

# SWINGLINE

SWINGLINE #12, by Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., Apt. 6-B, Brooklyn, NY 11201, is being done for the wonderful First Anniversary Mailing of Apa, on (for the first time in ages) My Own Typer. The Thirteenth Mailing of Apa is to be mailed on March 3, 1973, and it sure looks like we're gonna be on time.

At the risk of causing all kinds of offense, I'm going to jump right in with a few remarks about Arnie's nomination of Mike & Susan Glicksohn. Mind, I'm not going to jump right in and vote--I'm anxious to hear what some others of you think about the Glicksohns, and suspect that I'm subject to be strongly influenced by the rest of you in this regard. However, as it stands right now, I'm a little unhappy that they've been proposed. I like Mike...my fannish contacts with him haven't always been completely pleasant, but I've certainly always been able to respect him as a person, and though we have slightly different goals in our hobbies, I still consider him a very fine person. I don't know Susan as well; my limited contacts with her, though, have always been pleasant...she seems a really nice, sensitive girl. You may well wonder, then, why I'm not eager to have them in apa, and I hope I can explain without seeming too silly. The thing is, to me it seems that there's a really nice thing happening in apa: for the most part, we're getting to be pretty good friends. I know, speaking for myself, I really enjoy the company of those of you that I've met...and I especially enjoy that feeling that it might be mutual. Close-knit is a phrase that I've noticed several of us using lately, to describe what apa is becoming..... I like that. But, I can't help but think that, for all of what fine people they are, the Glicksohn's really aren't hunting for or interested in finding themselves in a close-knit group. I believe they would join..sure. And, I believe they'd be active...with fine fannish writing that'd be a joy to read in any fanzine and that, when we all got together at some future convention, they'd be as glad to see apans as they would to see any of their other fannish correspondents. I don't believe there'd ever be much more emotional involvement for them in the group than that, though. And I'm increasingly unhappy about the idea of taking people in just because they're Good Guys. I'd wish there could be a little more rapport than that. ... Am I wrong about my estimation of the Glicksohn's willingness to develop real friendships, of the type that apa seems to be fostering? Am I being over-influenced by their differences...their straightness, for example? Or...for that matter...do you think I'm using the wrong basis for judging whether they'd be good members? Do you think I should forget all this about Friendship and etc? -- Personally, I'd like to be in a nice normal apa with the Glicksohns, and several others like them....a nice apa like SAPS, for example. But not this one. I dunno...what basis are you guys using to decide who to vote yes or no on? If we just take in "Good Guys", we're going to end up with an awfully large apa...cause there are a wealth of Good Guys in fandom.

NEAL Funny...I worked in restaurants for years, and never ran into any pranksters. A lot of obnoxious customers, sure...but nothing like the stuff you described. If you come right down to it, I don't-guess I ever ran into that many restaurant workers who were in a good enough mood to play pranks... What (or maybe I should say Who) I always had the most trouble with were cooks...seems like cooks are sometimes just naturally mean. I remember taking a job as waitress in one particular dining room, and on my first day there, the cook developed an overpowering hatred for me. I'd walk into the kitchen to give an order, and would be met at the door with great strings of curses, thrown dishes, threatening gestures with cleavers..the whole bit. The other girls told me that Sarah was just cranky, and I shouldn't take it personally...one week it would be one person she hated, and the next another. But--a week of it was as much as I could take before I quit.

LANE Welcome home; stick around, won't you? -- On one hand, I think that it speaks well of your Cool Head, for being able to make it through your first con with no stars in your eyes. But, on the other hand, it's kinda sad, too. I hope that, before too long, you'll make a trip up into Yankee-Land to attend a convention; it would be nice if some future con could produce in you the gosh-wows that the DeepSouthCon didn't. Tell me, Lane: are you thinking of going to Toronto this fall? Or, how about Midwestcon this summer?

"being quite a bit less left of center than you..." Gee, Lane. How left of center do you think I am? -- For that matter, those famous words of yours, "hedonistic to the Hilt" are frequently mulled over in Brooklyn, and we often wonder just how hedonistic you think our hilts may be? -- I suspect, Lane, that your vision of us is probably a bit more extreme than the reality. But--I'm flattered by your opinion, regardless.

Your mention of Pommac was the first time I'd thought of that soda for a long time; I actually believed that they'd quit making it.

Why is it, do you think, that you experience more pressure from your peers to become more liberal than more conservative? Second question: do you really feel pressured by your apa associates to become more liberal? \*sigh\*...and we'd been trying so hard not to push our opinions off on you... woe. You mean just our existence puts pressure on you to alter your views? -- Yes, establishing individual freedom does indeed include the freedom to retain those of your original influences that you find desirable; it's always rather sad when someone becomes "free", and feels that he must of necessity deny the validity of everything he was ever taught in the past. In my opinion, this is as faulty thinking as that evidenced by those people who hold tenaciously (that doesn't look right..) to everything they've ever been taught, and refuse to examine anything new. Both are knee-jerk attitudes, after all.

(Despite my predictions that this was going to be done on my Very Own Typewriter, it's ended with me actually changing typers in mid-word. Which is pretty weird, I guess.)

GRANT Hey, Grant. Let's not fight. I think you have this mistaken notion that I'm angry at you...not true...or that I don't like you...again not true. I on the other hand probably have some pretty shaky, and probably mistaken, views of your methods of relating to the rest of us. You're afraid of getting too close to people...and I'm afraid (well..perhaps afraid isn't the correct word..) of people in apa being nothing but fannish personalities, with no meat to them behind the fluff. Who's to say which of us is most wrong or right in our opinion? You've come pretty highly recommended to me, Grant, and I'd much rather be your friend than not...so let's cool it, ok?

\*Sigh\* You're not a very relaxed person, are you Grant? Your stuff is very clever and bright, and gives the illusion of being really free-flowing...but it's about as hard to get close to as the patter from a stand-up comedian. -- Your reaction to my statement "relax and have sex with the ones you like, and not with the ones you don't" is case in point. Yes; I know that it doesn't necessarily work out that way in practice. And, yes Grant, I suspect I know more about "sexologists and psychiatrists and divorce and crimes of passion and exhibitionism and rape and the swinging scene and all that" than we're very likely to ever discuss in apa. But, the fact I know about war doesn't make peace undesirable, and I stand by my original statement that it would be better if people could just relax about sex. Do you find that so hard to accept?

I know others are going to say it, but I will too: don't worry about anyone "getting into your head". Nothings going to happen to you that you don't want to happen...and probably less, if you get right down to it.

Hunts tomato sauce...and found I didn't have a can opener...nor a beer opener.. nor even a sturdy sharp knife with which I could whittle it open. No different than any new bride who had just burnt the bisquits I burst into tears because I couldn't open the can...and Arnie laughed and took me out to Picadelli for a corn-beef sandwich. That sorta set the pace for the next five years.

For a combination five-year-anniversary and Main-Event's-Gonna-Make-It celebration. Arnie & I and Bill & Charl went out to dinner. I suppose I could have stayed home and made the supper I didn't make five years ago, but why change a good thing.

ROSS It must really have seemed strange to Hank's cat Sassy to come home again to 49th Street. That was Sassy's first home, wasn't it? As I recall Gail found Sassy wandering alone and afraid outside on the street at a Lunarian meeting and took her home. How is she settling in? Did she seem to remember the place?

I know that it must be very hard for Joy to settle into the new way of life that her new locale is going to require of her -- but, when you speak to her, wish her well for me.

I'll be interested to see what others saying about the secrecy of Apa. Obviously the initial secrecy requirements that were established when the group was formed probably can no longer be given any more than lip service, since the secrecy has been abridged so many times. For myself, I can't really see any harm in allowing someone to know that there is such a group. At one time it was the general feeling about secret apas that it was in kinda poor taste to announce their existance, and especially to reveal the membership, as it was tantamount to telling the listener about some sort of secret society from which he was barred...a rudeness. I believe many people have gone away from that attitude however and like you I'm curious as to just where the line is supposed to be drawn.

Of course unless there are more participants in the immediate future than in the immediate past, it might well develop into a rhetorical question.

AND AS THE SUN SINKS SLOWLY IN THE WEST, I leave the good ship Apa to its own destinies. Here's hoping to see you all in the next mailing; until then, don't let the pumpkins get ya.

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SWINGLINE #23 is brought to you by the hand of Joyce Katz, 59 Livingston St., #6-B Brooklyn N.Y. 11201. This is for the 42nd mailing of APA and is destined to appear in the October 4, 1975, mailing.

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S GONNA WORK For the past week or so, Bill & Charl and Arnie & I have been walking around almost dazedly, now and then muttering "by golly it looks like we're gonna make it". What's more incredible is that this is actually true. The last issue of MAIN EVENT sold out; we could have moved another 500 to 1000 copies. More importantly, it broke even...maybe even a little better than even.

Right now we're working on issue #7 which, by the time you read this will be in the printer's hands. We're increasing our press run of course...our only question is whether to double or triple it. And, as has been the case in every issue so far, this issue has improvements that make it even better than #6. Right now as I write this, it is yet undecided whether this issue is the one that we'll add color to the cover. We've talked to the printer; we have the price; the only thing that remains is for me to master the technique of doing the overlay. By the time APA is collated, I either will have or won't have.

As Arnie mentioned last issue we've made deals with some of the arenas on our own, but in most cases we're working through the distributor that Arnie mentioned. The split is the same in both cases and in many ways we're better off with the distributor since he takes MAIN EVENT to many arenas that are just too distant for us to reach, which relieves us of the necessity of either making long trips to deliver the magazine or shipping the magazines to the arenas by parcel post.

The Big Apple is still awaiting our first big bite. Our present status of break-even-or-better is without New York City, which I suppose makes it all the more impressive. However, starting no later than November we have received WWF approval to be on the concession stands at Madison Square Garden with its 22,000 person attendance and the Felt Forum with its addition 3-4 000. That is what we've been looking forward to..and now it's in our grasp.

It feels pretty strange to have success starting to blossom out ahead of us. I've been so busy with the nuts-and-bolts of preparing the issue that I haven't really been able to give it the Deep Contemplation it deserves but if someone had told me two years ago that we'd be putting out a magazine about wrestling, and actually making a go of it, I would have doubted his sanity. Now I'm gratified that it's not only believable, but all those people who thought we were nuts when we said we were going to try are beginning to realize it wasn't such a crazy idea at that.

LOVING CELEBRATIONS AS WE DO Arnie and I have always taken pleasure in celebrating every occasion, every holiday, and every anniversary that we can remember. This past week, on October 1, we celebrated one of the best... our five-year anniversary of getting our apartment. It was five years ago that we moved into our apartment on Livingston..which marked the commencement of the five happiest years of my life. (Actually, I have every expectation that it marked the commencement of the happiest 60 years of my life. I expect to live a long time.)

I still remember somewhat poignantly our first evening at home. The kitchen was more or less straightened out, and I commenced to make "our first meal" of spaghetti and meatsauce. The table was set, the water was boiling for the pasta, the meat was fried ready to have sauce added, and I reached for the can opener to open my can of

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ROBIN So you like working in the Book Store!? That's nice...but I guess it does surprise me a little. To me, I've always imagined book store work as being rather exhausting, involving a lot of physical chores ('Lift that box; tote those bales of books..') and a terrific amount of dust and cobwebs. (Well..now you know the kind of bookstores I most often frequent. Dirty book stores.) -- Seriously, it just goes to prove.... and I'm glad you've found something you enjoy.

When I was in highschool I worked in the local gift store (called "Merchandise Mart" and you'd be surprised how often people came in and asked to see Mr. Mart..) and it happened to be the only book store in Poplar Bluff. Not that it had that many books...all of the Nancy Drew books, Bobbsie Twins, those sorts of childrens books, and a selection of adult classics. (They also had a terrific selection of Bibles, and that was my specialty; anytime someone came in who wanted to buy a Bible, they were always turned over to me....I can sell Bibles interdenominationally, or something.) -- At any rate, I still remember one particularly difficult lady customer who came in hunting for a gift for her husband. I showed her everything in the store, and finally ended by suggesting that she look over the books. "No thanks," she replied, "he already has a book." --

Well, I'm glad there's at least one person who agrees with me that people are naturally tended toward bisexuality. On the other hand, I disagree with you about the need for emotional involvement. Oh, sure...emotional involvement is certainly the best kind, and makes for the most satisfying relationships. But I really do believe that emotional involvement is unnecessary...in fact, there could be even situations where it was undesirable; and I'll even follow it up by saying that there could be situations where an impersonal approach could be much more exciting. Face it, men have always, as long back as there have been records, been perfectly capable and interested in encounters with Strange Women...the prostitute's role is the perfect example, of course, and there's certainly no emotional involvement. Why should women be any different?

Touching and holding are pretty difficult things in today's society; even though, once the barriers are down, most people greatly enjoy physical contact. (I'm not really talking about sexual contact here...just touching of the sort that we so frequently shy away from with our friends.) But, because of all the hang-ups, an awful lot of people just aren't ready for that, and feel threatened by it. And, no different than most, I'm usually afraid to be the ice-breaker for fear of causing offense. --- You spoke about touch-starved childhoods; I guess mine was that, since it was (sex-education-wise) only a little less awful than something Theodore Sturgeon might have written about. Of a matter of fact, my father had a Thing: when each of his children reached age 5 or 6, he quit touching them. I have very vague shadowy memories of being a tiny girl and my father holding me on his lap, rocking me and singing "What a friend.." But, after age six, there was Nothing. At all. I suspect that this has a great deal with my tendency to slip into the child-role any time I'm given the chance. Ted--you've often said that if a person misses some stage of his development, he's got a tendency to make up for it later; perhaps you're right.

I've had some remarkably good relationships with gay guys, simply because of the lack of sexual tension. (Some of my best girl friends have been guys, in fact.) On the other hand, my relationships with gay girls have been of the most trivial...as you say, their lives are so hectic and unstable that it's a little difficult to really focus in and become a part of. -- But, as far as going to bed with them, I know myself well enough to realise I couldn't cut it with a couple of gay guys; I'd feel too insecure and..well, unnecessary. I've got to admit, I feel very threatened by the situation when two gay guys turn on to each other; my ego couldn't take it. And I realise how silly and immature that is.

Yeah...perhaps you're right; perhaps sexual adventures are the best. On the other hand, frequently the drug experience is very similar to the sexual experience; I do tend to couple the two in my mind.

No, no offense taken at your proselytising about health foods. I'll admit, though, that right now it seems very unlikely that I'll take your advice. I tell you the truth, Robin, I've got something of a prejudice against "Health Food" as such; I'm intelligent enough to realize that it's my hang-up, and poorly based, but I can't get rid of the feeling that a diet of health foods would come down to eating grass and weeds and brown rice and stuff. All of which has it's points, but would never replace roast beef..or even meat loaf. Now, I truly do know that mine is a stupid attitude, based on lack of knowledge; what it would probably take to turn my head around would be exposure to really good health food. But, too often what I've run into in the health-food-line have been 85 pound weaklings existing on a diet of nuts and berries...and I'm too much of a food-sensualist to anticipate the prospect of a John-The-Baptist style dinner of honey and locusts. --- Actually, to be fair about it, I suppose that I have unusual attitudes toward the subject of food in general. When I first started housekeeping, many years ago, I had been raised in the tradition of southern cooking...and, even if it sounds like bragging, I was really a very good cook. Back then, I was very interested in gourmet foods, and really nice meals.... and I considered cooking to be a real art form. But, over the years, because of his more or less constant dieting, Ray and I drifted away even from the concept of sit-down dinners together; and of course since there was no one who wanted to eat them, I drifted away from the notion of preparing good meals...for the last few years we were together, we only very rarely had real dinners. (No doubt this is the reason I drifted into that 95 pound weakling stage myself.) Now, happily, Arnie and I can enjoy each other's company over dinner....but (and this is at least partially because of Arnie's lack of interest in ~~gases~~ quite a few dishes I might otherwise be cooking) we find that very simple food best fits our lifestyle. Periodically, I become very unhappy about the fact that I'm not displaying any of my culinary talents; but, as Arnie so frequently points out to me, we're both very happy with our lifestyle, and therefore should be cautious about altering it too drastically. I'd actually like to find a happy medium between the type of cooking that would keep me in the kitchen several hours a day, and the simple style we now enjoy; and it's possibly true that, in health food I would find the answer. But--I think my exposure to health food would have to be more pleasant than any I've had so far before I'd be too anxious to learn to cook that way; maybe you'll be able to change my mind by telling me of some of your successes in that line.

FRANK You've mentioned wanting to go to the city, Frank, and we're all hoping that maybe you'll be coming here...for at least a little while. Any chance? -- Let me put in a plug...you've said that you'd be interested in being someplace where you could experience more than one lifestyle; NYC is really a good place to be if you just want to experiment with life a little, and see what different things and different people are like. Besides (and this is more to the point) we'd love to have you here if you decide you really do want to leave your area for a while.

Matter of fact, cruising around in a car is a lot of fun, particularly if you live some where that you ~~xxx~~ can get out into open country. Cruising the highway is fun; but I also really liked riding around on backroads in the country.... I think you've hit on exactly what the thrill is, when you speak of the self-contained atmosphere; it gives one a wonderful sensation of Galactic Observer (or something...) Actually, when I was in St. Louis Ray and I only did a moderate amount of driving just for the fun of it; we tended only to use our car to reach destinations. But, in Poplar Bluff, night-driving is one of the major forms of recreation...



LESLEIGH It sounds like your and my approaches to spiritualism are very similar; like you, I don't believe in it, but it makes for interesting stories. I'm rather partial to ghost story movies in particular, to such an extent that last year I was a fairly faithful watcher of The Sixth Sense, which had (in a few episodes) a nice blend of psychic phenomena with spiritualism. Actually, I don't think the program was good enough to recommend itself to anyone; it's just that I had a special interest in it. This year, though, the few shows I have watched seemed less appealing, and I fell out of the habit of seeing it.

I'm incredibly lazy, so I imagine my interest would fade away if I was faced with the reality of it, but I think I'd enjoy going on a very small dig. Back when Ray and I were rockhounds, we used to run around the countryside quite a lot, digging up fossils and mineral specimens, so I know at least a little bit about sifting through mud to find chips of something that might or might not prove to be worth the effort. -- Actually, my biggest interest in digs right at the moment is the one in southeast Missouri..down near Poplar Bluff..involving some old Indian findings. I heard that there was a very big find made down there, but then heard very little about it since; I know only that there have been crews working on it for a couple of years now (..during the good weather ~~xxxx~~ months...) Do you know if they ever found anything worthwhile...I'm uncommonly curious about it.

I found your mini-discussion of language differences very interesting, Lesleigh, and am especially fascinated by the thought of a language with no past tense. I wonder what cultural difference that would indicate in the society?

I dunno, Lesleigh...and I especially don't know that there's any point in arguing the question...but I really don't believe I can accept a college campus as being as involved with Reality as a business office. True, you and Hank have the special circumstances of being more-or-less on your own; however, most students seem to be fairly isolated from the unfortunate realities of the world: if something goes wrong, they can always get help from home; they can always go home, if it comes right down to it. Also, their associates are all more or less in the same financial and economic and educational bracket as themselves...and the educational bracket is the one that really makes the difference. In what I call "the real world" there are people from all kinds of social/economic/educational brackets, which makes it more of a mix than the campus...this leads to the radically different views of life. On a college campus you can pretty well assume that everyone you run into will at least be able to understand what you say, if not agree with it; in the outside world, you can't be altogether certain, til you've done some sparring around, if the other person has a similar enough educational background to your own to be able to even comprehend your words. From my angle, it looks like it would be much easier to be a student...in all sorts of ways. But, of course, from your angle the reverse probably seems to be the truth.

HANK Come back. I missed you last time.

ARNIE The unfortunate thing about any Movement is that, no matter how worthy the cause it usually takes Very Loud Voices to call popular attention to it. For that reason, it took demonstrations and civil disobedience before much was done for the civil rights cause. It took some very abrasive personalities to ever get the anti-war movement on the move. And, the same is being true of the Women's Lib Movement; there are a lot of very loud-mouthed extremists making a lot of stupid statements. But if it wasn't for that, probably the reasonable voices would never get a hearing at all. -- This doesn't make it right, nor do much to take away the sting of some of the stupider remarks. But it does seem to be true.

TED The Virginia Fanoclasts...oh, but that sounds strange. (Not quite as strange as the New York Fanoclasts are nowadays, but...) I wonder what wonders will come up out of Falls Church? A new golden age? Well, perhaps...meanwhile, I congratulate you on your good fortunes; as we've watched NY fandom dwindle, yours has been growing...perhaps that proves nothing is permanent, and someday we can hope for NY to spring back again, as new faces come to town. Meanwhile, I'll admit I envy you.

Well, what you say about the uncertainty of any sexual confrontation with one of your own is probably true; it certainly makes sense. Though, I would think that there'd not likely be any confrontation at all unless both parties were so inclined...which would mean there'd be less uncertainty. Still, I see your point. -- One thing for sure, I don't think I could get very turned on by that kind of heavy role playing and nerve-wracking unsettledness; you've hit on exactly the aspect of the whole thing that would turn me off the fastest. I hate uncertainty.

I don't think it would be possible for a woman to be really into a man's head (--sorry, Grant; I know how that phrase alarms you, but stay cool...) without being able to, at least on a mental basis, appreciate the beauty of the female form; or vice versa... and, I think as awareness of a person's own sensuality increases, your appreciation and awareness of other person's sensuality increases also. That is to say, I'm enough involved with Arnie that I can pretty well be turned on by whatever turns him on; even though I'm astoundingly male-oriented in my affections, through Arnie I've come to have a healthy appreciation of the female body as a sex object. -- As I mentioned (I think) in the last mailing, I've actually loved very few women, and then not in a sexual way at all; therefore I can understand your statement that you can't conceive any male as a love-object, even though I radically disagree with that view. But, once you remove the word Love from the conversation, I think you have another ballgame going altogether...and I think the separating of Love from sensuality helps remove a lot of the mental hangups we all have on the question. Basically, I find it very terrifying to even imagine a love situation with another woman...a purely sexual encounter, on the other hand (or even, as Robin has suggested might be desirable circumstance, a warm friendship that had physical gratification as part of it) is not threatening to me. Plainly spoken, one situation threatens the fabric of my life; the other has absolutely nothing to do with anything except the moment-at-hand. The precise same thing holds true of sexual encounters with members of the opposite sex; they are only frightening (..once you screen out the possibilities of physical harm..) if they threaten my life. I find the notion of going to bed with a total stranger far less frightening than the idea of being "in love" with someone other than Arnie. You might say that both are fairly unnecessary ideas, and nothing to really be shooting for...nonetheless, that heavy emotional involvement you stress is precisely the thing that I would find most frightening in any sexual encounter (outside of my marriage).

TERRY I think it's wonderful that you've thought of something you'd like to do; and, running a small movie theatre isn't a bad notion at all. -- Good luck to you in your efforts to get in position to do so.

As you guessed, the Andy we mentioned as being at our party was indeed Andy Porter. Andy only lives three or four short blocks from us, you know...and, as New York fandom continues to collapse in on itself, we've found ourselves fanning (..well, at least at parties and insurgent meetings..) more often with Andy. You'd be very correct to doubt that any Andy we spoke of would be Andy Offutt. I've never met Offutt; he may be ever-so-nice in person. But, thus far, nothing I've read by him or about him has made me want to find out about him closer to hand.

No, Leigh Couch and I have never been exactly what you'd call at odds....and, so far as I know, we've never had exactly what you'd call a disagreement. But, Terry, you must recall that Leigh and Norbert were the other two primary officers in the St. Louiscon bid and on the committee; naturally, this led to some stresses. I've been somewhat gratified at how pleasant our relationship has been since all the stresses have been removed. I don't think it would pay too much to speculate at length about the differences between the Couch family and the Fishers....they were seldom if ever outspoken differences, and in many ways it's remarkable that people with such strong personalities were able to get along for such an extended period of time. -- Leigh has shown a great deal of very sensitive understanding toward me; she probably doesn't even know (--though you can certainly feel free to tell her if you wish, and I certainly plan to thank her for it when next we meet--) how much I've appreciated some of the things she's done in the past couple of years. I've particularly appreciated the very delicate way she's managed to relay news to me; she's the only one who's been thoughtful enough to realize I'd probably want to know what was going on with Ray, and with OSFA. Most people have been very hesitant to give me any information at all, probably for fear of the way I'd take it; Leigh has apparently been able to understand that having Ray's life turn out to be happy has been quite a relief to me. -- All of which might be a bit Heavy, but that's how it is.

I don't know when I first became really Aware of death, but it was very very young. First there was my grandmother (maternal) who died when I was four or five or maybe less. This was back in the day when the coffin was kept...open...at the house, <sup>and</sup> I'm uncertain how long, but it must have been for about a week. By the time my/mother was buried, I was well aware of death...and my mother had had a nervous breakdown and had to be hospitalized, and a Miss Lena Holcomb...a wonderful buxom red-haired lady..had come to take care of me. "Aunt Lena" (I was taught to call all older people Aunt or Uncle, as a matter of politeness) took care of me for quite some time, before my mother was well again. -- The second major death was my paternal grandmother; it was even sloppier than the first, with open casket ceremony, and various aunts and uncles trying to throw themselves into the coffin and having hysterics, and people fainting from emotion....all sorts of barbaric stuff that you just don't run into much any more. I remember everyone having to kiss my grandmother goodbye before the casket was closed...it was very unsettling. -- There have been quite a few family deaths, come to think of it...and quite a few of them have been fairly sloppy. My own father's funeral was a little more dignified...but only a little. -- I know what you mean about getting the emotions confused, and feeling about the same about a pet's death as a persons. When my daughter died, I went half out of my mind with grief....but then, afterward, it was like I sort of transferred a lot of my love to a pet, and sort of submerged the grief deep down inside myself. A few months later the pet was killed..hit by a car...and I really just about flipped out over it. Sometimes the mind plays funny tricks on a person..and the emotions surrounding the death of the child and the death of the pet became very mingled... Yeah, you're right: the deaths we all live through have a great deal to do with the way our mind gets formed.

JOHN No...not true that Protestant churches all close during the week; in Poplar Bluff, the Baptist Church was definitely open, as was the Methodist...I am fairly certain, for that matter, that most of the Protestant churches were left open... I can't, of course, speak for churches in other towns. Lane? You've probably got the most current information on this subject: are Protestant churches locked in your area?

Speaking of your mother's reminding all of you of your family history...my mother is in process of writing her memoirs. And, dutiful daughter that I am, I'm ~~xxxx~~ typing them for her; periodically she sends me a chapter, I type it up and ship it back. -- But, sadly, my mother has yielded to that same infirmity you mention in your own: she has started editing her memories to get rid of all the unpleasant, non-conventional incidents. She only recently completed the chapter that was devoted to my grandfather, and the things she was able to not mention are amazing: my grandfather and grandmother were divorced, they both remarried. In my grandfather's case, his remarriage took the form of five children...in other words, it wasn't a Twilight-Of-Life affair, but a really substantial part of his life. And, neither is it a case of my mother not really being acquainted with his second family: they lived right in Poplar Bluff, and the two families visited back and forth; my mother's youngest half-sister is only about a year older than I, and for part of my grade-school-aged years, Mary Margaret was my closest friend. But, my mother has totally edited this divorce and remarriage, and her five half-brothers and sisters right out of her memories of her father....and, of course, has edited out the remarriage of her mother, as well. -- I was originally very excited when Mother told me she was going to try to commit a great many of her family memories to paper; I'm interested in family history, and thought that it could be a valuable document for we younger ones in the family who hold the past dear. But, unfortunately, her altering the truth to make it fit her own very old-fashioned opinions of what a conventional family should be, has made her memories completely useless as a historical document. Ah, well...she's enjoying writing her book....and I'll certainly never tell her that it's not good.

No, John...I disagree with you. I do not believe "religion is man's ultimate concern" (thank you Mr. Tillich). I believe, if anything is man's ultimate concern, it's happiness. Also, don't twist or play with words: neither do I believe I have a Great Closed Door in my mind on this subject, through which I dare not enter. Nonsense. Can't you simply accept the possibility that I devoted years...quite a number more years than you've yet devoted to anything, John...to trying to grasp Truth. And, not unlike Ted, I gradually worked out a general picture that seemed to work for me. Now, what it comes down to is all rather private...I don't really like to argue about religion any more, because I think everyone has to find his own answers, and I don't want to push my answers off on anyone, and more than I want them to push theirs off on me. (And, particularly in this group, have no desire to cause unpleasantness to those members who have radically different views than my own.) But, in the context of the conversation that brought this up: I don't believe in ghosts. Not the smallest reason I don't believe in ghosts is that I don't believe in life after death. If I suddenly believed in ghosts, I'd have to re-examine my views on life after death...and, if I adopted a belief in life after death, I'd undoubtedly have to come to some other religious belief than the one I now have. See---that's all very straight-forward and uncomplicated. Do you believe in ghosts, John? --- Do you really believe religion is man's ultimate concern? I'm more concerned about the starving Chinese than tormented souls in the by & by.

I see my page is running out; perhaps I'll get another chance to add some more later, but if not...apologies to Ross & Neal for missing you this time....and see you next month.