

KRATOPHANY
KRATOPHANY
KRATOPHANY

two



f. de p.

KRATOPHANY 2

July, 1972

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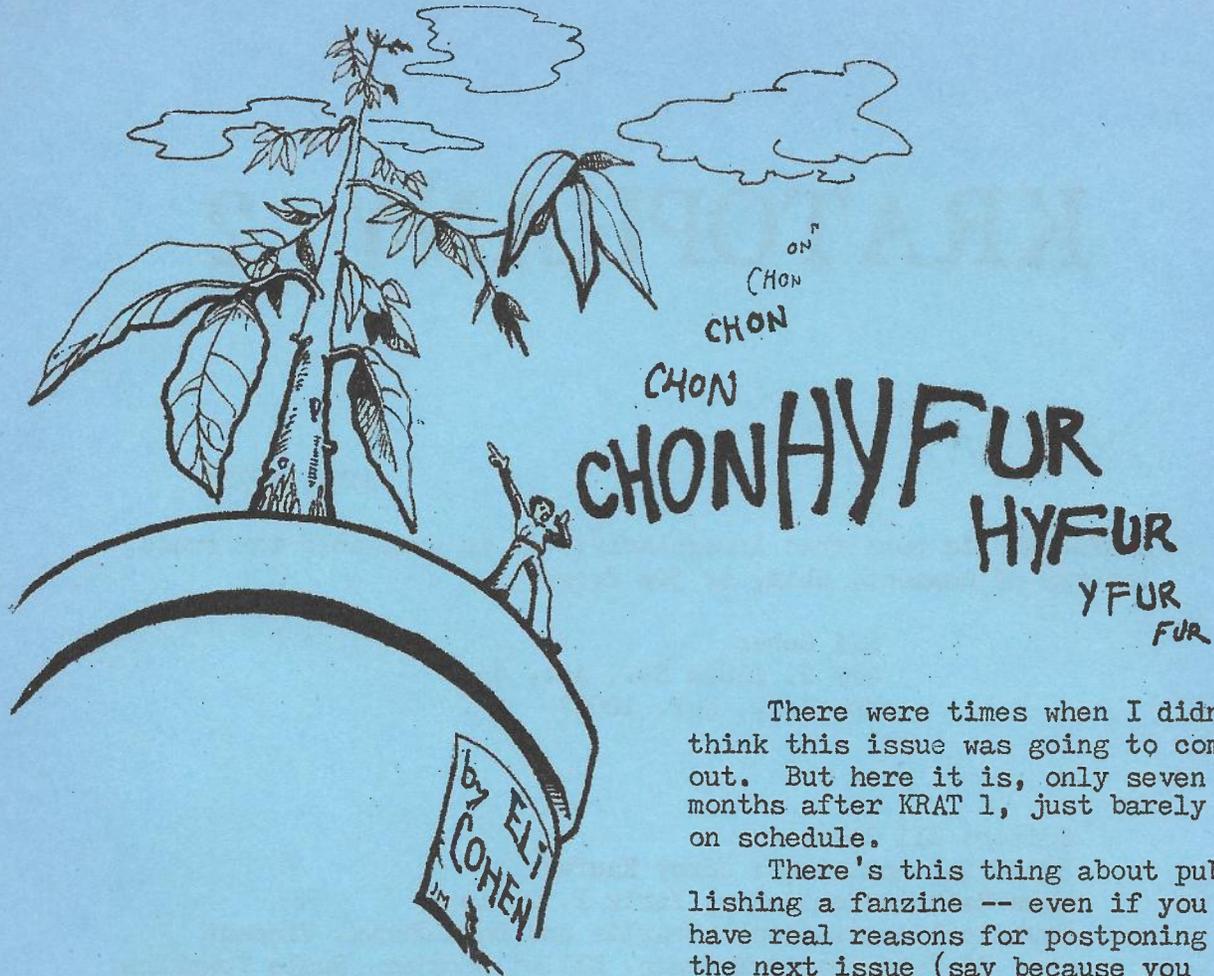
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CONTENTS

Chonhyfur.....	editorial by Eli Cohen	p.2
Wendy and the Yellow King, pt. 2.....	written by Mike Mason drawn by Judy Mitchell	p.5
Branches.....	letter column	p.11
Mithridates, He Died Old.....	column by Janet Kagan	p.16
The Adventures of Grayson Greensward.....	by Yarik P. Thrip	p.18
Advt.....		p.19
Jam Today.....	column by Ginjer Buchanan	p.20

ARTWORK: Vincent Di Fate -- Cover; Judy Mitchell -- p.2, 5-10, 16,19,21; Sandra Miesel -- p.12, 25; Grant Canfield -- p.14, 23; Alexis Gilliland -- p.15; Jim McLeod -- p.27.

This is an official Avocado Pit Publication.



There were times when I didn't think this issue was going to come out. But here it is, only seven months after KRAT 1, just barely on schedule.

There's this thing about publishing a fanzine -- even if you have real reasons for postponing the next issue (say because you have too much other work to do, you are going through severe emotional crises, and the world is falling apart all around you),

there's a steady, nagging pressure that permeates your existence: If you want to relax, a subliminal voice whispers "publish"; if you're working on something, it says "This isn't important -- why don't you do layout, or type a stencil, or write your editorial?" So on top of the positive joy of putting together a magazine, I have a profound sense of relief that it's done, already. Except for paste ups, headings, mimeography, collating, mailing ...

Response to KRAT 1 was very gratifying -- not only were there lots of nice letters with compliments, there were also quite a number of comments on the rise of technological civilizations. I had hoped to get a discussion started, on the off-chance that there were enough people interested in that kind of speculation, and it seems there are. In fact, Wendy and the Yellow King, the second installment of which you'll find on p.5, has an interesting assumption about technological civilizations (though it isn't apparent yet). You see, Mike Mason, who's writing the comic strip, is devising an incredibly complicated background for it. One part of this background is that technology freaks are rare in the galaxy; only a few races, such as Thunderfoot's (you'll meet him in this installment) and ours, have manipulative appendages that enable them to develop technology. This makes Earth people valuable as a resource -- not because of our intelligence, wit, or good humour, but because of our hands.

I think this should make for an interesting galactic society, es-

pecially in conjunction with the Fuzzy monopoly on space travel. (The Fuz-zies, as all of you of course recall from the first installment seven months ago, contacted Earth 40 years before our story begins, and rescued us from famine, disease, and the population explosion, in exchange for "certain perquisites.") (That is a problem with infrequent publication when you're running a serial. Especially when Mike chortles about the things he has planned that won't show up for hundreds of episodes yet ...)

Incidentally, if anyone would like to send Judy Mitchell fanzines, or try to coax artwork from her, her address is: 609 W. 114th St., Apt. 51, New York, N.Y. 10025.

* * * *

An old Zen master always told this fable to unserious students: Late one night a blind man was about to go home after visiting a friend. "Please," he said to his friend, "May I take your lantern with me?"

"Why carry a lantern?" asked his friend. "You won't see any better with it."

"No," said the blind one, "perhaps not. But others will see me better, and not bump into me." So his friend gave the blind man the lantern, which was made of paper on bamboo strips, with a candle inside.

Off went the blind man with the lantern, and before he had gone more than a few yards, Crack! -- someone walked right into him. The blind man was very angry. "Why don't you look out?" he stormed. "Why don't you see this lantern?"

"Why don't you light the candle?" asked the other.

-- from Zen Stories

* * * *

I recently took a course in "Design and Analysis of Experiments," which included some enlightening anecdotes about industrial practices. I found it amusing to discover there is a company that manufactures specially soiled cloth, just for detergent and washing machine tests. I visualize a huge factory, with one room devoted to little kids eating peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, another room full of people carrying leaky fountain pens, maybe a dining room staffed with clumsy waiters -- all working industriously to produce soiled cloth. The mind boggles.

* * * *

"Nature or Tao is not pursuing any purpose, and therefore is not meeting any difficulties."

"But just as soon as we feel that certain things, such as survival, are serious necessities, life becomes problematic in a very special sense quite different from, say, the problems of chess or of science."

-- Alan Watts, Psychotherapy East and West

* * * *

As I've mentioned before, we have a cat named Snap (for Snub Nosed, Avocadorous Pussycat). Now, I usually leave cat stories for Janet Kagan, who has a plethora of them (both cats and stories). But I had a very freaky experience with Snap a while back. Let me preface this by saying that while Snap is adorable and lots of fun (except possibly when she wants to play "fetch the crinkly cellophane" at 5 A.M.), her "catlike grace and dignity" leaves something to be desired. Like when she walks around the bathtub rim while you're taking a shower -- and falls in. Or when she jumps for a chair and misses. Her charm, when she looks up at you with her little gold nose quivering and her eyes all round, lies in

her being small and cute.

But -- one evening I was lying on my back in bed, reading, with my bedlamp shining from behind me. Snap, as is her wont, jumped onto the bed, and walked up my stomach and chest till her face was right in front of mine, folded her paws sphinx-like, and prepared to settle in. And for one brief instant, as the lighting turned her half-closed eyes to brilliant green slits, her face took on a haughty, regal expression, and staring imperiously down at me was the primordial cat-goddess.

The moment passed, and there was Snap, eyes closed, purring gently on my chest. But I know now why the Egyptians worshipped cats.

* * * *

GALAXY for some inexplicable reason, has decided to remove the date of the issue from the magazine's spine. This irritates me for obvious reasons, since my GALAXY's are stored with only the spines visible. The date has been replaced with a list of the issue's authors, which I suppose someone figured would sell more magazines. Except -- the May 1972 GALAXY lists on its spine "Gunn-Macfarlane-Gerrold-Fisher-Rome-Eisenberg." Now I don't know whether the typical buyer would be moved by this list or not; but when we turn the magazine, we note that they left out one minor name: On the cover, in letters half an inch high, it says ISAAC ASIMOV. You figure it out.

* * * *

In Tetsugen's time the holy Buddhist books in Chinese had never been published in Japanese, and Tetsugen thought they should be prepared so for his own countrymen. He planned to have several thousand copies printed from hand-engraved woodblocks, and went from town to town to collect donations so this great work could go ahead. After ten years he had the money needed, and started to have the blocks cut.

Just then the Uji river flooded, and there was famine in the land. Tetsugen took the money he had collected, and bought rice for the starving people. Then he started out to collect his funds again. Whether the donation was a little one or in coins of gold, he was equally grateful. After some years, he had the money again.

Then an epidemic passed over the country. Thousands of families were left without support. So Tetsugen spent all the money he had collected, helping the helpless. When it was all gone, he started collecting it again.

Finally his great project was accomplished, and he died content. Tetsugen's edition of the holy books in Japanese can still be seen. But those who know, say that the first two editions, which have never been seen, far surpass the third.

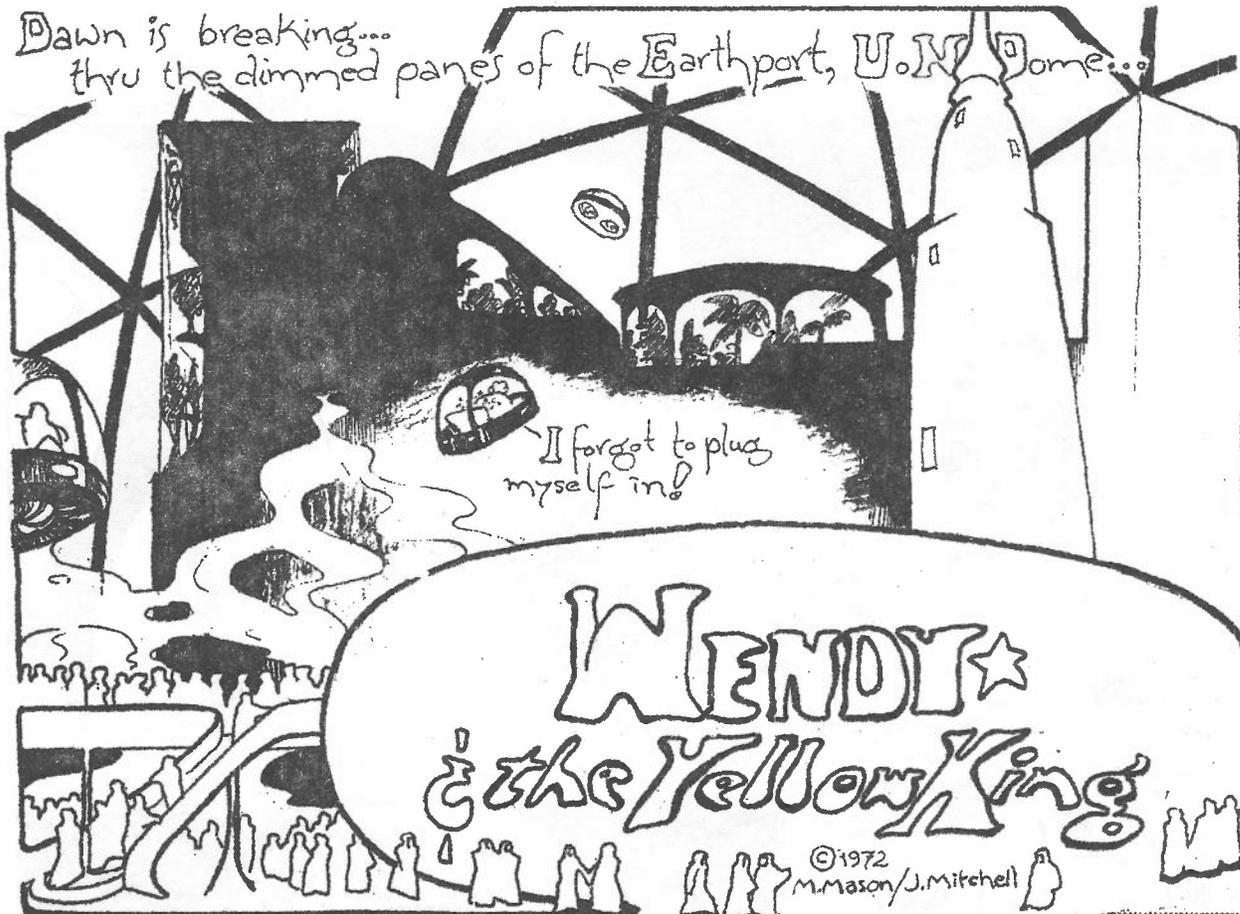
--from Zen Stories

* * * *
Avocado Is Better Than None Dept. For some unexplainable reason, (possibly because our humble abode is called the Avocado Pit), we have become the gurus of avocado fandom. We get

letters asking for advice on avocado growing; people accost me at conventions and ask me to diagnose what's wrong with their plant. Just a few months ago, we got a small box in the mail from Tom Digby. It was a 3 inch cube, and after opening it and tossing out sundry damp paper towels, I discovered a baggie. Inside the baggie was a soggy cloth wrapped around -- you guessed it -- an avocado pit! With a message attached: "Please give me a home." Oh -- alongside the pit were thoughtfully placed three toothpicks. Fortunately,

(continued on p. 22)

Dawn is breaking...
thru the dimmed panes of the Earthport, U.N. Dome...



When we find our heroine, Wendy Wudy, Girl Anthropologist of the Criminal Cultures, speeding thru the Centrally-Guided Traffic patterns, in the company of her mysterious new acquaintance, Bubbles.....

(You should have thought of that before we left the house.)



You'll have to meet my little Entourage, Toots.... your friends are en route also?

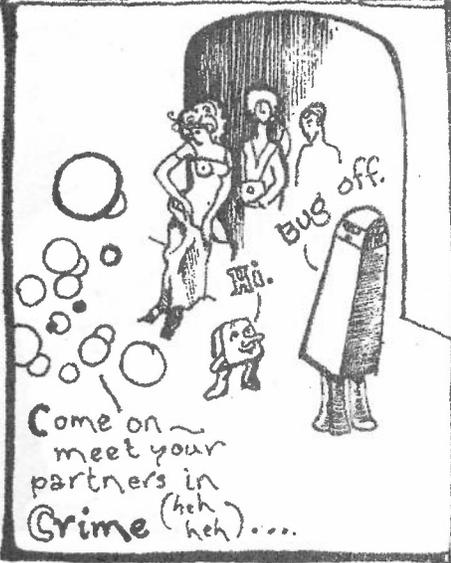
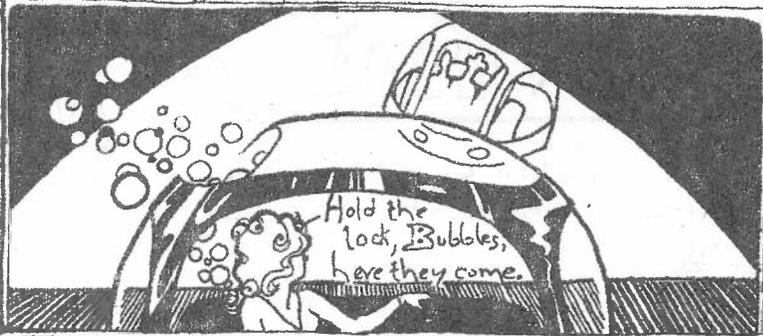
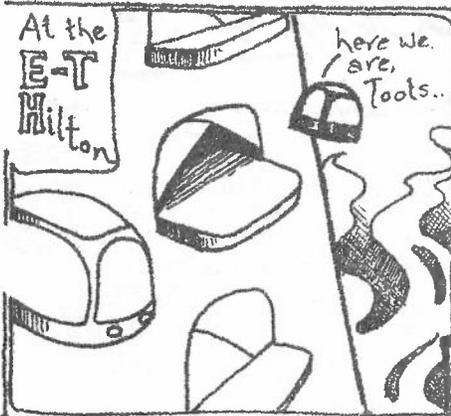
They're coming, all right, but they're not my friends. The Ice Twins aren't friendly.

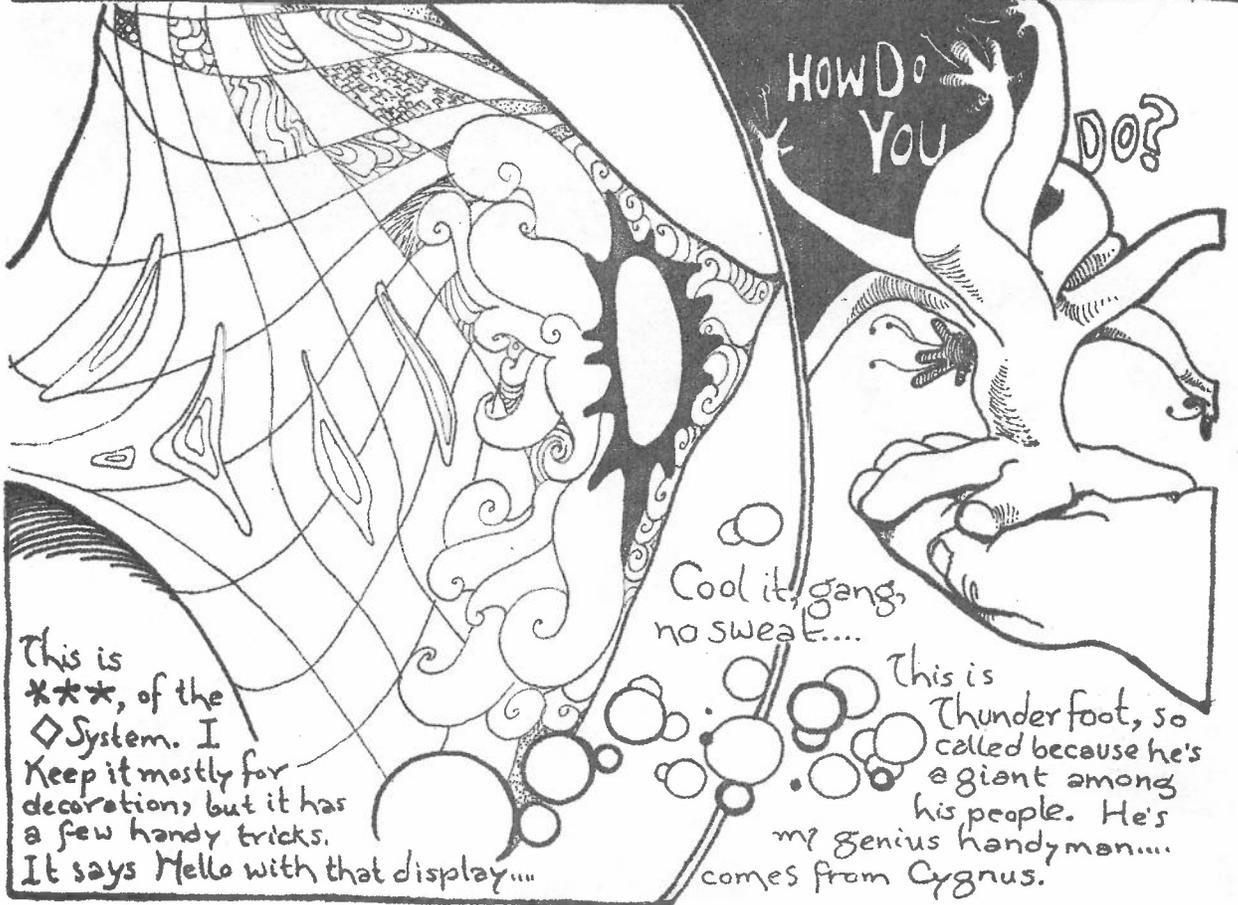
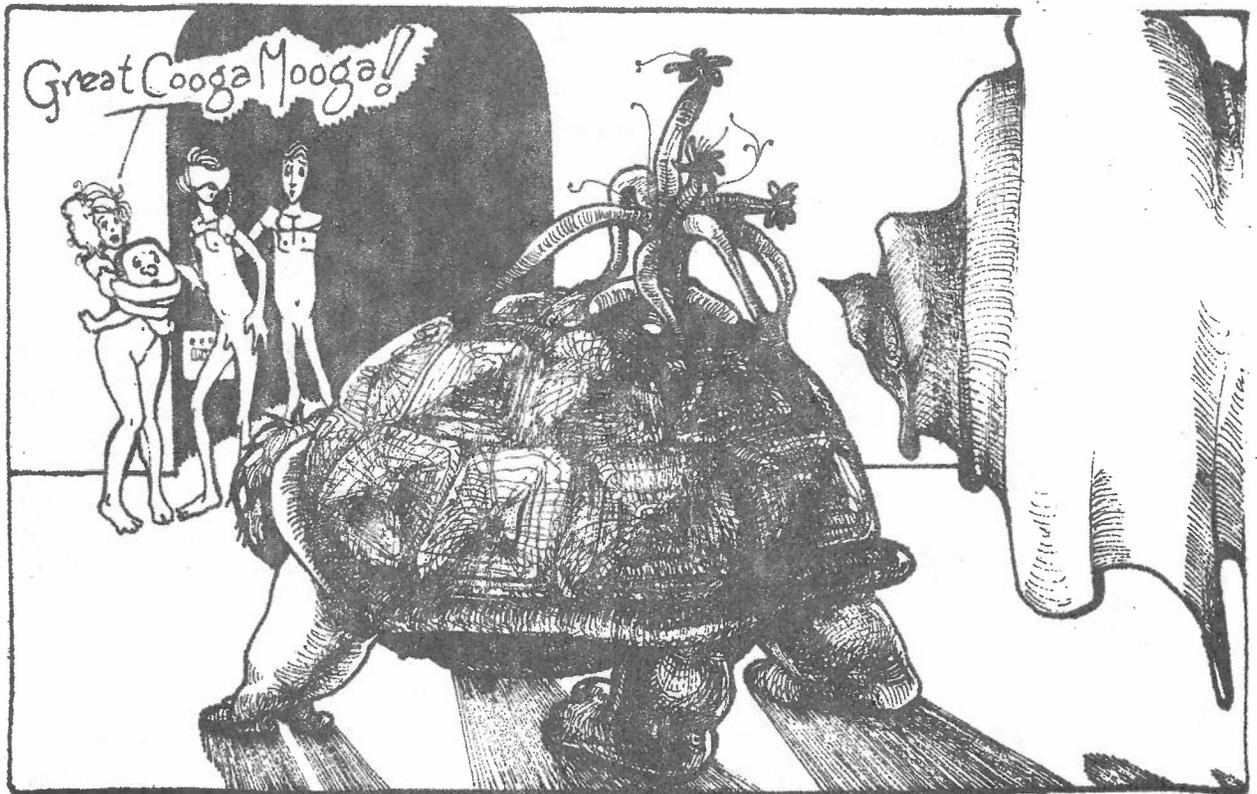
...as well as her Pet Robot, Gyranco.

Also threading the early morning mazes toward the same destination.....



... the eerie Ice Twins and their own rather more daunting companion, Box.



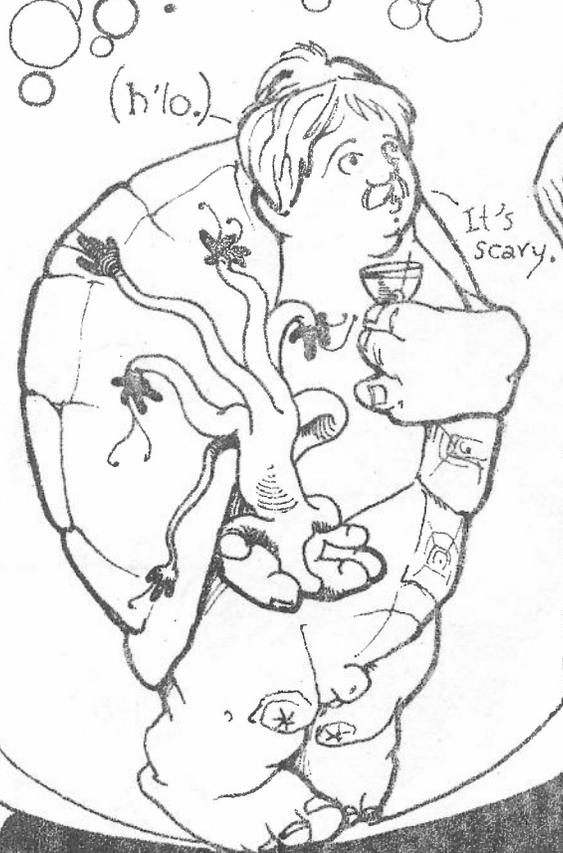


This is ***, of the ♦ System. I Keep it mostly for decorations but it has a few handy tricks. It says Hello with that display....

Cool it, gang, no sweat....

This is Thunder foot, so called because he's a giant among his people. He's my genius handyman.... comes from Cygnus.

...And meet Llewellyn, my heavy-duty boy.
 His first time on Earth; he's shy. Son of
 gene-altered parents indentured by
 Coffin to a Fuzzy job on a high-gravity
 planet... Say hello, Kid.



(h'lo.)

It's scary.

Oh my, how do.
 How fascinating!
 How do you like
 Earth?



Okay..
 Eats?
 Drinks?
 Smokes?
 Sprays?
 Breakfast?

LATER

Now..I suppose you're
 Wondering why
 you're here...

Well, I
 am-



m...an! Grrr... and mmm...m...!!

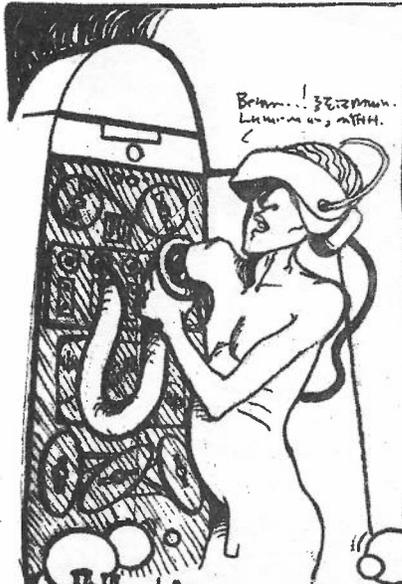
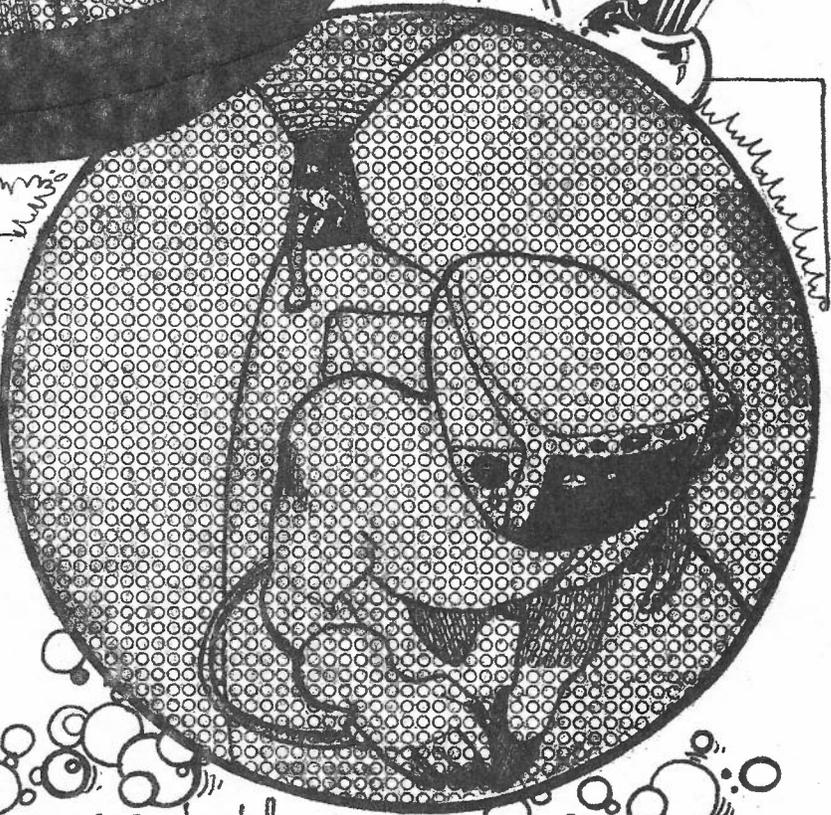
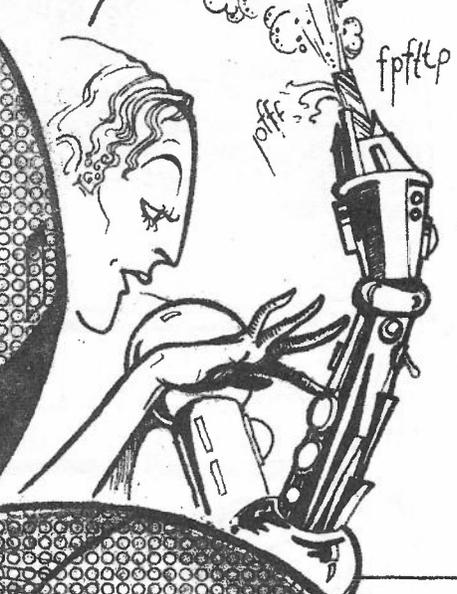
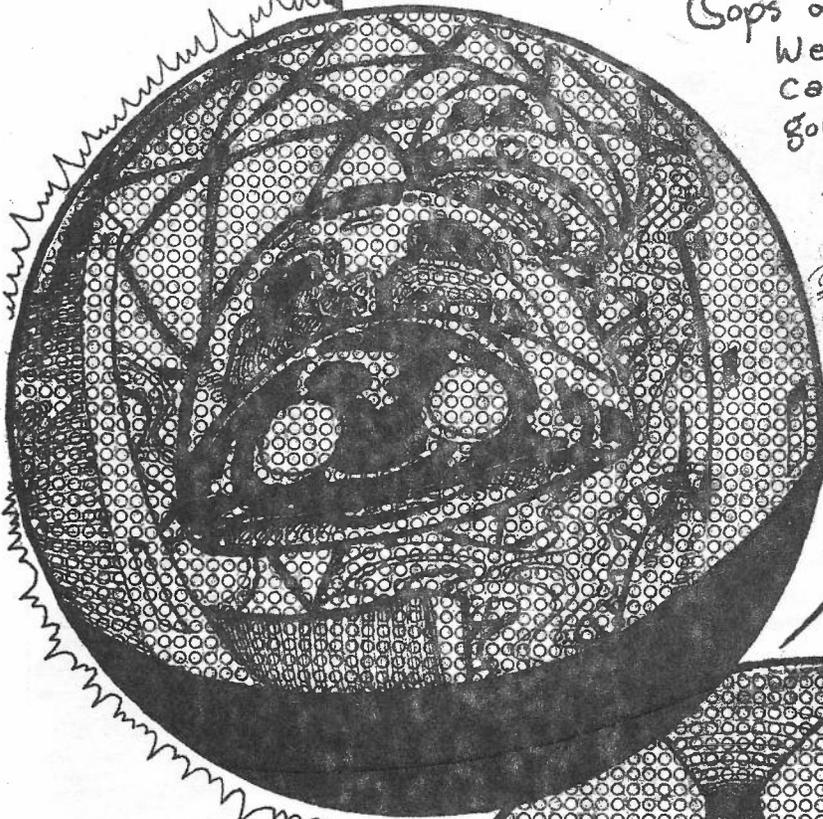
Uhh...



UN Cyborgs
 coming!

We've got Spy Bees out all around here...
Put some Beeviews on the wallscreen, Pollux.
Sops outside.

We can't run and we
can't get caught so we
gotta **erose** 'em.



What're you guys screaming about!
You'll blow my whole cover to the Fed's! Yer off yer nut; No Dice!
I lemme handle this...



Good Morning. U.N. Peacekeepers...
routine check — open at once, please!

Of course, officer...

Ah, peddle it,
Fathead! I can
cover this whole
thing if youse just

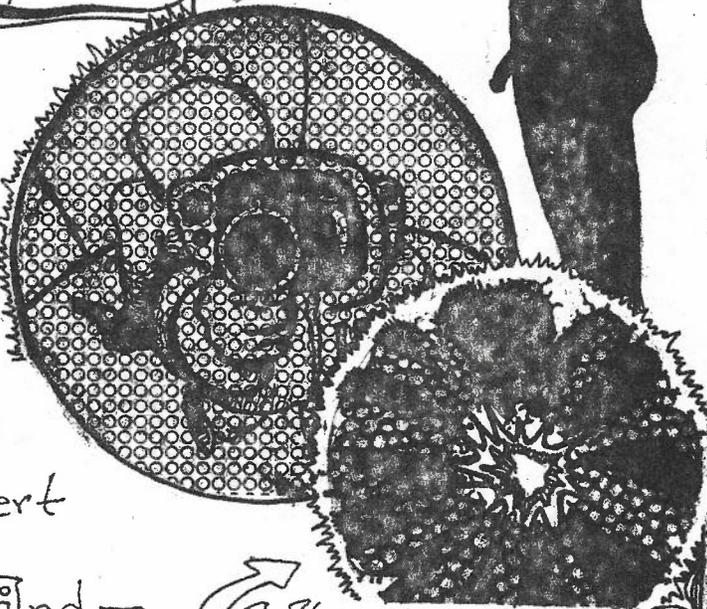
Button yer lip...

I tell you we're here
Illegally! We cancelled a
Zephyrcar out of the
Control System to get here;
Surveillance thinks we're
home. We can't have them
find out!

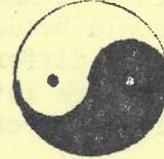


Will the Ice Twins
upset the applecart
before it gets rolling?
How can Bubbles avert
this confrontation?

And —  What about THIS?



BRANCHES



Harry Warner, Jr.
423 Summit Ave.
Hagerstown, Md. 21740

Instant locs are a rarity in Hagerstown. But I thought the situation deserved something special as a reward for the valiant drones of the postal service. The meter stamp on the envelope for

Kratophany is dated January 11 and the fanzine arrived today. ((Jan. 12th)) Unless someone goofed when he set the meter, that's speed which hasn't been known since The Great Train Robbery instituted the series of inhibitions that have been holding up the mails for years. Moreover, there's not a dogeared corner or a splotch of dirt on the envelope. The whole thing must be the outcome of one of those improbable series of coincidences like the potentiality of a penny falling through a dime because all the molecules in both coins just happened to line up in exactly the right fashion to permit the episode.

((This makes painfully obvious just how late this second issue of KRAT is. But such an incredible happening deserves to be recorded. And let me point out that Harry's issue was mailed third class!))

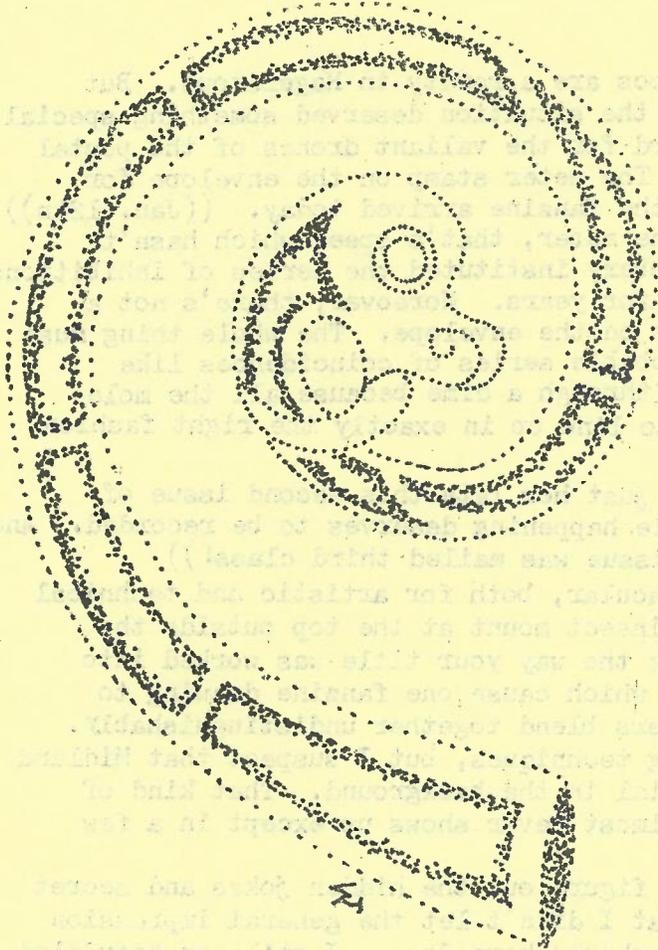
Your cover is absolutely spectacular, both for artistic and technical reasons. Putting the wings of the insect mount at the top outside the frame was a stroke of genius, as was the way your title was worked into the drawing. It's things like that which cause one fanzine drawing to stick in memory while a hundred others blend together undistinguishably. I don't know too much about printing techniques, but I suspect that Midland Press achieved something extra special in the background. That kind of separation of dark grey and black almost never shows up except in a few very expensive art books.

I spent so much time trying to figure out the hidden jokes and secret meanings in Two Skinny Magicians that I didn't let the general impression made by the story permeate me as it should have done. I still am befuddled by Hans Holzhand; the only thing I can make of it is the UCLA basketball coach, Johnny Wooden, and I don't imagine that John Boardman would drag him into this situation.

((That's awfully close. John told me he couldn't really stick anyone with the villain's role, so Hans Holzhand = John Board-man.))

I can think of some planetary situations that might delay indefinitely an advanced technological civilization for intelligent life. One might be an all-water world where the civilization emerges from among sea creatures. The wheel would be almost useless if the race needed to stay close to the surface or at great depths and without the wheel it might be very difficult to attain either intricate technology or the urge to become a technically minded civilization. Or you might think about circumstances on a planet where the intelligent creatures for one reason or another were quite few in numbers and couldn't reproduce rapidly enough to run into overpopulation problems. There goes the main reason for feuds, clans and wars, the necessity to build vehicles to convey stuff to feed big cities, and many other things that have helped to egg on the inventors

and scientists on Earth. And, of course, there are many ways in which "science" could be defined in your closing sentence. Technology and science could be quite different and unrecognizable to us at first glance, if there are planets where intelligent life takes forms other than our multi-celled collections of individuals that mate to reproduce and then die.



((There is the question of whether certain types of life-forms are viable. Multi-celled organisms are a very good way of building up complexity; sex of some sort is necessary to mix genes; a strong reproductive urge would usually be a survival characteristic for a species. I wonder if environments aren't the major variable, rather than the physiology of the species. Hypothesis: All intelligent species have a lot in common; the more similar their environments are, the more they have in common. Or, alternatively: The cultural diversity among intelligent species is not much greater than the cultural diversity that exists among humans.))

Tom Digby
1403 N. Curzon Ave., Apt. 6
Los Angeles, CA 90046

On what causes a science to develop, I wonder about the function of the theology. Now we hear tales of how the medieval church tried to suppress certain theories such as the heliocentric solar system, but I seem

to have also heard that the philosophy of the time worked from the assumption (partly borrowed from the Greeks) that the universe was created as a harmoniously functioning unit, like a marvelously built machine. Would this, as opposed to a conglomeration of gods scurrying around and getting into almost human scandals among themselves, lead one to conclude that it is indeed possible and worth trying to apply mathematics to make some sense out of the universe? Maybe there has to be a strong church that pushes the idea of a Creator who is all-wise and likes to create worlds in accordance with some ideals of perfection, and then this church has to be unable to keep too tight a rein on the culture. And the spiral of science and technology, like the single amoeba that is put into a glass and reproduces unnoticed until it half fills the glass, then almost instantly thereafter completely fills it, may have its beginnings in some obscure corner. What were the religious beliefs of the Chinese during the time they should have been developing science but

didn't? If you think that God built the universe as a sort of mathematical puzzle you may well try to solve it for the satisfaction of solving it, and if your doers are close enough to the thinkers some of it may well be put to use and start the spiral. On the other hand, if you develop mathematics for the fun of solving equations but don't think it applies to why the dragon swallows the sun during eclipses, you might not get very far, even if you do apply it to predicting when.

((Which comes first -- observing regularity in the universe and attributing it to a rational Creator, or postulating God's plan and then looking for patterns? Joseph Campbell, in THE MASKS OF GOD, vol. I, says that at the same time city-states (i.e. civilization) arose, there emerged the idea that the heavens had a pattern which was reflected on Earth. The study of said pattern was astrology, which was apparently well developed among all the early civilizations, from China to Mesopotamia to Egypt to the Mayans.))

And a question unanswered until we get out there and see what other planets are doing is whether something as effective as an advanced technology can be developed without Science As We Know It. For instance, what if the Eastern mystics, gurus, etc., had gone on to develop enough psi powers to gain fair control of the environment? If the course of major storm systems is determined by some very minor random event that snowballs, then weather control might be a matter of tracing possibilities from very small beginnings -- something the right precog might be able to do. Enough clairvoyance, telekinesis, perhaps teleportation, etc., might give an "advanced technology" without what we would call science.

((A valid alternative to logic and the scientific method might be the community subconscious Sturgeon plays with in "The Skills of Xanadu" and "The Touch of Your Hand."))

It may turn out that the gods of our planet aren't answering prayers because we got them mad at us some time in the distant past and then abandoned them for Doing It Ourselves, while on most other planets prayers ARE answered. Then the question may be one of how a planet not on good terms with its gods can do as well (?) as we are doing, and what went wrong. Why didn't we develop an "advanced theology"?

((Have you read Carlos Castaneda's books -- CONVERSATIONS WITH DON JUAN and A SEPARATE REALITY? There's your "advanced theology."))

Only it appears to be much too difficult and dangerous to catch on.))

Or maybe avocados aren't as dumb as they appear and they've been masterminding the whole thing so there will be somebody to plant them all over the galaxy instead of just this one planet. "As the craft neared Tau Ceti the sensors triggered the mechanism which inserted the three toothpicks into the sleeping passenger, set the engine for just enough thrust to provide the merest trace of artificial gravity, and half filled the compartment with water"

And what strange avocadoid creatures might they meet among the stars?

According to Straus' Editor's Report, a station in Denver interrupted a showing of King of Kings for commercials during the Sermon on the Mount, and then interrupted Judas' betrayal kiss with "If he kissed you once, will he kiss you again?"

Mike O'Brien
350 Thompson #439
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48108

EGREGIOUS EXERCISE IN FACILE LOGIC:

Your article in Av. Ext. of 12/71 is interesting,
but I would like to move down to particulars,
to investigate the applicability of the general

theory. To begin with, let's particularize the assumptions:

- 1) The Romans did not have Jon Singer.
- 2) We do.
- 3) Before 1600 there wasn't any Jon Singer anywhere.
- 4) The existence of Jon Singer does not necessarily mean mechanical,
or physics-based control of the environment.

I'm not bothering to define "Jon Singer" because for one thing,
I'm not sure that he or I or anyone else
is sure what Jon Singer means.

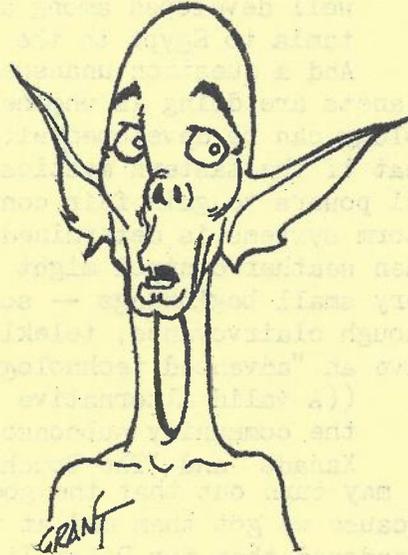
From the above, it is trivially ob-
vious that all the arguments in the arti-
cle follow, and we are left with the final,
and very particular question, How like-
ly is it that an arbitrary planet with
an intelligent life form will develop Jon
Singer?

The answer to this question is trivi-
ally obvious. It is interesting to note
how this example goes to prove the old
maxim that half of science is asking
the right question. This is not the right
question, so this is obviously the other
half of science.

ASIDE TO JERRY KAUFMAN: If you think
fandom is bad for forgetting science fic-
tion, try living in an office with six
other physics grad students. I've heard
more fictional science there than any-
where else. For instance, the neat proof that any functions with a non-
vanishing Wronskian have poles. PROOF: Wronski was Polish. Other recent
developments include the Raunchian of the Babbletonian and the inverse of the
converse of the reverse of the perverse of the obverse of the obtuse of the
abstruse of the ... but I'm sure you get the idea by now.

((There was the time in Analysis the teacher drew a weird diagram, and
a friend and I invented pornographic function theory: You define a
pornographic surface as a surface that satisfies certain complicated,
but obvious conditions as regards concavity and convexity; there are
two classes of pornographic surfaces, which we call Type I and Type II.
Let S_1 and S_2 be pornographic surfaces. A pornographic function, F ,
maps S_1 into S_2 obscenely (i.e. it satisfies certain regularity con-
ditions which we needn't go into in a family magazine). Older ter-
minology called this an erotic mapping. Of course, if both surfaces
are of the same type, F is a homomorphism. (A pornographic mapping of
 S into itself is obviously an auto-erotic mapping.) And there are re-
lationships between the poles and the zeros of F ...))

Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle: The fact that Nature plays a part
in experiments, which may alter the expected outcome.



Mike Glicksohn
32 Maynard Ave., Apt. 205
Toronto 156, Ontario, Canada

Susan and I appreciated the last of your
"WHY YOU GOT THIS"s. So, in fact, did Larson
E since once I'd finished reading the issue I
used it to line the bottom of his cage...

(Gloat over your proximity to IPA at me, will you ...?!)

((Now Mike, you know I don't drink the stuff. Why, when I go shopping I purposely avoid those supermarket aisles devoted exclusively to IPA. You don't realize what a problem it is trying to find a few Cokes among those thousands of cases of IPA -- it's not something I would gloat about.))

I do hope you'll continue to use little scientifically oriented fillers and interlineations in future issues of KRATOPHANY. I don't know about the rest of your readers, but I thoroughly enjoy them. I'm reminded of a sheet of drawings based on the PEANUTS characters that circulated when I was still doing graduate work in quantum chemistry. They included little panels such as Snoopy lying on his doghouse and musing "I'd think in this day and age it would be the duty of every wave function to be discrete." Strangely enough, most of my friends never found them amusing. But then they didn't react to the sign I carefully created out of Old English Lettraset for my door which read, "Quantum Mechanic probably on duty."



(By the by, what does "kratophany" mean? I could look it up in the dic-

tionary, but that would probably spoil everything. Right now I feel that since it appears to be a cross between "cacaphony" and "Kratacoa" it ought to be a word meaning "the sound made by an exploding volcano.")

((Ingenious, but not quite right. "Kratophany" comes from the Greek kratos (power, as in aristocrat) and phainein (to show or appear, as in epiphany). It should mean something like "a manifestation of power." Sandra Miesel used it in a letter once and I just thought it sounded neat.))

Terry Hughes
Route 3
Windsor, Mo. 65360

...I'm quite familiar with the info on teardrop mistletoe. You see, my brother was once walking through a mistletoe forest (near Tightwad, Mo.) when a large number of pods exploded. His body was pierced by 33 seeds. Fortunately, he died instantly. We buried him several years ago, and now where his grave is there stands a mighty oak tree. I no longer believe in acorns. Until that tragic event, I had always assumed that mistletoe was a medical term for astronauts with athlete's foot. That idea kept me from becoming an astronaut since I didn't want anyone to cut off my foot and hang it from a ceiling and kiss under it.

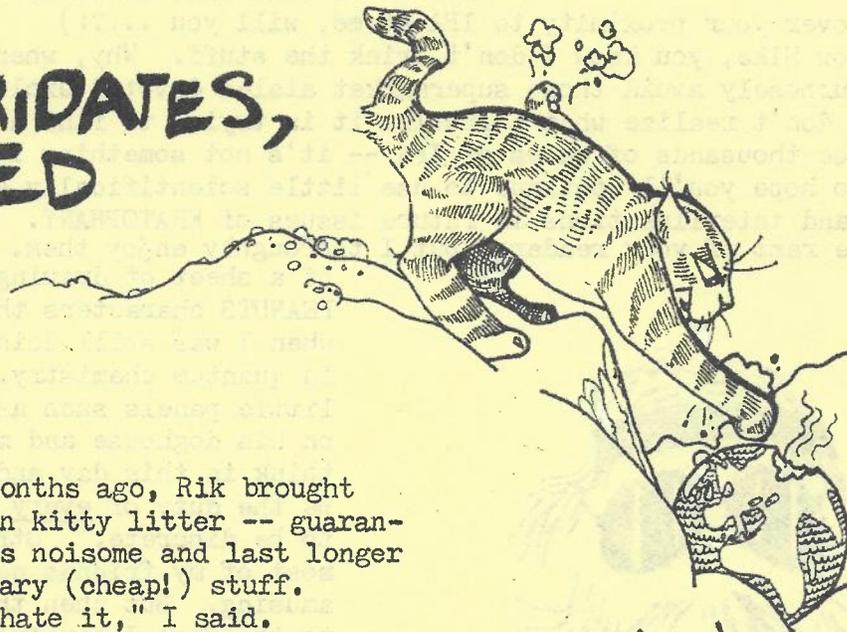
(Continued on p. 23)

sufficient statistic: An elusive function of a sample, which, if found, would say all about that sample that could be said.

It is seldom found; the noun "statistics" therefore remains plural in number.

--from A DICTIONARY FOR STATISTICIANS

MITHRIDATES, HE DIED OLD



Several months ago, Rik brought home some green kitty litter -- guaranteed to be less noisome and last longer than the ordinary (cheap!) stuff.

"They'll hate it," I said.

However, since he'd already bought it, the least we could do was try it.

Macska, the Lolita of the cat world, (she went into heat and got knocked up at the age of 4 months), sniffed the new stuff suspiciously, then made burying motions around the outside of the catpan. K'chortu, the 13-lb. Tom, was much more vociferous about his objections.

He stepped into the pan. Sniffed. Stepped out of the pan -- fastidiously shaking off each paw in turn. Looked up at me with a peculiar expression on his face. And kicked over the catpan with his hind foot.

This green stuff is not just gritty underfoot like the cheap stuff; this green stuff is crunchy and hurts like hell if you're barefoot.

I scooped up the green stuff and dumped it back into the catpan. Several hours later, K'chortu returned -- stepped into the pan, sniffed, stepped out -- and kicked the pan over with his hind foot.

The third time this happened, I vacuummed the kitchen floor and threw out the green kitty litter. Cats generally win.

...Until the first snowfall. Chuckling evilly to myself (I had more than one thing to get back at The Beast for), I carried K'chortu downstairs, opened the door, and dropped him ceremoniously into the snow on the front porch. He considered this. Sniffed. Stepped cautiously back inside, fastidiously shaking off each paw in turn. And, with the final paw, looked up at me with the same peculiar expression he'd had before he kicked over the catpan.

God help us if he finds a way to do it ...

by JANET
KAGAN

No, I am not going to explain the title of the column. But if you ask Eli nicely, he will probably tell you what now-extinct American Indian language it is ...

One Saturday evening I'm sitting on the kitchen stool watching Rik make spinach pies (lots of people think I married Ricky for his cooking, but that's completely untrue -- I married Ricky for his mint collection of ASTOUNDINGS). This consists of spreading melted butter on something like 60 paper-thin layers of phyllo.

"Ricky," I say, "You know how people who start reading SF read everything they can get their hands on and then suddenly start moaning, 'Nobody's writing any good stuff anymore'?"

Ricky butters still another layer of phyllo and nods at me.

"Well .. it happens to everybody, right? And part of it is that when you first start reading SF you have -- say -- twenty years of stuff to catch up on ..."

A second nod from Rik, this one accompanied by a slight spattering of melted butter.

"Well, there must be some way to express that as an equation," I conclude.

"That's easy," he says. Instead of explaining why he pauses to put the spinach pies in the oven. I wait while he searches thru the paper bags on the kitchen counter for an eggplant. Finally, he notices my exaggerated look of frozen expectation.

"Let p equal the amount of SF in existence at the point where you start to read SF. Let r equal the rate of reading; and s , the rate of generation of new SF."

He jams a long fork into the eggplant, turns on the front burner of the stove and starts to char the eggplant.

"Okay..." I say, encouragingly.

"Then $p + st$ (t being time) equals a , or the amount of SF available." The smell of charred eggplant (roughly like that of a jack-o-lantern you've forgotten to cut a hole in the lid of) fills the kitchen. "Now, obviously, $a - rt$ equals u , or the amount of SF left unread."

(I think to myself that this conversation is a great improvement over the usual concomitant to eggplants around here, which is Ricky's singing (badly), "Eggplants roasting on an open fire ..." I become aware that Rik is saying something else ...)

"Now we have C ..."

"What's C ?" I demand. "Wait a minute, what's C ?"

Smugly -- " C is the Crap Constant -- a number at least 10 in size, depending on whether you trust Sturgeon or not."

"Oh."

"No -- C ."

I give him a disgusted look.

He ignores my disgusted look. "Then u divided by C equals G_u , or Good SF left unread. When G_u becomes smaller than L_p -- Limit of patience," he explains, peeling the skin off the eggplant, "Then you complain that nobody writes any good SF any more!"

"Now, providing that you know the variables for a given person-- that is: C , r , and L_p -- you can determine precisely when that person will decide that no more good SF is being written."

I suddenly realize that he is mashing the eggplant into the Osterizer. "Don't put it in the blender! Ricky -- it ruins the texture! Ric-keeee!"

THE ADVENTURES OF GRAYSON GREENSWARD

On one of his many time travelling trips, Grayson Greensward found himself in the era of reconstruction following the First Atomic War. Although barbarism had not been entirely thrown off, isolated communities had started to rediscover some of the fruits of civilization.

While taking a great circle route through the North Pole, Greensward spotted such a community in northern Canada, and dropped in for a short visit and some reassuring words for the locals.

In the midst of a discussion with the local chieftain, a mighty siren suddenly burst forth in a raucous cacaphony of sound.

"What's happening?" demanded Greensward.

"Nothing to fear," said the chief, "It's merely a stray missile passing over. The automatic firing devices still occasionally send them off. Perhaps you would like to see the defense station. It's a part of the old Distant Early Warning line."

Greensward was naturally eager, and the two set off towards the sound of the siren. Many excited villagers ran past them, and Grayson asked why. The chief looked somewhat embarrassed, but after only a slight hesitation, he explained: "I've told you how simple my people are. They have forgotten the nature of the DEW-line and think of the siren as the voice of an angry god whom they have offended. They rush to soothe and reassure him of their devotion.

A few moments later, the ululations of the siren completely changed in pattern. And as they did, there arose the rhythmic chanting of many human voices. "The siren is now sounding the all-clear, the end of the alert," explained the chief. "Doubtless in more enlightened times, the village inhabitants would run through the streets, happily cheering 'the end, the end' in their joy. But now my simple followers have turned that happy cry around, into a plea to the angry god to cease his rage. Of course, the alert will soon be over anyway."

They approached the station, and Greensward was able to make out clearly the massed cries of END, END. A strange, almost beatific smile came over his face. The rhythmic chorus continued for a few moments, then the clearing was suddenly still as siren and human voices ceased abruptly. Greensward, still smiling, turned to his host and said softly, "To think I've actually found it!"

"What do you mean?" asked the bewildered chieftain.

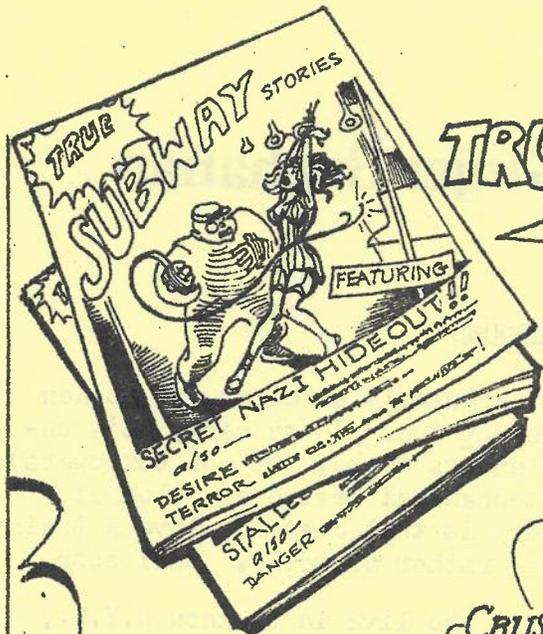
Quietly Grayson said, "Every fan sought it, but it fell to me to discover this reality behind the great legend. Wait until I return home and tell them I've finally found the 'end'-chanted DEW-placator!"

--- Yarik P. Thrip (with thanks to Mike Glicksohn)

A great official came to the master Takuan asking for help in passing his days more eventfully. All day long, he explained, he sat receiving supplications and reports, and he found it all very dull. Takuan took brush and paper, and wrote eight Chinese characters. Translated they said:

No day comes back again:
One inch of time is worth
A foot of jade.

--- from Zen Stories



TRUE SUBWAY STORIES

★ **FEATURING!** ★

SECRET NAZI HIDEOUT! In the Depths of New York City! **Death Camp at 91st Street!!**

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CRUSHED against Her Every Morning at 8! How Long could he restrain his Desire? **Jerome Avenue Tailbait!**

TERROR Stalks the BMT! Alone and unarmed Against 2 Magic-Marker-wielding Killers!

AND I was an UNDERCOVER AGENT for the TRANSIT POLICE!

Subway Confessions



Moving, Intimate Stories of Everyday Women... *Victims of Circumstance!*

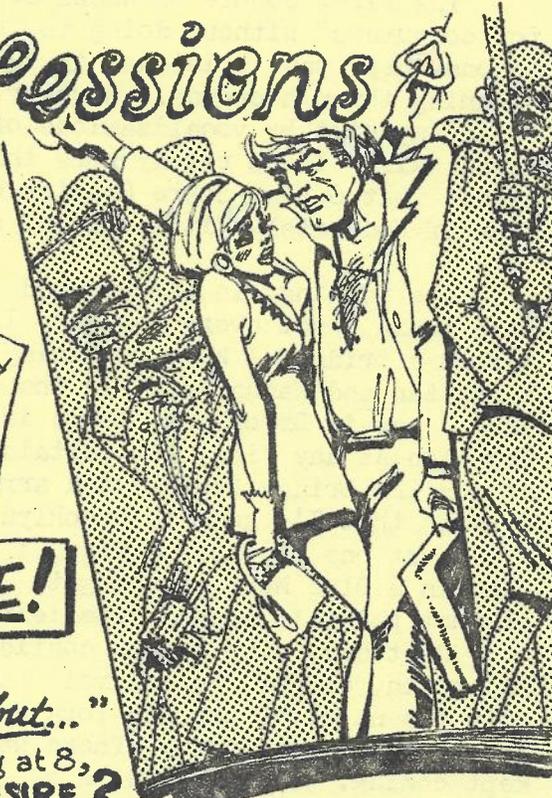
WHY JACKIE WON'T RIDE THE A-TRAIN

He wanted me to **DO IT...** on the **SUBWAY** ... **DURING RUSH HOUR!**

He said I could be the **NEXT MISS SUBWAYS** ... **"IF...!!"**

AND MORE...

TURNSTILE LOVE!



"I knew it was wrong, but..."
CRUSHED AGAINST HIM every morning at 8, how long could she **RESTRAIN HER DESIRE?**

JAM TODAY by Ginjer Buchanan

THE BEAR UNDERGROUND

I've been committing an unnatural act regularly since moving to New York. It's called "Commutation" and it is not fun. In my case, it's unnatural because Bears are not burrowers (lenders maybe, but not burrowers). It's also generally unnatural to board a mechanical device and plummet through the Earth's vitals. Something there is that does not love a train and brings this fact to people's attention rather directly. As I soon learned.

Let me set the scene: For those of you who live in or know N.Y.C., it should be sufficient to say that I live at W. 187th St. and Broadway and work at E. 22nd St. and Lexington. For those who are strangers to these parts -- well, imagine a flea having a permanent abode on a body's right shoulder, but being restricted to doing his flea thing on the same body's left thigh. Furthermore, to get from shoulder to thigh, the flea cannot simply journey diagonally across the body ... it must go straight down the right side, turn left at the hip, proceed to the navel, and then go "downward to the thigh." Or it may take a number of similarly roundabout routes. But it can never, never get there directly.

The first couple of weeks at my new job, I tried "variations on a theme for commuters" without doing too badly. Every morning, there I was, map in one furry paw, briefcase in the other. (Briefcases are excellent for slamming through crowds. However to be perfectly tasteful, movement should be accompanied by vocalizations of "parm me, parm me.") Things were going along well. I was rarely more than five minutes late for work. I concluded that Subway Scare Stories had been Greatly Exaggerated if I, a Bear of Moderately Little Brain, could cope;

HUBRIS

One morning, in experienced commuter fashion, I sprinted for my train. Same train I got every morning, I thought. When it surfaced and started across a bridge, I knew something was amiss. There is no bridge between Manhattan and Manhattan. At the other end of the bridge, I got off to find I was in Brooklyn. There is precious little reason for being in Brooklyn at any time, but certainly not at 9:30 A.M. So I got a train back across the bridge (Whee!) and arrived at work an hour late. And had to explain that I'd gone to Brooklyn accidentally.

Just one of those things, I thought. Could happen to anyone, I thought. Once in a Blue Moon, I thought. A rolling stone gathers no moss, I thought. At that point it seemed expedient to stop thinking.

Next day, with shaken confidence, I zipped down to the hipbone on the "A" train, caught the Canarsie Line to the navel (Union Square is undoubtedly the navel of the New York Subway system) and "Parm me'd" my way to the Lexington platform. There were lots people there. Lots more people kept coming. The train didn't. After 15 minutes, it became apparent to even me that there was an Unusual Delay on the line. An unexplained

Unusual Delay, since there had been no loudspeaker announcement to even give us a clue to what was wrong.

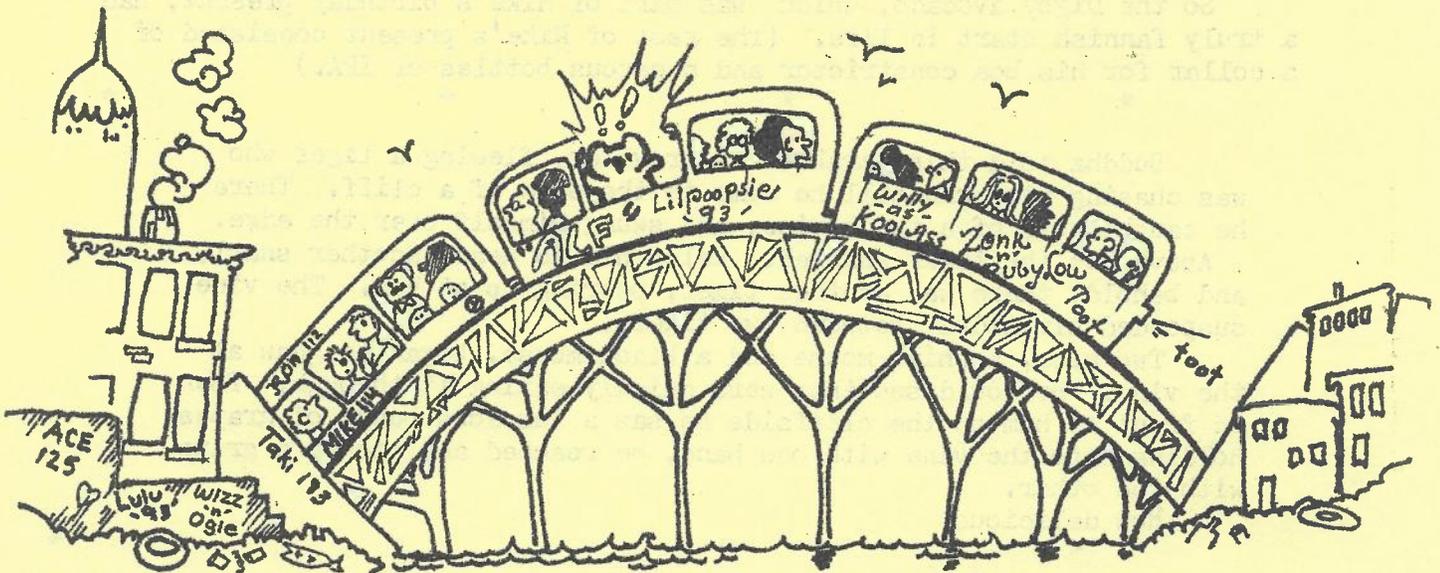
(I must digress at this point to explain that all one can hope for is a clue. Not only are all the subway "announcers" members of the Mushroom family -- an extremely inbred group of N.Y. residents whose distant ancestors were fathered by Demosthenes before the pebbles -- they are also sent to anti-elocution school, where they take such courses as "How to Make the Human Voice Sound like Static." They do learn, however, to clearly say, "There is a delay." Of course, if you've been waiting half an hour chances are you've already figured that out.)

Meanwhile, back at the navel, a train was a comin' in. The crowd shifted in anticipation. The train approached. The train tooted its horn. The train passed by. The train was on fire. The train did not stop. Neither did I; I tooted my horn, left the station, and walked to work -- arriving a mere hour late. Everyone wanted to know if I had gone to Brooklyn again.

After those two episodes, I began to adapt to the point where common, everyday happenings like fires, dogs on the tracks, and inexplicable crowds fazed me not.

But I was not prepared for a certain morning in January (the morning after the subway fare was raised 5¢, coincidentally) when the entire subway system froze. Yes, I said froze. For several hours. As I sat in the train, also freezing since the doors were open, I envisioned either trillions of ice-encrusted electrical particles immobilized in the third rail (my grasp of physics isn't too great) or a huge block of ice encasing some hapless train like the Blob. Neither possibility seemed too likely. Actually, I learned, the subway leaks -- sobering thought, that -- and various switches were frozen. This truth, however, did not set us free. This was left to subway maintenance men, no doubt armed with giant cans of Prestone de-icer. I got to work at 10:30 that day. My fellow workers consoled me with the fact that the subway often froze during cold weather -- i.e., the months of November through March.

That experience completed the process. I moved from adaptation to assimilation. I became a sophisticated Big City Bear. Now whenever two



(Lettercol, continued from p.15)

Andy Offutt

Funny Farm

Haldeman, Ky. 40329

...Your handsome cover
in particular is most wel-
come. Not only have I nev-
er seen an eye-dazzling

slick cover on a fanzine, but I have not -- to my knowledge -- seen Judy Mitchell's work before. I like it. AND, deciding that my second favorite piece of art was Dany Frolich's back cover, I looked for the third. Page 2; the Chonhyfur logo. Hmm. Judy Mitchell again. Now it's a game, so I picked out my 4th favorite. Page 18; three kings. Have to look up artist's name -- JUDY MITCHELL!

I can really groove behind this Wendy comic strip. Got a nekkid female in it, and everyone knows about my interest in same. I like the art, and -- oh hell! Really?

J U D Y M I T C H E L L ?

Judy Mitchell, wherever you are, you have A(nother) Fan.

Listen, are you people aware that Boardman's Lord "Cockloft" spelled backward is tfolkoc? Good lord, Cohen, are you aware that tfolkoc is a nigh-forgotten and extremely taboo word in Ykutnek, language of a little-known tribe of American Indians of which only some 83 members are still alive and speaking the language of their forefathers, the Nahpotark, who not only

met Leif Eriksen's ship but taught him and his bully-boys the little known and so-called Scandic art of rolling-your-cwm (not to mention the even more esoteric science of constructing lace-up reindeer horncovers), the entire remainder of the Ykutnek nation having been wiped out in the early fifties pursuant to one of their replying to a question posed by Senator McCarthy of the Totally Unamerican Committee by saying "Go tfolkoc yourself, Joe, you silly motherchonhyfurer!"?

I am honestly astonished and shocked more than somewhat that the man who publishes JUDY MITCHELL's art would publish such obscenity.

((That's shocking! I never thought to spell "Cockloft" backwards! And even more astonishing is the fact that the same word in Tonkawa means "gives you whiter, brighter wash." The miracles of language never cease to amaze me.))

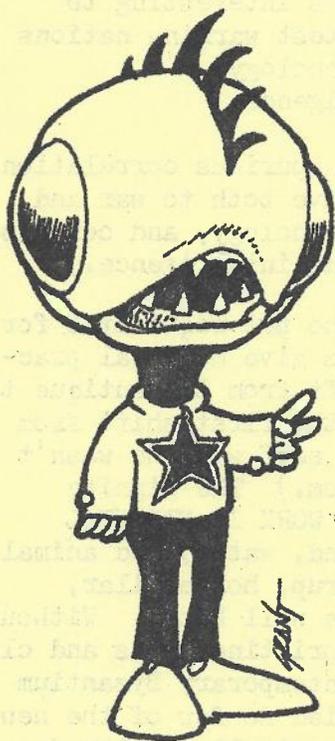
Buzz Dixon
519 Aberdeen Dr.
Raleigh, N.C. 27610

...Your comment about isolation and unification in China strikes true. As one author has pointed out, during the Renaissance Italy was ruled by the Borgias. Murder, terror, poisonings, debauchery, rape, and other

unhealthy things were the order of the day. During that time Italy pioneered trading and exploration, and produced such men as Michelangelo, Leonardo Da Vinci, Gallileo, and Marco Polo. Italy was the nation that led the world in technology, medicine, literature, and art.

During the same period in time, Switzerland existed under a democracy, peaceful, protected from war and invasion by the Alps, and under strict law and order.

All they developed was the cuckoo clock.



Though we will have no way of proving it, I go along with Arthur C. Clarke and the late John W. Campbell when they say that omnivores are the only form of life that can develop intelligence. It is interesting to note that Germany and the United States, the two greatest warring nations ever, have developed incredibly high standards of technology.

Therefore violence is directly related to intelligence.

Go spit on somebody today.

((The thing with Germany and the U.S. could be a spurious correlation with the best resources -- which would be conducive both to war and research. But everybody knows war stimulates technology, and conversely, knowledge is power. Ditto for competitiveness and intelligence.))

Sandra Miesel
8744 N. Pennsylvania St.
Indianapolis, IN 46240

A few random thoughts on the pre-requisites for technic civilization: let's give medieval practicality its due. The shift from the antique to the medieval world marked the first shift from a slave to a non-slave economy. (However miserable a serf was, he wasn't a slave and had some possibility of winning his freedom.) The dignity of labor was a new idea then (cf Boissonnade LIFE AND WORK IN MEDIEVAL EUROPE) and there was more interest in harnessing wind, water, and animal power than the ancients had shown. The ways the stirrup, horsecollar, horseshoe, and heavy plow changed medieval society are well known. Without skillful medieval metal-working, inventions like the printing press and clock would have been impossible. The odd thing is why contemporary Byzantium advanced so little over its ancient heritage and applied so few of the new ideas her people devised. But the Byzantines were perpetually on the defensive and knew the inevitability of their doom for centuries before the final blow fell, not favorable conditions for scientific advancement. The Chinese and Japanese, of course, invested all their intellectual capital in aesthetic enterprises. There was no pressure to improve technology to combat barbarians -- the barbarians conquered China once in a while though.

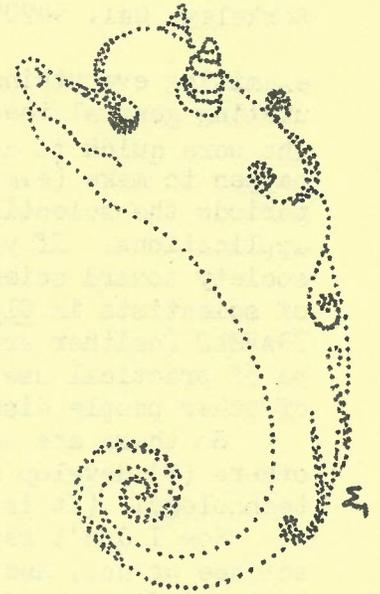
((The problem is why China invested all its intellectual capital in aesthetics. Isolation? The Byzantines, though, were the inheritors of the Roman Empire, which is notorious for its lack of science.))

Patrick McGuire
237' S. Rose St;
Bensenville, IL 60106

I think you overstress the necessary connection between science and practical-technology-as-a-source-of-instruments. Sure, practical technology is going to influence the direction of scientific research, and make some things possible that wouldn't be so without it, but many scientific instruments are ridiculously specialized, and hence built to order, and without immediate practical application. You may get spinoffs -- Watt was an instrument maker for the University of, uh, something or other, but these would not seem necessary consequences. There was clear technological improvement in the High Middle Ages over classical times, but classical science was still taught. Contrarily, there was little or no improvement between the High Middle Ages and the Renaissance, even though the various scientific paradigms changed drastically. Consider the situation described in Anderson's "No Truce with Kings," where theoretical science is moving along fine, but, even with a will to apply this science, practice lags because of the lack of resources. Sounds plausible enough to me. On the other hand, you are probably right in stressing the importance of mathematics. In any case, I would think that one could have science, develop technology, and then lose science again, or much of it, and still retain the technology.

Not even in the "The Machine Stops" sense; you might still be turning out perfectly good engineers, who simply did not have the breadth of view or the encouragement to do scientific speculation. (Soviet engineers, by the way, are much more specialized than American: they are trained narrowly for one branch of industry. This sort of training must depress abstract, scientific curiosity, but they are quite adequate engineers.) After Stalin was safely dead, Krushchev gradually disavowed Lysenko, at least partly because the USSR was falling behind the West in genetics and related fields. If there had not been Western competition, theoretical genetics might now be dead in the USSR. But there would still be stock-breeding, and hybrid seed.

((But when you lose your science completely, your technology should stop advancing, except for an occasional better mousetrap. That is, no great breakthroughs until theory is reinvented. If there's science but no technology, you're stymied past a certain point in almost every field: No telescopes in orbit for astronomy (and no radio astronomy), no cyclotrons for particle physics (in fact no high energy physics), no electron microscopes for biology, etc.))



Jay Freeman
1610 Milvia #3
Berkeley, Cal. 94709

I have a couple of comments toward "Avocado Abstracts." First, there is one other basic which might develop in many civilizations, which would probably provide much impetus for the development of mathematics and of certain kinds of precise measuring instruments. I am speaking of astronomy. For unless the planet in question has no large moons, has a nearly circular orbit, and has its axis of rotation nearly perpendicular to its plane of revolution, a calendar will almost certainly be of great survival value for prediction of annual biological cycles and climatic changes. And if long-distance commerce crosses oceans or deserts, astronomical technology may be useful for navigation.

I have thought of an interesting possible counterexample to the idea that the easiest science to develop is physics: I see no reason, in principle, why the laws of Mendelian genetics could not have been discovered almost as long ago as neolithic times -- all it takes is a bit of astute observation plus enough mathematics to do fractions. The discovery of practically useful genetics would probably have conferred an immense survival advantage on any civilization, through the ability to breed more efficient sources of food and better beasts of war and burden. Such developments might have encouraged the study of other branches of natural science, in which case I do not find it hard to imagine a civilization developing in which biological sciences were much better developed than physical ones.

((Some idea of probability is helpful in figuring out genetic laws. Since probability theory is originally derived from gambling, perhaps all your biologically-based civilizations would be great gamblers.))

Joe Gerver
1624 Milvia #1
Berkeley, Cal. 94709

It seems to be that according to any reasonable definition of science, the Greeks of the Hellenistic Age had science as much as did seventeenth century Europe. In both cases there were a lot of people examining everything around them, making precise measurements, and formulating general theories and principles, and there were other people around who were quick to apply any practical discoveries the scientists might happen to make (e.g. King Gelon of Syracuse and Archimedes); during both periods the scientists themselves weren't very interested in practical applications. If you want convincing evidence of the similar attitude of society toward science in the two periods, just compare Aristophanes' parody of scientists in Clouds and Jonathan Swift's in Book Three of GULLIVER'S TRAVELS (neither Aristophanes nor Swift thought science could possibly be of practical use, but it is clear from both selections that a lot of other people disagreed).

So there are now two questions: Why did these two societies, and no others (?) develop science, and why didn't Hellenistic society develop technology. (It is clear that science is necessary for technology).

Now I don't really know enough about China to say whether they had science or not, and no one knows enough about the Mayans, but the Roman Empire definitely did not. However, before examining the reasons for this,

I would like to consider the second question, because I believe it is closely tied in; namely, the Hellenistic Age did not develop technology because the Romans did not have science, or rather because they killed Hellenistic science.

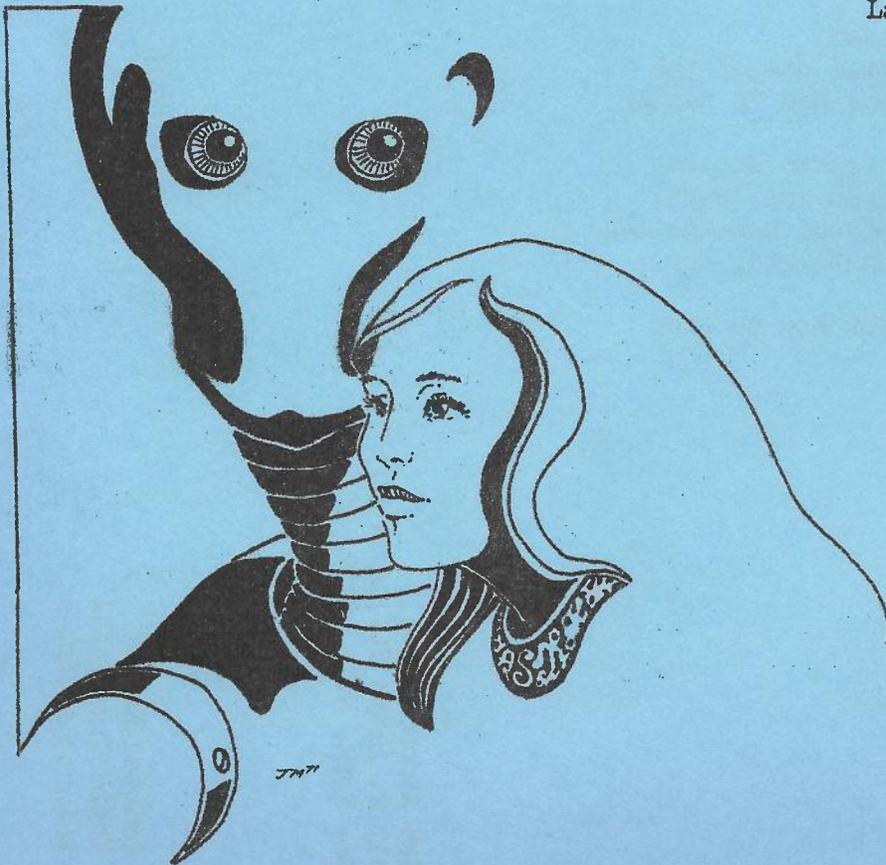
The most popular theory as to why the Greeks never developed technology is the slave theory: since there was a large supply of slave labor, technology was economically unnecessary. Thus Heiron invented a steam engine, but it was never used in industry. Now this seems to me to be nonsense. The reason Heiron's engine was not used was because there is no coal around the Mediterranean. The Romans did use water power in their mills, for example. Actually I don't think there is any conflict between slavery and an industrialized society (what would you call the people who worked in British factories in the nineteenth century?). Slaves become useless only after you have automation. In fact in some cases a certain amount of technology is necessary before slavery can flourish; e.g. the cotton gin and the American South.

It seems to me that what the Greeks were missing was electricity. If they had had electricity they could have industrialized with water power alone, without using fossil fuels at all (in this way technology could develop on any fuel-poor planet; perhaps at a slower rate than on earth, but that would be an advantage if anything). It also seems to me that if the Romans had maintained the Hellenistic attitude toward science, sooner or later they would have discovered electricity, although perhaps they would have been hampered by the fact that magnetite is not common around the Mediterranean. Only the Chinese knew of it at this time and it was not introduced into Europe for more than 1000 years. For that matter, amber is found mostly in Europe, I believe. Perhaps the discovery of electricity implies a knowledge of both amber and magnetite; Europe and China (with Mexican rubber thrown in for good luck). But I suspect that if the Romans had had science they would have managed to get hold of some Chinese magnetite. Science implies a curiosity about everything, including distant countries.

The question, then, is why didn't the Romans have science? I must admit that I am rather puzzled by the fact that science around the Mediterranean ceased when the Romans took over. To say that a society has science really means that there are a small group of people making discoveries; e.g., Eudoxus, Archimedes, Eratosthenes, and Aristarchus in the third century B.C. Now there must have been people of equal intelligence in the third century A.D. but they didn't become scientists for some reason. Maybe there weren't any people of equal intelligence; perhaps everyone was suffering from a mild case of lead poisoning. Or perhaps science had just lost all of its glamor, and intelligent people became generals or merchants. Maybe it was just that the education system had become more "efficient" so that anyone who would have shown promise as a scientist was forced to read Aristotle until he was sick of the whole idea. I think the Chinese had this problem at several points in their history. But I don't really know enough about Roman history to prove any of this.

((Does anyone care to correlate the death of science and the emergence of Rome as supreme? Say, after the Punic Wars, when the Roman Empire had no enemies of comparable strength? This may be more evidence for competition vs. isolation as the cause of technology and advanced science. But our sample is really too small. What about the Incas? Were they also isolated and/or supreme in their area?))

We also heard from: Leif Andersson, Sheryl Birkhead, Ginny Carew, P.L. Caruthers, Garth Danielson, Vincent Di Fate, Steve Eber, Robert Gersman, Bruce Gillespie, Dan Goodman, Dick Harter, Ben Indick, Tim Kirk, Jerry Lapidus, Joe Perry, Alice Sanvito, Jeff Schalles, Ken Scher, Sean Summers, and Jim Young.



Old chemists
never die -- they
just smell that
way.

perspicacity =
hopalong sweat?

I think orgies
are fine as long
as they're held
between two
consenting mobs.

D.C. IN '74!!

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