

# SPENT BRASS

The apparently frequent fanzine that backs Glasgow in '95, and wants to know why: Published by Andy Hooper and Carrie Root, 4228 Francis Ave. N #103, Seattle, WA 98103, members fwa. Available for the usual. This is Drag Bunt Press Production #137, 5/25/92. Material this time comes from Luke McGuff, and Andy. Art comes from Alexis Gilliland (page 1), Bill Rotsler (page 3), Pat Virzi (titles), and Stu Shiffman (page 1). Thanks to Mark Manning for being a funky, funky fan boy, and Jerry Kaufman for mimeo mastery.

ST:TNG: MONSIEUR HULOT'S HOLODECK

THE FIRST SPENT BRASS POLL Egoboo, in its native form, costs nothing; by Andy.



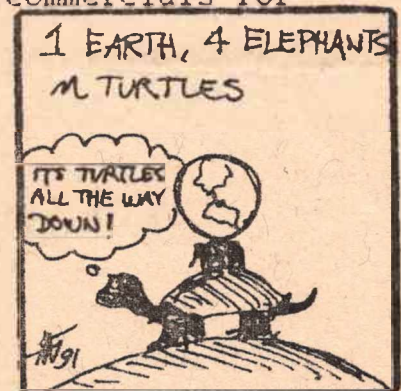
yet there is never enough of it around to keep us and our fellow fan from sniffing for cliques and elitists, jealous of an imaginary treasure. I feel as though I am brimming over with the pungent stuff, in the wake of receiving a Hugo nomination (for which I am grateful), and find myself with an urge to spread it around. So, in an effort to continue our program of trying on the trappings of a focal point fanzine, Spent Brass announces its first annual fanzine Poll. Awards will be made in five areas: Favorite Fanzine, 2.) Favorite Fan Writer, 3.) Favorite Fan Artist, 4.) Favorite Convention, and 5.) Favorite Letterhack. It is up to each voter to define exactly what these broad

categories entail, but we suggest considering the current fannish year to stretch from Chicon (or shortly before) to Magicon. In order to announce the winners at the latter event, all votes must be received by August 15th, 1992. Neither Carrie, myself or Spent Brass are eligible to win; that way, we figure we can vote too. -- aph.

Happy 147th Birthday today to Lip Pike, first professional baseballist.

PRIME TIME ACTIVISM I think one of the big reasons for apathy in this by Luke McGuff country is that we have no commercials for activism. Our lives have

for the most part become based on the images we receive from commercials, which the advertisers then use to justify the images they sell us. The result is that in the act of creating "the front for public consumption," the persona we market through our resumes and singles ads and so on, we have no inner core, no means left for thinking of things we don't get from the info-glut media bombardment. Considering that the "average American" sees 30,000 30-second commercials in a year, the images of consumption get shoved into our neocortex with a needle big enough to give a horse a blood transfusion. So herewith are some commercials ("based on proven sellers") that promote activism and discourse.



Here's a commercial for USBest. It starts with two guys talking on a street corner. Looks like something important. Then they're in a

Suppose they gave a feud and nobody covered it?

McGuff, Con't.: library's public meeting room with three or four other people. Then we see more people walking along streets passing out leaflets. As the music builds, we see the first small group talking to a more and more diverse crowd, men and women, racial rainbow, old and young, suits and punks, etc. Finally we see the original guy give a short speech to several thousand people with signs and banners on the state capitol steps. Others come up to the mike and share their viewpoint. People cheer. Headline says: REFORM BILL PASSES. Voice over: "Only you can make the US Best."

Here's a commercial for Readbooks. Lost of fast tracking shots in libraries, a patron gets a book off a shelf, reads for a bit, looks quizzical, flips to the index. Next we see the patron pointing to the book and talking to a librarian, librarian demonstrates the online catalog. Voice-over of slogans like "I believe there is a genius in all of us," and "I believe seventy is too young to stop thinking." Back to patron, now at a table surrounded by a pile of books, some magazines. Patron is reading and taking notes. With an exclamation, patron stands up, looking happy, holding a book. Voice over tag: "Readbooks. To learn what really matters."

Or how about a different "Stay inside the lines" commercial? Same gray authoritarian teacher. Students march down a hallway, one girl skips out of place. Teacher says stay in line. Grim and prim students march in lock step up to a teacher's desk, turning in "What I Did on My Summer Vacation" essay. There's a globe in the corner behind the teacher. Our girl comes along -- her report has a tinted cover. Oh no! Teacher glares, opens the report -- a dried flower falls out! "Stay inside the lines," he says, and throws her report in the wastebasket.

Cut to girl as a young adult. She looks kind of punky, has a few earrings, long hair. She's wearing black tights, and leading a dance/exercise group of second graders. Her group is happy, smiling, jumping around. On the wall behind them are a number of large, brightly colored maps, showing rainfall, population, resource distribution. Other students in the room are in the corner working on a project with a video camera and a graphics computer. Voice over: "Can you believe all this education for less than \$8,000 per student per year? Jump outside the lines."

Or how about the other one, with the boy in the mud puddle. Only this time, instead of a neglectful Mom (every time he falls down in that puddle, I think he's going to drown), Mom and boy are working together over a chemistry set. Same voice over, "They say our personalities are formed at a very young age." Boy pours something into a beaker. The liquid inside changes color, smokes, boils over, they both laugh. Cut to boy as an old man, accepting the Nobel Prize. CANCER CURE FOUND says headline.

Or this for a tea bag commercial. Couple driving a truck, talking happily. They pull up at a curb, get out, unload their truck. It's all 2 X 4s and building materials -- more people arrive and pitch in, put on masks and goggles, begin to shovel out an abandoned storefront. Sheet rock is hung, then primed. A swarm of kids arrive to paint a mural. They make their own plans and do their own work. An Asian woman and a Black man talk together over some plans. Everyone knows their task so well that no real "leader" is needed.

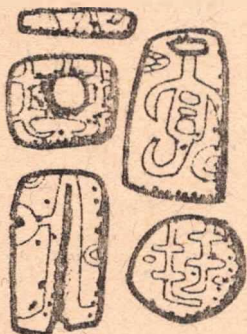
Now a group of oldsters arrive to pass out refreshments (iced tea and cookies) and kibbitz. Shelves are built than everybody puts the books up. Couches, a ping-pong table, a refrigerator. Pull back outside, there's a mural out front: POLYCULTURAL COMMUNITY CENTER. The Mayor gives a speech, cuts a ribbon. Everyone's real happy, balloons and used-car-lot flags. Voice over: When you have an active thirst for activism, try CommuniTea."

Here's one so far out I couldn't even think of a real commercial to base it on. Music: "Stand by me." Slow pan over grim looking crowd behind police barricade. Facing them is a row of cops, anonymous behind riot gear. Limousine enters scene with motorcycle escort. Crowd yells and waves signs that say "Give us homes," and "No high rises." As the limo enters the scene it stops. A man gets out, handlers following frantically. The crowd gets really excited and the man glares at them. Then he walks under the barricade into the crowd. Next we see him sitting on a stoop, suitcoat off, tie loosened, taking notes and nodding as people talk to him. "Stand by me" continues over the final cut to a prestigious dinner, with a model of a hundred-story high-rise in a prominent location. everyone's shuffling nervously because the man isn't there to announce the start of the project. I guess the only thing more ludicrous than commercials for cooperative activism is one for politicians accountable to their constituents.

Kind of brings a tear to the eye, don't it, all those little Frank Capra moments. But look at it this way: We watch hundreds of commercials for 4x4s that show people climbing mountains, and most people just use theirs to drive to Green Lake and pedal around. Maybe if we had commercials for big activism, we'd get more literacy volunteers. -- L.M.

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Please note: What follows are groundless lies.  
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A VISITOR TO SAN CLEMENTE  
by Andy



ALIEN MONARCH. UK '86

Dick swept the detector dish in a slow arc before him, closing his eyes, listening hard for the tell-tale tone of metal. Shutting out the low hiss of the waves, he was rewarded with a short, loud blip: Something small, but close to the surface. He knelt and jabbed the probe into the yielding sand, and pushed up. The coin was still shiny, it was a new Kennedy half-dollar. "Crap," said Dick, and he flung the piece back into the surf.

The little spaceship came out of the setting sun, low over the waves. It made a noise like a band saw, and green sparks fell heavily from its underslung exhaust pipes. It nosed down quite suddenly, and made a controlled crash-landing on the strand, not 30 yards away from where Dick was standing.

A door opened in the ship's side, followed by a metal gangplank. Two men came out, toting cheap-looking ray rifles, wearing brass-plated helmets and what looked like white leather bondage gear. Following them was an old, old man, dressed in a firecracker-red robe with unfathomable characters on the sleeves. He leaned on a stick with his right hand, and was supported at the left by another soldier. His head was smooth and bald, except for a pale goatee, and equally white, drooping mustaches. His nails were extravagantly long and lacquered as black as death.

Dick took off the head phones, left the detector in the sand. He strode forward to embrace the older man's hand, thrilled at the touch of those dark claws against his wrist, the heavy opal rings against his lips. "So," he said, "Is it time?"

The alien monarch nodded. "My people believe me dead. The Princes, Barin and Thun, proposed a constitutional dual-monarchy even as the door of the atomic furnace closed behind me. They have contrived a cease-fire with the tree-people. All my mystic/scientific wonders, two-way TV, the electric mesmerizer, the static-electric torture table, have been privatised. My world is unplugged."

Dick shook his head in dismay. "You were never appreciated, your excellency. Ungrateful children are the same across the universe. Are

you ready to move into the north wing with the Generallissimo and I?"

The visitor shook briefly, and his china-white skin empurpled visibly. "Never!", he spat, "I can't retire, with all my enemies triumphant! What I need is a new man, someone young, well-tanned, experienced in foreign policy...you're not even 120 yet, Dick."

Dick was moved. He couldn't speak. "You would have to face many trials," said the Emperor. "Never a moment's peace. If it isn't the Clay-men in revolt, it's the Hawk-men. Your own family conspire your death with alien scientists. Robot soldiers get more expensive all the time."

"I know all about incompetent help," said Dick. "but then they don't have Cubans where you come from, do they?"

The Emperor leaned close on his gnarled cane. "Dick, what I'm saying is this: How would you like to find out what "offshore" really means?" He smiled as he said this, and twirled one snowy mustachio. Dick looked down at the beach, at his cracked huaraches and the black socks. Going home, he thought. He smiled back, and held out his hand. "Hell, your mercilessness, I'm ready to leave right now." And Dick in his brown Bermudas and the Monarch in his orange-red robes, mounted the tin gangway, and their laughter echoed hollowly from within as the green fire flew.

The ship climbed swiftly, turned once over the compound, and then east. As it sparkled away, a man in a dark suit who had been standing on the dune above, pulled the little white earphone out of his ear.

"God help Mongo," he said. -- aph

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Vote "The Bakery that men don't see" for best non-fiction Hugo!  
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