became difficult for people to stop doing their usual job to go work in the fields. (Not to overlook the fact, also, that many of us didn't *want* or even *like* to go work in the fields, though it was Uncool to acknowledge this in the early days.)

Sorghum's limitations as our one-and-only sweetener soon became apparent. For one thing, everything sweetened with sorghum tasted like sorghum. It was *strong*-tasting stuff. We all wanted to switch to something else. However, rather than go back to honey we did some research and made a move to "cane syrup," a light syrup made from sugar cane in the same way that 'lasses is made from sorghum cane. This was not a sufficiently far leap, for this substance also had severe limitations as a sweetener, not least of which was it also had an overwhelmingly strong taste (plus, it had to be trucked up from southern Louisiana to get an affordable price); so I did some research (I was Store Man during this era, buying all the groceries for the community) and noticed that the Pride of Dixie brand of corn syrup based sweeteners (like Karo) was made only fifty miles away in Sheffield, Alabama. Calling them up one day to see if a bulk purchase was possible (i.e., if their equipment could be made to fill 55-gallon drums), they were only too happy to accommodate me, and so it wasn't long before a run was organized to get some. (See "Alabama Run" for further details on this scene.) Corn syrup's drawbacks also became readily apparent--it didn't act right in baking and it took a *lot* of it to sweeten something (although it tasted okay)--and since its other prime ingredient was sugar, a decision was soon made (in the face of dwindling revenues and the need to be cost-effective) that white sugar (and, at first, a lesser ration of dark brown

sugar) was to be the sweetener of choice.

This switch was well-received in the community since sugar, being cheaper than any of the previous alternatives, provided more sweetening power for the money. Certain high brahmans of purity in sweetness were heard to complain, but the Farm masses simply, indeed gratefully, accepted the seemingly inevitable. In later years, this love for white sugar would manifest itself in a Tennessee Farm Band song entitled "White Sugar," with lines like, "I like white sugar/And I'll tell you why/It gives me a buzz/And that's no lie/One of my favorite drugs/It makes me high." However, the forces of history continued in motion and several years down the line sugar entered into a price escalation. What had cost around a dime a pound in quantity when first adopted as the main sweetener of The Farm suddenly escalated to around 60 cents. This coincided with one of The Farm's many very broke periods and our sugar rations hit the skids, hard.

Suddenly, right around this time, amazing new revelations about bees came forth. (This synchronicity always reminded me of the annual scare reports about Soviet military build-up emanating from the U.S. Secretary of Defense around the same time each year as the White House's annual budget request for the Defense Department.) Bees, it was revealed, were being forced out of their natural habitat by the widespread use of chemical pesticides. Therefore, if we had bees on The Farm, they would have access to our fields and forests which were free of chemical pesticides and they could grow in numbers and prosper. In exchange for this, we would take some of their honey as rent. It seemed like a good deal for everyone, and so "policy" shifted once again.

Honey was not meant to replace sugar, only to supplement it. But in actual fact the community never funded a honey operation to any great extent. (The Farm, like the U.S. Congress, was good at passing sweeping mandates and terrible at passing appropriations bills to cover the expenses of the sweeping mandates.) Some was produced by "everyone," but at least one individual kept bees on his own in equal or greater quantities than the entire community lot. Eventually we resumed a sporadic program of buying honey in five-gallon tins from a farm about 25 miles away, which continued until even greater poverty overcame us and this practice, too, was discarded. Finally honey became, for most Farmies, one of those things like toothpaste and socks: you either went out and bought it yourself if you had any money, or you went without.

Indeed, that was a metaphor for material things on The Farm in general, not limited to sweeteners alone. But this subject won't be pursued here at this time, since this is only an article on sweetness, and light.

[Anyone who missed "Alabama Run" and wants to see it should send for MIMOSA #5 from Dick & Nicki Lynch, who recently moved from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to P.O. Box 1270, Germantown MD 20874. Its colophon states it's available for the usual or for \$2.00. If you're a fanzine fan and don't already receive this publication, you're missing something good.]

IN THE latest BLATANT, Avedon Carol writes, "Fandom isn't as sexy as it used to be... Poor Harry Bond finds himself alone in the quest for other young, enthusiastic fans, Martin Smith comes close to saying that Trufannish is a dead language, and even Chuck Harris shakes his head and says that he thinks 'our' kind of fandom is dying out."

Just as with weightier issues like nuclear destruction and the final and total degradation of the earth's ecosphere, one's first reaction to such statements is denial. "Dying out? Naaah, no way!" Cracks appear in this defense almost immediately. A sort of subjective ambivalence is the next, more reasoned response. Here's an example: Often it seems like my Attitude about fandom varies depending on how many fanzines I've received in the recent past, and from whom and/or where. I believe fanzine fandom needs its ongoing sense of community-in-print to breathe life into it. It's my perception that British fanzines have more of this element these days. This is possible (it's apparent to me) because they're written for a small, semi-intimate audience who *sees everything*. This is just as U.S. fandom was decades ago. When this element is missing from a strong contingent of fanzines, there may still be fanzines appearing but they exist in something of a vacuum, one created by lack of context.

Perhaps it's the postal rates, perhaps it's post-literacy hitting home, perhaps all the bright young loners go into computers these days, but it's undeniably true that U.S. fanzine fandom outside of the apas is in a shambles. It lacks the presence of context it has had at various times in the past. Unless you like insular clubzines, unless you like fanzines full of *fiction* and *poetry*, unless you like fanzines full of endless "reviews" of more sf and fantasy books than you could possibly read (or even want to read, judging from their descriptions)—the fanzines worth receiving coming out of the U.S. are fewer and farther between considering how many more of "our type" of fans there are who *could* be publishing fanzines. And there aren't that many of those other kinds of fanzines, either. There just aren't that many U.S. fanzines, period. As many of you know, I keep a log of fanzines received, and it's interesting to note that in seven of the eleven months I have complete records for this year, I received more fanzines from the rest of English-speaking fanzine fandom (mostly from the U.K. and Australia) than from the homeboys.

Without much happening in the here and now, there's a tendency to look back, so it's of some significance, I believe, to note that the most frequent current American genzine, Bill Bowers' OUTWORLDS, is focusing heavily lately on articles and letters from fans of the '30s. Writers like Charles Hornig, Russ Chauvenet, Langley Searles, Doc Lowndes, Sam Moskowitz, and others have been reminiscing about the good old days of 1939 and earlier. It's a real stretch sometimes to get interested in some portions of what they're writing about. Having seen my fair share over the years of '30s fanzines, it seems like the tenor of that time lives on in recent writings in OW. (If you aren't getting OUTWORLDS, I strongly recommend it. Bill Bowers has recently moved and inquiries should be addressed to him at 4651 Glenway Avenue, Cincinnati OH 45238.)

There's a parallel here in that some of Eo and First Fandom's favored subjects of discussion are as arcane to me as the most prized work of what Chuch refers to as "our" fandom (the Brandonizations, the con reports, the establishment of fannish traditions based on mutual goodwill (such as TAFF), the legendry based on personality) must be to newer recruits. Realizing this helps me to some extent to accept *w/ty* we are "dying out," if not to like it. However, like the Roman Empire we may be a long time going. Don't bronze your propeller beanie yet! But it is true that fannish activity in the form of fanzines these days

is at a snail's pace compared to those salad days of yore when fandom was smaller and more found in isolation or in little clusters of fans and when fanzines appeared fast and furious, and had that magical ingredient that makes fanzines cohesive—what is that word, Meyer? Ah, yes!--context.

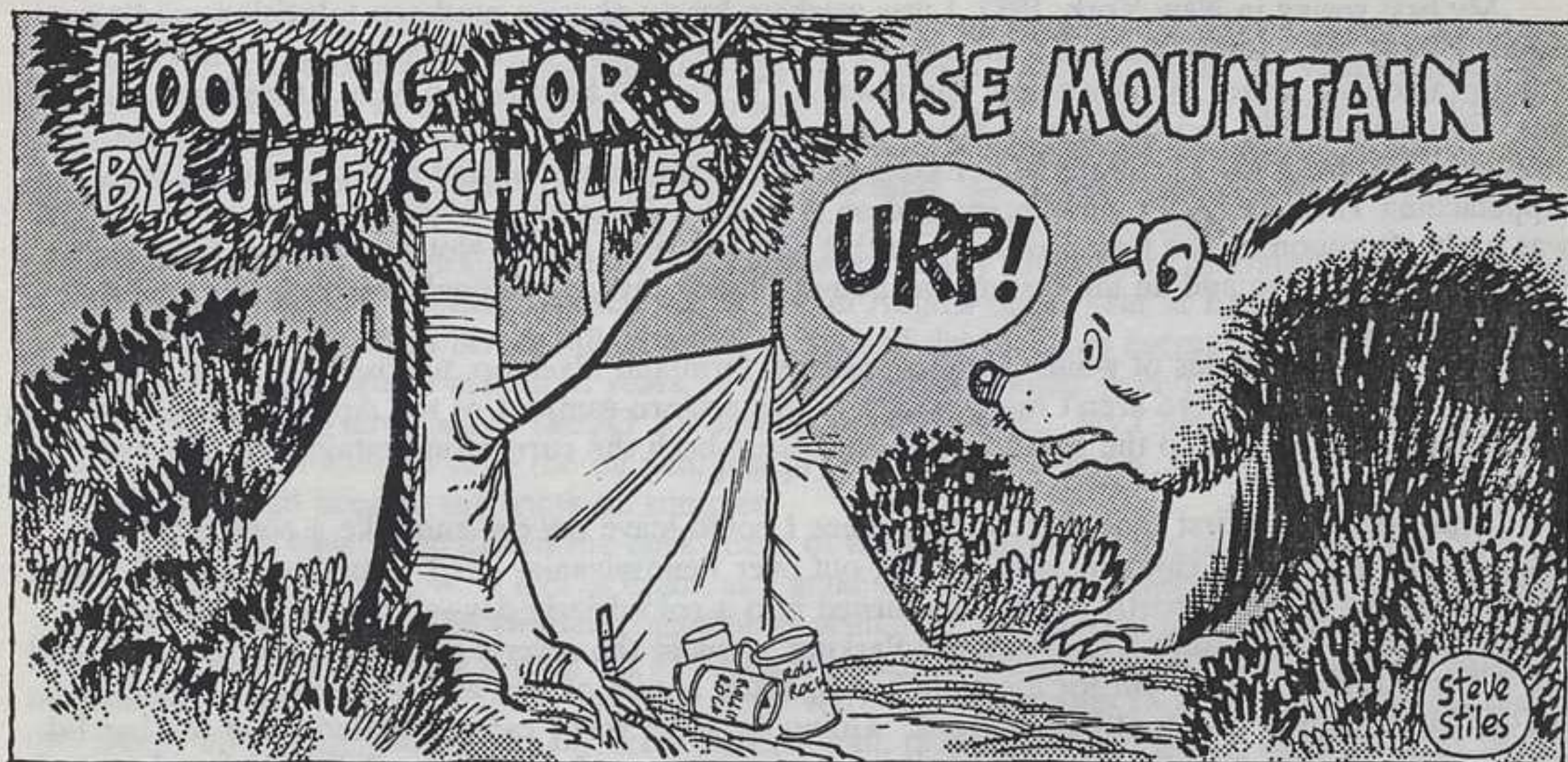
These days, the fannish genzine published in the U.S. is an endangered species. I encourage all fannish conservationists to rally to their support. If you count TRAP DOOR as a representative of this species, you should know there are two main things that prevent *this* particular fannish fanzine from appearing more frequently: lack of material and lack of funds. If these components were more present, I would be glad to take the time more often to Do This, realistically up to as often as three times a year given the other demands on my time and attention.

To help further this, anyone reading this who identifies himself as a relic from what Chuch calls "our" fandom (the living oldpharts who lurk among us) is welcome to show up in these pages, as well as anyone with a contemporary slant who also wants to join in. TRAP DOOR is a fanzine that tries to be of and for the unity of all eras of fandom, equally accessible to last and first fen alike. (Except, of course, for such occasional forays into the Lands of Allusion as Sid Coleman's "Moskowitz" in our last issue and Gary Deindorfer's "Handkerchief Man" in #4, for which you relative neos will have to forgive us shambling revenants as we hark back on occasion to distant faanish eras.) As stated in previous issues, the editor seeks no hard science articles unless they're humorous, no fiction and/or poetry unless it's faanish. But beyond these simple strictures, material in this zine has by no means been restricted to any particular fannish era or preoccupation, and contributors have ranged from rank newcomers to the most ancient of fannish dinosaurs. Study this and previous issues for numerous examples.

On other fronts, TRAP DOOR is setting a new standard for slowness of publication for a focal point fanzine (as Noreen Shaw accuses us of being in this issue's letter column). As stated above, it seems to be taking this long to gather enough publishable items to flesh out an issue. This infrequency has its effect on me. I miss the steady flow of letters I had when this fanzine appeared roughly twice yearly, though still a few errant letters on issues long past find their way to my post office box at all seasons. The most recent LoC on last issue arrived in early December.

All the foregoing is about the first of the two roadblocks in the way of more frequent publication. As to the other: At its present size and circulation, it costs over \$250 an issue to do this zine. That may not seem like much, but I'm a single parent in a world where nearly everything is priced based on the curious supposition that everyone is in a two-earner unit, so sometimes it's not easy to squeeze it in, even this infrequently. Voluntary subscriptions and/or visits from the angels are certainly welcome. But financial assistance, while helpful, is not the bottom line. (After all, I can't require your financial participation in *my* goddamn' hobby.) Participation is. TRAP DOOR would not have lasted this long if it weren't attracting a sufficiently steady flow of comments and contributions from a wide variety of supporters to keep my interest up. To everyone, thanks. And keep it coming...

--Robert Lichtman



HIGHTAILING IT STEREO BLASTING Mötörhead up Third Avenue in New York one Saturday last winter, my 1970 Chevelle Malibu running at the head of a snarling pack of taxis, traffic parts abruptly in my mirrors like the Red Sea before Moses and a dark blue four door sedan charges through, cutting everybody off, blowing its horn, not braking. There's a clenched-jaw well-dressed middle-aged woman driver sitting bolt upright, looking straight ahead. There's also a bum clinging to her wipers, sprawling across her hood from fender to fender, legs in space, as she swerves. His face is the face of the storyteller in Poe's "A Descent into the Maelstrom." He's a human, damnit lady. She fishtails past me through two red lights ahead and disappears. I want to follow, call the cops. I wish I still had a cab radio. It's 2:30 on a rainy winter afternoon and my head hurts from seeing Tackhead at the Ritz the night before and my hangover takes a right turn across the Queensboro Bridge.

I much prefer being atop high big rocks looking out over wild and distant landscapes. When I visited New York City in the early and mid-seventies (the first time for Mondocon in 1970, the last for the World Fantasy Convention in 1976) I always came away with that "chem lab" itch, with clear visual memories that every outdoor and most indoor surfaces had a permanent coating of abominable filth. It was dirty and scary for me the winter of 1981-82 when I moved here, and it's still dirty and scary. I survive because I'm suspicious and paranoid. These are among the survival traits.

I came to continue my explorations of the realms disclosed to me as I rock 'n roll my way through the years. I came to dance at the Ritz, hang out at CBGB's, go to Fanoclast meetings. I didn't know I'd end up playing in rock bands again, but that happened too. There's little point in elaborating the stream of consciousness details of my last six years. LoCs to the 1978 issue of my fanzine COVER marveled at my ribald true adventures and progression of interesting jobs. I haven't changed. And, so, *this* is about The Mountains.

Many years in Boy Scouts and Explorers taught me that woods and streams release torrents of ideas. I actively pursue this elusive soaring freedom. Sometimes it comes upon me in art galleries and museums, other times in the midst of blasted urban landscapes. But scouting taught me about tents and fires and maps and stuff. Especially the maps--I got into USGS topographic maps when I was eleven. I order ones of places I'm interested in and when I go exploring I already know a lot about where I'm going. Not everything, mind you. Some things only the mountains can tell you, or the people there.

My first spring in New York, 1982, I was working for an abusive madman television syndicator, Sandy Frank. My stereo was still in Maryland, my books were in Pennsylvania, and I wasn't comfortable with either the city or my apartment. The second Saturday in May I threw my camping gear into my old VW and drove west across New Jersey on I-80. I got off the interstate about thirteen miles from the Delaware Water Gap and made my way to a road that showed on both my Appalachian Trail (or "AT") guide maps and on Amoco's. Blairstown, New Jersey, was the key. It was early afternoon by the time I rolled into this very old rural town. Not touristy yet, but I pass a few ferny restaurants and an interesting bar before finding my way through the back of town to the mountain road.

After five or six miles of winding, rolling narrow farmland blacktop, up rises the steep flank of Kittatiny Mountain. There aren't many passes in this eastern rampart of the Appalachians. One, the Water Gap fifteen miles to the south, was there before both the current mountains and the previous ones.

I was hoping this first time there'd be a place I could leave my car and hike a couple of miles south on the AT, find a camping spot looking out over Pennsylvania. As I wound up the switchbacks in second gear, the cool, partly-cloudy day turned into a cold drizzly day--with solid clouds waiting for me on top. There were "No Overnight Parking" signs at the several pull-offs. But my old friend the AT was there. I hung out for a couple hours, hiked a mile or two and back, found I could get NYC FM, screamed insults at Sandy Frank. Going back the way I came, I pulled up at the bar I'd seen earlier. A sign over the door said "where old friends meet." Sure enough, inside in a wonderful old curved-glass standing cooler were seven-ounce bottles of Rolling Rock. The place is full of people in orange caps. I order a burger and fries and the next thing is this woman making her husband pull his pants down to show everyone his leg wound. Seems he'd drunkenly shoved his unsheathed hunting knife into his pants pocket the night before.

The next few years found me collecting maps and battling the mass psychosis of New York. It's like a big institution. I found New York's Taconic State Park through a piece in the *Village Voice* in 1983 about little-known parks with good swimming holes, visited it once but couldn't stay. Picnicked in 1984 at High Point State Park in New Jersey with John Sulak, a non-fanzine but inherently fannish fan I met at Phlange II in 1970. High Point sits in the northwest corner of the state and is, of course, the highest point in New Jersey. The AT runs through the park up Kittatiny Mountain from the south and then veers east to link up with the Berkshires and head north up the last stretch, to the White Mountains, in Maine.

I was amused the next year when this rowdy bunch of New York editors I know announced that they had discovered Taconic's park, and as my Chevelle was then sitting in front of my apartment building with a broken timing chain while I figured out how to fix it (book: 1. To remove timing cover, drop oil pan. 2. To drop oil pan, remove engine.) my girl friend of those years, Valerie (who I met when she auditioned to sing in my band, "Intensive Care"), and I rode up with these scourges of fandom to picnic and swim (in the old ore pit, bottomless, clear and cold) at Taconic. The following summer Valerie and I camped for four days there and on Saturday several carloads of NY's SF ne'er-do-wells joined us for swimming and a cookout.

The evening before Valerie and I had climbed to Sunset Rock, an hour going up, less coming back. Taconic is a large park with two separate camp-grounds. The one at the ore pit is smaller, tucked in a fold in the series of mountains that form the western rampart of the Berkshires. From Sunset Rock, several hundred yards from the Massachusetts border, you can see west across the wide lush farm valleys past blue hazy ridges to a purple smoky slash that is the Hudson Valley. Beyond lie the Catskills and Adirondacks. There were no takers from the beer drinkers around our picnic table that evening, but Sunday morning Valerie and I went up again. It was clear, and with polarizing and haze filters I took some solid postcard shots. I was happy. We got real sunburned in the nude at that altitude.

In the late afternoon Valerie went to the ore pit. There'd been a light rain earlier, and I sat on the picnic table surrounded by smells of wood smoke, wet pine needles, June breezes, creosoted

lumber, wild flowers. The campground sits half way up the mountain, nestled in a valley. I feel as well as hear gentle breezes running high through the treetops. They come up the valley alone and in groups. It is so quiet in the blue light of approaching evening that I can trace little ones as they move, circling about, acre by acre, up the mountain side. Little travelers with happy voices. I believe I have encountered bad spirits moving on foul night winds, but these are not like those. They happily ride the crest of the evening, following the terminator. Forever.

Meanwhile in New York I left the Harris Poll after nearly three years as Data Entry Supervisor for a lower paying job, learning typesetting. It was in August of my year at Envision East, a funky audiovisual studio on 32nd Street full of weird artists and driven hippy entrepreneurs, that I made my first serious wilderness assault in years. I hadn't hiked overnight since I explored the Georgia and North Carolina stretches of the AT for several weeks in 1976. My Chevy was running again (secret: you don't have to drop the oil pan, just pry the front of it down...real careful) and my camping gear had been in the trunk all summer.

Just me this time. I've driven the back roads of the four major forests in northwestern New Jersey several times by now. I feel at home as I make my way up the steep approach to High Point, watching for fresh corn. The two-lane blacktop is posted 55, and several stands have flashed by without warning. Finally, on a long flat stretch a sign says "fresh corn ahead" and I pull off easily onto the shoulder. The two aging "good ol' boys" were snoozing under their folding table and the one jumps up yelling "yes sir, yes sir" army style. Small, picked that day, baked in their husks soaked down with spring water over my wood fire in the High Point campground that night, I roar with approval. I'm new to this campground but I've got my favorite spot--furthest from everything else. But still just before dark a ranger comes tramping up the trail "just to say hi" and I have to hide my Rolling Rock. New York state park campgrounds permit alcohol--just not "rowdy behavior"--and they have hot showers.

Monday morning I'm actually parked at the trailhead and shouldering my pack by 10:30 a.m. People ask me, "where do they drop you off?" and stuff, but it's not like that. There is no "they." Just you and your resourcefulness. I've seen ads on the back page of the *Village Voice* for "group trips" where you pay someone to take you hiking, but not for me thanks. High Point's trailhead parking registration consists of picking up a mimeographed 3x5 card from the desk ("name"/"arrival date"/"departure date") and leaving it on your dash. There were some fifteen vehicles there already. I walked south.

I wasn't humming quite yet. I still had work and love life entanglements running amok through my head. The night before I caught myself calculating trail distances in points and picas. My pack was heavy. With lone hiking you have to carry everything yourself: tent, stove, fuel, cook kit. To my maximum arrogance, I was carrying a Melitta funnel, filters, fresh-ground coffee and...a pottery mug! Plus a heavy SLR, lenses, filters, tripod, cable release, twelve rolls of film. Hiking many years before in Georgia with the same basic gear (minus the coffee stuff) and with a lot more food (but only an old rangefinder) I covered 8-16 miles a day, every day for two weeks. This time it is harder. Mr. "Drums Is Aerobic," who doesn't bicycle as much as his usually rampaging imagination would have him believe, isn't enjoying this as much as he remembered.

Aside from trespassing, sanitation and other simple rules, the 2,000 mile long AT requires that you hike in to every shelter, and stay only one night. High Point is good for this--within the borders of the park are three shelters strung out over seven miles. Parking is in the middle. I hiked 5.2 miles that afternoon on the rocky crest of Kittatiny Mountain with my heavy pack. I bypassed the Lake Rutherford shelter (off the trail half a mile down the mountain) and by late afternoon found myself nearly outside of the park. Mashipacong shelter is a half mile past the Deckertown Turnpike, a genuinely ancient narrow blacktop running up over the mountain, probably following an oxen trail. "No Overnight Parking" signs abounded. I was brought back to the fact that I was in New Jersey and not in Georgia when I saw the sorry state of the lean-to, built of stone and timbers in 1936. It was full of filth and excrement and had a four foot pile of rubbish in front. There was a leaning outhouse and a large grassy clearing beyond. The AT continues on around the west side of the ridge

top, to Gren Anderson shelter. This is where my heart pulled me that night. I could do it easily in the morning. It was only six more miles. A mile before Gren Anderson is Sunrise Mountain.

Instead, I explored the upland sidetrail leading from the top of the clearing. Making my way up through the young forest, I found a series of grassy camping sites on small flat patches among the rising rocky shoulders of the mountain. People had been here probably for centuries. There were many fireplaces and patches of flattened grass. That night I had the multi-storied mansion to myself. The highest meadow was protected on the north by the jagged vertical backbone of the mountain. South the grove soon ended precipitously at a solid slab of upended conglomerate seafloor, dropping for several hundred feet into a leafy canopy below.

It was wonderful that evening. My mind was slowing, shedding frantic city obsessions, allowing me longer and longer periods of uninterrupted heavy thought. I kept the fire going until late. Deckertown Turnpike had occasional traffic, pickups downshifting for the last haul, a pause, the wine of tires down the far side of the mountain. I wished I was driving through the night too. Slept like a rock (trade secret: short foam pad under sleeping bag) and woke to a wonderful Tuesday morning. One thing I'd always hated on earlier trips was feeling grubby. So, after coffee and freeze-dried scrambled eggs that couldn't be beat, I boiled more water and washed my face and hair.

My body was not being cooperative. I was having a fine time, but I saw that I wasn't the powerhouse of eleven years before. I might make it on to Sunrise Mountain. I might die in the attempt. Ready to hike by 11:00, I turned back. The three miles to Rutherford shelter turnoff (east down a 300 foot descent of steeply sloping sandstone into the lower forest) were of full-blown faerie. I was humming "Ol' Dan Tucker" (the guy who combed his hair with a wagon wheel and died with a toothache in his heel) as I strolled along. I saw many deer and photographed some from a distance. I took many remarkable Kodachrome slides that day.

But something was bothering me as I walked the mountain crest, dipping in and out of shallow coves of upland northeastern forest. The rocky shoulders where the old sea floors stand perpendicular, where you can have lunch sitting on the earth's mossy upthrust throne, had conifers amid the high rocks, deciduous in the sheltered coves, and laurel, rhododendron, dogwood and many mosses and wildflowers everywhere. In most of the little upland dells I noted the noisy presence of thousands of birds, marking their borders and chattering away like a bunch of silly birdbrains. In a few places, though, there was only the breeze. The first few times I walked through these places I paid little heed, but during two days of tramping and resting it became uncomfortably obvious.

Did a major population of songbirds following millennia-old territorial and migratory patterns take off from this or that valley and perish in Central America upon finding their winter home sacrificed forever for ten years of fast food hamburgers? Are there horrible wars now being fought unknown between groups of territory-holding and of newly-homeless songbirds in the Central American highlands? I believe it, and I do not believe that this is what we were supposed to do with this planet when we were given lordship over it.

Though I had only hiked a few miles to this other shelter, I felt a tremendous sense of accomplishment. That night was another heavenly spot of time. Again, the lean-to had been fouled by unevolved and no doubt rowdy visitors, but again there were plenty of spots in the glades along the brook behind the shelter. The brook was out of a poem. My water the night before had come from a pump by the Deckertown Turnpike and hadn't tasted very good. The trail guide listed a spring near the shelter which turned out to be the source of the brook and the best water I'd drunk in years. I spent the rest of the afternoon and evening guzzling it, clambering back among the rocks in the midst of a hemlock thicket to refill my canteen. It was all so wonderful and serene that I made afternoon coffee and sat against a tree for hours.

After another productive evening alone by the fire retracing my steps through ancestral memory chains, I was asleep before midnight. Sometime later I was galvanized into wakefulness by rooting noises in the trash heap by the shelter. It jolted me into a semi-frantic defensive mode, lest it turn out to be a bloodthirsty wild dog. Probably a raccoon, it came up and snuffled the nylon side of the tent. I growled. A deep menacing primeval bruin snarl that scared me, too. I used a vocal cord I

never knew I had and it made my throat raw, but the beast snuffled off. I lay awake a bit and found I could hear ever so far away trucks on I-84, across the Delaware. It seemed I had just fallen asleep again when a commuter jetport nearby let loose with a couple dozen small jets.

Wednesday morning. After cleaning up and doing breathing and stretching exercises on the lawns by the tree-shaded brook, I hiked back up to the ridge. Gone was any thought of Sunrise Mountain. I just wanted to jump in my car and drive somewhere. After lunch in a friendly roadside place at the foot of the mountain, I drove across the river and headed south on Pennsylvania 209, following the west bank of the Delaware River. A well-paved blacktop following a wide flat river through a National Park on a Wednesday afternoon is different from Third Avenue. I remembered seeing a sign for Dingman's Ferry Campground at dusk one winter exploring with my friend Ruth. We were looking for a restaurant and found the Walpack Inn, across the river, deep in the park. When the sign came up, I made the left. It is a great place, nearly empty, with primitive tent sites by the river, down a rutted road from the RV sites. I was soon sitting in the Delaware on an August Wednesday up to my neck and humming Beethoven's 6th.

That evening I drove out of the campground, north, eight miles to Milford, Pennsylvania. Much touristier than Blairstown, where all this started long before. I bought a bag of ice and a case of Iron City beer (not distributed in New York) and asked if there was a bar where I could sit and eat. The Tom Quick Inn is named after an "Indian fighter" who sounded more like the Marquis de Sade, but I ate well and listened to local real estate gossip. That night I sat up late reading the *New York Times* and *Daily News* by propane lantern (car trunk camping only) and drinking good ol' Irons. No radio, no TV, just the hiss of propane burning in the mantles and the ticka-tick of bugs against the hurricane glass, with the gurgle of the river beyond.

The rain came an hour before sunrise. My tent is essentially a bug screen, good against straight down rain with its storm tarp but lacking a waterproof bottom. The sheets of water coursing down the impermeable sand I was camped on began to trickle past my cheek. Solid blocks of water were pouring from the sky with wild lightning and deafening thunder. I've stuck out plenty of these when I had to, but this time my Chevy was only twenty feet away. I jammed wet gear into the trunk and powered my way up the road-turned-stream to the upper campground. I was afraid I might go off the road and run over someone in a pup tent. Driving towards New York on I-80 during the morning rush hour taught me something new about yuppies. They drive the way they conduct business: selfishly, incompetently and viciously. I exited and found a mall to wander in, looking at expensive waterproof tents in the sporting goods store.

A couple more years of typesetting and I can buy land on the side of a mountain somewhere. Maybe even in time to escape the already-in-progress (do not attempt to adjust your set) environmental disaster and the highly probable social disintegration and hysteria to follow. The brutally corrupt Reagan regime is straight from the Book of Revelations. In this unending class war, the rich will stop at nothing to keep the lower classes on the edge, financially, emotionally, physically, with powerful jingoist propaganda, with dangerous food source manipulation, with nukes, fluorescent lights and microwaves (in our kitchens, no less), tobacco, sugar, sodas, crack, hot dogs, and badly animated Saturday morning television programs. Worse, the majority of the combatants have been on their knees so long that they can't even perceive their position. They somehow think the rich are out to *help* them. You can't go on feeding kids caffeine, chemicals and sugar, make them sit under fluorescent lights all day, and then expect them to learn or think. I find myself playing Steppenwolf's 1970 "Monster" cut real loud ("...and it just sits there watching...") until the anger passes, until I remember the mountains.

--Jeff Schalles



WE ARE AS WE SPEAK

BY JAN S. KAUFFMAN



Does it ever bother you (as it does me) that in the Star Trek episodes--the older ones, particularly--no matter where Kirk and his Away Team beamed, the people in the new place always spoke English? None of the Enterprise crew seemed surprised. "After all," we can imagine them saying, "if we can understand each other, why worry?"

There's an ongoing controversy among scholars about what it is exactly that makes humans distinguishable from the other animals. One faction holds that it's our tool-making capability that boosted us up the evolutionary ladder. Of late this faction has had to scramble mightily to support their arguments since it's been discovered that some of the higher primates, chimpanzees notably, have been observed making tools (cleaned sticks to dig edible ants out of their hills), passing that skill along to new generations of youngsters, creating objects to use for weapons, and washing yams in sea water for the tasty salt residue.

The other half of the scholarly argument focuses upon language as the essential ingredient of our specialized humanity--especially language as the source of self-consciousness, or self-awareness.

This segment also had to do some sobering reflection, stemming from the project that teaches ASL (American Sign Language, the "signing" that hearing impaired persons use to communicate) to Koko the female gorilla, and other primates. Koko uses her ASL vocabulary not only to communicate new thoughts, but to express emotions and longing. She is reaching the end of her childbearing years and repeatedly expresses a yearning for a baby gorilla of her own. Is this not consciousness? The discrimination becomes even less clear when considering mentally handicapped humans, who function at levels we see the chimps and gorillas duplicate with ease.

As you might guess, I prefer the side of the argument that says it is language that makes us human. Feral or "wild" children, normal in all other respects, who have been deprived of opportunities to acquire language in the formative years of two-to-three, seem more like the animals with whom they associate than humans. Attempts to socialize these children almost always fail. The essential lack seems to be language.

There is also evidence that *which* language we speak forms the way our mind works. For instance, children who speak Asiatic languages such as Japanese and Chinese recently showed on special tests that it was their language-structure that seemed to help them process mathematics better than Western, English-speaking children. Native Americans who speak Hopi and related languages *think* differently than we do: Hopi shows its speakers the world in a holistic, all-of-a-part gestalt, instead of the linear, analytical way that seems natural to speakers of English.

So it's totally reasonable that cultures with which Kirk et al came into contact had some sort of language. They would have had to, to rise to any level of culture. But *English*?

Today in the transportation industry there's a convention that requires all flight crews of international airlines, as well as control tower personnel, to speak English. When a Thai airliner wants to land at Paris' Orly airport, the instruction and responses from plane to tower are all in English. As late as 1948, when the United Nations was established, French was the international language of diplomacy. To move in international circles at all for the last two hundred or more years required fluency in French.

So it makes sense to me that perhaps, even by Kirk's time period, English could have been adopted as the Starfleet convention. It would have been one of the required subjects of study at the Starfleet Academy. It's easy to accept the idea of English as a sort of diplomatic language of the future, of the Federation and its allies.

The Enterprise's mission was to "explore new worlds, to go where no man has gone before." This prevents explanations of the lost-colony type--I was REALLY bothered by the hollow-worlders in "The World Is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky": they spoke perfect English, and nobody even noticed! Even their computer spoke English! Not even subtitles! In "Wink Of An Eye" we have aliens so different they exist on another dimension of the matter-energy spectrum--but can communicate perfectly enough in English to read the controls in the Engine Room for purposes of installing their doomsday machine, and well enough (in the case of their Queen) to take Kirk for a nice roll in the hay.

We know that individuated languages still flourished, because in "That Which Survives" the automatic warning beacon is heard in Russian by Chekhov, Vulcan by Spock, and in Swahili by Uhuru (it is telepathic, and hence translates into the native language of each individual). In the "Enterprise Incident" episode, the Romulan Commander, while trying to seduce Spock, comments that "Vulcan has always been a difficult language for me."

And on and on. Go ahead: say I'm nitpicking, but there has been some attention to this problem in the movies and later episodes, so this might have bothered somebody else besides me, somebody in the production crews. It's getting better. We actually heard Klingon lines of dialogue in "Search for Spock" with subtitles in English. Quite nice.

And assuming that the whole Universe speaks American English does help get on with the plot. But will someone *please* tell me WHY the Enterprise's computer cannot speaking without running a teletype machine in the background?

--Jan Sadler Kauffman

Dear Ms. Manners,

I have always striven to make my life an ecologically conscious one: I recycle all aluminum, paper and glass. I mulch my garbage and each spring plow it into the organically pure garden that grows behind the log cabin which I built with my own hand-made tools. I avoid buying anything that is packaged in plastic. Solar power provides all the electricity I require, and my cabin is warmed in the winter by a wood-burning stove. The chickens, goat, bees and cow who share my homestead free me from dependence on the chemically-laced commercial products available in the store. I tithe to the Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth and the Wilderness Society.

In short, I have attempted to reduce my personal impact upon Mother Earth to the bare minimum.

My only guilty pleasure stems from the fact that I am still a fan, and have found it impossible to learn to live without fanzines which arrive in the mail, printed upon a shockingly wasteful amount of paper. But an empty mailbox is something I could not abide. I have searched for a solution to this dilemma, but Walt Willis has said that it is a blasphemy to throw away a fanzine, and so I do not bind them up with the newspapers for recycling and they pile up in the corner of my cabin, accusing me and provoking the guilty knowledge that I am a hypocrite.

But recently, a potential solution occurred to me. After reading the wonderful fanzines that come to me in the mail, I have decided to recycle them in a manner which surely could not be objectionable to Walt Willis. I plan to *eat* them.

But I still have a problem. *The Whole Fanzine Catalog* offers no recipes for fanzine consumption and I am temporarily stymied as to the next step. I wonder if you, the arbiter of tableside manners, might have a tip for me on how to eat--for instance--a TRAP DOOR?

--Signed, Concerned About The World

Dear Concerned,
Just bolt it down.

--Signed, Ms. Manners [Jeanne Gomoll]

WE NEVER SLEEP

Paul Williams



I was ready, so ready to write to you on the train between London and Manchester, listening to John Hiatt on the headphones and wanting to share my delight, my sense of wonder, my overwhelming (illusory) clarity of mind. All gone now, like trying to remember a dream after waking reality has separated me from that world and its situations and feelings. All I remember is the intensity of my joy, and the keenness of my conviction that I could put it into words. Joy seems to lead directly to a desire to share it.

Music and movement go together. Dieter and I drove out of Basel together on a Saturday last September, heading towards his place in the Emmental, Swiss farm country, great sunny day driving along with this record I'd never heard before blasting from the stereo, *Shadow Man* by Johnny Clegg and Savuka, I just fell in love with it, like it pulled in all that sunshine and those hills and the camaraderie and spun it together and washed it back over us, moving down the road, hardly talking, just feeling so good--and later the same tape participated in another ecstatic moment on the plane between California and London (I've been a real travelling giant these last few months, I have), watching the sky and the tops of the clouds in the daylight, hung suspended as if motionless and moving 600 miles an hour at the same time, and it was like I could feel a whole shift taking place inside me, unexpectedly I was letting go of my lover, my relationship, my picture of how things ought to be, and it was okay, I could just let everything be whatever it might really be instead. A rush of relief, and freedom. All connected to this intense feeling conjured up by the music and by being in motion. Like a movie where the camera shifts from inside the train to the countryside going by outside, eye shifts, consciousness shifts, perspective opens up and the motion doesn't stop, still rockin', rollin', flying, living. Glad to be still so alive after all these years and all these events, is what I'm saying, and what Hiatt and Clegg say too. And something else. Something that feels, well, important and exciting. And simple and close to the bone. And rich and loving. All right.

What is it? I stopped at Owen Whiteoak's apartment for like five minutes in the course of sharing a cab ride with him and with Avedon Carol to our various parts of London (I was staying with friends in Barking) after a late night at the World Fantasy Con, five minutes and just looking at the posters on the walls I found I love this man, like recognizing a brother, not simply from shared interests or tastes but something to do with experiencing how he feels about and cherishes those pieces of the universe that have spoken to him, how he acknowledges and shares them, champions them, respects them, makes them his own and clings--I felt or imagined or somehow knew--fiercely yet unpresumptuously to each shard of God, each sighting of truth, of beauty. Saw me in that, but I don't do it the same way, and it was that I saw and liked *his* particular way. Pleased to come home and find a fanzine of his among the litter of my desk, now I can read it, a connection's been made. Could just as well have been made through the fanzine first, but it followed this other sequence instead.

Had dinner in Hollywood with Greg Shaw and Suzy Shaw two nights ago. Ate lunch in Santa Ana yesterday with Philip K. Dick's three children. Drove one of my own children to his basketball game early this morning; drove another one home from his job at the movie theater late tonight. Talked with Robert on the phone, who knew Greg and Suzy long ago, knew Phil, knew me long long ago and now we live down the street from each other, and I'm writing my piece for his fanzine. So? I don't know. I like the weaving, the interconnection. And I benefit from it. I have a place to stay in London, and in the Emmental, and L.A., and someone to talk on the phone to here in Glen Ellen, because of these connections. Which is always to me the implicit subject of all fan writings. That we are linked, you and me and the others on the mailing list, or some of them, other eyes and minds sharing this space with us, and our awareness of the link, how we resent it,

treasure it, doubt it, cling to it, seek to obscure or illuminate it. But what about music and movement?

Donna's at a rubber stamp convention in Carson with her rubber stamp fan friends, kids are sleeping, I'm here tapping at the word processor, could wipe this whole file with a couple of taps, or keep going to some kind of completion and give it to Robert for formatting, print-out, reproduction, distribution. It's a funny feeling. Like moving between cities, countries, houses. I'm blessed, I think, with a healthy sense of wonder. No doubt due to the sf I read as a kid. Or was the wonder there first? It was, but the sf could have strengthened, refined it, and fandom and the other contexts around sf may have helped me value it, respect it, do whatever I've done in my life such that I've been able to nourish rather than bury it, some of time. Feel it a lot lately. Lenny Kaye (connection!) gave me a quote on my rock & roll book which praises my "sense of wonder over rock & roll's holy process" and it tickles me no end, what a nice thing to say, and it clarifies something I hadn't quite understood myself. What connects us. And why it matters.

Motion. Travel. It stirs things up. Unpredictably. It can make something happen inside. And the sense of motion--driving along in the car with the music playing--has this ability to awaken, to rouse enthusiasm, to kindle joy, so much so that Donna got a speeding ticket while listening to John Hiatt the other day, and I got mad at her when I heard about it, 'cause I was holding her as this precious possession of mine that she has no right to endanger by driving too fast, 'stead of catching a glimpse of her freedom and beauty from the corner of my eye like some stranger might and loving the way she loves music, loves life, feels the motion too. Husbands are fools. Hiatt says, "I see a road in a flash of lightning/Let me tell you it's frightening." Later in the same song ("Is Anybody There?", *Slow Turning*), he shifts it to "We could hit that road in a flash of lightning/Maybe it won't be so frightening." Emphasis on the difference "we" makes. "I've taken vows with you/I believe them to be true/Can we take a little rain?"

Robert told me I could write as much as I like, so look out. It's 1:35 in the morning, Pacific standard time, December 4, 1988. Later today I get Donna at the airport and we go to the Bridge benefit, acoustic concert, Bob Dylan, Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Tracy Chapman, Jerry Garcia and Bob Weir, Billy Idol, Tom Petty--don't you wish you were here? Of course, sometimes the idea of seeing these people is more exciting than the actual experience, but I'm hoping there'll be some moments. Sure of it, actually. Next week we see Hiatt at the Great American Music Hall, and Ben Vaughn (check out his new lp on Restless, *Blows Your Mind*--lots of fun) (Ben used to put out a rock fanzine, pretty good one, Greg tells me). Last week we saw Tom Verlaine solo at the I-Beam. Life is rich.

I'd like to put in a namecheck here for Patrick and Teresa. Just 'cause I'm thinking about 'em, and to reward you guys if you've read this far. Would you believe I was in London on a first Thursday night and failed to make it to the (Welling) Tun? I was really excited about going and in fact gave up 20 quid by deciding to take the blue saver to Manchester Friday instead of the white saver Thursday, or do I have the colors switched? But anyway then at the last minute I was invited to a party celebrating twenty years of Compendium (the bookshop), and also ended up promising to meet someone there, and I was having dinner with John Dowie (I'm name-dropping, he's one of the best stand-up comics in the U.K. they tell me, a PKD/Dylan fan like me which is how we met, check out his book, *Hard to Swallow*, The Abandoned Comedy Routines of John Dowie, brilliantly and abundantly illustrated by Hunt Emerson, it's fabulous) and it got late and the Compendium party was one tube station away and the Wellington was much further and so.... But what kind of fan am I? The following weekend was Novacon, and I was in the U.K., and yet (despite appropriate arm-twisting from John Jarrold and Greg Pickersgill) I missed it, went to Manchester instead of Birmingham, went to a Dylan convention and blew my one big chance to meet D. West. In my defense I must point out that it was the Dylan convention that had flown me to the U.K. in the first place (did I say I'm living a charmed life?) and of course I had a great time there, hanging out with at least as many old friends and new friends as I could have found anywhere. But imagine missing Novacon! (It's like the story I love to tell about chatting with Bruce S. between sets at Max's Kansas City in '73, not caring that upstairs the other act is doing their set, as a result of which I missed seeing the Wailers--including Tosh and Marley--at the height of their powers...)

Mentioning P&T reminds me I want to put a plug here for a fresh, witty, basically irresistible publication called *The New York Review of Science Fiction*, \$2.50 per copy or \$24 a year (\$36 overseas air printed matter) from Box 78, Pleasantville, NY 10570, already in its fourth issue, edited and designed by a collective including the Neilsen Haydens, David Hartwell, Debbie Notkin, Kathryn Cramer, Chip Delany and other talented luminaries, and featuring along with the reviews such wonders as a column by Daniel Pinkwater and Susan Palwick's marvelous 3-part epic *I Was A Teenaged Crud Fan*. This is a hot magazine. I like it, and I don't read hardly anything, fanzines, sf, newspapers, anything--if you do read, you'll be knocked out by it. Worth spending good money for, honest.

Where was I? In Glen Ellen, I think. Not sleeping. Wondering instead, on paper or onscreen, why I find myself these last few years and right now and probably for at least the year to come writing so much about music. There's no specific or conscious reason. I'm not even being paid very well for it. It just suddenly came

on like something I wanted to do again, and so far it's like the more I listen and write the more I want to listen and write. I'm having a lot of fun with it. I had the thought in the last day or so that perhaps it's partly a way for me to write as a writer rather than as a teacher—I love and am proud of my "philosophy"-type writings but being perceived as a teacher has never sat well with me (I wanna teach but *not* be perceived as a teacher, you get me?)—of course writing about music could cause people to perceive me as a journalist which is not a very nice word but what the hell. It's none of my business what you think. But writing about music is definitely my way of writing about love, and art, and values, and the general subjective landscape I smell around me. Ah, let's end this self-consciousness right here, okay? Back to the sky, the train, the car, the Hiatt record, or the question of what is it that's so wonderful about Malamini Jobarteh's album *Kora is Like That!* Wonderful and universal. Will world music eventually replace rock and roll? I imagine so...and I embrace and applaud the transformation. We gotta let more people in on this fun. And break out of this anglo post-industrial cultural isolation for our own sakes, before we choke on it.

"It's been a slow turning/From the inside out." Hard to believe John Hiatt could top his *Bring the Family* album but *Slow Turning* does the trick. And Johnny Clegg's *Shadow Man* is my other favorite album of the year—these are both items that almost anyone, regardless of musical interest or background, is gonna like a lot and find a lot of personal reverberations in if they start listening to 'em. 'Specially if you have the particular perspective on life that comes from having been living it for three or four decades. Regarding other new stuff: Keith Richards' first solo lp is modest but rewarding. I'm still getting into it, don't know if it's going to come through in any deep way, but it does seem the sort of thing you might play quite a bit with ever-growing affection. R.E.M.'s *Green* is a mixed bag of foolishness and gems, not great but may grow on me; R.E.M.'s *Eponymous* surprised me, a "greatest hits" album and one I scarcely thought I needed—I have the albums—but my God it sounds good to me. R.E.M. like the Byrds before them create songs and recordings that benefit immensely from repackaging, resequencing, fresh contexts and combinations. Highly recommended. U2's *Rattle and Hum* is ho hum as a movie, but muscular and satisfying as an album. They continue to grow and explore new (to them) musical directions, exactly like a good band should and so few do. I'm not sure R.E.M. is doing it (on record—their stage show last year was fabulous, however). What else do I like? Patti Smith's album and Brian Wilson's album. Both extremely good, especially melodically/musically. But while I obviously don't mind doing consumer guide, long as it's for TRAP DOOR, for friends, still that isn't the thrust of what I want to get to here. What I want to do, I think, is acknowledge how this music and this moving around I've been doing have loosened me up a little, made some space for breakthrough, which looks both like relaxing and, sometimes, like screaming at the top of my lungs. With joy or anger. Tell the truth. Let it out.

I'm doing what I do. I talk on paper. I write. Put a computer in front of me and I'll write on a computer. Pencil and paper is okay too. You can motivate me with money, you can motivate me with attention, you can motivate me by ignoring me or by keeping me poor. Ultimately you can motivate me, or I can motivate myself, by simply letting time pass. I could fail to write for a thousand years, if I lived that long, and in hindsight I would just have been gathering momentum for what it turned out I had to say next. I praise travel but the truth is the natural state for me is to stay at home and I'm always asking "Is this trip necessary?" (Often I ask it in the form of irritability and fear, even terror.) I love it and I resist it, and somehow that seems to balance out okay for me. In the long run. Over time. At any given moment I may be miserable, and that's survivable too, though I have trouble telling myself so when I'm in the middle of it. Gotta do something about this, that's what my mind says. What my ego says. What my attachment says. And what it usually does is gets me in trouble and ties me in knots. So like I've been saying for dozens of years now, I'm working on learning to be more patient.

I don't hardly read, but I am reading *The Book of the New Sun* by Gene Wolfe, volume three this month, and I really love it (just like they always said I would). Like the music, it's stimulating and deeply nourishing. It amazes me. A lot amazes me, and delights me, these days. It's a good moment.

Lucius Shepard. I've been reading his stories out loud to Donna, since Andy Watson sent us *The Scalehunter's Beautiful Daughter*. Lucius is another reason to feel good about the culture we share. It comes through. It is not washed up; its glory days are not past and gone. In among the clutter, which is always with us, wonderful new work is being done. Forget the Sixties, and any other golden age: there's a new one, or the same old one, happening this moment. I call it to your attention. I tolerate no argument. Listen. Read. Move around. Participate. Sleep. Dream.

...I mean I'm not trying to tell you what to do. What I actually want to say, it suddenly hits me (and surprises me), is: I'm happy. I'm a happy man. Damn. Oh, and if, like my editor Michael and his wife, you have a new baby girl in your life, or even if you don't, I want to suggest that you listen to "Georgia Rae" by John Hiatt, on *Slow Turning*. You'll like it. I know you'll like it a lot.

—Paul Williams

THE ULTIMATE MARVEL COMIC

BY
Rich
Brown



Just a few weeks before the end of summer, Bill Bixby and Lou Ferrigno were in an hour-long TV special in which they reprised their role as The Hulk. It was called a "special," but in fact it was rather obviously a "pilot" to introduce yet another Marvel comic hero, Thor, to the TV public.

I don't know if Thor will ever get his own show--I tend to doubt it, now that the writer's strike is over. To tell the truth, I had mixed feelings about it, myself, even though Thor was one of my favorite Marvel comic heroes. I was, on the one hand, a bit disappointed because, in the TV version, Don Blake only "summons" Thor rather than turning into him, like Billy Batson becoming Captain Marvel; on the other, I was mildly amused that Blake, when Thor asked to be taken to some place where he could meet people "more like" himself, took him to a biker bar...

I sold all my comics, with the exception of those done by friends like Joe Staton and Steve Stiles, for about \$3,000 when I got divorced--mostly Marvels. It was Marvel Comics which got me collecting again and for some reason the above-mentioned pilot reminded me of something I had not thought about in many years--a grand, multi-layered Marvel superhero plot which Steve Stiles and I noodled out one evening more than a few years back.

We were inspired in roughly equal parts by the exciting things that were then happening at Marvel Comics (this was early on, around the time the X-Men got their own comic, to give you some idea of the timeframe), by what we had been smoking that evening, and by a *New Yorker* cartoon which showed two men on a street corner staring up into a night-time sky populated by about sixty comic superheroes, and one of the men is saying to the other, "It looks like a Bad Night for evil-doers."

It was primarily this cartoon, I guess, which got the two of us thinking about how thoroughly committed to evil-doing a Marvel villain had to be, given that all the Marvel superheroes populate the same universe. "For example," I said to Steve with my mouth, "just suppose that you were, say, Magneto." Steve sort of closed his eyes, imagining that he was, say, Magneto. "And after years of plotting and scheming," I went on, "and--let's face it--in most cases, failing, let's say you finally succeeded in totally destroying the X-Men. Crushed them, ground them up, scattered their atoms to the nethermost portions of the universe. Your wildest ambition finally realized. Would you, do you think, get a chance to gloat, dance a little jig, wave your clenched fist at the sky, or even cackle fiendishly for a while over their mangled corpses? Could you take just a few minutes to enjoy your oft-denied success? I think not. Why? Because, before you could do any of that, along would come Spider Man or The Hulk or Thor or the Fantastic Four and on and on--there's no end to them!--and

all the weapons which you had spent years and no small amount of inventiveness on (to say nothing of your family fortune and all your ill-gotten gains) to develop specifically for combatting the X-Men would be for naught...because they had been developed specifically for combatting the X-Men and would only take into consideration their powers, and of course all those other bloody superheroes have *different* bloody super powers and--"

Steve's eyes blinked open and he stood up, gesticulating wildly to interrupt me. "No, rich, no," he said, "we're going about this All Wrong. I mean, sure, I admit the things you're saying *are* true, but instead of picking out some *existing* Marvel villain, and feeling sorry for the poor schlub because he can't cope, like we're doing, we should be coming up with one of our own--a super villain who *would* be able to take on the entire Marvel pantheon."

"Yeah, but Steve, no matter what kind of super powers we might grant him, I don't think--"

"I know who could do it," Steve said calmly. "Piece of cake. I know who could defeat them all."

"Really? Who?"

Steve smiled at me. Beatifically as only a Steve Stiles can smile. "God could do it, rich, if He really wanted to," he said. (We had been Talking Philosophy that night, too, needless to say. In those bygone days, both Steve and I were Objectivists (our friends forgave us for this, just as they/we forgave Dave Van Arnham for being a Nixon Republican) and, of course, at the same time, atheists. We laugh about our former fondness for Ayn Rand's philosophy now--but we had also discovered, in the course of many discussions, that we'd both been raised as Baptists.) "God could do it," Steve went on, "because with God, all things are possible. If He could make a stone which He could not lift, He could certainly defeat all the Marvel superheroes--either one at a time or all in a bunch."

"But not at first," I suggested. "I mean, even God would probably find it a *little* difficult."

Steve started to object, but then he considered it. Had we been comic book characters ourselves, at that point we both would have had light bulbs or exclamation points in thought balloons over our heads; obviously possibilities were beginning to present themselves. So we sat down and started to plot it all out.

We figured God probably would have grown tired of humanity sometime in the decadent '20s--so that, by the time the '30s rolled around, maybe He would have decided to say good riddance to bad rubbish. We figured it was possible that the *way* God might have gone about this might have been to let Naziism come into flower after which (humanity's fate being a foregone conclusion) He would have gone on to other things. The Nazis were crazy, of course, and--as many a scientfiction author has speculated--they probably would have destroyed the world if they had not been stopped.

So it wasn't as if (I hasten to defend) Steve and I were really trying to do something original. The only element Steve and I were adding, as we saw it, was that this might have been part of God's plan if He suddenly got it into His head that what He wanted to do was destroy the human race. And, we figured, it *would* have worked, just as God planned, had it not been foiled by all the daring deeds of Sgt. Fury (later to become, in yet another Marvel comic, Col. Nick Fury, Agent of Shield) and his howling commandos. And anyone who ever read that comic and had a good grasp of that era of history would have to admit it--if it hadn't been for Sgt. Fury and his howling commandos, it would have been All Over for the Allies.

But eventually, we assumed, God would have to turn His attention back to Earth--at which point He would perceive that His plan had gone awry (like those best laid by mice and men which we're all forever hearing about). Steve seemed to think, at that point, that God would get a bit hysterical and start trying all sorts of different plans. Not think too clearly, see, on account of His not being used to having His Will thwarted.

What this meant, in practical terms of plotting out the Ultimate Marvel Comic, was that Steve and I spent a while thinking up match-ups, each of which we figured would be worth a comic of their own if done up in true Marvel fashion. (I should perhaps explain that, at the time, most of the Marvel superheroes were relatively new--except for those who were being dusted off from not having been around in comic book form for twenty years or more, e.g., Captain America, which of course made them "relatively new" to everyone who hadn't been reading comics for twenty years or more--and so the folks at Marvel were all the time matching the different superheroes against each other,

thus showing the readers who was stronger than who. This might seem a little weird to you until you stop to realize that the Hulk and the Submariner, for example, may have been good guys by their own lights, but they were sometimes perceived as bad guys by humans and even other Marvel superheroes. And then, too, some, like Spider Man, were getting a Bad Press, while others, like Thor, were haughty to the point of rudeness. So it was relatively easy for the writers at Marvel to come up with reasons for, say, Spider Man and the Fantastic Four to be at odds, at least for a little while, and any superhero who accidentally trod on Thor's big toe might find themselves being beamed with his hammer. For a while there, it seemed that the folks at Marvel were throwing the names of their superheroes into a hat and picking two at random, then thinking up some reason why they might be at odds with one another. Steve and I were, therefore, just following this already established pattern/formula. Again, I would not want us to be accused of originality. But enough of this digression.)

Unfortunately, I don't recall everything Steve and I came up with in the way of match-ups, but a few of those we felt would be worth exploring were: The Holy Ghost vs. Dr. Strange, Goliath vs. The Thing, Shadrach vs. the Human Torch, and Samson vs. The Hulk. But if I don't, at this late date, remember much about the match-ups Steve and I came up with, at least I remember most of the details of the Ultimate Battle.

We figured the U.B. (as we called it for short) would take, at a minimum, three issues--beginning, of course, with the Penultimate Battle (or P.B., as we called it). Had it been later on, we might have debated the matter, but at the time only Jack Kirby, we decided, could really do it justice.

Jesus and Thor would be the logical pair to have it out in the P.B., which would take up the first issue. By the end of that issue, it would seem that Jesus had succeeded; but at the beginning of the second issue, Thor would gather himself up from what had previously seemed to be Total Defeat, dust himself off, and after spouting some typically high-flown verbiage ("Thou has truly a strength likst mine, yet whilst I hath strength of any kind, even strength to whilst away a few hours, I wilt again have at thee a whilst!"--you know, sounding like he'd been put through the whilsterizer Marty Cantor uses to edit HTT) go after J.C. with such a vengeance that finally God Himself would have to intervene.

That's where we'd end the second issue, with God getting ready to intervene because, naturally, in the third and final issue, with rippling sinews and two-page spreads galore, tossing suns and planets at each other, Odin and God would have to duke it out.

"And then God would win," Steve said.

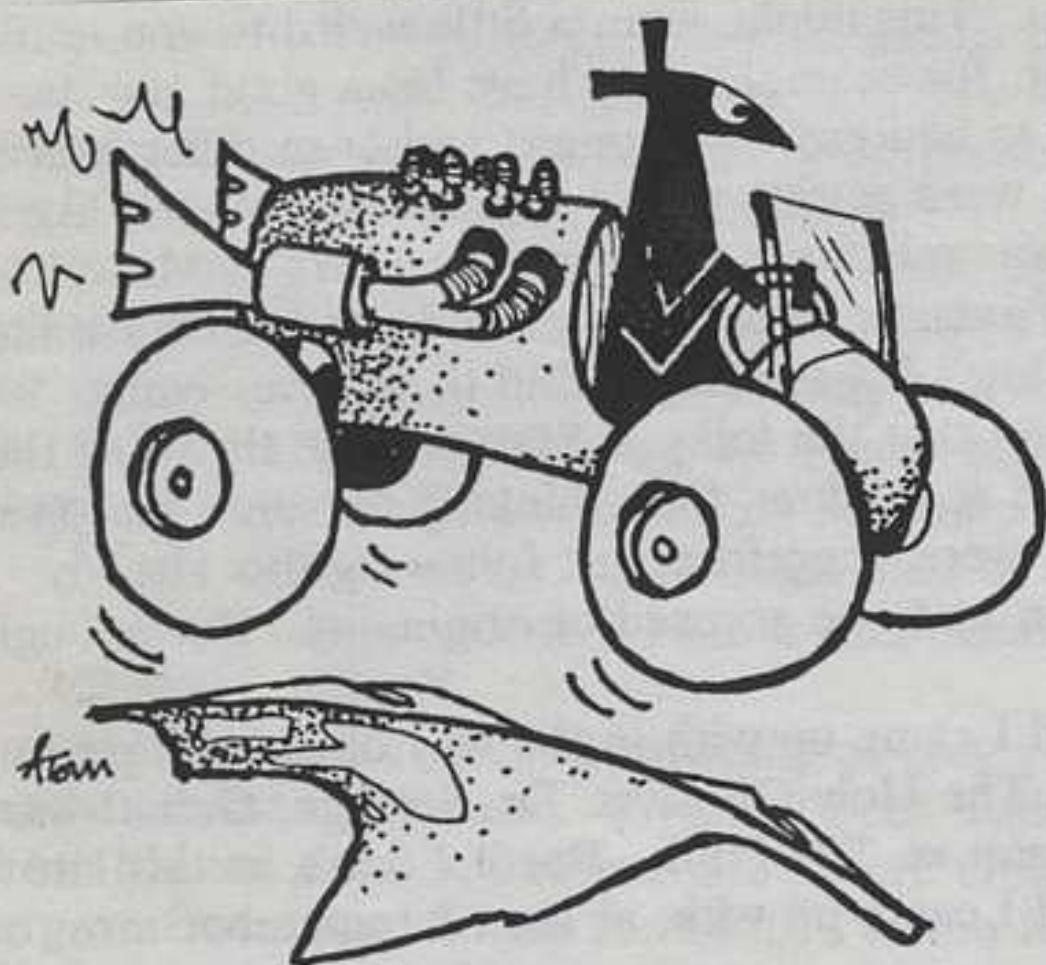
"Well..." I said, "maybe not at first. Picture this: on the last few pages of the third issue, after this tremendous battle which has devastated the better part of three or four galaxies, we'd show God admitting temporary defeat and gathering up his Armageddon Army. See, He'd go trudging off but, just before He reached the End of the Universe As We Know It, He'd turn, look back--at that distance, some of the surviving galaxies would be whizzing around His head but, just to put things in perspective, they'd be almost minuscule in comparison--and, in the final panel, He'd be shaking a mighty fist and you'd be able to see His scowl and the fiery anger gleaming in His eyes, which would be glaring back at our galaxy over His mighty bicep..."

Steve, who obviously saw where I was heading, picked up his cue. "...and He'd be saying, 'You haven't heard the last of me!'"

"You've got it," I said.

--rich brown





PAUL SKELTON

When Terry Carr was first getting active in fandom, and beginning to build by his fannish endeavors his tremendous and well-deserved reputation, I was just a kid running around in the local woods, half a world away, rerunning John Wayne scenarios with my friends, fighting off the dastardly depredations of Sioux or Apache, fighting the Nazi war machine to a standstill or, in the denser underbrush, stalking platoon after platoon of cunning Japs. Precisely which depended largely upon which film had been most recently aired over the television that week. Even as kids we were subconsciously aware that all enemies are interchangeable.

The woods are still there, but tamed now. They were, in my childhood, just leftovers, nature hanging on to a straggly ribbon of land that tumbled into a river valley cut quite deep into sandstone plain, with various streams and arroyos, land that was just too much trouble for the developers, who turned their attention to much easier meat elsewhere. Now the local woods have become a "Leisure Resource," and are criss-crossed with signposted "Nature Trails," from which most denizens of Nature have long since fled, but they do make for pleasant walks through sun-dappled tranquility. The walking is much easier now for the streams are criss-crossed with rustic bridges looking for all the world like they've been there for centuries though they weren't there a few scant years ago. Even the mighty river is now spanned by a footbridge, so that it is now possible to take a single "country" walk from near the center of Stockport, out up onto the Derbyshire hills in the adjoining Peak District.

I use the term "mighty river" with some looseness, you understand. The Goyt is no muddy Mississippi, no raging Colorado. Even when it gets together in Stockport with the River Etherow, and the River Thame, to form the Mersey, the result is still no big deal. But to a little kid it might as well have been the unfordable Amazon (in fact, several times it was the unfordable Amazon, as we tracked along its banks, eyes peeled for hostile natives with their blowpipes and poisoned darts, ever vigilant in case our

THE Other STILL VIBRATES

intrepid party should be attacked by a jaguar or, worse, by a hundred-foot anaconda. You wouldn't believe the incidence, in those far off days, of hundred-foot Anacondas along the banks of a sleepy Cheshire river). To us little kids the Goyt was a natural barrier, the Wall Around The World.

Truth to tell, the river had far more significance as a barrier than was justified, for there was really no need to cross it. The land on the far side rose much more gently, and hence was given over to farmland, once you got past the trees and scrubby brush in its immediate defile. But it was there, it was a challenge, and cross it eventually we did, when a long hot summer and a much lowered water table played into our hands. Of course, exploring the hidden secrets of the other side took all of ten minutes, after which there wasn't anything else to do but cross back. But we'd done it, and it remained a big deal in our circle.

Crossing the streams was never a big deal, for they were always passable one way or another. One stream in particular, because the terrain on the other side was more varied and interesting than most, so we'd be back and forth across it most days. If the worst came to the worst we could always take off our shoes and socks and roll up the legs of our jeans. That was it didn't matter if you missed your footing on a particularly slippery rock and ended up knee-deep in the water unless of course you went on to further lose your balance and so finish up sitting on the stream bed. But that was too easy and hardly ever necessary, unless the stream was particularly swollen from recent storms. Even so, picking the best way across usually required a bit of thought. Sometimes you'd get partway across, following a particular series of rocky outcrops, only to discover a stretch of water that would prove not to be negotiable, or that might require a leap somewhat more hazardous than you were prepared to tackle that day (like for instance if your jeans were clean on that morning—a mother's wrath being far more to be feared than any number of Sioux war parties). So back we'd come and try another route.

Sometimes I found that a better approach was to start from the other side, to plot a course back from where I wanted to go. Starting at the far bank I'd mentally trace the path back to my side. This meant I could pick the routes that looked easiest at their far extremity, and if they appeared difficult over by my bank, at least I could study the problem up close without first having to go almost all the way across. This approach had the distinct psychological advantage that you knew, once you'd got started, that the hardest part was behind you, and that it would get progressively easier as you went along. It is a technique with widespread applicability, and not confined to the crossing of childhood streams.

I once tried to apply it to writing a fan article.

I had a small idea, a typical whimsical notion, nothing much to it, but I was in the right frame of mind so I sat down at the typewriter and made of it what I could, which wasn't a lot. Oh, I liked what there was of it, but that was only about two-thirds of a page. Such episodes make great, off-the-wall digressions when you're publishing a diary-type personalzine—but unfortunately I no longer was. But I liked it. How then could I make use of it? It was about eating potato chips in bed. Not a topic easily incorporated into most fan articles, even as a digression. So, if it couldn't be a digression, it would have to be on the main line. So I had what I took to be an original idea. I would write the article backwards. I'd start at the far bank, as it were, and work out the best way to get there from here. So I came up with a logical way to lead into it, and then I backed up another step and looked around for the best way to get to that. And so on, and eventually I found myself at what looked to be a logical jumping-off point, at which point I switched from "reverse" to "forward" and actually wrote the piece.

And I was pleased with it, but then I was not in a position to make a disinterested judgment. Others liked it, too. Dave Locke, who published it in the first issue of his *TIME & AGAIN* liked it. Most of the readers who mentioned it did so favorably, all except one in fact. Terry Carr didn't like it. In fact he liked just about everything in the issue except my piece, which was a bit of a downer. In his comments, Terry wrote: "I liked just about everything in *TIME & AGAIN* #1 except for Skel's piece, which I thought was very badly written and evidently not at all planned beforehand."

Not at all planned beforehand? This as a comment on one of the most meticulously constructed pieces I'd ever written? "Terry Carr," I said to myself, "doesn't know what he's talking about." Then the sheer ludicrousness of that statement hit me. Terry Carr didn't know what he was talking about? Terry Carr? Come on, Skel, what universe are you inhabiting here?

So I thought about it some more. The thing is, the only reason I thought about it some more was that the comment was Terry Carr's. Had the comment been from, say, one of the other contributors to *TRAP DOOR* #7, I wouldn't have given it a second thought. But this was Terry Carr, and so I knew that it was up to me to figure out what I was doing wrong. So I thought about it some more, and I came to my own conclusions. I still like that piece, but I've never constructed another one the same way, and don't expect to.

So "fame," "public recognition" can be useful, when that use is within a justified context, even if the benefit is not drawn by the famee, but by a third party. Argument

from authority is dodgy, especially when the "authority" is all the backing that the argument has, but within a genuine context one is forced to ask oneself where that "authority" comes from, and Terry's authority is unimpeachable. You can't demand or command respect, but when it exists you can use it as a yardstick. Thus it was that I thought Paul Williams' comments in this issue tied in well to the "remembering Terry" theme.

So *TRAP DOOR* #7 was an issue that gave me much thought and satisfaction, along strictly personal lines, much after the fashion of Debbie Notkin's piece in that issue, and Terry was the theme that pulled it all together, just as it did for Debbie.

I always intended to write Terry and thank him for his comments, but I never got around to it. Unlike Debbie, I didn't know Terry well. I didn't even correspond with him, so I didn't feel comfortable just dropping him off a note to the effect that I'd appreciated his remarks. I felt I needed a context to initiate such a correspondence, and the context was never forthcoming. I appreciated that it was a much bigger deal to me than it was to Terry, and so I never got around to telling him "thank you."

I never got around to telling him how much I appreciated his comments. I don't feel any guilt in this omission, just regret. It was no big deal, but he went to the trouble of expressing his comments, and he deserved to hear my response to them. Explaining that response now does nothing for Terry. He's dead. If you want to say "thank you" to someone, better to do it when they're alive, when they can hear you.

Like I said, it was no big deal, but I'm sure I could have found that context if I'd tried a bit harder. I wish I'd tried a bit harder. (25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW, UK)

JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON

The present issue is not as amusing as past ones as everyone writing about Terry gets depressing in such a large dose, and a couple other fanzines have done it too, so I feel like I've had too many large doses. Terry and I corresponded about short story art, recommended stories to each other, and were certain to have at least one real conversation at any con we both attended. He bought one story from me, but the anthology was orphaned and he was unable to publish it after all; but he'd made suggestions for improvement (the *only* editor, in my experience, whose suggestions were 100% valid and useful) and when his anthology was orphaned, I sold that story to an Allen & Unwin anthology. Would never have happened without improvements Terry helped make. I wasn't close to him at all but there was a mutual liking. I don't actively *like* many people and, in fact, have to work hard not to dislike most; so I can only agree with everyone who says he was a great guy, and get a bit depressed when lots of folks say it in a few pages of a fanzine.

There was still humor in the issue, though, especially Tucker's piece on senility. It ended badly; he's also written humorously on his advocating alcoholism, and I'm never certain if he really thinks "smooth" is a good joke, let alone a good self-image. I think it's pretty stupid myself. But except for his tag-off, he wrote an extremely witty piece with a sick sense of humor deserving of Bloch. That was also a funny bit by Don Herron about Clive Barker's fiction; it's rare when something in a fanzine makes me laugh aloud, but that bit did. (P.O. Box 20610, Seattle WA 98102)

RICK SNEARY

I knew Terry Carr best thirty years ago and for a rather short time, and have seen little of him since. A good man, and I'm sorry he is gone. As you say, one who was willing to help others. I wish the feeling and ability were more wide spread--and that I had a greater share of it myself. Carr was one of the few that cared about fandom, as a whole...the movement and the reason it was there, or whatever it was. You know what I mean, because you are another one. Fandom is a love affair with certain people, as you say, but some of us take an interest in were it is all going, and what fandom is--Willis, Warner, White--fans like that. Nothing high minded, and no agreement, just a sense of timebinding, as Ev Evans used to write about. Carr was one of them. We are all deminished by his death. (2962 Santa Ana Street, South Gate CA 90280)

AVEDON CAROL

Thanks for printing all that stuff people wrote about Terry. You know, this is the first time I think I've ever needed the funeral. Instead, I'd say to people, "Terry Carr died," and they'd say, "So what? American editors never buy anything from British writers." The first time someone said this to me, I was really shocked. I recovered enough, finally, to say, "Did you ever send him anything?" And they said they hadn't, and I just said, "Well, that's great--the most accessible editor in SF, and you never bothered to send him anything--and you wonder why you never sold anything in America." And several people said that to me, that they didn't care because he was an American editor and Americans don't buy stuff from British writers. I just thought it was remarkable that they could take the death of someone who was so important as a human being and a fan, as well as an editor, as an occasion to trot out their bigotry and their ignorance about the SF market.

So there I was last spring/summer, trying to work through that sense of loss by writing about it for BLATANT, and the whole time I'm thinking, "Terry's going to really give me shit about using British and US spellings in the same piece," or "I can't wait to see the joke I just know Terry's going to make about this line here," you know. We all keep a little mental list of the people we are writing especially for when we write, and Terry was on my list. And now, I wonder how much the fact that I'm writing so little lately has to do with my having finally realized that he isn't there to write for anymore. And who's going to tell me how to spell, now?

Anyway, we had this panel at the Worldcon to remember him--I knew I wouldn't really know he was dead until the Worldcon, so I needed that. But I still have this weird, groping feeling (Terry taught me how to spell "weird," you know; I've never been able to tell vowels apart); I don't even know what to read anymore. People around here don't seem to talk much about SF, except as shop talk (they tell you that they are writing something; I don't know if they are reading anything at all), and I really miss knowing that if anyone new is worth watching, Terry will make sure I know about it. God, I am so pissed off at him for making himself so indispensable and then leaving.

And then there's this LoC you printed from him, so typical of the way he would pay attention, and then make sure you knew he was paying attention. That's what made him so great to be with, too.

Glen Warminger is right, too, about UK fandom. On the other hand, I still worry about Glen's dedication to fashion. I thought once you reached the age of 20, you started to develop your own style, and the hell with what some jerk-off designer decided you should wear.

On good writing vs. content: As much as I enjoy running into someone who has something to say, I generally prefer to see it said well; but I can get pretty tired of clever writing by someone who doesn't seem to have anything to say. The other week I was reading a couple of Calvino books, and I thought they were very cute and clever; but in the end, I thought their best quality was that they were short--I mean, once he'd made the point that he was being cute and clever, he knew better than to go on doing it for another 200 pages. Mog Decarnin isn't as flashy, but she gets right down to the cheese and says something that has to be said--that's what's most important to me. (144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB, UK)

ERIC BENTCLIFFE

Like many, I felt a real sense of loss when I heard about Terry's death. I'm not going to eulogize, but during the '50s we were fairly close (despite the then apparently vast distance geographically betwixt) and I've fond memories of the letters and fanzines and tapes he, Ron Ellik and I exchanged. That was a time when we never really expected to meet in person but distances shrunk (salaries got slightly larger) and we did; and he (and Ron) were as delightful in person as in print.

I think I still have some of those sound-tapes we exchanged in the eofannish days *somewhere* and I hope it doesn't sound too ghoulish to say that I intend to seek them out, play them, and have a drink with the Man. Not as solid a tribute as your own valuable project, but then I am an old fan, and tired... (17 Riverside Crescent, Holmes Chapel, Cheshire CW4 7NR, UK)

JEANNE MEALY

Sigh. More Terry Carr memoria. For a while, it got to where I was afraid to look at new fanzines--I knew I'd get sad, maybe a little depressed, at reading more Tales of Terry from those who had in some way been touched by his presence. Most freely claimed he was NOT perfect, but that didn't detract from their fondness. I appreciate your including these thoughts. I'm sure it helped a lot of people deal with their emotions--the readers and writers alike. It's very difficult acknowledging grief and all of its forms--that we fear for our own longevity and wonder if anyone will remember us; we regret the things we now can't say or do with the one who's gone; we value memories of them, and consciously carry on little bits of them in quotes and ideas and actions.

We also may look around to see what we still do with those around us. It reminds me of a small illustration I saw in a magazine. A tombstone; the inscription: "Don't wait until I'm dead to say something nice about me." I try not to 'save' many compliments and dream-goals for the future.

"For FAPA at 50" left few stones unturned as Fred Pohl told of early fannish sacrifices to Pub An Ish. It tied in well with your own reminiscences of the fannish glue that binds and not realizing where it was leading--just doing it because it was fun. {And still is!} (4157 Lyndale Ave. So., Minneapolis MN 55409)

BEV CLARK

It's almost ironic, since I never knew him, but my only comment on TRAP DOOR #7 is on Terry Carr's letter. I think I know why fans love to tell "how I got to be a fan" stories and other fans are always interested in hearing them, no matter how many others they may have heard. The stories promote group solidarity and reinforce people's beliefs that in fandom they have found a group of kindred spirits, a place where they belong. Every fannish story has some similarities, in theme if not in details, and hearing the similarities provokes a sort of great Aha! as one recognizes emotional kinship. Fundamentalists tell their born-again stories for the same reason, as do new AA members, and even members of professional societies sooner or later get around to "how I became an aardvark hunter" or whatever. This is particularly common in my own profession--technical communication--because so many of us fell into it without really planning to. We tend to feel that there is something vaguely wrong with us or with our ability to be a proper technical communicator (editor or writer in Old-speak), and it's very reassuring to hear that most of the other people in the Society for Technical Communication (for instance) got there the same way we did.

Actually, I do have another comment, and that's on lotteries. I don't find them morally outrageous, and I think if you ask you'll find that the people who are supposed to be protected from themselves or from further economic hardship if lotteries are abolished don't want to be protected, thank you very much. And for the rest of us, lotteries are a form of voluntary taxation from which we can at least hope for direct, personal benefits, however unlikely it is that we'll actually win anything. For the poorest people in society, too, lotteries are just about the only area in which they compete on an equal footing with everyone else and have any chance of winning wealth. I think it's the element of chance that makes lotteries so attractive, especially to people who, logically, lose more than they gain by playing; the lawyer and the chronically unemployed have an equal chance of winning, and because lottery players tend to be from the lower socioeconomic classes, so are winners, which gives hope. *{As a parent of four attending public schools and as also a regular player of the California Lotto (playing just one entry per drawing--and using the same six-number combination of numbers--unless the pot goes up over \$20 million in which case I buy just a few more combinations), I generally agree with the above. The prospect of winning millions is appealing and the benefit to the schools is something I support as well. I seem to have one or two numbers in about two thirds of the games and have won \$5 for having three numbers on a handful of occasions. I used to play the scratch games, once winning \$25 on a ticket, but have dropped that level of participation, no longer feeling comfortable with it.}* (10501 8th Ave. NE #119, Seattle WA 98125)

MILT STEVENS

When I first entered fandom I certainly didn't foresee the extent of my future involvement. If I had known then what I know now, I'd probably have done some things earlier and other things not at all. The thought of quitting fandom has only crossed my mind a couple times in the intervening years. The last time I thought of quitting, Bruce Pelz asked me what I was going to do with my spare time, stay home and watch television? The idea of watching television on a regular basis horrified me so much that I haven't considered quitting since.

In Gary Hubbard's article, Captain Flash sounds like a fairly typical super hero, but the Mirror Monster sounds innovative. You just don't encounter many Commie squids from another dimension. If the Mirror Monster comes from an entirely Communistic dimension, it might raise the issue of political refugees. Imagine having every gas station and convenience store in the country run by refugee squids.

"Moskowitz" by Sid Coleman is, is...different. When one thinks about being a fannish legend one usually doesn't consider that legendary characters include Jack the Ripper, Lizzy Borden and Claude Degler. I'm sure when Moskowitz crawled out of the ocean to buy his first issue of AMAZING he didn't consider the consequences of becoming legendary. (7234 Capps Avenue, Reseda CA 91335)

JANICE MURRAY

It would appear Mr. Hubbard was correct. "Bomb-making has become a part of our lifestyle and a key element of our economy." This is why I was surprised to hear the Department of Energy wants to stop Hanford's plutonium production because they have enough stockpiled already. My Ghod, that's almost logical! These gov't people are the same folks who want to put a nuclear dump site at Hanford because they own the land and can do any damn thing they want with it (despite all the studies that show radioactivity could hit the Columbia River in as little as five years). I guess they figured out they could save some money this way. I hear rumors that they gotta start thinking about that sort of thing. Pity.

Just when I'm trying to get over the shock of a rational policy decision coming from those guys, we start hearing news reports about the citizens of the area picketing, signing petitions and threatening to sue (somebody, I was never sure just whom) because the loss of all those jobs isn't "in the best interests of America." These folks have been on the federally funded gravy train for so long they can't figure out how to make an honest living. Tell me again how we ain't never gonna be a socialist state? Harrumph.

When I first got into fandom I had the same problem with the Boeing-employed members of the local club. I still remember getting a call at work in the summer of 1980: "I've been playing games on the computer all morning, then I called all my relatives on the long distance lines, now I'm bored so I'll talk to you." I could hear my taxes going up.

Sometimes I wish I could just be a good little robot like them, but I can't. Perhaps that's why I like to escape into fandom--that world where intelligence is a virtue and thinking for one's self is, most of the time, tolerated. (P.O. Box 75684, Seattle WA 98125)

BERNIE PHILLIPS

In response to Gary Hubbard's article, I'm afraid his little scenario isn't as far fetched or uncommon as one would hope. I've been working here in Silicon Valley for ten years in jobs requiring security checks. My first job was on the graveyard shift. Many of my coworkers were scrapings from the bottom of the barrel. Some were functionally illiterate. Some came in drunk or on drugs all the time. We were making chips to go in a variety of electronic devices. It was production work, and in production it's numbers that count. Management gave lip service to quality but quantity was what they really cared about. The supervisors used to hand carry lots that they knew were

bad past the quality control inspectors so the lots would not be rejected. (And you wonder why things you buy turn to junk quickly. Garbage in, garbage out.) It's my impression that this is common operating procedure in many of the valley's lesser-quality companies. A friend of mine, in a different company, said that first they showed them a film about how important it was to do good work. She says she remembers a scene where a plane crashed because it relied on a bad chip. Then they put her on the line as an inspector and tried to force her to pass bad chips. She said, "How can you ask me to pass bad lots when it could cause a plane crash?" She raised such a ruckus that they took her off the line and transferred her to Quality Control. (2065 Latham St. #36, Mountain View CA 94040)

SUE THOMASON

Gary Hubbard's visit to bomb-factory land was a superb piece of writing. This is what happens when the brainwashing wears off, and in the middle of a whole bunch of roles playing themselves out, a *person* wakes up and says, "Why am I *here*? What is this *for*?" Of course the world doesn't need bombs; they are no protection against the Communist Nightmare (or any other nightmare for that matter). Those people Over There are not some nameless/labelled lurking menace, or Jungian collective shadow; they are *us*. Let us not cause ourselves pain, but joy. (111 Albermarle Road, York, N. Yorks YO2 1EP, UK)

MARTYN TAYLOR

I'm amazed anyone could be surprised they have bomb factories. I mean, how are we all going to have our very own, personal nuclear devices if they aren't mass produced. Look, we've had them for 45 years now and what is the market penetration? Practically zero. Dave Langford is the only person I know personally who has his own, and he doesn't say much about it now. It's a sad commentary on the decline of Western manufacturing industry. We'll just have to let the Japanese and Koreans in on the act. They'll cut prices, build up a market share by dumping, and just think of the advertising: "The amazing all-new Sony Walkbomb," "There's a difference at Oppenheimer's you'll enjoy," "Atomic Weapons are IT," and "Probably the best fission device in the world."

It's funny—but not ha ha—how AIDS brings out the irrational in people. Personally I find the notion of it being the "judgment of God" offensive (and I'm a practicing member of the liberal wing of the Church of England—Mrs. Thatcher doesn't like us so we must be good guys). So far as I am aware, the essence of Christianity is that you take responsibility for your own actions. All this "visiting the sins of the parents on the children even unto the seventh generation" crap went out with the guy on the cross—and there are an awful lot of children being born with the HIV virus if not full-blown AIDS. I don't see how a newborn can be accused of "wallowing in a cesspit of its own making." A smelly nappy, yes, but a cesspit? Then you have those who have caught AIDS from infected blood products. How's that for the judgment of God? "You're sick, you're a hemophiliac. Zap! That'll teach you." I suppose some people might think that, the same people who believe riches are a sign of God's approval, forgetting those unfortunate words of Christ (that it's easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven) and of Paul (that love of money is the root of all evil). Actually it makes me

rather angry. Human beings have got up to some pretty unpleasant activities over the years—try Belsen, Hiroshima and Pol Pot's little exercise in social engineering to pick three recent examples—and the world isn't littered with pillars of stone, is it. Yet we're expected to believe God is going to get his knickers in a twist about a little fucking around and abuse of hard drugs. To quote Mr. McEnroe, you cannot be serious!

What really frightens me about AIDS is the reaction of our government. Now Maggie's Army have had just one concern in their terms of office: putting money in their pockets. Public expenditure is anathema to them—except when it does their election chances good, viz pouring billions down the Falklands plowhole. For eight years they have systematically starved the National Health Service of funds (well, it's one way of encouraging people to go private, and who runs the private health organizations? I don't need to tell you). Yet in the past couple of years they've thrown hundreds of millions at AIDS. Why? They only got heavy about hard drugs when their own kids started dying of overdoses and adulterated smack, so what's going on? Has young Mark got AIDS? To a suspicious mind like mine, their action is so out of character that I have to wonder whether they know something about the syndrome they aren't telling the rest of us. Maybe it really is the result of a secret CIA experiment gone wrong (right?), after all?

Why have I spent so much time waffling on about the least pleasant aspect of TRAP DOOR? What do you take me for, a psychologist? (14 Natal Road, Cambridge CB1 3NS, UK)

HARRY WARNER JR.

Gary Hubbard grazes repeatedly but never comes to grips with the matter I've tried to bring up several times in fannish places. Why don't the anti-nuclear, anti-imperialism, anti-war, and other antis pay some attention to the millions of men and women who actually make the things that would be used in warfare? I don't think there are many nations on the planet where efficient production of the implements of war could continue if all the little guys who talk daily about how awful another would be were consistent enough to refuse to work on the production of war material. Maybe Russia has enough power over its citizenry to maintain some sort of production, but I doubt it.

I wish that Debbie Notkin hadn't written in just this way. Someone in HTT's memorial issue pointed out Terry's custom of staying out of fandom's feuds and vendettas. It seems not quite right to use his death as a springboard for another volley against Eric Mayer and his cafe society theory. I understand fully how Debbie feels one's enjoyment of fandom is enriched when one has personal contact with congenial and talented fans. But the very tragedy that inspired so much material in this issue of TRAP DOOR should remind us of the other aspect of that fact: I don't think Debbie would believe everyone who enters fandom after April 8, 1987, should ignore Terry because there is no longer any possibility of knowing personally the individual who wrote so well in all those old fanzines, edited so many outstanding collections of professional science fiction, and authored exceptionally fine fiction. Even those among us who are regular congoers, belong to local fan clubs, and make goodwill tours of fandom have generally found much pleasure in the accomplish-

ments of fans with whom they have little or no contact. Irish Fandom was the most celebrated example of that. In this issue, you urge increased mail contact with a Russian fan with whom it is unlikely that many fans outside the USSR will have personal contact in the foreseeable future.

I wonder if Paul Williams' problem is mainly the decline of literacy among the young people who are the main fans of rock. For every youngster who is capable of enjoying a book about rock, there must be a thousand who like to listen to rock music but don't have the patience or the reading ability to sit down with a book and read about their interest. However, fame isn't an automatic guarantee that one's creativity will be marketable. Somewhere I read recently that Ray Bradbury has been unable to sell some of his recent short stories. I have no ideas whether they are Bradbury quality or if his quality is dropping off, but obviously his name and fame aren't enough to create instant acceptance by an editor. (423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown MD 21740)

RICHARD BRANDT

Allyn's article may end with an instance of one of those diabolically clever devices babies use to imprint their parents upon them, but the piece as a whole (and I apologize, Allyn and Donna and Eric) just reinforces my feelings of good fortune in having escaped the trials of parenthood (not that there hasn't been a close call or two). My mother keeps writing me, wishing I could get another look at my little cousin Matthew. When I visited last year, the little tyke was miserable with an ear infection, and kept up a squalling racket most of the holidays. None of our ears were feeling too good by the end of the week.

Debbie Notkin's reply to Eric Mayer is all right as far as it goes, but she may not appreciate the value of strictly-paper fanac to some of us who don't necessarily sneer at "cafe fandom." Sharing a lively face-to-face relationship with other fans must be dandy, but for those of us who live in remote outposts of the boonies (say, El Paso) with no native fannish populations, it's something of an idle fancy. For me, face-to-face contact with fans must be left to the occasional con or like gathering; these are likely to be hundreds of miles away (if not thousands). Paper fanac is crucial, because it's the only contact with most fans I can expect.

Steve Green really hit a nerve; I gave up on a job in broadcast news—surely the most glamorous of fields, right?—and not only was it a lot less than people on the other side of the cathode ray tube might expect, but to me it was a job, not a career; and I traded it for another job, not any career. Besides, in a market like El Paso's, if you really want a career in television news you make plans to get out of town. I stuck it out as long as I could, then changed occupations instead of towns. Ah well. Of course, it might have helped that, unlike Greg Benford or David Bratman, a TV newsman never felt like anything I was; no work I've found has made me feel like anything but a fan who happens to do it for a living. Should have found more interesting work... (4740 N. Mesa #111, El Paso TX 79912)

DARROLL PARDOE

Of course, I can't resist Debbie Notkin's dangling comment hook. I'm glad she has such fond memories of PIG ON THE WALL, but I do wonder at her making so clear a dichotomy between knowing someone at first hand and communicating in writing. My readership in PIG

consisted of a lot of people I knew personally and saw at fairly frequent intervals (i.e., all the British readers); quite a number of people I also knew personally but didn't see anything like as often as I'd like (i.e., the ones who lived in foreign parts); and the remainder who I'd never met face to face but for one reason or another had come into contact with (and hoped for an eventual meeting). PIG was a letter substitute, and I regarded it not so much as a consciously created artifact as just a way of keeping in touch. It complemented my physical meetings (and phone calls). I've never had one set of friends for talking to in person and another for writing to; for preference I'd like to have you all here by me to see and hear whenever I want, but since that isn't possible, paper communication is a useful extension of the means of keeping in touch.

I've never deliberately created a paper persona. When I write the words just come out of the back of my head and on to the page. Those who know me best recognize this, I think; I've been told that I have recognizable turns of phrase which crop up both in speech and writing. I'd love to meet Debbie one day, should the opportunity arise; but had I not met her on paper the opportunity would never occur anyway, would it?

Sue Thomason saw clowns in the toilet? Our toilet at home when I was little had green tiled walls and the tiles had grey swirly patterns on them. I used to sit on the khazi and imagine that these were the entrances to either caves into another dimension or alternatively whirlpools in the fabric of space. Fortunately they were always under my conscious control. I could sit there and speculated on the strange worlds beyond without ever fearing that I'd be sucked down into them. What did worry me when I was very small was accidentally flushing the toilet without getting off it first. I was always very careful to do that, because I imagined that the flushing action created a tremendous vacuum which might either glue me to the seat or pull me round the sump. It was years before I found that it wasn't true.

I used to see caves in the fire, too. When I was little we had coal fires, and as the coal burned you could see cavities, glowing red hot, in among the lumps. Sometimes bits of tarry liquids would come hissing out of them, accompanied by flames in pretty colors. I used to spend a lot of time staring into the fire and imagining a world of (very small, presumably) demons and salamanders. (36 Hamilton Street, Hoole, Chester CH2 3JQ, UK)

JOHN BERRY

I was extremely pleased to read Tucker's item about senility, because I have been accused of slowly dipping into the incipient state of senility. I am almost 62 years old, and fondly imagined to myself that as the years advanced, life's problems became clearer; unfortunately, what I consider to be intellectual maturity means that my mind, whilst racing with solutions to the mysteries of cosmology, for example, causes mundane contratemps. I mow the lawn, nip in for coffee, and when I return to the lawn, the mower is missing. I run in the house, protesting volubly about such a nasty trick being played on me; my wife takes me by the hand, leads me, somewhat gibbering, into the garden, and the mower is there in all its glory, throbbing in the anticipation of my soothing hands gripping its handles. In my office, I ask if anyone has seen my spectacles and they are actually rampant on my forehead. On the credit side, of course, is my clear appreciation of the Universe...one

book I recently finished, written by a lecture of Astronomy at one of our leading universities, bases all his work on black holes. Now black holes may very well be strongly based theoretically, but I know I am correct in stating that black holes have never been spotted. There is absolutely not one iota of practical observation to support a black hole hypothesis. Yet many astronomers write and lecture glibly about their presence in the Universe. I mean, learned men state that matter disappears inside a black hole and is never seen again, and even a senile person like myself must ask the obvious question: if a galaxy is gobbled up by a black hole, where does it go? Astronomers reveal that the Universe as we know it was created in one millionth of a second after the Big Bang. What I want to know is, where did the matter come from beforehand? What is the use of airily waving one's hands in a lecture, and giving theories about the Universe being finite or infinite, if one doesn't know where the metaphysical bricks come from? Etc., etc. I could go on for hours, but that would merely tend to confirm Tucker's theory. (4 Chilterns, S. Hatfield, Herts. AL10 8JU, UK)

JEANNE GOMOLL

I think Paul Williams may be right when he implies that one makes a choice along the line somewhere to strive for fame or do what one wants to do. Right around the same time I read TRAP DOOR, I read an article in *Mother Jones* about Coppola, and there was a quote by him there that seemed to connect directly with what Paul was talking about. Coppola claims to have decided to stop being a professional film-maker and says he will no longer attempt the enormous-budget films which must please the widest possible audience. He says:

"I now think that all my dreams and my attitudes toward creativity and culture are possible on an amateur basis. The amateur basis is the big muscle that can smite them all because it never gets itself wormed into the complicated vested financial world. They can never control you because you're not using immense amounts of money; you're just using personal enthusiasm. I'll be immune because I'm not in that world; I'm not in that economy. An amateur by definition is one who does it out of love."

This seems like a very fannish attitude to me. (P.O. Box 1443, Madison WI 53701)

LUKE MCGUFF

I liked "For FAPA at Fifty" because Pohl conveyed the sense of what it was like to be a pioneer in zinedom and fandom. The fans he talks about thought they were creating a form, and they were. Today, you have zines devoted to just about every topic imaginable. When I worked at the Adler Planetarium, we got a dittoed newsletter that was, basically, a fanzine for people who put on planetarium shows. A friend of mine worked in a mathematical library several years ago, and she said that they got a magazine about some weird hobby math which was basically a fanzine.

But no matter what the special or general topic of one's zine today, no one will be as much of a pioneer as the people Fred talks about in his article. Yeah! I also agree with him as to how the publishing business has changed the effect of individual editors.

Anyway, the reverential attitude of old fans to old zines used to really bug me--it still really bothers me when it doesn't allow them to see the value of new zines. Pohl is

honest more than overly-reverential. He's honest when he says that he prefers the print form (actually, I must admit I do too, but I didn't have a modem when I had my computer). Hah! Anyway, I liked "For FAPA at Fifty" more than I usually like such reminiscences.

As always, the article headings and illustrations are amusing and appropriate. Oh, and I wanted to talk about "Now THAT's What I Call Creative." Lucy and Jerry aren't the only fans who are/were into rubber stamps. I remember Cheryl Cline's zine, *THE WRETCH TAKES TO WRITING*, quite fondly, especially the special wrestling issue, which was way ahead of its time. Not to snipe, or anything, but Cheryl's experience of getting blisters from some of the complicated stamping that went into this *THE WRETCH TAKES TO WRITING* special issue could be the equivalent of Fred's story of hektographing. (P.O. Box 3680, Minneapolis MN 55403)

RICH BROWN

I don't know what to say about Avedon Carol's paean of praise for the condom and men who can drop their shorts and fuck while wearing their raincoat. At the very least she's revising history. She does prose on about how men now are "finally" having to share the responsibility of birth control, since the advent of AIDS has made them more willing to roll on a rubber. I mean, in the late 1950s, when the Pill was still being tested and the IUD was virtually unheard of, all we *had* were condoms--and the burden for their use was *entirely* on the man; there was no, or at least very damned little, "sharing" of this responsibility. Well, telling a man flat out that--even if using condoms always made him feel like he was making love to someone in another room--if he failed to supply a rubber, he wouldn't get fucked, might, by some stretch of the imagination, be considered "sharing responsibility."

Women *could* have purchased rubbers back when they were about the only form of birth control on the market, but the fact is that--with the exception of prostitutes--most women didn't. (I guess, since they must be worn by the male, rubbers are perceived, as Avedon seems to perceive them, as a man's birth control device--even though a man, presumably, never runs a very high risk of getting pregnant). What women wanted--or *said* they wanted, at the time, which after all might not be the same thing--was control over their own bodies, their *own* form of birth control untied to the sex act.

No doubt when Avedon was becoming sexually active, the dangers of the Pill and certain IUDs were starting to become apparent. Perhaps that's why, from her letter, I get the impression that women have been waiting around, not necessarily angrily, but for years and with growing exasperation toward us unhep males for not putting on those groovy ol' rubbers and sharing responsibility for birth control with our lovers. Avedon thus gifts women with a foresight and preference that, at least for the most part, they neither possessed nor expressed. The fact is, the sexual revolution began and really took off *only* after the Pill and the IUD had finally given people a variety of choices and women the kind of control over their bodies they'd said they always wanted. I am sorry to disappoint Avedon, but condoms date back to the 1700s, if not earlier; they had nothing whatsoever to do with the sexual revolution. {At least not the current one...}

When women were freed from the worries of unwanted pregnancy through contraceptives they could convenient-

ly use themselves, they could finally begin to truly enjoy the many pleasures of lovemaking. This in turn freed us all to explore, try new things with each other, try different things with different people and enjoy sex in as many ways as our vanishing hangups let us, and with as many (or as few) as we decided upon ourselves.

It's these *choices* which Avedon is blithely ignoring in her determination not to "understand" why people are saying the advent of AIDS will put an end of the sexual revolution, will mean that many people will have to give up upwards of two thirds of what they previously learned to enjoy as part of their sexual repertoire.

Besides, the issue *isn't* birth control, it's disease prevention. Matters of preference are irrelevant--the only choices are to use condoms, give up sex, or die. Oral and/or anal sex, even only as foreplay, are forms of experimentation which can only be practiced by those who are willing to put their life on the line for them. I hope I don't know anyone who likes them that much. The choices and experimentation of the sexual revolution need to be forgotten; couples had damn well *better* start using condoms *and* cutting down on the number of their sexual partners, or stand a very good chance of catching (and/or passing on to someone they presumably care for) a slow, lingering disease that will kill them and for which there is at present no treatment or cure.

Anything less than total adherence to these principles and you're playing Russian Roulette with your own life and, before you can die for your own stupidity, the lives of any of your subsequent lovers.

Avedon isn't precisely trivializing AIDS with her comments; she just shrugs it off as being almost beneath her contempt--as though it's just another form of VD. And since condoms are *her* birth control device of choice, she seems to be saying, *she* has nothing to worry about--and she just wonders what all the fuss is about, since anyone who uses *her* birth control device of choice will be just as safe as she is...

It's a terrible thing to give your honey a case of the clap. It can happen easily enough if you're into fucking a lot of people. But previously--before AIDS--the "bright side" was that, whatever you got, it was either curable (if anything but herpes II) or treatable (if herpes II). All of our lives it has been this way: the "killer" forms of VD were being treated in the 19th century and cured in the 20th. I would imagine it to be a gut-wrenching experience to have to say, "Dearest, I contracted VD and didn't know it, so I accidentally gave it to you. Now you'll have to go in to the doctor's with me and get some shots." All the more so if your sweetie didn't realize you were fooling around with others. But most people, faced with the choice, could bite the bullet and do what had to be done. How much harder it's going to be, though, if you have to tell your lover that you've given him/her a debilitating and deadly disease for which there is no cure?

Another distinction which Avedon does not bother her head about: All of the major sexually transmitted diseases except AIDS have a relatively short gestation period, i.e., when you contract one of them, it doesn't take long for you to know about it. But the entire TRAP DOOR mailing list (Foo forbid) *could* have the AIDS virus right now--and not show symptoms of it for another two or three years.

All in all, it bothers me to observe Avedon sneering at those for whom condoms are not The Birth Control Method of Choice and implying that only men could ever

be turned off by them. (Or am I wrong? In the new lexicon, can women be called "wimps" too?) I dunno. I live in a world populated by people who have differing tastes--in sex as well as other things. It behooves us, I think, to be tolerant of each other's non-harmful differences (sexual and otherwise), for the simple reason that then others will be tolerant where we may differ from them. I daresay that, if I gave voice to contempt for the many women I've known who positively disliked condoms (i.e., all but one of the women I've ever made love to) the way Avedon has done for men here, I'd be branded a misogynist. I've used rubbers of my own free will--I briefly had a case of venereal warts that I didn't want to pass on--but I didn't really enjoy the lack of tactile sensation and could hardly wait to get back to "real" sex; I suspect, therefore, that I'll like it even less now that it's no longer a matter of choice.

I suppose many of your readers will be adding their remembrances of Terry Carr to those which you published. Marta Randall, Dick Ellington and Sid Coleman have said what I would like to have said--and all far better than I could have. Terry was already a fannish legend because he *was* the quintessential Trufan; and at 14, I would never have dreamed that knowing Terry for 30 years would be so very much too few, either.

But you know, I think Terry knew pretty much (without letting it go to his head) how highly we all regarded him. I know that's true in my case because, after his death, Carol returned a manuscript I'd sent to him for his criticisms and response--a long piece I had done for Joe Sanders' book *Science Fiction Fandom* on post-Sputnik fandom--and the piece was full of highly complimentary things about Terry's fannish accomplishments (the Carl Brandon hoax, FANAC as focal point, the Tower of Bheer Cans to the Moon, etc.). I knew he read it, too, because the margins contained pencilled notes which probably would have formed the basis of his response; as it was, they were quite helpful.

The news of Terry's death shook me up but I wondered, not for the first time in my life, why I have always found it so damnably easy to pour tears into fictional things, like movies and books, and yet hardly ever react externally when the feelings are real-world. In Terry's case, I think it's because the initial grief was the "selfish" kind Dick Ellington was talking about--I regret Terry's passing because I know he would have gone on being who he was, doing the things he did to the delight of us all, and now I'm going to have to do without. As are we all.

But, hey, the problem with existence is that none of us is going to get out of it alive; Terry put a lot into his life and, when you stop to think about it, he got a lot in return. We would have wished him more, for his own sake and our own, but I also think we all know how lucky we were and how lucky he was, too. Terry was lucky because he realized his potential and accomplished more in both the fannish microcosm and the sf macrocosm than most of us ever dream of; the whole sf community appreciated his writing and editing talents, fans who were only acquainted with him liked him (Terry was, with the possible exception of Walt Willis, the most universally liked fan I know of) and his friends loved him. Terry was luckier than most because he *knew* he was appreciated, and liked, and loved. And we, of course, were lucky because we had and took the opportunity to let him know it. (508 N. Highland #B5, Arlington VA 22201-- note CoA)

RICHARD LUPOFF

I think TRAP DOOR #7 is going to be one of those issues that people will come across years from now, and they'll look at the contents page, and their jaws will drop. Kind of the way I feel when I look at a PLANET STORIES letter column from 1948. Makes me pleased to be involved, even with a teensy one-paragraph letter.

One point that ought to be cleared up. Pascal Thomas mentions Jerry Jacks' signature on an AIDS-related petition, mentions Andy Porter's editorial reference to Jerry's death of (presumably) AIDS, and so forth. *{Actually, the petition was a fannish petition about Steve Stiles not getting his copy of TRAP DOOR #5--he was the cover artist for that issue and his bulk-mailed copy of that issue never reached him--and it was circulated at the DC Corflu in 1986. But I digress...}*

When Jerry died, everyone who knew him (at least, everyone who knew him that I know of) assumed that he had died of AIDS. But when the medical report on cause of death was received, it turned out that Jerry had not had AIDS. Grant Canfield acted as the spearhead in dealing with officialdom at the time, and he was quite emphatic about this. Cause of death was cancer, specifically of lymph cancer which had spread to his liver. *There was no indication of AIDS.*

And yet, in a way, Jerry died of AIDS.

How could this be? During the months prior to Jerry's death, it was obvious to people who saw him frequently that he was very seriously sick and that his condition was growing worse. Everyone kept urging him to seek medical help, and he kept refusing.

The "invisible subtext" was this: We all thought Jerry had AIDS. We all "knew" that Jerry "knew" he had AIDS. He didn't want to wind up lying in a hospital bed with tubes running in and out of him. He wanted to stay in his home (he loved his home), see his friends, and live his life, as close to normal as he could.

In this he succeeded. Three days before Jerry died, Pat and I and Grant visited him. Pat and I brought over a light meal from the deli. Jerry sat at the table with us and was able to eat a little. Afterwards we watched an amazingly bad movie, something about time-travelling mutant robot killer tanks. We all had a good laugh.

A couple of nights later Grant and Jerry's friend Paul Moslander dropped in for a visit. They said later that Jerry was visibly weaker and that they finally persuaded him to see a doctor. They returned in the morning to take him to the hospital and found that he had died, alone, during the night.

After the medical report came in, several knowledgeable persons told me that the form of cancer Jerry had is treatable by chemotherapy, with a good rate of success. If Jerry had sought treatment weeks--I suppose, months--earlier, he might have been treated successfully. But (I believe) he was convinced that he had AIDS and that was why he wouldn't go. (3208 Claremont Avenue, Berkeley CA 94705)

DOUG BARBOUR

The response to Paul Williams on AIDS, especially Mog Decarnin's, was fascinating. Another year goes by and the real battle is still just beginning to be fought. Will everybody finally recognize the absolute necessity for education? It is beginning to happen here. My wife teaches in junior high, and the sex ed classes now include information

on AIDS and condoms, etc. The person who teaches sex ed really enjoys it if only because it's one class where the students *really* pay attention. And some information is getting out, if a joke some students told her is any indication. (A couple of people are sharing a needle on a corner and another person asks them if they aren't worried about getting AIDS. No, they say, "we're wearing condoms!") Still is it worrisome when TV continually fails to provide ads which would deliver any helpful information out of fear of offending someone. The message being that it's better to have your children die than have your sensibilities offended. That is sick.

Paul is equally intriguing this time. I wonder if he's read Michael Ondaatje's wonderful poem/novel, *Coming Through Slaughter*, about Buddy Bolden and the disastrous desire to take part in "the 20th century game of fame" from which perhaps the only way out is brain and heart suicide. Or a refusal to get caught up in it. For me that's pretty easy since, as a poet, even if I "made it" I would still be known to not more than about 5,000 people at the outside (and, despite having over ten books of poetry, plus a few edited volumes, to my name, I am not that well known, even in Canada). But the desire is there, duplicitous but real: (1) Since I write I must want to communicate--therefore it would be nice if my writing actually did "reach" some people; (2) Jesus, what would happen to me if I suddenly became a "known" and therefore no more than potentially "consumed" "product"--now that really scares me. As does the growing idea that even literature is nothing more than a consumer product. Perhaps that concept is the worst thing late capitalism has done to our culture (what of it remains).

Of course the core of this issue are the memoirs of Terry Carr--deeply felt, profoundly moving, and a glowing testimony to how much he meant to the fannish community. I met him only once, when Susan Wood got him to invite Sharon and me to his 1976 New Year's Eve bash. I admired his library, enjoyed meeting other fans and writers there, and had a fine time indeed. His genuine enjoyment of life came through in everything of his I've read as well as in his hospitality that evening. People were there because they had a good time in his presence. Of how many can that be truly said? Thanks for gathering those tributes. They meant something. (11655 - 72nd Ave., Edmonton, Alberta T6G 0B9, Canada)

MOG DECARNIN

Having been so involved in AIDS work, my impulse is always to go off on long dissertations whenever the subject comes up in print; there is so much misinformation and misinterpretation around. How about some statistics? Here's how the number of reported cases looked from 1979 on (this is the total population: 3/4 gay, 1/4 straight at any given time after the first few cases): approximate numbers -- 10, 28, 174, 626, 1,508, 6,931, 14,739, 26,878, 48,574 and now partway through 1988, 57,000. Here are the numbers for *heterosexually transmitted AIDS* in straight men, starting 1984: 5, 28, 90 (524), 241 (886). The numbers in parentheses are the actual numbers now acknowledged; the others are what they would be if we still counted the way the CDC started off, that is, eliminating anyone Haitian or African automatically. What actually happened, of course, is that straight men were getting AIDS through heterosexual contact long before 1984 in the U.S., but it was limited to the Haitian population pretty much, and

they didn't count. So lots and lots of people were under the impression that straight white men who didn't shoot drugs were safe from AIDS. I am sure it is merely a coincidence that the release of the information that, no, they weren't, was immediately followed by a whumping media interest in AIDS, which up to that time had only been good for a feature every six months or so. It was also followed by a lot of funding.

I hope that straight media finds it in the realm of possibility to do some very explicit AIDS education *soon*, because the "straight" stats look very, very familiar--and that's only the straight men, of course, though women have been getting AIDS heterosexually right along, too, and both men and women of course get AIDS from sharing needles. Sure, gay men have more sex than straight men, but remember there are more straights than gays, and their media is bogged in puritan mores and won't give out nitty-gritty information. There are well over 2,000 men and women in the U.S. now with heterosexually acquired AIDS--many more than the gays in year 5 of the gay epidemic. This is of course only the number diagnosed with full-blown AIDS; it doesn't count ARC, and it doesn't show the number of people infected. Why stress straight AIDS so much? Simply because straights control the media and the money in the U.S. and they had *better* get interested, for everyone's sake. I know what it is like to be surrounded by people dying of this disease. About three years ago I realized that if straights don't wake up, the whole society is going to find out first-hand about the anguish that has rocked the gay community for nearly a decade, a series of blows that never lets up, that decimates the most creative and joyful segment of a population (yes, you end up facing the fact that the neatest people do have more sex), that gets more and more crushing every day, and that has to be stopped *in the past*--nothing you can do NOW will prevent thousands of people from dying next year.

AIDS will take some different forms in the straight population. After all, they have had *some* warning. But they have some myths to deal with that gay men didn't: e.g., the myth of monogamy. How many times have I heard people, mainly women, say that they were glad they didn't have to worry about AIDS because they were monogamous. Being monogamous yourself isn't enough; your partner had better be, too, and you'd both better have been monogamous over the last five years as well. One of the most common calls on all AIDS hotlines is the married man who has been out screwing around and is now worried. Sometimes he's been making it with men, incidentally. Has he told his wife? Are you kidding? And I'll never forget the man who had recently been diagnosed with AIDS who quietly told me that what he wanted to do now was to settle down, get married, and have a family. I had to explain to him that AIDS wasn't transmitted *ONLY* through gay sex, which was what he had believed. Not so surprising when you consider that a whole LOT of doctors tried to hang onto that belief *real* hard. But pretty appalling when you think he had been through most of the medical and social service mill already and no one had told him. Think of that if you ever wonder what we mean when we keep harping on education as the answer to AIDS. Most people are decent. Most people would never knowingly give someone AIDS. But they gotta *know*. And right now, even the supposedly educated segment of U.S. society is very ignorant about AIDS, and that includes fandom.

I was particularly struck by Steve Green's comment about his career, journalism, being one "most people would give their eye teeth to be part of." He may be overestimating there. I remember when I used to tell school counselors that I wanted to be a writer, and they would all respond with, "Oh! Then you'll be interested in taking journalism in college." And I would be at first surprised and later secretly hostile. Didn't they know the difference between being a *writer*--the most fascinating and awesome career imaginable--and being a *journalist*--working on boring newspapers and (ostensibly) getting to write nothing but non-fiction? Even later, when I contemplated things with a slightly more practical eye, I could see little relation between the two vocations, and now that I have done some freelance writing for the papers, I see only one advantage to journalism, namely, someone gives you a deadline and you have to meet it, and you do. If I could somehow work that bit into fiction writing...but it doesn't seem to work if I give *myself* the deadline. ("Huh," says my subconscious. "Who does she think *she* is?") (2020 Portland Ave. So. #3, Minneapolis MN 55404)

AMY THOMSON

I liked Avedon's comments about the professional quality of most fanzine articles and, more importantly, that fanzines fill a need that professional magazines don't. I think the intimacy of fanzines is part of that for me. Where could I find, for example, anything remotely like Allyn Cadogan's hilarious article on breastfeeding and babies? Not only was it funny, it was also a highly instructive piece for those folks considering children.

There's an intimacy to the best fanzines that professional magazines lack, and I think there's definitely a market for this kind of personal journalism in today's alienated society. There are so few personal support systems left. Even the Reagan-Hallowed Family is a hollow myth. There's an increasing percentage of single mothers who lack a support group to go to when the baby drives them nuts. The fastest growing segment of the homeless in America is single mothers with children, one of the most chilling statistics I know of. Fandom is a pretty good support network; people care a lot. I wish it could reach more people, but then it wouldn't be Fandom anymore, would it? (4014 Latona Ave. NE, Seattle WA 98105)

DAVID LANGFORD

I'd forgotten about that either/or attitude which draws a stern line between Tossing Off Lightweight Crap For Fanzines and Buckling Down To The Stern Realities Of The Pro Market. When the wind is nor-nor-east I often have a merry time doing both--e.g., the same article not only being picked up for a planned fanthology but also bringing me a few hundred quid from a glossy magazine here. It's embarrassing to admit that in the good old days of a year or three ago, KNAVE (the mag in question) would accept stuff that the high standards of fanzines had bounced. Unfortunately there was a change of editorship, the humor content was dropped from KNAVE's pages, and these days it requires sensitive prose of a type I'm not good at ("Gosh, I've Never Seen One As Big As *That*, She Whispered Hoarsely"). Chris Priest was, as you can imagine, extremely pleased when he sold his Beatles article from CHUCH to the ever so prestigious THE FICTION

MAGAZINE for sixty quid. He ground his teeth a bit when I sold "Fizz! Buzz!" (the very same, only with some of the hard bits spelt out for mundane intellects) to a not so prestigious computer magazine for twice as much. The moral isn't so much that TRAP DOOR has incredibly high standards, though of course it does, as that I don't see a real distinction between fannish and steely-eyed professional writing when the subject happens not to be the strangely unexportable one of fandom itself.

Nice to see Eric Mayer disporting himself in your letter column. Of late I've seen letters from Mike Glicksohn (among others) carrying a strange rumor about Eric being summarily ejected from fandom by a coalition of Secret Masters. Who these illuminati were supposed to be, and how anyone could possibly be ejected from fandom, was not explained. All very mysterious. No, I didn't agree with Eric's cafe theories, but I don't quite agree with Debbie Notkin's massaging of her logic either. "You choose to create an on-paper persona," she writes, and immediately leaps to the non-sequitur conclusion that the fans one meets through letters and fanzines isn't the real fan. The very term "paper persona" implies artificiality, spuriousness. I know this isn't necessarily so. For example, when I actually met the "real" 3-D version of the paper Avedon Carol with whom I'd corresponded, I was pleased but remarkably unsurprised. The original Armenian had been a pretty accurate representation. (94 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU, UK)

JEAN YOUNG

I'm sure you put that phrase, "entertaining yet meaningful," on the cover for laughs, but 'tis true--and I suspect you *want* it to be true. Anybody idealistic enough to spend time on The Farm has got a sercon streak somewhere; perhaps not as bad as *mine*, but there, I'm sure.

I thought your series of remembrances of Terry Carr was excellent--very touching and, because of the different kinds of people writing them, showed very well many facets of Terry and his relationships with different folks, and makes the common perceptions stronger as they crop up in all the various memories.

It is very bold of you to admit that you have fallen in love with many of the people you've met in fandom. "Love" is such a suspect word it's hard to use in public. I think it's the case when you say "Love is the only explanation" and perhaps it's easier to say it now than it was 25 or 30 years ago, but it's still common for people to feel it either exaggerated or sissy.

I enjoyed Gary Hubbard's "A-bomb factory" piece. It does rather boggle the mind; but then, so does *any* munitions factory--and there are lots of them. I'm so old I remember WW2 (as a child) and the stuff in newspapers about bombing munitions factories, and people going to work in munitions factories (especially women) and newsreel propaganda about *their* (wicked) munitions factories; stuff in papers and on the air warning people not to talk about their work (spies are everywhere), and comic books and adventure novels which involved bombing or sabotaging munitions plants. But of course, *that* was War, and *this* is (hohoho) Peace. I don't know that I've really believe in Peace for a long time. Certainly, even a state of Not-Quite-War or Uneasy Truce is better than War; but it's not Peace. And I suppose all those times in the past we thought *were* Peace really weren't either--just times when it was easier for the "educated" (= rich) classes to insulate

themselves from the fact that guns and bombs and whatever were the weapons of the time were being made in factories or smithies and workshops.

Decorah is in an economically depressed area. When a new factory opens that employs 10-100 people, it's big news and a Good Thing. A new electronics plant open nine or ten years ago, a branch of a big, well-known electronics firm. They're making parts for bombsites. All us peaceniks wanted to protest. Some actually may have. Now I need money pretty badly. If they offered assembly work at home (which they have from time to time) I'd take it. As far as I can see, all I'd get by not doing it is a chance to pretend I'm not "dirtying myself" and a lot less money. It hasn't arisen, of course. But it would take such a phenomenal number of people to refuse making such things for it to have any effect worth mentioning on their production, that it seems silly to put any effort into that route. And I'm not at all sure what *is* an effective route. I no longer have the energy or the turn of mind to be an idealist. I've retreated--perhaps it's fair to say I've retreated into "my art." I'm not sure about that. I know that's what I want to do ("art") and that doing stuff to sell (hand-work) takes an awful lot of time (and money); and driving mail takes a big chunk out of my life (not the actual trip, the schedule--the layovers, the away at night); and living in the country, which I *came here* to do and want to do; and winter, the price for living here in my particular Sacred Land. I'm pessimistic about the weapons race and the future--part of that is just being older, and tired, and pessimistic about myself, I suppose.

I was interested in Debbie Notkin's piece even though I don't get HOLIER THAN THOU and so hadn't read Eric Mayer on Cafe Society Fandom. I think what she says is the case--that people who like to put out fanzines like, or choose, to present an on-paper "partial persona," to reveal only a part of themselves. Many fans are, I think, lonely people--especially fanzine fans. Several are well-known as self-declared hermits (Harry Warner, Bill Danner, Richard Geis). If you have difficulty with face-to-face social contacts, if live personal relationships aren't your thing or you feel you have no talent for them--well, why *not* a paper persona? Any worse than any of the other masks people put on? Yes, a fanzine can lead you to want to meet someone--but it may not be all roses when you do.

Many people who go to conventions these days do so in costume *all the time*. They're not putting on a *persona*? Acting out a fantasy? One of my very good friends here, a local craftsperson of great talent, will be taking her stuff to the MiniCon Easter weekend in Minneapolis, and asked me if people would be in costume the whole time. *She* wants to be. She wants to "dress up" and put on a persona. She makes masks. Feather masks. She creates personas. She sells at the Minnesota Renaissance Faire and dresses for that for six weeks. She loves it.

Like Debbie, I need personal contact and touch; I have some friends here who are very important to me (more so than I am to them, though). But the experiences of a lifetime, and especially of the years since Larry came and then left, have convinced me that I have no or little talent for face-to-face relationships of the sort I want, and I find myself becoming more and more hermitish, doing the things I do alone--and feeling, somehow, that they are more worthwhile. Now, I do not, in fact, think that *anything* is more inherently worthwhile than anything else; but I plainly do *feel* that. I recognize that I feel it *for me*; but it slips

very easily into being something general. I feel uncomfortable now if I'm not "doing"—either the minimal necessary chores or "art." I feel uncomfortable about spending a lot of time socializing (myself) and about people who do. I've *done* it—I've been a "Cambridge person," "in theatre," hanging out, all that—and at the time I loved it. I can't do it now. Sometimes I have to spend a day in town (laundry or getting the car fixed) and I hang about at the Cafe Deluxe, where Larry used to work, and perhaps see some people and chat a bit—and it's pleasant. But I always feel uncomfortable, as though precious time were being wasted, and slightly guilty. I don't think it's *just* that I've incorporated the local maniacal Norwegian/German work ethic (which I affect to despise—even really think I despise), though that's certainly part of it. But I can spend at least *some* time out here "doing nothing" (especially in winter) and not feel nearly as guilty—time looking out the window, watching sun and clouds ("counting the snow"—Walt Kelly). Perhaps it's awareness of the decreasing years ahead that I feel I have to have something I've done that I can point to—a pile of cards or prints. It's hard to point to a relationship and say "I did that," and too many of my relationships have failed. I think people here are saying, "Jean must be doing better; she isn't bothering us as much." Well, Jean may or may not be "doing better," but basically Jean just gave up. One friend—the one I thought was closest—nearly broke off our friendship because I came around too much and always wanted to have a serious conversation. I haven't had what I consider a serious conversation with him in a year and a half. We get along "better." That's *better*? It's easier on him. I suppose it's easier on me—it's just sort of nothing.

Regarding Paul's article, I've gone through very much the same sort of mental or psychic turmoil over the issue of public recognition. When I first started doing Altairs, just doing them was enough. *{Altairs are, I believe, hand-illuminated note cards and calendars that Jean co-produces.}* And doing them had a large mystic component; they felt (and Altairs in particular still feel) like a sacred work. I was happy to show them to a few friends who really appreciated them. But two or three things happened. I went to my first art fair and found strangers who appreciated them, sometimes even bought them, but especially *talked* to me about them—people not obliged by friendship to "say nice things" to me. I got into doing non-Altair things. And I started using better (and more expensive) materials. I found that (to my distress, actually) one audience of 2-8 people was not enough. I wanted to reach more people.

Well, there it is. A certain amount of recognition and publicity is necessary for someone to sell his/her work; and since the works costs to do, it is necessary (in that framework) to sell some. For me, I'd like to make a little above expenses; and of course, "expenses" means all the expenses of what doesn't sell as well as what does. I'd like to get something for my time. I'd like to be able to help out my other bills with my "art" after all these years of buying pens by not paying the phone bill and so on. I do things that are "merely" decorative, on purpose to sell—that's what the stationery/notecards is all about, and I haven't a twinge over it. But with Altairs...yes, "fear of and desire for fame" certainly do "shape our careers and lives." "Fame itself rapidly becomes the center of attention, and in that sense doesn't further and may even retard interest in the actual works of this creative person." Indeed, indeed. But I, at least, am safely far, far, far from the prospect of that level of fame. But that whole last section—expectations that

could turn into arrogance, the years of "paying dues and thin gruel"—I feel for that. Most of my artist/craftspeople friends worry about the same thing. Pricing our stuff is hard for us, for fear not only that it won't sell but that it is somehow "asking too much." My feather worker friend, also a woman, especially has a hard time putting a fair price on her labor, and so do I. It's hard to say "I am worth Actual Money," when you've been conditioned to be polite and subservient (as a woman) and warned against the evils of money and success by a succession of invited and uninvited "spiritual advisors." We talk about it, we tear our hair over it, and we never feel as though we're getting enough because we *aren't*, because we always undersell ourselves. I'm brought to a halt by my own awareness that there is no reason at all why anyone ought to lay out money for "art." Yet I've got to eat, too (given that I want to live and work). What to do, what to do. It's been a long time since I asked the *I Ching* about artwork, about five years or more. I don't like to ask the *I Ching* unless I'm really, truly, totally stuck on making my own decision. But I understand Paul's doing it, because I *have* done it.

Here's a difference, though, that Paul didn't mention: we all hope people will like our work, we know (and hope we can live with) the fact that *no way* is *everybody* going to like our work—not even our friends—just because our tastes differ. The problem comes, the fame or "famosity" comes when people like us *just* because they like our work (I don't mean initial attraction—after all, *something* has to be an initial circumstance in any attraction), and then that escalates into liking us, or seeking us, just because we're famous. (Well, "we"...not me. My chances of ever getting there are mighty slim.) But somehow I think if one can focus on *the work*—then one can stay somehow detached from the dangers a little bit.

But I don't really have any answers, and by gum, if I had a chance to get interviewed (appear on TV? Ridiculous!) or get some sort of publicity, I'd take it. I doubt I've got enough years left now to let fame get ahead of me. (RR 4, Box 47, Decorah IA 52101)

WILLIAM MEYERS

Our minds meet again. It's been an other-worldly life, far removed from Tennessee and California, and further removed yet from the astral level of fandom. Your fanzines arriving in my mailbox over the last year or two were like strangely familiar objects delivered via timewarp from a past world only dimly remembered. It's still there! Looking and being and acting and talking and writing the same after decades of environmental degradation and cultural upheaval and nuclear fission of the mind. How tempting it would be to settle in to something so dependably secure and solid and seemingly unending as this particular astral village. But it doesn't seem to be my karma.

So the only truly engaged reaction I can give you to your issue of last winter is that I was very sorry to hear that Terry Carr had died. I knew him and Carol back in the '60s when we were all living in New York. He always seemed like a good-hearted soul, and I liked him for the time that we intersected. (P.O. Box 1206, Rockefeller Center Station, New York NY 10185)

GARY DEINDORFER

Too bad about Terry Carr. He was "Mr. Fandom" to me—particularly Mr. Faanish Fandom. It won't be quite

the same without him. The tributes tell me some things I never knew before about Terry. It is what I would expect, his finding clever ways to reject stories to friends. He had that playfulness about him, as we know.

Welcome to Boris Zavgorodny. This leads me to hope that someday there will be a branch of faanish fandom in the USSR, for, after all TRAP DOOR is about as faanish as one can get, in the Terry Carr, unforced, natural sense of the term. Imagine Boris translating Burbee and Willis into Russian. I would like to see Gary Hubbard's thought provoking piece in this issue translated into Russian by Comrade Zavgorodny. The mind reels at the thought.

Nice to see something so personal and self-revelatory from Allyn Cadogan. This tells me more about her than I was able to extract from the pages of the fine but rather formal fanzine she used to publish.

Bob Tucker's piece seems forced and artificial, but it is also a waftage of incense from the past, from a day when such articles were quite the thing. He's resting on his laurels here but he's earned the right to do so, after having singlehandedly invented faanish fandom long ago.

Debbie Notkin's letter makes sense of a sort, but it doesn't mean that much to me, because this kind of sentimentality about fandom doesn't go down too well with me. Who am I to opine, though, having had my last in-person dealings with fans in 1980? Though I can't really be called a paper fan, because there were times before that when I too lived the fannish way of life with face-to-face interactions and all that sort of thing. Merely that I don't feel impelled to do so again, at least not for the time being, so far as I can see. Yes, fandom has all this warm fellow feeling and all that, such as the fellow feeling that decided that Eric Mayer was not one of the "right" people and should be driven from the fold. It's not all sweetness and light, this fandom; it can get pretty nasty at times. But let it be noted that as a participant in fandom in person and in print I have indulged in my share of nastiness, though amazingly enough I have also managed to be mellow and openhearted at times too. It's okay in its way, fandom is, but I can get sick and tired of it at times, because the scandal is prone to be a nicer word for what are mere lies. I scandalmonger too, but at least I have something to back it up, my oceanic consciousness which floats it on an imitation Walt Whitmanish cloud of benevolent fellow feeling.

But, but I really do have cosmicness; that's the one thing about me that is true. It's not as fantastic a thing as people think it is once you have it. When you have it you take it for granted and assume everybody has it, which apparently they don't. After all those years of living on The Farm you probably have it too; could be, more of it than I do, though of course to speak of this in quantifying terms is nonsense. But I won't belabor this bit, because it smacks too much of group minds and telepathy, something you have already adequately covered in the pages of TD.

It's just that I have a certain perspective on fandom that causes me not to be able to treat it as a Religion the way others seem to. There is something implacably trivial about all this faanish blahblahblah, really, but it is like a background noise I have gotten so used to as to take for granted, and could not do without, as long as I am not expected to get maudlin about it. Which thankfully I am not.

I wish Paul luck with his quest for fame, if he means *real* fame, with all of its drawbacks, because he is already

pretty famous, I would think, as the father of rock journalism. I used to think I was famous, but then I realized, for what? What have I done to warrant being famous? I mean, outside the confines of fandom, in which even there I am not what you would call famous. Well, I have not done anything, exactly, but apparently I have done something inexactly that gives me an aura of hazy notoriety, though even I am not sure what it is. That is, if you will grant that the name I used to use as a hippie, Gary Dawson, has a notoriety to it that my real name does not. It's a nagging name that people hear and they seem to think they know the person or something he did or was supposed to have done but didn't. But the name Gary Dawson has taken on rather bullshitty proportions for me, and for anybody else induces instant amnesia. So though I used to have the delusion that I have a certain fame I realize now that everybody has forgotten about me and that is just as well, because now I can try to find out who the real me is beneath this cornball pseudonym, someone having become not even infamous but forgotten, with perhaps an occasional person who here and there says, "Oh, he was that guy who did or said this or that or didn't do or say this or that; anyway, who cares, he's obsolete now." True, that infernal dopey pseudonym is obsolete now, but Gary Deindorfer still goes on in his desultory way, realizing he's just another drop in the ocean. I wrote all this, and yet occasionally either some relic of the past or, oddly, some kid will look at me as I walk by and exclaim something such as "The Son! The Son!!" It is very rare for this to happen, and anyway THAT particular label IS hopelessly obsolete.

I have yet to read an article or LoC from Sidney Coleman that wasn't either brilliant or close to it. "Moskowitz" is my favorite thing in this issue. Dreadfully funny in that dry, wry Coleman style which is like a bubble of black blood in the throat. Also, good editing to put it immediately after Paul's piece, because it is a kind of meditation on fame. Though this "Moskowitz" is the ur-Moskowitz, the pre-existing edilon in the Platonic realm of pure thot, that austere dimension where exist the equations of Godel and Ramanujan. Not necessarily having any relation to the flesh and blood Sam Moskowitz, because this character that Sidney is lauding could just as well be someone else other than the only one and true Sam. This piece really hit my funnybone bang on, and the Stiles heading is hilarious.

"Mail Run" is moody and beautifully done. Of course, Jean Young is a fannish legend to me.

Frederik Pohl. Wow, what a coup! Fine to have this master of science fictional satire appearing in the pages of your humble and obedient publication. It rounds off FAPA's first fifty nicely. Wouldn't you love to crawl into Frederik's mind just for an hour and rummage around in the Grand Canyon firsthand fannish memories of this ancient fan and pro? I would.

Donna Nassar offers a nice--and well-written--glimpse into a craft that I never knew anything about before reading this article. Did you ever realize how many other skills and hobbies fans have aside from their sf faaning? If you pooled all of these skills you could man a generations ship to Alpha Centauri. Now, to round *this* off, all you need on it is a letter of comment from Cheryl Cline, who used to use rubber stamps in her fanzines to clever effect. I haven't seen anything of Cheryl's in print in years. Is she gafia? {Cheryl?}

Nice to fill in the little blank spot in my knowledge

regarding the Swedish Carl Brandon. It must have embarrassed Terry Carr to have been the object of such adulation on the part of Jean-Henri. Little did I realize that Sweden even now is the last stronghold of trufannishness. A strange phenomenon, when you think about it, considering that the fannish ghods mentioned were not writing in Swedish.

Terry Carr's last LoC shows that he was one of the great locsmiths of all times. (447 Bellevue Ave., #9-B, Trenton NJ 08618)

LENNY KAYE

I experienced a nigh-Proustian rush of corflu remembrance when I opened the copy of TRAP DOOR #7 you so kindly sent me. When I saw it was a honest-to-ghuness (see how the ol' language comes flooding back) fanzine, of a type that hasn't crossed my portal in a decade's while...

It was a nice flashback, and thanks for thinking of me. I don't recall if we had a direct-direct relationship back in the days of Seventh (or was it Eighth?) Fandom, but you were certainly part of the cast of characters who populated my letterbox world a quarter of a century ago. I was very young during my time as an actifan, roughly 13 to 16 and covering my high school years, and fandom was really the place I learned to interact creatively with people. My first writings appeared there, my first missives to the outside world in the form of fanzines, and, I guess, my first attempt at defining myself as an individual. Like most adolescent groping, I find a lot of desire and not a lot of chops in my early efforts. I do think in retrospect that had I stuck around, I would have really gotten a grounding in articulation, style, page layout, social cohesion, bohemian rhetoric, free-thinking ideas, art aesthetics, a true collector's nose, and a real sense of the possibilities life could hold. Not bad for a pulp product!

Ultimately, my other love--rock and roll--would claim me and I can't say that the two are entirely unrelated. In fact, both fannish worlds have their share of misfits and miscreants, which I discovered while working behind the counter of Village Oldies, or applying the fanzine art to ROCK SCENE, or playing in the Patti Smith Group. But I remember the feeling of belonging that fandom encouraged, and the pleasure I felt at meeting or hearing from my own BNF heroes, like Ted White and Dick Lupoff (both of whose interest in music kept our friendship going a lot longer--in fact, to this day, and if Dick or Ted is reading, let's hang out soon!).

Of course, that made the news about Terry all the more poignant. Another of my fannish heroes, and one of my personal favorite editors, hearing of his passing brought the whole magazine into sepia. The concept of faanish vs. fannish is an interesting one, and happens when the chosen object (religion?) of a subgroup is rendered irrelevant. Not that it's still not appreciated, or even venerated, but the world that's been created--its own mythology--is more fascinating. The story of mankind, I suppose. It's what made, for a young fan like me (who came into fandom in 1960 completely bewildered by its arcane mythology), Dick Eney's *Fancyclopedia* (II, I think) such a treasure. And why I love to look at the photographs in Sam Moskowitz's *Immortal Storm* and see the Futurians vs. the S.F. League or somesuch. But then, I was a history major in college and I like that patina.

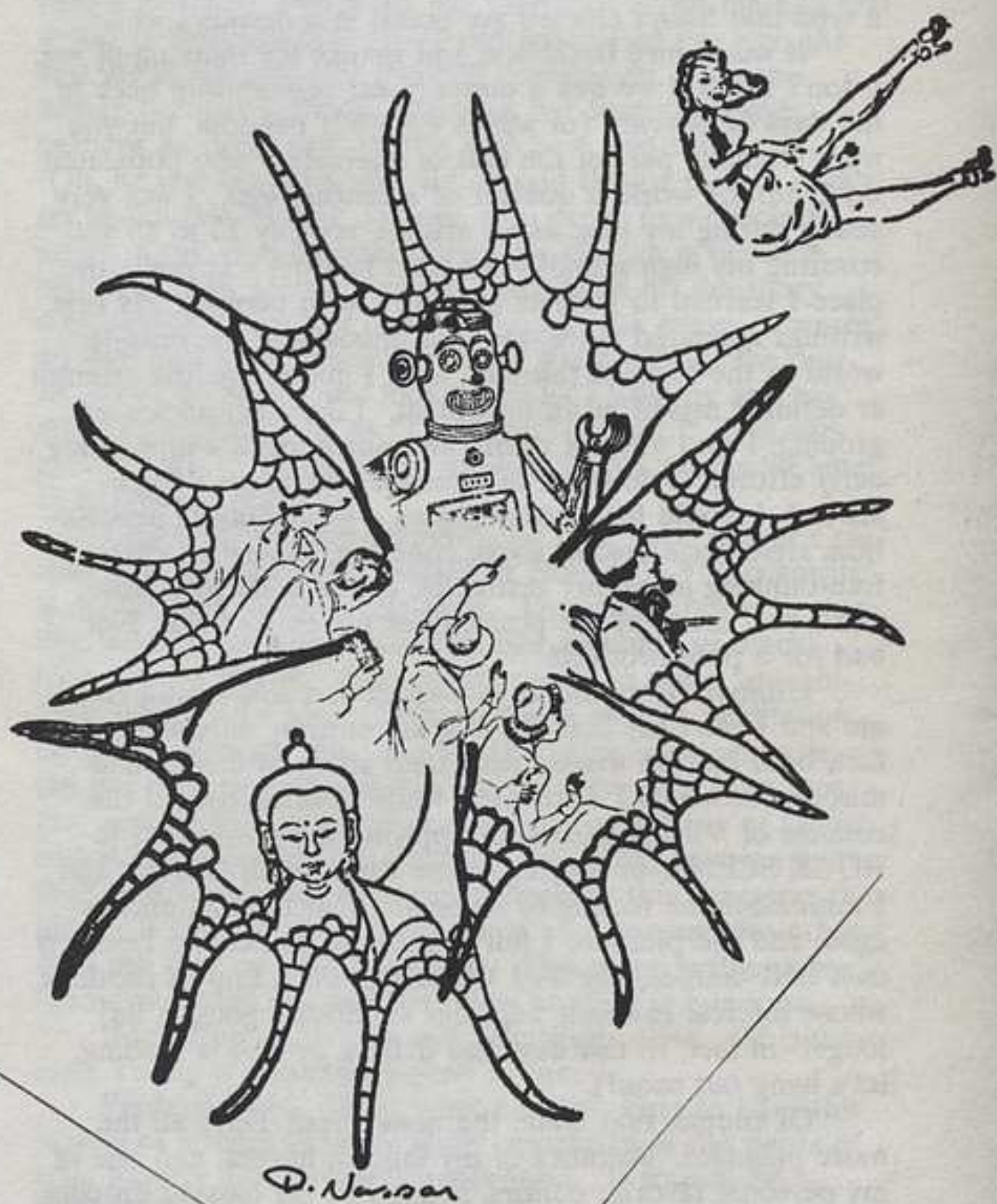
I dug faandom, myself, and liked John Koning's fictional faan history (that would be one anthology I'd like to

read, assuming it could be reconstructed from the scattered fanzines of the era in which it took place); it was a world unto its own. SF's entry into the mainstream (Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* and the Kube's 2001 are my markers) and the underground-overground upheavals of the '60s and '70s created a few more acceptable pockets to escape. And here we are today.

Fred Pohl's salute to FAPA at 50 reminded me of one of my most chucklesome memories. I spent nearly five years on the FAPA waiting list, working my way up from the low fifties. Of course, I was long in thrall to the guitar (1967) and in fact was the proud owner of a Fender six-string bass by the time I reached number one...on the waiting list, that is. Naturally I forgot to acknowledge, and thus missed my chance to enter that hallowed institution. An effective hail and farewell. (P.O. Box 407, Murray Hill Station, New York NY 10156)

And we also heard from: HARRY ANDRUSCHAK, HARRY BELL, TONY BERRY, SHERYL BIRKHEAD, HARRY BOND, ALLYN CADOGAN, KATHLEEN GALLAGHER ("Allyn's article brings back memories of my son Teddy, now five, as a baby. He was a tiny, skinny little thing when he came home from the hospital. He ate every two hours around the clock and thought nighttime was playtime. I felt like a Moo Cow for six months, until he was weaned, and didn't sleep all night for a year."), JUDITH HANNA ("Those of us who never knew Terry Carr are learning what a nice guy we missed out on knowing."), JERRY KAUFMAN, ETHEL LINDSAY ("Although I had met Terry Carr a few times I did not know him well as a person. I knew him, like so many others, as a personality in fandom whose writing was always sane and either amusing or thought-provoking. I always thought of him in partnership with Ron Ellik and Terry's death brought back the memory of how Ron's shocked me. I am now 67 and less likely to be shocked by the deaths of younger people--but oh what a waste! I remember how I used to love it when they ran FANAC."), ANDREW MAIN, JOHN OWEN, JOHN PURCELL, BOYD RAEBURN, KEN RUDOLPH, JEFF SCHALLES, NOREEN SHAW (who says TRAP DOOR "does seem to be a gathering or Focal Point," to which I can only say that, if so, this is fandom's slowest focal point fanzine ever), NICK SHEARS, ROBERT WHITAKER SIRIGNANO ("I met Terry Carr a few times and the encounters were brief. He said, after being asked about *Cirque*, he was inclined to being somewhat mystic, and that a lot of the Ace Specials were chosen because they appealed to that sense within him. 900 *Grandmothers*, *Rites of Passage* and *Left Hand of Darkness* (and so on) were selected not only because they were good, but that they appealed to Terry Carr's interests in the arcane."), DAVE WOOD, and--finally--a pactsarced from BORIS ALEXANDROVICH ZAVGORODNY. Keep those cards, letters, contributions and fanzines coming. The lighthouse is aglow in Glen Ellen....





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