

An irregular journal of whatever happens to enter the head of Don Markstein, P.O. Box 53112, New Orleans, La. 70153. Available for response--if you like it, drop me a line saying so (and if you don't like it, you can roll it up in a little tube and look at the Moon through it for all I care). Available for trade--send me a fanzine and you automatically go on my mailing list. Available through SFFPA--it's not a SFFPAzine, but I send it through there anyway on account of SFFPA is the greatest apa I've ever been a member of (even tho there *are* one or two real farheads in it). Available for none of the above--I may just happen to send you a copy for no good reason, in which case you may respond, send a zine in trade, or join SFFPA if you want to keep getting it. If you're desperate, it's even available for money--I'll part with a copy for a quarter (but won't accept subscriptions), but only if you can't think of *any* other way to get it. Demented Turkish Dwarf Press publication #237. AM106. TSSA. This first stencil being cut June 20, 1974.

Welcome to the sixth issue of the fanzine that sounds not only like a sneeze...but also like something you might say to somebody who just sneezed. A number of people have written to ask how I pronounce the fershlugginer name. Simple. Fer·slug'...but if you want to know how to pronounce *Tandstikkerzeitung*, listen up.

Five syllables, accent on the first and fourth. "Z" pronounced in the German manner ("TS"). Vowels as follows: A as in "twat." I as in "shit." ER as in "bugger." EI as in "Scheiss." U as in "turd" (*not* as in "dun"). Now, aren't you sorry you asked?

The power of words to induce feelings of rage, discomfort or disgust is well known. The writer combines words in such ways that their meanings and connotations evoke these and other feelings. But some words--those considered "obscene"--have power over the emotions all by themselves. Silly, isn't it? And yet, there's no getting around it. Saying obscene words is like saying a magical incantation in its effect, except that it works better.

Different cultures consider different words obscene, but all seem to have their no-nos. Just a couple of paragraphs ago, in telling how the title of this zine is pronounced, I used all sorts of groovy words with, I'll bet, hardly a raised eyebrow. To large segments of our population---segments well represented in fandom and among other readers of *stikker*--these words are no longer taboo. But that doesn't mean *no* words are.

Faruk von Turk is the only outside contributor to *Tandstikkerzeitung*, aside from those who write letters that I run excerpts from. To the extent that I give him column space, however, "Tales of the Tent" is in effect his own fanzine. I do not edit what he submits without his permission, and I ask it only with regard to grammatical elements (as when the tense of a verb has to be changed in transferring it from the mailing comment to whatever it originally appeared in to independent status here). He writes well and is always interesting. It would be an insult to him to change his wording to conform to my personal conception of good style.

Contrary to popular belief, by the way, von Turk is neither a hoax nor a pseudonym of mine. Not that I expect you to believe that, of course.

When I saw a particular word in his column for this issue, I was a small bit nonplussed. The thought of changing it to fit my idea of what words may properly appear in print is abhorrent to me. As I said, I don't edit von Turk's copy. But I did court briefly with the idea of rejecting the whole column this time, even though the word in question isn't used in an offensive manner (and if you think otherwise, then you don't know von Turk).

Then a little word occurred to me. You'll find the word in the second paragraph of this editorial, if that's what it is. Like I said, words have power in and of themselves, and this one certainly exercised power over me.

The word is "taboo."

Tandstikkerzeitung is a facetious, frivolous little journal utterly without redeeming social value except that it keeps me off the streets. But by God, I will *not* knowingly lay it open to a charge of having taboos.

The word "nigger" appears in the copy von Turk submitted this time. Therefore, it appears in this zine.

TALES OF THE TENT

by Faruk von Turk
defender of the faith

The question arises as before it has as well that how could an organization so blundering as to put a fool of the magnitude of Kirk in charge of a Starship ever reach the stage of power it pretends in a certain well-known series? The answer becomes clear when we see the circumstances under which the Enterprise's 5 year (chuckle) mission was started, or in funnybook language *The Origin Of Star Trek*. It seems that at a time just prior to a great house cleaning at the Federation there was opposition to scrapping an old starship as being a great waste of money after some of the haranguers on both sides had quited down somewhat somebody mentioned Capt. Kirk, long a problem for them, and at once a number of problems were resolved. Give him the ship and send him off in some direction for five years. It had better be in some direction where he isn't likely to run into anybody else. Right, where no man has gone before. And if he does happen onto any civilizations better tell him not to fool with it. That better be his Prime Directive. He'll never follow it. No but at least we told him, it's not our fault what he does. He's liable to send the whole crew down and then blow up the planet. That's the idea isn't it? Right, but he might do it too soon. He might not be far enough away. Then we'd still have the Enterprise to get rid of--and Kirk. Well then, when he finds any new planet he just *has* to investigate he has to go down himself.--and take his first officer too--and his navigator.--and the ship's doctor and the engineer. That ought to take care of him. What about a crew? This sounds like a good chance to get shed of some you know, undesirables. Niggers? Chinks? Right. What about that guy that thinks he's a Vulcan. The one with the fake ears? Him. Ain't he dead yet? He's too stupid. He can't die. What's he call himself? Spook? Whatever. Get Dr. McCoy he won't even know the guy isn't a Vulcan. And that crazy Scotchman for an engineer. He don't know an engine from his asshole. When he fools with an engine there isn't much difference. But what if they come back? No way. They'll be lucky if they last three years. Now get that jerk in here so we can get him going.

This installment of "Tales of the Tent," which originally appeared in *Von Turk's Scarlet Letter Zine* and is copyrighted in 1974 by Faruk von Turk, has been made possible by a grant from Mobil Oil Corporation. (Included in the copyright are the "roll it up in a little tube" line from the colophon and von Turk's observation that "*Tandstikkerzeitung*" isn't something you say to somebody who just sneezed. It's something you say to somebody who just farted.) Be with us nexttime for *another* Tale from the Tent, boys and girls.

It's cockroach season once again in old New Orleans. To commemorate the fact, one of our local weekly tabloids, *Figaro*, had a special cover-featured article on the little monsters. It could have benefitted from a reading of my cockroach story in *stikker #2*, but wasn't so bad for all that.

The astute reader will recall that in that issue, I distinguished between two separate and distinct types of cockroach--the ordinary, or garden variety roach, and the giant, disgusting cigar roach, so-called because it strongly resembles a well-chewed cigar butt, except that most cigar butts are smaller. (The cigar roach is also distinguished by the fact that it can fly--haltingly, perhaps, but I'd like to see you do better. And

if you can think of anything more disgusting than having a four-inch cigar roach fly in your face, for the love of God, *don't* tell me about it. Fortunately for some, the cigar roach is found only in New Orleans.)

Figaro's cover showed a photo of a cigar roach, taken by D. Eric "Dependable Dave" Bookhardt. A sidebar with the story explained the techniques used to photograph the roach--mentioned the type of camera and lens, and told how the beast was refrigerated for several hours to slow him down for the camera. Unfortunately, it neglected to mention that the roach used in the picture was captured in Faruk von Turk's basement and cooled in his refrigerator. *Figaro* very seldom gives adequate cover credits, especially (or at least most noticeably) when people I know are involved.

Speaking of the cover, Connie Trujillo remarked that that was a pretty dinky roach to appear on the cover of a big-time paper like the Fig. I conveyed the criticism to Dependable Dave, who said that she wouldn't have said that had it been mentioned that the picture was printed "same-size."

The story itself tells about how this is the worse (depending on your point of view) roach season in many years, the cigar roaches in Orleans Parish outnumbering the human beings by a factor of about 500. That means there are about a third as many of the horrible things within walking distance of this typewriter as there are people in the world.

Needless to say, we must all do our part in eradicating this menace (that's menace, loosely speaking, of course. As I pointed out in *stikker* #2, the cigar roach carries no diseases that can be caught by people or their pets and eats few things that people find useful. Its only crime, the only reason it should be hunted down and exterminated, is that it's horribly, horribly ugly--so ugly that the only reasonable attitude toward it is a fervent desire to destroy.) This means that each of us, man, woman and child in New Orleans, must kill at least 500 roaches this summer.

Figaro suggested several ways to do this. One, which they refer to as "The Only Way," is to seal off a house, pump it full of cyanide and wait. A popular method in the 19th century was to write a letter politely asking the roaches to leave and infest somebody else's house. Still a third is based on the very plausible theory that roaches are invulnerable to everything but their own ugliness--and *nothing* is invulnerable to *that*. What the article failed to mention, however, is that if *anything* is so thoroughly debased that it can withstand the ugliness of a cigar roach, it's a cigar roach.

Nonetheless, our duty is clear--kill them we must.

Most people look on this as a noxious duty imposed upon them and approach it with trepidation. Not me. You see, I am aware that men are carnivores, possessing all of the instincts of carnivores...the instinct to chew...the instinct to torture and maim...the instinct to hunt...and I, a city dweller who has nothing better to hunt, welcome the opportunity to track down and do in an occasional roach.

Several months ago, von Turk acquired a substance known as "Arab-Deth," which shoots twelve feet and kills small creatures on contact, almost instantly (tho cigar roaches, we've found, take upwards of five seconds to die from it). We amused ourselves by picking moths out of the sky for awhile, but we knew that the true test of Arab-Deth would come during cockroach season.

Ned Dameron (an exceedingly talented fantasy artist whose work can be seen only in New Orleans and occasionally in SFPA) tells a very amusing story about the time he got a cigar roach stoned by blowing the smoke of a harmless vegetable product in its face. It makes a nice little story, but I think he misses the point. The thing to do with cigar roaches isn't to get them stoned. It's to kill them.

This we do with alacrity. In fact, von Turk and I have already killed our year's quota of 500 roaches apiece, and look forward to killing many more. We do it not with Arab-Deth (which is a lot of fun, but no real sport) but by hunting them down and

adopt 'hip' expressions. Harried business execs would moan about crifanac. Banks would faunch at overdue car payments. [Actually, they'd fout at them. They'd faunch *for* them.] Political commentators would be crogged by events in Washington. But look at the bright side. Nixon might gafiate!"

Eric also says, "The propensity of words to harbor sexual innuendos not noted by dictionaries can be a real pain. As anyone who's gone through junior high knows, it's almost impossible to say more than two sentences without saying something that someone can construe as sex oriented." If you think junior high is bad, you should hang around with my group. You can't mention Dick Van Dyke, Peter O'Toole or Peter sellers [*sic*] without somebody snickering.

Timsie Marion wrote to say that if I'd please put him back on my mailing list, he'd send me all the back issues of *Soitgoze* that I missed while I was in fafia. My mailing list says you got #5 already, Timsie. Who am I going to believe? You or my mailing list? But send those back issues anyway, and I'll see if I can't find another copy.

Faruk von Turk says that the price of the whopper isn't contingent on the price of soybeans, as I hinted lastish, but in fact, a careful study of the fluctuation of the two-handed hamburger will show that its price skyrocketed only when paper began to get scarce. Von Turk also dropped by with a copy of the first issue of *Impulse*, an incredibly raunchy pornzine with a story by Norman Spinrad. *Sic transit gloria mundi*. If you don't believe us, order *Impulse* for half a buck from Kash Enterprises, 5466 Santa Monica Blvd., #95, Los Angeles, Ca. 90029.

Brett Cox expressed surprise that I missed what is, to him, the most obvious example of a respectable word with obscene origins--"snafu," an acronym for "situation normal, all fucked up." Maybe *you* consider "snafu" a respectable word, Brett. And Elaine Vignes notes that "rock 'n' roll" really describes the motions of sexual intercourse. Hmmm...

At the end of a short note, Norm Hochberg queries, "Hey, isn't this supposed to be a humor fanzine...?" If you say so, Norm. I've never hung a label on it, myself.

Bob Jennings sent an incredible five-page LoC less than a week after I sent him a stack of zines. I printed large chunks of it in the last issue of *The Sphere* and will print more chunks in *Om Markstein Sklom Stu* #14 when I finally get around to publishing it. For the nonce, let me give a sample paragraph: "My wife just finished reading all your zines. It took her half an hour. I hate people who are speed readers, especially since I am not. I also hold a life-long grudge against you because apparently you make no typing or spelling errors either. Speed readers and perfect spellers are freaks." A freak I may be, Bob, but I'm a freak who reads fast and spells correctly.

Doug Leingang sent me a fairly standard I-am-gafiating-kindly-remove-me-from-your-mailing-list letter. If you want to get off of my mailing list, Doug, writing me letters after receiving *stikker* is *not* the way to do it.

Most of the above also took the trouble to say they enjoyed *stikker*, for which thanks. I also got an interesting response from the Gale Research Company--an envelope addressed to me at my old address, with the name *Tandstikkerzeitung* on the outside. It contained several news releases. The galling thing is that I got three other envelopes--identical except addressed to different zines--in the same mail. One of the three was a oneshot. Be it known that I resent this profligate waste of postage--not that it's any skin off my nose if The Gale Research Company wants to use its stamps to send me the same thing four times when I'm not going to print it anyway, but you know damn well that waste is going to be passed on to the consumer in one way or another. Fout!

Oh, and for the several who complained that I didn't give the derivation of the word "orchid" but only hinted at it, it's from the Greek ὄρχις (please forgive the deficiencies of my typewriter--my Greek golfball doesn't have a terminal sigma), meaning "testicle." It refers to the shape of the root.

Do you believe Nixon is innocent? Clap your hands if you do!

The Rev. Sun Moon, or somebody with a name that sounds sort of like that, has been in New Orleans a couple of times in the past few months, and he's very efficient about blanketing the city with his minions. These are not your ordinary Jesus freaks--they're even more obnoxious. Whereas the common or garden Jesus freak will latch onto a victim and won't let go until he has both money and the victim's soul (muggers are a lot less greedy--they only want the money), the minion of Sun Moon secures both of those items, plus a promise to appear at whatever benefit performance Sun Moon happens to be staging that week. And he does it usually without even being able to speak English.

Their favorite technique is to zero in on the potential victim while he's still 50 or 100 feet away, and stand in his path to get his attention. I quickly developed a counter to that--I would keep going without slacking, and affect a look on my face that if the guy wasn't gone by the time I got there, I was going to plow right through him as if he weren't there. I only weigh 140 pounds, but I can look *mean* when I want to.

One determined soul withstood my advance until I was about ten feet away, whereupon I went into Phase II--bellowing "Out of my way!" He stepped aside politely. Good thing, too, because if I'd had to go into Phase III--plowing right through him as if he weren't there--I might have gotten hurt.

Those aren't the only organized panhandlers in the name of God around. Another particularly noisome group is called The Process (I don't *think* individuals in it call themselves Process Servers, but they might)--and they're actually worse, because they aren't here only on special occasions, but are a consistent nuisance. They aren't your common or garden Jesus freaks either. In fact, their religion is somewhere between medieval devil worship and paganism. They're usually fairly easy to deal with, tho--just make a cross of your forefingers and cry "Back! Back!" and they leave you alone.

I'm really kind of a nice guy, and I hate to be so rude to people. But these characters don't seem to understand anything but total rudeness. If you're polite to them, you'll wind up having to give them money, your soul and a promise to appear at the benefit to make them go away. So you have to work out techniques for dealing with them.

When one approaches me from the side, I have a set speech I go into. I don't turn my head or slack my pace to see if he hears me, but merely say, in my most threatening monotone, "Absolutely not under any circumstances whatsoever and if you come close enough to grab I'm going to tear out your fingernails."

Faruk von Turk is teaching himself Greek so that he can engage them in Bible discussions and demonstrate to them that they don't even know what they're preaching about. Until he's read the Septuagint, tho, he just mutters "Paulist swine!" and keeps going, leaving them insulted but not knowing why, so he can make his getaway while they try to figure it out.

But I think George Wells' method is best of all. He tries to recruit them into the N3F.

Meanwhile, Sun Moon's latest appearance in New Orleans was just last week, and his minions made themselves just as obnoxious as before. One of them thrust a leaflet at me about his second or third day out. I told him to clean up the mess he'd already made, gesturing toward hundreds of his leaflets littering the streets, before he passed out any more. Some people think the Rev. Sun Moon is a prophet. Far as I'm concerned, he's nothing but a litterbug.

I just spent a pleasant time with von Turk blowing bubbles. Those bubble-blowing outfits are such great things that they should be kept out of the hands of kids until they're old enough to appreciate them. We blew smoke bubbles (something kids aren't allowed to do), scared his dog, Priscilla, with them (Priscilla is scared of anything that moves by itself--remind me to tell you a few Priscilla stories sometime) and did all sorts of stuff with the bubflu (including turn a broken clay pipe of his into a bubble pipe, thus ruining it if it hadn't already been ruined). Wonderful stuff. Try it.

The current rage among the Cream of New Orleans fandom (my group) is Scrabble. I never thought much of the game until recently. But I've always been rather addicted to crossword puzzles, and Scrabble is merely a competitive version of them.

It started over the Christmas season, when von Turk's aunt visited for several weeks. She's an excellent player, tho rather more interested in the accumulation of points than in the words themselves. For example, shen comment was made on her adding onto "zoo" to make "zooid," she defended it with the dictionary--but she pronounced it "zoo-id" rather than the correct "zo-oid." And she defended my use of the word "baroom" (a sound effect) when I couldn't find an R on the board to make "barroom." (Which was actually okay, since "baroom" is kind of a nice word.)

The game as practiced by us has undergone some change in the past few months. The main effect has been a lessening of respect for high point totals in favor of creating words with interesting sounds, definitions or connotations--what we call "good" words. For example, "hovel" is a much better word than "shovel"--which is worth at least a point more in regular games. "Hovel" would therefore be used in preference to "shovel" if at all possible.

Gradually, we've phased out conventional scorekeeping altogether. Instead, each player keeps a list of words he's particularly proud to have made, and a winner is decided by common consent (sort of like electing a Pope) at the end of the game. Ties are very frequent. Words needn't be in the dictionary, but if they aren't, their meanings should be immediately obvious to the educated (a vote is taken in the event of a dispute). For example, von Turk once made the word "fartler," which appears in no dictionary we've consulted but is clearly an English ("good old Anglo-Saxon") word.

In one game recently, three players managed to get "reefer," "twat," "tawdry," "varlet" and several others on the board all at one time. In the same game, not content with "jism," I added to it to make "jismism." And that was a fairly typical game.

Racial and ethnic slurs and other references are common. When Kevin Smith made the word "nip" recently, it was greeted with scorn--until he defined it as "a citizen of Japan." I've made both "Zionist" and "quadroon" (tho my usual procedure, if I get a Q early in the game, is to save it until I can do "quack," which may or may not relate to something Bruce Arthurs brought up in his LoC on *stikker* #5 [see responses, three pages back]--but "quadroon" was too good to pass up).

One ethnic slur that shows up frequently in our games is "yat." This is a localism (it occurs in the phrase "yats and cats") for a speaker of a dialect peculiar to certain sections of New Orleans, including what is euphemistically called the "Lower Garden District." (The word, incidentally, is derived from the greeting "Way yat," which may be cognate with the English "Where are you at?" or may not. Another yat word is "maw-thadite," meaning odd or unusual and having somewhat opprobrious overtones, apparently from the English "hermaphrodite." But that's another article, and von Turk is much more fluent in yat than I.)

One of the oddities to our games that would astound an outsider is the extent to which we help one another. We'll do just about anything short of trade or pool letters, which we regard as "too easy"--tho sometimes, to make a word like "toady" or "douchebag" it's awfully tempting. But we'll frequently defer to a better word by not playing in a particular part of the board. I mean, you don't get words much better than "turdiform," but a simple "uni" in the wrong place could ruin it. And occasionally one of us may use an inferior word to set up a much better one for another player--such as putting down "odor" so someone else can have "malodorous." And if one of us is stumped, the procedure is to let all the others see his letters (not that what he has is any big secret anyway) and see if anybody has any suggestions. All of this is taken into account at the end of the game. Winners are frequently decided by the outcomes of arguments like "but 'outgribben' (as in "outgribe, outgrabe, outgribben") was my idea!"

The ideal way to play, I think, would be for a panel of experts to award points for each word, for each suggestion, and for each overcoming of an impossible handicap (like

the time I started a game with exactly one consonant and used it to make "apa" instead of the more mundane "ape" or "pea")--and to mitigate their decisions for having to rely on another player's help. But a panel of experts is hard to come by. Not least among the difficulties would be to find experts who didn't want to play themselves.

But even with the players voting on the winner, Scrabble in New Orleans fandom is an even better game than chhes. Remind me to tell you about chhes sometime.

For several years now, there's been a growing movement to change the name of Louisiana State University at New Orleans to "University of New Orleans." For reasons I haven't been able to determine, practically every student at LSUNO has been a fervent backer of the movement. Perhaps they're under the delusion that it'll somehow become a better school if it's removed from the LSU system (tho I can't see what changing the name would have to do with that), but the only accomplishment I can see to it would be that it would be the first step toward the little empire Homer Hitt, the chancellor, has been wanting to carve for himself.

Be that as it may, the movement finally succeeded a few months ago. Of course, this makes no difference to me. When I say "LSUNO" I expect people to know what I'm talking about, and if they're talking about that big school out on the lakefront, I expect them to use a name for it that I recognize.

Last week, I met a guy who's going to be spending some time in a Spanish-speaking part of Texas. Before he leaves, he says, he's going to stock up on LSUNO sweatshirts while they can still be had. Otherwise, he can see himself wearing one of the new ones and having every smartass he meets say "Hey, Gringo! What's that, your sperm count or your number of known parents?"

Remember the old neighborhood snowball stand? Probably not. I'm told most localities have different names for this food of the gods, like "snow cones" and "slush." To jog your memory, then, let me mention that a snowball is a taste-tempting delight made by pouring flavored syrup over ice shavings. The best of them are so sickly sweet that they give you diarrhea for a week.

My association with the snowball goes back quite awhile. As early as 1948, I used to be placed in a stroller each afternoon and wheeled to the snowball stand a couple of blocks down the street, banging a little silver cup against the side of the vehicle. (I still have that silver cup, by the way--dents and all. Only I drink beer out of it now.) The cup would be filled with one of Mr. William's 88 flavors--usually chocolate--and I would go my way, temporarily satisfied, or as satisfied as a 1-year-old kid ever gets.

Mr. William's stand is still there, but it bears the name "Accardo Brothers" these days. Doesn't matter what the sign says, of course--I know what the name of the place is. Each year the prices are a little higher and the hours a little shorter, but they're as drippingly sweet and disgusting as ever.

I've been in and out of the old neighborhood ever since, but even when I lived as far away as Baton Rouge, I'd make occasional pilgrimages to Mr. William's. Nobody made snowballs like he did, and I'm pleased to say that the two guys who are running Mr. William's now are just as good. These days, I get by there about once or twice a month when it's open, which is usually between March and October, when we have summer in New Orleans (spring being January and February, and fall being November and December).

A favorite game among those of us who are in the habit of going there more-or-less regularly is grossing one another out with combinations of flavors. I mean, they're all good, singly and in combination, but spearmint on one side and tangerine on the other does sound sort of repulsive--and if it doesn't, then a good look at the center stripe between the green and orange sides will go far toward making you lose your breakfast.

Egg nog and wild cherry...cinnamon and bubble gum...anisetete and zuchini...chocolate and "rocket 88"...the list is endless.

"Rocket 88," by the way, is one of those flavors that are a complete mystery. Even after you taste it, you still don't know what it's supposed to taste like. Others include, but are not limited to, "orchid cream vanilla" (which I've actually seen in the same snowball as blackberry) and "popeye." Ah yes... I recall the day we were speculating on the probable composition of "popeye." Ned Dameron suggested that it most likely consisted of ice covered with olive oil. His suggestion as to how it was consumed is too obscene to mention.

Naturally, we're not the only ones who have found out how great a place Mr. William's is, and the lines tend to be rather long. But we don't mind. We while away our time picking off an occasional cigar roach that wanders in to get the sweet stuff that falls on the ground.

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Doug Wirth just called to convey the startling information that I'd been interviewed in yesterday's paper. I quickly ran through my memories of the past few days to see if I'd happened to run into any of its reporters (I know most of them) and said anything that could conceivably have been construed as an interview. Negative. But it turned out, I realized as he read the headline and by-line, to be something that took place well over a year ago. I'd almost completely forgotten about it. The age of the interview could be told by the fact that the story referred to me as a "goateed comic book collector." The hair on my face went the way of all flesh last November.

Quite an experience to have your statements of about a year and a half ago thrown back at you. It wasn't so bad, tho. I've been in the game long enough not to get upset at being quoted out of context or having my words garbled beyond recognition. Even if I weren't, tho, the only quibble I could have with the treatment is that it was *Donald Duck* four color #29 I got for a buck and a quarter in 1967, not #22. Remarkable, when you consider that the interview, if such it was, took place in three distinct sessions --the first being back when I worked for the paper, during lunch table conversations; the second being when I ran into Jeannie Blake, the author, at the Book Fair (a year before the one described in *stikker* #5); and the third being while standing in line to see a movie, when I ran into her again.

So I've had my thoughts filtered through somebody else and printed, and I'm actually pleased with the result. I can hardly believe it.

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A Conversation between Joe Haldeman (dual gothic) and Don Markstein (Elite 72), on the road from Merritt Island to Orlando, April 16, 1972:

"The trouble with the world is that people care too much about each other."

"Yeah, let's hear it for apathy!"

"We ought to hold a pro-apathy demonstration."

"Isn't that defeating our purpose?"

"Only if anybody notices."

"Right on! Let's hold it in somebody's basement."

"Good idea! You hold it in your basement and I'll hold it in mine."

"But I don't have a basement."

"Neither do I."

"Why don't we just forget the whole thing?"

"Sure. Who cares anyway?"

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"Nixon is a Cox-shucker!"

--Guy H. Lillian III, November, 1973.

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Once again I start a last page with no idea in the world what I'm going to fill it with. Somehow, my zines seem to end at exactly nine pages these days. Hmm...so I could tell of my incredible adventures in Gretna, La. (which is something like having incredible adventures in Lower Platypus Flats, Ark., if you read *Rally!*), wherein I discovered, to my horror, that the ferry had been out of service several months. So, while I could see New Orleans and civilization just across the river...there was no way in the world for me to get there. When I discovered my plight, I marched across the street to the Gretna City Hall and asked who would accept complaints. The girl behind the desk smiled sweetly and gave me an address in Algiers. I left, chastened. There is now no way for a pedestrian to cross the Mississippi River between Algiers and Luling. Not that the names should mean anything to you, but you will of course have the courtesy to be suitably indignant along with me.

With the energy crisis and all, I thought we were supposed to be encouraging people to be pedestrians instead of making it impossible. Oh well, it'll be a cold day in June before you catch me in Gretna again. Come to think of it, yesterday was a cold day in June. Or at least, it got down into the 50s last night, and with a damp wind coming off of Lake Pontchartrain, it felt kind of chill. I was out in my regular Don Markstein evening wear--cutoff charcoal grey jeans and a madras shirt left over from when the stuff was popular (and not everybody can button the top button of shirts he wore ten years ago)--and felt it rather strongly. But I stuck it out, because I didn't want to leave the open-air movie without seeing *Freaks*.

I'm glad I stayed, even tho I damn near froze my ass off. (I'm used to temperature and humidity both in the 90s in June, not that kind of weather.) *Freaks* is worth freezing to see. It was on a double bill with *Psycho*, and the *Psycho* print included a trailer where Hitchcock walked around the set talking about the movie...and it was *still* the best thing on the program. Of course, there were a couple of imbeciles who had to guffaw every time the pinheads came on, but they were bearable. It could have done without the last 30 seconds or so, but it's still a great movie. I'd never seen it before last night. If you get a chance to see it, do so.

I decided at the last minute to run *stikker* #5 through SAPS. I may run this one through also, even tho it means adding to a print run that already seems more than adequate. I got 222 copies of the last issue, not the 175 I expected--and they're just about gone now. I pruned the mailing list down somewhat, but it's back up again somehow. This time, tho, there are no less than 29 people with little marks by their names saying this is their last issue unless I hear from them. I won't say who the 29 are--if in doubt, respond (if you still want to keep getting *stikker*, that is). I *am* going to get that list down to some sort of manageable size.

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