
Quodlibet 16 is a fanzine of eccentric period by Bill Patterson, 537 Jones Street, No. 9943, San Francisco, California 94102. Available for locs or other contributions only. Screw the usual. Death to Francis Towner Laney! Let a hundred flowers bloom!

So, I'm lying in bed reading Patrick's Fanthology '81 and occasionally giggling (although I'll be bless'd if I can figure out why the Silverberg review is included--unless it's a satire. That must be it. Like a lot of those SCTV "Sammy Maudlin" sketches so close to the real thing that they cease to be funny...) and humming "Mad Dogs and Englishmen" until I come across the farter's song, at which point I grimace and pass on (to no avail, I might add. There is a second verse later in the same piece). By gosh, by gum, this is the real thing--overpoweringly British from point to point, and more Patrick than fandom, I think, but the real thing nonetheless.

I flash back to Izzard I received last week. For the benefit of those even less au courant than I, Ted White and Dan Steffan have apparently decided to stop publishing Pong (I didn't receive it, but a number of people are remarking of "the last Pong," and so forth). Pong came out frequently. Very frequently. So a conspiracy sprang up (picture Bergeron and Berry "breathing together" by pen and telephone) to get Patrick and Teresa to pick up the fast-and-frequent fannish fanzine ball (I refuse to use the gauntlet metaphor again...) and run with it. Which they proceeded to do.

Well, heckalarum, I exclaim to myself. I've been doing just that for more than a year. I mean, ten issues in twelve months is no Pong, perhaps, but respectable nonetheless. Ted White and Dan Steffan both get Quodlibet. So do Patrick and Teresa and Jerry Kaufman. Not a mention anywhere. Quodlibet does not exist in those quarters.

Oh, well. Fast Quodlibet may be, but it is "fannish" (whatever that is) only by courtesy perhaps attenuated beyond all reason or proportion. As I get farther away from my minimum daily requirement of fanac, I get less and less fannish. I do have a kind of endearing and helpless admiration for Teresa's writing. I learned a great deal from her Azapazines in particular. And I certainly wish I could toss sparkle off like that. But when I try I get what I christened the "Style Pretiosus," the paradigmatic example of which is contained in the introductory pages of the IguanaCon Program Book. Blanch and kretsch. Kretsch and blanch. Beat beat drums. Spectacle of Tinker Bell as played by the Goodrich Blimp. So I go chewing on with rectilinear prose, metamorphosis ongoing. The fannish caterpillar becomes the mundane butterfly? Something wrong about that image.

Thass okay. It is quodlibeo. And sui generis is a Proud and Lonely thing, too.

However slowly and sluggishly, the information revolution begins. I refer to a service just offered this month in Focus magazine, our local PBS channel's magazine (I joined this past summer so I could cuss 'em out about their offensive "Summer Festival" commercials). I quote: "CODART is a 21st-century electronic delivery system that replaces the expense of printing, pressing, and distributing with the efficiency of the airwaves. Beginning this month, KQED-FM will broadcast a special five-hour overnight program service, different from the regular broadcast day only by short, almost inaudible codes before and after program segments. The big difference is that you needn't be listening to enjoy it. This cutting-edge technology now makes it possible for you to preselect what you wish to hear, and for automatic selection by your tape recorder of only those specific items. As your radio listens to the full overnight schedule, the CODART control unit instructs your tape recorder to automatically switch on to record only those items you have requested. CODART allows you to collect what you desire for use at times you designate as most convenient. It also guarantees copyright payment to the owners of that material." There's a lot more, but it's worse hype than the preceding, which does, at least, contain some information. I called immediately for a catalogue and information, and it appears that they sell you for about \$100.00 a device which can decode the prefix signals broadcast with the program. You select from a catalogue what you wish to record and phone in your request. They set the machine to decode those signals and turn your cassette recorder on. The copyright charge runs at about \$2.00 per hour of material.

As it happens, this particular application is not likely to be terribly useful, simply because PBS radio doesn't contain much really useful information. But it's a definite start. One peculiar aspect of the program is that they are enforcing the copyright provisions by inconvenience--it doesn't appear that there is anything stopping you from either rigging up a timer or staying up to tape the broadcast off the airwaves. It's an ingenious solution, not terribly practical in the long-term, but if they can sell it, it should give rise to more practical solutions in the future. As soon as the catalogue comes in, I'll report back on it.

I've mentioned several times that I got cable tv over the summer. I've found it a very worthwhile investment. It runs about \$48.50 a month for 36-channel cable, HBO, Showtime, and Cinemax, a third movie channel, and Escapade, a soft-core porn channel that seems to share most of its features with the other channels--They have been running American Gigolo and The Sensuous Nurse, for instance on Showtime one month, Escapade the next, and Cinemax the third. I've compiled a list of the movies and features I watched for the first four months. Those marked with an asterisk I had seen before in theatrical distribution,

June:

Stripes*, Blowout*, Continental Divide, Paradise Alley, On the Right Track, Going Ape, Zorro the Gay Blade, Birth of the Beatles*, A Change of Seasons, Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, Saturday the 14th, Silver Streak*, Spectacular Canada, The First Nudie Musical, The Jazz Singer, Grand Illusion, Private Benjamin*, Plaza Suite, Brubaker*, Cutter's Way, American Gigolo, The Sensuous Nurse, Peter Paul & Mary In Concert, The Legend of the Lone Ranger, The Stuntman, Dona Flor and Her Two Husbands, Wild and Beautiful on Ibiza, The Story of O.

July

A Face in the Crowd, Barry Lyndon, Cheaper to Keep Her, The Children, Fame*, Hardly Working, Heavens Above, The Hustler of Muscle Beach, Inside Moves, Laughs, Search and Destroy, Serial*, Star Trek*, Victory, SOB*, History of the World, part 1, Raggedy Man, Agatha, In God We Trust*, A Clockwork Orange, Dr. Zhivago, The North Avenue Irregulars, Silent Partner, The Harrad Experiment*.

August

Tarzan*, Cannonball Run*, Looking for Mr. Goodbar, Under the Rainbow, Flash Gordon, Heaven Can Wait*, Alien*, Massacre at Central High, Young Joe the Forgotten Kennedy, An Enemy of the People, Coast to Coast, Darby O'Gill and the Little People, Deadly Blessing, Elvis, Fear No Evil, The Fixer, Foul Play*, Happy Birthday Gemini*.

September

Outland*, The First Family, St. Helens, Mommie Dearest, The Man With Bogart's Face, Breaker Morant, Tribute, The Thirty-Nine Steps, Student Bodies*, Mad Max, The French Woman, Acting Out, Portnoy's Complaint, The Swinging Cheerleaders, The Blue Lagoon, Woman of the Year, Robin and Marian, The Elephant Man, The Frog Prince, Camelot, Nine to Five*, Arthur*.

So, for just under \$200 I've seen ninety-three

movies, some of which are still in first release. A bargain. Many of them were films I didn't get to last year. They would have cost me \$5 at the time. So I'm doing pretty well. The timing of the shows is sometimes inconvenient, and frequently Showtime and HBO will run the same film at the same time. With Cinemax, the problem is gotten around. A lot of the cable channels are not local, so there is no tv guide listing, except that they reserve channel 13 for a program guide that goes in four-hour chunks, about five seconds per item, so I get to explore channel 40 (Sacramento-Stockton), which seems to have a good program director, and the Atlanta "Superstation," which frankly isn't all that hot.

The big secondary benefit is having all the six or seven "local" PBS channels come in with clear reception. I follow "Nova" and "Fast Forward" and the various science programs assiduously, and cable is almost worth it for that alone. Now if only they'll bring back Connections...

Steven Black has been urging me to hear Philip Glass for some time now, and I finally walked into Star Magic here and bought the "Glassworks" tape. My basic reaction was first to wonder if that's all there was, and second to wonder what the fuss was about. I mean, it's decentish stuff of its kind, but nothing to go bananas over.

"Glassworks" is a kind of study in repeated motives, a suite in six sections, partly synthesized and partly on other instruments. It's all very pleasant, although, technically, not as interesting as the orchestral etude Elliott Carter did twenty-five years ago that uses only one pitch for the whole work, varying timbre instead of pitch.

There is at one point ("Floes") an extended quotation from the last movement of Sibelius' fifth symphony, just the cantus firmus



without the theme Sibelius used for contrast and development:



I suspect Glass used that particular quotation because of the "oceanic" feeling it carries into the Sibelius symphony. But when Glass uses it it is not oceanic. It is the combination of the irregular, swelling countertheme with the regularly patterned cantus firmus that produced the impression.

My general impression, after listening to "Glassworks" for the third time, is that it is much too long and involved for what it does; that it is a perfectly good little etude carried to

ridiculous lengths--not so much music in the fullest sense of the term, as a kind of conceptual etude for the composer, somewhat along the lines of the experimental piece done about fifteen years ago taking a phrase, repeating it endlessly, and doubling it over fugally--progressively out of phase by about a quarter of a second or so. An interesting effect, and something to keep in mind, but you don't go to it for the same reason you would go to something recognizably musical.

Incidentally, when I heard "Glassworks" for the first time, I went to my records to check the quotation and discovered that I didn't own a copy of the Fifth. So I went to Tower Records and found a cutout of Ormandy doing it. Mistake. Ormandy doesn't have the faintest notion of what's going on in the work. Completely arbitrarily he pointed up the string sections and broke up a stringendo development. When Ormandy does understand a section, he blows it away; when he follows it by a section he doesn't understand, the bridge is indistinct. So he winds up lurching from phrase to phrase, development to development. It's a very bad recording. Embarrassing.

I finally managed to catch Tales of the Gold Monkey last night and was a little disappointed. "A little" is the most I could have been disappointed, because my expectations were not high to begin with. But I did have hopes.

There is something appealing about this particular type of romance, the action-adventure story. I think this is partly because all the elements are purified and reduced to their simplest denominators: raw evil matched by raw heroism. This particular reduction to the simplest level is not necessarily a bad thing; indeed, if it's handled properly, it has enormous possibilities, viz Chandler's Philip Marlowe detective stories and Orff's "Schoolwork." And, I suppose, it's frequently a relief to be able to be moved to pity or terror (or cheers) by an immediate apprehension, without having to weigh carefully the balance of the situation. There is no hidden qualification in the conceptual network lying in wait to trip you up.

Well, this Tales of the Gold Monkey had all that good stuff, and it even had a fast-paced development, shuttling among eight main characters. This multiplicity of characters was a bit confusing, and it was awhile before I sorted out who were the "regulars" and who the guests.

Let's see--the story starts with Jake Cutter (played by Stephen Collins), and his sidekicks "Corky" and a wonderdog whose name I can't remember, ferrying a scientist who, we later find out, is a double agent for the U.S., to a meeting with some Germans who are, we later find out, building a plutonium bomb. On the way

in they stop to rescue some islanders who are dying on the open sea because they have opened a cannister we are not told contains the plutonium, but every time somebody opens the cannister, the whole screen solarizes and turns sky-blue with what is presumed to be Chernkov radiation. Incidentally, keeping straight who knows what is one of the hardest jobs TOTGM presents the viewer. The American agent, Cutter's girl on the island, slips the scientist a mickey to get the cannister. The mickey is too strong, so, although Cutter hasn't the faintest idea what's going on, he has to go to meet the Germans in his place the next day. He is recognized by the Dutch collaborator-priest as they leave.

At that point I turned the TV off and went off to play hearts.

What this episode, at least, did not have was the high energy level, the vibrant sense of tension, the ache to find out what's going to happen next, that I associate with the genre. This lack allowed me to notice the absolutely awful accents put on by the principals--Roddy McDowell, for instance, in a pencil-moustache, with a "French" accent that slipped and slithered as he reminisced about his service in La Legion Etrangere at Fort Zindeneuf (Roddy McDowell??); the "Germans" playing for low comedy--and Jake Cutter. Although Cutter had no accent, he had a character trait much, much worse: a sappy grin, dimpled and cute as all get out, that he might be able to get away with once a show. I mean, this is not Treat Williams' irrepressible and infinitely self-renewing shit-eating grin we're talking about here. Instead, he flashed it every five seconds. I began to feel seasick after the third repetition. No doubt Collins' jaws were aching by that time, too.

The distressing thing is that the show creates its own failures by foreshadowing far too much, by making the viewer keep track of too much information. Especially at the beginning of a series, this is a fatal flaw. I do not expect Tales of the Gold Monkey to survive the season.

The U.S. Court of Appeals yesterday struck down San Francisco's handgun law as unconstitutional--which everybody with half a brain knew anyway back in April. Latest word is that the City will consider appealing the matter to the California Supreme Court.

First Blood this issue goes to...

Richard Prokop
180 Waverly
Sunnyvale CA 94086

Dear Bill,
I received
Quodlibet 15 to-
day (I'm surprised

I spelled it correctly after having just read Tim Kyger's loc). I must admit I've been looking forward to getting it, in part because I don't

receive much mail, but also in order to see myself in print.

Actually, I read or glanced over much of the perzine before checking out my loc. I even read all the way through Dan's review of The Boot first (although why anyone would want to make a movie about a boot, let alone do a review on it, is beyond my understanding). (If Tim can do it--so can I).

The truth of the matter is, I had little interest in reading my review again since I read and reread it many times while writing it. My handwritten letter was, as you must remember, very messy, and I was wanting to see how my thoughts looked when neatly typed, but even so my real interest was in what you were going to say. How disappointed I was when I didn't see any of your highly prized, boldface comments sprinkled throughout my review. Fortunately, you did make a few remarks about the movie Wrath of Khan at the end but almost nothing about what I said.

Well excu-u-u-se me! Actually, as you may already be aware, I look at my loccol as basically **conversations-in-print**, except that, except for the very large, genzine-type issues, I don't sort anything out into separate articles. So when I get a review mannascript like yours (or Dan's) I decided to treat it as a straightforward review and back out of your limelight. Nobody likes a scene-stealer, and I thought you'd appreciate almost-center stage for the nonce. Even if I violently disagreed with something you said (which I didn't), I wouldn't break into a set piece like a review. So instead, I saved up such comments as would not be repetitive or destructive to the end.

You're forgiven.

I found Tim Kyger's loc (?) fun reading. However, he should probably be shot. (Did you know that TK is a pickled muppet?)

A fill-in-the-blank perzine loc might be interesting. For example, you might write: "Dan Wynne's loc was _____. Too bad he didn't mention _____. Well, maybe next time. And Bob Prokop's thinking could use some _____. Someone should let him know."

Boy, it sure is easy to write up comments. Tim was right.

Hmmm. Gary Farber reminded me recently of an alternative method of generating locs when you can't find anything that looks like a good comment hook. Just pick a statement at random and go off on a mental fugue with "That reminds me of something I heard once/ran across once, etc." Works every time. I mean, Mike Glicksohn has made a fannish career out of this sort of thing...to say nothing of Harry Warner, Jr.

There's a lot of talk tonight on the radio (KGO) about a supposedly spectacular meteor

which streaked across San Francisco and fell into the sea around 8:00 p.m. Did you see it, Bill? I've seen some notable meteors in my time, but never one which struck the Earth. (I did not see this one.)

By a most remarkable and well-nigh unbelievable coincidence, I got your loc the same day you sent it off (actually not that unbelievable, as you sent it up to the City with Kyger), and I was scanning the papers for the meteor. No mention.

What happened is that I was playing Spades with some friends at the time, and we got a series of bright flashes--two or three in a row, then a bit of a wait, then two or three more. They were quite bright, actinic in fact. All three of the other Spades-players were new to San Francisco and only remarked that it must be lightning outside. Ho-ho, I thought, having missed the first flash. These people don't know that it never lightens in SF--almost never, that is. I think I've seen lightning about three times in the five years I've been living here. But when I saw the next flash, I jumped to the same conclusion--except, as I said, they were actinic, and you don't get that kind of brightness unless the lightning is very near. No thunder. Peculiar. After sitting through the rest of the flashes and investigating them from the bay window that faces the back yard, we concluded that someone was probably playing with a strobe light and went back to playing Spades.

As I said. No mention of a meteor in the next day's papers (doesn't mean a thing--current news wouldn't necessarily make it into the Chron until four days later, anyway). But they did have an article about the "Twilight Phenomenon" in Northern California from some missile launches at Vandenberg, and that is supposed to account for it. Hmph. Never seen anything like that before.

Back in Phoenix, we would occasionally get a spectacular display in the west--a bright russet-orange squiggle floating in the dusky sky. As the dust in the air gives us spectacular gold-washed sunsets, anyway, the glowing squiggle would be spectacular indeed--particularly as it continued to hang there, glowing, well after dark. Phoenix and San Francisco are almost equidistant from Vandenberg. But it's all desert from there to Phoenix, while it's moisture-laden sea air up the coast. Maybe that accounts for the difference. I dunno.

Sure was spectacular, though.

You can always quickly spot Bob Prokop in print by looking for mentions of E.E. "Doc" Smith, the Lensman series, or Skylark of Space. This is not a putdown--just an observation. By the way, Bob, did you know you still have the Lensman hardcovers at home (Dad's)? You haven't been there for so many years you may have forgotten.

Speaking of old SF, I've just read Asimov's Currents of Space for the first time (1950 copyright). It was a fascinating mixture of spy story, mystery, social comment, and science fiction. At first I was bothered by the novel because there were so many loose ends and sketchy details in the first few chapters. However, as I read on, Asimov began tying all those loose ends together and filling in the voids with such thoroughness that I realized he knew what he was doing. The Trantorian Empire (five hundred years after Trantor began its movement out into the Galaxy) was a significant part of the novel. What I would like to know is (1) was The Currents of Space written before or after the Foundation series, and (2) is Trantor and the Trantorian Empire to be found in other Asimov novels and short stories?

Let's see--it's been a good fifteen years since I last read Currents of Space, but I think I can answer those questions. First, the pieces of which the first two books of the Foundation tetology is composed were published in Astounding during the 1940's, so Currents was written substantially after that part of the canon. Second Foundation bears a copyright date of 1953, so it's after Currents.

Trantor and the Trantorian Empire, eleven thousand years before Foundation opens, is featured in a few short stories--none of whose titles I can recall--and the novel Pebble in the Sky, which is set on Earth. This leads me to Foundation's Edge, the recently-published fourth book in the Foundation series. There's a great deal to be said about it, but I have neither time nor inclination to do a thorough job on the book. Suffice it to say that Asimov links into the Foundation universe not only the Robot novels and stories, but also End of Eternity and clears up some of the mystery surrounding The Mule. It's a very good book, although nothing like the earlier books in tone and style. I think there is either a quality of certainty lost or uncertainty overcome from the early Asimov that gave those early works a brilliant clarity. That quality is missing from Foundation's Edge. The style is much darker and more complex--which is not to say "better," because it's not. Just different. So much for a capsule review. (TK has my copy--you can get it from him).

Also, since Bob mentioned "space" in his loc, I might (and will) mention that "space" plays a part in The Currents of Space. I'm not sure what modern science says of "space," but it's my feeling (based in part on the theories of Joseph Sheffer) that there is no such thing as "nothing." The entire universe is filled with somethingness--which takes the forms of matter, energy, or empty space. So that whether you are between individual atoms in space or between the particles of an atom, there is always "some-

thing." (I'm tempted here to speculate about the makeup of this somethingness, but I'm afraid of creating a new heresy or falling into an old one. I'm willing to talk about it but not to put it into print.)

Well, maybe--although I have an emotional fondness for the idea of the void--it's so dashed romantic and all...I don't much care for the mass-chauvinists who insist that there has to be an "exchange" particle shuttling back and forth between everything. Sooner or later these people are going to have to confront the notion that "there are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamed of in your philosophy," instead of dreaming up new suppositions. If you must have somethingness, you might as well call it "continuum." One of the consequences of Einstein's theorizing I find most pleasant is the conception of the "plastic" universe. The universe itself comes, metaphorically, to life, reacting positively to every being. There can be no "cosmic indifference" in this sense, because every faintest bit of being changes the shape of the whole. As I said--romantic.

There is one misprint I'd like to correct. C.S. Lewis said that the great tyrants were all monotonously alike, not monstrously alike.

I enjoyed rich brown's ((he really did write it with the lower case initials, rich--whp)) constructive criticisms of your work. Just who is rich brown anyhow? And why is his name in small letters.

rich brown is a fanzine fan living in Washington, D.C. On Gary Farber's recommendation I sent him a spec copy of Quodlibet 11 (I think), and he has responded admirably. As to why his name appears in lower case--he wants it that way. (I have sore spots yet where my ears were pinned back).

I've been bombarded lately by radio advertisements for Battlefield Earth--an sf novel by L. Ron Hubbard. What about this? I didn't know he wrote sf--anymore, anyway.

I haven't had the courage to be seen picking this monstrous tome up in a bookstore, yet--and I refuse to buy it, hardback or paperback. So I don't know whether it's a reissuance of old stories or a new book. But in any case, I wouldn't support him financially any more than I would willingly support Jerry Falwell or the U.S.S.R. financially.

I had a run-in with Scientologists recently. Out of pure curiosity, I went in for one of their screening exams and was appalled and disgusted by the test. It had perhaps 120 questions of the "I need more/less control over my life" kind. The test was so rigged that for a normally well-balanced person it's only possible to mark the "Don't need" boxes straight down the chain. Which means that they automatically sort out

everyone but the terminal losers. To my mind, that's preying on the terminally credulous and psychologically helpless. Disgusting.

What the heck is that bird doing?

Ah--finally, somebody notices. The bird is counting strokes on the word-processor. The machine counts the number of times you hit a key during each period the machine is turned on. That's all.

I'm somewhat miffed that nobody else has commented on the cartoons in Quodlibet 14. I worked hard on those things, after all, and deserve some egoboo, even if negative.

Whimper

Well, I think I'll stop here. I suppose I've written enough to get another Quodlibet. I enjoy getting them.

From here to Sark (Sarkian for "thanks"--Currents of Space)

Richard Prokop

That have enough boldface for your tastes, eh? I keep intending to write you a letter (since you don't have a phone and are forty miles away), but, heck, this is supposed to be a letter substitute, isn't it?

Ted White
1014 N. Tuckahoe St.
Falls Church VA 22046

Dear Bill:

I have been meaning to write you since you began sending me Quodlibet, but they have been arriving too quickly to keep up with.

This from an editor of Pong? Oy!

I have been fascinated by your discussion with rich brown about Heinlein. I began reading Heinlein with his first juvenile, Rocketship Galileo, in 1947, when I was nine. I was immediately his biggest fan: I began immediately to reread the first page when I'd finished the last, and I read the entire book straight through a second time. (This is something I have done maybe three times in my life, and the most recent occasion was in the fall of 1980 when I read Parke Godwin's Arthurian novel the name of which momentarily escapes me, but by god it was good!) Heinlein turned me into an sf fan, made me aware of sf as a specific genre that I enjoyed, something John Kier Cross's Angry Planet, which I'd read at eight, had failed to do (although I liked it well enough to do a book report on it, wrote to the publisher, and got a photo of the author.)

I grew up with Heinlein. When I started buying sf magazines (after having been afraid they'd be "over my head" for several years) when I was thirteen I found Heinlein's Puppet Masters advertised to begin appearing in the very next issue of Galaxy. I already had the Signet editions of his novels and story collections, and had read everything of his in hardcover my

library had.

For years I read the Heinlein serials in Galaxy, Astounding and F&SF and then read them avidly when they were published as books. It was my habit to read every Heinlein novel several times, three or four at a minimum.

That takes me back. When I was in second or third grade--1959 or 1960--I decided to read every book in the school library. As the fiction shelves ended at the door, I started with "Z" and read backwards--which might be a variety of lightening the corner where you are. But I had already read most of the myth, biography, and science books in the library by that time. Perhaps you're yet young enough to have read Herbert Zim's science books as a child? I have a vague impression the series was begun in the '40's.

At any rate, I got to what Fritz Leiber informs me must have been S. Fowler Wright's The Throne of Saturn (what that was doing on Sierra Vista Elementary's shelves I have no idea) and was immediately hooked. I abandoned the Great Plan and started searching out the other sf. Brooks' Freddie the Pig stories; the three Mushroom Planet books, such Norton as was available (for some reason, Star Man's Son was on the restricted shelves. No matter: I got it from the bookmobile), and then I hit Starman Jones and Farmer in the Sky. I can't remember which I hit first. The two hooked me at once. Powerful impact. And those two are still among my favorite books. I make a practice of rereading Heinlein's entire corpus on about a three-year cycle. Great staying power in those books.

Glory Road broke me of that habit. (I did read Stranger twice, in its first hardcover edition, but it was clearly an anomaly and not just in the fact that it wasn't serialized first.) When I tried to reread Glory Road in book form I found I could not force myself past those jejune early chapters. The sex in Stranger had embarrassed me on Heinlein's behalf, but the adolescent wish-fantasy that opens Glory Road made me squirm, it was so badly handled, even badly written.

I think Heinlein's failures have almost always in one way or another been auctorial failures: his inability to realize a character, or to maintain it believably, or to transcend his own stereotypes. The protagonist of Glory Road read like Heinlein had just read a Richard Prather Shell Scott novel, preferably one which took place at least in part in a nudist camp. (This is not totally unlikely; Heinlein does read mystery writers, and Prather's politics were "right" up Heinlein's alley, especially in the red-baiting fifties.) Subsequent failures among Heinlein's recent novels must include Time Enough for Love, a book I'd nominate as the Ultimate Narcissistic Auctorial Masturbation Fantasy if

not for its eclipse by Number of the Beast. In these novels Heinlein shoves his characters around so openly that most of them lack any characterization at all.

So by now I'm a lapsed Heinleinite, I guess. I wrote a "Heinleinesque" novel once (Secret of the Marauder Satellite), and I still try to read the new novels. I even enjoyed Friday. But my respect for Heinlein has waned. His treatment of Panshin was and is despicable (and all caused by Redd Boggs' choice of a title for an early Panshin piece--"Heinlein by his Jockstrap"--which offended Heinlein). And the best I can say for Friday is that while it's the best thing Heinlein has written since The Moon is a Harsh Mistress, that's not saying a lot, because neither book comes close to equalling his earlier works.

De gustibus, as they say. I do not agree with any of your evaluations after the fifties juveniles. But, then again, I'm the guy who reads Robert Rimmer with a certain amount of sympathy (although not an infinite amount). I have little information about the Panshin feud, but I understand the causes for Heinlein's attitude to be considerably more serious. At most, his treatment of Panshin is an "over reaction." For my own part, I found Heinlein in Dimension to be filled with sloppy scholarship, inept criticism, and bad writing. The man simply does not understand what is going on in the corpus. That's sufficient reason to disain Panshin. Would that it were enough to disain, as well.

That being the case, a few comments on your discussion with rich:

Moon won the Best Novel Hugo in 1967; therefore it must have been published in 1965 or 1966 (it was serialized first, I think).

Referring to the "period" in which "Gulf" was written (very late 1948 or 1949), you say "there are a great many peculiar stories from that period--'The Man Who Travelled in Elephants,' for instance, or 'The Unpleasant Profession of Jonathan Hoag'." Nonsense.

"Hoag" was published in Unknown in the early forties (1942? 43?) and undoubtedly written in that period and not later. "Gulf" we have established at around 1949. "Elephants" appeared in Saturn SF in 1957 (as "The Elephant Circuit"), and probably wasn't more than a couple of years old.

Any "period" which takes in 1942-1957 is going to include most of Heinlein's short fiction; there's been damed little since 1957 ("All You Zombies") is all I recall offhand), and his writing pretty well started in 1939.

You are absolutely correct. Caught me in another brainfuzz. Possibly because of the anthologies I tend to think of them as grouped together, while I have the publication dates around somewhere to be looked up. Tim Kyger

caught me on that one, too, just before Quodlibet went to press. Too late to change. "Gulf" is roughly contemporaneous with the first three juveniles.

I'm amazed by your admiration for Time Enough for Love. You seem to like the way he handled "large numbers of characters in a single scene." Well, hell, it's easy when they all speak with the same voice and share nearly all the same personality attributes. TEFL is Heinlein/-Harshaw/Long talking to himself and doing all the voices. (Number of the Beast seems to be the same thing, sans storylines.)

With respect, sir, I reiterate my analysis. There is a dinner party scene on Tertius that contains at least nine characters in one conversation. I never had the slightest difficulty telling who was speaking. And if you will hark back to The Rolling Stones, the example that is usually given to prove Heinlein's skill on this point, you will find the same kind of similarity of personality. What you're saying is that you like The Rolling Stones and don't like TEFL--which is perfectly all right but shouldn't be confused with an objective evaluation of the book.

Moving on to your argument on abortion, I have several thoughts, the first of which is that your reductio ad absurdum, "you can trace the chain back so that everything is identical to everything else--and you would come out with the absurd notion that nothing has a discrete identity," is hardly absurd at all--it is true.

"Discrete identity" is a man-made myth by which we group things and label them with varying degrees of arbitrariness. It's like calling today "Thursday." Today was an interval of time which we have arbitrarily divided and defined and labeled with the name of one of the days of the week. "Day" and "week" are both more general and less arbitrary labels.

"Embryo," "fetus," "baby," "child," "adolescent" and "adult" are ways in which we label people. Applied to any specific person, they describe stages of growth. When looked at out of context (the person's whole life) they can be considered and seen as "discrete" labels, since there is clearly contrast and separate identifying features to each (such as size, to take only the grossest example).

In talking about abortion, the real sticking point seems to be the definition of where human personhood begins. Embryos are clearly not (yet) viable humans. They are potential humans, even as an acorn is the potential oak, but not (yet) a tree of any kind. Where do we draw the line, then?

The simplistic approach (which apparently you subscribe to) is to say, "Well, hell, as far as I'm concerned, that acorn is an oak tree!" Or, the human being exists from conception.

But if this is true then we have always been a

race of murderers because a large percentage of pregnancies spontaneously abort within three weeks or less of conception--"mid-month staining." Why? My suspicion is that something was wrong and had there been no spontaneous abortion the creature that would have been born would have had serious "birth defects," probably of such magnitude of seriousness that sustaining its life would be pointless is not impossible. (The defect has to be gross if it has already turned up within the first few weeks of existence, possibly concerning the central nervous system.)

There is clearly a point at which the mother's body assesses the embryo and makes a basic decision (unless, another possibility, the defective embryo triggers its own abortion at some point, possibly by dying), and this is within the first month. Okay, there's one line to be crossed.

Another line is that which is crossed when the creature can survive if untimely ripped from its mother's womb. By this I do not refer to survival in the wild, but survival in an artificial-womb environment. Clearly this is not a fixed line but depends on technology and medical science and developments involving learning precisely what the prematurely-born baby really needs. Right now I think that survivability is where I draw the line. Anything younger than that is a potential human but not yet a viable human.

Now as soon as we begin defining potential as actual (which I feel you do, if in fact you hold that it All starts at conception), we can begin paying with our definitions of what "potential" really means--which is what rich did. He is not the first. The Roman Catholic admonition against male masturbation is based on an interpretation of the Bible which says that semen, male seeds, are potential life, potentially human, and thus equally sacred as a fetus, not to be "wasted" on anything except attempts at procreation. Thus, your reductio ad absurdum is already history. And you are on its side....

You say later, "I'm always bemused when I hear someone talk about the 'right' to commit murder." Why? It is a right which we all possess, being one of those rights made by might--i.e., if I can kill you I have power over you, the foundation of all civilized society and governments, including ours. The right is exercised principally in two areas--war and execution for crime. But the "unwritten law" is that we all, individually have the "right" to kill (or "murder") in the defense of our own life.

You, of course, were not using "murder" in this context. You were applying it to abortion. "Murder" is a word with specific connotations, among them the fact that the victim was a human being, which I imagine was your point, but it also implies malice or evil motives, unlike the more neutral but equally accurate word, "kill."

No one disputes that in an abortion something is killed and dies. Some people (myself among them) feel that "murder" is a rabble-rousing, emotionally-loaded word which, as soon as it appears in discussions of this kind, immediately tips the hand of he who uses it and all but disqualifies him from consideration in a rational debate on the subject.

A word to the wise...

Why, Ted, that's a masterful congeries of misstatement, special pleading, assumptions-not-in-evidence, logical fallacies, and self-contradictions. However did you do it? Last point first: "murder" is, indeed, a word with a precise meaning. It is the willful killing of a human being. This is why we have a separate word for non-willful killing ("manslaughter"). Once the point is made that the foetus is a human being (which I still regard as proved beyond possibility of refutation), the term becomes not only appropriate, but the only appropriate term. If you find the word offensive, surely you must realize how offensive is the deed. As to the "might makes right" argument, you have put your finger on one of the underlying reasons I am an anarchist. But "power" and "right" are not in any sense of the term synonymous. In fact, if you want to look for a central organizing principle of civilization, it would be the organization of restraint of power, the strategies each society develops for particular restraint of power defining cultures.

You set up a continuum of existence from embryo to adult, then you chop embryo out of the continuum on the grounds that it is relatively more helpless as an embryo. Again, I fail to see what the person's relative state of helplessness has to do with whether it is a human being or not. Second, having posited a naive nominalist approach to the concept/thing relationship, you proceed to set a difference of kind (i.e., a "discrete identity") to the fetus based on its ability to survive outside its support system. Shaking of head. Third, you reason inaptly from analogy--the question under discussion is "to what species of beings does a fetus belong." The correct reasoning from acorn to oak is that the acorn belongs to the same species of being as the oak. You seem to have confused the use of potency in this respect. This is hardly a "simplistic" approach.

You are reasoning in advance of your facts with regard to spontaneous abortions. In any case, these spontaneous abortions are completely outside the discourse, as we were talking about willed events. That abortions occur in nature is not a fact that has any bearing on the question of whether one should perform or undertake abortions.

And as to discrete identity being a manmade myth, I laugh in your general direction. That's a

can of worms too vast to be taken up in this forum. Generally, there are three positions on the question: nominalism, idealism, and realism. A flat assertion of nominalism is neither impressive nor convincing.

Incidentally, I believe you have confused two different elements of Catholic doctrine. The Biblical point you refer to is the "sin of Onan," which is "spilling his seed upon the ground." Onan's sin was not coitus interruptus or masturbation, but rather shirking his familial duty to father a child by his sister-in-law so that his brother's line would not end. The prohibition of masturbation, at least as I understand the reasoning, which gets pretty rarified at points, is part and parcel of Thomas' theory of human sexuality, represented at its absolute worst by Humanae Vitae. The objectionable quality is not that it wastes potential life, but rather that it uses sex in an "unnatural" way--i.e., sex which is not oriented to reproduction. This theory I find highly distasteful, as well as logically inconsistent with other notions embodied in the doctrine--such as the Aristotelian dictum that man is a rational animal. I interpret this to mean that sex, like any other appetite, is properly used when it satisfies both the animal (reproductive) function and the intellectual function (delight) simultaneously. Recreational sex ought not to be per se forbidden, as I read the reasoning, any more than eating-for-pleasure is forbidden per se. I would certainly go along with the usual line of prohibition when the gratification of the appetite exceeds (or does not suffice for) the prudent use for the benefit of the people involved.

I thought I'd made additional checkmarks, but I find no more. Well, three pages is probably as many as needed.

Ted White

Rather than take the rest point-by-point, let me turn away from the argument to make a statement.

The reason I've gone along with the abortion discussion thus far is simply to show people--primarily my anarchist and voluntarist colleagues--that it is not the simple open-and-shut question they think it to be. I've come across, too many times, the assumption that there is no good reason for opposing abortion--that the only people who do so are reactionaries working from fundamentalist principles. This is simply not the case. There are people out there who want to make laws and force behavior. The question must be thought out thoroughly and not allowed to slide in on assumption.

As I hope this will be the last word on the subject, let me briefly summarize the argument to date. As this will be a fairly sizeable summary, I'm going back into regular (not bold-

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face) type.

The subject was first broached in Victor Reppert's loc in Quodlibet 11 (page 7), in which he referenced a point from our private correspondence. He remarked that he had run into a person who asserted that the "pro-life" people were trying to impose religious convictions on the public at large. Victor responded that it was not religious principals being debated, but instead a question of fact, and pointed to me as an example--an atheist and anarchist who believed "life began at conception." Before starting to detail the supporting argumentation for my belief that a proposition of fact is true, I responded to the "arrogance and intellectual narrowness of this person who appears to believe that this is a 'settled' issue and that the only opposition to her fuggheaded view is taken by intellectually blind fundamentalists." In the very next paragraph, I demurred to advocating legislation of any kind. So from the very beginning, the argument has been cast in terms of explaining my reasons for believing that this proposition of fact--that the foetus is entitled to full valuation of the human right to life, liberty, and property--is true. That is the only point I have ever intended to make. The text of the argument is that materialist objections having to do with at exactly what point characteristic brain activity and so forth begins, when the foetus is independently viable, and so forth, are irrelevant because "human rights" inhere in a being as a member of an intellectual species, and the foetus is indisputably a member of the species of H. sapiens from the instant it comes into being. The only recourse from this argument is that rights do not inhere at all, but are granted privileges or conventions. If one wishes to argue this position, he is welcome to do so, and I will think much the less of his intellectual abilities.

There follow from this reasoning a number of other factual and ethical propositions--among them the proposition that, by direct substitution, abortion is the wilful killing of a human being--i.e., "murder," by the strictest definition of the term. And as to the ethical consequences of the proposition, the relevant proposition is that, if you regard murder as wrong, then abortion is, again by direct substitution, wrong. As a side commentary, if we recognize the casual murder of the helpless for the sole reason of convenience as especially reprehensible, then abortion is the most reprehensible of all categories of murder.

These are the only points I wished to make, and I feel I have made them. I have constantly refused to argue social convenience or usefulness or possible esthetic qualities.

There is, however, one point that I would address, in the way of a moot social commentary. A great deal has been made of the

withdrawal of federal funding for abortion, as a heinous offense against equity and fairness and so forth. I would plead with these people to stop and think about the proposition with unclouded emotions. Look calmly at the other side of the debate, whether you agree or not. To those people who think or feel abortion to be cold-blooded and horrifying murder, federal funding for abortions is federal funding--their own money, seized by theft--used to support cold-blooded and horrifying murder. Of course they will want to withdraw federal funding--if for no other reason, just to maintain "clean hands." It is not meanness of spirit or the imposition of a stereotype that prompts this, but the logic of the discourse.

It is never safe to trivialize a culture-wide argument of this kind. Laugh it off if you will. Makes me no never mind. But it is discourtesy at the least and wildly foolish behavior at most.

Andy Thornton
1823 E. 7th St., No. 5
Long Beach CA 90813

Dear Bill,
Received Quodlibet this morn;
congratulations

on yet another well done 'zine.

I am unable to find Q13 with the Moorcock essay, so the misquotes must be blamed on my memory. (I believe it is in the "to-be-filed pile," a mass of paper towering to the six foot as of writing).

And you say you aren't a fan...

While it is historically true that Josiah Warren worked out a system of economics in True Civilization in a state of blissful ignorance of Proudhon, the remainder of American anarchists were in constant touch with the European anarchists. Any given issue of Liberty! has something on the topic. Both Proudhon and Stirner were immensely influential on the American movement. May I suggest you use "individualist" and "collectivist" as descriptive terms? We should talk on this when I get up there, as I do not wish to bore the hell out of your readership. Small tho' it may be, you should take care of it.

Feh! upon you, Mr. T. Or is it "Dr." T. Your typing shows every evidence of your possessing five thousand fingers...(one cheap shot deserves another, usw).

Now, I never said (or meant to say, anyway) that no American anarchists were hooked in with the liberal left-wing anarchists of Europe, or that Bakunin was an unknown name in the states. The left-wing anarchists beloved of song and dance have always had a strong, if underground, presence in the U.S. But I specifically exempted them from what I was talking about. People who read an essay by Lysander Spooner and found their way to anarchism fall between two entirely different stools, and I maintain that, however

much one may quantify and tack qualificatory caboose onto the statement, it still stands. The people in the U.S. who were not absorbed into left-wing anarchism did come to the ideas generally on their own. The old anarchist wing of the Libertarian Party, before the purge, were not wholly "left"--one of the many reasons I am dissatisfied with Sam Konkin's "Movement of the Libertarian Left." American Reform Anarchism, to give it a label at random, aint the same breed of dog at all, at all. So what you said is perfectly true and valid and all that good stuff, and what I said is true and valid and all that good stuff. Just talking about different slices of the pie.

And as to the maintenance of my readers, tend to your knitting, DeFarge. You and Sam Konkin are both on my mailing list (I will one day yet provoke SEK into comment!), so consider this a bone toss'd to you.

The terms "individualist" and "collectivist" aren't really terribly appropriate to describe the two strains of anarchists. There are, after all, individualist anarchists in the European strain and syndicalists and so forth in the American Reform strain. Whether one favors organizing according to groups or an atomistic and completely dynamic organization is, after all, a matter of tactics to be used after Der Tag. And I suspect that, were a large-scale anarchiate to be established, it would contain virtually all those tactical solutions, being used on an ad hoc basis.

Ah, Bill, you forget distinguishing characteristics. It may walk like a duck, act like a duck, and smell like a duck--you may be taking a gander at a goose! There is no charge for the pun. If Mister Kyger had sent his missive in a box would it still have been a letter or a parcel? An exercise I leave for the logical to ponder.

In respect of its being sent through the mails, a parcel. In respect of its being a communication in written form, of the appropriate characteristics, a letter. In respect of its content as a loc, a placeholder (zero). Stone soup. I can't believe I typed that with a straight face...

I can't understand why you insist on defending Time Enough for Love. In public yet and in a forum that shall live in filing cabinets--at least mine--for years to come. It's boring and tedious. I fully agree that a novel can also teach as well as entertain, but I want the writer to have something worthwhile to say that cannot be said in any other way. Heinlein is a worthy man of the tall tale. He scribes a ripping good yard. If'n he wants to ruminate "about it all," fine. RAH is not, however, what one would call a brilliant intellect of historical and social insight. TEFL needed one to make it work. Laz Long is a good ole boy from Misery and colors everything with his lame attitudes. Yes, given the attitude of the book and the way it is presented, we are

expected to look through his eyes, but that only takes us back to the question of why Heinlein chose to use LL as the main character; a question of what to write. Laz has learned nothing in the too many years of his life, and I soon got tired of watching him playing the same tired routines. The eternal "philosophy of life" that is pounded home on every page is not suited for fiction as much as it would be suited for something like Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance. That would be, perhaps, a good book, succeeding where TEFL dont.

(Pause while you answer with your diatribe).

Andy Thornton

What? Me? Nevah.

There are other people who have comments along the same lines, so I'll address them as they come up. But let me point out that words like "boring" and "tedious" are not properly descriptions of Time Enough for Love. They are, insteads, descriptions of your attitudes toward the book. Information of a kind--but information about Andy Thornton (and Ted White, and rich brown, apparently), rather than about TEFL. I can't work with your attitudes--I can only work with the ding-an-sich. Point to a fault of the book, and we can discuss it at length; give me an "emotive list," and I say "de gustibus." I didn't find it boring and tedious as a whole--although I will certainly admit to not liking Lazarus Long as much as I like other, similar characters in the canon. So I found some of the long sections that concentrate on Lazarus Long a bit wearying, as I found the realization of sexual mores a bit precious. But, in LL's defense, I would say that he has learned at least one thing of great value, a pearl of great price--to make time to love. This is, after all, the point of the book. And it cannot be restressed enough. Builds strong bodies ten ways.

"Brilliant" is, of course, a question-begging term. I've found the underlying theses of Heinlein's books worthwhile, even when I disagree violently with specific theses--a particular bit from Rolling Stones rises to mind in this context--the point at which Roger Stone says he doesn't care much about any of his sons' classes wherein they don't have to use slipsticks. And, of course, LL was tired of going through the same old routines.

But I will say again that at least the novelette "The Tale of the Adopted Daughter" and the novel "Da Capo" are technically brilliant, and "TOTAD" is incomparably "warm," sensitive, emotive, pathetic, and just plain overwhelming. If you can read Dora's death without leuchtenden augen, you have a circuit missing.

And a final point: you describe Heinlein as "a worthy man of the tall tale. He scribes a ripping good yarn." This may be true of a number of his

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works, but I would hesitate to class Citizen of the Galaxy, for instance, or "Requiem," or any number of other works as "tall tales." Or are you also inclined to characterize Notes from the Underground as "a snappy little toss-off"?

I've heard from a number of other people on this subject and others, but I see that I'm at page 11, which means I don't have space to do another loc and keep Quodlibet 16 to a comfortable twelve pages. So I'll bump rich brown's (incidentally, rich, did you know that the D.C. telephone operators have you listed as "rick" brown???) and Robert Prokop's letters to the next issue, coming out about a month from now, give or take a week or two. The schedule, like the contents, is quodlibetal.

So I'm starting off with several pages' worth of locs for Quodlibet 17, which means that more will probably be bumped to 18, if things take their normal course. However, I promise to clear up all outstanding locs by 18, because that's going to be another genzine issue--sometime in January, 1983. I'm a bit more confident this time around, as I've already started hounding prospective contributors. With any luck at all, Quodlibet 18 will wind up at sixty pages or so.

Also, with number 18, Quodlibet will "go public," in the sense that I'm planning to expand the mailing list to 150 or so fanzine fans (clearing the list of people who have not responded. There are about twelve so far scheduled for the axe unless I hear from them before January 10 or so: Paula Ann Anthony, Bruce Arthurs, Greg Brown, Jim Corrick, Don Horton, Sharon Alban Maples, Bruce Osborn, Bea Patterson [familial piety? What's that?], Mark Price, Victor Reppert, Susan Roberts, and Lisa Dahlslien).

And I'm not pausing the production of these small-and-frequent issues in the meantime. If this works out at all well, I may do genzine-issues quarterly or semi-annually. We'll see how it works out. For those long-time readers, I should prepare you to disregard the inside baccover, as it will contain the same drivel about why the zine is named "Quodlibet" as the last genzine issue had.

And to save last-minute drudgery on my own article and editorial, I've started working on them already, a bit at a time. I'm quite pleased with what I have so far. It's about--but, no. Let's save that for January.

Other last-minute matters: The Codart response finally arrived--not a catalogue, as I had requested, but a promotional letter. A few days later, the KQED offices had the nerve to call me up to badger me about subscribing to it. Fortunately, I didn't find the service valuable

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enough that I would put up with that temerity, so I was quite rude to the telephone solicitor, going into great detail about the problems with the system. At which point, she started to argue with me. So long Codart.

The promotional letter does give a bit more information than the Focus article had (incidentally, did you know that KQED has taken their Focus magazine public? S'truth. They've expanded the thing to about sixty pages and are hawking it on newsstands. Used to be a perquisite of public-tv subscribers. I subscribed this year, to the tune of \$120 in monthly installments of \$10 each. Partly to have the privilege of telling them how disgusting their "Summer Festival" was and partly because they finally managed to bring up a "membership gift" I thought worth the price of admission--in this case the Encyclopedia of Film [which, ironically, doesn't take up a single film, but only lists technical terms-of-art, directors, actors, and so forth. Am I repeating myself? Very well, I'll stop digressing and go on with the main point which, if I recall correctly, was about Codart...]).

The system I surmised and summarized on page 1 seems to be correct. Cutting out the hokum and hype, the letter says: "Every month, you receive a catalog listing hundreds of PersonalPrimeTime Audio programs. You choose only those programs you want. And you pay only for those programs you choose. Probably less than 50 cents a day, if you're like the average listener....The heart of the CODART system is a magic little 5" x 6" keyboard unit called the

Edicoder. It sits near your radio and tape recorder and lets you automatically record the PersonalPrimeTime Audio programs you've selected. The programs are broadcast overnight while you sleep. So when you wake up in the morning, you have a personalized, commercial-free tape to play back whenever you like. Wherever you like. As often as you like....All you need to get started on this audio adventure is the Edicoder, which sells for a one-time purchase price of \$99.50 plus tax, shipping, and handling. And if you're not completely satisfied, you can return it within 30 days and we'll refund your purchase price of \$99.50 plus tax."

The people kindly enclosed a sheet telling what they're offering for November. The list includes articles from Business Week (15 min./day at \$5.00 for four weeks), summaries of financial news (\$4.00 for 15 minutes four days a week for a month), LA Times articles, Prevention magazine, Spring magazine, various special features at from \$1.50 to \$6.00, X-Minus One (which almost persuaded me--four 30-min. episodes for \$4 each), articles from Mother Jones, and music--tapes at \$4-\$5 each. They say music runs to about 25 cents a minute--which makes a standard LP 60 minutes (that's pretty standard these days for "classical"--eat your heart out, rock fans!) run to \$15.00--fairly expensive. However, you can construct a tape cut-by-cut instead of buying entire albums with only a few numbers you want to record. Still strikes me as expensive.

So that's Codart. Not my cuppa. Maybe yours. Mazeltov.

FIRST CLASS

Joe Hoffman
350 McArthur Blvd
Fort Charlotte FL 33952



537 Jones Street, No. 9943
San Francisco CA 94102