

IGFATZ # 39January 1966SAPS Mlg # 74

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Stenciled in Vicenza, Italy, on this 17th day of November 1965, by Nancy Rapp. Address unknown, as of this date.

Well, son of a gun, if it isn't another cold rainy day and here I sit stenciling.

It looks as though we won't be back home in time for Xmas after all. Our rotation date was set for Dec 30th but there was a Big Rumor going around that all December rotations had been curtailed and we were all shipping out by December 1st. Big Joke, ha ha. None have been curtailed and to make matters worse all the Dec. rotation orders have been given out except Art's. All he got was a note saying his orders were being sent under separate cover. For Pete's sake! So here we are..half pack; in a quandary about Xmas (does Santa bring the kids' toys here or to grandma's house?); do I unpack most of the clothes and let Stevie wear them so I have to wash and iron them again before we leave here (WHEN do we leave??); will we be here long enough so the tank of gas lasts or do I order another one only to have used it a week before we leave (the gas company won't give any refund on it either, so I'd pay 3000 Lira for a smidgen of gas); when do we take the car to port and ship it to New York because before we do I have to stock up on milk and canned food and baby food etc etc to last the weeks we're still here, plus the time at the hotel and the trip to Milano and the plane flight. Oh, it's an exciting life all righty.

Our forthcoming trip is fraught with all sorts of wild things. Like Stevie's demand that I coherently explain just WHY he can't take his whole room (ceiling and walls included) with him when we move back to the states. "Why do we have to move, non? What's Italy, non? What's the states, non? What's a country, non? I ain't goin' to the states, non because I want to stay here at home, non" And me rushing thru my shots so I could go home by Dec first and then discovering that my smallpox vaccinated arm really didn't have to be riddled with typhoid serum before my vaccination was 8 days old. Chee chhhh...you Old timers can imagine how I grumbled about that since you know my opinion of shots. Besides which, I shampooed and washed all our rugs and carpet over a month ago; washed down all the walls and woodwork and washed and packed away all the curtains and drapes and there are packed trunks and boxes stacked all over the apartment ...full of dishes, vases, clothes, glassware, ceramics etc and it is a messy madhouse around here. Now, if they'd just get on the ball back in the states and send us our orders so's we can get things settled over here.....

Oh yes, for those who haven't heard, we now have another boy. Lil ole Michael John Rapp was born on July 29th. The doctor said he was due Sept 13. So much for THAT army doctor! Anyway, despite the fact that it was touch and go for over 3 hours, Mickey Mouse fooled the doctor and came into the world screaming his head off. He's a fat, healthy, happy little boy. Mana is a fat, relieved, happy-to-be-me-again woman

firmly convinced she doesn't particularly care for army doctors or pregnancy or enovid pills(now, what'll I do!) Stevie's birth was one of the most awesome and soul satisfying experiences in my life. Mickey's birth was one of the most frightening days of my life and I'd like to forget all about it except for the lovely moment when he cried and I knew I had a healthy alive little boy. We're very lucky people...our second child was a determined little cuss who hung on to his spark of life despite the troubled first 3 months in the womb and the last few hours before delivery when it became apparent he might not live long enough to get through a normal, long labor into the world. But he did... and so did mama and we are one lucky family.

November 29th: with the kids both asleep; supper dishes washed and I've broken the spell(or something)! It isn't a cold rainy evening! Its just cold. Cloudy, tho. Maybe it'll snow! Which would be nice...we've already had snow. Last week, for two days & did Stevie love it. He had a ball throwing snow balls into the house. Yeah. Of course, with the snow came the expected questioning. He is so avid about finding the answers to everything...WHY is it snowing? Where does it come from? Why does it have to come down from clouds? etc etc When he asks things I don't know the answers to(gee, I never knew I was so stupid till Steve started asking questions! I know I wasn't overly intelligent, but I didn't know I was so dumb!) I keep telling him he has to learn to read so he can find the answers to his questions at the library and then he can teach me(never mind ME finding the answers at the library...)so now he's trying his best to figure out what letters go together to form specific words. He already knows how to "write" O and P and T and X and B. If you don't believe me, come around sometime and I'll proudly point them out...they're written all over the walls and on my tablecloths! With magic markers, yet.

Well, lets see. What subject next? World affairs. Shudder. People killing each other. People protesting. People burning themselves. That puzzles me(the burnings, I mean). Why is there so much of that? I bet somethings collecting charred people. (doesn't anybody read Fort anymore? Neofen, I mean?)

Which reminds me...speaking of fortcan things. Its THAT time of year again. From the middle of november until about the 3rd week in december there seems to be more plane crashes(commercial ones) and boat sinkings than at any other time of year. Its TRUE! Just think back and then go thru old newspapers and recent newspapers if you don't believe me. Anyway, I hope we don't get our rotation orders till near the end of january. WHY are aerial and naval travel more prone to serious accidents during this time? What natural phw is involved? What happens during this time of year between the autumnal equinox and the winter solistice, to natures laws?

(Just that I'd throw that all in to spark some serious discussion in the next mailing. Real serious and constructive type fanzine that this sapszine ain't. Or something...)

Wonderingly,
Nancy

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M A I L I N G C O M M E N T S

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SPECTATOR: 281 pages??? Geewhiz. Come to think of it, though, it's rather nice to have such a mediumsized mailing. It's a good mlg..probably because it is composed mostly of mlg comments & that fact always tends to make for a more interesting mailing for me. # Bruce Pelz/is a fink! Heheheh,I can say it now that I know he isn't going to be ghod much longer. WRAIBALLARD FOR GHOD OF THE YR!

NUMBER ONE # 4: I kept reading mentions of Bob Dylan and had noticed several 45rpm recordings by him at the PX & this weekend I got reckless and decided to BUY one after reading what you & other have saic about him. I got "Strictly 4th Street" and in a somewhat weird way I rather like it. He has a monotone type voice that usually tends to appeal to me during some of my more peculiar moments in life. Art nearly had a fit listening to this recording (sometimes my musical tastes tend to make him gag anyway,so we'll just overlook his reaction,shall we??).Me, I liked it ..tho I don't believe I will like to listen to it very often.Just when I'm in one of my R7R moods. I goofed. The recording is titled POSITIVELY 4th STREET. Owell..... Dylan will excuse me I guess.After all,remember,please,that I've been in a vaccum,as far as current trends in american musica is concerned, for nearly three years.Why the last time I was in the states the newest names were*URK* Franky Avalon ad nauseam. I've slowly started to LIKE some R&R...at least the type which has some musical rhythm to it. Forinstance,the above mentioned Dylan recording & also one I picked up a few weeks ago by Marianne Faithful entitled"Summer Nights". I'd never even heard of marianne Faithful so I bought it solely because of the way I felt when I saw her name. Heh, now THERE's a good reason for buying a record! Her "Sha-la-la Song" on the flip side is nice too.#Maaaann, I think,like,I been over here too long.Youknow,man ,like I'm even gettin the urge to wear shades and snap my fingers as I bounce along to a sil~~ent~~ rock of drums...ye ahhhhhhh! #Listening to the Italian versions of Rock and Roll is almost too much for any semihuman to bear; the Germans do a fairly good job of R&R (only I don't understand much of the lyrics so that rather spoils it for me) & the other stations we pick up in this area don't carry much R&R since those stations are in poland and chezk. I heard a wild rendition of "Old Man River " on one of the chezk programs.It was sung in english and the male vocalist did an excellent job of translation except for one particular line.." we sweet and strain, bodies all akkin '...". It rather floored me because he kept repeating these two mispronounciations. Rats,he spoiled the song for me because now I'll never be a le to listen to the sadness of the song without grinning. Its all some vile communistic plot and I'm going to contact the John Birch society real soon now....

QUIP # 1: You've got an interesting zine. I should say more, since I did enjoy the whole issue, but I might get real ambitious in a week or two and write you a LOC & I'd hate to repeat myself. I usually do, you know. Except for the times when I contradict myself.

POR QUE? 27 : Doreen Webbert, ma'm, you gas me. You're a N*U*T! # It's good to see a fat porky again. Now if you'll just add illos on every page and bring back the nature page, saps would really be returning to itself! Hmm, that doesn't make sense.. I meant saps would be full of its old flavor. # Oh, you'd like the steaks that Art grills. They taste as good as they smell because he stuffs them full of goodies and we sprinkle onions and onion juice all over them and then the onions fall into the fire and make it smell twice as good and when you bite into all the goodies stuffed inside the meat it really tastes as good as it smelled grilling. Boy am I hungry... # Thanks for keeping your fingers crossed. It worked.. because I am now looking at the world thru greenspeckled glasses. Whenever I feed Michael he always sneezes whenever I'm feeding him greenbeans or peas or spinach. About a year ago I started wearing glasses again and I keep forgetting to take them off (I shouldn't wear them all the time since my eyes tend to get weaker when I do) so most of the time I've got green spots all over my eyeball covers. # Hmmm. Odd. Popcorn usually tastes just as good, to me, as it smells. What bothers me is coffee. It always smells so yummy... but it never tastes good. Rats....

COLLECTOR : Sybil makes a fuss when you stack your mags and books in the livingroom? GOOD for her! How come it works? I fuss about all the mags and books and boxes of such stuff that Art stacks all over this place (You should see our bedroom... it looks like a warehouse or something... boxes stacked all over the floor along three walls) and the crazy bookcases he finds for us. Like in el paso we had one built of beer cartons and an old wooden crate. Here, we have a bookcase that used to be an old army filing rack or cabinet. Painted chinese red, at that. Some day I'm going to tell about the "improvement" Art made on my nice new modern floor lamp, only none of you would ever believe it. It causes all sorts of sideways glances from people when they venture into our livingroom. It also causes all sorts of scowls and hurt looks from me whenever I have to look at that monstrosity. It used to be a floorlamp.. I haven't the vaguest idea what it is NOW. # Gee, you're going to buy another house? I wish we were. Someday we're going to have our own house and none will live in it except us and it'll be so nice to be able to sneeze and not have 10 other people hear it. Only about 18 more months and Art can retire and become a DAC & the months are already starting to drag.

OUTSIDERS : Good grief, what a skinny issue. Whatsamattayou? You a tired old fan already? Naw... you were just too busy to do a BIG issue. After all, look at all the time it takes up just to consume all those bottles of gin and vodka and wine (you lush).

What ever happened to that sweet unspoiled farmboy who spent his spare time milking cows and haying and who had lots of time to do huge zines for saps? I'm not so sure I ought to vote an exfarmboy turned lush into the job as OE of saps. Hurry up and bribe me before I get my ballot....# TV? What's TV???? Oooohhh, pretty soon now I ought to be back in civilization and can see TV and go shopping and best of all I can do without those big transformers for the refrigerator, toaster, vaccumcleaner etc! And hooboy, oh JOY, to be able to plug a lamp into an outlet and not have to check to make sure the 125 volt light bulb is being plugged into the 125 volt outlet and the 220 v bulb into the 220 v outlet. Come to think of it there aren't many 220 v lamps at home, are there?? And porches . and telephones! No more paying bills in thousand lire banknotes. No more paying italian taxes. Hotdawg. Oh yeah..thats something I could fume about for pages and pages...these italians and their nutty taxes. They even had the gall to demand that I pay them 4000 lire radio tax just to listen to their cruddy rock and roll. I'm defying them...I refuse to pay their radio tax since I don't listen to their programs any more. We keep getting nasty letters from Venice demanding we give them their 4000 lire. I keep ignoring them. So far I've won..tho I rather suspect they'll win in the end since they could demand payment before we're allowed to clear post for rotation to the states. I dare 'em! Grrrrr....talk about stopping the gold outflow....our government ought to look into the matter of its military being forced to pay all the state, govt and local taxes in each country. Like , how come? Let's all write to our congressmen! (You think I'm not serious?) # Your talking about the choice sights outside your bathroom window and wondering if you should set up your typer in there reminds me of what Chrys Tackett once said..she gets all her choice ideas for tapes in the bathroom and was wondering about putting their taper in there.... # Hey, don't you dare try to influence the army into sending Art to seattle. Seattle has lots of sweet wonder ul type fans and some really lovely scenery but boyyyyy, your weather is lousey. After spending three years in this part of Italy with its seattle-type weather, I want to go someplace where its dry. Like el paso. I miss my lovely desert. # Hey..there's something Earl Kemp missed in "Why is a Fan"...how many of us sat down front (in the first 3 rows) in the movies when we were young? I always did. Because I couldn't SEE if I didn't. No one figured out that I needed glasses till I was about 14 yrs old. Heck, I thought people and things were normally and naturally fuzzy and blurry...what a shock to discover everything is in focus and clearly defined. Which must explain SOMETHING about the way I think! Anyway, up until five years ago I always sat down in the first three rows (ONE seat in ONE of the first three rows). I'd probably be sitting down front yet, if I still went to movies. I don't go to movies no more. Art Rapp is a FINK..he won't take me to a movie. And he adds ground glass to my wound by cheerfully telling me about all the good movies listed in the DB on post....#Heyyy, I can remember when movies were 10¢! And when service men and women could get in for 28¢! What does that make me, besides OLD? #How come you don't get Bill to do you a cover for your 100th zine?

SIDERIAL 3: Jack Harness is lazier than me and that's going some.

Oh, I LIKE that bacover (Family Group)! Can I have the original, Jack Harness??? Or better yet, would you do an oil of it for me.... I'll even BUY it from you. If you don't want TOO much for it. Those lines are superb! What an artist you are becoming, ole friend...

MISTILY MEANDERING 14: Why BJOTrimble! What a naughty cover! # I'm sorry, Fred, but I'm voting for Wrai. Besides knowing what a mean, ornery, old-fashioned type saps ghod Wrai is, I'm of the opinion you got some screwy idears as set forth in you campaign announcement. I disagree with Wrai's views on cutting back the membership, but he was a darn good OE the other time he held the post & if he is kookie enough to ever want to be OE a second time I think we ought to be nasty enough to let him have the job. Besides, he plays with mice....

YEZIDEE: Hey there, mama-to-be, congratulations! Hooboy, just wait and see what will happen to all your fanac fever once Horton hatches! Why, when Horton starts screaming for his bottle at 10 pm and 2 AM and 6 AM (or if he's like our second son, Michael John: at 10pm; midnite; 2am; 4am; 6am etcetc .Checcccchhhh!) and you've fed him and burped him and diapered him, you can sit there groggyeyed and stencil sapszincs and turning the mimeo crank! Suuure you can! # Shoot...don't worry about getting all big and round...just diet very strictly during the last two months of pregnancy and LOSE weight instead of gaining and you will be wildly joyful over the slimness of yourself after the birth. No fooling...if you can stand to be hungry during the last two months its well worth it. With Steve, I was so starved I used to sit and quietly cry from hunger and nausea but by ghod I lost 9 lbs in 4 days during my 8th month and lost 2 more the last few weeks. It was awful while it lasted...no salt and very little liquids and teeny portions of food but after I delivered I lost close to 30 lbs. Got into a size slacks and dress I hadn't been able to wear since I was 17! With Michael I didn't stick to my diet until the last month and by then I was heading into a good case of toxemia (from salt mostly) and was so bloated I couldn't wear shoes. Twas partly MY fault since I didn't stick to my diet and now I'm STILL regretting it. I've still got so much of the added weight that I picked up during that pregnancy that I'm having trouble getting into my clothes and he's 4 months old today. 'Course all this beer I've been drinking isn't helping matters any...but gads, I need my couple bottles of beer every night! Anyway, don't worry about getting all big and fat ...if you gain just the 18 or 20 lbs allowed, you'll be pleasantly surprised at how skinny you'll be after delivery. You lose a LOT when the baby arrives. Tis difficult to believe, but its true. # You play poker?? Oh BOYYYYYYY....lets get up a game sometime! I am a fanatic about poker and Art won't play ANY card games and after coming from a family that stays up till 2 am playing poker, it has been rather frustrating the past couple years (hey, Art Rapp unfrustrate me! teehee....oops, nancy rapp, watch out or you'll lose out on your determination to do your bit for population control.....). I'm so desperate I've been trying to teach Stevie to play cards. So far he's half-learned WAR (ech) and can recognize most of the cards but he still hasn't gotten to the point where he can

play without hints. And WAR is a far cry from poker. Besides, I'll have to wait till his daddy gives him an allowance since it's no fun winning my OWN money. You ever play Baseball poker? There's a game for you.....

MAINE -IAN 29: (That's a nice unround number..) ..gee, I can remember oldtime maine-iacs with geometrical covers in color, yet. Or was that old spacewarps??? #You men! Here you are bragging to Buz about not gaining weight no matter how much food or beer you drink (I was going to correct that gramatical error by saying "food you eat"..but it makes more sense edcowise the other way, huh?) .It ain't fair! You and old Art Rapp. Art doesn't eat much, but he can sure pack away the beer and he doesn't gain. Well, maybe an inch or two around the waist, but then that's from my cooking. Me, all I have to do is look at food or beer and I can feel the pounds and inches gathering on me. All in the wrong places, too. # Whata you mean by shuddering at the mention of amso pomes? Why, Calvin T Marsden used to write amso pomes once upon a time. Gee, I'm getting old when I can remember old Calvin. # We got the pkbk version of FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING and I can't get past the first couple of pages. Must be something wrong with me..I've been eager to read this book and I've picked it up 3 times now and just can't get lost in it. Owell, I'll try again a few months from now. Right now, all I want to do is read John Macdonald books, it seems. Or Playboy. I also got a copy of Goldfinger...bah! Fleming isn't much of a writer, is he? He's rather good at plots and characters but it all seemed so underdeveloped. The writing is too sketchy to suit me. Prejudiced little rascal, isn't he (Bond)? # Ed Cox, you fink, you. How come you don't let Anne do some illos and better yet, some writings for your sapszine?? #HI ANNE! HI, KEVIN DOLL!

IBEX : Foocy on a NYCon. Also Foocy on a baltimorecon. I hope neither one of you gets it. Let's have an HawaiiCon!

TIS THE SEASON TO BE NASTY #1: Detroit sounds like an interesting place not to live. Except that it is, apparently, no different, politically, than any SMALL town. Sounds like the iditots running Detroit are related to the iditots running the small town in penna where I lived most of my life. That bunch has to be seen and experienced to be believed. They control'd it when I was a kid and they still control it, because the people don't care enough to get rid of them. They are under the impression that all it takes is a ballot voted for the opposition (when there IS any opposition, which ain't often). It takes a lot more than that. The ballot, my friend, doesn't mean what it once meant.

WILD COLONIAL BOY 14: Good heavens, where'd you get that Rotsler wench? #Butbutbutbut, why didn't you hurry on over to Italy?? You've had almost three whole years to come visit us and help put out a one shot. We've been in a fannish bocndock all this time and all those fans traveling to europe for vacations & ons didn't even bother to stop and say hello to us. The Snobs....

POT POURRI # 41(wow!) : I can remember when there was a Pot Pourri # 1! # Some day I want to play chess with you...if you'll let me win. I won a game once when I played with wrai. Neither one of us can figure out how that happened. The only possible explanation is that Wrai was DRUNK(I saw him drinking vodka with my own eyes I saw him & he even introduced me to my first non-taste of vodka)# a Good issue,sir,and tho I enjoyed it tremendously and especially your space stamp hunts and your rowboat adventure I can't think of anything intelligent to say about it(then?). My back hurts..I sprained it lifting Michael this afternoon(think I'm kidding don't you? He weighs 20 lbs and wears a size 2 clothes already and he's only 3½ months old), and I'm sitting here lopsided with stabbing pains all over my spine and side and that's my excuse this week for not being able to think intelligently. I also cut my hair short this week...but I doubt if that has anything to do with it.

PLEASURE UNITS 12: Thank you kindly for the rundown on Dylan etall. I'll have you know that you inspired me to buy one of his recordings at the PX. Pete Seegar you can keep..Bob Dylan I can take.In moderate doses.

SAPRISE! 4 : You must be kidding. You mean preferential treatment should be given people just because they have dark skin? Just because their ancestors were denied such assinilation into society? For heavensake,you MUST be kidding.That's the most assinine statement I've ever heard and if your thinking is typical of the MAJORITY of the modern-revolutionists Iam disillusioned. Why not take your reasoning one step farther and make it a law & then you can also make it law to hire handicapped people on a preferential basis because thru no fault of their own they have been and are still unable to compete fairly on the labor market with nonhandicapped persons. Go farther and not only give the physically handicapped preferential treatment but extend it FIRST to the mentally handicapped since they most certainly can't help the discrimination shown them in hiring practices. Or in society as a whole. Black skin;crippled muscles;crippled minds..none of this is anyone's fault. So explain to me just why black skin should be a sound basis for preferential hiring or anything else just because a person can't help the color of his skin. You are thinking with your emotions(or toes or something ..certainly not your mind) and not your intellect. Because our ancestorswouldn't accept the negro(or chinese or japanese or indian) into their society,this is a reason to peanalize our children?Better we should begin over on a clean slate: equal opportunities for those of EQUAL abilities and intellects. Instead of going from one extreme (complete rejection and subjugation) to the other extreme you favor. You think you'd be doing the negro a favor? I doubt it very much. In your opinion,as expressed in your remark, you seem to be as prejudiced as the ones responsible for most of the negros misery. People are PEOPLE no matter what kind of skin they wear & I'll be damned if I want someone getting a job my sons are qualified for,just because the other guy has black skin and my kids have white.So the negro has felt this all his life,,so that's any reason to subject MY kids to it? Fooley! Let YOUR sins be redeemed;but not via my innocent kids.

SIC, SIC, SIC

by ART RAPP

I'm quite sure this article won't win me any friends, but I have vague hopes that it might influence a few people. It is inspired by the fact that I found the pleasurable pastime of reading the October SAPS mailing all-too-frequently interrupted by the jarring discords of elementary errors in spelling and English.

I'm not objecting to the usage, in fannish writing, of slang, regional idiom, coined-words, or even deliberate violations of accepted usage -- certainly these have a place, if anywhere, in fanzines, particularly those composed on stencil, to which the rules of verbal, rather than formal written English should apply. Furthermore, the haste of fannish publishing schedules, plus the fact that few fans are expert typists, renders inevitable, perhaps, a greater incidence of typographical errors than would be acceptable in letterpress -- or even in a page of typescript sent forth into the mundane world with serious intent. In what follows, I have included nothing that seemed merely the result of a momentary fumble at the keyboard.

Apparantly	Haveing	Polute
Appearant		Portentious
Arguements	Immanent	Pretentions
	Inadmittently	Propritor
Ballotting	Incumbant	
Releived		Rakete
	Licquor	Reminisent
Consecuitive	Loosing	Renactment
	Ludicrously	Repertuory
Delema		
Developement	Numberous	Sensorship
		Siddled
Efficiency	Outspokendly	Siderial
Evidentially		Snearing
	Tyrranical	
Guarentee		Underprivleged
		Unenomical

All of the above words came from the 73d SAPS Mailing. A few of the spelling errors are understandable, if not excusable, on the acknowledged grounds that they are common even in the writing of well-educated people, even those with college degrees in Liberal Arts. This is perhaps more a discredit to the educational standards of our time than to the people who have found the standards so lax that they needed no thorough knowledge of their native language. A few others of the words on the list, however, are so distorted that there is room for doubt about just what the writer intended them to represent. In their respective contexts, for example, efficiency could mean either efficacy or efficiency, and portentious either portentous or pretentious, with considerable modification of the meaning.

The moral? Use unfamiliar words with care (and a dictionary), or you may give your readers quite a different impression than you intended. Even when there is no mistaking the meaning, a blatant misspelling convicts the writer of at least carelessness, and at most ignorance, in the eyes of his audience.

I Before E, Except After C...I Before Me, Except After He...I Adore Me, Except...

Before we proceed, time out for a couple of parenthetical explanations: Don't develop a Hurt Look if you spot a gem from your SAPSzine in either what appears on the preceding page, or in what follows. I started gathering material for this article with the noble intention of screening the entire mailing. I got about 80% through before Nancy and Stevie managed to shuffle the stack of zines and thus destroy my knowledge of which I'd proofread and which I hadn't. But since, in the 80% I did peruse for the purpose of finding errors, not a one escaped without a contribution to this discussion, I feel it quite logical to assume that a 100% representation of the zines in the mailing would have been the result. Of course, it took a great deal more searching in some zines than in others: Buz, Karen, John Berry, Ed Meskys, you led me a merry chase; I had to reread your zines and then nitpick to drum up a quarrel with you. The same goes for Puce, come to think of it. But in most cases, it was easy...

Furthermore, I assume that by this time a number of readers are mumbling words to the effect that, who does this guy think he is, telling us what's wrong with our writing? Looky here, people, I'm no academic expert on the English language. I had two years of college English, some fifteen years ago. Come to think of it, those courses weren't of the grammar-and-usage variety, either (I scored high enough on the entrance exams to be excused from the freshman courses repeating what should have been learned in highschool, so the courses I took were in writing and the study of literature, rather than the mechanics of the language.) On the other hand, I've been working intermittently for about a quarter of a century as a typist, stenographer, or clerical administrator. I didn't officially hold these jobs a large part of that time -- they were little extra duties I was called upon to perform because I could do them better than anyone else around -- including the people who were assigned to such jobs. And one reason why I am favored for these little tasks is that when I run across a mistake in the material I'm typing, I automatically correct it, whether the writer is a second lieutenant or a two-star general. (The generals are easier to deal with, usually: they are used to depending on experts in technical matters. It is the newly-commissioned officer who thinks that he knows all about everything.)

Of course, if I work regularly for anyone who objects to any change in his sacred words between manuscript and typescript, I yield (not without an inward shudder) to his preferences, and from then on, anything he gives me to type goes on paper exactly as written. And since most senior officers in today's Army are by no means ignorant, I have on several occasions subsequently had the sadistic pleasure of typing an efficiency report on the cocksure subordinate which mentions that he needs improvement in his ability to express himself in writing.

(Need I point out the obvious moral to those young SAPS among us who may find themselves commissioned in this war, or maybe the next one? Or even those who gain executive rank in civilian life? -- Don't underestimate the value of your assistants -- no one is likely to do anything deliberately designed to make you look like a fool -- but if they don't give a damn about you, more times than you imagine they'll stand idly by and let you proceed to make yourself look like a fool.)

We wandered far off the track, there...let's get back to the language problem. Let's get into the grammatical-error field. For example:

So far the Nycon campaign is one of reaction -- we know nothing about their hotel, program ideas...

Their being a pronoun, it needs an antecedent. The only possibility in the foregoing sentence is Nycon campaign. The Nycon campaign's hotel? Uh-uh. In place of their use something like the committee's, or NY fandom's.

...I don't remember him playing...

playing is a verb used as a noun (him playing, the object of remember). This is known as a gerund, and a good rule to remember is that gerunds take the possessive case. The phrase should read: ...I don't remember his playing...

It is not New York, the tourist scalper's paradise, where 99% of all possible east coast attendees have been and viewed over and over.

Where they have been, but which they have viewed. The parallel clauses are incompatible, and the verb where will not serve for both. A better construction might be: which 99%...have visited and viewed...

In all but the irresponsibility of writing he is like most fans -- but the point is, ours have the same qualification...

The writer did not intend to imply that our fans are, like he, irresponsible. What he means is that ours, too, are like most fans. The trouble here is that same can be taken to refer to more than one term which precedes it.

This season is the poorest yet with only the re-runs of previous years' shows offering anything worth while if you want to look at it again.

It should be plural (them) to agree with the plural antecedent, re-runs.

BSFS has grown tremendously since its original 5-member start.

This is technically (and fascinatingly) known as a pleonasm -- using more words than are necessary to convey the sense. Redundancy, if you would like a more familiar term. Either omit original, or change the phrase to read original 5 members.

Whoever was chairing the meeting at this point asked if anyone had anything to say.

Should be whoever. If you have doubts, in cases like this, of which is correct, try substituting he and him for who(ever) and whom(ever); I'm quite sure no one would be likely to write: him was chairing the meeting. What happened here is that the writer used the (wrong) objective case instead of the nominative -- but you don't need to know that if you use the he-him test to select the correct case.

Out of this folk room came an increased awareness of the existence of folk music by teenagers.

The writer means, not the teenagers' music, but their awareness. by teenagers should be moved from the end of the sentence to a position between awareness and of.

Many of the British rock singers, however, expressed considerable interest and appreciation for folk...

Another example of non-parallel phrases hung on the verb expressed. The cure is simple: insert in after interest.

...the general consensus was negative...

Many writers have a difficult time using consensus correctly. However, in most cases they goof by writing consensus of opinion, forgetting that the word means general or majority opinion. General consensus, consequently, is a pleonasm, tho not a particularly heinous offense.

The Goon Show was a BBC radio show several years ago, featuring incredible puns, logic, Harry Secombe, Spike Milligan, and Peter Sellers.

The above could possibly be defended on the grounds that the puns, the logic, and the three actors were all incredible. More likely, however, the writer's intended meaning would be correctly expressed by inserting and after puns.

The result will be due during the early part of March.

The above (future-perfect tense, I think: I told you I was no expert on the technicalities) would be proper in answer to a question such as: If I undertake this task, when must it be completed? In the present example, however, the result does not depend on a future action but a past one, so that it is due during the early part of March. (Congratulations and/or commiserations, Bruce & Diane. Twenty years from now you'll still be wondering which is appropriate).

...a bit exacting in it's own way.

The only time you put an apostrophe in its is when the letters are serving as a contraction of it is. I suppose if the possessive of he were hes instead of his, people would be erroneously writing he's, too.

...and to make the mailings smaller as there're less people to produce for it.

This is not strictly an error: merely a violation of accepted usage (cf: American-English Usage by Margaret Nicholson, based on Fowler's Modern English Usage -- Signet Q²63⁷, 95¢ and invaluable to anyone who takes his grammar seriously). Less is, in modern usage, restricted to the meaning a smaller amount of. Modifying people, the preferred term would be fewer. (I think the contraction there're would get raised eyebrows from most English instructors, too; but tho I personally think it is awkward, I concede the writer the right to use it. As I said several pages ago, it's only mistakes I'm crusading against at the moment.)

It won't guarantee them of getting a mailing...

Another gerund needing its possessive -- as you should have realized before reading this if you absorbed the second explanation (first example) on the preceding page.

...who has been packed off at various military schools by his forceful father...

I doubt the author would have blundered if he were speaking the above sentence rather than writing it. There's some sort of short-circuit between the verbalization centers in the brain and the muscles in the fingers (what do you

mean, you don't use your finger-muscles in writing: longhand, that is, not typing?) Sure, I know the penmanship textbooks all say use your wrist, but did you ever see anyone DO it?) At any rate, somewhere between impulse and action, every writer has time to think of alternative ways to express his thoughts, and too many of them yield to the impulse. The unfortunate subject of the example above could have been packed off at those schools by the headmasters thereof, but I am sure his forceful father packed him off to the schools.

The song was so strong that attempts to ban it for the radio were made.

You ban something for the people who want it banned, but you ban it from places it might otherwise appear.

I think I'll finish this piece off by writing a few paragraphs about...

Finish as a synonym for complete is perfectly legitimate, the unfortunate (why have two words with the same meaning: ideally, finish would be restricted to the meaning: complete by adding surface lustre to). However, finish off has an entirely different meaning: kill. Whether or not this was the effect of his few paragraphs, I'm sure it wasn't the writer's intent.

Perhaps the very finest thing Bob Dylan has ever written.

Pleonasm. Strike out either one of the underlined words. (And, in THAT remark, strike out either or one!)

Very little of the lyrics make any sense...

Little is singular; make plural. Change one or the other (few, makes) to make the subject and verb agree in number.

...in there rhymes...

There means in that place; their means belonging to them. The writer made the wrong choice.

Cavanagh on his hand suppressed the police report...

Landing between two stools, the writer missed both idioms: for his part and on the other hand.

I intended to, but as yet have not, reread WELL OF THE UNICORN.

The main portion of the sentence is in past tense, while the parenthetical clause but as yet have not is in past perfect tense. It is only a coincidence that re-read (pron. re-reed) and reread (pron. re-reed) are spelled the same in spite of differing pronunciations.

Now that you are in the veritable center of modern fandom, do you wonder how you survived without the sheer number of fannish contacts in North Carolina?

In North Carolina modifies survived, and should follow that word, since its position at the end of the sentence leads the reader at first glance to assume it modifies number -- giving almost exactly the opposite of the intended meaning.

I am beginning to feel like I did at the last (and I mean last) BSI meeting I went to...

And Winston's taste good, like a cigarette should -- I guess we're fighting a losing battle against the formerly-condemned use of like for as. A wince in taste's good, nevertheless, for those of us who were taught that like means similar to. So remember, like, huh?

Before moving here, fanac was something to be done in spare moments to eat up time.

Dangling participle. The phrase expresses the thought: before I moved here. This demands an I elsewhere in the sentence upon which to hang the participial phrase. ...something I did in spare moments... would be tolerable, but might still necessitate the reader's stopping to figure out who/what was moving. Far better would be: Before moving here, I considered fanac... Unless you have other, subtle or sinister motives, your principal aim as a writer should be to set forth your thoughts in such a way that your readers comprehend your meaning with minimum effort. Involved in this, consequently, is the judicious use of occasional syntax more complicated than a simple declarative sentence -- for the purpose of relieving the monotony and thus helping your audience to maintain their attention. But inadvertent ambiguities are equivalent to coughs in a concert hall: they add nothing to the performance, and ruin the mood of the piece for anyone who is conscious of them.

As best I was able to construct it, Roger had, in the best scientific tradition, had drawn upon his primitive experiments with the aimed CO₂'s.

The writer forgot he'd already written had before his parenthetical phrase, and inadvertently repeated it. The most euphonous sentence results from crossing out the second had.

But how can this be done by such an inoffensive person as me?

...by me would be correct, but the meaning as written is: ...by such an inoffensive person as I am. Therefore, I is the correct word.

...the more subtle pressure of withholding city business has forced many more businesses to substantially increase its Negro work force, regardless of employer preferences.

its should be their to agree with the plural number of the subject.

But now Jerry is coming up against something that he can't do very much about at this time. Retraining of adults and slums.

A comma after adults would help show that retraining applies only to adults. Better would be: retraining of adults and clearing of slums.

Conklin's first few were great but in late years, Merrill's have been dependably excellent time after time.

Time after time adds nothing to the meaning of the sentence, which would be a much more forceful statement without it.

This concludes the grammar lesson for this mailing. Aren't you glad? Perhaps I have gone on to greater than necessary length in detailing your sins of omission and commission. However, with no Spoor in SABS to catch our boobies, I'm afraid all of us have been lax with the language of late. This is because we tend to think we know all about our native tongue and can thus disregard the traditional rules for its use. Now, when Burkhardt Blum gets into SABS, I'm sure he'll write more precise English than any of us, merely because he'll be conscious of the mechanics of the language. This is why speaking a foreign language to its native users is far easier than learning the same language in a classroom -- you can break all sorts of grammatical and pronunciation rules, and the people who use the language are still able to comprehend your meaning; the language teacher, on the other hand, is listening to your mistakes, not your successful usage.

As Nancy immediately pointed out after reading the first couple stencils of this essay, it's a dangerous subject to write about -- I'm sure you will all be slavering with enthusiasm to call to my attention the first subsequent goof I make -- indeed, perhaps you've spotted a few in these pages already.

This article has been composed on-stencil. If she doesn't happen to mention it, I'd like to add that Nancy's zine, this time, for once in an eon, was first-drafted. Go thou and do likewise, if you are error-prone. (Of course, you might claim it doesn't help much in Nancy's case -- but then, obviously, you didn't see the first-draft!)

WHOSE TURNTABLE SPEED IS WAY OFF? DEPARTMENT...

'Desolation Row,' a monumental twelve-minute thing.
--GORDON EKLUND in PLEASURE UNITS #1

'A new Dylan song called 'Desolation Row' which is 11 minutes long...'
-- MIKE McINERNEY in NUMBER ONE #1

The current crop of incendiary protesters (why burn a draft card -- the only way you get one is by first going down to your local Selective Service office and cooperatively filling in a long and complicated form) (I'll pour gasoline on me and set it on fire -- THEN they'll be sorry they didn't pay any attention to me) reminds me that, in four years as an MP guardhouse sergeant, I saw quite a few people whose conscientious objections to military service developed too late to keep them from being part of the military establishment. And it is passing strange that the Jehovah's Witnesses and others whose religion forbade them to salute the flag or wear a uniform were nevertheless most eager, come payday, to place their signatures on that warmongering document, a military payroll -- in fact, a couple of them even demanded to see the IG when they considered their share of the military budget not as adequate as they were entitled to.

It seems odd that every now and then someone tries to hijack an airliner in an attempt to get to the people's paradise of Cuba, yet to date not even the most rabid pacifist has attempted to work his way to North Viet Nam where he could assist his proletarian brothers in their struggle against imperialism. Maybe they don't like the thought of those real bullets that are flying over there -- from EITHER side of the line.

