

ARGLEBARGLE has risen from the grave. (It was muddy and boring there.) After an absence of only one mailing, it returns. Those of you who didn't notice it was missing should have the decency not to indicate same to Denny Lien of 2528 15th Avenue S. / Minneapolis MN 55404 / USA (612) 376-2550 or 722-5217, lest he see his shadow, get frightened and retreat, and thus cause six more weeks of gafia. A Lien and Hungry Look Production for SPINOFF 17, not to be confused with SPINOFF 16, even though 16 was.

This is, by the way, 19 March 1981. (And this is # 8.)

Lien briefly considers nattering, feels the preliminary pangs of traditional typer phobia/creative freezeup approaching, and escapes as usual into mailing comments, this time on 16:

Valeria Beasley, A VIRAGINIAN FRIBBLER 1: Welcome to the apa; I'm glad to see FILE 770's mention did some good. (We had vague fears of hundreds of people beating down our mailbox and raising the copy count--or even "raising" it--but one, that's not too many. . . .)

"one side ... calling themselves the YoHets (Young Heterosexuals)"--gee, implicit homophobia and ageism in one abbreviation; I suppose one should admire their consiseness if nothing else. (Then there's the Young Anglo Heterosexuals, Ordinarily Officious, or YAHOOs for short.)

I don't think anyone who worries about a prospective roommate having to tolerate "typing, fandom, and a spirit duplicator" can be a fringe fan; after almost twenty years in fandom I have yet to own (or, other than briefly, run) either a mimeo or a ditto. If you're fringefan, I must logically by comparison be cast into that outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing (grambling?) of teeth; I refer, of course, to the worldcon N3F party.

"fans didn't create apas...only minac and being oriented around a general topic." My minimal knowledge of pre-fannish amateur journalism (being largely gained by reading too much Lovecraft juvenalia and secondary sources) suggests that a lot of mundane a-jay was "oriented" around creative writing (a.k.a. "literatchure"); i.e., most folks seemed to be publishing bad poetry, bad fiction, or mediocre essays based on 18th/19th century models of the sort that today often gets mailed off to a vanity press instead. Don't know if this qualifies as a "general topic" or not. I do have the impression that fans created silly, mailing-comment-heavy, timebinding apas, which are the only kind that interest me (much).

"Ideally, I use 10 hours of sleep a night." What do you use them for? In case of wartime shortages, are you willing to put up with ersatz sleep? Can you be replaced by two part-time jobsharing types each of whom sleep five hours a night?

I don't believe I've ever shot a pistol. I owned a .22 rifle for many years as a teen-ager, and used to kill inoffensive birds and gophers and tin cans. I have no strong opinions about guns one way or the other, except to feel that (a) I don't want one and (b) I would much rather face a person with a gun than face an attacking German Shepherd or Doberman. Dogs, pound for pound, frighten me more than people. For one thing, I suspect I would be more able to talk sense into an angry human than into an angry dog; for another, the dog is more likely to be sober and thus unlikely to miss. Besides, I've been attacked by dogs before and I know I don't like it; never having been shot before, my subconscious is not sure if I will like it or not. (Probably not, of course, but my subconscious tries to be very openminded and not condemn any experience without precedents.)

What is the name of your political economics journal? (I could probably find out with a little librarian work, but I'm lazy.) I recently ran across a sociology journal with an analysis of the sociological dynamics of a motel which caters to assignations. I can see the economics side of brushing teeth, I think, but "political economics"? Is use of menthol/regular a political statement, or brushing up-and-down/side-to-side, or what?

Beasley continued: "As income increases, sex goes up; but so does value of time, reducing the desire to spend one's time in this activity, countering the first."

Various thoughts: I wonder if anyone's pointed out to the mostly-Moral-Majority* types who propose eliminating the minimum wage for underage workers that logically this should mean increased sexual activity among the young? ("Well, you're not worth \$2.75 an hour of my time, but if I can only make \$2 an hour I guess I'll work you in, except not on Sunday cause that's time and a half.") Alternately; this explains the attraction rich people seem to have for the non-rich--it's simply a matter of flattery, and nothing so crass as wanting to horn in (NASL; a Minneapa abbreviation for "not a straight line") on the wealth. Alternately, an idea trip on someone who, in flagrente etc., gets a call from hir boss announcing a ten cent an hour raise and immediately breaks off as this tipped the scales against wasting any more time at the moment.

**"mostly-Moral-Majority":

no, I am not intending to suggest that everyone whose economics are conservative is also a member of that rather revolting clutch of BibleBarfers; there does seem to be a fair amount of overlap, however; at least enough for an apazine idea trip. Apologies to insulted libertarians everywhere, possibly including me.

Marc "Token Australian" Ortlieb, ECHO BEACH QUARTERLY; Now that I am your agent, I shall have to start seeing that you get fewer comments, so that you are inclined to reply to fewer people and thus produce smaller zines which will be cheaper to mail. "To serve, and obey, and guard men from harm."

((now 22 March)) I wonder if the ROCKY HORROR audience phenomena is in any danger of spreading to other fantasy films. I can vaguely see NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD cultists showing up dressed as their favorite zombie, but even a fanatic might think twice before producing the necessary surgery to emulate his or her favorite character in FREAKS. (Actually, the phenomenum is more wide-spread than generally realized. I've seen several members of audiences in teen-oriented movies who in fact appeared to my uncritical eyes to be indistinguishable from real teen-agers. Also, at movies meant to appeal to straight middle-aged white blokes in business suits, I have spotted people in the audience who are dead ringers therefore. It's all very eerie.)

My mumble of discontent was not for the smallish size of SPINOFF (which is fine with me, as I collate the bloody thing) as for the fact that virtually all members who were in when we took over as OEs promptly or semi-promptly dropped out. Maybe it's our breath?

Current odds are approaching 2 to 1 that I'll join Joyce ~~if she does~~ on her trip to Australia. Major obstacles would be cold cash (too little) or cold feet (too many).

"Autosexuality is a seperate classification which transcends hetero-, homo-, and bi-." Ah yes, omnisexuality. Well, that's one sort of auto. (Not to be confused with a Chevy Bova.) (For whom Gremlins do not exist.)

As for the Covenant trilogy, well, I don't mind "listening to the blues for the assurance that there are people worse off than oneself," but then the average blues song asks only an investment of a few minutes of my time, not 25 or 30 hours. I staggered through the first volume after a few weeks, but the last trump is likely to blow before I pick up the second. (Actually, the last trump has already been blown. I did it the last time I was forced to play bridge. I blew the others too.)

As noted above, it is now Sunday, 22 March. In the interim, I have gone to a gaming party (at which we played the most conservative game of RISK I've ever seen--I finally took a chance and promptly found myself the first player wiped out); have skipped the Minn-STF annual elections meeting (it was held at a local fannish residence famed in legend for drug use, up with which I would prefer not to put); and have skipped a Sunday afternoon Minn-STF "all you can play for \$3" pinball party. (Replacing the usual Sunday Minn-STF bowling expedition.) This fan club is getting so . . . physical . . . tsk tsk.

Joyce Scrivner, TOUCHSTONE 9: The only rock/folk/pop/whatever groups I've ever seen in concert are Joan Baez, Ravi Shankar, Peter Paul & Mary (twice, 15 years apart), and, hm, The Association. Beyond that we descend to the likes of Sy Zetner. Oh--Johnny Mathis. This means that when the conversation at fan gatherings turns around to questions like "What was the very best Greatful Dead concert you ever saw and what were you on at the time," I tend to wander into the next room for a beer. (See, it's true, rock music does lead to alcohol abuse.) Since I've heard a rumor that Steeleye Span are/have reunit -ed/-ing, I suppose there is one act in the world which could in theory drag me out to a concert.

"I saw the Rolling Stones in a football stadium with about half the US forces in Germany." You must have been a very popular date.

"Women's drive builds up slowly until she peaks in her early thirties." ~~Well, I hope it has with all those tests of fertility!~~

"Masturbation . . . requires no less than two external pieces of equipment and plenty of level area and an average of half an hour free time." That's more or less what a ping pong game requires...

I would think the creatures most interested in keeping you "liveable" would be tapeworms, wood ticks, internal flora and fauna, etc.

The L'il Abner character you mean is Joe Btfsplk, I think. He's not depressed, though (pace the black cloud over his head), but a jinx.

Lynne Dollis, no snappy title: "For sine titles, I collect phrases that strike my fancy for various reasons." How many reasons are there to strike your fancy? What does it do to others? Does it enjoy being struck, or should it trying to change its habits to elicit a less hostile response from its environment? I prefer phrases that tickle my fancy, personally. (Personally tickled fancies are a status symbol in a mechanized age...)

I once had a nightmare that I was falling into a cesspool, but it turned out to be a pipe dream. (From which I woke up flushed and feeling drained.) What a waste. . .

Sorry I missed THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SARAH BINKS. Is it a reading from the book or a dramatization or what? (Answer: it's "what.")

"Re Oxymoronic--no bull?" No, I wouldn't give you a bum steer like that. (Insert ~~how~~ the usual fourteen puns that traditionally follow this gag at fannish pun sessions, and pass on to the next comment hook.)

I'm not sure about the economic dynamics behind marketing canned fish balls. From an anthropological perspective, I'd presume that they were purchased mainly by those who felt that by consuming them, they would gain all the traditional power and virility of a great Bull Fish. Or perhaps the marketing is only a sideline, and the real point of all this is the production of fish castrati to serve as harem guards and tenors in operas. Since both of these occupations have traditionally been closed to fish in the past, I suppose it represents some sort of sacrifice in the hope of bettering oneself, and I hope they stick to it. (Which brings up another product: Bettered Fish Sticks.)

"They have a dish which picks up TV stations from satellites." I've heard of someone whose false teeth used to do so, but not crockery. But that's a side issue (must be a side dish). Probably explains all those aliens in sf stories who learn to speak English by overhearing tv shows in their flying saucers.

I don't in theory see anything wrong with paying for sex either. In practice there are various objections, among them that it is vastly overpriced.

Valli Hoski, FANDANITY 3: "Tampax is a registered trademark, yes, but I don't see them taking out large ads saying 'Don't use Tampax as a common-usage noun' like Xerox did." They may be afraid of being suspected of causing Culture Shock. (Which reminds me of an ideatrip about stockpiling Rely tampons before they were pulled off the market, on the theory that someday they will be Collector's Items. Not that I know of any tampon collectors at present, but then I didn't know of any beer can collectors ten years ago either.)

Anyway, Tampax probably has little more chance than Xerox does of keeping its name out of common-usage status. In Xerox's case, they have the misfortune of having a name which is much shorter and snappier than the accepted generic ("photocopy") as well as being the leader; in Tampax's case, their name sounds very like the accepted generic and again, they are perceived as a leader. To guard a product name from going generic, one ought to have a long and silly name; nobody is in danger of replacing the generic name "jam" with "Schmuckers" (as in "peanut butter and schmuckers sandwich").

The comic story you describe sounds to me like Claire Bretecher; it doesn't appear in her one US collection, though. (She does/did appear in Ms.)

"Would any sane person have sex with a fan?" Depends on whether or not it was spinning at the time.

I voted for Anderson in '80, MacBride in '76, MacGovern in '72, Humphrey in '68. I have no regrets about the two most recent; if I could do it over again, I would vote for Nospers in '72 and written in Mickey Mouse in '68.

"Fascinating, being in two apas with the same person." Also improbable. Are any of us the same person in more than one apa? I'm not. (Close, in some cases, but never quite the same.) For that matter, I'm not the same person in any apa as I am in person, and my in-person persona differs with various external stimuli as well. (At home vs. away; in crowds vs. one-to-one; drunk vs. sober; formally vs. casually dressed; etc.)

I discovered when I took a freshman anthropology course in college that my background was "upper-Lower Class." I have, however, stopped putting my elbows in the gravy.

I know very few fans who do like disco. (Emphatically I do not.) Didn't Boston send out a survey asking what should be part of a worldcom on which disco music finished a strong last out of some hundred categories? (Mind you, I don't like much of any music of the last dozen years or so.)

Well, Joyce's JANIS IAN cassettes are the only ones of hers I have worn out from overplay. Among their other virtues, they make great background music to do fanac by, at least when one feels as ambivalently cynical about fandom as I do. ("I may as well sit home and type stencils because I am a sensitive artist who is above all this going out and having fun nonsense, and besides nobody asked me. But that's the way the world is when you're a Trufan, and so, for my next number. . .")

Are you suggesting that the "great two-handed engine" in LYCIDIAS which has puzzled Milton scholars for centuries was a Rely tampon?

MTC SAYS CRITICIZED ADS RAISED RIDERSHIP (from the Minneapolis Tribune);

"The bus system's Christmas advertising campaign, which critics called sexist, raised ridership as well as tempers, the Metropolitan Transit Commission (MTC) reported Thursday. Studies completed yesterday show a 'surprisingly large' increase of roughly 7 per cent in off-peak ridership in December 1980 over December 1979. . . . The bulk of the advertising, which ran from late November until just before Christmas, portrayed well-dressed young women on shopping trips grappling with the problems of the automobile: flat tires, dead batteries, keys locked inside, spilled gasoline at self-service pumps. ((continued))

"From the MTC's point of view, the message was that shopping by bus is more convenient than shopping by car.

From the viewpoint of the National Organization for Women--which formally condemned the campaign--and other critics, the message was that women are incapable of operating automobiles. The criticism led the MTC to vote against using such portrayals in future ads.

The MTC conducted four studies during the campaign. . . . ((None)) asked whether the respondents considered the ads sexist. Six percent in the card survey volunteered the criticism. . . and 1.4 percent of those in the phone survey complained that the ads were offensive. . . .

The over-all success of the campaign, however, has led his staff to recommend new advertising this year. . . "We will probably try to appeal to different age groups and both sexes" As for the content of the ads, he said he personally had found them offensive, but noted that they were prepared by an MTC staff member and an outside advertising specialist 'who were both professional ladies, young ladies, not people who would have been insensitive' to sexist inferences." -- MINNEAPOLIS TRIBUNE, March 81

Well, if the six per cent who objected quit riding the bus, the seven per cent increase must really be a thirteen per cent increase, from which we can extrapolate that one out of every seven and a half people riding the bus for the first time in December 1980 did so in protest against the women's movement...or something like that. (Gordon, our captive mathematician, will now wince.)

A helpful vocabulary: "young ladies"--any female who works for MTC and does not put her elbows in the gravy. "inferences"--business major jargon for what English majors call "implications."

By the way, it is now 2 April 1981.

Michael J. Wallis, MERE WORDS 2: Reagan "will restore the image of the Imperial President." Yep, Reagan is to a real president as margarine is to butter. (Actually, you may be right, but I suspect Reagan's idea of imperial prerogative is based on that in, say, THE WIZARD OF ID.)

In theory, I agree with you that apa deadlines should be hard and fast. ~~Life isn't all tough, tests & beautiful copies.~~ In practice, some of you are tough enough to withstand two months of intense psychological warfare but crack once you have outlasted that period and realize that the torturers are not going to give up and go home.

"My only regret is your mangling of the english language. ((sic)) I know the intent, but 'hir' ~~shakes the galactic muffin~~ grates against the nerves (nails on blackboard)."

Frivolous response: You've found me out!--I'm kinky about sucking galactic muffins.

Nasty response: Seeing "English" spelled "english" grates on my nerves. Another frivolous response: I told you it was psychological warfare....

Serious response: I'm sorry you feel that way. I do not share your feelings, and do not think it likely that I will stop. (Usually I simply recast sentences into plurals or the like to avoid the generic "he," but sometimes I get careless or bored and use "hir" as an escape hatch.) I find that the more popular solution of using "they" as a singular affects me as fingers on a blackboard, while the traditional and correct-according-to-style-manuals usage of generic he etc. affects me as fingers, toes, and raw exposed crazy bones on the blackboard. Perhaps I could black out the offending neologism on your copies?

Gordon L. Miller, TANGENTS 3: "I will think nothing of moving whole continents in pursuit of the wretched pun." G'won, d'ya wanna land yourself in jail like the last vagrant who couldn't exercise control in this area (an incontinental drifter)?

"Can you say 'malevolent' in this apa? No one is going to insist on 'gendervolent'?" No, no one is going to insist. On the other hand, having seen that particular ploy wrung dry years ago, it is possible that no one is going to be especially amused, either.

Your reprinted headlines enjoyed, as usual.

Gerri Balter, THE PEOPLE MAGAZINE AND NEW YORK DAILY NEWS OF GERRI BALTER: (Sorry, I got tired of repeating "Life" and "Times");

The idea of a self-defense class run during a con brings up various idea trip ideas, mostly in bad taste. I can certainly see neos getting the wrong idea about fandom. ~~Of, even worse, the right idea.~~ "It was a treat seeing you in that three-piece suit." Out of the goodness of my heart, I'm willing to show up in a two-piece suit this year. (Turn in after a year or two for later reports.)

The BNA is the British North America act, the basis of Canadian government in roughly (very...) the same manner the Constitution is that of the U.S.A.

"Grot" is a British term for "rubbish". (This tells me that you have not been watching THE FALL AND RISE OF REGINALD PERRIN.) By extension, I assumed from Marc's usage that it was to be read as "slob." (Quite a long extension; from Minnesota to England to Australia. Probably not structurally stable. Though one might find any amount of grot in such structures as stables.)

~~Gerri Balter, INTERESTING TIMES: One of the advantages of not being in MINNEAPA is that I can read this without feeling an obligation to respond; one of the disadvantages of being in SPINOFF is that I cannot.~~

A basic disclaimer: it is entirely possible that my inability to accept most of this ~~is~~ the life I see about me is my own fault; that I am a victim of the system and lying to myself and desperately trying to justify said system.

A basic disclaimer to the disclaimer: but I don't think so.

(For one thing, I might point out that any neutral observer who's been ~~tapping my phone~~ doing their neutral observing of me in Minn-STF over the last few years will have noted that few of the women around whom I hang/with whom I may seem to involve myself qualify under any standardized description as "young and pretty" as you or most other neutral observers may describe it.)

A basic dilemma: as I see it, one of three possibilities re this zine must be largely true: (a) it is wholly unreliable; fictional, allegorical, satiric, or conducted with a research methodology so bad as to be totally unreliable (choosing the two or three worst cases in each instance and implying equivalence of the rest even if this were not the case, for instance); (b) it is reliable for the forty people interviewed, but these people are themselves statistically very anomalous as compared to people in general; or (c) your sample and your methodology were both satisfactory, and this is the way People Really Are.

Now: if I believed (b), my opinion of your acquaintances would go down so thoroughly as to drag my opinion of you down several notches as well. (These are the people who she knows well enough to be that honest in that slimey a manner?)

Gerri Balter, INTERESTING TIMES; It is roughly equivalent to telling me that you just found forty people you knew who trusted you enough to give you their real feelings on intimate topics and they all turned out to be members of the American Nazi Party. I can see anyone knowing one or two such, but forty????

Alternately, if I believe (e), then the entire human race (or at least the North American segment thereof it based around the upper Midwest/southern Canada) is so contemptible that I despair of them, and of living. If (c) is correct; my opinion of you remains high but my opinion of life in general drops to the borderline-suicide level. If (b) is correct, my opinion of life is untouched, but my opinion of you drops to the closet-creep level.

leaves (a), in which my opinion of you drops slightly but not significantly, and my opinion of the rest of the human race is unchanged (i.e., it remains low, but slightly above the compost heap level). So I am by nature going to prefer explanation (a). You can probably convince me of (b) or (c) if you try hard enough, but I wish you wouldn't.

As

for more specific arguments;

You state your views of three incidents and question from these why "people ((are)) so preoccupied with young and pretty." Yet only in one of these three is that phrase used.

The first incident, in which Minn-STF men with whom you spoke said 'There's no one in Minn-Stf for me.' . . . The unattached women were not what could be described as young and pretty." Isn't this the Fallacy of the Unexcluded Middle or some such? You offer no evidence to indicate that the people in question felt this way; it seems to be your interpretation. How do you know the people in question were not saying "there is no one is Minn-STF who is a female, non-smoker, non-drug-user, occasional drinker, quasi-Deist but not involved in a specific religion, oriented toward fanzine fandom, interested in fanzine production, left-handed, vegetarian anarcho-syndicalist" (or words to that effect)? "What they knew was that there was no available young and pretty women in Minn-Stf, using their definition of young and pretty." No; what they claimed to know (possibly exaggerated for effect, as things tend to be at parties) was that there was no unattached heterosexual female Minn-STF, who fit their minimum standards (which may have been high, and which may as easily have been political/philosophical/etc./etc. as physical, from details given here). "What they knew" is your interpretation.

"The second incident..."; less ambiguous, but still not open-and-shut. "a man said to me 'Wouldn't it be great if we could put your personality into the body of...'" ; I know both the man and the other woman involved, and consider both your personality and your body two or three orders of magnitude more interesting than hers; nonetheless fair is fair and said man did not say that he felt such a swap desirable because the other woman was young and pretty. (By my definition, she is neither; by his, I don't know--and you don't give us enough detail to be sure.) Playing Devil's Advocate, I might suggest that insofar as your personality is more active and hers more passive, he felt yours would fit better in what seems to be arguably a more healthy structure. (No, I don't really believe that, but in any case you are using here as an incident the views of one person.)

"The third incident" does use the concept "young and pretty" and again reflects the opinion of one person, for a total of two, causing you to ask "why are people so preoccupied with young and pretty"? I don't know; the question that would spring first to my mind is why are you so preoccupied with same?

"I talked to women who are young and pretty..." by your standards--which are what? (How young? How pretty?) (emphasis mine).

"You can change ((personality traits)) a lot easier than you can change your looks." I'm not sure I agree; depending on what sort of changes you mean. I can change some of my looks very easily indeed--cut off my hair, shave, and start wearing a suit and tie every day. I could probably change my personality as radically if I really wanted to, but it would be much more difficult. And some aspects--such as my agnosticism--are not under my control.

Gerri Balter, continued: "The quotes used are the most common answer(s), unless otherwise noted." But an exact quote cannot be a "common answer" unless several people say the same thing word-for-word; it can only be typical of the attitudes expressed most commonly in the answers, and it is you who are deciding here on what those attitudes are and what are their most typical expressions. For example, for the question "How do you feel about men," you give two replies, one of which is "Men are stupid. . . . You treat them like dirt. . . ." and the other of which is "Men are great. They give you anything you want. . . ." If fourteen of the other twenty-eight people interviewed agree that men are stupid but don't give clear reasons, and the other fourteen agree that men are great but don't elaborate, do these two quotes become "the most common answers"?

I suggest that if you want some of your critics in Minneapa (plus your reluctant critic in Spinoff) to take the conclusions you draw from your survey more seriously that you print all thirty answers for one or two of the most volatile questions and let us draw our conclusions.

click resume frivolous mode *click*

Torque ToC: All concerned please notice that "money questions to Lien" includes the unspoken suggestion "checks made out to Lien" as I ~~carry the books~~ handle the bookkeeping and the mailing. Checks made out to Joyee have to be signed over from her to me, using up more ink and hastening the not-far-off-day of ink shortages when wealthy Arab ink magnates will drive the cost of fanac up above most of our means and we will be forced to put words on paper by laboriously cutting out holes in the paper in the shape of the letters desired.

Joyce Scrivner, cover: "Well, she was just seventeen, you know what I mean"--no, I don't know, as I thought this sixteen. Of course, as Chico Marx once said, "I got lots of numbers."

This looks like our house as seen from the house next door. What have you been doing at the house next door?

It's now Friday, 3 April 1981, and this is the last page of this sine. Tomorrow or Monday I'll haul this in to the copy shoppe; this weekend or Monday do Torque and update the accounts, and Glaroon willing this may be the first issue of Spinoff to get out within a day or two of ontime since we took it over.

And speaking of over: the next deadline should be (mumble mumble) let's say June 1st. Now, on that day Joyce should be in Australia and the odds are good that I will be as well, meaning that all contributions for SPINOFF 18 should be sent to the Emergency OE:

*****Gerri Balter***** as will be repeated in Torque...

and all excuses for the late appearance thereof will be for her to think up for a change.

Comments (highly belated) on Spinoff 15 will follow next time; this sine is long enough.

"This babu is satisfied of ultimate futility of all things; nevertetheless, am chaste voluptuary, fearful of extremes and yet pursuing them because there seems no end to anything and why grow weary of the middle?" -- Talbot Mundy, JIMGRIM