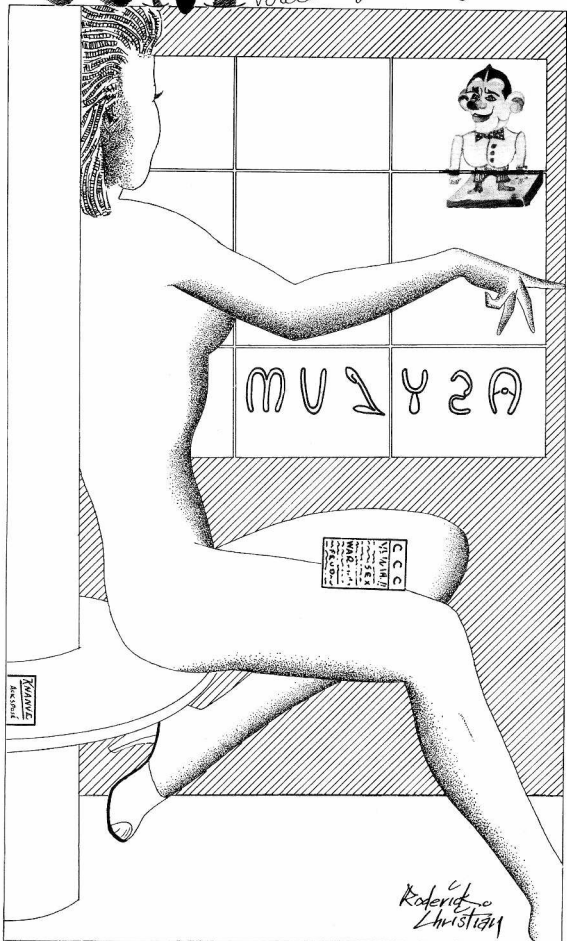




NO. 31 Apr 44

Voice of the Imagi-Nation



*Roderick
Christian*

VOICE of the RESIG-NATION

(Wright)

(Tom)

DEAR VOM:

THEY SAY THAT EVERY WORM MUST EVENTUALLY REALIZE THE FOLLY OF HIS POSITION AND ASSUME THE LIFE OF THE MOTH.

I FIND MYSELF IN THAT POSITION.

I AM NOT THE LEAST INTERESTED IN WHETHER OR NOT THIS LETTER IS PRINTED IN VOM. THE DIME ENCLOSED IS FOR A COPY FOR MY DEAR MOTHER SINCE SHE HAS A COMPLETE SCRAPBOOK OF MY WITTY SAYINGS.

THERE ARE MANY THINGS LYING AROUND MY HOUSE THAT HAVE BEEN NEGLECTED FOR LO THESE MANY YEARS. MY NUDES FOR INSTANCE, WHO COLLECT STAMPS.



Wherein TOM DANIEL's slanplans are sabotaged...

I have a son, age 7, and for 2 or 3 years he has been following a careful mapped out plan of my own in education, social outlook, truthful facts and parental dominion. I was very happy in the results I was obtaining. Then came my huge upset.

My marital relations were completely torn asunder. I was forced to leave him to the tender mercies of a boarding house for children. He was there for 6 months, left to the tender ministrations of the average and normal child's social upbringing.

Fellow arguers, 6 months in which was torn down all that had been carefully instilled in him over a period of about 3 years, ripped asunder as tho it had been naught!

My son knew why rocketships could fly to the moon, what the stars were, their relation to planets, a knowledge of the cosmos as far as it is possible to make known these concepts to a 5 or 6 year old. Things it took me years and far into my teens to realize! What a start it is possible to make, with the right basic training and knowledge. He had a fair idea of religion, its connection with social customs, a working concept of the human anatomy, had learned the connection of fairy tales to real life, etc. In all, a carefully nurtured plan that was showing real progress.

In my absence, his guardian, no doubt horrified that such a small youngster could tell why and how babies were born as the best grownup, started him to Sunday school, made him a model Christian, he even won a bible for attendance and aptitude, and so worked on him, that his entire cognizance was an ungodly mixed up muddle. Now he asks me such questions as, "Dad, why did God make the snakes that kill you, when he made the others to kill bugs in the garden?" So begins the weary round again!

And let me tell you fans something, it is ten times as hard to put him right on the things he had learned once, Than it was to start him right in the first place! He never did give up the knowledge of the stork myth, tho. I can imagine the fluff the guardian went thru in trying to cancel his knowledge of the truth. Because he knew the truth of this, not just his old man's say-so!

However, there are repercussions. Irate parents giving me a holler about their little Johnny coming in and saying that little Tommy Daniel had busted their stork picture all to pieces. This is just one example, but it heads the list. Evolution causes another tangle, and the only thing that saved me here was the fact that I didn't put it as "our ancestors were monkeys", but explained how a one-celled animal was made, its life, and so forth. But this shore did kick their God-theory in the pants.

PLANS FOR SLANS must start at about 2 years of age, with the reading of stories to the children. Good old fairy stories, and with truthful answers to their lisping questions concerning fairies, i.e., it is a form of fantasy. This type of reading slowly graduates into good solid children's stories, and omitting the well-known religious stories that most children are subjected to at the approximate age of five.

I haven't said they are to be eliminated altogether. There will crop up in due time questions that are caused by the child's social contacts with children of his own age

(Concluded next to last pg)

ABLETAY of ONTENTSCAY...

(Un)cover by Rod Christian, illustrating AE Van de Camp's "Knanve Is a Louse". Knanve in upper rite-hand corner executed by Geo Wyman, courtesy the Foutsiders.....	1
Tom WRIGHT: The Moth & His Moth-er.....	2
PLANS for SLANS: DANIEL.....	2
This.....	Here
Pvt Art WIDNER: Much a-doodle about something.....	4
Jack SPEER: Such a nude'll be just futile.....	5
'On the Carpet' - Vomaiden by Karl.....	5
Les CROUTCH: One, two, three, four, five, sex.....	6
Robt BLOCH: Don't be Sally!	7
Jimmy KEPNER: Mirror aint all it's crackt up to be.....	7
Geo EBEBY & Wm WATSON: Poor retch.....	8
Cpl Dave MCILWAIN: Evrything looks dark in Afrika.....	9
"Ego" CLARKE: Wings Over the World.....	9
Roland FORSTER: The Ironie Cross.....	9
Russ WILSEY: Nudes no longer a-pealing.....	10
"Boob" TUCKER: Wants dirtionary.....	10
Cpl Dick WILSON: Behind the eat-bawl with nut-breed.....	11
Larry SHAW: A sup-lament.....	11
'Back to Nature' - Vomaiden by Karl.....	11
Larry SHAW: And a compliment.....	11
'Angry Automaton' - Voman by Shaw.....	12
'Leg Art' (or 'Beauty & the Breast') - Vomaiden by Karl.....	13

VOICE OF THE IMAGI-NATION, aka VOM, #31. Apr Foo '44. 15c, 7/\$1
 Issued about once evry 6 wks. Produced in colaboration with World Fandom. Fubarians "Lefty" Weaver & Morojo S. Quirt, Impropietors. Adres Bx 6475 Met Stn, Los Angeles 14, Cal. This periodical subli-dized by Knanve gold & possitively has no connexion with the lazy ol LASFS...O yes? O yes? O yes? O yes? O yes? O yes? O yes? O yes? No!

FANTASTICONTEST Conducted by Sgt Lirpa Loop

Our bacover this lsh poses a problem which has the best brains of Shangri-LA baffled. The fantasy element in the Vomaiden, U'll note, consists of that, while she has her normal 3 mammary glands & 3 locomotive limbs, she has only 2 arms! But, most confusing, is the question that has stumpt all comers so far: Does she have 2 rite or 2 left legs? For the first positive response to this poser, we will offer an autograff copy of the first Lovecraft Memor-ial! All entrys shoud be accompanyd by a 2-1/2 dollar bill. All money will be returnd, in event of a 3-way tie.

Shaw offers what he blieves to be a constructive idea for the Table of Contents when he says, "Remember Fmz Digest's Information Desk? I suggest you go thou and do likewise. I o w, a ToC listing in order the contribu-tors, with addresses and other pertinent information, if any. This would also allow you to remove the often annoying info from the head of each missive, and you could be as humorous as you wished in your Introductions. The idea has other advantages which may or may not be apparent." As a parent, what sayest thou Widner, Daniel, Unger, Dunkelberger, Ashley, Tucker, Liebecker (oops!) Etcetera? We espeshly want to hear from good old Etcetera.

The rest of this editorial is sposed to be fild with glittering gewgaws to produce behavs of latter but after crawling thru an Infiltration Course out at Santa Anita (whoa, mist an opportunity--Santanita--must be get-ting foggy) we caut a lil colt & now we're too horse. (We lose more equine-amity this way. All those in favor, say neigh. The good neigh-bor policy, as it were. Well, pleasant Knight Mayors.)

Alas, poor Larry. In his parrygraf up above we just noticed we left out a couple sentences. In his letter on pg 12 we inadver-tently repeated a fraze. All is fubar.

"Fubar" Ackerman & Morojo.

WIDNER, newest servifan, rote in his last days bfor servitude, from 87 Colonial Rd. N Weymouth 91, Mass. Dear FandM: I've just discovered a penciled-at-work letter on Voms 27&28; add to this a hily interesting #29, stir well, & uve quite an aged mess - I mean a message - coming up. Prepare thyself accordingly. & natch, friends, i xpect u to print all of same.

About this questn of tadpoles into frogs. But natch. Vot else? Fen whose all-consuming interest is fandom, year after year, are cases of arrested development. This doesnt mean that u cant progress mentally & still remain an actifan. I think i have; Milty, Chauvenet, & Speer & dozens of others certainly have. Nor is this an underhanded dig at u, 4e. I think u r gettin a more froggy attitude, praps without realizing it yerslf. Yr activity has fallen off a lot in the past couple of yrs, & its not entirely due to the wah, either. We have yr own words in #27:

"Well, r u going to stuff yrsself away in a little cubicle & work on yr fanmag & miss this precious opportunity to gab with a fan?"

Thats the way it starts. Its taking more tym with u becoz yr so dead set on being a fan & nothing else. Later the last 4 words in the quote will be changed to: "--hear Shostakovitch's 8th" or "go for a ride in Joe's new 'copter" or "--get out & meet the Sun halfway" or what-have-u.

In the argument between u & Len Missionary Moffatt, u seem to have slitley the better of it. However i do think u tend to lean over backwards in yr stand against religion. Cabell seems to have yr attitude pretty well pegged when he says in "These Restless Heads":

"But all my contemporaries....have from the first embraced atheism" with a deeply religious fervor; they have become zealots of unfaith, very ardently seeking to make converts to all indevotion, & they have seemed to live in an ever-fretful dread of their own not impossible collapse into some form of sectarian belief.they have convinced me that Americans have not learned in my time to be broad-minded with entire ease...." "Mr Cabell uses the word "agnosticism" which he seems to consider a synonym, but which i do not. An atheist is anti-religious whilst an agnostic is merely non-religious.

Homo does need some kind of a creed or code of ethics to keep him line. Religion has been the only attempt at this so far. Admittedly it hasnt been satisfactory & must b replaced by "clear thinking" "scientific attitude" etc. But this is a long, gradual process, & saying "religion stinks" is going to prolong rather than hasten its demise. Its just the same as Joe Fann writing in to tell Palmer that Kummer stinks.

The nude on p6 #27: T H O S E F E E T ! My God, those feet!!! & the "hands"!!! & the po-sition!!! I claim it is impossible to assume such a position without recourse to levitation.

Moffatt: I wd lyk to noe y one must believe that Christ was the Son of God in order to b a Christian. Cdnt u b one by just following his teachings?

BEB: What is faith? & y must something b found to pin it on? I dont think u mean faith, i think u mean self-confidence.

Nude on p8: I have seen a sack of onions which had a better shape.

BEB again: Re the hysterix on p 13 -- quote: "Show me anywhere, what is being done to better the condits of actifandom..."

In the past we had the TFG, Futurian League, New Fandom, & the NFFF. All of these attempted to put talk into action. They accomplished a little, but failed thru lack of support from the majority. Right now, we have Sian Shack bettering condits by getting several fen can talk & plan, not once a year, Fencyclopdia is nearing completn, tns by being an effective aid to other things too. Little things - dead yet, either. Right now, an It never really had a chance to luck after another has been its lot. Everyone admits that the PAPA is an excellent, successful organization - but where wd it b if the Blitzkrieg of 1940 had failed? It mytv quietly fizzled out, & everybody wd b saying today that the PAPA was "just another half-baked fan club." . . . I wont admit that "no one exhibits less self-control than an actifan". u'll have to prove it to me. The beginning has been made, but the process is painfully slow, & we can't see any advance becoz we r part of it. U r somewhat of an anachronism, BEB.

The Gibson gal was super lucious - but still a nude for nudity's sake. If she had been placed in a functional acceleration chair or somepn lyk that, instead of the "arty" bench, the pic wd have my blessing.

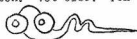
Now for

#28: The little doodles thruout were fascinating. More, but not too many. The cartoons wernt bad, especially the one about the atheist.

Yerke's clear-cut, humorous letter was a great relief after all the semanticonfusion by our young hopefuls.

Dont see any reason for believing in an infinity of beings hier than we, unless he also blicvs in an infinity lower than we. In other words it seems likely in an infinite universe (I cant swallow this "finite" universe somehow) thored be an infinite variety & number of beings, if there were any.

MacDonald writes quite intelligibly for a youngster - or anybody, for that matter. Cant find a single



thing to disagree with in all that long letter.

pernt about "escape" lit. I hadnt thot of it that way bfore. Milty makes a good

Too lazy to go all thru #28 again to see if i missed anything. I'll proceed to #29: End of pencilled letter.

Cover, good, xpt 4 the soup-strainer on 4c. Makes him look sinister, but we all noe he cdnt b sinister any more than Mickey Rooney.

Well, if u cant think of something "witty" for ToC by the 7th rereading of the letters, I think its better left unwritten.

Firstthing we run into is the ubiquitous "faith" wheeze again. It irks me. Dunmire: "...man must look up to something..." Wilsey: "A man must have some faith in something outside of himself." This seems analagous or identical with the "purpose" ideology Laney complains about. Laney asks why must every human act be rationalized - & that leads to the pretty-well establd theory that man is a rationalizing animal. (Only a few r rational) But praps the fan mystix have an xplanatn 4 it. Id lyk to hear it. However, Laney seems to go to the opposite xtreme. I often do things just "to improve my mind" or becuz theyr "good 4 my health", in which noble endeavors L doesnt appear to b interested. Ive had my share of tuf luck, but i still want 2 crack the century mark & learn everything i can possly cram into my cranium.

roly disagree with FTLs remark that "'Emerging' may b a neey stage....but we will b happier....in the chrystalis". Fout, nank, & splrfsk on such a fil-osophy. If u want pure escapism that bad, Fran, y not take up the piper. Guaranteed to give u a wow of a time while it lasts. George Whiskerd Shaw seems to have knocked the pins out from under the "escapist" withis statement: "The fact that a believer is happier than a sceptic is no more to the point than the fact that a drunk-on man is happier than a sober one." & even at that I'm ready to debate the point that a drunk is happier than a sober one. It all depends on the individual.



Laney also takes a narrow view, saying that "life....is made bearable only by the cushioning effects of books, music, art, & praps alky". Id have nothing to say xpt praps a "tsk!" if he said what he probly meant; "bearable for Laney" but he didnt say that - so i say there's a great many other things besides those 4 which will do the triok for "the person who differs one iota from the common herd". Eg., athletix, love, scientific research, study, service - to name a few - plus the greatest of all, Creative Work, from pubbing a fansine to composing a symfony.

Milty on religion rates Hopcan applause from this corner.

I approve the nude on p8. Its okay. U may now consider Vom a success.

act the narcotic effects of sevral pp of solid print." I add, solid print of good quality: NO!!! Mike says "even a poor drawing helps to counter-

Nude on p 11 appears about 4 mos pregnant. & im not sure but what the PO wd define it as "obscene", if it happened to see it. If 4 no other reason, y do u persist in running the risk of having Vom banned from the mails, just 2 gratify a foolish whim in print- these slovenly nudes?

Kepner, whered u get yr figures on decline of church attendance since war began? I was under the impress they had gone up. I also insist on pgfs, 4c, or i wont ryt again!

whilst reading Vom. Enclosed r some doodles i dood

THE JUFFUSERIALETTER reaches its climacticoconclusion shrouded in mystery: Kepner asks, who but the artist is to decide whether nudes belong? By Gad, sir, I am. I and the other readers of magazines, or anybody else whom the artist expects to see his drawings. We have as much right to say what we don't want as we have to shut up a conversational bore. As to the belongingness of fantasy nudes, Kepner has made a presentable argument (I thot he was going to pull in that ridiculous reasoning about extra-torrestrial life being proper subject for stef, therefore terrestrial life also). However, notice how often nudes are drawn where they are not called for by the future or other-worldly culture that is being represented. Probably in the majority of cases in illustrating stories, nudes, semi-nudes, and femmes with disarranged clothing are inserted gratuitously, because they're expected to draw in the groundling trade. And in fansines like Vom, nothing is more obvious than that the artist first of all decides that he's going to draw a nude, and then (maybe) sketches in some outre or futuristic background.



Is the Bloch poem copy of an announcement aux de Camps? (Qui.)

Another word about churchism: It may be true, as Zheckay says, that church attendance has dropped off during the war, but this could be ascribed to the movement of population, into the

Army and to communities with inadequate facilities. The I must add that here in Chevy Chase those factors are insufficient to explain the failure to gain with increasing population. It is to be noted that the sale of Bibles, and of various modern versions of the Bible, has increased greatly, even those screwy metal-backed ones that're supposed to stop bullets and save soldiers' lives. Probably the wild-eyed fundamentalist denominations have gained too, but I doubt if many have staying power. The Catholic Church almost certainly will suffer greatly from the war (preacher recently pointed out that there's not a country in the world today where the Papacy would be welcomed). Very probably the stupider forms of religion are in a decline which will not end, and eventually the more enlightened denominations will follow them. But don't write them off the books yet.

Gad, but you can louse up the letters. I definitely did not make the misprint "dick against the prints" (check back--touché!); that must be Aek's evil subconscious mind at work; that's even worse than (sic) your earlier mutilation of my complaint about "don't b a dog, U dog" (rendered: "don't b a dog, U hog", as I remember). Moreover, you failed to insert any dots of suppression before that verse quoted from Pope, giving the impression that I'd shoved it in abruptly.

Re Laney's plans for his slammes. Not so long ago I patted myself on the back for not exercising the obnoxious kind of salesmanship in trying to push a guy into fandom. And Laney's intention not to force his kids to piano practice sounds good. But it sometimes happens that when we've been pushed into something, we find we like it, or it's benefited us greatly, and the guy on the inside knew all along we'd like it once we got into it. Laney mite do his girls a favor by forcing them to their piano lessons if they show real ability, but unwillingness to do the hard work of getting to the point where they'll enjoy it.

Now that second front cover for Vom has done something with a nude. There's no emphasis on nakedness there, but the lines and curves seem to add up to something in composition--not being an artist, I wouldn't know what. It's on the credit side, tho. Whodunit? (Pvt Joe Gibson.)

Les. Croutch,

#1 Canadian, puts in his oar from Box 121, Parry Sound, Ontario: For the luvva god, gang, move over and let me have a word or so in this fight that is going on. Hanged if I can let Beakibus Taylor of St. Andy's carry the whole load for Canadian fandom. There's some pretty good stuff in this new ish of Vom, #29, and I am like a cat on hot p-pardon me- bricks, itching to get my two cents in.

First can I discuss on this torrid topic of sex? Egad, such a fuss as there is being made about it. You'd think it was something pretty bad, evil, or whatnot. I'm surprised some body hasn't up and started quoting the Bible in their attack on us horny old sexualists. (See The Professor, last ish!)

Personally, I figure anything goes in this old world of ours that helps to enlighten the sorrows and pains of this life. Just as long as MY little vice or pleasure doesn't tramp on YOUR toes, then what are you beefing about? If you are having a swell time at a dance and some big bruiser comes in and proceeds to have himself a swell time also by stamping hard on the floor in time to the music, do you care? Do you walk up to him and say "Now look here, Bub. I don't like the way you have fun. You got to dance like me or I'll have you thrown out!" Naturally you'd be a pretty poor specimen of humanity if you did. But if this big bruiser walked over and brought his heel down hard on your pet corn, then you'd be justified in yelling "Damn!" or hitting the guy between the eyes. It's the same way with this sex question. YOU don't like it. But does that give you the authority to compel others to live by your rules? If Joe wants to go out with a bat, does that concern you? Of course, if the bat is your wife then it does, and I'd offer you my gun to shoot the bugger with, but if she isn't, then hang it all. I'll help Joe shoot you if you try to bust his little party up. If you walk down the street and see a western starring Dick de Jerk and you hate Dick, does that mean you can kick up a row and spoil it for others by going in and stomping on the floor and yelling rude remarks at the screen, and the audience? Suppose you are sitting in your chair watching Myrna Loy give Dick Powell the old "come-int-my-bedroom" eye, and some boob sitting in front turns around and says, "This is disgusting. It is unclean. You are a foul brute for coming in to see it" and then jumps up and yells and you can't see the pic, how would you feel? So now you got the point, or so I hope. If you guys who don't like nudes will shut up and let us guys who do like nudes enjoy them, well all right then. It's a free world isn't it? If you don't want to see nudes all over the pages, why don't you try to change the subject by sending in some pics of something as interesting so we'll be interested in seeing them as well? Or if you can't do that, introduce some new topic of conversation. Of course, maybe you can't do that. Then be constructive in your criticism. Lay down some hard talk on WHY nudes shouldn't be seen, why they are dirty, sinful, unclean, et al ad nauseum.

Look you guys and gals- Mrs. Aggie Beachey also- if you have a rotten, stinkin' soft orange and you wrap it up in gold cloth and silver string, does that make it a clean, sweet, wholesome item of fruit? Would you buy it and take it home because it was so wrapped? Would you eat it because you bought it wrapped up and because it was so wrapped it must be clean? Foolish, sez you, of course not.

OK then- if a naked woman isn't clean and fit to look at, is she any different because artificial covering is put on her? If she is bad fruit to begin with will a seal skin coat and a set of lace panties make her an angel? Ok then, if nudes are filthy then a clothed woman is filthy and it follows then that no woman is clean and decent. You guys out there- is your mother, your sister, your sweetie

decent? Are you decent, Mrs. Beachey?

THEN FOR GAWD'S SAKE SHUT UP! #

Robert Bloch

reports on his flesh-&-fantasy child, Sally Ann (an obvious dodge for Slanne): 2x2-E:

I just received #28 and #29 of your contribution to the Paper Drive. Fascinated by discussions of such timely topics as (1) Who is God? (2) Is Pornography obscene? and (3)

How Green Was My Valley? To say nothing of the remarks anent SLANS.

Sally Ann, my daughter, aged 6 months, read the stuff about SLANS with particular interest. She is just at an age where such a topic would delight her.

But when she began to ask me questions, I was a bit embarrassed.

She has the damndest habit of inquisitiveness, you know. Last month, when I had a story adapted for radio on the Kate Smith Show (ADVT.) starring Laird Cregar, I naturally arranged for Sally to listen in hopes that she would be duly impressed. Upon the conclusion of the broadcast she began to plague me with questions. "Are you Jack the Ripper, Daddy?" she lisped, chewing my shoelaces pensively. "Papa -- did you ever out up a prostitute? Didja Fa, huh, hey?"

Ignoring her question by subtly cracking her over the head with a rum bottle I happened to be holding, I opened up the pages of VOM and gave her the SLAN stuff to peruse. She read, retched, and turned to me with a curious smile. A strange belch played about her lips.

"Am I a SLAN, Daddy?" my moppet gurgled. "Can I read science-fiction? When are you gonna tell me about Sex? Is opium the religion of the people or are people the opium of religion? Who invented the character of Ackerman? Why do you sit there with your mouth open like a dope?"

Well, you see how it is. Your damned VOM put me on the spot. Naturally, I had to drag out THE GOLDEN ROUGH and DECLINE OF THE WEST and SCIENCE AND HEALTH AND A KEY TO THE WASHROOM and explain religion to her. Then, realizing that modern parents of SLANS should never allow their children to pick up sex information from the gutter (because they might get parking tickets) I had to tell her all about sex. I believe that telling a child about sex when it is six months old will help avoid serious problems in later life. I believe that no child should be kept in the dark about the origin of religious beliefs. I also believe the moon is made of green cheese, too. But the hell with that.

Anyhow, your VOMS have made a SLAN out of my darling daughter, and I hope you're satisfied.

She wasn't. When I finished talking about religion and sex for six hours and then spent another six hours trying to explain science-fiction and fantasy, Sally Ann turned to me and leered.

"But you didn't explain about Ackerman," she protested, playfully gouging at my left eye with her favorite straight-razor. "Who invented Ackerman?"

"Listen, blight of my life," I answered, groping for my missing eye-ball on the floor. "I have told you about religion and revealed the truth about sex. But SLAN or no SLAN, you will have to wait until you grow up to learn about the cause of Ackerman. There are some things not fit for a child's ears."

Emphasizing my remark, I removed her ears and put them into my pocket for safekeeping.

That ended the discussion. But now, although I ply my baby with copies of rare back issues of scientifiotionmags, she keeps crying for 4E. And when she grows up she wants to marry a robot. Ta hell with VOM and all its ilk! #

Jimmy Kefauver

concedes: VOM shows signs of improvement.

The cover shows you haven't forgotten that there are other subjects in fantasy art than nude women - altho I don't care terribly for Dold's style. But then why be so damned particular? The interior nudes were better executed than usual.

The editorial was one of your best moves in recent years. Do it often, just to let us know you're really still there. Whenever you stick your editorial comments in the interior of the letters, some of us readers get the impressions that gremlins are around.

Naturally I don't agree with all of the points in your policy - could you expect it?

You say you want to reflect fandom - but not through rose colored glasses. Why? Why should you want to perpetuate junk that's not worthy of reproduction, along with the bit of good material you got? Besides, such a mirror is, for some perverse reason, always likely to reflect more of the bad and less of the good. If your standard is low, you can't very well expect a very good type of letter. Those that you do receive, of any merit, are often rather long, in which case you lay them aside completely. I know, you say that the sight of such a long letter frightens you. And I say that the sight of most of the letters you print frightens your readers.

If VOM were an accurate mirror, why are there so few interesting and mature letters? Why so little really good humor? You see, fans are a bit lazy, but they still like to see their names in print. Now suppose a fan does a bit of writing for VOM - that involves a certain amount of work - a certain amount of

creative thinking. And his name appears in print once. However, if he could put the ms. in different form, and have it accepted by a fanz editor with higher standards, and still turn out some bit of hack work for VOM, with no thought and little time involved, his name would appear in print twice - along with the honor of having "made" one of the more exclusive fanzines. Thus he kills two birds with one stone and a pebble. And VOM continues to receive inferior material.

I note an interesting little trend. Whence all these letters from the meek religious? I imagine these mild but intelligent religionists must present a problem to rabid atheists such as yourself. It is such persons as these that the churches wave in our faces when they call their rolls of the great, naming off those great leaders, often rather simple persons, who were "upholders of the faith", in reality, more often than not, persons with an outlook similar to that of the old theists - that is, a rather hazy acceptance of some of the more abstract features of religion, and perhaps, lip service to the churches. But, on the whole, it is hard for the extremist to conceive of honestly intelligent persons being on the other side of the fence.

I am one who is still inclined to get into religious discussions - - and that mainly because the subject still interests me. Religion, even if false, is one of the major factors in the world, even today. And if it should be true - - need I say more? (Reader "RUSTY" GRAY puts it: You militant atheists are going to be a very surprised lot when you die. That is a sweet thought which I give you to ponder on.) However the strict atheist takes it for granted that religion is absolutely false. He accepts this with the same dogmatic faith, and sticks to it with the same narrow persistence, of the religionist. His stand is but little more logical than theirs. 'Tis reasonably true that science has disproven several points to which religionist have adhered. And the more prudent among the religious have backed up. Perhaps in doing so they have merely cast off clothes which they had outgrown, and put on some of more appropriate dimensions. Can it be that science, in its attempt to destroy religion has merely purged it - cleansed it of outworn appendages? Perhaps new and more vital religion shall arise?

Don't misunderstand me. I accept no portion of the sundry faiths, unless it be some well-evidenced fact or idea. Atheism is also a faith, an absolute faith that there neither is nor could be any god. Therefore, in the absence of sufficient proof, I must also reject atheism.

An agnostic is a freethinker. His ideal is an open, searching, analytical mind.

Those who prate of their abhorrence of "religious arguments" after show their close-mindedness. Like those who "do not discuss politics" they are the timid minds who are afraid to think. They will not discuss religion because the act of discussing it exposes them to thought. A person's faith, whether it be for or against religion, is on far shakier foundation than he will allow even himself to think, so, along with the fear of any mental stimulation, there is another lurking fear that the other side might prove itself right, and he might be forced to readjust his philosophy.

There are still two factors which make religion a mighty force in the world. One is the power of its philosophy (or philosophies). Philosophy is one of the vital life forces, whereby men live, and religion furnishes this for many people, indeed for a majority of the world's population (or shall we quibble over statistics?). Now anyone who aspires to help somewhat in the molding of a better future should attempt to have some influence on mankind's philosophy. And the religions, in their present forms, furnish much that is undesirable here.

The second factor concerns itself with the vast political power of the organized religious bodies. Most non-religious persons, who are so lucky as to be thrown in with a group of kindred souls tend to minimize the great influence which the churches still wield in politics and economics. They forget that the forces of organized religion constitute one of the major pressure groups in Washington, and in all other capitols. I feel rather certain that they would snap quite suddenly out of their lethargy if they came to realize that some of the legal measures which the churches are attempting either to sustain or force upon us affect them directly. Perhaps some of them have read and enjoyed books which they are entirely unaware the church has attempted to suppress. Perhaps those who drink would feel grossly insulted, and even alarmed if they knew that powerful religious lobbies are still attempting to put prohibition back. Perhaps they would take offense (Niff influence?) if they were aware of religions continued interference with education, or at the stand of the churches on various progressive questions. Not that I mean to imply that religion, as one body, is in the form of a thorough-going villain, because the churches do not stand united. A few are quite liberal even. My point is that if the average person knew more about their activities, even today, he would be far less inclined to be lethargic. #

George Chely & WM WATSON hark back to #29: The third doodle on the left at the bottom of page six is nothing short of an artistic eruption. George and I are fascinated -- spellbound by this masterpiece's rhapsodic overtones and sweeping lines. Such expression! Such weird beauty! Lovecraft -- only he -- could do justice to such a striking doodle. We swoon! VOM has long been known for its exceptional artwork -- but this -- this -- this -- O god no. . . dot dot dot.

We read the letters too and were much taken with the soul searchings of Laney, Speer, Kepner, Dunmire et al. It was our opinion that fans were good and lowbrow with each other and saved the intellectual rhapsodizing for the hoi polloi. Yet these wordy essays on pacifism, child psychology, and religion, continue to clutter up VOM's lengthy pages and bring even more of boredom

into the lives of the uninitiate. Come off it fellows: we knew you when.

It's not, come to think of it, the subject matter of these letters but the manner in which they are handled. Thus Kopner gabbles a ton of clichés in such a way that one is apt to take the title "budding young intellectual" on his brow while discovering a method of retching out of one side of the mouth. We retch on you Kopner.

However there's no point in making this letter a succession of nasty criticisms. We were commenting on the art and it's worthy of more comment. The Van cartoon has a certain coarse joviality about it that's downright invigorating. But the Smith insert is the one piece of true art in the issue.

Watson's letter is, of course, in a class by itself "and a box of vitamin crunchies" cries the man on the radio courtesy of Watson who wants nothing adverse here about semi-literate effort. Remembering the circumstances under which it was written--Honig tangled in the toilet paper and moaning lugubriously beneath the table, Fern shouting anti-Degler propaganda, Macdermott--or was it Anderson--quoting prices on his collection--all the usual bedlam of a fan convention. . . (Staplecon #2.)

And this is a good place to end the letter. Two more comments and we're done. The letters from foreign fans and natives far afield are the most interesting parts of the whole magazine.

P. S.

Re cover: Forrie's face strikes a happy medium between beauty and ruin. #

Dave M. Schuman Anglicorporeal, sends his love to "the Larynx" from an RAF Stn in Bone/Bnaf: Delighted to receive Vom #27 and a couple of Shangri L'Affaires. The war does not seem to have interfered with LA productivity overmuch, dank! al Ghu. I thought I was growing out of Stefandom, having had so little association with it since I came to Africa, but every time I receive some fannines -- comes that ol' feeling surging through the brain, like diarrhoea of the meninges. S'rrresistible!

May I have the honour to echo Ack Ack's capitalisings on page 9 of aforementioned Vom (to the effect that the picture of an actifan becoming a finistfan was a concept most difficult for me to accept; that I never expect to chuck fandom; & if Tucker ever should, I'd believe in woodenickels. --46). The nudes seem to be getting nuder and cruder, almost up to the standard of Algerian Brothelopolis Fotografis, but not quite--(thank Vom for small mercies). Letter selection interesting, and the best crack of the issue is on page 6 - lines 7 to 11 (to the effect that in the opinion of Ackermorojo, religion smells to the high heaven they don't believe in). On

the theory that there ought to be more Stefan-music, I am composing a thing called "Lament for Lovecraft", which will be forwarded to World Fandom H.Q. in due course, for pigeon-holing with other fan items which have nothing whatever to do with true stf. #

FLYING OFFICER A C CLARKE of England: I have just received the Nov '43 issue of VOM. I'd like to thank you for the trouble you have gone to in sending me so much literature in the past but please don't bother to do so any more. The reasons are manifold. Perhaps most important - though I shall always read sciencefiction I have grown out of the "fan" stage and am no longer interested in fan-mags. Also scarcely any of the contents of VOM is intelligible to me.

In addition, I simply haven't the time for more than a very small amount of reading outside the technical field nowadays. I might mention, too, that I am fed up with the childish reiteration of badly - sometimes shockingly - drawn nudes which for no imaginable reason litter your pages. There are only two serious functions of nude drawings. One is the pursuit of beauty, which very obviously does not apply in this case as one can see at a glance. The other is the breaking down of sexual inhibitions and I see no reason why a fan-magazine should concern itself so single-mindedly with this aim, laudable though it is. It seems, therefore, that the explanation in the case of VOM must lie in the realms of morbid psychology and though I don't much worry about other people's minds, I don't want my colleagues to judge my own by the literature I read. (I have a big enough job explaining away sciencefiction!)

Sorry and all that - but there it is. (No offense, old rocketor. Here's brilliance to your brain & strength to your good right arm. Stf be with U--see U on the Moon! --Forry & Morojo.) #

Roland Toms - Esperantistfan of Anglo-land: I have been pleased to see the many more serious and thoughtful letters that have been featured in Vom of late. I used to pride myself on a well-developed sense-of-humor, but somehow I seem to have lost it. Maybe it's the war. The triviality of some of the letters used to make me wonder at the colossal conceit of those who would point to the average fan as someone intellectually superior to the average of humanity in general; but I see now that the average fan (I'm thinking particularly of the American version) can be serious when he wishes; witness the current controversy on religion. Controversy is all to the good, since it necessitates constructive thinking; and it seems to me that the sole justification for stf, apart from its pure entertainment value, is the fact that it does serve as a means to make a fair number of its readers think independently and constructively about mankind, society, politics, religion and kindred semi-philosophical subjects. In the matter of religion, personally I'm neutral -- more or less. An agnostic, I simply know that I don't know and probably never shall. I am not especially prejudiced against religion, as long as it does not unduly interfere with the welfare of the community, and I have no quarrel with the basic, ethical principles of Christianity. 'Churchianity' is merely a distortion of the principles of a great social revolutionary who was trying to change for the better the manner of life of mankind. It is

rather ironic that the society to make the nearest approach to the basic principles of Christianity should be that of so-called godless Russia. Before finishing this note on the religious controversy, let me make a quotation with reference to Eric Hopkins' assertion that only agnosticism, not atheism, is possible. It is from 'The Existence of God' by Joseph McCabe, an author who should be familiar to you militant atheists. "It will be found that the majority of the more authoritative dictionaries define the atheist as 'one who either denies or disbelieves the existence of God' and the agnostic as one who, holding a certain theory of the limitations of the mind, 'regards the problem of the existence of God as insoluble.'" #

Condensation of a communication from RUSS WILSEY of 87-22 -- 252 St. Bellerose, NY: Cover good stuff (#29). Nudes are no longer appealing. I don't give a dam for this buzz of fans working towards a better future, foocy. To much work. Same thing as the political and religious fanatics are trying to do and they usually have a platform or something. Kinda funny, using Pong for a platform for a better future. What the hell, why not just have fun shooting off our mouths and be satisfied...Dunmire expresses somewhat the thing I was trying to get across. Relegion (Oh hell's bells) is usefull in this world for the common goon to lean on...Speer writes good...Letter by Elder all very fine and well, but the whole thing seems butup to this cynical cynic...Nude is cute, glub.Milty ditto. Speer razes (pun meaning raises) the idea wether or not fans tobe would find us (don't you love that "us") sooner or later...Laney remarks that stf is futile, good. Just what I mean, afterall is said and done, we do it for the fun of it. And I would like to see a human act that is rational. Don't care to much for Watson's remarks. I, for one, like Harry Honig. Kepner offers an intellijunt (hheh) argument for nudes. Taylor's Tales interesting. Oh want fun "they" will have with this admitted non-sinner...Laney's Planey's(OHRO) for Slaney's (I just had to do-it) Lotsa good stuff in that, to bad I have decided to stay single, tsK. And so we come to the rear, end, finis, with its lovely lovely. #

A complementary communique on the foregoing fellow follows from "BOOB" TUCKER: Russell Wilsey had trouble finding the word "lude" in his dictionary. I hale him as a brother-sufferer. I too am quite disgusted and discouraged with modern American dictionaries, which because of the prissy attitudes of there editors, lack many of the fascinating, not-nice wurdz I would like to examine.

Their is for example, "hoar". I learned this wurd when I was a little boy and knew it to be unclean, but was constantly frustrated by its absense in even the best dictionaries of the time. I knew it useless to ask my parents or teacher. To this day I have yet to see "hoar" in a dictionary. (There is something about "hoarfrost" but it doesn't mean what I'm interested in.)

And too, there is "newd". As a very young youngster I discovered that a newd woman meant one without any close on. But could I locate it in that old stand-by of information, the dictionary? I could not. (Altho "newt" was there.)

Con- sider "bich". I once heard this applied to a dog, but smart me, I know it ment something else! However, you have gessed by now my failure to find it printed anywhere.

Oh, there were any number of strange wurdz I wanted to look up. Wurdz like: won-tin, naikid, puebic, conseeve, brest, thy, toarse, butucks, naval and so forth. "Nav-al" was there but it had something to do with the navy.

So may I offer Milty a concrete purpose for fandom: let us all engage in a campaign to have included in American dictionaries, durtyer and luder words!

PS to Ackerman: Youse is right about Lat-fan Lutwin shortening his name. It was Lutwiniak.

PS to fandom: Karden probably means he was thirteen years old before he took a bath. #

Dick Wilson - corporal connected with a Bomb Wing, drops a Vamshell: I hate to be rude, but my leisurly amble thru the pages of VOMs 28-30 made me think of the walls of a GI latrine. Why the emphasis on the female form--divine or otherwise? While art is art, and while I can gaze comfortably at a naked woman as long as the next man, sexy cartoons are still sexy cartoons and will be disseminated as long as there is a guy with a pencil and a rudimentary knowledge of firm, upstanding breasts, an umbilicus and pubic hair. Please record my vote of disapproval. Next you will be giving dirty stories a space ship setting and calling them science fiction. (Shades of Marvel Science mag!)

Milty's letter on evolution in weapons ties in nicely with a clipping from the Northern Ireland edition of Stars and Stripes sent me by Dave Kyle, 1st Lt, Air Corps. It's called "Buck Rogers is on the Firing Line" and is bylined Bud Hutton. He says "From neutral borders of warring states all across the world is beginning to come a flood of new stories describing the imminent appearance of one secret weapon or another. Some of them sound as if they had been hatched up at a conference between Jules Verne and the authors of Tom Swift, Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers....Virtually all of them would have made good reading in Astounding Stories five years ago." Among other weapons, he itemizes jet-propelled planes (Sir Isaac Newton thought up jet-propulsion in 1680), a sonic-operated torpedo that would be attracted to a ship's propellers, a non-poisonous gas that would be spread over a city, then ignited, annihilating everything, and ultra-violet searchlights with a 125-mile range thru smoke, fog, dust and what have you. But I like the idea of the "individual who suggested a leather flying suit on, literally, Superman lines, which, with the use of an out-board motor, would enable soldier to fly without planes."

Could Mr Spifrek have meant lewd instead of ludey Your original spelling slays me, Wilsey, really it does.

I'm in favor of the future, too. Does that make me narrowminded, too, or merely overoptimistic?

What bit on Honig? He talks like a man with a paper hat.

Anent slan-dom. (That word certainly caught on.) It is my opinion that people who think science fiction fans are a special breed are as nuts as people who think they are the only ones who will reach a paradise because their religion is the only true one. An intelligent person is an intelligent person whether his hobby is science fiction or jazz....Jazz is my other hobby. Does anyone want to talk about Bix or Louis or Auggsy or Pee Wee Russell?

I agree with Nebularry (who hides behind this front--not Farsaciv) (no, one Larry SHAW--whose letter follows) about pipe-smoking being superior to cigars. I'm a new convert. ~~"Pissant" all around.~~ Cheaper, too. But no good in a restaurant. Or outdoors in a wind; you can't see the smoke, and that's 90% of the fun....Chewing gum. What's that? The PX has had the "No Gum" sign up so long that Porshing remembers it....Who wants to talk about liquor? I am under the impression, said impression having been gathered thru the haze at the Chicon in what-was-it: '40's, that Mororojo and Ackerschmacker are teetotalers and furthermore than Mororojo doesn't approve of drinkers. I know she didn't approve of me that gay Sunday night when the amber had begun to amble thru me. The cold and stony, she gave me, just as if we wasn't speakin'. As a matter of fact, we wasn't, right then. But it's all right now, lady. All I quaff is a bit of Idaho 4% "beer" now and again, not because I like it, but because I can't see sliding seventy-five hard-earned cents across the bar and getting back a thimbleful of watered rye.

Tucker never ceases to surprise me. His Plan for Slon is wonderful. Sometimes I think of Bob as another Thurber. Sometimes I think of him as another Perelman (this is only when I am mad at him). Sometimes I think of him as a combination Scott-Corbett-Parke Cummings. But mostly I just think of him as Bob Tucker, who can make me laugh, and who is a nice guy.

The Professor(who,plsy)'s ('s-a-myskery) disparagement is as silly as Ackerman's rebuttal is in poor taste. Militant atheists gripe the hell out of me. If a guy has to have a religion, let him have it, and respect his practice of it. If he's wrong, he'll never find out; but if you're wrong, I pity you! #

Larry SHAW, the Schenectadynamo, generates a couple juicy letters from 1301 State St, stating: Well, I have finally decided not to publish that Vom-supplement "Fahree" and I discussed. Several reasons: too much repetition in it of things already said, too much danger in running it off here, and others. For the benefit of the readers, who are all just dying to know, the sup was to be a reprint of some comments on the religion question made by Trudy Kuslan in her FAPA pub, The Nucleus, plus several assorted comments on the same question by Shaw. It would also have 'revealed' that I am the fan onymous with the religious problem ominous who inspired (?) the 'Plans for Slans' section (just like 'Sinister Barrier' inspired Unk). Juffus, of course, has already revealed that. I told practically everybody anyway. I'm grateful to 4e, incidentally, for presenting it as he did, tho there was no need for secrecy: if my parents even got a good look at Vom, it'd be tuff for me; and I have nothing to hide from fandom. I'd just like to say that I agree with everything that has been said in opposition to religion, that I appreciate all sympathy and advice offered, that I don't claim to have looked at the question objectively and doubt if I'll be capable of doing so for many years. The situation has improved a lot, tho I still can't get out of going to church on Sundays. And I probably should have said 'parental domination.' Smeer is right; my main reason for bearing up under the strain is that I don't want to hurt the folks. But to anyone who regards Pragnell's little piece as 'childish': well, you just haven't been thru it, bub! #

Later Larry Letter:

Be it known that I do not approve of paragrafing the letters in Vom and am writing my epistle with the thots (if any) separated in the old style, thusly: "The Jan jacket rated higher'n hyper with me, tho at first I interpreted it incorrectly. This was really an inspired cover; I hope you are inspired again soon. Of Delder's tymsiden I do not approve, either. The hour-glass has been overdone. He would have done better to use a clock; 'twould have been more modern and besides resulted in a tick-ToC." Smeer asks if we would simply deny the charge of too much imagination in stf. Well, it's a relative question, I guess--"too much" isn't a heck of a lot of imagination to most people. The phrase "overworked imagination" is all too common. But the fan mind seems in most cases to benefit by a large helping of imagination; tennyrate, I doubt if any fan would have planned for himself to be different if given the opportunity, tho his particular type of brain workings may cause him quite a bit of unhappiness in his associations with ordinary people. As for too much imagination in literature, I suppose it would limit the work to a comparatively small number of readers and prevent it from ever becoming a true classic. And if the imagination angle is played up at the expense of other qualities of writing, that would be rather detrimental. But it's pleasant to think that our greats like Wells know they are writing to and for a small class of people and write as they do in spite of that. I'm sure that an author capable of writing great imaginative works could write non-



imaginative works that would be considered great by a larger number of readers with comparative ease. I agree with jfs on the agnostic-atheist dilemma. Until receiving #30, I took it for granted that "Mr. and Mrs. D. Elder" were the parents of Dave! As I recall, Asel Devrd is younger than I. Not that I disapprove; in fact, I think it's swell. But the letter would have carried more weight if it was written by a fan's parents. Disagree with Milt only to the extent that religion isn't something you get interested in, it's something you're forced to be interested in, it's something you're forced to be interested in and, in most cases, never think about enough to have any other idea on the subject. But Milt knows that as well as I do, of course. Perhaps if Rayn had said "SO MANY millions of comparatively intelligent people" Laney would have been more satisfied. The Fran no doubt holds that practically none of the people in the United States is intelligent to any degree at all. Laney also says that with stf there is some chance of satisfaction for the person who differs from the common herd. But is satisfaction as an end in itself anything to praise? Even if it is "only" the type of accomplishment Hitler has achieved, dissatisfaction usually leads—or at least is the starting point for—accomplishment of some sort. We won't have Utopia while anyone is dissatisfied, naturally, but if everyone is satisfied to begin with we won't even work for it. As for the "purpose" argument, Fran should differentiate between contemporary American advertising methods. He'd find that the latter is where most of the "purposes" he complains about have their foundation. Watson would have had more chance of making his point if he had been coherent. I don't suppose anyone bothered to look at the face of T. Van's cartoon, but if anyone had, he might have noticed something—would have if he read Unknown, anyway. (Incidentally, I wonder why the fans never took to the longer title, Unknown Worlds. Simply too accustomed to the original?) A man may or may not need faith in something outside of himself, Russ, but most men definitely need more faith in themselves (I include myself in that). I don't get your last statement; how about a clarification, since there might be a good argument in it? Taylor presents evidence, as do other fans elsewhere, that all fans can't superdoodle. I wonder how many can? Think Jiko is right re pacifism. Does he have any figures to back up his statement about declining church attendance since the war? I hope so. Bravo to Laney for his Slan-Plans. I only hope he is able and willing to carry them out. For some reason I liked the baeover. (Gibson Girl.) Hmmm. There oughta be something in here to break up the letter. How about a cartoon? I enclose a cartoon. This is a great achievement for me, so consider yourself honored. The 30th cover was another surprise and an exceptionally effective one. Happy to see a long editorial once more. I, personally, am quite satisfied with Vom the way it is and expect to continue to be, since I think it is as much a mirror of fandom as it could be. Kepner disagrees with me, and in doing so helps to keep Vom a mirror. So be it. Some of the questions he suggests are silly, some are unanswerable as they stand. If he wants 'em discussed, let him state them in more detail. I do believe it important to preserve a thoroughgoing freespeech (& free art!) fannag. The lil' cuts you include, of course, do not always hold to the mirror policy—sometimes being done by non-fans—but they are decidedly of and for fans, so they're all right with me. Sure. Proceed sans dummy. This will also limit to a selected few the number of fans possessing these marvelous items. (I'll be exclusive somehow or bust!) (The bust is yet to come. See conclv of Larry Letter next num.) #

(SLAN PLAN BAN, concluded): (all this time he has attended the public schools as tho he were no different than any other unfortunate child (maybe unfortunate should be inside quotation marks, but why spotlight the obvious?)) and these will be answered to correspond with his previous knowledge and training.

At 8 or 9 he will begin reading Amazing Stories, but there I go digressing. He will read very carefully selected STF and Fantasy. From here on out it is to the only logical conclusion.

At 15 he will be where we are now, or to be exact, from 25 to 30. My friends, with the present educational system as it is now, and with little hope for many future changes, that is a remarkable advantage. Above all, he must vie with those of his own age, of their viewpoints, and realize his difference and superiority, with no thought that it should be any different.

I repeat. Plans for Slans? A list of books, starting with the best possible fairy stories, graded up into the best type of books for children in their respective ages, boy scout books, outdoor books, et al, to STF's lowly beginning. In other words, let's start getting lists of what to read for the all-age Slan. ##

