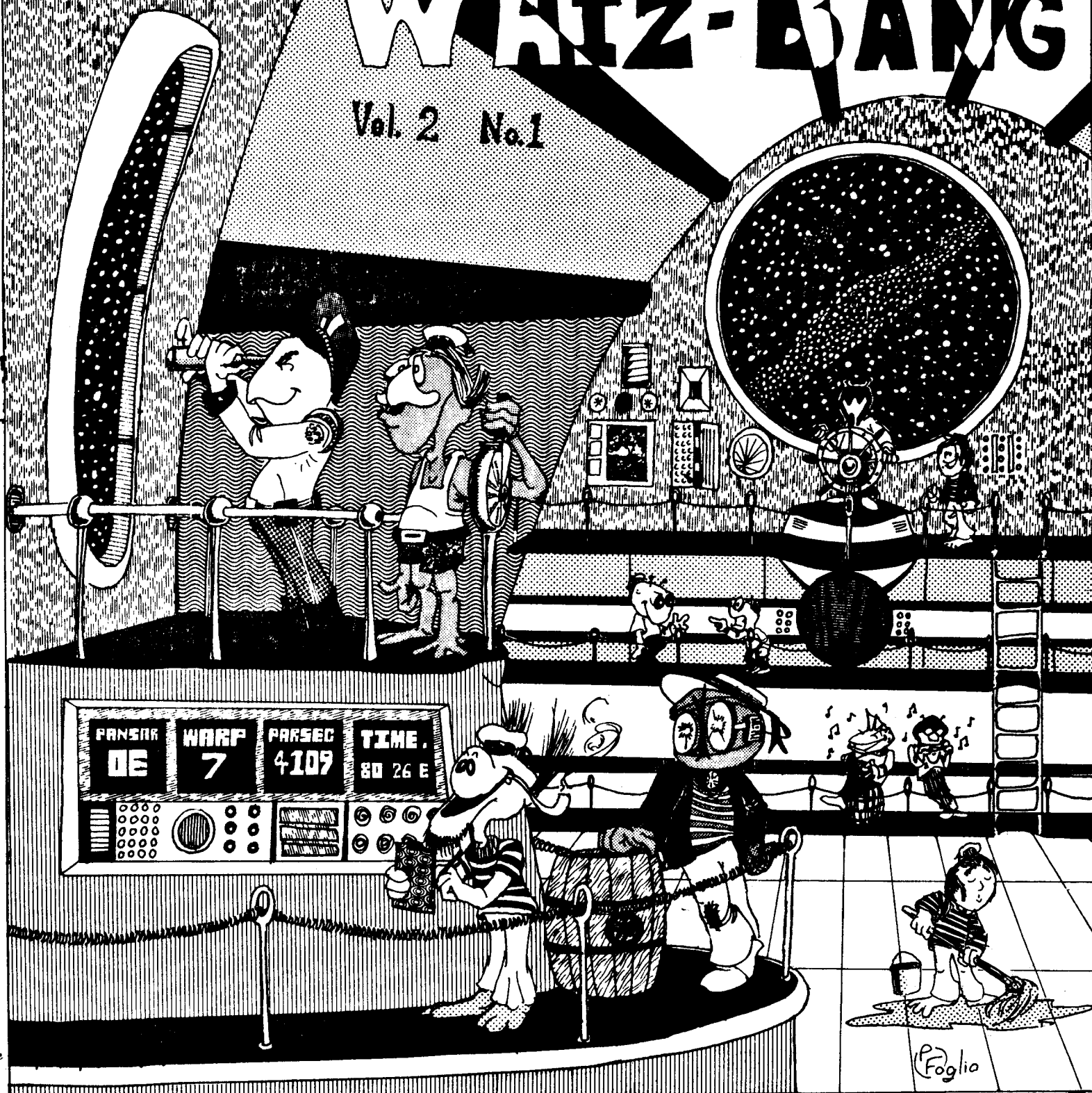


CAP'N RO'S WHIZ-BANG

Vol. 2 No.1



(Foglio)

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CAP'N RO'S THORN

[A HA! THORN]

"Hey, gang! I've got a great idea that will raise the money that the football team needs for the uniforms when they play State... We'll put on a show!"

-Vintage Andy Hardy

The FBI, the CIA, the N3f....I've contacted them all, gave them all the vital statistics, offered handsome rewards to do some leg work for me and find out who or what stole some sixty

hours of my life. There I was, on January 24th, minding everyone else's business like a good con chairperson, when, unexpectedly, WHAM! and it is January 26th in the afternoon. ConFusion was over ... and just when I was getting use to it, too! Exhibit A:



Tuesday January 28

Dear Ro and Lin: Just wanted to drop you a short note to thank you sincerely for the superb treatment you accorded me as FGoH at ConFusion 13. I've never been honoured in that way before (as you'll note, I've not yet recovered from the debilitating effects of an entire weekend without sleep!) and it was a sensationally enjoyable experience! I can only hope that you feel that the choice you made was a good one: as for me, it was one of the nicest things that's happened to me in eight years of fandom.

I still feel slightly incoherent from fatigue and the cumulative effects of the weekend, but the memories I have are good ones, and I hope that, despite the problems of being chairpeople, you were able to enjoy your own convention as much as I did. It was a damn fine con, for very many reasons, and I thank you for letting me be a part of it!

I'll try and write again later on, but right now I'd better crash, or my poor students will spend another day wondering what on earth I've been doing to be able to fall asleep while standing at the blackboard. So...thank you, for your hospitality, your generosity (and especially for the glasses, which you know will get good use!) and your many kindnesses. It was an incredible experience, and one I wouldn't have missed for the world.

All my love to both of you.--Mike Glicksohn

Gentle Members of the Court, need I go on? One entire letter from Mssr. Glicksohn and not one snide comment. Upon reading his letter, I became suspicious that, indeed, something had gone on in those missing hours. I was prepared to dismiss the entire affair when Exhibit B arrived:

Feb. 1, 1975

Dear Ro: Just wanted to render a few kind words unto you, the Stilyagi Air Corps, and any other co-conspirators in appreciation for a highly enjoyable con last weekend. When I got there I was instantly surprised at how much it had grown since last year. Then I found that, even with the increased size, everything seemed to be functioning smoothly, with good parties, good programming, and even decent food at the banquet. (What won't they think of next?)

Stanley Schmidt

First, a letter from Glicksohn and then a letter from a pro. Hm...this is where the **perpetrators** made their fatal mistake. A complimentary letter from a pro or a complimentary letter from Glicksohn and I would have pursued the matter no further. However, faced with this compelling evidence, I rather reluctantly disentangled myself from Fondlecon 1 and set off in pursuit of the facts. So far, this has been the best that I could do:

ConFusion 13 was brought to you by some or all of the following:

- A. Lin Lutz, Jim Martin and Lary Ward : AKA The Con Committee
- B. Rick Lieder, Sid Altus, Ted Reynolds, Mike Gould, Mark Bernstien, Dick Laws: AKA The Stilyagi Air Corps
- C. Lloyd Biggle: AKA A Very Nice Pro and Friend

These people, using every whim and guile available did:

1. Bring three hundred forty-odd people together for the weekend.
2. In some unfathomable manner, got Fred Pohl to come as Pro Guest of Honor. Even after he realized where he was, Fred proved himself to be a Very Nice Person as well.
3. After all expenses had been paid, donated \$200 to the Down Under Fan Fund and \$200 to the TuckerFund; the excess money, should either fund go over the top, will be used to send Mike Glicksohn and Susan Wood to Aussiecon.
4. Again using their strange powers, had Gordon Dickson give a seminar. So did Lloyd.
5. Obtained the late Keeve M. Siegel, Ph.D. and former head of KMS Fusion address the crowd on Friday night.
6. Prevented one sort-of suicide.

Being humble and sincere, I want to thank all those mentioned above for doing a hell of a lot more than anyone had a right to expect. And just think...this year we didn't know what we were doing! Imagine what we can do when we get experienced!

I did my famous 'dead act' for about a week and a half after

the con, trying to do simple things like, for one example, remembering my name and, for another, cursing the Hilton.

This issue should have come out in January, but as those who were able to attend might understand, there was a sufficient amount of fanac during the weekend to cause the delay.

Before we look at the changes that are forthcoming in future issues, let's take a look of what some people said about the last:

December 6, 1974

Dear Ro: Quite honestly, this issue of CRWB is damn good--man, you now have a real fanzine, and an enjoyable one. Really good artwork (though "The Hooded Aardvark" didn't live up to my expectations--but few things do), clean repro, neat words, good lettercol...



I think, if I had to pick something I thought was the best part of your fanzine, I'd choose your editorial. Besides the fact that I tend to enjoy editorials the most in any fanzine, you combine the serious and the humorous rather well, and bring up some pretty good points. I mean, who are the fringe fans? That's not not an easy thing to define. As someone pointed out, there are really three sorts of fandom inside SF fandom: Fanzine fandom, club fandom, and convention fandom. And at the Worldcon the three decide to get together at once. (Maybe you should add "collecting fandom" to that list) And of course, we can regard those who are interested only in comic books, or Star Trek, or Planet of the Apes, or E. R. Burroughs or whatever as "fringe fans", but I'm afraid that a lot of fannish fans consider anyone with an interest in these subjects as a fringe fan, even if they're interested in sf and the

fannish aspects of fandom as well. Jacqueline Lichtenberg, for instance, struck me as being put down unfairly, after I read the article you saw printed in SP 36. John Robinson made a comment in one fanzine that I think is pretty accurate: Most fringe fans are from the local area, as you might expect.

Perhaps simply a high at-the-door fee would discourage them.

Yours --Cy Chauvin

2/4/75

Dear Ro: Wish that I could write a letter for your lettercol that would be as interesting as some of the ones I see in The Alien Critic or Algol, but I don't know any of the obvious rabble-rousers like Zenna Henderson or Edgar Pangborn and can't complain about lousy market conditions or somebody stepping on my foot while I was on a panel at Discon. Just a wash-out as far as pro or fan feuds go, I guess. I'd plug my new book if I had a new book to plug, but I don't so I can't.

Best --Mike Toman



Ro-Lin, Ro-Lin, Ro-Lin on the River...

I am moved to drop you both a loc on the most recent CRWB to arrive here. (Some people are affected that way by Exlax; with me it's offset fanzines exuding the musky miasma of Detroit from between their tainted pages.) I don't know if there's anything here I'll want to/be able to

respond to but I've never let that stop me in the past.

Actually, I suppose I should have begun this letter "Rear Do..." since by the time you get through typing the masters it'll probably come out that way anyway. Can't you do something about those typos, Ro? Like cut off both hands at the elbows and turn the machine over to an orang-utang with delusions of grandeur? I doubt we'd notice the difference...

Good editorial, being both well written and thought provoking. I'm in agreement with whoever said we need more Nagey in CRWB. Although it's about the only place we need more of that great putrid hulk...

Some people seem to be able to write enormous great convention reports describing in laborious detail who they said what to when while watching who doing what to whom. I figure they're

either making all of it up, or being so busy taking notes they're missing out on the convention itself. I'll settle for a mosaic impression of the con, with fewer details and precise conversations but more impressions, any time. For myself, I didn't even try to remember specifics from DISCON, so you're one or ten up on me in that respect. And you caught some of the flavour of your DISCON, which is what is really important. A good report...even if it fails to mention me even once...

In the various columns I've written in my far-from-luminous career about why I had nothing at all to write about, I've never come close to doing it as neatly as Cy Caubin (to use his letter-col designation) does in this little exercise of his. I'll keep the technique in mind should anyone ever ask me to "write an article for me." (Like as not, I can pull it off too: because like Cy I too have a statue of Mike Glicksohn I use for inspiration...)

If I may don the persona of Darrell Schweitzer for a second, SF did too have an old respectability, in the turn of the century days when it regularly appeared in all the highest quality slick national magazines, and before it became ghettoized in the purple pulpish pages. So there, Scott, nyah, nyah!

There's lot's of other Good Stuff in this issue, but most of it is Serious, and I make it a point never to discuss anything Serious in my locs. Fandom is too essentially frivolous for that. I did chuckle heartily over Lin's column though. The mind of even the most imaginative science fiction fan would boggle at trying to juxtapose the features and bodies of the two of you! On the other hand, for pure unadulterated horror, I can conceive of nothing to chill the very marrow of the bones to the extent that would result from even contemplating the awful terror of waking up in the body of Ro Nagey! There are some things beyond our ability to even conceive...

A fun, friendly, fannish issue. Who's this Snyder chap anyway, and what does he know? So keep up the adequate work, Ro baby...

Best, et al, etc, ibid, qed --Mike Glicksohn

January 30, 1975

Ro Nagey: Don D'Amassa's accounting of his books is something else. I can't imagine. Our county library hasn't got that many books! We've got a houseful. But not near that many.

Hmmm! It would be interesting to have some idea. This weekend I may just put some bored, industrious (not too compatible a combination) child to work on finding out just how many books are in the offutt household.

--Jodie Offutt

Tuesday 28th January 1975

offutt to Nagey, peace: My Jodie has just come into the office

with tears in her eyes and Cap'n Ro's Whizz-bang in her hand. She had it open to page four, and handed it to me. I read pp four and five while she wiped her eyes. It wasn't quite necessary for me to wipe mine, though I felt that familiar "unmanly" tug at the lachrymal glands.

Your perception and recounting of the after-the-banquet business at DISCon is about the way it was, and I have so said since, once the agony wore off and the Ellisonian wound crusted over, at Chambanacon and at other places among the faithful.

As to the rest of what you said: Thanks, friend.

Stay well, and please be careful, and ---Write on!

recycle ---offutt

PS: I dissembled a bit to you and your people at the door to me room. I had avoided a Scene at the banquet, at the advent of the enfant terrible of Sherman Oaks; I was not interested in beginning another. I will never forget; he will never be friend; he cannot be trusted, and that is the main definition of friend. --ajo

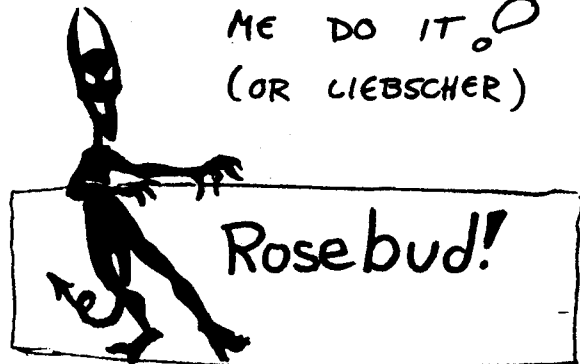
Dec. 23, 1974

Cheers: Whizz-bang 5 was mailed November 20th and reached here December 17th. The speed of the modern mails frightens me. I'm sure that if some math wizard would put his mind to it, he could prove that if the mails are speeded up any faster--even by one small day--they will fly off the track and topple over. Written and printed communications simply aren't meant to travel that fast and if Washington doesn't do something to reduce this reckless speed, God will take a hand.

This is a bugging about the crossword puzzle diagram on page 28. Tsk, as they mutter in the comic balloons, tsk. It's a bastard diagram, which Just Ain't Done. The white squares must always be evenly distributed and balanced across the length and breadth of the diagram, while the black squares must always have equal counterparts on the opposite side of the diagram, plus the top and bottom. Study the enclosed examples.

You have placed two blank squares immediately below the number nine word. To be correctly balanced, the diagram should have two black squares on the opposite side immediately below number 14, or two blacks immediately above number 64. And that white square number 74 down in the corner is a free-standing horror with no legal right to exist--but not only that, you failed to balance with a white free-standing horror in the upper left corner. Tsk.

TUCKER MADE
ME DO IT.^o
(OR LIEBSCHER)



When you graduate, please don't design bridges I may want to cross.

Best --Bob Tucker

January 30, 1975

Dear Ro: The offset reproduction is splendid. I'm sure it cost you all sorts of extra cash to use 1:1 reproduction of the typing, but the easy reading that this provided is particularly welcome to superannuated eyes like mine...

I liked James Martin's book reviews very much, despite the inadvertent problem that I haven't read any of the books reviewed here. Since I've read little fiction by Barry Malzberg, I don't mean to second the criticism of his fiction. But I do feel completely in sympathy with the basic warning that science fiction must appeal to a substantial audience. Avant garde music is written and performed because a couple thousand dollars will permit parts to be written and musicians to rehearse and give a concert at a university, where there are enough faculty members and music majors to provide some sort of audience. It takes much more than that sum even to publish a book through a vanity press, and commercial publishers can't be expected to accept manuscripts that will sell to as many people as will attend that concert of modern music. Until the realities of publishing and distribution change, science fiction needs at least a small mass audience to survive, and I would hate to be faced with only juveniles on the bookracks because the adult science fiction had grown too cryptic and subtle to survive.

Barf Against the Cosmos appealed to me the most of the humorous material in this issue. If Ted Reynolds could retain his ability to write this way while aiming for a mass audience, we might get the amusing novels that Keith Laumer just misses creating, time after time.

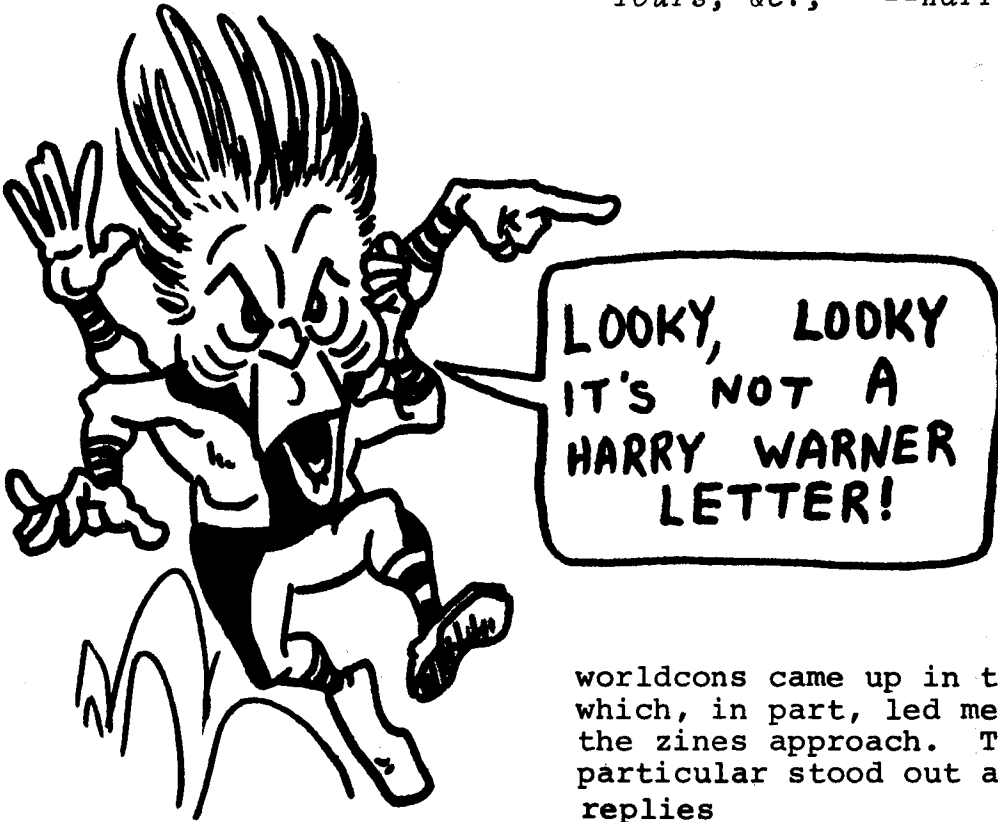
Don D'Amassa's article should be kept in print and provided to every neofan when he attends his first worldcon or writes his first fanzine loc or joins the NFFF or does something else to symbolize his emergence in fandom. It's such a clear exposition of the sweet agonies which collecting can involve and it might persuade some fans to prepare for the space problems that creep up on most new collectors unexpectedly. I have and I haven't a space problem myself. The house is big enough to hold lots more books, but I've tried to keep them confined to the attic and one spare bedroom, and for lack of time to sort and shelve or pack them nicely, they're consuming more of those areas than they should and I'm unable to find any given title when I want it. I had a orderly mind until I was 18 or thereabouts and I wish I could remember where I mislaid it because I need it badly now.

John Curlovich offers an interesting angle on the science fiction boom in colleges. My own fear has centered on the danger that students will begin to regard science fiction as part of the mundane establishment, now that it has become the topic for so many courses. It would be a shame if they began to dread reading *Nightfall* as they have long hated to read *Silas Marner*, for similar reasons: the obligation to read a particular piece of fiction and the doom of answering questions or writing an essay about

the story in a later test. The best science fiction courses, and the ones that are getting favorable comment in fanzines, are those where the students have a lot of freedom in choice of stories and the classroom atmosphere is informal. But how many teachers will do it the hard way, when it's so easy to assign certain stories and run a standardized test involving them through the office ditto?

The illustrations range from good to brilliant, I liked in particular Randy Bathurst's satanic bem on page 30 and Joe Pearson's page 3 sketch although this one suffered in my copy from the only real flaw in the issue's reproduction, which failed to get a properly solid black into the background rectangle.

Yours, &c., --Harry Warner, Jr.



Probably one of the greatest joys around fandom is the receipt of a Harry Warner loc - besides, it allows me to use the illo at left -

The issue of worldcons came up in the last issue, which, in part, led me to want to change the zines approach. Two letters in particular stood out among the various replies

December 5, 1974

Dear Cap'n Ro: Convention bidding is an overly expensive, overly complicated mess. I was program chairman for the Discon (though my real title was Official Letter-writer and Bad Example), and luckily didn't have much to do with the bid until after it had been won. But I heard some hair-raising tales of acute pocketbook atrophy, at least for the 1971 bid.

The whole thing has always seemed kind of silly to me. I vote more for location than anything else: how much it will cost me to get to a place, and how interesting a city it is. If a con committee is really incompetent, I'll hear about it from people whose judgement I trust.

I kind of like your second suggestion (p. 3), about eliminating bidding during the worldcons. It's easy to imagine a scenario where a few fuggheads could bilk a couple of grand out of a potential site hotel, and saturate the bidding con with propaganda and booze -- and then fizzle out. After having secured the votes of 3,946 walk-ins.

But even that wouldn't be so bad. I'm working myself into some n-dimensional syllogism here; let me just list the premises and let you work out the multivalued conclusion:

1. A worldcon is pretty big business for a hotel.
2. Any hotel that can handle a worldcon can shell out a few grand for public relations.
3. The efficiency with which a hotel handles a con is the biggest single factor as to whether a con will be a success or a failure.
4. The amount of enthusiasm a hotel demonstrates during the bidding is a fair harbinger of things to come on Labor Day.
5. Bidding parties are only a source of free booze anyway.
6. Conclusion: All Greeks are Romans, but some Romans are typefaces.

Keep the faith -- Joe Haldeman

Dear Ro: Philadelphia-77 will probably spend less than \$200 in its total bidding expenses, and we are so a serious bid. On the matter of limiting attendance: our hotel, the Sheraton, will comfortably hold about 2,750 in the biggest meeting room -- so we plan to limit attendance to about that. We figure that to allow more wouldn't be fair to the first 2,750 that registered in advance, even though it'll be hard on those that only realized at the last minute that they had the time/money to go.

Stay wicked, George H Scithers

And now, to address the issue on hand:

Trying to put out a genzine on a bi-monthly schedule is driving Lin and me up a wall - both timewise and financially. Timewise in the sense that Lin is a third-year med student and frequently puts in twelve-hour days, and I am trying to do as much serious writing as possible before I go broke and have to take a job. Financially in the sense that Lin pretty much supports herself and I support myself completely. By doing CRWB offset, we shelled out some eighty dollars out of our own expenses.

We both have a deep pride - not so much in this issue or past ones - but in the way the zine is heading. But not at the cost. We could either revert to mimeo and lose a certain degree of graphic abilities or limit production.

We are going to be taking about three months laying the groundwork for the next issue. We will no longer put the Whiz-Bang out on a bimonthly schedule, probably, but not definitely, biannually. We will also be doubling or tripling the word count. Finally, we will no longer be a genzine. Instead, we will be orienting future issues along varying thematic lines. For example, the next issue, which should be

in the mails shortly after Aussiecon, will be entirely about conventions, with the exception of course of the lettercol and such regulars as JAM Session!.

We feel that we can do a much better job in this fashion and that we should have a lot more fun.

In other words, you ain't seen nothing yet!



RUSTY FOR DUFF

ORLANDO IN '77

J. A. M. SESSION!

THE FEMALE MAN, Joanna Russ, Bantam, \$1.25

TRIPLE DETENTE, Piers Anthony, DAW, \$.95

FRIENDS COME IN BOXES, Michael G. Coney, \$.95

STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS, Harry Harrison, Berkely, \$.95

THE GORGON FESTIVAL, John Boyd, Bantam, \$.95

David Gerrold recently raised the question of the qualities of a good book review in the pages of SELDON'S PLAN. His remarks came in a letter responding to criticism of his writing. I wrote to SELDON'S PLAN in response to his position, and later, wrote to him. I won't quote here from his reply, since I didn't ask his permission to do so, but the ideas in his letter have been made known publicly in other places, so I will feel free to paraphrase from his letter.

Gerrold's three criteria for a good review are: (1) What was the author trying to do? (2) how well did he or she do it? and (3) was it worth doing in the first place? I have tentatively decided on three qualities of a good review (for some reason, these things always seem to come in threes): (1) Assisting the reader in deciding whether or not to read the book; (2) analyzing the work to suggest ideas about it (either on substantive content or style) that may not have occurred to the reader and will increase the reader's enjoyment of it -- whether the book has already been read or will be later; and (3) being entertaining. I believe that Gerrold's standards are too author-oriented -- they are designed to help out the author on his next book. Gerrold believes that my list -- especially the entertainment item -- gets the reviewer into showing off, at the expense of the proper purposes of the review.

Gerrold can state his own position better than I, so I will not try to put any more words into his mouth, or typewriter, than the bare sketch of his argument that is set out above. Instead I will expand a bit on my own position and, hopefully, review a few books.

Most of the people who read books are not authors. They fall into two main categories -- those who have read the book and those who have not. I suppose that it is beyond argument that a book review should be of some assistance to the person deciding whether or not to read the book. (Gerrold finds this implicit in his other criteria) Since tastes vary, it is not enough simply to say "This book is good" or "This book is bad"; enough must be said to let the reader make a somewhat independent judgement. Because the reviewer inevitably acts as a filter of ideas, it isn't possible to guaranty that the reader can rely 100% on the reviewer's

presentation of the book to make a decision whether to read it.

The second of my criteria for a good book review has to do more with the reader who has already read the book. I find that I often enjoy reviews more after reading the book than before. Some of this comes from the pleasure of having my own opinion confirmed; some of it comes from the combative pleasure of frothing at the mouth and, perhaps, dashing off an angry letter. A lot of it comes from comparing notes with someone else who has read the same material and thought about it. In a sense, it's a kind of one-way rap session about a shared experience. The utility of the review in that respect is often increased by the fact that the reviewer has usually given more thought to the book than the casual reader, and often can come up with more than would have occurred to the reader. Authors often make good reviewers because the immediacy of their own experience in writing makes them more thoughtful and sensitive to the faults, virtues, and interesting bypaths of someone else's work. It should be noted too, however, that authors can sometimes make very poor reviewers because they can become too self-conscious. They may be unwilling to appear catty, and thus tend to say excessively nice things about another author's works. More unfortunately, they may begin to talk shop, emphasizing matters that are only of marginal concern to the reader but are important to the author.

With my final criterion for the good review -- entertainment -- we reach what may be the crux of the issue. Should the reviewer try to entertain? I suppose that we could all agree that his prose should be readable enough that his writing doesn't bore. Should he go beyond that? Should he be witty? Should he pun? In an ideal world, there is no reason to avoid entertainment in anything -- a founding principle, I suppose, of Sesame Street. The danger is that Mr. Hyde will take over from kindly and perceptive Dr. Jekyll, and that the reviews will degenerate into contests to see who is best at putting down the author. The temptation is real, and, especially in fanzines, is often yielded to.

I suspect that Gerrold's standards and mine would, as a practical matter, overlap in many cases -- that is, we might both be able to agree that the same review was a good one. What is essential is that the reviewer using his standards be strong enough to avoid the pitfalls of playing to the author, and that the reviewer using my standards be strong enough to avoid the temptation to substitute showmanship for good reviewing. Whether this particular reviewer has displayed such strengths -- or has entertained -- is for the Gentle Reader to decide. (A final comment: I may not agree with Gerrold's reviewing criteria, but I believe he excels as an author. WHEN HARLIE WAS ONE and especially THE MAN WHO FOLDED HIMSELF are high on my list, despite criticisms that they have received elsewhere.)

*** **

Joanna Russ is an author and a reviewer. Her reviews are tough and demanding; so, in another sense, is her writing. THE FEMALE MAN is not a good book. That is a shame, because Russ can write very well. (See, for example, her excellent story in QUARK #1, "The View From This Window".) It is also a shame because it is clear that a great deal of effort and feeling went into the work. Unfortunately, the feeling is too strong, at least for the man who reads this intensely anti-male (not liberationist) book; at times he feels almost battered by it.

"Whileaway" is the planet Earth, sometime in the future, and in a different probability track in which a disease has wiped out all men. Whileaway women master some of the secrets of manipulating probabilities and send an emissary to today's "Earth", though an Earth also on a different probability track in which Hitler never rose to power and the Great Depression dragged on and on. (Making the other Earth different from our own blunts the contrasts between Whileaway and the real here-and-now. It mystifies me.) Most of THE FEMALE MAN is dedicated to depiction of the Whileaway society, which is saner than our own (and that of the parallel earth) but occasionally more cruel. There is no real plot, just a series of scenes on earth and on Whileaway. The narration skips from first person to third, with a narrator who is sometimes simply a narrator, sometimes a character, and sometimes a thing that hangs on the curtain. It skips from past-tense narrative to present-tense narrative. It skips from occasional interesting scenes to long dreary monologues. My well-developed sense of guilt was ultimately unable to keep me from skimming over about 80 pages. At the end Russ addresses the book itself with a valedictory, wondering about some future time when it will no longer be understood. I suspect that it may never be -- and that if it is, it will not reward the necessary effort. Unfortunately, the book will probably be talked about for the wrong reasons -- Russ seems to say at the end that she (but possibly only the character "Joanna") is a Lesbian. There will be gossip. It would be so nice if Russ could get over the pain which darkens every page of her book and use her ample talent to entertain, as well as communicate.

*** **

Science fiction is capable of more villainous villains than other forms of literature because villains have more villainy available to them in science fiction. Hitler could try to wipe out an ethnic group, but real villains can go for planets, galaxies, or even the Universe if they are so inclined. For some reason, several recent books have treated of evil, from



starkly different perspectives.

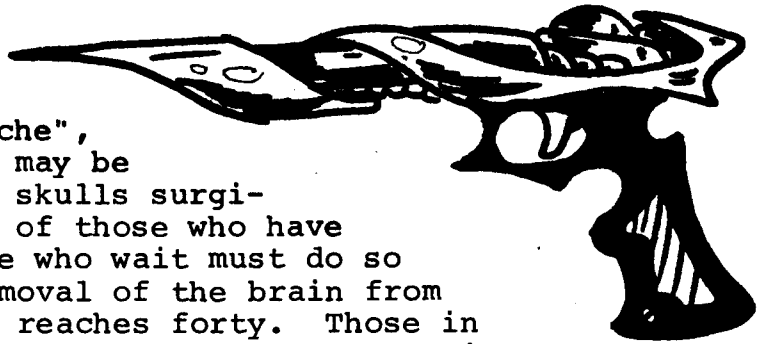
In TRIPLE DETENTE, Piers Anthony has an earth fleet meeting an alien fleet in the beginnings of an interstellar war. The war is ended when the two military establishments agree to a strange arrangement: Each side pretends, to the folks back home, to have lost the war, and each then rules the other's home planet. In effect, they swap governments. Because each side's military knows that the other side's military could do some very nasty retaliation against the unsuspecting folks back home, including friends and relatives, each is channelled into striving for good government. (This gives away a fact that is revealed fairly early in the book and is obvious even earlier than that.) The curious thing about TRIPLE DETENTE is what happens next: Each side, acting with the approval of the other, begins a ruthless genetic "improvement" plan against its "conquered" planet. Well over half the people of each planet are destroyed to get rid of excess population (from which each planet suffers greatly) and to improve genetic stock. It is explained that both planets' societies were on their way to destruction because neither could exercise the control necessary to save themselves. The "detente" was the answer because the apparent victor in a war could accomplish much that would not be tolerated from one's own government.

I won't lecture about Hitler. I will admit that the Earth is even now overpopulated, and that our genetic stock might be declining as a result of our humanitarian efforts to preserve the physically weak, or of the fact that survival and reproduction probably probably require less intelligence in our welfare society than in a laissez-faire society. (It doesn't follow, of course, that one can identify inferior genotypes -- an inferior gene may be carried by a superior phenotype.) I won't moralize. I will observe, however, that it is incredible that someone would write a book centering around genocide without once truly coming to grips with the moral issues involved with mass killings. The writing is competent; and the situations are sometimes interesting, but the whole book emerges as a vacuum, a creampuff, so long as no character even once seems to agonize over what is being done. The characters occasionally discuss it, but they inevitably (and in a few paragraphs) come around to grudging, and finally enthusiastic, support for the program. If science fiction is the Literature of Ideas, it is because ideas are explored, and not merely set out like pearls on a string. No book can be a success if it uses genocide-for-good-motives as a central theme without exploring the moral question and the reaction of its characters to that question. This book fails badly.

*** **

FRIENDS COME IN BOXES, by Michael Coney, is a great success. The book is a collection of stories revolving around different characters but taking place the same day and concerning the same central theme -- brain transference. The technique has been

perfected, and society has shaped itself around the attainment of immortality. Babies must be registered and yielded to "the Creche", so that their six-month old brains may be removed and disposed of, and their skulls surgically changed to accept the brains of those who have been waiting for a new body. Those who wait must do so in a life-sustaining box, since removal of the brain from the body is required when the body reaches forty. Those in boxes are called "friends" as a part of a government campaign to encourage people with bodies to take the friends out for walks, and the like, to relieve the tedium of sitting on a shelf waiting for a new body. (So the title doesn't mean what you thought it did.) The plot, as sketched out, doesn't really sound very inviting, but Michael Coney has a very special way with painting ordinary characters and their reactions to life. All of the stories involve some activity of the Creche and how people try to cheat it, avoid it, or profit by it. There is no intrusive moralizing; the strength that develops by the final pages is part of the overall story because it is the realistic response of real people. None of these people is superhuman; most are gentle, or timid, or kind, and a few are petty and greedy. Coney's storytelling, and his presentation of the moral question, are believable because his characters are not larger than life. This is a don't-miss book.



*** **

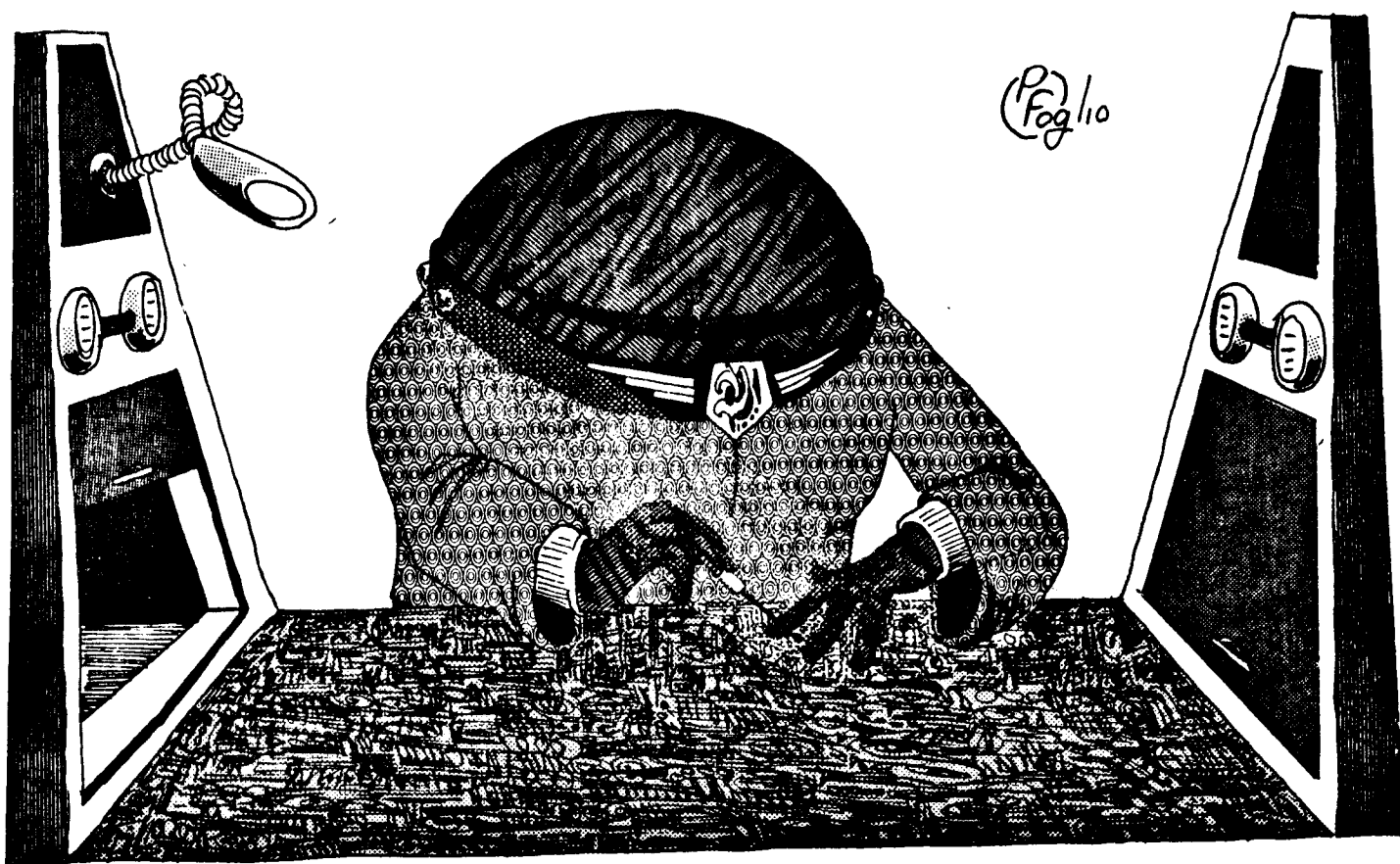
Can evil be funny? You bet. STAR SMASHERS OF THE GALAXY RANGERS is the best of Harry Harrison's humor that I have read so far. There are bad guys and good guys of heroic and foolish dimension. Our heroes, Chuck and Jerry, invent a spaceship (using a converted airplane) capable of f-t-l travel. In the process they invent an amazingly destructive weapon and go off, somewhat by accident, to help the downtrodden. Unfortunately, they make a few mistakes along the way (like discovering that the bad guys --99.9% of whose race they kill off in the quick end to a 10,000 year war - are really the good guys. But they make amends. "Sorry about that" they remark, and shift gears to go after the real bad guys. STAR SMASHERS avoids many of the common pitfalls of s-f humor: it has broad humor that does not degenerate into silliness; it maintains the semblance of a plot; it keeps its pace to the end (watch that last page); and it doesn't rely on big print or wide margins to fill the book. Another one you shouldn't miss.

*** **

Finally, THE GORGON FESTIVAL, by John Boyd, takes up the theme of human experimentation that is at least marginally evil but is much more than marginally funny. The gimmick of the book is a drug that restores youth and regenerates sexual ability. The whole idea seems remarkably plausible as it starts out in the

quiet groves of academe. But the action moves quickly to L.A. and the drug culture underground, mixed with a little bit of motorcycle gangsterism with ultra-rightwing politics. Finally the action wends its way through beauty spas and rock concerts so that good may triumph -- sort of. Nothing is sacred along the way, and practically anything you don't like is deflated by Boyd's satire, sprinkled here and there with puns and word games. This one isn't a knee slapper like STAR SMASHERS, but its humor is more thoughtful and insidious. Boyd has always written several books which have won critical acclaim but have been hard to appreciate fully because of cryptic allegory. THE GORGON FESTIVAL is sly but understandable, and seems to me Boyd's best so far.

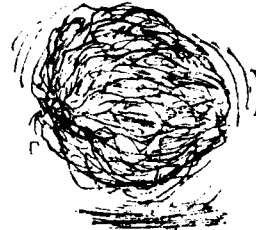
JAMES A. MARTIN



The Fantasy Film World
of Bernard Hermann
The National Philharmonic Orchestra
Bernard Hermann, conductor
London Phase 4 SP 44207 \$6.98

HOW ABOUT, A CHORUS
OF 'ROLLING ALONG
WITH THE TUMBLING
TUMBLEWEED?

- Works:
- 1) Journey to the Center
of the Earth
 - 2) The Seventh Voyage of
Sinbad
 - 3) The Day the Earth Stood
Still
 - 4) Fahrenheit 451



Being a somewhat abnormal fan with money that should have gone into science fiction books invested in a quad-riphonic system, I snatched this album up as soon as it appeared in my neighborhood Korvettes. It wasn't on sale, I had to pay the premium price for it, but I figured that since science fiction audio thrills were hard to come by, any price would be reasonable.

I wasn't disappointed.

Though Hermann's music reminds me of the works of Richard Strauss, it's not what a critic could call 'great' or 'serious' music. This is because it was written for the film medium, to enhance visuals and convey action, and is subject to the demands of story content, sound mixing, and editors. Yet these works are extremely enjoyable because, though shallow, they can stand by themselves. In particular, the science fiction scores convey a sense of wonder hard to duplicate in any other way and in the case of Journey to the Center of the Earth and Fahrenheit 451, probably kept the storylines of the movies from becoming boring and pedantic exercises.

As is the convention with these kind of albums, the complete music of each film is not presented but themes from them are combined by the composer into suites. The timings for each suite are 15:03, 8:31, 11:35, and 10:50 minutes and seconds in the order I have listed at the top of this review. The listener loses nothing by this arrangement (in fact gains something in Hermann's case because by the sound of it, he certainly knows how to tack what were once bits and snatches into a coherent whole). The music is not taken from the films' soundtracks but has been recorded by a top notch orchestra under the composer's baton with modern recording equipment.

My only objection to any of the works is that I wish Hermann had presented more of the music associated with Gort in The Day the Earth Stood Still. As he has it in this album, Gort only gets a brief musical mention.

I've learned that the Science Fiction Book Club has made available the science fiction music on this album on

their own record, with the film score of Psycho replacing Sinbad; same orchestra, composer conducting. Whereas the commercial release (my copy), has only a few brief and sketchy notes by Hermann on the music, the SFBC release has more extensive notes, better cover art, and would probably be of more interest to a science fiction fan.

Technically the recorded sound on my copy is topnotch, though certain solo instruments--theremins, xylophones, harps-- are spotlighted. There's a slight ingroove rumble on side one of my disc which disappears after a minute or so, but there are none of the pops and clicks that indicate a terrible pressing. London normally has pressings that are a cut above the average and this release appears to carry on the tradition.

GUY SNYDER



Tales From the Hooded Aardvark Inn

[Cap'n's Note: By the time that you read this, the Hooded Aardvark Inn should be open once again. It has been closed for nearly two weeks and in all honesty, I, and I alone must take the blame. Past experience should have taught me to be more wary, but a combination of beer and Lin (not necessarily in that order) probably lowered my guard. I should have known better when he said that he had been thrown out of Callahan's Place, a pub that seems to be crawling with spiders and their ilk. The damage has been done and I, for one, will be more careful.]

SAVOIR FAIRE

OR

THE TALE THAT CLOSED THE HOODED AARDVARK INN

Yes, Tom Morris was an amazing man, and he had an amazing career. I should know; I ended it.

An incredibly versatile human, that Tom Morris. Had colonized planets and governed them, both as elected president and as dictator. Led the revolt of the cyborgs. Invented the tintinabulator and the discombobulator. Telepath, barfly, artiste, megalomaniac, judge, acrobat, family man, Morris' abilities were vast. As Lothario, he was unequalled, finding entrees to species previously considered far beyond human capabilities (he was the only man ever to even get near the High Priestess of the Yestonian Blob-shells, much less to impregnate her). Gustatory connoisseur? Morris could cook the foods of 6000 worlds with discrimination, and eat most of them.



And he had traveled; how he had traveled, always upholding the cause of Creative Civilization. At least eighteen times he had been warped around the home galaxy, and twice he had been warped as far as Andromeda. He'd been warped through the Medusa-head Nebula, past the clutches of the Great Web, and right up the Great Canal from Clitoris to Cervix. In fact, he was undoubtably the most warped human of our times.

I naturally found myself in deadly opposition to Morris, since I myself am the sworn foe of Creative Civilization, the leader of the Disintegrationists. Cooperation, Harmony, Constructiveness...sheer rot! Nevertheless, I could not help admiring the brilliance and the audacity of my rival.

Had I fallen into Tom Morris' hands, he would have cheerfully reconstructed my character. The thought gives me chills even now. But it was fated that he was to stumble into my power, and my strong sense of ethics will permit me to enforce no stronger penalty than annihilation.

Even the manner of disposing of Morris was pragmatically out of my hands. Although nominal leader of the motley band of marauders --- mutants, androids, Stilyagi outcasts and the scourings of a score of species --- my continued authority required my continual humoring of my crew in minor matters, such as the disposition of captives. In this case, there were thirteen separate human-ingesting races represented among my following, and it seemed the better part of valour to turn Morris over to them for gustatory purposes.

The whole scene returns to my inner eye. Tom Morris, manacled and immobilized, bound in the center of the great kitchen of the flagship of the Disintegrator fleet. Around him, the clawed, horned, tentacled, fanged, hirsute, carapaced, reticulated and amorphous representatives of the human-consuming aliens. Next to him, the culinary apparatus. On his face, that faint mark of a smirk that made me respect Morris while I hated him.

And I must admit that my crew made a very poor showing for the Disintegrationist cause. They quarreled incessantly about the proper way of preparing Morris for consumption. For while they were all anthropovorous, they all had different concepts of the best way to go about it. Some wanted to fry Morris in Betelgeusian frig-oil; others would rather stew him in Vegan gunkwood powder; one thought a light sprinkling of Attar-of-Antares over the raw flesh would be sufficient. They could not agree. And as they passed from querulousness through irritation to fury, the smirk on Tom Morris' lips blossomed slowly into a wide grin. Finally he broke into the turmoil boldly with his arrogantly authoritative voice, and his molesters fell silent to listen.

"Here you, yourselves, demonstrate," said Tom Morris, "the ineffectiveness of your Disintegrationist cause. Adherents of Creative Civilization would never bicker and infight in such a manner. They would Harmoniously Cooperate in a Constructive solution. I advise you all to turn to the side of Creative Civilization, before your Disintegrationist values lead to your own self-destruction."

Delivered in such fearless and undoubting tones, this speech had a visible effect upon my crew; I could see many wavering, uncertain, weighing the possibility that Morris might have a point. Much as I admired Morris' futile bravery, I had to step in now, in the interests of discipline, with a properly Disintegrationist solution.

"Divide the spoils," I ordered. And Morris was no More.

There were thirteen separate courses served on the flagship that day. Each race spiced its portion of Morris to its liking. Not one but stated its entire satisfaction with the culinary experience. Morris, it seemed, tasted equally sublime whether garnished with Denebian thymewart, fricassed with an injection of Lyran mock-cow butter, basted in Algolian schock, diced up and salted with Spicaspice, or simply served with Terran A-1. Morris was through and through a man of taste.

I myself declined to partake. I had absolutely no relish for it, whatsoever. But now having heard my tale, perhaps you can see why I can say with such confidence, and without hesitation, that Tom Morris was, indeed a Man for All Seasons.

TED REYNOLDS



CROSSWORD PUZZLE (DEDICATED TO TUCKER)

ACROSS

1. _____ gun
4. _____ in Ursa Major
10. Nick van Rijn is this
13. Irish
14. What Josef K. turned into in "The Metamorphosis"
16. Bostonian Thespian (coll.)
17. Dr. _____
18. Type of enemy
20. "An Alien _____"
22. How one greets a friendly Denebian
23. Caliber of a 1A, "E" series
25. What one says upon detecting a blip on the hyper-radar
26. Where fans congregate
28. Comes before root B
29. Where Dilithium comes from
30. Patron saint of resistors
31. "Why, there goes a unicorn. '____ a good omen."
33. Type of batteries sometimes found in 1A
34. Pschotropic chemical
36. Solar Exchange Commission (abbr.)
37. Flare pistol
40. Where a golfball sits prior to blast-off
43. Writers' Assoc.
47. Number of Spock's Earth parents
48. "What's _____?" "Nothin, Luigi, what's nu with you?"
49. Cats like to sit here
51. If you are reading this, you are one.
52. Source of power of Apollo program (2 wds)

DOWN

1. Type of diodes
2. An anthropomorphic servomechanism
3. Post-Space (abbr.)
5. Tolkien bad guy
6. Aider and abettor (group of Roman soldiers)
7. Soul, to some
8. Pink Floyd opus
9. "_____ Thing"
10. Fellow Creature (abbr.)
11. Goddess of knowledge
12. Gibbons are, apes aren't
14. BEM's are generally un-
_____ looking
16. Type of rocket drive, power gun, can opener, etc.
19. Fanzines involve _____ of paper
21. The cowardly lion had one
24. Grade of steel wool atomic engines become when snapped out of hyper-drive prematurely.
27. One will never appear in Spock's eye
32. Opposite of Ext.
35. _____ roamin'
36. America's features a pyramid
37. Very ontological (abbr.)
38. Bad guys often try to do this to Fems
39. Concerning
41. Condition prevalent in outer space
42. Pick
44. Fearless Follower (abbr.)
45. China is this in certain areas.
46. Unknown (Abbr.)
48. _____ Goldfinger
50. User
53. Prefix meaning "together"
54. Thin Man's dog
55. Public Address (abbr.)
57. Alien (abbr.)
58. Usually the basis for a story

ACROSS

- 54. They brought you "I Was A Teenage [Whatever]" (abbr)
- 56. This will usually get you a free zine (abbr.)
- 57. Entropically linked idiom (abbr.)
- 59. BEM's are always _____ people
- 61. BEM's are often ill-_____
- 63. _____ Deum (Latin)
- 64. Old comic book publishers
- 66. Usually a dirt road (abbr)
- 67. Displaced entity (abbr.)
- 68. He (Fr.)
- 69. His disease afflicts fans occasionally
- 73. From (Latin)
- 75. Ultimate answer to population explosion?

DOWN

- 60. Count on
- 62. A sailor
- 65. Mayday
- 68. It (Latin)
- 69. "From Time _____ Timbuctu"
- 70. Welsh navigator (abbr.)
- 71. Nuclear power (abbr.)
- 72. Kryptonian Hero (abbr.)
- 74. Type of radiation (abbr)

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WIZARD OF OZONE

THE ANNOTATED AARDVARK

Comparatively few books on aardvarks have been written and there has been a considerable advance in knowledge since the times of most of them. But the bulk of this new knowledge is scattered in journals where only a specialist can keep track of it.

Nevertheless, those who wish to learn more about the habits of aardvarks ought not to ignore the pioneers and (if they can get them) should read The Life of the Aardvark, by F.J. Habre (translated by Alexander Meixeira de Tattos); Observations on Sexual Selection in Aardvarks of the Family Tubulidentata, by W.E. Geckham (two papers published by the Unnatural History Society of Minneconsin in 1889 and 1890); Extrovert Hyraxes and Introvert Aardvarks, by M.J. Toggridge, 1873; and American Aardvarks and their Tastes in Cheese, by Mc.H. Cook, 3 vol., 1889. More recent books include The Aardvark Book, by C.H. Jomstock, 1940; Aardvark Wonders of Australia, by M.C. Keown, 1936; Les Tubiludentates--Encyclopedie Zoologique A, xiv, by B. Lerband, 1932; Aardvarks of Conneticut--The Biology of Aardvarks with Special Reference to the Danish Fauna, by N. Eilson, Vol. I., Copenhagen (in Danish) 723 pages with 459 illustrations in the text, 5 color plates and excessive bibliography, 1962. The principal work dealing with the habits of Michigan aardvarks is The Comity of Aardvarks, by S.B. Wistowe (2 Vol. 1969, 1971). In the "popular" class his paperback called Gorgonzola, 1967, is short but full of interest. The sesquicentenary journal Aardvarkiana is also highly recommended.

The identification of aardvarks is difficult and a spectro-scope is needed for all but the more conspicuous species. B. Jackwells' A History of the Aardvarks of North and Central America is beautifully illustrated in color, but scarce, expensive, and, of course, out of date (1684). C.O. Pambridge's Aardvarks of Ypsilanti suffers from the same disadvantage and lacks good illustrations. Siberian Aardvarks, a work in twenty volumes by L.G. Hocket and M.A. Filledge describing and illustrating all Siberian species, is in preparation by the Qay Society. The first volume will be published in Djakarta in 1983.

Less scholastic, but of great interest to the true aardvark fan, is The Aardvark and His Cheeses in Art, Literature, Philosophy, History, and Religion, Comprising All Major References to This Noble Beast For the Past 17,000 Years, by A.N. Aardvark, 1974.

TED REYNOLDS

WE ALSO HEARD FROM.... THE PAST

During the years 1964--1970, Michigan State University in East Lansing, Michigan, was a veritable hotbed of fannish activity, an affliction from which it presently appears to have recovered, perhaps by infecting its neighboring ghetto, Ann Arbor. The disease first manifested itself following the arrival on campus of three very disparate characters. Rich Mann was a gregarious, aggressively personable character who shares with Richie Benyo the responsibility for the founding of Apa45. His roommate, by prior arrangement, was George Fergus, a Cleveland recluse and fan, who--despite a brief stay in Apa45--confines himself to copious inspiring locs and occasional articles. The third was Marty Massoglia, a fountain of nervous energy, whose contacts with organized fandom have remained peripheral despite his manic obsession with the genre. Marty was the organizer of the group, however, and began to gather a group of fans about him at the opposite end of the campus from Mann and Fergus. Somehow he managed to live in the same dormitory with SF pro Vernor Vinge without discovering the fact, but such is the way of fate. We were subsequently to learn that J. Hunter Holly was also a student at MSU, and that Cyril Kornbluth had actually been on the faculty briefly, but all this came later.

The MSU Science Fiction Society grew by leaps and bounds, and by the end of 1964 there were two clusters of fans hovering like Trantor and Terminus, with occasional forays from one to the other. David Heal, a New Jersey fan (now gafiated) who had co-edited BEACON with John Woods (also gafiated), arrived at MSU and moved in down the hall from Rich and George, taking as his roommate a rank neo named Don D'Ammassa, who would later move in with George Fergus following the departure of Rich Mann. D'Ammassa was subsequently enticed into Apa45, and insists to this day that fandom was forced upon him while he was still too young and naive to know better.

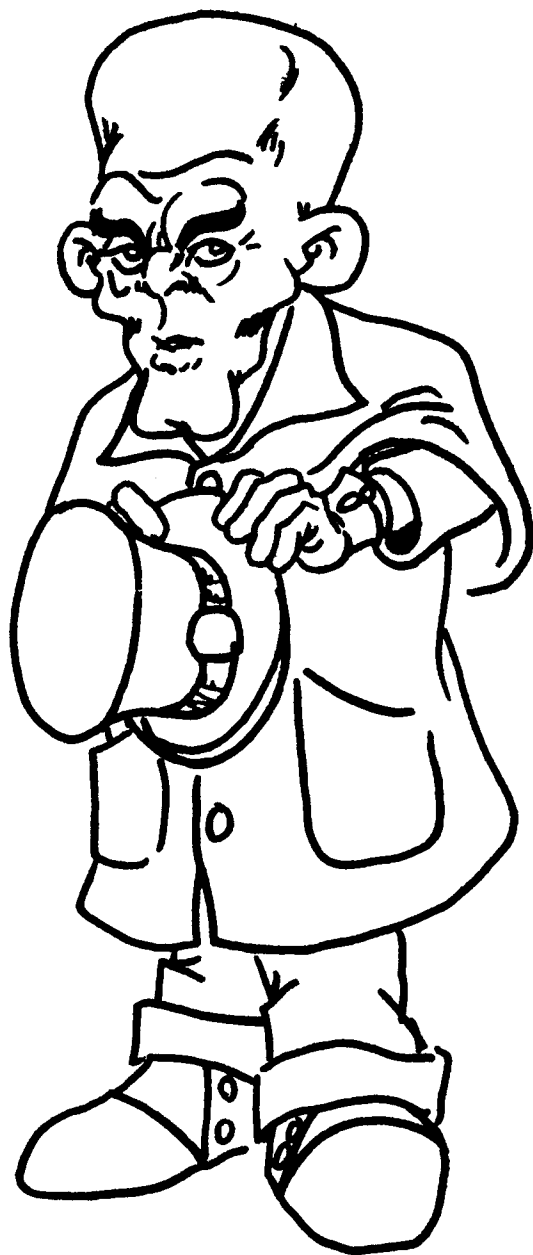
Massoglia began to organize informal but regular meetings, at which there were subsequently to appear such stalwarts of fandom as Jim Landau and Tracie Brown (now both active in WSFA); Terry and Ann McCutchen (now active in NESFA and co-chairpeople of next year's Boskone); and Seth McEvoy, who was to go on to become Official Editor of Apa45, and who is now a member of SAPS. Rich Mann had by now left MSU (and fandom also), but he was replaced by a flurry of new faces including WSFAn Fred Gottschalk (now unfortunately deceased), Bob Shaw (gafiated), and Lee Carson (gafiated). The latter-

tion was the arrival of yet another fantasy oriented group, the Society for Creative Anachronisms. In the waning years of the 1960's, the splintering was completed as many of the old hands began to flunk, graduate, or transfer out.

Many good fanzines originated at MSU during these years, including MAGIC BAGEL, TRANSITRON, ACHILLES, MANNDERINGS, CHTHON, AGENT OF VAGUENESS, and in the waning years, the initial issues of COLOG and B WEEK (AMOEBOID SCUNGE). The fannish climate persisted for awhile, in fact, Clarion was eventually to arrive on campus. But the old fannish spirit was gone and MSUSFS is now just a memory.

So now it's your turn, Ann Arbor fandom. Let's see what you can do.

DON D'AMMASSA



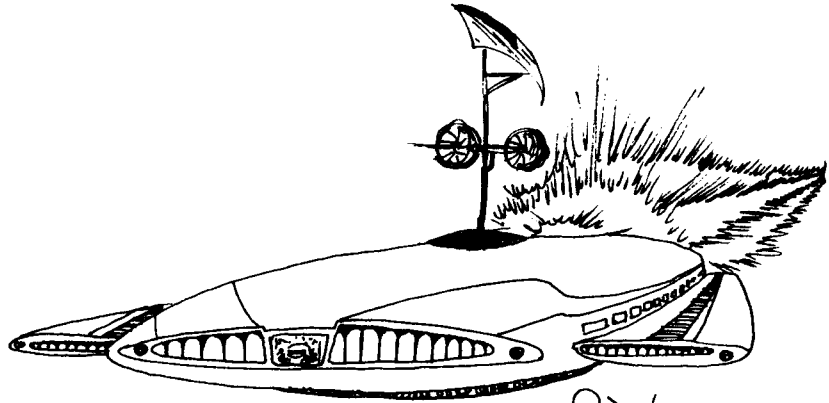
**KARLOFF! KARLOFF!?!
MOST PEOPLE SAY I
LOOK LIKE D'AMMASSA!**

LINIMENT

Writing this column is always a chore for me. I admit to being a con fan more than a zine fan. Reading fanzines I love but writing--ugh! I write my best when I am doing a simple factual

report with bare essentials and nothing else. That, of course, is precisely the sort of writing that is required in the medical profession, so I do well enough there.

(One of the reasons I ended up in the sciences in college was to avoid writing.) I admire people who can write, precisely because it is so difficult for me.



(P) /
Faglia

This is all in way of prelude to an explanation of what I thought I'd do this time with *Liniment*. The idea was that I could do a few con reports and pass on a couple of news items and I'd be all set. Nice factual, simple stuff. Problem is, Windycon is too far away to remember well and Confusion I have little to say about. What with being a third-year Med student, I haven't had time to attend many other cons, so that leaves me with only Marcon to talk about.

A few words, at least, for Confusion:

The weekend is a blur. Being on a con committee means never knowing where the weekend went. Most of the people I talked to afterwards said they had a good time--even if I never saw them during the con. We added a couple of people to the fringe of the Air Corps; it remains to be seen if they will actually join in. (Not having a formal membership makes it difficult to tell who's a member and who isn't.) The committee is crazy enough to want to do it again next year and the con chairman got enough egoboo to last him a week. So next year it's Confusion 12, January 23-25, 1976. And no snow... please!

After recovering from Confusion it was nice to attend Marcon

and do as I pleased. As usual, the con for me was the parties and there were some good ones this year. There were the name tag exchanges (which are becoming *de rigueur* at cons this season), the secret handshake of fandom (to which Marshall Tymn was initiated), an engagement party for Ross Pavlac and his fiancée, Elise, thrown by the Pittsburgh fan, and Marshall Tymn's freeforall vip party...not to mention the official con parties.

A highlight of Marcon was a surprise movie premiere on Saturday morning of *Dark Star*. It was amazing to see the number of people who crawled out of bed for the nine am showing, free or not. I was amazed at myself--but it was worth it. This is the film made by several young people partly to prove that an sf movie could be made cheaply and still have good special effects. I've heard they put \$60,000 into the making of this flick, although I find that hard to believe. But however much money it was, they spent it well. I thoroughly enjoyed this movie. True, the film showed a certain lack of experience but more than made up for it in ingenuity. *Flesh Gordon* was more amateurish in appearance and certainly had a lot less thought behind it (and a lot more bucks). Some of *Dark Star's* special effects are easy to see through, and a lot of the equipment used is obviously makeshift (ice cube trays turned upside down make up the control console, the alien is a large orange beach ball with gloved human hands for feet, etc.), but it's easy to ignore these things. Or maybe they add to the movies charm. I don't know. But I do know that I liked it. I only hope that it makes it to the theaters.

One Marcon event I unfortunately missed (drat!) was the Sunday morning, 3 am, excursion in search of eats by a group of partiers. However, it being 3 am Sunday and it being Columbus (this is Ohio, remember) the only place they found open was a bar on Gay Street (the name of the street--honest!) They didn't realize until they went inside that the street name had some basis in fact, coincidence or otherwise. I was told by some who were there that the transvestite waiters (waitresses?) were quite attractive. I wonder what they thought of the fan?

Back in the mundane world after Marcon I continued my major project of '75--reading *Dhalgren*. As of going to press, I've read all but 25 pages! I may even finish it! And that's more than some people I know can say. Over eight hundred pages of prose poetry without a discernible plot is indeed difficult to get through no matter how beautifully written. I love Delany. I've read and reread all of his other works. But I'm afraid this is going to be a one-time-only reading--if that. What a pity. I can't help feeling he is trying to say something, but if so, it's lost among all that lovely prose.

One final note, we have added two black kittens to our household to replace Whiz Bang, our beloved Tabby, who was killed by an automobile in January. They spend their time sleeping, eating and entertaining us---that order. Our only problem

has been naming them. They've had several sets of names but we've yet to settle on any permanent ones. Currently, we're calling them Buddha and the Bitch. Point of interest to me is that sf people, as a rule, are cat people, not dog people. A cat-centric rationale for this is that cats are more intelligent and independent than dogs and therefore appeal to the intelligence and independence of sf writers and fen. But then, I'm an sf fan and a cat-lover. I wonder what a dog-lover would have to say.

So..AMF. (That's medicalese for "good-bye". Strictly translated, it stands for "Adios Mother-Fucker". Its usage means that the patient referred to is to be discharged asap.)

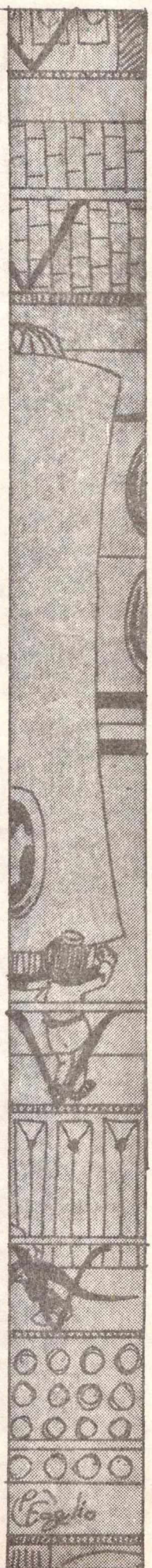
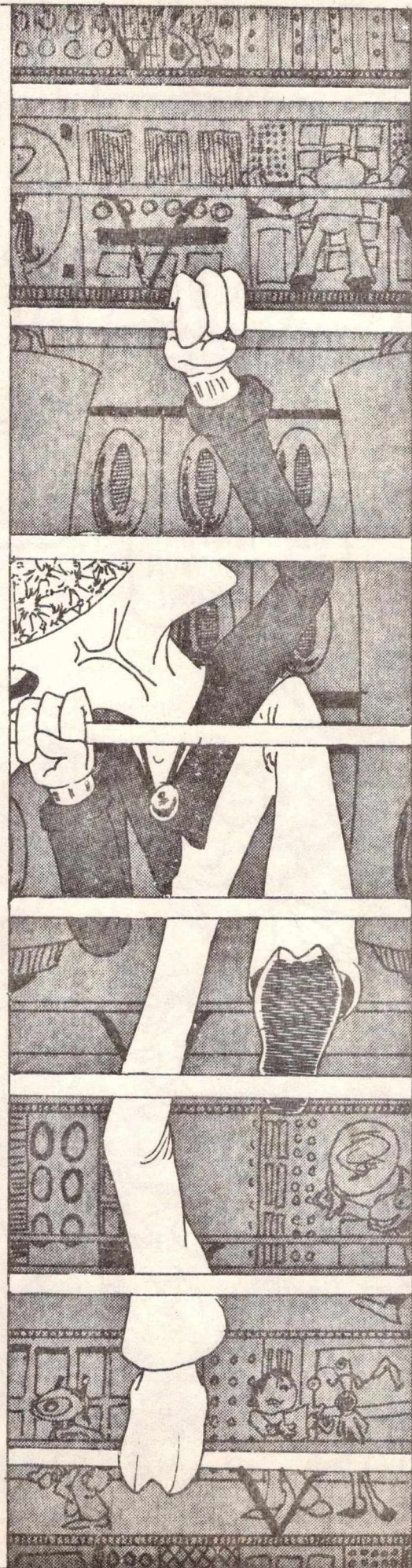
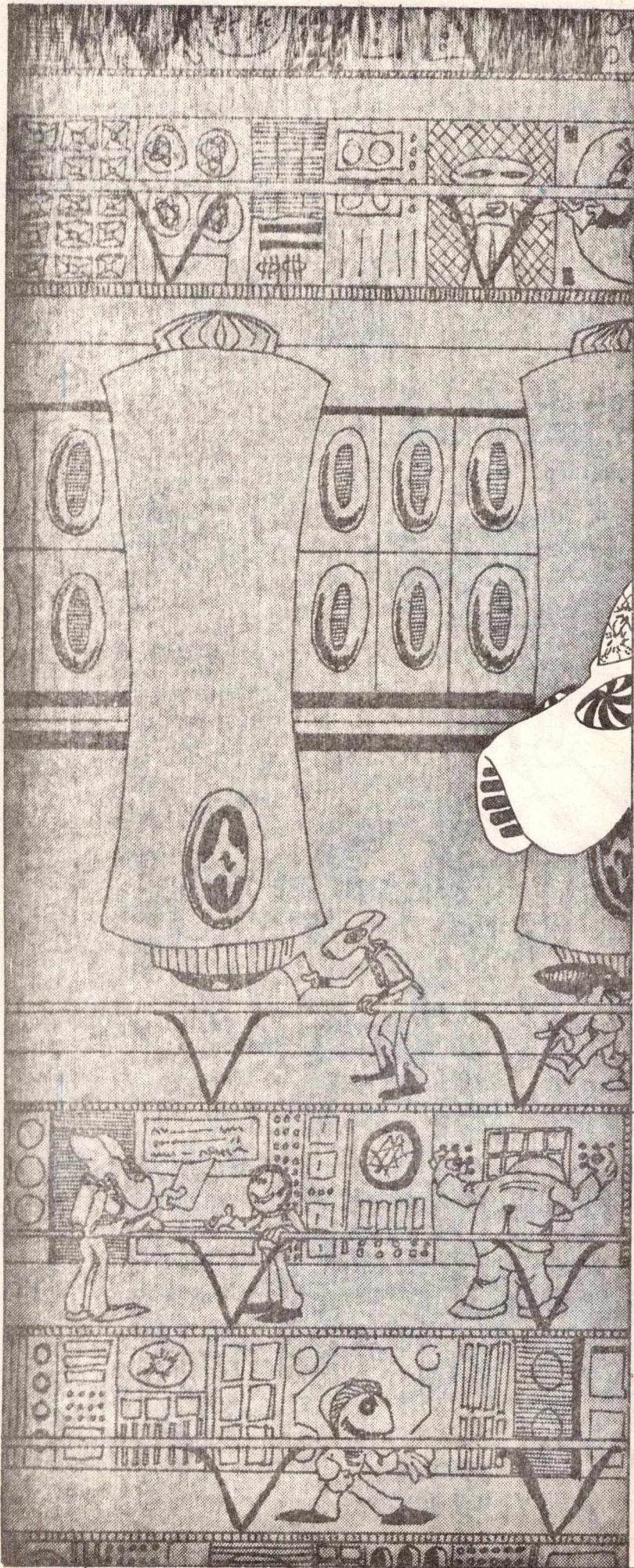
LIN LUTZ.



Wooded Attack of Confusion 13

& Lamonte Lizard





Esposito