



# SPIRITUS MUNDI 193

A SFPazine for SFPA #231 by  
Guy H. Lillian III \* P.O. Box 53092 \* New  
Orleans LA 70153-3092  
GHLIII@yahoo.com  
504/482-7083 \* 504/909-7084  
GHLIII Press Publication #945  
January 1, 2003



We put the puppy down on the welcome mat, knocked on the door, and hid. The seconds before Nita and Harold answered were interminable. What if Harold's Christmas present freaked out and took off? But no, he just sat there like a little fur ball until Rosy's mother and stepfather opened the door, and looked down. "Well, hi there, pal! Come on in!"

Merry Christmas, Harold! And Happy New Year, SFPA!

2003 is barely nine hours old here in the Central Time Zone, but I've been up and at it for quite some time. True, the fireworks noise outside hit its midnight peak just as Rose-Marie and I were spiraling down to slumber, and our New Year's Eve celebration consisted of an Italian dinner at Liuzza's and the first weird hour of **The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover**, a holiday movie if ever there *wasn't* one. But this morning I was up early and at fannish tasks. I played with DUFF stuff, downloaded the Torcon Hugo ballot, and, mindful of my hope to have as many of those ballots inscribed with my fanzine's name, fiddled with **Challenger #17**. I've also begun **Spiritus Mundi**, a January 1<sup>st</sup> tradition dating back to the first abortive stencil cut for **Spiritus Mundi 1** on January 1, 1971 – as of today, a mere 32 years ago.

Jeez, by April (when, incidentally, the Hugo nominations will be long decided, and the DUFF winners will be madly prepping for their 'round-the-world journey), I'll be but one year from having been in SFPA for *a third of a century*. Remarkable, is it not, that there is *nothing* remarkable about this "accomplishment." Two dudes on our present roster have already done it, and I think Lon Atkins put in that long before he left our ken. Still, it'll be a moment worth noting. Never missed a mailing, never owed pages ... you know, maybe someday I'll stop feeling like *the new guy* around here!

\*\*\*

Enough baloney. Back to the puppy.

Rose-Marie's mother contacted her in early December and together, they concocted a plan. Nita's husband Harold, now pushing 80, was an active and successful restaurateur for many years, and has led a fascinating life. (For instance, he spent his World War II service in the company of a fellow airman named **Joseph Heller**, whose letters, he says, are now lost. *Arrgh!*) While Rosy lived at their Royal Palm Beach condo, he grew fond of Rosy's critters yorkie, Jessie. Nita had an idea: get him one of his own. She appointed her daughter to the task.

*La Belle* Rose-Marie found an ad for purebred yorkie pups in the newspaper and contacted the lady, who ran her yipping, yapping business out of her Metairie home. She forced me out of my Christmas funk – money worries always seem worse when you're trying to do good stuff with it, like buy presents for one's wonderful wife – and we went on over.

Rosy had fears that we would be dealing with a puppy mill, but the happy lunacy that filled that house put all of those worries to rest. My own Scroogery faced the dozens of roly-poly critters bopping hither and thither through the fenced-off kitchen area – and was doomed. This was a class outfit. They bred their dawgs for sale and for show, and had championship ribbons to prove their success. All the york pups were given personal care and attention. All were clean, beautiful, happy pooches. Rosy had the unenviable chance of choosing one for her stepfather – but I concurred in her choice: the smallest male, 12 weeks old, a silly-looking woofers whom both she and the lady in charge said had a great personality. All I know is that he weighed less than a pair of my socks. A day or so before we were to leave for our Florida Christmas trip, we picked him up.

A green-eyed aside. The master of that home had an admirable life indeed. He cradled his newest grandchild. His beautiful youngest daughter was soon to marry. He lived well in a house rife with youth and hope and health. So what if it smelled like puppies? So what if he probably voted for Bush? The guy had the right to smile!

So did we. Rosy had been concerned that our new pooch would miss his littermates, but when we loosed him into our apartment, we found those worries false. Here there were new and fascinating playmates to be had. There was Jessie, who eyed the bouncy interloper into her domain with horror and jealousy. He loved to nip at her ear – oh, she *loved* that – and jump on her outside as she was trying to pee. Poor Jessie took to moping and staring mournfully at Rosy when she played with the new beast, doubtless turning unworthy thoughts of canine murder over and over in her doggy mind.

And then there was the cat. Puppy had never seen a cat before. He was astonished. He was curious. He was *not* intimidated. Boo hissed and clawed clawlessly at him. *Yip-yip* ... and a ten-year-old cat was chased into hiding by a 4-month-old dawg the size of a sneaker. It was wonderful to see.

The pooch made himself at home and was soon doing his puppy prance all over. Worried that the chill nights here in December would be a problem, Rosy let him shack up with us. An adventure indeed. The little dude nestled himself into the crook of Rosy's warm and lovely neck and slept the night through. *Not*. How do I describe the glorious hilarity of waking up at 4AM with a woob-dawg attacking your nose?

Trying to read in bed was an experience. I'd hie my autographed copy of Vincent Bugliosi's **And the Sea Will Tell** onto my belly to peruse, and find the puppy gnawing on it – and with incredibly sharp teeth. Being around Jessie, whose only remaining tooth pokes out of the side of her mouth, has spoiled us. I turned some of his attention to a yellow highlighter, but no sooner did I return my eyes to the page than – *woof!* he was back. My book ended the Christmas holidays ripped to shreds.

(Another thing about the puppy: predictably, he was a *chick magnet*. Every time we took him out during our Florida journey, the girls flocked. Why didn't I discover this trick before?)

We spent a neat weekend at Joe and Patty Green's house on Merritt Island, where the pup took on Patty's houseful of huge, spoiled cats and vanquished the lot. Rosy and I were treated to a fine dinner at her stepsister Melody's apartment. The other guests, like our hostess, were deaf, so when I learned that, for the second week in a row, the worthless New Orleans Saints had blown a shot at the playoffs to an inferior team, only those facing me and reading my lips could understand the curses I mouthed under my breath. We went to see **Gangs of New York** – disappointing; too long; sagged under its own weight; but a *great* elephant scene – and Patty, princess that she is, started work on a new **Challenger** website for her annoying step-son-in-law. [www.challzine.com](http://www.challzine.com). Check it out.

On Christmas Eve we headed south for Royal Palm Beach. I refer you to my opening paragraph for an account of our arrival. Gotta admit, it hurt to hand that puppy dawg over to Harold. After some reflection, and consideration of appropriate nomickers like *Bagel* (in honor of Harold's restaurant career) and *Pierre* (because of the woofers' New Orleans heritage) Harold settled on a name for his new pal: **Tinker**. (Later expanded to **Tinker Toy Terrible Terrier ...** or **T4**, anticipating Arnold Schwarzenegger.)

The days we spent at Nita's were truly special. Christmas Day was a day of gluttonous celebration. Nita put on a handsome spread for us and those of Harold's family who came over, and we made out like bandits in the gift department. Both Harold's kid and Nita's received the same major gift – a DVD player. Though it was the last gift we opened, I kind of guessed it might be forthcoming when I was given the 5-DVD edition of **The Lord of the Rings**. It looks better on the TV now than it does at the movies. And my worries that I wouldn't do my girl justice in the gift department were proven foolish: I bought her three presents, one fun (a computer game), one practical (a cookbook from Commander's Palace, where we had our anniversary dinner and our office brunch), one pretty (a tiny crystal jack-in-the-box from a famous, closing Thibodaux jewelry store – same place she bought me *my* present, a nice watch). She seemed pleased by all.

Speaking of **LotR**, we watched **Fellowship of the Ring** on Starz on Christmas night, and the next day, went to see **The Two Towers**. Need I say? We weep for next December and **Return of the King**. But strangely enough, a throwaway blip of TV seen on Christmas had the most impact on me. WGN Chicago had apparently raided its vaults for holiday fluff and found an ancient animated puppet-toon from Centaur Productions – made in 1951 – and when it came on I nearly flipped. I remembered “Suzy Snowflake”. I've never forgotten the insipid song that accompanied the (now washed-out) stop-motion animation. I wonder what Harold and Nita thought hearing a 53-year-old lawyer sing along to “*Here / comes / Suzy Snowflake / dressed in*

*her snow-white gown / TAP TAP TAPPING on your window pane / to tell you she's in town ... "*  
I wish I'd taped it: a minute out of my childhood, which I expect I'll be singing – incessantly, and at the top of my feeble lungs – in my senility. Come hear me at the home.

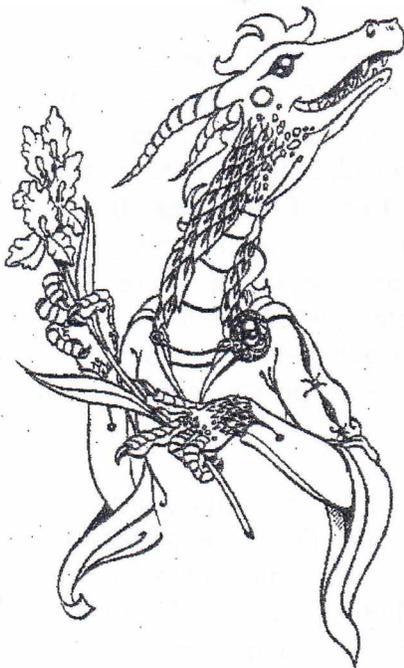
Nita dragged out several cartons of old correspondence for us to go through, artwork and letters, including Wally Wood originals (one of which might be on my cover) and contemporary accounts of Apollo launches mentioning the launch parties she put on with Joe. Meade Frierson's SFPazine on the subject was there, as well as a copy of a long letter about the Apollo 17 launch from A.E. van Vogt to my Berkeley comrade (and former SFPA member) Tom Collins. (I tried to get permission from Tom and van Vogt (is he still alive?) to print the latter in **Challenger**, marking the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the last human footstep on the moon. But it inspired him to his own project.)

I'm sure it hurt Rosy to leave her mother, who is suffering from terrible arthritis, when at last it was time to leave. Myself, I hated to leave the puppy – I'd rather have him around than a few dumb old autographed paperbacks, any day. But the calendar commanded, and home we came, going a long route I'd always wanted to take. In 1977, see, after Rosy had seen me off with Doug Wirth from Miami Beach and Suncon, we'd had the chance to travel I-75, Alligator Alley, straight across the tip of the Florida peninsula through the Everglades. For some reason, Doug and I took different roads – and for some reason, I've always regretted it. Now I could correct that lapse. So we drove south, hopped on 75, and drove across. Though no 'gators stopped traffic, nor did the road cut through o'erhanging jungles, it was a worthwhile jaunt – the famous

Sea of Grass was appropriately awesome. So was Tampa Bay, a gorgeous expanse Doug and I had crossed at night 25 years before.

So that was Christmas. Now it is New Year's Day, and 2003, and **Spiritus Mundi** 193. Hey, looks like that third of a century mark in April, 2004, will coincide most nicely with **Spiritus Mundi 200**. Best start planning now ...

Cover: Whether I finally get to run the picture of my mother-in-law's shower curtain or you must settle for an original Wally Wood, I don't yet know. But I do know that I owe both to Nita Green – who let me nose around in her collection of memorabilia and yank forth the Woods, gifts from the artist himself. This zine is dedicated to her with deep gratitude and hope that I can make her daughter happy. I live for nothing else.



# Mailing Caustics

## 230

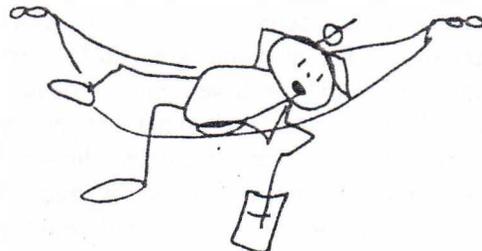
*The Southerner #23 / Jeff* I agree that SFPA is robust and healthy. True, I miss the days – let’s say, the *years* – when we had a waitlist and could count on a new member every other mailing or so, but the way we are now is the stable apa we always knew we would eventually be. It’s fine. Well, wait. I wish Lon Atkins and Alan Hutchinson were still among us. And George Inzer. And Rusty Burke. And Dee Schardt. And ... [] The new first-class dues are indeed onerous, but I’m damned if I’ll wait an extra week, an extra day, an extra nano-second for my SFPA mailings. I’m paying. [] New Rule #4 contest noted. I wonder if I should cheat and look up “Sawley” on the Internet.

*Egoboo Poll Results / Jeff* Thanks everyone for the boo. Of course I’m very pleased by my presidency, second place technical win though it is, and by getting the most answers right in your Rule #4 quiz, but I have to admit disappointment in the Zine of the Year category. Not because Gelb won for **Ellison Webderland** – I voted for it myself! It’s just that I regard **Challenger #15** as the best zine I’ve ever done, and it only drew one vote, and I’m starting to sound like Hutchinson in his last year of membership, so I’ll shut up. [] Gary Robe, ya twit! If you’d voted in the egoboo poll and gotten the bonus, you’d’ve come in 4<sup>th</sup>! [] By the way, whoever called me “A living charismatic giant” in the Roll Your Own category, please *don’t* tell me you were joking. It’s brought a special strain of warm fuzzy into my fanac.

*Variations on a Theme #17 / Lynch* I’m not going to let Rose-Marie read your account of visiting California, since that was to be a major part of our ConJose trip, and we’re *still* heartsick that we couldn’t go. Me, I’m heartsick that I missed Genny Dazzo’s lasagna. You say she worked on it for *three days*? [] So Des Alpes – the SanFran

Basque restaurant -- is gone. That was Teddy Harvia who went with us on that year’s “Dick Lynch Death March,” which involved a street car ride up the side of El Capitan, and an unscheduled fall into the lap of a German tourist girl. [] ConJose sounds like a wonderful time. Rosy doesn’t get *near* this zine. [] No, the Australian ballot does produce the occasional injustice, such as when a candidate is so clearly preferred over his competitors, yet loses because he doesn’t have enough second and third place votes. Frank Wu’s experience, like that of **Field of Dreams**, shows that 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place votes count more than 1sts! [] A very nice eulogy for Dal Coger. I don’t think I ever met him; my loss.

*Revenant #15 / Sheila* Considering this state, I’d’ve guessed “The Louisiana Festival of the Book” would have taken place at a *racetrack*. [] The Louisiana elections ended with a win for Mary Landrieu, and thank God for that. Suzanne Terrell, the Republican, ran a vile race, questioning not only Landrieu’s politics but her *religious* values, presumably because she isn’t a wild-eyed anti-abortion zealot. Such tactics disgusted even Louisiana voters. Terrell brought W down here to smarm for her, too, and his argument, that it’d be good for Louisiana to have a Republican senator as well as a Democratic one because it would make *him* happy ... well, it suited someone of his intellectual capacity. For once, our state provided some good news. [] Maybe the problem with Crescent City Con is that it still doesn’t know if it’s a fannish convention, like DSC, or a media event, where you’re trying to please conventioners by showing them celebrities. I liked the DSC that krewe put on in Metairie, and hope they try another.



*“Yngvi is a Louse” & Other Graffitos #80 / Toni* I recently got an envelope of “fresh” Rotsler for use in **Challenger**, whenever I manage to get it published. Boy, was he good – forever imaginative. Every one of his little illos suggests a story. [] As you’ll see later in these mc’s, I envy everyone who travels their travels, and that goes especially for you, who got to go to New York. I wish I could’ve been with you when Hank saw the Metropolitan Museum’s armor collection. When I wrote him about it years ago, he had a telling criticism which I cannot now recall. But I bet he was close to giggling with joy in that magnificent stuff in that magnificent room. [] Mike Resnick waxed nearly apoplectic over the “stupidity” of **Signs** on his listserv, and I advised Rosy not to tell him that I’d nominated the flick for the Hugo. (After all, they have five spots to fill in every category, and **The Two Towers** is good for only two or three.) I agree with Ms. Proctor in *Charlotte’s Web*, in other words: it was excellent. Shyamalan’s subject is popular culture, and he delights in taking off-center looks at our icons. Last time it was comic superheroes. This time it’s invasions from outer space. I think he’s great. “Swing out.” [] I had the honor of reciting “The Night Before Hankmas” at the Reinhardt Roast thirty years ago. Grand to see it back in print!

*The New Port News #206 / Brooks* Great limerick about the ichthyosaurus! Isabel Frances Bellows was a genius. [] I don’t miss beef much – or pork, either: turkey bacon is better. Of course, I allow myself the occasional Shoney’s patty melt, and on really special occasions, a porterhouse. [] “Are all the Baptists teetotalers?” Ha! Never met L.E. King, my grandfather, did you? [] Castro might not have been as bad a sinner as some, Idi Amin for instance, but he was certainly an active menace to American interests. The questions are, did he start out that way or did we drive him into the arms of the Soviet Union, and, what happens next? Red states are fundamentally dictatorships with no established method of transferring power, and the vacuum that will result when

Fidel kicks it will be turbulent indeed. [] So **Fantasy Commentator** was the first *fanzine*, according to no less a reference than the OED. Where did *it* get the name? [] Could anyone tell that James Tiptree was, in reality, a woman, Alice Sheldon? Knowing what we know *now*, I can see feminist bitterness in “The Girl Who Was Plugged In” and “Houston, Houston, Do You Read?” but there’s none in **Brightness Falls from the Air** (except maybe for the scene where the octopoid aliens either mate with their females – or eat them). When it came time to write a truly angry story – not so much feminist as a bitter denunciation of sexual antagonism in the male gender – she opted for a pen name closer to her own, “Racoona Sheldon” (the story was “The Screwfly Solution”). And when her husband died, she chose to join him. Go figure. [] I remember Ronnie Bodenheimer, as prosecutor, asking a defense shrink, of a murderer, “Does Joel Durham have free will?” She could not answer. I wonder if Ronnie Bodenheimer, disgraced judge and criminal defendant, was asked the same question. [] Wonderful words on Iraq. They deserve to be quoted. [] I’ve become convinced that Clinton’s sexual naughtiness was given such play by the Republicans in order to excite their own faithful, not convince the undecided. And in the cases of two successive Republican House speakers, titillate their own mistresses. Hs, Hs, Wh’s, and Hs. [] Comparing MRIs. *We are getting old.* [] “My mother tells me she has been trying to get rid of a sort of bush ...” So are we. Wish us luck.

*Tyndallite Vol. 3, No. 104 / NORM!* Really enjoyed the article you co-wrote in the latest **Fantasy Commentator**. Wish you’d pen one for me on why **20,000 Leagues** isn’t, by your lights, science fiction. [] That story of DAW wrecking Jack Jardine’s story by excising the most important chapter is priceless. [] Speaking of bad editing, wasn’t it Ray Palmer who turned a western into SF by substituting Mars for Tombstone and rayguns for six-shooters? [] I thought of your comments about H.G. Wells while watching **Time After Time** on the tube the

other day. (I also thought that David Warner *ran* funny.) Wells wrote science *fantasies*, imaginative works of what *might* be so, but nothing extrapolated from current scientific knowledge. Labels don't mean as much to me as they do to you, so I'll just hail him as the original SF genius whose example would benefit the field, even now, because wit and verve such as he brought to the page is a rare commodity indeed. [] At the last L.A.Con, several years ago, Bradbury mentioned new scripts in the works for both **Fahrenheit 451** and **The Martian Chronicles**. Notice that was several years ago, and nothing has come to fruition yet. [] I read Dan Simmons' **Hardcase**, not a bad diversion. He dedicated it to the writer he imitated: "Richard Stark, who sometime publishes under the wussy pseudonym of Donald Eastlake." [] Outstanding letters this time. Those guys are *real* Sfers.

*Under the Knife with the Armadillo #56 / Liz* Kidney stones! YUCK One time when I worked at Charity Hospital – you remember – I got a look at a stone some poor bastard had passed. It looked like a stone sand burr. Ouch! *OUCH!* And a hyster to come in February. Guess that mean Mardi Gras is out. Phooey on this. *Get well!*

*Weasel Crossing/ Jeff* Dreadfully worried about Liz, but don't tell her. Good luck holding things together until she's back in the pink. [] Tsk tsk. *Never* put an apostrophe in the title of **Finnegans Wake**. It spoils Joyce's multi-level pun. In addition, y'see, to describing the funeral of Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, or Finnegans, the title also calls on the Irish, or Finnegans, to rouse themselves from their cultural stupor. Double and triple and quadruple meanings abound in the Wake. A way a lone a last a loved a long the [] Yeah, I dig on Trinlay Khadro's art. Hardly polished, but good-humored and cute. [] No, no, the color mastheads on the OO marked Liz's O.E.ship; the plain-jane business-only blue jobs you're running denote yours. Nothing fancy, nothing at all ornate, just good solid administration and silly Rules #4. Keep

things the way they be. [] Gawk! Don't mention Entrapment, not after I've seen **Chicago** and the latest **Esquire** and begin to respect Catherine Zeta-Jones. (Actually, my mind began to change about her with **Traffic**, but her hoofing in **Chicago** astonished me.) [] Thanks for saying that you'd count **Challenger** towards my minac if **SM** missed the mailing, but ... please don't. For one thing, **Spiritus Mundi** will never miss a mailing, and for another, **Challenger** doesn't meet the originality requirements of minac. It's distied worldwide before it shows in SFPA. Hmm ... I never ran any part of **Chall #16** here, did I? [] A "government of laws ... unevenly enforced by unpredictable people" is a good description of a bad situation. Our government could be in real trouble. There is no oversight today. The Supreme Court is a partisan joke. Congress shows every sign of rubber-stamping anything Cheney demands. There's no check on his desires, or on his idiot boss' impulses. The balance of power is history. I fear. [] Re Proof of Life: indeed, the romance was the weak part of an otherwise good film, in that there was no nervous, guilty, build-up to it. Whatever got laid, it wasn't the foundation. [] Ah. We see into the heart of this issue, its most demanding ethical and political paradoxes: *are Jenna Jameson's real?* Judging from the **Playboy** shot I have of her, no. Judging from my lizard brain, who cares? [] "The Miss America Duck Call" – as you say, one of the two or three best and sickest moments in SFPA history – indeed, in the history of apac, fandom, amateur publishing, human flesh, whatever – was published by the great Rusty Burke. He will spend an extra 65,000 years in Hell for doing so ... and the rest of us, 30,000 years next to him for looking at it. [] The "historical text" of mine you mention was published in **The Book of Years** ten years ago or so, when SFPA hit 30. I gave some thought to updating it in 2001, and will be really tempted to do so when we reach our Golden Anniversary in 2011. (I'll be 63; what better will I have to do?) I took my information from before mlg 39 from Markstein's **Timebinders** (mlg 50) and my

own articles on The Montgomery Papers, Larry Montgomery's collection of our first 5 years. I haven't taken good enough care of my mailings to adequately review – or illustrate – the decade+ since TboY – when the time does come for a new edition, I'll have to rely on Ned or someone as meticulous. [] I love the WW2 quote from the Queen Mum on the very idea of leaving the country during the Blitz. Now that's a Queen. [] I saw **Galaxina** ... and feel guilty. How can a guy enjoy ogling a gorgeous girl in a skintight outfit when you know a scumbag blew her brains out and sodomized her corpse? Movie shouldn't have been released. [] **Yellow Submarine** does indeed suffer from slow pacing. There's one scene with the Blue Meanies that's plain interminable. [] I too am lucky in that I get paid to do one of the things that I love. I am simply not paid enough. [] Another joy about being a lawyer: since taking my oath, no one has pestered me about the United Way! [] Martina Klicperova would love your story about bus ticket trash in the former Red bloc. [] Beautiful comment about the stupidity of the 9-1-1 hijackers. Although bin Laden has said that their object was to kill as many people as possible, shock our sense of well-being, and knock down a symbol of American capitalism, his goons could have done much more damage of the only kind that really matters to us: lives lost. But what about bin Laden? Where is he? Bush seems to have forgotten this bad guy, chasing shadows and rationalizations in Iraq, but Osama's the one we need to find, nail, stop for keeps. [] I doubt very seriously that Peter Sellers was caricaturing Henry Kissinger in **Dr. Strangelove**; Kubrick made his movie in '63 and released it in '64, and Kings Seer didn't achieve fame until Nixon had set up his White House psycho ward five or six years later. Methinks Sellers was riffing on Werner von Braun – but mostly, creating his monster from whole cloth. [] Weight loss? Ha! Over Christmas I ate like a hog with a tapeworm, and am back where I started, wheezing, farting, struggling to do so much as move.

*Frequent Flyer / Tom* Thanks for passing along the hilarious paragraph about **The Weekly World News**. It's in place in **Challenger**, assuming it ever gets printed... [] A new house! I am lost in admiration and envy. The way I'm going, Rosy and I will be living out of a refrigerator carton on the docks before long. Sincere congrats! [] Rick Rescorda, the corporate veep who ordered his people out of 2 WTC when the first building was attacked, and who perished trying to make sure everyone was okay, should be considered a hero. Surely he compensates, a bit, for Enron. [] I imagine you guys made it to Chattacon; how was it? We really wanted to see Benford and do some flesh-pressing for DUFF, but no way. [] I've grown more fond of **Fail-Safe**, the movie, since its events became even more unlikely. Dan O'Herlihy is terrific and Fritz Weaver shines in his first role. [] My cousin reads the Left Behind series, and when we've talked about them, I've been polite. [] Ah, yes, "Spock's Brain". "The givers of pain ... and heh heh delight ..."



*Peter, Pan & Merry #46 / Dave* I understand from your LASFAPazine that Kay's father passed away recently. My desperate sympathies to your terrific lady. [] Hmm ... so maybe there was a point to all that prejudice against touching an "unclean" woman. [] Even illegal aliens have rights to due process, no matter what the psychotic Nazis in Ashcroft's Justice Department maintain. That these same thugs deny that process to anyone they can, alien or citizen, and get away with it is a national disgrace. I haven't felt this small a measure of respect for our people since the reaction to William Calley. (Though, to be fair, I've begun to understand that what some Americans disliked about Calley's trial was their feeling that he was a scapegoat for higher-ups, instead of a belief that his butchery was justified. What about that ditch?) [] I like the way Sauron is depicted in the LotR films – I thought he wasn't enough of a presence in the sacred texts, but he's always looming in the movies. If I may say so, the ten and a half months until **Return of the King** seem interminable. And, since you ask, I feel ecstatic about **Fellowship** winning its Hugo. Fantasy it certainly is, but it deserves any award it gets, up to and including the Heisman Trophy. [] Great comment about Ashcroft covering our freedoms with plastic. And our statues with burlap.

*The Sphere vol. 201, no. 1 / Don* Our deepest sympathies to GiGi on the loss of her nephew to the ultimate act of despair. I hope the kid found peace. [] The proper way to intone the term "weapons of mass destruction" is, I've decided, in a squeaky pubescent pitch. It's become almost prayer-like for the Bushies, desperate for an excuse to roll the tanks, take the oil, look tough to the rubes ... people who are naïve and desperate and want even the basest sort of reassurance, no matter how bogus, that they've safe again. [] James Hogan wrote a fine article about "the AIDS heretics" in **Challenger #4**.

*Twygdrazil #78 / Dengrove* Didn't you have the same number last time? [] Your

mother's courtroom art is excellent. Great portraits capture the inner lives of their subjects – and though these are quick sketches, they bring forth tantalizing hints of personality. Mark Chapman's eyes are bright with zeal and madness, frightening, focused on nothing. And check out the dismay and fear on Mick Jagger's face, so lost and out-of-place in one venue where he isn't worshipped as a demigod: a courtroom. [] Re the plasticene donkey and elephants sculptures: "I might take a gander." Take a *goose* instead, Rich; you don't want people to think you're *gay*. [] 9-11 had some historic meaning – but only to me and my brother. It's our parents' anniversary. I doubt that Osama bin Laden took that fact into consideration. [] In the early '60's, when I fancied myself a liberal Republican, I liked Bill Mauldin much more than the equally famous political cartoonist Herbert Block, who seemed ferociously and smugly Democrat. Later I discovered Block's World War II stuff, and changed my mind about him; it was much more subtle, much more devastating. Consider his early Pulitzer winner – I'll print it here if I can find it online. A Paris street. A German officer stands on the curb, glaring with angry impotence at the sky. Behind him several Parisians watch him, smiling. The title tells all: "British Plane." [] Is the movement in psychiatry about repressed abuse still going strong, or has it been repudiated by the fanatics? Some impressionable psych patients have apparently been bullied into believing they were abuse victims – when they weren't. One obsessive doctor, questioned on this by the press, exploded into a tirade of paranoid accusations – clearly, her reliance on repressed abuse as a diagnosis spoke more to her neurosis than her patient's. [] If you want to visit Harry Warner, make yourself known to him. Send him **Jomp Jr.** and **Twyg**. He was friendly and welcoming the two times I visited him, but he'd been in SFPA and seen **Chall** then. [] Verne's inner Earth in **Journey to the Center of Same** was essentially cave after cave, with no light at all – until Professor Lindebrook, Axel (or is it Alex?), Hans and Co. reached the vast inner

sea, with its phosphorescent light, ichthyosaurus and so forth. Speaking of Verne, part of the reason that H.G. Wells' fantastic inventions – though more fanciful than Jules' – seem more plausible is that H.G. was a far better wordsmith. Of course, this could be due to the poor translations Norm's always complaining about. [] Fan fiction ... I've written three extended pieces (four, counting "The Enemies List"), based on **The Exorcist**, **Salem's Lot**, and **I, Claudius**. I certainly did *not* want to "find a place among such characters." Of course, you're talking about *female* fanfic writers, a whole different set of sensibilities. Slash writers are another breed of kitten than those who pen fan fiction: seems to me they want to transform attractive masculine figures into unthreatening, undemanding gays, who can provide the comfort and protection of masculine company without the baggage of sexual tension. Hmm ... SFPA slash fiction... No. No. Nonono. [] I understand one of the reasons AIDS has such a death grip on Africa is because the natives – gad, remember when we called black Africans "natives"? shades of **Jungle Jim** – routinely practice anal intercourse as a means of contraception. YIH I hate this topic. [] Nothing happened in New Orleans as far as SFPA is concerned?! Nonsense! Don Markstein's O.E.ship was based here, on St. Charles Avenue, in a little house behind a bigger house (not what you're thinking). It was perhaps the most important period in our history, a virtual rebirth after a near-fatal decline. New, enthused, and if I may say so, talented members poured into the apa and stayed for decades, Gary Brown, Steve Hughes and some schmuck named Lillian among them. An energy and an identity were built that still infuses the apa. Don't forget also that Dennis Dolbear and I acted as O.E.s here too. New Orleans is one of *the* SFPA cities, Another, believe it or not, is Greensboro NC, where a somewhat similar renewal was headquartered, but we won't go into that. [] Where – assuming he has them, which I don't, and no one with any brains should – would Saddam use his "weapons of mass destruction" – and who else laughs

aloud when they hear that phrase? If he had A-bombs, and the ability to deliver them, both of which I doubt, I'd bet on the concentration of our troops across his border, the Gulf near our fleet, and the military's HQ in Qatar. Of course, I hope Hussein has no atomics at his command, since I don't want a single GI to suffer in W's stupid little war – and I admit, I don't want Bush proven right about Iraq's dangerousness, either. [] Nah, **Smallville's** Lex Luthor is a far better realized character than **Star Wars'** Annakin Skywalker – at least so far. I'm severely disappointed in the shallowness of Lucas' treatment of the future Darth Vader – what was intimated in **The Return of the Jedi** was so much more compelling than the wimpy teen romance we're being served now. Anyway, Lex is interesting because we *know* that his attempts at decency are going to go desperately wrong, as shown by that terrific **Smallville** where an old psychic "reads" his future, sees blood raining down on the Oval Office ... and *dies*. Mark Verheiden promises a slew of new episodes, which we should be in the midst of now. I drool for them. [] I remember "The Song of Hiawatha" from my childhood, and also Lucy Ricardo's enthusiastic recitation of the opening stanza on I Love Lucy. Rosy and I hope to circumnavigate "Gitchee-Goomee" this summer. [] No, I insist that it wasn't the *effectiveness* of Sherman's March to the Sea that 'roused Southern loathing, but its *sloppiness*, its general, pointless destructiveness of *everything* regardless of military value. Sherman gave his purpose as teaching the South a lesson. He did. *Hate yankees*. It was lesson that kept the South isolate until the rise of Jimmy Carter. Now, here's an issue Fred van Hartesveldt and I argued about last fall. Did Sherman's atrocities lead to the aforementioned schism between the South and the rest of America, or was it Reconstruction, or were both part of the same vengefulness on the part of the victorious North? [] Speaking of the War, but between the Sexes, not the States, check out "He Had It Comin'" in the new movie – and probable Oscar winner – **Chicago**. It's the best number in the best movie musical

since **Cabaret**, or **Hair** – cynical, very creative, and unmistakably the product of the Great White Way, since the performers really belt'em out. Watch your gum. [] So you've made a will forbidding "heroic measures" to save your life. Not me. I want blood and sacrifice to keep *me* going! [] A glorious comment I must quote: "There is a difference between Bush's selling stock and Clinton's Whitewater scheme. Clinton's Whitewater scheme never happened."

*Oblio No. 143 / Brown* SpongeBob Squarepants? I prefer 7 of 9. [] Thanks in advance for helping Rose-Marie look for Florida contacts with our local newspaper – even if there was no help to give. She's been trying to pry work out of the **Times-Picayune** for 18 months, and even with being a vet of your paper. and with recommendations from the **Chicago Daily News** ... anyway, thanks. [] Gad, I never knew you were a frat rat! Couldn't be further from my experience in college, of course, but obviously, you had more fun. Or let's say, *healthier* fun. [] I certainly pray that you're right that the fear over 9-1-1 is fading, and the GOP will not ride public terror to power forever. Republicans hide an oil grab behind a holy war and tax breaks for the rich behind an "economic stimulus" package and overt fascism behind a packet of bullshit called a Patriot Act. The President is revealed to be an insider trader – a common corporate crook. And the public doesn't even *want* to know about it. Sickening. [] Football – even as I type I'm watching the NFC Divisional game between Tampa Bay and the 49ers. The Saints ... well, it still hurts to think about it. That could have been *us* getting smeared by the Eagles last night instead of Vick's Falcons. All we had to do was tackle a guy who dropped the ball, fumbled for it, had no blockers around him ... or beat a team with a 1-13 record ... or a team we'd whupped once before already. Every expert in town -- me among others – is convinced that all we had to do was pull our injured quarterback and put in the second banana. But no. There must be something in our water ... [] What *is* that thing Jughead

wears on his head, anyway? [] Your story about the frightened German soldier reminds me of the incident in **Band of Brothers** where the GI meets a German soldier from Eugene, Oregon. His parents were *bundists*, and after they moved back to *der vaterland*, he got drafted. And when he got captured, he got shot.

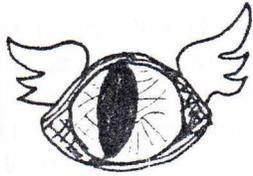
*Comments 17 / Steve & Suzanne* I'm almost glad to hear – from both you and Fred van Hartesveldt – that there were other reasons the republican won the Georgia Senate contest besides the Democrat's alleged lack of patriotism. Making an issue out of the Confederate flag was simply stupid, because it simply doesn't matter – oh, it might offend the aesthetics of some people, and have differing associations from group to group, but such matters are cultural and personal, not political, and the Democratic governor who tried to apply politics to them, through the flag issue, was foolish in the extreme. My joy is severely tempered by the fact that GOP sleaze now holds Georgia's top offices, but at least no one successfully called a man who lost three limbs in Vietnam unpatriotic and got away with it. [] I'm almost glad I'm too poor to invest money. I wouldn't want to rely on the honesty and competence – as Arthur, I believe, said – not only of strangers, but of strangers who have driven multi-billion-dollar corporations into the dirt. [] The last time I took a stress test, I rather enjoyed it. Rosy has had me move her exercycle into the "office"/TV room, and I spent at least a few minutes during the football championships pedaling nowhere, fast. [] Were the 9/11 hijackers smart? Check out my comment to Copeland on that subject. They did their damage, to the buildings and to the American psyche, but they could have done much worse. *Lucky*, I'll grant you, that they were.

*Anoit4her Issue / Bobye* Yes, we need cowboy heroes to protect us against having the plugs in the ocean pulled by Italian terrorists. However, let's not give the enemy an advantage. Tom Mix is a *wimp*.

*Trivial Pursuits #104 / Janice* No surprise that you were bounced off the jury after expressing your opinion on drug legalization. D.A.s don't want independent thinkers hearing their evidence. Since you said that you could put aside your opinion and enforce the law, the prosecutors had no reason to dump you for Cause, but no surprise at all that they put your name on their first peremptory. [] Ankle sprain – ouch. Had two in high school and one in Greensboro, and one just before Mardi Gras that made Fat Tuesday particularly interesting that year. GWS! [] About the election – it reflected the dominant emotion affecting both America and the Democratic party these days: *panic*. The notion is still so traumatized by 9-1-1 that it will accept any action – no matter how dumb or unconstitutional – to meet it. No, correction: The nation is still so traumatized that it doesn't know what action it will not accept. The Republicans, skilled at sleaze, are taking advantage. They *sound* strong. They *sound* grounded. The Democrats are so terrified of being called unpatriotic to the terrified public that they avoid even the appearance of questioning the goof in the White House. As Clinton said so rightly, the public will always choose strong and wrong over weak and right. This is why Al Gore's decision not to run in 2004 is a disaster. Only he has the nerve and the stature to stand up to Bush, with a superior mind and superior arguments (and 51% of the last vote). Now Gore is enjoying himself on David Letterman and SNL and the Democrats are awash in me-too political non-entities. Of course, a non-entity took the presidency in 1976, and an underdog did the same in 1992 – they caught the national imagination and one of the Democrats might do the same (although I doubt it). Whatever happens, I'll miss the chance to see justice done. Gore was victimized by callous and conniving politicians with the acquiescence of a dumb and cowardly public, to the detriment of every non-wealthy person in the world. We're told, forget the past and look ahead – but I see the 2000 election as a crime, and should any crime victim “forget the past and look ahead”? [] Funny you should mention “the

infamous Madonna Inn” in San Luis Obispo – its infamous for its men's room, with urinals like little waterfalls. I visited in 1993. Every man should pee there. [] Rosy likes the Laura Joh Rowland books, so you two have something to argue about when next you meet. [] A neat WFC report. I've always wanted to get to Minneapolis. The Mall of America and Punch & Judy were obvious bonuses. Too bad you (apparently) didn't attend the awards – someone (Teddy Harvia?) wrote a letter to **Chall** about the hideous HPL-head trophies; they grossed him out. [] When I went to a Dodgers game at Chavez Ravine in 1962, a foul ball came so close everybody in my section ducked. And I've told the story of the lady beamed by a foul ball during a Zephyrs game here a few years back. [] As you wished, I told Cindy about your puppeteer pal on **The Country Bears** when we gave her the tape, and she was suitably impressed. [] The war violence in **Starship Troopers** offended me much less than the bloodletting in **Total Recall**, which was simply o'er-the-top gratuitous gore. **Buffy** just impresses me as silly. [] Harlan's attitude about fandom is hardly atypical. I heard Robert Bloch, one of the great worldcon toastmasters, put down fanzines from the dais of a Nebula banquet, showing that, even in SF, the message depends on the audience. I'll forgive the wonderful Mr. Bloch anything, but David Gerrold's infamous comment to Ellison that he “used to think fans were important” deserves to be more infamous than it is. [] Educate an ignorant goy again: what's the religious purpose of forbidding Jews from carrying anything in a public place on the Sabbath? [] As for picking a college due to the number of rabbits on campus, at Greensboro the female students were always checking to make sure the rabbits were *alive*.

*Confessions of a Consistent Liar 79 / Derogatory Reference #100 / Arthur* Brad Foster did a wonderful cover for your centennial **DR**. I hope it isn't your last; your natter is some of the wittiest and most provocative out there. For instance, the idea



that an abortion as part of a “successful reproductive strategy” is anything but an obscenity because cats kill their imperfect offspring. We’re not cats. Our imperfect offspring aren’t obstacles to successful evolution. The whole argument that they are, and we should mimic the cats, reminds me of schools who abandon troubled students so they can concentrate on those having an easier time. Upon which sadistic and evil idea I loose my bowels. [] An interesting discussion of either-or thinking regarding Clifford Geertz’ *Available Light*. We see it all the time from both political poles: wingers who bomb abortion clinics, feminists who expel kids from college for questioning their maxims. Humane thinking would roll with the punches such skepticism throws out, and answer the questions, not just silence them. [] Binker Hughes’ article on Charles Williams will be in the next *Challenger*, with the usual proviso: when I can afford it. [] “By now my reaction to strippers is a blasé lack of curiosity.” For me, it depends on the stripper, but the last time I went to Platinum Plus, I lasted only an hour.

*Guilty Pleasures 26 / Eve* Unlike Ken Kesey’s hero in *Sometimes a Great Notion*, I always feel a pang of regret when a tree – even a dead one – falls. The one in your backyard is obviously a menace, and so yes, down it must come, but sky that could be filled with branches is sky that *should* be filled with branches. [] Not counting the next-to-the-last-worldcon there, which I didn’t enjoy, I’ve spent but one day in Boston (cf. *The Transcendent Route*) – but it was one awesome day. [] My UC co-op, Barrington Hall, was coed, but each suite of rooms had its own bathroom, so while we stalwart lads got used to seeing girls in bathrobes and slops, the enchanting sight of women in towels was denied to us. Raphi’s lucky. (I was about to say that Barrington

girls walked around in *curlers*, but remembered that Berkeley ladies of my era always wore their locks long and straight. My beloved *belle Rose*, a natural curly-top, would have stood out all the more.) [] Speaking of Berkeley, you inspire a pang of regret when you mention TA’s ... teaching assistants. I had one my first year named Barbara who was, I sweat, six feet two of bright, beautiful blonde *body* ... oh Jesus ... one time she rested her chin on my shoulder while we critiqued a paper about Edward Albee, and I never felt *less* like an Edward Albee character in my life. She was wasted on me in 1967 ... [] Speaking of Boston now, and baseball, my one hope regarding that sport is that the Red Sox win the World Series before my old boss at the Unemployment Office dies. He’s a devotee of the Green Monster club and of course, he’s never seen them ultimately triumphant. [] Well, I hate to play editor, but isn’t the term “to piss off,” meaning “to anger,” an anachronism for the time of *Smuggler’s Gold*?

*Avatar Press 2.24 / Randy* I said my bit about your first *SFC Bulletin* last issue. To sum, it’s damned good, and refreshingly witty. You have the right attitude: fandom, and certainly Southern fandom, is inherently funny. So *have fun* with it! [] Christmas became fun for me when we got the puppy. Before that I’d been lost in anxiety over affording Rosy’s presents and surviving the month. Fool! Fool! Rosy loved what I got her – something fun, something practical, something pretty ~~and all me~~ – and we had a great time. Christmas magic, I guess. [] I’m very sorry about your Uncle Paul. I miss my uncles Frank and Bill – Bill was revered by all of his nephews, and he held this one together during my dad’s funeral. I’m sure Paul meant every bit as much to you. Best of luck to your mother and cousin, too, as they cope with illness, and to you as *you* cope with it. [] Would love to see a photo of you as Bacchus, God of Wine! [] Yeah, enjoy the *Queen of the Damned* CD but *don’t* see the movie. The poor kid who starred in it (Allyah?) died soon afterwards in a plane

crash, and she tries so hard to be kinky and dangerous and alluring – it’s just too bad. Otherwise the movie is laughable. I’ve seen sexier shoeboxes. (Just don’t ask about the shoeboxes. I give them names, you know. Girl names, of course. I wouldn’t want anybody to think I was *weird*.)

*Somewhere, Under the Danube / George*  
You’ve got me whistling that damned song ... [] Too bad that “caretaking” for an aging relative screwed up your Manhattan plans with Hank & Toni. The demands of an elderly parent – our mother, being torn by Alzheimer’s in fresh full bloom – has screwed up my relationship with my brother, and I don’t know if it will ever recover. [] The *Sesame Street* song “Put Down the Duckie” sounds like John Ashcroft’s SWAT team, bursting through the door at bathtime. [] Erin Gray – wasn’t she the babe in the spraypainted white leather jumpsuit on **Buck Rogers**? Some SFPAn, no longer with us, had unpleasant things to say about her back when that show was on the air, but let’s let the bread bury the bread, or whatever. [] Neat tale of your meeting the apparently-famous Argentine musician King Clave. “Clave” is Spanish for “key,” so maybe he’s a pianist – or is noted for the key he sings in. Or maybe there’s another word in *espanol* for that. [] “Topic Drift” as a panel topic? Great idea – reminds me of the trivia contest at the DSC where I checked with Buck Coulson on the meaning of “snogging,” and Muhammad Ali was in the hotel. Great fight he had against Joe Frazier that October. I’ve never been to Manila or the Phillipines, but my father caught a case of athlete’s foot there that bedeviled him till the day he passed away. Imagine jungle rot outliving the war wherein it was caught! Could, I wonder, Zulus catch athlete’s foot, trained as they were to harden the soles of their feet against thistles and thorns? Michael Caine was terrific in that movie. He’s bound to get an Oscar nomination this year, but Jack Nicholson will probably win for **About Schmidt**, his *fourth* Oscar. And his first role was as a fool who liked having his teeth drilled in **Little Shop of Horrors**! Great

musical, that. Saw it with Maureen Kaough. I wonder if she finished medical school ... Yeah, that’d be a great panel! [] You print two illos, a werewolf fishing and a naked girl grinning. No doubt in my mind which is the more dangerous.

*Passages #16 / Janet* Five years a SFPAn! Good for you! Of course, you’ve been part of Southern fandom since you were a teenager, but it’s good you’re *here*, too. [] Tort reform sounds really great when you’re arguing anecdotally about somebody being given a billion dollars for skinning a knuckle, or some aberrant idiocy of the kind. So when W – ever the friend of the civil defendant, especially if it’s a corporation – proposes a limit on medical punitive awards of \$250,000, everyone cheers. But most punitive awards are not for people who skin their knuckles. Consider the woman who was diagnosed with breast cancer, advised to have a double mastectomy, did so ... and then was told that the doctor and the lab and the hospital had messed up her records – and *she wasn’t sick at all*. Oops. Her own fault, of course, for believing her health care providers. She should have sought other opinions. But could she afford other opinions? Was she told her life would be in jeopardy should she not get her operation, immediately. Now she has infections, a regimen of antibiotics, and a mutilated body. How much is that worth? Start piling up dollar bills. Stop when it’s worth your eyesight. Now, what about the idea you voice, of a medical fund generated by practicing physicians to distribute compensation. Could a lay person trust such a group to make a fair judgment? Would it not be suspected of protecting the profession above all other concerns? Tort reform is a sop to the rich. Tort reform is necessary to save the medical profession from insane insurance costs. Take your pick. [] But I do like your idea about a Medical Savings Account. If I made enough to live on, now, I’d start one. [] Keep your ear to the ground regarding the Chattanooga DSC. I sense problems. [] Understand the fifth Harry Potter book – thicker even than the Hugo-

winning fourth! – is in publication now. Watch the bookstore lines start to form ... [] The rationale given for **Moon is a Harsh Mistress** being nominated for two years in a row was that its initial publication in **Worlds of If** bridged two years. That is, it appeared in the November and December 1965 issues and also in the January '66 issue (I may have those months wrong), so under the rules currently in place, it was indeed eligible for both Hugo races. The rules have since been changed.

*Tennessee Trash #50 / Robe* First of all, congratulations on reaching 50 issues! So what if your zine is a string-saver? It's here, that's what's important. [] Composed in Sao Paulo, eh? Someone should publish a world map showing where we put our inutterable genius to disc. [] Lousy civil engineering in road construction is not restricted to Brazil. Here in New Orleans we've been enduring city-wide road repairs for the last several months. Our interstates are a crush and the main avenues are frequently all but impassable. Made the question of evacuating the city during hurricane season ticklish indeed; it was one reason we decided to sit out Isidore and Lili instead of running. [] Charleston is a beautiful city, and I envy your visit there. I don't know about bunking down on the *Yorktown* and eating C-rations – I ate crab legs and a shrimp & artichoke omelet when I was there – but for the dudes, I'm sure it was grand fun. Next time, check out Fort Sumter, Angel Oak and the islands where Hugo came ashore ... or the weird arrangement of porches on most of the houses. [] Impressive that Nick scored so well the first time he fired a real gun. He obviously has good eye-hand coordination and he should pursue it. My uncle took me into the Mojave Desert for my first shooting lesson, and I kept the beer can I peppered with .22 bullets – from about 20 feet – for years. [] I liked **Harry Potter II** but the wailing baby some idiots brought to our showing – and wouldn't take out – really hurt the experience. I didn't mind a restless bebe cutting up behind me when I saw **Blood**

**Beach**, but for a big-ticket item, with my wife beside me? I griped.

*Ascending/Descending / mike* However the photographer did that Escher Lego construction, good for him. It's perfect. And speaking of "forced perspective," I wonder if Disney made a behind-the-scenes film about the fx in **Darby O'Gill**. The odd sets must have taken years to work out. [] "May you receive exactly what you say you desire." Oh, yes, oh, yes ... It's wonderful, but living up to it, deserving it in your own head, is something altogether different. [] You read the entire Constitution? Good for you – it's something of a chore. Of course, you realize that those who would limit its protections to citizens rely on interpretations of its language, as given in legal decisions by the Supremes and other courts – which make a simple sentence fragment like "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion" complex enough to employ generations of scholars and lawyers and judges and other such riffraff. Those of us who disagree with limiting constitutional rights *also* rely on precedents, and the beat goes on. [] I didn't hear this about the dull Pearl Harbor epic, **Tora<sup>3</sup>**, that it drove the great Kurosawa to attempt suicide. Why? [] Missing a line here about "puppy dog Jack" who turned out to be "fe-" something. I bet I can guess. You should have seen the puppy we got Rosy's stepfather. Drove Jessie *crazy*. [] So Dee Dee Ramone O.D.ed. Strike up another win for drug use. Knowing what is to be known now, would he have still loaded up that first syringe? Would the release it probably brought from inhibition and doubt be worth it? I agree, though, that if the authorities would lie less about relatively harmless stuff like grass, fewer people would feel they were lying about *all* drugs. [] Ever try to get in touch with that other "mike weber" in Dawsonville? Hurry – I missed meeting "Lillian Guy." [] You've *got* to write up these Verne calculations for **Challenger!** [] Aw, c'mon, Supergirl couldn't fly with, umm, counterweights like those! You win a Best Bit, though, for letting me imagine it!

*Spiritus Mundi 192 / me* I like to use my mc to **SM** to catch up on matters there discussed, form instance, Cindy, now living in a group home in downtown New Orleans, waiting for a gummint apartment in Jefferson Parish to open up. It's not too bad a house, although the floors sag and the neighborhood sucks; but so far she's the only one there. I'm scared for her, and want her in JP as soon as possible. [] My \$377.50 Ford Festiva is holding up so far, knock wood, now that the jerk mechanics have the right fan belt in it. I won't go into the miserable adventures of my blown Tracker since it left my control, but it now sits in a fenced-in lot behind a garage, and I'll probably never get it back. Of course, I'll still have to keep up the payments ... [] Another hung jury in St. John was recently sent back time and again by the judge. They finally came in Guilty as Charged, of second degree murder. The defendant was a woman who had stabbed her drunken boyfriend after he'd broken a broom on her back – a boyfriend with a history of similar abuse towards her. The verdict is an obscenity, and I hope the lady's lawyer – a state representative – somehow gets the travesty reversed.

Hey, that does it, 1-20-03, 4:14 PM.

Helluva time printing these mc's – the gaps you see on certain pages are due to that. What the hey is a "Block Pro"? Erasing such commands gave me the chance to eliminate most, but damage done is damage done. I stuck some of Trinlay Khadro's illos into the spaces. And I found my text would not call off **bold print** or *italics* or **both** when told to do so ... which necessitated, at times, line by line cleansing. Phooey. Glad that's over.

This MLK Day I have finished this zine, and, effectively, **Challenger**. I made a good start at my resume for Tennessee, but find I have to document my publication – note the sarcastic singular – and cited cases. I hope the people in Tennessee ignore the fact that I've been listed in the law books three times, and each time, my side lost. Rosy, poor girl, *didn't* get the day off, which cannot make the decision she's being forced to make any easier. Her young boss sat her down last week, see, and told her that if she wanted to keep reporting for the Thibodaux **Daily Comet**, she'd better move to their distribution area.

It's all the same to me. Thibodaux is almost as close to my job as New Orleans. Of course, it's country, without amenities like good bookstores and theatres, and Rosy likes it here. This apartment is too big and far too expensive for me, but she doesn't relish the thought of moving – especially to Thibodaux, especially if I get lucky, and Nashville calls, and we have to move again.

Stress? Nonsense. Rosy's home, and that's all that matters.

