

DAGON

#135, SECOND ANNIVERSARY DISTRIBUTION (#53) OF APA-Q

24 September 1976

STREAK GORDON - XXIV

(From high in the air of Planet Porno we see the Flying City of the Hawkpeople, assailed by the aerial rocket ships of EMPEROR WANG. At first the city makes almost no response to the bombardment, then its blasts of radiation increase, and imperial ships are seen shot down or crippled. The vista recedes, and we then see that it has appeared on a screen in WANG's palace. WANG himself is looking at the battle scene; with him are several court officials and the MOUNTAIN DEMON.)
WANG: Tao's Jewel-Studded Foreskin! How can the Hawkmen hold out so

long? They shouldn't have the energy resources to keep going like that. A lousy carbon-oxygen fusion couldn't give them that much!
FIRST SCIENTIST: Perhaps they've converted to something else, Your Extensivity.

SECOND SCIENTIST: If that Earthman Jerkoff is working for them...

WANG: Even if he is, they've also got that posturing idiot Streak Gordon. He should be able to counteract any good their other Earth prisoner does them. Captain Turd!

(A beefy officer in space armor steps before WANG and salutes.)

WANG: Captain, take this message to Sky Admiral Heinmeity. If the Hawkpeople are able to keep up this bombardment, make any terms that don't make us look too bad. We'll have to pass it off as a victory here for public relations purposes, so don't give too much away. Vulgar knows he can't ask too much, so I think he'll be willing to deal. Don't put this on the air, but deliver it personally. It's Ultraviolet Top Secret.

CAPTAIN TURD: Aye, aye, Your Penetration. (Pauses.) Er - Ultraviolet Top Secret - Sire - doesn't that mean "Destroy After Reading"?

WANG: Of course.

(CAPTAIN TURD gives a bone-rattling salute and exits.)

MOUNTAIN DEMON: Your pardon, Your Assholiness, but-

WANG: The only copy of the message is in his brain. Ultraviolet Top Secret is the best way I know to weed out those dumbbells whose only qualification is loyalty.

MOUNTAIN DEMON: Again your pardon, Your Erectivity, but such human heartlessness upsets my second stomach. May I retire?

WANG: Go ahead. You Mountain Demons are too squeamish for your own good.

(The MOUNTAIN DEMON leaves, but the sick expression fades from his face as soon as he is out of the Presence. He goes to the room in which we first saw him with YONI ELEPHANT, back in Chapter VII. From under YONI's bed he takes a dildo modeled on his own species, unscrews it, and takes out a radio transmitter.)

MOUNTAIN DEMON: Now if I can get this thing started again, and remember that idiotic code. (Fiddles with the dials.) Corncob Pipe, this is Daddy Gator with the word from the Boss Smokey. Got your ears on? (under his breath) What gibberish!

(Half the screen shifts to KING VULGAR's harem, where YONI ELEPHANT and KESTRELLE are snogging on a divan. Suddenly one of the pillows starts buzzing.)

(continued on p. 8)

GETTING CAUGHT UP

I am once more in contact with Dan Goodman, and he is now on the DAGON-TIME MACHINE mailing list. In a recent letter he had a few comments on these fanzines, to the following points:

The comments by "Maryjane Dexter", which appeared in zEEn #13 and were reprinted in TIME MACHINE #2, were by Jan Evers. This gave the reaction of a senior at Miskatonic University to the remembrances of old grad David Mason, '51. Dan adds; "Since Dave Mason believed in reincarnation, you might consider setting aside a copy for him..."

Anent DAGON #131, Dan recalls: "I remember Algren's 3rd Law as 'Never sleep with anyone whose troubles are worse than your own.' This is a rather more comprehensive statement than the form I remember. But the advice is being given by an old drifter to a young man who is just starting out in that occupation, and I still recall it as 'Never sleep with a woman whose troubles are worse than your own'. I'd check the Urtext, but I cannot recall the book's title. Either way, it is excellent advice.

In DAGON #131 I cited various tyrannical and hierarchial churches which play the roles of villains in s-f novels, running all the way back to Edgar Rice Burroughs' Holy Therns on John Carter's Mars. (Incidental Question: Don't you wish Carter had landed on Bradbury's Mars, or Heinlein's, rather than on Burroughs'?)* The church founded by Nehemiah Scudder and overthrown in If This Goes On, Dan observes, has more similarity to "various 19th-century offshoots of Protestantism; the Mormons being the best-known." The Mormons are also hierarchial, and Heinlein obviously as something against them, since he also parodizes them as the Fosterites in Stranger in a Strange Land. Both the real Mormons and the fictional Fosterites are highly successful business enterprises, thinly disguised as religious sects - a disguise that has subsequently been used to good effect by the Scientologists, the Moonies, and the devotees of Guru Maharaj Ji.

Of the Dorsai novels, Dan says: "Seems to me that Dickson considers the various splinter groups of humanity equally valid. He seems to think most highly of the Exotics and likes the Dorsai best; but he considers all the rest worthy of respect. Apparently, they HAD to be allowed to splinter, and occupy different worlds and systems; they will then, in future, be blended together again." This is probably analogous to the way in which the homogenizing tendencies of American society are blending together the heirs of English Puritans, African slaves, Italian and Irish peasants, Jewish scholars and artisans, and refugee aristocracies from Cuba to Vietnam. The villain in Soldier, Ask Not thinks that the Friendlies can be eliminated from the recombination, and their characteristics thus eliminated from humanity. This, mind you, is the character that Dickson regards as the villain; I know people who would see this ambition as heroic.

Several people have informed me that Dickson is of Scottish-Canadian ancestry, which certainly means that a religion very like the Friendlies' is in his background at no great distance.

"One classic example of tuckerization," Dan writes, "is Larry Niven's 'What Can You Say About Chocolate-Covered Manhole Covers?' The divorce party with which it starts out is an actual event; and all the characters are then-LASFSians who were present. So it makes a nice test of some-

* - "Once there was the People, Zenna gave them birth.
Once there was the People, and they all hid out on Earth.
Earth, they thought, would make them all wear yellow stars.
But they really came from Ray Bradbury's Mars."

one's familiarity with LASFS circa 1971. The only disguise is inadvertent--one character described as having a Midwestern drawl actually has a north Florida (just south of Georgia) accent, because Niven isn't that good on accents."

Tuckerizing LASFS is not new. About 8 or 9 years ago, a LASFS member wrote, under a pseudonym, a soft-core porn novel entitled Lesbo Lodge. Not only were individual members thinly disguised in it, but the whole organization appeared as the "Los Angeles Fantasy Fiction Society", or "LAFSS".

At about the same time there appeared a series of about 15 paperbacks from the San Diego porn house that various used such names as "Corinth" and "Leisure" and "Greenleaf", describing the adventures of "Secret Agent 0008". These James Bond parodies were written by "Clyde Allison", which Dame Rumor whispered to be the pen name of a LASFS member named John Jardine. Since then, of course, many s-f writers have done porn books under their own names - Barry Malzberg, Philip Jose Farmer, David Mason, etc.

Dan also confirms my comments on Dungeons & Dragons, saying, "D & D has been bringing people into LASFS, including a higher proportion of females than most new groups include." Not all fandoms are as enthusiastic about D&D; its play is rigorously forbidden in that organization which I shall always think of as the Society for Creative Aelfgar.

With regard to the "Busted Rocket" tales now being reprinted in TIME MACHINE, Dan writes that he did one once, but would rather it not be reprinted. I don't myself even recall it. Joe Vlick is Dan's creation; "According to a recent New Scientist, there were still pockets of Homo erectus in Australia circa 9,000 BC; in the Kow Swamp area. So it's not all that improbable that Australia could've developed a separate human species. Ironically, the problem is the opposite of the one which probably kept Australia from developing a native civilization. It was too easily reached for the first comers to avoid being overwhelmed by later arrivals; and too isolated to get enough cultural influence from more advanced areas before it was invaded by Europeans.

"Offhand, I suspect that a native Australian civilization would have arisen in the smallish rain-forest area; and would have found it simpler to expand to New Guinea (and perhaps later into Indonesia?) than into the interior."

Dan has some interesting comments about personality interactions in LASFS, which suggest what would have happened if New York fandom had developed as one big club instead of several overlapping ones. "Each room of the clubhouse except the bathroom has its group, which amounts to a club in its own right by NYC standards. There are people never found except in the kitchen, or the library." This is

I wonder what groups would meet where if New York fandom had developed this way. Fanoclasts would meet in O At
the duper room, putting together an apa at the last minute. P Great
FISTFA would meet in the kitchen. Lunarians would E Intervals
be relegated to the basement by general agreement so their R This
procedural wrangles wouldn't bother anyone else. ESFA A Appears
would meet on the roof so they could check conjunctions of T To
planets and actually watch Jupiter enter the Virgin. As I Inflame
the most intellectual group, any remaining Futurians could O Optic
meet in the library. The Katz group could meet in the en- N Nerves
try, since they always leave early anyhow. Peripheral
fandoms could be included. The SCA would go into the back # 744
yard where they could bash each other's ribs with rattan
broadswords. D&D fans could run a real dungeon in the basement, treating the Lunarians as Chaotic Near-Humans. Diplomacy players needn't

be assigned a particular room, since they'll go all over the house to negotiate anyhow, but since they eat like starved Huns the game board can go on the table next to the refreshments. And of course the Synergy people can go to the bedrooms.

"There are other clubs in this area," Dan concludes, "enough to keep LA fandom going quite well if LASES were to suddenly collapse." (Bite your typewriter.) "Some are composed of old LASFSians; others are college or highschool groups. The Long Beach club started because of the gas shortage; it has continued recently as a gathering-place for fans who are also Libertarians."

We have a few of them around here too, but they've all been confined in a student club at NYU where they can do harm only to one another. I once had to keep one of these confirmed Libertarians from liberating the wine at a convention party.

*

Fanno Domini #33 (Singer): Since Dick Trtek may not get his copy of the 51st Distribution in time to answer your question, I'll do it - he is indeed of Czech ancestry. No other people, not even the British-type English, are so secure in the conviction that the letter "r" is a vowel.

I regard psychiatry as an art only in the same sense that the great projects of John Worrall Keeley, Charles Ponzi, and Bernie Cornfeld were arts. In the 18th century there was animal magnetism; in the 19th, homeopathy; in the 20th, psychiatry. The 21st will no doubt laugh at all of these, and go in for comparable idiocies of its own.

Slow Boat #2 (MacGregor): The poem "A Fable" was clever, but you seem unaware of the literary background of Peter and Harriet, or why Peter should be a mouse while a Frog bears fleurs de lis.

Those Al Hartley Archies are on sale in at least three Jesus Freak bookshops in Manhattan, and I get them and the works of Jack Chick (see DAGON #123) for the San Francisco Academy of Comic Art, of which I have the honor to be a director. At SFACA they will go cheek-by-jowl with 80-year-old Katzenjammer Kids strips, and Steve Stiles eight-pagers.

While Al Hartley is preaching the word of Jesus at Riverdale High School, the present Archie books have introduced a character called 'Sabrina, the Teen-Age Witch'. If the Witches decide to defend themselves in this medium, they could do Hartley-type books showing Sabrina organizing Archie, Veronica, Betty, Jughead, et al. into a Coven and doing all the pleasant things Witches are said to do in Covens. Reggie, of course, would try to fink on the Coven to those two Chick busybodies, the Crusaders, and the Coven would sacrifice Reggie on the next Walpurgisnacht.

When several people including Busby deliver their long overdue apologies to Walter and Marion Breen, I will consider the matter closed. Not before.

The only reason that the Moonies are getting away with it is that any law framed to curb them would have to be framed in language that would also hit various religions that each claim the allegiance of several million Americans. Not that this wouldn't be a good idea, but alas, you'd never get it through any legislative body.

CSICPOP, and my article on it in DAGON #127, take the position "Let's show these charlatans that they can't put anything over on us!" for a very good reason. On the preferable side of the funny farm fence, this is the only attitude to take towards astrology, mind-reading, calling up the dead, psych(ot)ic phenomena, and the other subjects coming under CSICPOP's purview. Your own statement that belief in these things is a "feeling...largely indefensible in terms of logic" is perfectly accurate.

That 'bomb scare' of yours had some rather ugly roots - I suggest you look into whatever it was in your own outlooks that led you to freak out. We've had a few bombs planted in department stores in the past couple of weeks, and the police and the media were in a cold blue funk that stretched all the way from the Puerto Rican National Liberation Front to the Jewish Defense League. Well, the culprit was arrested last Monday, and turned out to be a completely non-political 13-year-old girl with static in her attic.

Fan o' Fanoclast (Indick): By all means reprint Dave Mason's thing from TIME MACHINE #1. You might send a copy, as I've done, to his widow: Katherine MacLean, 30 Day South Portland, Maine 04106.

Your comments on the Olivier version of Henry V reminds me of the film version of Shaw's Major Barbara. In the play, the arms manufacturer Undershaft was a typically Shavian enlightened villain. The film puts him in a better light, since it was made at a time when Great Britain had desperate need of arms manufacturers.

As for Brecht's Threepenny Opera, no version could possibly come up to John Gay's original Beggar's Opera or its little-known sequel Polly. Both Gay and Brecht made the same points in comparing the Establishments of their times to thieves, but Gay did it without being so damnably preachy. Gay's version is fun to watch (Olivier once did it as a film), but Brecht's is about as interesting as a Marxist tract.

TIME MACHINE #5 (me): Coincidentally with this reprinted review of Stranger in a Strange Land, Al Nofi has just reviewed in EMPIRE #47 Karl Wurf's To Serve Man, an anthropophagist's cookbook recently published by George Scithers' Owlswick Press. (Place your orders for free copies of EMPIRE #47, and I'll deliver them at the next meeting.)

Rikki Tiki Tavi #7 (Leibowitz): I've never seen the point of trying to talk mundanes into reading and liking s-f. Either you do or you don't, which is nothing that can be changed by missionary work.

They just cancelled the EE train - now what'll you do?

Quackbot #27 (Shiffman): If there was ever a 14th month in the year in the Jewish calendar, it was before Hillel II regularized it in the 4th century CE. Since then, it's used the astronomical fact that 235 lunar months is very nearly equal to 19 solar years - 12 years of 12 months each and 7 years of 13 months each.

There was an earlier rabbi than Israel Baal-Shem who thought, like him, that "anyone could come close to the Lord...and that one didn't even have to be particularly learned or educated to be righteous." Fellow name of Jesus. Try that one out on your friendly neighborhood Hasid.

The Sound of One Finger Pointing #12 (Geraud): "Raid 'kills bugs dead' - is there any other way to kill them?" Yes, assuming that the copy-writer's native language was that South Seas pidgin, Beche-de-mer. In Beche-de-mer, "kill" merely means "strike" or "stab". A fatal consequence is described as "kill'm-dead-finish".

There exists a translation of the Bible in Beche-de-mer. In it, the Lord's Prayer begins "Big-fella walk along sky".

Am I Episcopalian? I vaguely recall being sprinkled by their ritual at about the age of six, but my parents usually attended the nearest Protestant church whose pastor they could stand. From an esthetic standpoint I prefer Jewish services, or those of extremely "Low" Protestant sects. Esthetically, I see Roman Catholicism among religions as I see Victorian Gothic among styles of architecture.

Quibble #61 (Feder): The 'sameness' extends outside America. Towns in Quebec are duplicates of American towns save for the language, and they say Europe and Japan are getting that way as well.

Negatively curved 'spheres' ($x^2 - y^2 - z^2 = a^2$) don't have edges that join - that's the whole point of being negatively curved.

Real radio hams know what they're doing - and, thanks to the lobbying by manufacturers of cheap electronic equipment, hands are being taken away from the hams and given to the CB gang so they can say "Ten-four, good buddy" on more frequencies. Hams seem to have little conversation outside their equipment, but there at least they know what they're talking about, Tune 'em in sometime, & compare with the CB crowd.

Dreaming Hotel #9 (Kaufman): Steve Whitmore, a local war-gaming fan, was head of star security during that Trekkie con over Labor Day weekend. It was his job to keep Trekkies from raping William Shatner. Shatner later said that these arrangements had gone more smoothly than at any other Star Trek con he'd attended - I wonder whether he was bragging or complaining.

A Complete Guide to Silverlock is yet to be published. But for that matter, the James Branch Cabell fans haven't even worked out all the obscure mythological and historical references that he put into his numerous novels.

Quibble #62 (Feder): Most of the comments I've heard on Big MAC confirm the anticipations I put into earlier issues of DAGON.

Thanks for the kind Distribution Comments.

I agree with you on ToC's. What real difficulty could there be in placing the ToC for Distribution #N into Distribution #N+1?

Don't take those "two physicists at Stanford" as having found "evidence quite supportive of 'distant viewing...and precognition'". I know one of them, Russell Targ, and his eyesight is so bad that you could put over anything on him. A few years ago, before Geller was exposed as a fraud, Targ was one of Geller's chief advocates. Targ seems to have a "need to believe". A study of this sort of thing would be far more useful than the transitory media coverage given to each successive 'psionic' charlatan.

Fun City #13 (Hoylman): I also find the notion of "genetic identicals" very unlikely, given the laws of statistics. If you want to be consistent, I suppose you could hypothesize some law of cross-time travel, which manages to get the same people born in different time-tracks. There are, in the literature, alternate worlds with more advanced technologies than ours. You'll find them in Sam Merwin's Three Faces of Time, Dave Mason's The Shores of Tomorrow, and (to some extent) in Keith Laumer's Brion Bayard novels.

"A day on which two people of international reputation died unconnected deaths" was of course 4 July 1826, the fiftieth anniversary of the declaration of American independence, and the two people were former Presidents Adams and Jefferson. Now - on what day were born two people who both made basic revisions in the fields that they chose as careers, and as a result are both deeply respected and bitterly hated to this day. Hint: One liberated the body; the other, the mind.

Out in the regions where the Appaloosa and closely related Nez Perce breeds of horse originated, both are called "Spotty-Ass" after their most distinguishing physical characteristic. Some believe that the Spotty-Ass is a native American horse, though palaeontologists generally deny that such a thing exists.

I Don't Really Believe This Special Announcement (Shorter): I am sorry, but not really surprised, to hear this.

Fizbak #3 (Wood): Next door to the Busted Rocket is a Fukien restaurant that serves the best Rippley Squid I ever ate. Try it. You can't miss the place - over the door is a sign: "Best Fukien Restaurant in Town".

Vaudeville Lines #30 (Lipton): One of James Thurber's Fables for Our Time is about a moth who, against the advice of all his friends and relations, keeps trying to fly into a star instead of zishing himself in candles and lamps like a respectable moth. He is still trying to fly to his star, long after all his kinfolk are dead. "Who flies afar from this sphere of sorrow, is here today - and here tomorrow." Long live escapism!

Slow Boat #3 (MacGregor): A Greek-Japanese restaurant? That's even wilder than the place that used to be in Morningside Heights - "Forlini's Sukiyaki Restaurant - Discotheque Nightly".

To judge from the change in attitudes that has taken place towards it over the past few years, I should judge that the quality of Coors Beer has declined over that period.

I am not of the opinion that an author's works of fiction exist quite apart and aside from his or her personal beliefs. Rudyard Kipling, H. G. Wells, George Bernard Shaw, and Robert Heinlein all had firmly established systems of belief which are illustrated in their fiction. I can readily believe that Heinlein's Starship Trooper,

Dickson's Dorsai series, Harrison's Bill, the Galactic Hero, and Haldeman's The Forever War each expresses the author's personal and deeply felt belief on the subjects of war and the relationship between military and civil society. Furthermore, with regard to these four authors, I am unaware of any information about them which contradicts this hypothesis.

Sometimes an author will assume for the sake of a plot something in which he or she does not believe. Anyone reading de Camp's fiction could possibly assume that he believes in the mythical Atlantis. But his non-fiction would disabuse anyone of this notion.

Poul Anderson is another matter. He is one of the most complex people now writing science-fiction. It is my belief that his message novels are not intended as propaganda in the sense that Heinlein's or Koontz's are, but are his attempts to work out in fiction a problem that is bothering him. Perhaps the best single recent example of this sort of thing is his "The Pugilist" (F&SF, November 1973).

In regard to The Man Who Fell to Earth (and to 2001, about which the same thing was said) I feel that a film should be a complete artistic entity, not requiring reference to the book from which it was taken, or which was taken from it. As an example, the book and film versions of Jaws had many points of difference, particularly in the relationship between the hero and his wife, but both were entities not requiring reference to each other.

Anent that remark back on page 5, the 'last Monday' on which the 13-year-old bomber was picked up was 6 September. She turned out to be black, for what that may mean - nothing, in my opinion.

You may wait a very long time for a reprint of Dave Mason's Devil's Food.

No coincidence about Bob's and my common punch line ("...it's an old joke and, anyway you told it wrong.") - I'd already seen his 'zine before writing mine.

Would it take a dung son to travel The Dark Light Years?

Village Exile #3 (Polak): The Hutterite communes of the upper Midwest are also having trouble with local laws about communal living - and with local retail merchants, who resent that the communes buy direct from wholesale. Israel obviated this problem with the kibbutzim by organizing as a socialist society from the very beginning.

Star Wars sounds, particularly after the discussion in the New York Times of 12 September, like Flash Gordon brought up to the 1970's.

Caster Canadensis #2 (Trtek): Ah, another beaver enthusiast!

And another Coon enthusiast! Plaudits!

Ecotopia suffers from the common defect of utopian novels, which I took up in my review of Stranger in a Strange Land reprinted in TIME MACHINE #5. One of the few which does not is Tom Pease's Pudoria, published by Lyle Stuart in 1961. The hero, an uptight young American Fundamentalist, is precipitated into a hidden kingdom in the inner Andes. He finds that people are thoroughly natural and uninhibited about sex, but think that money and financial transactions are shameful. All financial necessities are referred to by paraphrases, and paraphrases of paraphrases. Buying and selling are done inside enclosed booths whose walls are covered with graffiti. Bankers are the bottom of society, do not mix in polite company, and are politely referred to as 'Necessary Men'. The worst insult you can call anyone is "Mother-swindling son of a banker". This society has just as many contradictions and inconsistencies as our own, but in different directions.

I feel that the ecology movement is a war of the rich against the poor, within our society, and as our society faces others. "I have my automobile (air conditioner) (refrigerator) (television) (imported Chilean lobster tails), but if you ever get one too, it will bring down civilization." And so these people praise the austere and hard-working society of China, which does without these things, and continue to enjoy their benefits here. I'm not sure what they'll do when the Chinese standard of living rises to the point where the Chinese will be able to enjoy these things. Or the Iranians will, if you think a capitalist society is more likely than a socialist one to provide these things to those presently without them.

The Redhead Gives Some Stuff Away! (Indick): I can easily believe that the contribution by Townley is speedwriting - it looks as if he was on speed when he wrote it.

STREAK GORDON (continued from p. 1)

YONI: Sorry, luv, but there's a call for Mother Leadfeather, and I've got to take it.

KESTRELLE: No sweat, hon. See you later. (Exit)

YONI: Daddy Gator, this is Mammoth Cave. Corncob Pipe is busy, but I can do anything you want. You ain't exactly loud and proud, but you'll do. What's the Boss Smokey up to?

MOUNTAIN DEMON (on his half of the screen): Yoni, is that you?

YONI: Sure is, lover, so let's knock off this crummy code. Are you the one who's been getting things to Mother L. from the capital?

MOUNTAIN DEMON: Yes, and this is important. The Flying City is giving Wang so much trouble that he's willing to negotiate. He's just sent a message to the Sky Admiral to get terms that won't make either side look too bad.

YONI: Great! I'll pass the word to King Vulgar, and be back with you as soon as they can get this damn war patched up. How're you doing?

MOUNTAIN DEMON: Wall to wall and treetop tall.

YONI: I can easily believe it. Ten-four, lover.

This issue of DAGON was cut on four different type faces by John Boardman (address below) for the 53rd and therefore apparently Second Anniversary Distribution of APA-Q - which will take place not on the date announced on page 1, but on Thursday 23 September 1976, otherwise known as Erev Erev Rosh ha-Shanah 5737, which is the lesser reason for the change of date. (The greater reason is, of course, Pghlange, to which several Fanoclast members though not myself will be going.)

The 52nd Distribution, I am credibly informed, had 52 pages - a neat coincidence to round out our second year. Actually, thanks to cancellation or postponement of a few Distributions over the past couple of years, I realize that the real second anniversary by calendrical measurement passed some time ago. We have all been assuming that an apa which usually has a Distribution every two weeks must therefore have its second anniversary 52 weeks after its first. 'Tain't so, McGee.

Oh, Streak-O? Yes, he's going to continue for a while. Thought you were rid of him, didn't you?

DAGON #135

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U. S. A.

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My name is John Boardman.

What is Leslie R. King's name?