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Well, I'm in charge of FreFanZine now. The last mailing before I take over is out. Very puny--four contributors; 22 pages. But I've been just as busy as a little beaver lining up contributors for the next one, which will be out Feb. 1. I think what I'll probably do is move the deadlines back a little at a time until it's a bimonthly alternating with SFPA. Deadline for #16 will be March 21 (you saw it here first), and I'll need about 40 copies (with participation as low as it's been, I want to have plenty to send around to possibly interested parties). As for the current level of participation, as opposed to the level before I took over, I figure on having at least a dozen contributors for #15. If you're interested in a spec copy, just indicate the fact in a comment to me next mailing.

Nothing else particularly printable has happened to me lately (the HalfaCon report is under separate cover), so let's have some mcs.

I'M NOT ELIGIBLE... (Hutchinson) My plans to microfilm my collection have been suspended for the time being, but I do plan (at the moment) to get some of that done next summer. I figure on huckstering away hard copies of some of the less exciting items (like a complete run of JUSTICE LEAGUE OF AMERICA) but hanging onto things like POGO, UNCLE SCROOGE, etc. This will get rid of about 80% of the bulk in my collection without reducing the quality noticeably, and I very much need to shed some bulk.

JUST IMAGICON (Caruthers) I've been hearing so much about your new weight level that I'm going to be extremely upset if you backslide before I see you in May. (Just a friendly warning...)

The newspaper item you printed about Illinois allowing doctors to prescribe marijuana for glaucoma (how generous of them) should at least shut up those critics who claim that there is absolutely no legitimate (whatever that means) use for dope. It won't, of course, but it should.

What's your image? Hard for me to say. Men seem to like you (or tend to like you) more than women, but that's not at all surprising.

You don't have to apologize to me for liking Harlan Ellison, P.L. I'm aware that no human being could possibly be as devoid of redeeming characteristics as I perceive Ellison to be--it's just that circumstances have made me more aware than most people of his faults, which are many, varied, and absolutely incredible in an adult. The fact that he chooses not to display whatever virtues I surmise him to have in my presence doesn't mean other people can't see them, particularly attractive females, to whom one might easily imagine he would be inclined to show his best qualities.

THE NEW PORT NEWS (Brooks) Yes, Ned, it's true that the reason most people don't get upset with RALLY! is because of its reputation for kidding around and printing outrageous stories about people. But in the particular case in question, I think it's important to point out that every single word was true--I'm not the kind of person who thinks it's funny to go kidding around with strangers, so even tho I wrote the story in a flippant style, I did take great care to verify the facts before printing it. When Ellison calls me a liar for printing it...what can I say? He's lying.

Brooks (cont.) It shouldn't be too difficult getting rid of the typers, mimeos, dittos and stuff you have cluttering up your house. Just bring some of it to a con and put it on your huckster table.

What caused the light spots in my zine last time and the time before was using a regular closed-drum mimeo that was low on ink. I've been using mostly silkscreen machines for the past 8-10 years or so, and have mostly forgotten how to diagnose problems in the other kind.

You'll probably be dumped on by every funnybook freak in SFPA for this, but I might as well add my 2¢ worth. Earthquake McGoon was a character in LI'L ABNER. Popeye's enemy was Bluto.

GUNFIGHTERS (Jennings) Old comics might not sell at the outrageous prices dealers ask for them, but I strongly suspect that if you put them out at \$2.50-\$4 each, they'd disappear fast enough to convince you you'd made a mistake. Anyway, what you say is really true only of superhero comics. The better funny animal ones (Barks, Kelly, etc.) do seem to get the high prices.

DC is dropping its mystery/horror anthology line? Gee, that's news to me. I don't buy all that many (just those with Nino, Ditko or something equally worthwhile), but I'll be kind of sorry to see it go--HOUSE OF MYSTERY, particularly, has been coming out about as long as I've been reading comics, and longer than anything else DC does except the Big Three superheroes (Superman, Batman and Wonder Woman) and their related titles. Sigh. Any idea what they're going to replace them with in the printer's schedule, or is it just a continuation of The DC Implosion?

I really doubt Marvel's total backlog is as big as DC's, even discounting quality and type of story. It's true that they've got all those horror, western, war, Archie-type and other stuff from the 50s, but DC has, aside from its own not-inconsiderable output, all the stuff published by Quality, Fawcett, ACG and God knows who else. And I really think the total pagecount of the Captain Marvel stories alone would dwarf all of Timely and Atlas put together.

I am absolutely astonished that another sane-appearing person could, with a straight face, say that the main and only legitimate object of punishment is to make the wrongdoer suffer. I could understand a desire to imprison criminals in order to make it physically impossible for them to hurt honest people (whatever they are). If there were any evidence that punishment had any corrective effect, I could understand using it for that. But I have never understood a desire for mere revenge, I can never understand it, and I think those who possess it are sick.

DWERD'S DWELLING (Reed) Ditko is only one of the off-the-wall artists I'd like to see illustrating Batman. Kubert is another. But now that one hardly does any artwork anymore and the other got disgusted and went back to Marvel, I don't think that's very likely. Anywho, Levitz has already done one thing with Batman that I would call "totally off the wall"--killed him off.

If you plant your chickens heads-up, they might grow better.

GIGO (Davis) Oh, sure, most funnybook freaks consider newspaper comics part of the field. A little inconvenient to collect (for most people, anyway), but certainly worthwhile. Anyway, Leiber's having scripted the Buck Rogers strip doesn't make him the only Hugo winner to have done comics. Offhand, I can think of Alfred Bester, Harlan Ellison, Edmond Hamilton and I'm sure many others whose names will spring to mind soon as this stencil is out of the typer.

JUST ANOTHER DAMN SFPA WAITLISTER (Lambert)

Yeah, I suppose it's theoretically possible that someone holding a position of power could have the best interests of the public in mind, and wield his power in a benign manner. And I suppose it's also possible that such a person might have existed in one or two freak situations in history. But I tend to agree with Ned when he says that we're ruled by evil men, because the lust for power is evil in itself, and anyone who seeks it must have some motive besides doing good. And even in such freak situations, as you point out, power does tend to corrupt people.

Lafferty did say some really interesting things in front of the audience at the DSC in Birmingham. It's just that he wasn't speaking into the microphone, so I was the only one who heard him.

I'm a bit confused, Lane. In one sentence, you say that if it weren't for gun control, the KKK, Nazis and all sorts of other unsavory characters would be toting arsenals, and then in the next sentence, as if in illustration of the point, you cite the arsenals they do tote. Obviously, making it against the law doesn't impress people like them. Maybe if it weren't so illegal, people would have an easier time defending themselves from the gun-wielding nuts who arm themselves anyway--at the very least, a common mugger would be a bit more reluctant to pull a gun on a stranger, not knowing whether or not he'd get his head blown off for it. The rise in violent crime is cited as a reason it's necessary to restrict the use of guns--but the crime rate rises right along with the level of gun restriction, leading one to suppose that if there's a connection between the two, it's not the one the gun-control fanatics think it is. And anyway, if you don't mind indulging in an absurd fantasy for a moment, suppose--just suppose it were actually possible to keep guns away from people who want them. Ridiculous assumption, of course, but if it actually happened, the only people remaining armed would be policemen. And that, Lane, scare the fucking shit out of me.

You say you've been getting more anti-government lately, but still think it seems necessary. Maybe a little exposure to intelligent anarchists would push you over the line. Can I send you a spec copy of FreFanZine?

Tom Lehrer isn't doing much of anything these days. Teaching math, of course, I think at some small university in California. And I heard a few years ago that he would occasionally have silly poems in mathematical journals. But his records still get played, and I hear his songs from the most unexpected sources, so it's surprising that he's living in such obscurity.

I don't know how much you'd have to pay for MICKEY MOUSE MEETS THE AIR PIRATES FUNNIES, but I saw a copy in near-mint condition on a huckster table last year, with a \$5 pricetag, and it went in minutes. Another dealer opined that one could probably get about \$20 for it now, if one were willing to hold onto it until a real fanatic came along. In a couple more years, I guess it'll join the ranks of three-digit comics. That, and HERBIE #1, which has suddenly started going for a fortune. As for AIR PIRATES #3, the one that came out just before Disney got a court order banning sale, I imagine it's probably beyond price.

Somebody or other remarked that the "slow glass" concept is one of the few really original ideas for a technological breakthrough that science fiction has come up with in a couple of decades, and I'm inclined to agree. Not only that, but the stories were well done to boot. It was a bit disconcerting to see Tony Isabella rip off and totally mangle the idea in the fourth or fifth magazine entitled UNKNOWN WORLDS, but in a way, even that is testimony to what a fine concept it is. That alone would make me a Bob Shaw fan, even if he'd never written another word.

SOME OF OUR PLANNERS ARE MISSING (Juge) You know, a lot of the less pleasant experiences I've had in life have come from tying my fortunes too closely to those of other people. In fact, I'd go so far as to say most of my problems getting along in the world, not to mention an awful lot of the ones I've seen of other people, come from that source. I preach a philosophy of self-reliance, but what I practice is less than perfect in that regard. But I'm learning. I have hopes of someday being burned badly enough for the lesson to sink in. If that hasn't happened already, of course, and only time will tell if I've finally caught on this time.

Indeed yes, staying high on drugs all the time is just exchanging one set of permanent filters through which to view the world for another. Which is why the prospect of doing so, at least when I'm in a reasonably decent frame of mind, is unattractive to me. But a total rejection of mind-altering drugs is, to me, even worse, because the perpetual drug user at least understands that an altered frame of reference can be a valid one.

I picked up the expression "The map is not the territory" from Robert Anton Wilson, who could easily have gotten it from Korzybski. You know, although Korzybski read like gibberish to me when I was in high school, every time you talk about him, you make me want to get hold of some of his stuff and check him out again. I was a pretty immature high school kid--in fact, I'm a pretty immature 32-year-old now, but that's not quite so bad--so it wouldn't be at all surprising if I understood it now, especially since you say my thought processes are so much like his.

"HHOK" = "Ha Ha Only Kidding".

I'm looking forward to seeing your Popeyes Fried Chicken commercials here in Phoenix. Actually, I have an ulterior motive for that--I'm looking forward to seeing Popeyes Fried Chicken itself here in Phoenix. Haven't had a chance to luv dat chicken since July. In fact, one of my major motivations for planning a trip to N.O. for Mardi Gras is for another taste.

Every time I read one of your zines, I make mental notes of books I've got to read soon as I run across them. I've got to start writing the things down, there are so many of them.

SHE JACKNIFED INTO THE AIR, THROWING UP AS SHE SOARED (Wells) Migod, George,

what memories you dredge up! I did recall sitting with you in a bar at IACon (nearly seven years ago), but didn't recall it in such detail until you ran that paragraph about it here. Let's see, now--I couldn't have quite said that three of the four people who had been OE of SFPA were at the previous table I'd been sitting at, because at the time, there were six. But the three, now that you recall it for me, were me, Lon and Joe Station. But Dave was at that con--that was the only time I'd met him until the '75 HalfaCon, matter of fact, and the meeting was brief. That's still the only time I've met Joe.

UTGARD (Hulan) The idea of an apa as a place to showcase your talent, rather than as simply a communication medium, isn't entirely foreign to SFPA. It was more prevalent a few years ago than it is now, but even now, there's a lot more of the art-for-art's-sake here than there is in, say, FreFanZine, which, with few exceptions, is kind of grungy. Not as much, however, as there is in, say, CAPA-alpha (at least, while I was there), where a zine could actually be challenged and denied credit just for being poorly written and/or drawn, but enough to be noticeable. I think that may be a consequence of having an Ego Boo Poll, particularly one to which some importance is attached.

Hulan (cont)) I don't mean to denigrate Lynn Hickman as a person, since I don't even know him, but I must say, his contributions to SFPA during his first two (brief) periods of membership were less than impressive, and from the beginning of his current stint I see no reason to expect anything different. (I wasn't a member when he was in before, but I do have all of the mailings from that period.) If honorary Southern status were to be granted to anyone--and I would hate to see a precedent for it established for any reason--I can't even imagine the tiniest reason for him to be the one to get it. In fact, if I were in his position, I'd even be embarrassed to have such a thing discussed, and I wouldn't be surprised if he is. As you say, Dave Locke was a member earlier and longer, and with all due respect, was considerably more prominent. Tho, as I say, I'd hate to see such special treatment given to anyone, Locke would be a much better candidate--even tho I don't particularly like him personally, he writes extremely well and can be a great asset to any apa ~~as/1076/42/46/4000~~ ~~47/4047/4447/40047/4147~~. But if we're fantasizing in this direction, what a bout Mark Verheiden? If any non-Southerner who has ever been in SFPA deserves such an honor (and nobody does), he's the one.

Speaking of whom... THIN ICE (Verheiden) I've never seen a copy of WEREWOLF VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMAN--or even heard of it, outside of George Wells' zines--but I do remember THE CLONES from when it first came out, somewhere between 10 and 15 years ago, I think. As I recall, the obviously pseudonymous P.T. Olemly was a collaboration between two authors who had done other stuff in the sf field, tho I paid so little attention at the time that I've completely forgotten who they were. Perhaps George or Ned would know--and if I remember wrong, perhaps they'd know that too.

I haven't seen WATERSHIP DOWN yet, but I do plan to. I'm not surprised that it could just as well have been done with real rabbits--the book was that way, too, with the rabbits not doing anything different from what real rabbits do except maybe talk to one another, and we don't know they don't do that.

Yup, yup, nothing is so goddamn important that it's worth taking seriously. Nice to kick myself in the ass once in awhile and remind myself of that important fact. It's so easy to forget.

SLOWER THAN INFINITY (Hyde) Since you're new around here, I'm not going to make any of the obvious remarks about your opinion of comics fans and collectors, which several very vocal SFPANs who can write rings around you are. But as a general rule, you know, it's a good idea to know your audience before saying stuff like that, and to smile when you say it, podnuh.

Oh, and what makes you think having relatives in the film distribution business makes your opinions on films worth a pile of shit? Not that they aren't, of course, but I'd give a little more weight to them if they were supported with something more substantial than a string of adjectives and the assertion that you almost lost your girlfriend to THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW.

I'M COMIN', BEANY BOY! (Hutchinson) By all means, run your POGO index through SFPA. I'd offer to help out with some info for it, but I seriously doubt my puny little collection could provide any information you don't already have. But let me know which issues you need info on, and I'll run a notice in RALLY!, for whatever that's worth.

I refuse to believe you can't tell the difference between Bob Montana's Archie artwork and Bob Bolling's.

WILKINSON (cont.) I enjoyed the first installment of the EC Library too, and I think it's a wonderful project and all that, but I don't go all apeshit over it. EC comics were fine things, but they weren't as good as a lot of others (Plastic Man, The Spirit and a few others spring to mind immediately), and their republication in omnibus volumes has brought out a fact about them that I didn't even suspect before--it's very easy to o.d. on them. Still, I plan to pick up future volumes as they come out, possibly excepting the horror ones, which I'm not all that fond of.

Two years is how long it's been. Thanks for noticing. From the next zine in the mailing, I gather not everyone has.

You bought the B&B "Strange Sports Stories" when you were 12? That's pretty good. Can you get me a few comics three years before they come out?

Wallow in your false sense of security if it makes you feel good, Alan, but if they reinstitute the draft, nobody is safe from it. The only reason people over 26 were "safe" before is because the same people who enacted the law said they were--something they can easily refrain from doing.

I don't think it's all that courteous to listen to a spiel from a telephone salesperson. Much kinder, I'd say, to inform him early in the conversation that he's wasting his time talking to you.

You know, I almost envy people who can drop acid and see all the bizarre things acidheads are supposed to see. All I ever see are the same old things in new ways. As for your assertion that your brother dropped once and saw everyone around him melting, well, I'm not your brother, so I really can't say how valid what he saw was. My guess is that he saw things in a way that he couldn't describe to anyone who hadn't had the experience, and saying they looked like they were melting seemed the best way of expressing it. Of course, I don't know that everyone around him wasn't melting...

I don't have first-hand knowledge of the so-called "death threat" Harlan Ellison is supposed to have received regarding his ERA stand, but I do have second-hand knowledge of it (that is, knowledge from people who have actually seen the letter), and that's closer to the horse's mouth than you'll find anywhere else in this apa (or most others). According to my sources--note plural--the "death threat" was from some well-meaning soul who wrote pointing out that Arizona is the state where Don Boiles (Phoenix reporter strongly disliked by the local power structure) was murdered, adding that the world is full of lunatics who do this sort of thing to people, and suggesting that he might consider being careful. Ellison never quoted the letter directly, but got an awful lot of mileage out of it.

And if I may jump from there to your next paragraph, where you defend me against the charge of having used Ellison's notorious volatility to jockey myself into BNFdom--thanks. Of course, the charge is so totally absurd on the face of it (how could I possibly have engineered that?) that I can't imagine anyone taking it seriously, but still, thanks. While we're on the subject, tho, I think I'll take this opportunity to accuse Ellison of having used me to enhance his glory. As demonstrated by the "death threat" incident, the "time-wasting, yellow-journalist asshole" incident and countless others, Ellison will apparently seize upon any opportunity to shriek at the top of his lungs about how persecuted he is. And the groupies just eat it up.

When can you pick up your Rebel Award? Any time, as far as I'm concerned.

When you get to the point of selling comics cheap to a dealer, keep me in mind...

USMA MOCHUP (Burchinas) It is kind of funny to see good ol' Black Pete being blandified into Sneaky Pete these days--especially since Black Pete himself is a blandification of the original name, Peg-Leg Pete. I guess every generation has its own bete noir. Or bete something, at any rate.

Thanks very much for telling me about all these Barks reprints that are around. I would almost certainly have missed them, since I never seem to get around to going to comics specialty stores and they don't seem to show up anywhere else. In the case of the Dynabrite Comics, that's not so important, since I have originals or good reprints of all the stories I'm particularly interested in (including "Mickey and the Beanstalk"). But the WALT DISNEY'S BEST COMICS volumes are really worth knowing about, since my collection lacks two of the Duck stories ("Magic Hourglass" and, you guessed it, "Maharajah Donald") and more likely than not all of the Mouse, which I don't keep catalogued in my head in quite so much detail.

By the way, was there a WALT DISNEY'S CHRISTMAS PARADE this year? If so, I guess I missed it.

WISMAHI YEYAPI (Kennedy) If they ever elect me Pope, I haven't quite decided what I'll call myself. So far, it's a tossup between Peter II and Judas I. Sigh. Can't pack my bags for the trip to Rome until I make that important decision...

Shadow-SPPA (Waitlist Gang) MY DESTINY IS NOT YET FULFILLED (Karrh) Somehow, the image of you sitting around with your cats and your window garden for 30 years like a typical stereotyped schoolteacher is so utterly ludicrous that I can't even reply to it.

You know, this notion that if women were in charge of the world there would be no more wars is intriguing. No less so, just because when I first heard it the best known female heads of state were Golda Meir and Indira Gandhi...

ESPRIT DE CORPSE (Bridget) Can't say as I think much of your choice in title puns, but that's life.

You know, Bill, it's really hard for me to grasp this image you project of fandom, of all things, enforcing conformity on newcomers. If ever there were a functioning anarchy, man, this is it. Now, it's quite true that a neofan can get off on the wrong foot...you, in particular, came out with both fists swinging, displaying a remarkable propensity for pissing people off that persists to this very day. I perceive in your writing occasional--very occasional--flashes of a warm, sensitive human being. But you cover your tracks so well that not one person in ten seems to admit seeing a nything worthwhile in your in-print personality at all. Stop being so goddamn defensive about every tiny thing that happens to or around you, and you'll find that fandom will let you be yourself more than you can imagine.

AJ'S WEB (Barker) Only one real comment hook for me in your zine, but it's a lulu. In fact, I'm not even going to respond in full because it's entirely too long a diatribe to fit in a reasonable mailing comment. You see, when someone says something like "If you don't vote, don't gripe", I feel a slight depression on my chest. A Button is being pushed. Of all the asinine pieces of conventional wisdom that pass for thought among the unthinking, that is the most. Nothing personal intended, of course. I've been years getting rid of my programmed non-thoughts, and I'm sure I've still got some irrational beliefs that I haven't subjected

Barber cont. to logical scrutiny yet. As a matter of fact, I voted as recently as 1976. But even then, I recognized a refusal to vote as a valid protest against a worthless slate of candidates. I mean, suppose you vote, and your candidate wins? Can you gripe then? I really think the non-voter, whose hands are clean, has a firmer basis from which to gripe than someone who actually helped put the asshole into office.

Of course, even regarding the non-vote as a protest against the candidates is still Playing The Game. If you'll back up to my comment to Lane Lambert, you might get an idea why I consider a refusal ever to vote a valid protest against the System itself. I used to say that if I ever found a candidate it didn't make me sick to vote for, then I'd vote (that's why I voted in 1976--at the time, I thought having Roger McBride as President wouldn't make me sick). Having thought it through more thoroughly now, I add that the only candidate I'd vote for would be one who promised to abolish the office immediately upon assuming it. That's why I don't vote--my choice isn't on the ballot.

Enough! I could go on forever, but I'll close with something along these lines that I at least got a grin out of. There was an article in TV GUIDE a couple of months ago about those replies to TV editorials you occasionally see. One election day, some station ran what it thought was a perfectly innocent, non-repliable editorial about how everyone should all go out and vote for the candidate of his choice. Well, sir, they got a reply to it, from the Nobody For President Campaign, to the effect that people shouldn't vote; it only encourages the politicians. Conventional wisdom says that the small plurality Nobody got in the last Presidential campaign is a sign of horrifying apathy and should be stamped out (some say by making voting compulsory, which strikes me as the ultimate in totalitarianism). But I look at evidence of massive disillusionment with the System and am encouraged.

Sorry if my strong words back at the beginning offended you. Like I say, this is one of my Buttons--and you should know that no matter how self-evident something seems to you, somebody, somewhere, can make a case for the opposite. (If you don't think the case is made, and would like to see the real diatribe, just ask. I may write it anyway--it strikes me as an article I could possibly sell.)

WAITING IS..... (Lynch) I've been in hotels with some strange mixtures of conventions. Like, there was one years ago that we shared with a convention of Scientologists. They thought we were weird! Obviously, they've forgotten their origins.

FLYING IS TYING IS YING (Sp erhauk) It is really amazing that I can get through as long and entertaining a zine as this without finding a single substantial comment hook. When are you going to do some duck cartoons for RALLY!

GIMBOATE (Steele) I'll probably have my Selectric back next mailing. I'll get into the act then. (With or without it, I can still read that Symbol golfball stuff almost as fluently as English.)

When you attach your Selectric to your computer so the computer can type your zines without errors, why not go all the way and have it justify the margins, too?

Not going to IguanaCon would have been far worse than being there could possibly have been--no way do I run from that sort of shit. But I couldn't have been a "mystery" guest at the Roast--not without a mask. I'm sure the con wasn't a day old before I was spotted to him.

UNUSUAL (Biffers) In the entire three years I was DE, there was only one mailing loss scare, and that turned out to be a false alarm. Now, it seems to be s.o.p. Oh, for an alternative to the Post Offal!

I did buy a copy of SUPERMAN VS. MUHAMMAD ALI when it came out, and was fairly well impressed by it. Good story, really good artwork, and some nice touches. Lucky you, to get a half dozen for free. Hang onto them; they'll be worth a fortune in a couple of years.

There weren't any KISS fans at Iggy to see their idols, as far as I know. Nobody knew they were even there, except the fans who were actually at the con, and all but one of them stayed in the room. In fact, their publicity flacks even deny that they were there, and some fannish outlets (notably Mike Glycer) gave space to the denial. (I don't personally know that they were there after all, but I don't take the PR people's denial as evidence, and I do know a couple of committee people who tell plausible stories of why they think the people there really were KISS.)

There isn't really much point arguing the nature of reality through mailing comments, Cliff, but I will say that if you think "The average person has sufficient qualities of discernment to perceive reality in an objective way--that is, to filter out his prejudices and assumptions before he makes a value judgment," then you obviously don't understand what I was saying. The average person has never seen reality except through his prejudices and assumptions--and neither has the exceptional person--and therefore has no true knowledge on which to base these so-called objective judgments. In fact, I really doubt anyone even has a clear enough idea what his prejudices and assumptions are, to make even a decent attempt. For example, your prejudices and assumptions apparently include the notion that there exists an objective reality to perceive; whereas my prejudices and assumptions tell me that this idea, like the image of a neutron as a little hard ball existing in a single location in space, is entirely too simple to be an adequate representation of the universe. If you want to continue this line of conversation next mailing, I'm game, and may even be persuadable into expanding on the above if anyone would like to hear a diatribe on the subject. But give the matter a lot of thought before replying, OK? This is the sort of thing that could easily degenerate into a mere recitation of prejudices and assumptions, which would get kind of boring after a few mailings.

FATHER CHRISTMAS (weber) I don't know how FIRE IN THE SKY appeared elsewhere, but in this area, it was quite well received. At least, among fans--we all have, uh, common experiences that helped us to appreciate that wonderful scene of the Hyatt Regency tumbling down. It was sort of ridiculous, of course, to have only one major character get skragged during a disaster movie, but I did like the way they did it. (In case anyone missed the movie, the scientist goes to the exact point of the comet's strike, 50 miles out in the desert. He runs into a bunch of Indians fleeing on foot. Uses his CB to call for a helicopter and gives his car to the younger ones. As he sets out his instruments, and it's becoming apparent that the helicopter isn't coming, an old man asks if his science can stop the comet. Says no, and asks if any of the Indian's magic can stop it. The Indian says he has something just as good, and pulls out his pipe. Exit all, smiling.)

RASPUTIN'S DRAWERS (DA Longo) I can well imagine von Turk would tell good stories about his dreams. His stories tend to be quite good no matter what they're about. I'd oblige you with some stories of my dreams, but can't think offhand of any that I'd care to put in print.

HERBIE (Brown) Since you've got this nice library of Warner Brothers cartoons now, perhaps you'd care to do me a somewhat large favor. There's this song that turns up occasionally in Chuck Jones cartoons--I call it the Italian Waiter song because I first became aware of it in a cartoon about an Italian restaurant, but it can show up any time food is being served. I'd like to know all the words to it because I like to sing it while I'm tossing the salad that I usually make for the pot luck dinners a few of us have on Sunday nights, but I'm only fairly sure of three lines--"Whatsa matta, whatsa matta, hey, whatsa matta fa you//I'm-a give you cacciatore an'a pizza that's good to chew..." Well, make that two lines, tho I can fill in most of the last. Anywho, if you could correct those, if necessary, and supply the missing ones, I'd appreciate it.

EGOBOO POLL RESULTS (Hutchinson) This will have to wait until nextish to get noted in RALLY!. Sorry it missed by so little, but I was in a hurry to get the last one out in time for HalfaCon, couldn't get Alan on the phone, and Rosie couldn't tell me who won. I don't suppose it'll have any effect on the world's only one-sided feud to tender my congratulations for this long-awaited honor, but I do anyway.

I'm still in the Top Ten, I see, but dropping every year. Sigh. One of these years, I'm going to have to start contributing again. Thanx to all who voted for me.

Not running for a third term, Alan? Would it tempt you if I mentioned that if you do, you'll have done 20 mailings in a row, beating out my 19-mailing record?

THE MORAVIAN PREFECTURE (Moudry) Now, there's a title I never expected to see again--and in SFGA, no less.

For some reason, it comes as no surprise to me that the racial problems in South Africa are more complex than the American zealots who want to make over the whole world in their own image and likeness would have us believe. It will also come as no surprise to me when the solutions that they work out for themselves turn out to be more just and long-lasting than anything that can be imposed on them from outside can be (tho they'll certainly go through some bad periods getting there).

Good heavens, another mailing commented on more-or-less from beginning to end. If I keep this sort of stuff up, next thing you know I'll be doing oneshots again, or running for OE, or something equally improbable.

By the way, remember a couple of mailings ago when I said I was going to have to acquire a vehicle of some sort that I could use to transport masses of hucksterable material to and from cons? Well, I've gone and done it. Didn't just get a van--no, the one I bought qualifies as a genuine Classic Vehicle, one of the few vans to do so. The Duckmobile is a 1957 Volkswagen in near-mint condition, previously owned by a mechanic who kept it in top running order and who spent an entire day showing me how to take care of it. The first major use of it will probably be for a trip to New Orleans for Mardi Gras (got floor space for four or five crashers, Linda?)--that's the best way I know to get most of my expenses paid for a trip to Austin to pick up a few essential belongings (Selectric, waterbed, Gestetner, offset machine, HERBIE collection, etc.). Most of you will probably have a chance to see The Duckmobile, either on that trip or on one of the several I plan to make during the spring and summer. (Other than that one trip in late February, you couldn't drag me out of Arizona in the winter.)

Can't think of any two-line closings that I haven't done to death, so why don't you just supply your own?